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VIETNAM BUDDHIST UNIVERITY SERIES

# BUDDHIST STUDIES: CONTEMPORARY APPROACHES

Editor

**Most Ven. Thich Nhat Tu**, *D.Phil.*,

RELIGION PUBLISHER

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# FOREWORD

In 1999, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the resolution to recognize the Vesak Day as an International Day of Recognition of Buddhists and the contribution of the Buddha to the world. Since then, the people and the Royal Government of the Kingdom of Thailand, in general, and Mahachulalongkornraja-vidyalaya University, in particular, were very honored to have successively and successfully held for twelve years the United Nations Day of Vesak Celebrations in Thailand.

From 2004 to date, we have come a long way in the celebrations, and we are happy to be the host and organizer, but it is time for the celebrations to grow and evolve. The United Nations Day of Vesak celebrations is coming to maturity, with twelve celebrations under our belt, much experience gained, it is time now to share this with others. There will always be room for growth and development, and we are elated to see it grow.

In 2006-2007, having joined the International Organizing Committee for UN Day of Vesak as Deputy Secretary General, Ven. Dr. Thich Nhat Tu has played a crucial role in building strong relationship between the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and International Council for Day of Vesak in particular and Global Buddhist community in general.

We have supported and congratulated Vietnam for organizing successful UNDV celebrations and conference in 2008 and 2014 respectively. We have full trust in Vietnam being the host of UNDV 2019 for the third time. We like to thank all those who have contribute to the success of previous celebrations and wish all the future celebrations be successful.

The teachings of the Buddha see no boundaries, the minds of all are alike, the sufferings of all are similar and truly, the liberation

of all is the same. We are happy to initiate the process, develop the scope and now it is time for others to follow in footsteps similar, evolve the celebrations into a truly international event that can be shared with the Buddhists and Non-Buddhists alike.

Let the Dhamma of the Buddha be the beacon to the world, shredding away the ignorance within our hearts, bringing development into sustainable capacity for humanity and more importantly, peace and harmony to the world.

**Most Ven.Prof. Brahmapundit**
President, International Council for Day of Vesak (ICDV)
President, International Association of Buddhist Universities (IABU)

# PREFACE

The history of mankind records how the Buddha got enlightenment and showed a path which not only leads but also guides the world till date. That is solely to emanate wisdom and offer insights which help us overcome numerous challenges and achieve the welfare of humanity.

Recognizing his pragmatic approach, values and contribution of Buddhism, the United Nations in a resolution in 1999 decided to celebrate the Triply Blessed Day of Vesak (Birth, Enlightenment and Passing Away of Gautama), falling mostly in a lunar calendar in the month of May. The first celebrations were held way back in the year 2000 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York and subsequently the day has been celebrated hugely in different countries.

Today our planet is confronted with a number of crises and unprecedented natural disasters. The imminent threat of terrorism and ethnic violence, tackling poverty, providing education and sustainable development leads us to strive for social justice. There is an urgent need for concerted and constant planning and right effort at an international level to foster permanent peace in the societies and in the lives of individuals.

Against the backdrop of such widespread misery and strife leading to complex issues and crises, Buddhism with its rich heritage of tolerance and non-violence can contribute immensely and inspire us with His message of loving-kindness, peace and harmony in today's world. The United Nations Day of Vesak (UNDV) 2019 is a testimony to this fact.

Vietnam got the chance and responsibility of hosting this international Buddhist event UNDV in 2008 and 2014 respectively. The event proved an amazing spectacle of religious and spiritual festivity, with thousands of Buddhists from around the world

converging in Vietnam, to spread the Buddha's message of peace, love and harmony.

This is the third time that Vietnam is hosting this important international event which is viewed by Buddhists as an opportunity to spread the Buddha's message and values of love, peace, non-violence, tolerance and compassion across the world.

It is a great honor for Vietnam, the Vietnamese people, the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and Buddhists all around the world to participate in the UNDV celebrations and spread the rich Buddhist heritage, especially its teachings of equality, social justice, respect and understanding for the benefit of all humanity. World Buddhists and particularly the Vietnamese people are excited about their country hosting this auspicious and important event for the third time. This international religious, cultural and academic event would also certainly promote interaction and exchange of Buddhist cultural and intellectual values among diverse countries.

The International Buddhist conference with the main theme of "Buddhist Approach to Global Leadership and Shared Responsibilities for Sustainable Societies" during the celebrations could not have been more relevant and timely.

The sub-themes of the conference include: (i) Mindful Leadership for Sustainable Peace, (ii) Buddhist Approach to Harmonious Families, Healthcare and Sustainable Societies, (iii) Buddhist Approach to Global Education in Ethics, (iv) Buddhism and the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and (v) Buddhist Approach to Responsible Consumption and Sustainable Development. This international conference aims to foster co-operation among Buddhist communities and institutions, and to develop Buddhist solutions to the global crisis.

Papers selected for this volume are those that combine thematic relevance, familiarity with the main theme or sub-themes, significant research in primary resources, innovative theoretical perspectives, clarity of organization and accessible prose style. Acceptable articles in this volume are determined by the Academic Peer-Review Committee.

UNDV 2019 certainly is an opportunity for the world Buddhists, the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and all the members of the international community to benefit from the rich traditions, values and spiritual ideals of Buddhism. The pragmatic path shown by Buddha can make the world a better, safer, more peaceful and harmonious place to be cherished and enjoyed by all sentient beings.

On behalf of the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and myself, I would like to warmly welcome President of Myanmar, H.E. Mr. U Win Myint, Prime Minister of Nepal, Right Hon. Mr. K.P. Sharma Oli, Vice President of India, H.E Mr. Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, Chairperson of the National Council of Bhutan, H.E. Mr. Tashi Dorji, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations/ Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific, H.E. Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Director-General of UNESCO, H.E. Ms. Audrey Azoulay, Ambassadors, and many other dignitaries.

It is my honor to warmly welcome National Assembly Chairwoman H.E. Ms. Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan, Prime Minister of Vietnam, H.E. Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc, President of the Vietnam Fatherland Front Central Committee H.E.Mr. Tran Thanh Man, Permanent Deputy Prime Minister H.E.Mr. Truong Hoa Binh, Deputy Prime Minister-Minister of External Affairs H.E.Mr. Pham Binh Minh, other dignitaries including former Political leaders of the Government of Vietnam.

I extend my warmest welcome to all respected Sangharajas, Sangha Leaders, Buddhist Leaders, Sangha members and 1600 Buddhist Scholars and practitioners from 115 countries and territories, participating in this international celebration and conference. Let me thank all of you for your contributions to this celebration and Conference.

My heartfelt thanks are extended to respected members of the Supreme Patriarch Council and Executive members of the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, especially 25 sub-committees for UNDV 2019 in Vietnam for their devotion and contribution.

I take this opportunity to express here my profound gratitude

to Most Ven. Prof. Brahmapundit for his continuous supporting Vietnam to host this international event. I also thank profusely all members of the International Council for Day of Vesak (ICDV), Conference Committee and Editorial Board for their devotion.

I am grateful to Mr. Xuan Truong for his generosity and other donors, sponsors, volunteers and agencies from the public sector and the private sector for their excellent contribution.

This publication and other 29 books printed for Vesak could not have been possible without the persistence, hard work, and dedication of Editorial Committee for their devotion including Most Ven.Dr. Thich Duc Thien, Prof. Le Manh That, and especially Most Ven. Dr. Thich Nhat Tu serving as the international conference coordinator.

I extend my warmest and best wishes to all the delegates and participating countries on this special occasion which strengthens our resolve to improve the world by walking on the path shown by the Lord Buddha.

Whatever merit there is in publishing this book may be transferred over to the welfare and happiness of all sentient beings. May all sentient beings be happy and released from suffering.

We wish the celebration of the United Nations Day of Vesak 2019 in Vietnam every success.

**Most Ven. Thich Thien Nhon**
President of the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha
Chairman of the United Nations Day of Vesak 2019 in Vietnam

# EDITOR'S FOREWORD

The day of Vesak marks the birth, the Enlightenment and the Nirvana of the Buddha. His birth heralded the age of man's deliverance from suffering. His enlightenment was the discovery of the Truth well illustrated in the Four Noble Truths and the Law of Dependent Origination. His Mahaparinirvana led us to think and prepare our lives for the right mindfulness. The three major events in the life of the Buddha signal the birth of Buddhism, a great enlightened phenomenon in the history of humanity.

For this reason, many countries, including India, Nepal, Vietnam, China, Japan, Korea, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos observe the Day of Vesak as their national Day of Great Importance and Remembrance. The commemoration of the Day of Vesak by Buddhists everywhere in the world is to worship and honor the compassion, wisdom and purity of the Buddha who taught humanity to be kind and tolerant towards each other, instill life values and qualities which would foster world peace.

The United Nations Day of Vesak was recognized by the United Nations through a resolution at its General Assembly on December 15, 1999. As Vesak is a special Full Moon day for Buddhists all over the world, we all can observe precepts on this very special day wherever we live and abide by them throughout the day.

On this "Thrice blessed day" we all should understand and practice the teachings of the Buddha and apply them to our day to day life for the well-being of human beings as taught to us by the Buddha Himself. As the greatest man ever born on this earth, the Buddha has taught us how to live peacefully and harmoniously in society by supporting each other. As most of us know, Buddhism is not a religion but a way of enlightened living. As it is a way of enlightenment, we all should be able to put it into practice in our daily life to overcome all hardships and suffering.

In November 1998, at the International Buddhist Conference in Colombo, Sri Lanka, all member countries unanimously expressed the intention to gain International Recognition for the Day of Vesak, a symbol of the birth of Buddhism as well as the religion for peace. United Nations representatives of the following countries Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Laos, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand, proposed to the UN General Assembly to adopt the resolution for the international recognition of the Day of Vesak. On 15 December 1999, the Plenary Meeting of the UN General Assembly at its 54th session considered the agenda item 174 and adopted the draft resolution for the International Recognition of the Day of Vesak and for the proper arrangements for its observance at the UN Headquarters and other offices of the 34. UN countries sponsoring the draft resolution.

Since the year 2000, on that most auspicious day (which is the full-moon in the fourth lunar month) Buddhist countries have joined in the commemorative event at the UN Headquarters. Thailand had the honor of hosting the event in 2004. Since then until today, the UNDV celebrations have been held twelve times in Thailand, once in Sri Lanka and thrice in Vietnam.

Vietnam had the mandate to organize this most prestigious and important event of the UN in 2008 and 2014 and again now in 2019, the 16th United Nations Day of Vesak Celebration in Ha Nam Province, Vietnam. Each time Vietnam has hosted the UNDV Celebration, it achieves huge success for not only having a theme, which covers the burning issues of the globalized world, but also in terms of participant numbers and showcasing the living Buddhism of Vietnam to the world. That is why, ICDV with the same hope mandated Vietnam for the third time to host the 16th United Nations Day of Vesak Celebration and Conference from May 12-14, 2019 under the leadership of the Government of Vietnam and the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha.

It is also imperative to mention that, in 2007, three Executive Members of the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha including Most Ven. Thich Thien Tam, Prof. Le Manh That and I joined the International Organizing Committee for UN Day of Vesak. Since then, the three of us have played a crucial role in building strong

relationships between the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and in particular the International Council for Day of Vesak as well as the Global Buddhist communities in general.

Since the teachings of the Buddha have steadily gained widespread popularity in Vietnam, this year, the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha has initiated a new vision to showcase the statues of the Buddha from various parts of the World to reflect a range of cultures and Buddhist traditions and enrich the understanding of Buddhist followers in Vietnam through Buddhist art.

As we all know, Buddhism has helped to identify the root cause of contemporary crisis in our modern civilization as being a spiritual crisis of today's human values. It is now time for people the world over to seek the means of creating a "human civilization" that will contribute to the peace and happiness of humankind and harmonize our differences in ethnicity, culture, and language.

Toward the realization of this goal, I am personally determined to expand the circle of global dialogue and further develop a network of solidarity.

I conclude my congratulatory message with a prayer that the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha under its leadership will steadily develop into an oasis for enlightening dialogues and will shine even more brightly as a beacon of intellect and understanding in the years to come.

I extend my best wishes to the fruitful accomplishments and great success of the 16th Anniversary Celebration and International Buddhist Conference of United Nations Day of Vesak 2019 at Tam Chuc International Buddhist Convention Center in Ha Nam Province from 12$^{th}$ to 14$^{th}$ May 2019.

**Most Ven. Dr. Thich Nhat Tu**
Vice Rector of Vietnam Buddhist University
Deputy Secretary General of the 2019 UNDV in Vietnam

# -I-
# PHILOSOPHY

# AN OVERVIEW OF MEDITATION IN INDIA, CHINA AND VIETNAM (PALI SUTTA – HUI NENG – TRAN NHAN TONG)

**by Most Ven. Thich Tam Duc***

**ABSTRACT**

Meditation (*Jhana* in Pali, *Dhyana* in Sanskrit, *Ch'an* in China, *Zen* in Japan, Meditation in English, and *Thien* in Vietnamese) is a method in the *Three Studies*[1], the *Eightfold Path*[2], and the *Six Paramita*[3], which are the basic ones in both *Theravada* and *Mahayana* Buddhism. In Buddhism, *Thien* plays an important role helping meditators attain enlightenment and emancipation.

Historically, Buddhism from ancient India spread to Eastern countries, e.g., China, Mongolia, Korea, Japan, Vietnam. And, meditation, a component of Buddhism, gradually became an essential element in self-cultivation, society and nation.

*. Vice Rector, Vietnam Buddhist Research Institute, Vietnam.

1. The Three Studies, namely, (i) Discipline: Learning by the prohibitions to guard against the evil consequences of error by mind, mouth, or body; (ii) Meditation: Learning by dhyana; and (iii) Wisdom: Learning by philosophy, i. e., studies of principles and solving of doubts.

2. The Eightfold Noble Path (Aryamarga) are: (i) Right view in regard to the Four truths, and freedom from the common delusion; (ii) Right thought; (iii) Right speech, avoidance of false and idle talk; (iv) Right deed so as to dwell in purity; (v) Right livelihood, avoiding the five immoral occupations; (vi) Right zeal in uninterrupted progress in the way of Nirvana; (vii) Right remembrance, which retains the true and excludes the false; and (viii) Right meditation.

3. The Six Paramitas are: (i) Dana or charity; (ii) Sila, keeping the commandements; (iii) Ksanti, patience under insult; (iv) Virya, zeal and progress; (v) Dhyana, meditation and contemplation; (vi) Prajna, wisdom, the power to discover reality or truth. It is the last one which carries the cultivators across the Samsara (sea of incarnate life) to the shore of Nirvana.

Here, in this paper, the writer just makes an overview of meditation in India, China and Vietnam, i. e., meditation in *Pali sutta*, *Hui Neng* in China, and *Tran Nhan Tong* in Vietnam.

## 1. MEDITATION IN EARLY BUDDHISM (THERAVADA / PALI CANON)

In Pali canon, *sati* (mindfulness), a part of *jhana* (meditation), was emphasized by the Buddha. In *Mahā-satipaṭṭhāna suttanata* the Buddha spoke thus:

"*There is this one sole way, monks, for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrows and griefs, for the going down of sufferings and miseries, for winning the right path, for realising Nibbana, that is to say, the Four applications of mindfulness.*"[4]

And, at the end of each discourse the Buddha usually advised his disciples to practise meditation like this:

"*These, Cunda, are the roots of trees, these are empty places. Meditate, Cunda; do not be slotful; be not remorseful later. This is our instruction to you.*"[5]

Through discourses *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna*, Ānāpānasati and *Kāyagatāsati* one can see that meditation is combined by two elements, i. e., concentration and contemplation. Concentration means to focus the mind on one object, i. e., mindfulness on breath:

"*As to this, monks, a monk who is forest-gone or gone to the root of a tree or gone to an empty place, sits down cross-legged, holding his back erect, arousing mindfulness in front of him. Mindful he breaths in, mindful he breaths out."*[6]

After mindfulness on in-and-out breathing is well-trained a meditator contemplates impermanence of body, feelings, mind

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4. PTS, Dig. N., II, LD, 1982, p. 290 [*Ekāyano ayaṃ bhikkhave maggo sattānaṃ visudhhiyā soka-pariddavānaṃ samatikkamāya dukkha-domanassānaṃ-atthagamāya ñāyassa adhigamāya nibbānassa sacchi-kiriyāya, yadidaṃ cattāro satipaṭṭhāna*]

5. PTS, Maj. N., I, LD, 1979, p. 46 [*Etāni Cunda rukkhamūlāni, etāni suññāgārāni. Jhāyatha Cunda, mā pamādatha, ma pacchā vippaṭisārino ahuvattha, ayaṃ vo amhākaṃ anusāsanāī ti.*]

6. Ibid., III, LD, 1977, p. 82 [*Idha, bhikkave, bhikkhu araññagato vā rukkha-mūlagato va suññāgarato va nisīdati pallaṅkaṁ ābhujitvā ujuṁ kāyaṁ paṇidhāya parimukhaṁ satim upatthapetvā. So sato va assasati, sato passasati*]

and mind objects in his body and others. Such doing leads to great fruits, advantages, even psychic powers:

*"Whoever, monks, should thus develop these four applications of mindfulness for seven years (or seven days) one of two fruits is to be expected for him: either profound knowledge here and now*[7]*, or, if there is any residuum remaining, the state of non re-turning."*[8]

*"Monks, these ten advantages are to be expected from pursuing mindfulness of body, developing it, making much of it, making it a vehicle, making it a foundation, practising it, and fully undertaking it. What ten? He is one who overcomes dislike and liking, and dislike (and liking) do not overcome him; he fares along constantly conquering any dislike (and liking) that have arisen. He is one who overcomes fear and dread, and fear and dread do not overcome him; and he fares along constantly conquering any fear and dread that have arisen. He is one who bears cold, heat, hunger, thirst, the touch of gadfly, mosquito, wind and sun, creeping things, ways of speech that are irksome, unwelcome; he is of character to bear bodily feelings which, arising, are painful, acute, sharp, shooting, disagreeable, miserable, deadly. He is one who at will, without trouble, without difficulty, acquires the four meditations that are of the purest mentality, abidings in ease here and now. He experiences the various forms of psychic power: having been one he is manifold; having been manifold he is one; manifest or invisible he goes unhindered through a wall, a rampart, a mountain as if through air; he plunges into the ground and shoots up again as if in water; he walks upon the water without parting it as if on the ground; sitting cross-legged he travels through the air like a bird on the wing; with his hand he rubs and strokes this moon and sun although they are of such mighty power and majesty; and even as far as the Brahma-world he has power in respect of his person… "*[9]

## 2. HUI-NENG IN CHINA

Different from the Indians, the Chinese are generally considered to be a practical, earthbound nation not given to speculations about such religious problems as the nature of the universe, the afterlife,

7. It refers to *Arhat*.

8. PTS, Maj. N., I, LD, 1979, pp. 62-63.

9. PTS, Maj. N., III, LD, 1977, pp. 97-98.

and so forth. When the Chinese were first brought face to face with Indian Buddhism with its rich and elaborate imagery, concepts, and modes of thinking, they were fascinated at first and finally overwhelmed and conquered. After a few centuries, however, the practical nature of the Chinese began affirming itself, it began to seek for certain features within Buddhism that it could understand and practise and soon found out *dhyana* or *cha'n* in Chinese as the essence of Buddhism. As a result, *cha'n* school emerged and fourished, particularly under the guidance of *Hui-neng*, an illiterate but most famous *ch'an* patriarch of the *T'ang* dynasty.

According to Kenneth Ch'en,[10] by late in the 7th century intellectual conditions in China were ready for the development of *ch'an* Buddhism. For over one hundred and thirty years, from AD. 625 to 755, the *T'ang* dynasty had enjoyed tranquility, security, and prosperity without any internal rebellion or external invasion to mar the orderly march of events. During this era all phases of Chinese culture, religion, art, and literature enjoyed a long period of free growth and development. This development reached its highest level during the 8th century, during the reign of *Ming-huang*, which started in 713 and moved on an even, prosperous keel until 755, when the peace of the empire was rudely shattered by *An-lu-shan* rebellion. The prevailing tendency of the period was one of freedom of expression and naturalism in poetry, art, etc. The *ch'an* movement during the period is but one aspect of the whole liberating tendency that characterised the age. This is one of the religions why it became so popular in China. The school was not so speculative as the *Ti'en-t'ai*, *Hua-yen*, and *Wei-shih* schools, and hence appealed more to the practical tendency in Chinese thought. It did not antagonise Confucian thought, and it bore a close affinity with Taoism in its philosophical ramifications.

According to the record, *Hui-neng*, considered as the 6th *ch'an* patriarch from *Bodhidharma*[11], inherited the robe at 24, has his hair shaved (i.e., ordained) at 39 and died at the age of 76

10.Kenneth Ch'en, *Buddhism in China*, Princeton, 1964.

11. *Bodhidharma* (C.470-534) was the third son of the king of *Kañcīpura*, south India. Obeying the instruction of *Prajñātara*, his teacher, *Bodhidharma* started for the East and arrived in China in 520 A. D. and considered the founder of *ch'an* Buddhism there.

(A. D. 713). *Hui-neng* got enlightenment from *Diamond sutra*[12] (or *Vajracchedika prajñāpāramitā* in Sanskrit) which is a small book of a great work named *Mahāprajñāpāramitā* (Perfection of Transcendental wisdom). *Mahāprajñāpāramitā*, "Whose void thought is a conclusion from the Dependent origination theory of Early Buddhism and combination of the void thought of other Buddhist sects,"[13] is one of many books in the Great canon of Mahayana (or Northern) Buddhism and considered as the mother of all *Mahayana* books.

*Hui-neng*'s teachings: What are taught in the Sutra of *Hui-neng* can be summarized into three main points, namely, (i) *Dhyāna*, (ii) The Essence of mind, and (iii) Kingdom of Buddha in this world.

***Dhyāna***:

*Dhyāna* or meditation, according to *Hui-neng*, is to realise inwardly the imperturbability of the Essence of mind.[14]

*Dhyāna* is neither keeping a watch on mind for tranquillity nor suppressing mind from all thinking:

*"Some teachers of meditation instruct their disciples to keep a watch on their mind for tranquillity, so that it will cease from activity. Henceforth the disciples give up all exertion of mind. Ignorant persons become insane from having too much confidence in such instruction… It is a great mistake to suppress our mind from all thinking; for even if we succeed in getting rid of all thoughts, and die immediately thereafter, still we shall be reincarnated elsewhere."*[15]

And, *Dhyāna* is not sitting quietly and keeping mind blank:

*"There is also a class of foolish people who sit quietly and try to keep their mind blank. They refrain from thinking of anything and call them-*

12. *Hung-ren* was *Hui-neng*'s Master. One day *Hung-ren* expounded the *Diamond sutra* to *Hui-neng* up to the line *One should use one's mind in such a way that it will be free from any attachment, Hui-neng* suddenly became thoroughly enlightened, and realised that all things in the universe are the Essence of mind itself.

13 Kimura Taiken, *Dai-thua Phat-giao Tu-tuong-luan* (A Survey on Mahayana Buddhist Thought), trans. Thich-quang-do, Saigon, 1969, p. 63.

14 Nanjio, *the Sutra of Hui-neng*, trans. A. F. Price and Wong. M. Lam, Boston, 1969, p. 48

15. *Ibid*., pp. 44-45.

*selves 'great'."*[16]

Again, *Hui-neng* advises one not to attach oneself to anything since they are not real and nothing but the concept of the reality of objects: "We should practise straight forwardness and should not attach ourselves to anything."[17] "In all things there is nothing real, and so we should free ourselves from the concept of the reality of objects."

The Essence of mind

So far as the Essence of mind is concerned, *Hui-neng* considers it as a state of absolute void different from the idea of vacuity, and it is beyond the extremes or duality:

"*The Essence of mind, which is a state of absolute void (i. e., the voidness of non-void). Learned audience, when you hear me talk about the void, do not at once fall into the idea of vacuity, (because this involes the heresy of the doctrine of annihilation)… When we see the goodness or the badness of other people we are not attracted by it, nor repelled by it, nor attached to it, so that our attitude of mind is as void as space. In this way, we say our mind is great therefore we call it Maha.*"[18]

Kingdom of Buddha in this world

The thing is enlightenment and happiness, but where? For the ignorant, this world is full of suffering and that world, the Pure land of the West, is full of happiness. But to the enlightened, everywhere is happy. The Buddha said: "No matter where they happen to be, they are always happy and comfortable."[19]

And, *Hui-neng* emphasises that the Buddha land must be in this world, and enlightenment must be sought and realised in this practical world, here and now:

"*The kingdom of Buddha is in this world within which enlightenment is to be sought. Seeking enlightenment by separating from this world is as absurd as searching for a rabbit's horn.*"[20]

16. *Ibid*., p. 26.
17. *Ibid*., p. 43.
18. *Ibid*., p. 26.
19. *Ibid*., p. 38.
20. *Ibid*., p. 34.

## 3. TRAN-NHAN-TONG IN VIETNAM

***Tran-nhan-tong*** (1258-1308 A. D.): He was *Tran-thanh-tong*'s eldest son. He was a king, patriot and hero. He was also famous for his generosity and humaneness. He proposed a unity policy; advocated *easing people's labour*, promoted and recruited talented men for the state machine through competition examinations, and expanded democracy. During his reign there were two famous conferences, one in *Binh-Than* in 1282 between kings and officers, and another in *Dien-Hong* in 1284 between kings and elders all over the country. As a result, five hundred thousand Mongol soldiers were defeated in 1285 and 1288. He was also a poet and founder of the *Truc-Lam Thien* school, the first *Thien* school of the Viets, which united other contemporary alien *Thien* schools, met the religious need of the people and contributed to the construction of an influential, civilised and independent *Dai-Viet*[21] against the exotic impacts. It is in the reign of king *Tran-nhan-tong* Vietnam reached its peak in every aspects. In 1293 He yielded his throne to his son and started plunging headlong into Buddhist activities. In 1298, he was ordained a monk and then travelled all over the country and to *Champa.*

*Tran-nhan-tong* founded the *Truc-Lam Thien* school. However, in point of fact, the school was founded with the contributions of other *Thien* Masters, *Tran-thai-tong* and *Tue-trung Thuong-si*. *Tran-thai-tong* was the first king founding the *Tran* dynasty. Like *Hui-neng*, the 6th ch'an patriarch in China, *Tran-thai-tong* attained enlightenment from the line *One should use one's mind in such a way that it will be free from any attachment* in the *Diamond sutra*.

"*We used to read the Diamond sutra. One time, on reading to the line one should use one's mind in such a way that it will be free from any attachment, and just at the moment I left off reading for thinking, suddenly attaining enlightenment.*"[22]

*Tue-trung Thuong-si* was considered by the contemporary as *Vimalakirti bodhisattva*[23] in Vietnam, and was *Tran-nhan-tong*'s Master. Nowadays, the remaining texts by *Tran-thai-tong, Tue-trung*

21. The former country name of Vietnam

22. Tran-thai-tong, *Khoa-Hu-Luc*, trans. Thich-thanh-kiem, Hochiminh, 1992, p. 56

23. A well-known lay devotee in Mahayana Buddhism.

*Thuong-si, Tran-nhan-tong, Phap-loa, Huyen-quang* consist of the *Tran-thai-tong*'s *Khoa-Hu-Luc, Tue-trung Thuong-si*'s *Ngu-Luc,* and verses, dialogues by three latter authors.

Here, we only examine thoughts of three pillar *Thien* Masters of the *Truc-Lam Thien* school, who are *Tran-thai-tong, Tue-trung Thuong-si,* and *Tran-nhan-tong*. They were genuine meditation Masters, not being affected by thoughts of such other schools as Tantrism, Pure Land Buddhism…

In the text *Khoa-Hu-Luc, Khoa* means effort to cultivate, *Hu* means non-attachment to concepts, dogma forms, and *Luc* means teachings. So, *Khoa-Hu* means cultivation without grasping, or without a thought. *Tran-thai-tong* said:

"*If not yet to attain the Buddha's mind or patriarch's thoughts, first of all should observe commandments and recite sutras. Until realising the Buddha and patriarchs are void then commandments and sutras are not necessary to be observed and recited, respectively. In the false form it is also the real form, in the worldly-body it is also the Dharma-body.*"[24]

The *Truc-Lam Thien* school had various methods of self-cultivation, namely, repentance, repeating the name of a Buddha, observing commandments, sitting meditation, studying *sutras*.

- On repentance, *Tran-thai-tong* said:

"*…. Due to the Buddha's supernatural power and one's devotion every evil karma accumulated in hundreds of thousands of kalpas can be all removed only in a day or moment…*"[25]

- For repeating the name of a Buddha, *Tran-thai-tong* said:

"*Repeating the name of a Buddha is produced by mind. The mind which produces good things is good thought. The mind which produces bad things is bad thought. Bad thought produced results in bad karma… When repeating the name of a Buddha he sits keeping his back erect, not doing wrong deeds, which is to get rid of body-karma. He keeps his mouth reciting right words, not uttering wrong words, which is to*

24. Uy Ban Khoa Hoc Xa Hoi Viet Nam – Vien Van Hoc, *Tho Van Ly Tran*, II, Hanoi, 1989, p. 55

25. Tran-thai-tong, *Op. Cit.,* p. 61

*cease oral karma. And his mind produces right thought instead of false one, which is to end mind-karma."*[26]

- On observing commandments, *Tran-thai-tong* said:

"*The Buddha of the past, present, and future could not attain enlightenment without observing commandments… Worshipping the Buddha as preceptor, first of all, observe commandments.*"[27]

*Tran-thai-tong* also used commandments for deterring people from doing wrong deeds in the fields of religion and politics; for example: "Robbers are mean persons… resisting Heaven and Earth, deceiving *Dharma* and despising penal laws;"[28] or, "Those who are very fond of wine lose their righteousness and good character, those who drink wine speak mistakenly… from which their life end and country is lost, too."[29]

However, the high wise can be flexible when observing commandments. One day, *Tran-nhan-tong* asked *Tue-trung Thuong-si* about the merit of observing commandments. *Tue-trung Thuong-si* said:

"*Observing commandments and patience,*
*Just looking for sin instead of blessedness.*
*To know how is neither sin nor blessedness,*
*Do not observe commandments and patience.*
*Just as a man climbing up a tree,*
*Being safe he himself suddenly seeks for danger.*
*Not to climb up the tree any more,*
*How could he get harm from it.*
*Then Tue-trung Thuong-si told Tran-nhan-tong to keep it secret, not to tell anybody unworthy to tell."*[30]

As far as *sutras* are concerned, it is usually that each Buddhist school establishes its viewpoint on one *sutra* or *sastra*, e. g., *Hua-yen*

26. Uy Ban Khoa Hoc Xa Hoi Viet Nam – Vien Van Hoc, *Op. Cit.,* p. 83
27. *Ibid.*, pp. 80-81
28. Tran-thai-tong, *Op. Cit.,* p. 36
29. *Ibid.*, p. 42
30. Uy Ban Khoa Hoc Xa Hoi Viet Nam – Vien Van Hoc, *Op. Cit.,* p. 546

school on *Avatamsaka, Ti'en-t'ai* school on *Saddharmapundarika, Kosa* school on *Abhidharma-kosa-sastra, Satyasiddhi* school on *Satya-siddhi-sastra, Nirvana* school on *Mahaparinirvana*… But the *Truc-Lam Thien* school studied most *sutras* in the Chinese *Tripitaka*. A combination of meditation and studying *sutras* is a specific feature of the *Truc-Lam Thien* school when compared to *Hui-neng*'s *ch'an* in China, which advocates to realise the Buddha nature or Essence of mind, not paying attention to words and *sutras*. The combination of meditation and studying *sutras* is illustrated in a verse of *Tran-nhan-tong*:

*"Living peacefully with the imperturbable heart among the quiet scenery,*
*A cool wind blew to the shadow of a pine tree.*
*Under the tree are a meditation cushion and sutra,*
*Two words leisured-life are much more valuable than van nen*[31] *of gold."*

But, one more method, according to the *Truc-Lam Thien* school, is the most decisive and important. It is meditation.

- On speaking of *Three studies Tran-thai-tong* quoted a passage from the *Vimoksa-sastra* '*Sila-dhyana-prajna* is the path of salvation'. But he emphasises on sitting meditation, saying:

*"Although one observes all pure commandments but does not sit meditation, the power of concentration is hardly produced. The power of concentration not existing means false thoughts not being got rid of… Yet, walking, standing, lying, sitting are meditation, not only sitting… Wisdom is produced from the power of concentration. If the mind concentrated, the mirror of wisdom would appear; if the mind distracted, the mirror of wisdom would disappear… It should be known that wisdom appears from concentration, and vice versa. Concentration and wisdom depend on each other, one can not exist without the other."*[32]

Yet, the important thing is when sitting meditation a meditator must be mindful and conscious, not forgetting reality. *Tran-thai-tong* said:

*"When sitting meditation… had one not ceased all false thoughts, the monkey mind would emerge and horse mind would travel far and*

31. (Vietnamese units in measurement) equivalent to 3,778kg
32. Tran-thai-tong, *Op. Cit.,* pp. 49-51

*double quick. As a result, either from mental trouble one knows one's previous lives, or from inrecordable state one forgets one's (Buddha) nature. Leaning on chair or wall, closing eyes and hiding pupils, sleeping soundly and salivating, falling one's head and bending one's back, though in the name of sitting meditation, it is not different from sitting at the black mountain or in the cavern of devils."*[33]

As mentioned above, there is a close relation between meditation and wisdom. The fruit of meditation is wisdom or right view, which realises the empty nature of all things, releases all cravings, grasp, dual discrimination, and cuts off all sufferings and bonds. *Tran-thai-tong* said: "A follower just needs to see the (Buddha) nature."[34] *Tue-trung Thuong-si* said:

"*Birth and death is of void nature by origin."*[35]

*"Wishing to know what the Original Face is*

*Ha! Ha! At noon the third watch of the night strikes."*[36]

All things in the phenomenal world are false names, not real, which are produced by erroneous thinking. *Tue-trung Thuong-si* said:

"*Without a defilement thought is pure Dharmakaya*

*It is neither clean nor dirty from old to present*

*Clean and dirty are completely false names."*[37]

The mind without dual discrimination is not different from *Nāgārjuna*'s viewpoints. In his dedicatory verse of the *Mādhyamika sāstra*, *Nāgārjuna*[38] set forth the eightfold negation as follows:

"*The Perfect Buddha,*

*The foremost of all teachers I salute*

*He has proclaimed*

*The principle of (universal) relativity.*

33. Uy Ban Khoa Hoc Xa Hoi Viet Nam – Vien Van Hoc, *Op. Cit.,* p. 87

34. Tran-thai-tong, *Op. Cit.,* pp. 49

35. Tue-trung Thuong-si, *Ngu Luc*, trans. Truc-thien, Saigon, 1969, p. 99

36. *Ibid.*, p. 157

37. *Ibid.*, p. 27

38. He was an Inidan Buddhist Philosopher, considered as Second Buddha

*'Tis like Blissful (Nirvana)*
*Quiescence of plurality.*
*There nothing disappears,*
*Nor anything appears,*
*Nothing has an end.*
*Nor is there anything eternal,*
*Nothing is identical (with itself).*
*Nor is there any thing differentiated.*
*Nothing moves,*
*Neither hither nor thither."*[39]

When realising all things are false, illusory one's own mind becomes imperturbable tranquillity, cuts off all conditions, bonds, not seeking for or clinging to them any longer even the so-called meditation. *Tran-nhan-tong* said:

*"Living in the world, be happy with the path in accordance with the circumstances.*
*Eat when hungry, sleep when tired.*
*Valuables are available at home, do not look for them anywhere else.*
*Facing objects without a thought then it need not ask about meditation any longer."*[40]

When illusive thoughts, desires are extinguished, Buddha and human beings are identical:

*"Buddha is at home,*
*No need to look for (Him) anywhere else.*
*Due to forgetting the Origin I look for the Buddha,*
*Having known it, the Buddha is Myself."*[41]

It is the idea *Buddha is Myself* that affirms further the sense of independence in both politics and religion of kings and subjects of the *Tran* dynasty.

39. Junjiro Takakusu, *The essentials of Buddhist Philosophy*, Delhi, 1975, pp. 106-107
40. Uy Ban Khoa Hoc Xa Hoi Viet Nam – Vien Van Hoc, *Op. Cit.,* p. 510
41. *Ibid.*, p. 506

## 4. AN OVERVIEW OF THE ABOVE THREE TYPES OF MEDITATION

After analysing the above three types of meditation – *Jhana* of Early Buddhism in ancient India, *Hui-neng*'s *ch'an* in China and *Truc-Lam Thien* school founded by *Tran-nhan-tong* – one can see that among them have similar and different points as follows:

All of the three do not seek for, depend upon or grasp anything in the world; and all of them lead meditators to the emancipation (of Arhat) in Early Buddhism or (of Buddhahood) in the other two.

On methods, Early Buddhism contemplates origination-and-dissolution things internally and externally. Meanwhile, the other two contemplate the Buddha nature or the imperturbability of Essence of mind internally.

*Hui-neng*'s *ch'an* does not pay attention to sitting meditation, but the other two do not rule out meditation in such gestures of body as sitting, standing, lying, walking…

Meditation of Early Buddhism is taught by Buddha himself. Meanwhile, *Hui-neng*'s *ch'an* obtains the guiding principle from the *Diamond sutra,* and the *Truc-Lam Thien* school from the *Diamond sutra* and partriarch *Nāgārjuna*.

The *Truc-Lam Thien* school combines meditation and studying *sutras*. Meanwhile the other two are not interested in studying *sutras*.

The meditation of Early Buddhism has supernatural tendency. Meanwhile *Hui-neng*'s *cha'n* is individually practical in daily life. But, the *Truc-Lam Thien* school is practical in social-political life.

The *Truc-Lam Thien* school and meditation of Early Buddhism advocate gradual enlightenment, but *Hui-neng*'s *cha'n* sudden enlightenment.

Buddhism including meditation appeared in India 2500 years ago and has since spread throughout the world, and depending on the circumstances of the territory or country in which it has applications adapted to help people there achieving the purpose of life that the Buddha advocates, that is, *Happiness for gods and humans*.

# BUDDHA AND WITTGENSTEIN

by Frank J. Hoffman*

The thesis of my paper is that Buddha and Wittgenstein were both dedicated to the solitary life, were innovators, charismatic teachers, deeply thoughtful, and connected thought to action.

I am claiming that the five premises below apply prove my thesis; not that my five premises give all *possible* ways in which Buddha and Wittgenstein are comparable. In other words, this paper is not an exhaustive comparative analysis but only opens the door for future research.

**(1) Buddha and Wittgenstein were dedicated to the solitary life.**

Ludwig Wittgenstein lived a solitary life and once worked as a gardener in a Christian monastery. Although not officially religious, he appears to have looked at everything from a religious point of view. On that view "religion" at its best implies passionate dedication to truth. His austere life is a reflection of his dedication to truth in philosophy and avoiding excessive material comforts.

Siddhartha Gautama Sakyamuni Buddha emphasized meditation and differed from his yoga teachers Alara the Kalama and Uddaka Ramaputta. Buddha's methods of tranquility (*samatha*) and insight (*vipassana*) were deepened in solitary meditation to achieve sublime states such as the knowledge of the destruction of the *asavas* (defilements). In effect, the Buddha's method surpassed the yogins' methods since they had not reached *nibbana* (enlightenment).

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**(2) Buddha and Wittgenstein were innovators.**

Buddha articulated his own philosophical positions on doctrines such as causality that emerged from his own meditation and life experience. In the *Sutta Pitaka* one sees that Buddha defeated scripture-based Vedic traditionalists (brahmins), the fatalists (*niyativadins*), the skeptics (Ajivikas), the materialists (Carvaka), and the ascetics (Jains). As against pre-Buddhistic traditions he argued against caste in *Madhurasutta,* and advocated development of tranquility and insight and *metta* to attain *nibbana,* the highest goal.

Wittgenstein was a versatile innovator, who during his lifetime invented a propeller, designed Bauhaus style architecture, and taught school in a mountain community in addition to becoming a world-class philosopher. He did not seek the fame, good fortune, and professor title as many intellectuals have done. He was a non-conformist who refused to wear a tie at high table in Cambridge. In doing so he became a "true person, no rank" with the attitude, but not the formal training, of a Zen person. The emptiness of all conceptual systems is understood in a late work, *On Certainty,* where Wittgenstein writes: "The difficulty is to realize the groundlessness of all our believing" (#166).

Wittgenstein was born into a wealthy family in Vienna, Austria, but gave away his fortune. When admitted to Cambridge University to study the foundations of mathematics, logic, and meaning with Bertrand Russell, he lived in a simple room at college with just a cot, a table, and a chair. When Bertrand Russell thought Wittgenstein's dissertation was ready, he called professors together and had a conversation about the work, but because Wittgenstein's genius was widely recognized, it was not a "dissertation defense" in any ordinary sense. Russell titled Wittgenstein's dissertation *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus,* but Wittgenstein himself never named it nor did he refer to himself as a "Doctor". He had no interest in publishing philosophy books, but instead was keen on doing philosophy as a process of inquiry. Wittgenstein did not put any stock in the idea of academic or professional philosophy or in the production of books as a manifestation of a fixed ego. Instead, he considered philosophy not primarily as product (books and articles), but as process of critical philosophical thinking in which clarification of concepts and critical

evaluation of arguments happens. He thought problems could be "dissolved" when their statement was ultimately nonsensical. For Wittgenstein, philosophy was something to be honored in the process of doing it. Compared to most philosophers, Wittgenstein was generous and uncommonly egoless: a high-minded serious philosopher indeed.

(3) **Buddha and Wittgenstein were charismatic teachers.**

Buddha built up his Sangha after enlightenment, at first with his friends' circle, that is, those fellow travelers on the way who became gradually convinced by the evidence of Buddha's personal self-transformation. Throughout his teaching career Buddha travelled extensively, and it was the power of his conviction of his own enlightenment that kept him energized as a convincing, charismatic teacher. Although adjusted on occasion for "skill in means", Buddha usually taught in vernacular rather than high language. His thought was later made available to all in the worker's language of Pali rather than in the high culture language of the brahmins' Sanskrit.

By comparison, the intensity of Wittgenstein's passion for the discovery of truth was evident to all his students who came in small groups to his room for discussions. There it was said, you could hear a pin drop, as students awaited his next logical move in the conversation while Wittgenstein paced back and forth in dialogue with them.

(4) **Buddha and Wittgenstein were deeply thoughtful.**

Buddha's method was *ehipassika* ('come and see") rather than doctrinaire and dogmatic as a string of blind men following the Vedas in Brahmanism would be. Buddha taught people to critically examine and not to blindly accept the fixed theories of brahmin teachers and other thinkers of India before Buddha. In the *Kalama Sutta* one is encouraged to test every statement, not depending of report, tradition, or hearsay, and in the same *sutta* one is also urged to consult the *vinnu*, the wise ones. Not depending on fallible sources of knowledge, and being open to new ideas from intelligent people, is the way Buddha advised to obtain knowledge.

Wittgenstein, like Buddha, was deeply thoughtful. Wittgenstein rejected the "craving for generality" of ambitious systematic philosophy which was abstract and remote from experience. Instead he encouraged his students to look rather than think,

and to base their philosophical ideas on the actual experience of life rather than preconceived theory, seeing what is really there. This was particularly apparent in conversations about how words mean. We are to be guided, in the later Wittgenstein of the *Philosophical Investigations*, on how we learn the meanings of words in real life situations. This is why his time teaching school in a mountain village was well spent.

In the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein writes:

> 6.522 There are, indeed, things that cannot be put into words. They *make themselves manifest*. They are what is mystical.

This is a point is about the distinction between what can be *said* (ordinary observation statements) and what can be *shown* (non-factual matters, such as value statements and the principles of logic). In addition to 6.522 he states: "My work consists of two parts: the one presented here plus all that I have *not* written. And it is precisely this second part that is the important one." That is, what cannot be put into words -- the mystical - is most important. The opposite of what can be said is everything other than facts, where a fact is a configuration of objects in the world.

It is obvious that setting aside of that which cannot be *experientially* verified is advocated in both early Buddhist doctrines and in Wittgenstein's writings. The precise content of the transcendent sphere differs though, since Buddha admits "super-knowledge" (*abhinna*) as a way to knowledge whereas Wittgenstein says nothing to suggest that he thinks so. As a matter of fact, there is no evidence that Wittgenstein ever engaged in formal meditation training. Additionally, Wittgenstein explicitly includes ethics in the transcendent, and it is not clear Buddha would think of *sila* (*morality*) as transcendental in the sense that we cannot speak about it.

(5) **Buddha and Wittgenstein connected thought to action.**

Wittgenstein noticed for example, that there are things people do with words such as making buildings that require a certain pattern of words at the construction site. He called these patterns of words, "language games". These language games are connected to what he called "forms of life". So when the construction boss yells "slab", a worker brings a piece of wood over to the place where work is being done. The construction foreman neither needs nor uses a complete

sentence to get this result. This is how language games and forms of life connect thought to action in real situations.

While Buddha wished to liberate people from *dukkha* altogether in its various manifestations, Wittgenstein's concern was to liberate people from the suffering caused by conceptual confusion.

And in the *Philosophical Investigations* the idea of philosophy as liberation is just as explicit:

> 309. What is your aim in philosophy? -- To show the fly the way out of the fly-bottle.

The pragmatic method of the Buddha is illustrated in The *Parable of the Raft*. The raft, like the *dhamma,* is useful for crossing over, not for retaining. But just as after crossing the river on a raft it is a mistake to needlessly carry the raft over land, so too after crossing over into *nirvana* doctrines and words are superfluous. The Zen emphasis on this point has led some to regard Zen as the philosophy of silence.

And here there is an interesting parallel to Wittgenstein's method. At the end of the *Tractatus* he writes:

> 6.54. My propositions serve as elucidations in the following way: anyone who understands me eventually recognizes them as nonsensical, when he has used them – as steps -- to climb up beyond them. (He must, so to speak, throw away the ladder after he has climbed up it.) He must transcend these propositions, and then he will see the world aright.
>
> **7. What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence.**

As in the raft analogy, the thrust of Wittgenstein's ladder analogy is decisively pragmatic. The propositions are *used,* like a ladder, in order to climb up beyond them. There is clearly some goal: philosophy is not pursued for its own sake, and similarly in Buddha's thought.

Thought, meditative behavior, and action were unified in both Buddha's and Wittgenstein's theory and practice.

My conclusion is that Buddha and Wittgenstein were both dedicated to the solitary life, were innovators, charismatic teachers, deeply thoughtful, and connected thought to action.

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# MADHYAMIKA'S INTERDEPENDENT ORIGINATION AND YOGĀCĀRA'S DEPENDENT NATURE THE NEXUS BETWEEN EMOTIONS AND EXISTENCE

**by Priyadarshini Mahara***

**ABSTRACT**

This paper focuses on the Psychological and Epistemological aspect of two main schools of Buddhism – Madhyamika and Yogācāra and also how these two essential philosophies are related with each other in bringing out a crucial understanding of existence and emotions. It also points out the impeccable way that can be developed in order to bring a harmony between existence and emotions.

While agreeing with the Mādhyamikas as to the unreality of external objects, the Yogācāra differs from them in holding that the mind (*citta*) cannot be regarded as unreal. The reality of consciousness should atleast be admitted in order to make correct thinking possible.

Yogācāra view is called Vijňānavāda or Idealism because it admits that there is only one kind of reality, which is of the nature of consciousness (*Vijňāna*) and objects which appear to be material or external or consciousness, are really ideas or states of consciousness.

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This theory maybe described further as subjective idealism, because according to it, the existence of an object perceived is not different from the subject or the perceiving mind.

Nāgārjuna, founder of the system of the Middle Way, asserts that interdependent origination, emptiness, and the Middle Way are identical in significance. The Philosophy of the Middle Way arrives at this insubstantiality and relativity of all phenomena through an examination of interdependent origination: that all things exist dependent on a combination of causes and conditions, that all things have no independent existence, and that all things are empty. This is developed through the investigation of the three classes of phenomena: causality, concepts, and knowledge. And just as things are materially dependent, so are concepts. Existence and non-existence, identity and difference, short and long, time (past, present, future) are all concepts that are mutually conditioned and relative. The same analysis can then be applied to knowledge.

What in the Middle Way School is interdependent origination--the link between *saṁsāra* and *nirvāṇa* - is the dependent nature in the Mind Only School. (Della Santina, 175).

**T**he long history of the world documents periods of upheaval in human lives with man's vision becoming increasingly vested, ever-hazarding itself to the binding influences of the phenomenal world, to an utter exclusion of the absolute sense of reality. In this confinement within the ever-changing phases of existence, he loses stability and the "suffering" begins. Many great teachers and masters came to remedy the situation bringing in an intellectual renaissance. However with the advent of the Buddha, 6th century BC marks the beginning of the transition in the field of 'reason' lifting human existence from the levels of blind impulse to the realm of light – of the Spirit; reason becoming a medium and an intermediate power.

The ever-changing creation of infinite variety seems to be grounded on some stable plane of existence. Some definite pattern seems to confirm the rhythm of nature. A definite plan seems to move the infinite number of galaxies in the vast structure of cosmic space. A definite procedure seems to predominate the creation, evolution and dissolution of all things. The phenomenal world is in

a constant flux, changing everything, but the incessant change itself seems to have some unchanging basis. This unchanging basis lying beyond the immediate appearance of the universe embraces and controls the stream of force.

The inquisitive nature of beings led them to probe into every sphere of existence and come up with several questions. Hence, man got more entangled as he began to search for answers to these speculative inquiries. When the philosophy of integrated life was lost from the view, the idea grew that everything that life can offer is present on the obvious levels of existence and that it would therefore be useless to aspire to anything that might lie deeper than external appearances. Society became dominated by this superficial outlook; insight into reality was lost; the right sense of values forgotten and the stability of life destroyed. Tension, confusion, superstition, unhappiness prevailed.

Finding the field distorted, Buddha came with a message of right action, and his message was complete because he incorporated the fields of being, thinking and doing in his theme of revival.

In the Kaccayanagotta Sutta (Samyutta Nikaya 12.15) the Buddha said,

"By and large, Kaccayana, this world is supported by (takes as its object) a polarity, that of existence and non-existence. But when one sees the origination of the world as it actually is with right discernment, 'non-existence' with reference to the world does not occur to one. When one sees the cessation of the world as it actually is with right discernment, 'existence' with reference to the world does not occur to one."[1]

Impressed by the emptiness of things, of senses, the Buddha renounced the ease, power and wealth of the palace to meditate on the eternal and open for his fellowmen an escape from the illusions of the flesh. When he found enlightenment after years of steady search and meditation, he felt charged with the mission to announce to the doomed multitudes the way to everlasting felicity.

1. Feer, M.L. (editor) (1960) Sammyutta Nikāya. London: Messers Luzac and Company Ltd.

Without troubling himself with the subtleties of metaphysics, he preached the ethical way that might save the masses living in sin and infamy, evincing more concern on their welfare.

Speaking from his level of consciousness established in being, in eternal freedom (*nirvāṇa*), Buddha taught the philosophy of action in freedom. He advocated meditation in order to purify the field of thought through direct contact of Being and bring about a state of right action. He correlated different fields of life in a systematic manner through the practice of transcendental meditation with realization of being as the basis of good life. He emphasized on the inner purification of the being by removing g the defilement and not mere outward practice of austerities.

Focusing on the phenomenal existence, man is concerned with "the intelligence and the intelligent will as the intermediaries between his soul and its works."(2) However without realizing the limitations of this intelligent will and losing it in the search to know the illusionary appearances, he misses out on that truth which lies beyond. What is that truth which is lying beyond the general human capabilities? As the Buddhist doctrine mentions, it is the highest state of Absolute Bliss called liberation. It is the attainment of that which is already attained and the discovery of that which has always been a fact. "The striking fact is that Buddha passes over in silence all questions of metaphysical import on the ground that they are ethically unimportant. What exactly is the significance of Buddha's silence? Did he know the truth and yet refuse to divulge it? Was he a negative dogmatist, denying soul and God? Or did he consider such discussions unprofitable? Was it his idea that speculative tendency was a weakness which ought not to be encouraged?"(3)

These philosophical accounts highlight that it is only when we cease to be occupied with our own limited emotions, which bound us to keep ourselves in the center of the world and ask most comprehensive questions in their profundity relating to the world and

2. Joshi, K. and Gupta, A.S. (editors) (2003) *Philosophy of Supermind And Contemporary Crisis: A Compilation of Passages From Sri Aurobindo's Writings*. New Delhi: Indian Council of Philosophical Research, pp. 292.

3. Radhakrishnan, S. (1929) *Indian Philosophy*. Vol. I. London: Oxford India Paperbacks, pp. 465.

its future possibilities, that we find the relevance of various sources of knowledge. Hence the Silence of Buddha is an answer that states the inevitable truth of human existence – suffering. The philosophical investigation of the Buddha and then the Buddhist scholar and expounder of the Mādhyamika thought, Nāgārjuna presents us with the truth of life that no thing is permanent and independent. The phenomenal existence is essence-less and thus the realization of this leads to the higher goal away from the indubitable suffering. The dealing into the Ontological realm is futile. And on the other hand, Yogācāra admits that there is only one kind of reality, which is of the nature of consciousness (Vijňāna) and objects, which appear to be material or external to consciousness, are really ideas or states of consciousness. This theory maybe described further as subjective idealism, because according to it, the existence of an object perceived is not different from the subject or the perceiving mind.

Emotions or Vedanā, which forms an integral part of existence are born through the contact of sense organs with its object. "The Śākyamuni Buddha edifies us about the perils of devoting ourselves to the delights of sense-pleasures. When one comes across something that appeals to the senses, one feels attracted to it and enjoys the experience. This attitude is called assāda (attraction or enjoyment) in Pāli."[4] The actions and emotions are always completely homologous with the agent who is acting upon them. "Thought itself is the thinker and if the thought is removed, there's no thinker to be found." [5] Buddhaghosa articulates this point as follows:

"Mere suffering exists, but no sufferer is found;

The deeds are, but no doer is found."[6]

Existence and emotions present a close-knit origination, bringing in the truth of suffering of phenomenal existence. Emotions lead existence to a path, which can be both liberating or binding to the worldly phenomena. According to Venerable K. Sri Dhammananda Maha Thera - "The Buddha stated that, Knowledge

4. Walpola, R. (1978) *What the Buddha Taught*. Taipei: The Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Society, , 17-18.

5. Walpol (1978).

6. Walpol (1978).

about Eternalism or Nihilism can in no way help man to break the present fetters which bind him to existence and which are the source of all his emotions of discontent which arise from his inability to completely satisfy his cravings. The Buddha stated that before one can begin to tread the path that leads to Nibbāna one must have Right View. Only when one knows clearly what one is seeking will one be able to attain it."(7) The madhyam mārga or the middle way that avoids the two extremes does not point out to a calculative center point between two ends, rather it presents a dependent nature of all worldly phenomena which is inter-dependent and postulates conditioned existence and emotions.

"If we ask how attachment and anger arise, the answer is that they are undoubtedly assisted by our grasping at things to be true and inherently real. When, for instance, we are angry at something, we feel that the object is out there, solid, true, and unimputed, and that we ourselves are likewise something solid and findable. Before we get angry, the object appears ordinary, but when our mind is influenced by anger, the object looks ugly, completely repulsive, nauseating; something we want to get rid of immediately- it really appears to exist in that way: solid, independent and very unattractive. This appearance of "truly ugly" fuels our anger. Yet when we see the same object the next day, when our anger has subsided, it seems more beautiful than it did before; it's the same object but it doesn't seem as bad. This shows how anger and attachment are influenced by our grasping at things as true and unimputed."(8)

The Four Noble Truths (Sanskrit: Catvāri Āryasatyāni, Pāli: Cattāri Ariyasaccni) lay the foundation of Buddhist Philosophy. This philosophical edifice stands on the pillars of ethical and moral duty of every individual. Unveiling the truths of existence Buddha revealed that suffering or (Sanskrit: *Duḥkha* Pāli: Dukkha) is the inevitable truth of phenomenal existence. There is nothing in this world that can escape this reality, remaining in the cycle

7. Venerable Maha Thera, D. *Eternalism and Nihilism – What Buddhist Believe*, viewed 20 January 2019.

https://www.budsas.org/ebud/whatbudbeliev/111.htm (budsas.org)

8. The Dalai Lama. *Four Noble Truths.* Edited by Nicholas Ribush. October 10, 2014. http://www.lamayeshe.com/index.php?sect=article&id=380 , viewed 9 January 2019

of becoming and ceasing. He goes on to reveal the second truth, which clearly points out to the reason of this suffering to be desire or attachment (Sanskrit: *Tṛṣṇā* Pāli: *Taṇhā)*. This desire forms a string of connection between existence and emotions. Existence without emotions, in the most general terms, is something, which cannot exist. However, perceiving this relationship of existence and emotions from the Buddhist point of view, we attain clarity of this relationship between existence and that, which cannot be separated from it, i.e. emotions. However, the Buddha did not leave with these two truth to be perceived as mere negative reality of existence; rather he brought out the real meaning and optimistic nature of existence by stating that there is also an end to this suffering. He termed this state of existence to be ultimate or the absolute. The truth of cessation is the doctrine of *Nirvāṇa* (Pāli: Nibbāna).

Buddha marks this absolute to be the attainment of cessation from agony or the negative emotions that overpower existence by petty obligations and desire. It is a degree, which is characterized as having no limits in every sense of phenomenal restrictions of time, space, visibility or emotions.

"*Atti Bhikkhave, tadāyatanaṃ, yattha neva paṭhavi, na āpo, na tejo, na vāyo, na ākāsānañcāyatanaṃ, na viññānañcāyatanaṃ, na ākiñcaññāyatanaṃ, na nevasaññānāsaññāyatanaṃ, nāyaṃ loko, na parloko, na ubho candimasuriyā. Ta trāpāhaṃ bhikkhave, neva āgatiṃ vadāmi, na gatiṃ, na ṭhitiṃ, na cutiṃ, na upapattiṃ. Appatiṭṭhaṃ appavattaṃ anārammaṇamevetaṃ. Esevanto dukkhassā*". [(9)]

The one who observes this path of the absolute, breaks from the empirical levels of suffering and other emotions that bound individuals to the lower levels of torment and despair, emerges to be focused on the higher reality. His psyche thus getting liberated leads to a state of existence where emotions come to a halt, ascending to levels of wisdom thereby bringing in emancipation.

"*Evaṃ passaṃ aggivessana sutavā ariyasāvako sukhāyapi vedanāya nibbindati, dukkhāyapi vedanāya nibbindati,*

9. Woodward, F.L. (editor) (1977) N*ibbāna Sutta, Udāna VIII. I. Paramatthadīpani udānattha kathā of Dhammapālacariya.* London: The Pali Text Society.

*adukkhāmasukhāyapi vedanāya nibbindati. Nibbindaṃ virajjati, virāgā vimuccati, vimuttasmiṃ vimuttamiti ñāṇaṃ hoti, khīṇā jāti, vusitaṃ brahmacariyaṃ, kataṃ karaṇīyaṃ nāparaṃ itthattāyāti pajānāti. Evaṃ vimutta citto kho aggivessana bhikkhu na kenacī saṃvadati. Na kenaci vivadati. Yaňca loke vuttaṃ teneva voharati aparāmasanti*". (10)

Thus, the fourth truth stated by the Buddha is the Noble Eightfold Path (Sanskrit: *Āryāṣṭāṅgamārga-āryasatya*, Pāli: *Ariyaaṭṭhaṅgikamagga-ariyasacca*), which unveils the path trodden by the Buddha himself leading to the absolute, which is beyond the conventional realms.

Madhyamika points out to the Buddha's teachings relating to two aspects of truth- the conventional or empirical and the ultimate or the absolute. Empirical truth is also known as *saṁvṛti* satya. Absolute truth is paramārtha satya. Empirical truth is the one that is relevant to the phenomenal world, the world as grasped through emotions and the absolute truth is the one that relates to reality as it is in itself. Absolute or ultimate truth is beyond the classification of names and forms.

Candrakirti mentions three senses *saṁvṛti* satya:

"i- It is that which covers all round the real nature of things. It is ajňāna (primal ignorance). It is primal ignorance, which throws a veil over reality.

ii- It is the mutual dependence of things or their reality. In this sense it is identical with phenomenon.

iii- What is conventionally accepted by a large mass of people is *saṁvṛti* satya."(11)

The metaphysical realm according to the Buddhist thought revolves around the fundamental concepts of, "impermanence (anitya), selflessness (anātman), interdependence (Pratītyasamutpāda) and emptiness (śūnyatā) – and an elaboration

10. Trencher, V. (editor) (1888) *Dighanaka Sutta, Majjhima Nikāya 74.12, V., Majjhima – Nikāya, Vol. I.* London: The Pali Text Society

11. Edelglass, W. and Garfield, J. (2009) *Buddhist Philosophy: Essential Readings.* USA: Oxford University Press, pp.121

of the ideas that reality comprises of two truths – a conventional and an ultimate truth."(12)

Nāgārjuna, founder of the system of the Middle Way, "asserts that interdependent origination, emptiness, and the Middle Way are identical in significance. Taken from the point of view of ignorance, interdependent origination explains, sustains, and is the very essence of *saṁvṛti*. But interdependent origination is also emptiness, because everything that exists dependent on something else does not really exist-- it has no independent being and does not exist by itself. Therefore, it is empty. All that is interdependent origination is also emptiness. And interdependent origination, which avoids the alternatives of identity and difference, existence and nonexistence, eternalism and nihilism, is also the Middle Way taught by the Buddha. Hence the system founded by Nāgārjuna and sustained by his disciples and successors is known as the Philosophy of the Middle Way, Madhyamaka". (13)

There is likewise a nearby correspondence between two pedagogical ideas of 'existence and emotions' and 'ultimate truth'. "Nāgārjuna says 'in the event that we take reliant beginning as the relationship in the middle of circumstances and end results, we have *saṁsāra*, however in the event that we take between ward start as non-causal- - as vacancy - we have *nirvāṇa*. The connection in the middle of circumstances and end results, in the middle of karma and its outcomes, is conceptualization or creative energy. Nāgārjuna says unmistakably that creative ability is in charge of the association in the middle of circumstances and end results."(14)

On the other hand the Yogācāra School accepts the reality of consciousness as existing, in order to made correct thinking possible. Unlike the Madhyamika, Yogācāra states that there is a stream of ideas or states and these flows outside the consciousness.

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12. Edelglass, W. and Garfield, J. (2009) *Buddhist Philosophy: Essential Readings.* USA: Oxford University Press, pp.9.

13. Santina, P.D. (1984) *Fundamentals of Buddhism, Taipei: Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational* Foundation, pp. 166.

14 . Hungtington Jr. C. and Wangchen N (1989) *The Emptiness of Emptiness: An Introduction to Early Madhyamika* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, pp. 78.

For them all that lies outside the mind or consciousness is the creation of the perceiving mind.

Yogācāra gives eight types of consciousness

i. Eye - Consciousness

ii. Ear - Consciousness

iii. Nose - Consciousness

iv. Tongue - Consciousness

v. Body - Consciousness

vi. Mind (the consciousness of ideation)

vii. Kliśta Manovijñāna (obscure or complicated mind)

viii. Ālayavijñāna (store house of all the above)

The first six are individual consciousness (*Pravṛtti vijñāna*) and the last two are pure, transcendental knowledge.

Further, Yogācāra school gives the theory of Trisvabhāva: the three natures or the three characteristics. These are the three natures of perception, three basic modes by which we perceive the world.

i. Parikalpita: Imaginary conceptual constructions.

ii. Parātantra: dependent the dependent origination of things is understood.

iii. Parinispanna: Transcendental apprehension of things as they are in themselves.

The first two are Samvriti satya (Empirical knowledge) and the third one is Parmārtha satya (Transcendental knowledge).

Thus, according to Yogācāra, the connection between existence and emotion is that through which one can move to the higher truth. It lies in the way of rightly transforming this ability of conceptual construction in a way that would yield positive results. It points at the statges in which the jhāna (Sanskrit: dhyāna) consciousness are cultivated, which are five (or four, according to the Visuddhimagga). "The first jhāna consists of the five jhānic factors (factors of absorption), namely, Vitakka (Initial Application), Vicāra (Sustained Application), Pīti (Zest), Sukkha

(Pleasant Feeling), and Ekaggatā(One pointedness of mind). Each of these factors weakens one of the five Hindrances (*Nīvaraṇa*). In the second jhāna, Vittaka is eliminated and the rest are retained. In the third, the first two factors are eliminated and the rest are retained. In the fourth jhāna, Pīti too is eliminated while Sukkha and Ekaggatā are retained. In the fifth and final jhāna, Sukkha too is abandoned and Upekkhā is cultivated in its stead."(15)

Buddha with his teachings of life wanted to eliminate human sufferings. The sole reason of his efforts towards this is visible in the schools that came into existence, after his mahāparinirvāṇa. The most important being Madhyamika and Yogācāra that strive hard to keep alive that message of the enlightened one. On the off chance that anguish were the changeless state of human existence, there is no break from the apotheosis of skepticism, which would deny any reason in the universe and diminish it to worthlessness, refutation and demise. "The one and only meaning of reality would be nothingness. The teaching of the Buddha has been misinterpreted as nihilism, forgetting that the Buddha's emphasis is on man's power to overcome the void and attain *nirvāṇa*." (16)

Madhyamika and Yogācāra together present a path, which is the most formidable in its understanding and realization yet practical in its application of the deep contemplative thought of Buddha; in their teachings. Though this philosophy is deeply rooted in the contemplative thought process yet it can be practiced in life without extreme exhaustion of the individual. It is the realization of the existence(17), which is the result of causal law pointing to its dependence on factors around.

"The sole criterion for empirical reality is existence within the nexus of cause and effect which defines our shared sociolinguistic experience.

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15. Maha Thera, N (1979) trans. *A Manual of Abhidhamma, being, ABHIDHAMMATTHA SANGHA of BHADANTA ANURUDDHACARYA*. Kuala Lampur: Buddhist Missionary Society.

16. Maha Thera, N (1979) trans. *A Manual of Abhidhamma, being, ABHIDHAMMATTHA SANGHA of BHADANTA ANURUDDHACARYA*. Kuala Lampur: Buddhist Missionary Society, pp 58.

17. Hungtington Jr. C. and Wangchen N (1989) *The Emptiness of Emptiness: An Introduction to Early Madhyamika* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, pp. 48.

Conventional truth allows things to arise, to exist and to fade away. Conventional truth allows causes to arise and to create effects. However, the ultimate truth lies beyond all the arising and ceasing, beyond all the laws of cause and effect and beyond all the discursive thought processes. It is this ultimate that needs to be achieved in order to break the entrapment of the phenomenal existence," which according to the Buddha is a continuous flow of suffering.

The teachings of the Buddha, which are evidently visible in Madhyamika and Yogācāra, are the result of one's own experience. "Whoever develops certain mental qualities, called 'wings to awakening,' will come to the same realization as did the Buddha."[18] Buddha has trodden a path that unveils the truth and has realized the Absolute; it is this path that he leaves open for all in search of it.

Nāgārjuna explains:

*"Whatever is dependently co-arisen*
*That is explained to be emptiness*
*That being a dependent designation*
*Is itself the middle way*
*Something that is not dependently arisen*
*Such a thing does not exists*
*Therefore a non-empty*
*Does not exist."* [19]

Therefore, whether it is the Buddha who gives his profound understanding of the phenomenal existence, which is accompanied with emotions; or the schools which developed tracing his philosophy, all point out to one reality. This one reality is the attainment of the absolute for the cessation of suffering. If perceived in terms of conventional understanding which is endowed with ignorance and desire there is a strong connection between existence and emotions. However, the rightly transformation of these emotions can become a path leading to absolute reality.

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18. Iser, W. (1974) *The Implied Reader.* Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, pp. 290.

19. Garfield, J.L. and Priest, G. *Nagarjuna and the Limits of Thought, Philosopy of East and West*, Jan., Vol.53, Issue 1, 21.

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# PRACTICE OF EMPTINESS (ANĀTMAN): A BUDDHIST APPROACH TO INNER AND WORLD PEACE

**by Pooja Dabral***

**ABSTRACT**

Emptiness (pali: *anattā*; skt.: *anātman*) connotes the ultimate nature of all phenomena that is not tainted by any stains of subjective influence. Since the time of Shakyamuni Buddha quest for the ultimate cause of suffering and its end led to the discovery of multiple layers of reality of both internal and external world. His teaching of Emptiness (*anātman*) reveals that there is a fundamental disparity between the way we perceive the world, including our own existence in it, and the way things really are. We believe in or grasp at an independent, substantial self (*ātman*) that leads to afflictions (*kleśa*) such as attachment or aversion, which in turn gives rise to chain of destructive actions (*karma*) and suffering (*duhkha*). This chain of reactions based on misrepresentation of reality finally leads to a self-perpetuating dysfunction in our engagement with the world and with our fellow sentient beings. The wisdom of Emptiness counteracts this misconception by rejecting the existence of such a Self. It is said in Dhammapada, "All forms are unreal,' he who knows and sees becomes passive in pain; this is the way that leads to purity". Moreover, this wisdom that realizes the selfless nature

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of all phenomena while precisely not defying the efficacy of law of karma, allows one to see the nuance of emptiness to be in stark contrast with nihilism. Nagarjuna says in Mulamadhyamikakarika, that only when one sees the emptiness in the light of its true insight of dependent origination (pali: *paṭiccasamuppāda*; skt.: *pratītyasamutpāda*).

This legacy of wisdom has greatly profound implication in elevating an individual from the worst of the pains and stress of life. As noted above in Dhammapada, someone who sees the selfness or illusion-like nature of all phenomena does not give into afflictions and which in turn stops the destructive actions, leading one to the purity of nirvāna. Besides the various presentations of Emptiness (pali: *anattā*; skt.: *anātman)* in prominent Theravada and Mahayana scriptures, this paper will also explore the ways and positive impacts of gaining insight into Emptiness in achieving peace and harmony in our individual lives and societies.

The Buddha Shakyamuni's quest for the ultimate cause of suffering and its end gave a universal message. The root cause of all our sufferings is not only the lack of knowledge but 'an active misapprehension in the nature of the things' (Dalai Lama 2006, p. 29). The question is why we perceive all phenomena in a distorted way. The reason is not that we want to misperceive the world but because the way things appear epistemologically is not how they ontologically exist. The philosophy of Emptiness that is paramount philosophical enquiry in Buddhist thoughts as indicated by many western philosophers reveals that 'there is a fundamental disparity between the way we perceive the world, including our own existence in it, and the way things really are' (Dalai Lama 2005, p. 48). For example, we believe in essential core to our being, which is characterized as our identity or individuality, independent of physical and mental aggregates i.e. body and mind that constitute our existence.

The philosophy of emptiness (pali: *anattā*; skt.: *anatman*) reveals that this is not only a fundamental error but also basis for ethical issues such as aversion, clinging and the development of numerous prejudices. The fundamental truth of 'the way things really are' is described in Buddhist treatises as emptiness or shunyata

in Sanskrit. Wisdom of emptiness counteracts the misperception of viewing things as intrinsically real with the principle of dependent origination (pali *Paticcasamuppada*; skt. *Pratītyasamutpāda*). The principle of dependent origination is the 'recognition of the fundamentally dependent nature of the reality' (Dalai Lama 2005, p. 48) and is the core of Buddhist understanding of the world and nature of the human existence. The enquiry into dependent origination can be established in three kinds: causal dependence, the dependent origination of dependence of whole on parts and the dependent origination of dependence on mere mental designation.

The first theory of dependent origination counteracts the cognitive error pertaining to the misperception of the cause and effect relationship and this is accepted by all the four schools of Buddhist metaphysics: Vaibhashika, Sautrantika, Chittamatra and Madhyamika school. In our common sense view of world, we relate to things and events whether material or mental, as if they exist with intrinsic nature in and on themselves. We tend to believe that not only each of these things and events has a discrete, independent reality of its own but also these self enclosed, independent, discrete entities interact with each other. We do believe that an intrinsically real seed produces an intrinsically real shoot at an intrinsically real time in an intrinsically real place. This is a clear indication that we believe in a kind of causality in which effect is not contingent upon its cause. This is the first kind of cognitive error because of which, we believe in the random production of the things as opposed to the reality of causal interdependency. Elizabeth Napper expresses Nagarjuna's viewpoint and argues that according to theory of emptiness, this belief is totally untenable because if entities possess such independent, intrinsic existence that would imply that nothing has the capacity to interact with and exert influence on other phenomena (Napper 1989, p. 184). But we know that there is cause and effect, which implies contingency and dependence. Since all conditioned things come into being only as a result of interaction of causes and conditions, it has the implication that things and events are empty of independent existence.

Second theory of dependent origination shows that there is the mutual dependence between the parts and whole; without parts

there can be no whole and without whole parts make no sense. For example, without the individual trees that constitute a forest, the forest makes no sense and likewise, without the forest, the individual trees of that forest make no sense. This interdependence of whole and parts implies in both spatial and temporal terms.

The third level of dependent origination i.e. the dependent origination of dependence on mere labeling or mere subjective designation shows that objects do not have intrinsic existence but come into existence through mere mental designation on total network of everything that has a possible or potential relation to it. It is undeniable that objects appear to exist intrinsically, and even within Buddhist thoughts, most schools accept this appearance of things, arguing that if phenomena did not exist in their own right, there would be no way to posit that they exist. However, the Madhyamika (Middle Way) school following Chandrakriti, called the Prasangika Madhyamika or consequence school, espouses a very profound depiction of the ontology of phenomena such as five aggregates[1] to be empty from their own characteristics. In Madhyamika, the term "dependent arising" includes the notion that all things exist in dependence upon conceptual designation (Newland 2008, p. 70). For instance when we look at the aggregate of form[2], it does exist but when we examine very closely then we see that it does not exist as something other than its constituents. And also, none of its parts is the form. One discovers that the form neither exist as something one with its parts nor as different from its parts. Since the form is not found through this ultimate analysis, the form is said to have no true or intrinsic existence. In Precious Garland, Nagarjuna explains this in relation to the 'person' and also the six elements that constitute the person. Nagarjuna says (in Hopkins translation, 1998),

1. According to Buddhist philosophy, the entire universe, including the individual, is made up of different phenomena, which is classified into different categories: what we conventionally call a "person" can be understood in terms of five aggregates: Form, Feeling, Discrimination, Compositional factors and Consciousness

2. The aggregate of form corresponds to material or physical factors. It includes our own bodies, and material objects as well. Specifically, the aggregate of form includes the five physical organs (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body), and the corresponding physical objects of the sense organs (sight, sound, smell, taste and tangible objects).

'A person is not earth, not water,
Not fire, not wind, not space,
Not consciousness, and not all of them.
What person is there other than these?

Just as a person is not real
Due to being a composite of six constituents,
So each of the constituents also
Is not real due to being a composite' (pp. 104-105).

The fact that the form is not found when subjected to the ultimate analysis, does not suggest that the form does not exist. The form does exist. Though it does not exist on the ultimate level or as intrinsically real but it does exist on the conventional level. By combining together all the parts which are not form, we mentally impute the form which ensures the existence of form. Other than this nothing exists as from the object side. This is the theory of dependent origination of mere mental designation or imputation.

The principle of dependent origination shows on the one hand that everything that exists is dependently originated. On the other hand it connotes emptiness of independent existence for it shows that things come into being by dependence on their respective causes and conditions, parts and finally depending on mere mental designation. In this way the principle of Dependent Origination indicates the negation of independence or the emptiness of independent existence. Therefore, emptiness and dependent origination are said to be the two sides of the same coin. In his book Mulamadhyamikakarika, Nagarjuna (cited in Je Tsongkhapa 2006) says,

'That which is dependent origination
Is explained to be emptiness.
That, being a dependent designation,
Is itself the middle way' (p. 503).

He argues, only if one understands emptiness in the light of dependent origination then the term 'dependent origination' itself negates any mistaken view of emptiness as nothingness. Emptiness which means emptiness of independence existence, invariably leads

one to the understanding that things exist by dependence. Thus, emptiness rejects the extreme of nothingness or non-existence. Furthermore, since internal and external things come into being only by virtue of their dependence on their respective causes and conditions, they cannot have any intrinsic existence. In this way emptiness discards the extreme of existence as well i.e. intrinsic existence. Therefore, this wisdom that sees the interdependent nature of all phenomena efficaciously accounts for the functionality of the world and of law of karma. Nagarjuna (cited in Jamgön Mipham 2004) says in Bodhicittavivarana,

'*When voidness (emptiness) of phenomena is understood,*
*The wondrous law of karmic cause and fruit*
*Shines forth as yet more wonderful,*
*And though amazing is yet more astonishing*' (p. 163).

Also, Je Tsongkhapa (2012), in his worldwide well known book Lamrim Chen Mo says, that 'the intelligent should develop an unshakable certainty that the very meaning of emptiness is dependent origination' (p. 139). Therefore, emptiness that discards both the extremes- extreme of existence i.e. intrinsic existence and the extreme of non existence i.e. nihilism- is called the middle path. Therefore, Chandrakriti's Clear Words says that these three emptiness, dependent origination and middle path are synonymous. Chandrakirti (cited in Jeffrey Hopkins 1996) stated,

*'Due to lacking the two extremes of [inherent] existence and non-existence, just this emptiness which is characterizes as no inherently existent production is called the middle path, the middle passage. Therefore, emptiness, dependent imputation, and middle path are synonymous of dependent-arising [for one who has generated the Madhyamika view in his continum] (p. 661)'.*

According to one of the sub-schools of Madhyamika i.e. 'Prasangika Madhyamika', the wisdom of emptiness establishes the ultimate nature of reality by discarding any degree of intrinsic, independent existence and this is the final philosophical position of Buddha's teachings.

The theory of emptiness or selflessness is of two kinds i.e.

Selflessness of person or selflessness of phenomena. Selflessness of person again can be understood at two levels i.e. coarse and subtle. The four Buddhist tenets, Vaibhashika, Sautrantika, Chittamatra and Madhyamika (Svatrantika Madhyamika and Prasangika Madhyamika) differ in their understanding of the coarse and subtle selflessness of person as well as phenomena. The first three schools i.e. Vaibhashika, Sautrantika, Chittamatra and one sub school of Madhyamika philosophy i.e. Svatrantika Madhyamika share the same understanding of coarse and subtle selflessness or emptiness of person. They put forth that the coarse selflessness of person means the selflessness of permanent, unitary and independent self and subtle selflessness of person is selflessness of autonomous substantial reality. According to Prasangika Madhyamika school these understandings of the selflessness of person in terms of selflessness of permanent, unitary and independent self and selflessness of autonomous substantial reality are the coarse understandings of selflessness of person. Prasangika Madhyamika tenet asserts the selflessness of person in terms of person being empty of intrinsic existence.

As mentioned before, these Buddhist tenets differ in their understanding of selflessness of phenomena as well. Pransangika Madhyamika tenet asserts that selflessness of phenomena is equally subtle as selflessness of person i.e. phenomena being empty of intrinsic existence. On the other hand, the first two schools i.e. Vaibhashika and Sautrantika do not really deal with selflessness of phenomena. They speak about selflessness of phenomena only in relation to the selflessness of person, for instance the subtle selflessness of table means the table is empty of being possessed by the autonomous substantial vessel. According to the remaining Buddhist tenet holders i.e. Cittamatra and Svatrantika Madhyamika, there is a huge difference between the selflessness of person and phenomena in terms of subtlety. The proponents of the Chittamatra School maintain that there are no external objects. They assert that all phenomena are of the nature of mind and thus do not exist external to the mind. Therefore, according to this school the emptiness of phenomena means the emptiness of external reality. In addition, this school's view of emptiness of phenomena includes

the emptiness of subject-object duality, object being empty of true reference of the label and emptiness of distinctness of the subject-object substance.

Furthermore, the proponents of Svatrantika Madhyamika School propound the emptiness of phenomena in terms of emptiness of true existence while not rejecting intrinsic existence. In this way, these four tenets of Buddhist Metaphysics propound a different and progressively subtler understanding of what constitutes the ultimate truth or emptiness. Although they differ in their presentations but the deep understanding and experience of different selflessnesses as proposed by Vaibhashika, Sautantrika, Chittamatra and Savatantrika Madhyamika are extremely important for they serve as the foundational steps that take the practitioner gradually and skillfully towards the understanding of the subtlest version of selflessness i.e. emptiness of intrinsic existence as propounded by Prasangika Madhyamika.

One may question, apart from revealing the ultimate nature of reality, what is the significance of this theory? And what is wrong with believing in independent, intrinsic existence of things? For Nagarjuna the wisdom of emptiness is not a question of the mere conceptual understanding of the reality but it has profound psychological and ethical implications (Dalai Lama 2005, p. 53). In chapter eighteen 'Examination of self and phenomena' of Mulamadhyamikakarika Nagarjuna (cited in Je Tsongkhapa 2006) writes,

'*Through the elimination of karma and afflictions there is nirvana.*

*Karma and afflictions come from conceptual thoughts.*

*These come from mental fabrication (of grasping at true existence),*

*Fabrication ceases through emptiness*' (p. 337).

In this verse, Nagarjuna explains how this whole mechanism of arising of miseries operate in five steps: (i) Samsara as opposed to Nirvana, (ii) Contaminated Karmas, (iii) Afflictions, (iv) Conceptual thoughts referring to the inappropriate attention that gives false characterization to the objects, and (v) Ignorance that misconceives the objects to have true or independent existence, when in reality they exist merely by dependence.

He argues that believing in or grasping at the independent existence of things leads to afflictions, which in turn gives rise to chain of destructive actions (Karmas), reactions and suffering. He clearly explains how this whole mechanism operates in five steps. First of all, our belief in intrinsic or independent existence of things, lays the foundation for inappropriate attention and other gross afflictions to arise. Then, the inappropriate attention accords the intrinsic properties of attractiveness to some objects whether animate or inanimate and intrinsic properties of aversion to others and thereby we react to certain objects and events with attachment and to other objects with aversion. As a consequence we end up in a self-perpetuating dysfunction in our engagement with the world and with our fellow sentient beings, and thus all kinds of miseries ensue (Dalai Lama 2005, p. 53). Furthermore, he argues in the last line of the same stanza that self perpetuating cycle of miseries can be brought to an end through the understanding of emptiness. It is only through the conviction, realization and consistent familiarization with this wisdom that one can reverse the chain of above stated actions and reactions. By not adhering to the misconception of the independent, intrinsic existence of things, one does not attribute false properties to the objects, which stops the gross afflictions and which in turn brings an end to the destructive or contaminated actions.

Therefore, if somebody really wants to be freed of all the fear, the understanding of wisdom of emptiness becomes indispensible. Buddha mentioned very clearly that these fears are nothing but the result of our own ignorant actions that are performed under the sway of afflictions and extremely vicious self grasping ignorance. Buddha taught (Samādhirājasūtra 2018),

'*Just as in the dream of a young girl,*
*She met with a boy and saw his death,*
*Joyous was she at the meeting and despairing over his death,*
*View all phenomena as thus*'.

It indicates that all the pains we go through are like the reaction of a child to the scary things seen in the nightmares. In other word, they are rooted to our misconception of seeing things as intrinsically real. Things do exist, the world does exist but they do not exist the

way they appear to us. They appear to us so intrinsically real but in actuality they exist as empty of intrinsic existence or like a dream. And, if somebody wishes to come out of this vicious and incessant cycle of miseries, one should strive to gain conviction in wisdom of emptiness through the steps of learning, reflection and meditation. Other means to subdue our sufferings are also there. Even, the compassionate teacher Buddha Shakyamuni taught different way to deal with sufferings, for instance He taught meditation on impermanence, different kinds of suffering, mindfulness and so forth to help beings with different mental dispositions. But the wisdom of emptiness is considered to be the best of the means it can dispel all our afflictions, not only by subduing them but by eliminating their root cause that is self grasping ignorance. Nagarjuna (2007) says in Dharmadhatustava (In Praise of Dharmadhatu),

'*Impermanence, suffering and empty,*
*These three, they purify the mind.*
*The Dharma purifying mind the best,*
*Is the lack of intrinsic nature*' (p. 120).

Also, Buddha taught in Dhammapada (F. Max Müller trans., 2013), 'All forms are unreal,' he who knows and sees becomes passive in pain; this is the way that leads to purity'. Therefore, someone who through constant learning and familiarization sees the empty or illusion-like nature of all phenomena can counteract the worst of the fears and pains, leading one to the purity of nirvana.

Furthermore, if someone's aspiration is not limited to the personal liberation (pali: nibbana; skt.: nirvana) but to benefit all sentient beings through achieving full awakening, even then along with the practice of ten perfections or paramitas such as generosity, ethical discipline, patience and so forth, the practice of wisdom of emptiness becomes indispensible. It is so because all these practices become pure or perfected only when they are conjoined with wisdom of emptiness (Jamgön Mipham 2004, p. 161). For example, Chandrakirti (cited in Jamgön Mipham 2002) a seventh century Nalanda saint Scholar explains this in relation to the perfection of generosity on the first Bodhisattva ground, in chapter one of the Madhyamikavatara (Entry into the middle way),

'*Giving, void (empty) of giver, gift, receiver,*
*Is called a paramita that transcends the world.*
*But when attachment to these three occurs,*
*The teachings have defined it as the perfect act of worldly ones*' (p. 61).

The act of giving that is conjoined with the uncontaminated wisdom that cognizes giver, gift, receiver as empty of intrinsic or inherent existence is called a supramundane perfection of giving. If the giving is not conjoined with the wisdom, it is called a mundane perfection. The non-dual meditative equipoise on emptiness of a bodhisattva is supermundane, therefore the practice of giving conjoined with it is a supramundane perfection. It is because this wisdom cognizes these three spheres of giver, gift and beneficiary as empty of intrinsic existence. Likewise, he explains how the bodhisattva practices of all other perfections such as, ethical discipline, patience, meditative concentration and so forth become supramundane when they are imbued with the understanding of wisdom of emptiness.

The practice of wisdom of emptiness that ensures cultivation of tranquility and calmness in individuals, who meditate on it, also plays a significant role in building the world harmony and peace. The condition of a family, city, country, world or the whole universe is determined on the basis of the condition of its inhabitants and their relation to one another not only at the level of individuals but also at the level of systems such as education, economy, politics, environment and so forth. And as explained earlier, the more one sees the true nature of all phenomena i.e. emptiness of independent existence, more one gains insight into the efficacy of the principle of interdependency. The principle of dependent origination as Buddha Shakyamuni taught in Āryaśālistambanāmamahāyānasūtra (2018) states, 'that something arises because something else already exists; something is born because something else was already born. …' (para 1.4). It indicates that any things that exist, comes into being by dependent on certain conditions. There is nothing in this entire universe that has independent or intrinsic existence.

If someone sees interdependent nature of all phenomena, invariably one will become aware of the fact that even the

happiness that we all want is also a dependent phenomena. It is contingent on many factors such as good education, clean environment, stable economy, efficacious law and order and the behavior of our fellow beings not only towards each other but also towards education, ecosystem, economy, laws, nation, world and the universe. Undoubtedly, the problems such as distrust, corruption, deteriorating ecosystems, racism, wars, terrorism, and so forth are nothing but the results of our lack of understanding of interdependent nature of things. David Bohm (cited in Dalai Lama 2005), a significant physicist of the twentieth century, who contributed unorthodox ideas to quantum theory, neuropsychology and the philosophy of mind says,

'*… If we examine the various ideologies that tend to divide humanity, such as racism, extreme nationalism and the Marxist class struggle, one of the key factor of their origin is the tendency to perceive things as inherently divided and disconnected*' (pp. 53-54).

From this misconception springs the belief that all of us and also each of these divisions are essentially independent and self-existent, which propels us to engage in all kinds of corruptions not only at the individual but national, international and also universal level.

It is for this reason the deeper one gains insight into the wisdom of emptiness that sees the interdependent nature of all phenomena, the lesser one will adhere to the misconception of viewing things as independent or existing from their own side. In other words, the more clearly and closely one understands this broad network of both intra- and interdependency of sentient beings and the world they live in, more one will respect the coexisting fellow beings, laws and orders, ecosystem, and also the role of education, politics, economy and so forth in building a harmonious and peaceful world. Again then, following the principle of dependent origination, one will play an active role in building the world that we all would like to live in. Hence, this legacy of wisdom has greatly profound implication in not only elevating an individual from the worst of the pains and stress of life but bringing peace and harmony in the entire world.

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# DHAMMA FOR THE 4TH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

by A.T. Ariyaratne*

I am responding to the Most Ven. Dr.Thich Nhat Tu's invitation to send a contribution on the given subtheme of Buddhism and the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Though I am no expert on Buddhism or a scholar on Industrial Revolutions, I accepted this invitation extended to me as a practitioner of Buddha's teaching since my childhood. Besides, the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement we started six decades ago in 1958, attempted to apply Buddhism to find solutions to modern day social, political and economic issues.

I was fortunate to be born into a family of Buddhists. In my country Sri Lanka, we had inherited a culture that dates back to over two thousand six hundred years. My parents, specially my mother, were my primary educators to introduce age-old traditional Buddhist ideals to us. Later these values were inculcated into our personalities as life-long practices applicable to every moment of living by the learned and virtuous monks of our village temple and the school teachers.

It may be appropriate to mention one of those lessons I learnt at this point. A mosquito may land on my left hand and its bite hurts me. My right hand alights on the mosquito spontaneously. My mother sees my reaction. She calls me lovingly and makes me sit on

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her lap and begins to talk. "My son, look at the size of this mosquito. So tiny, you even can't see it easily. Imagine how small his brain is. Imagine how big you are and your brain compared to the mosquito. The poor pest hasn't got a developed mind to understand that it hurts you. In your case you have a very advanced mind. So, my son, remember, never to hurt even a mosquito."

This is how my mother taught me the first precept of "Abstinence from Killing" and the *supremacy of the human* mind. It also should be mentioned that respect for all life and the importance of safeguarding the entire living world was inculcated into our consciousness at that blooming age. Similarly we learnt about the other four precepts, namely, Abstinence from Stealing, Sexual Misconduct, Speaking Untruth and Consuming Intoxicants and many other lessons while we were still children. In Buddhism we call these Five Precepts Pancha Sila which is the bare minimum of moral principles needed for the progress of a civilized and peaceful society. My personal belief is that it is the non-adherence to this bare minimum of moral principles by leaders at local, national and international levels which has led to the misery, conflicts and chaos of today's world..

*Panca Sila* is the bare minimum of Buddhist practice for lay disciples. Building on the Panca Sila, Buddhism indicates a very clear program not only for the further development of individuals, but also for the "welfare of the many" and the material development of individuals, families, groups, organizations and states. One is free to choose the path one may take at a pace one may also choose. Though there are many possible paths, all of them can be subsumed under three main teachings of the Buddha. They are as follow:

***The four noble truths (chaturaryasatya)***

***The noble eightfold path (aryaastangikamarga)***

***The theory of dependent origination (paticca samuppada dhamma )***

Looking at the past, the present and considering the future of the world I do not think that there is any scientific discovery or technological innovation done during the last 2 600 years

comparable to the enunciation and exposition of the above teachings. Please allow me to expand on the above salient teachings for the benefit of those who may not be Buddhists.

## 1. THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS

The Four Noble Truths constitute the Buddhist analysis of life.

It reveals the real status of life as "being unsatisfactory" in that whoever we are, we are subject to illness, decay, death, separation from loved ones, association with those whom we dislike, etc. No one is exempt from this, neither the richest nor the poorest, neither the most powerful nor the weakest, etc. This is the First Noble Truth in brief. Buddhists refer to this as the ***Noble Truth of Suffering***.

The Second Noble Truth states the Cause for this "unsatisfactory state". It is not due to any materialistic, or physical reason outside of "us", but due to the operation of "Greed", "Hatred" and "Ignorance" within "us". The "ignorance" referred to is the ignorance of the "Four Noble Truths."Buddhists refer to this as the ***Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering***.

The Third Noble Truth gives hope to one in that it states that it is possible to escape this recurring cycle of "being unsatisfactory". Buddhists refer to this as the ***Noble Truth of the Eradication of Suffering.***

The Fourth Noble Truth indicates the path one should take to permanently leave this "unsatisfactory state". This path is the Noble Eightfold Path. Buddhists refer to this as ***The noble eightfold path***. This is a path which is open to any human being to follow Noble ***Truth of the Path to the Eradication of Suffering***. Many in this audience and outside are most certainly following this path either knowingly or unknowingly. Many who followed this Path in the Buddha's time were not Buddhists as such. The Path is best understood in three segments as follows.

*Right Speech, Right Endeavour, Right Livelihood (Abstaining from all evils), which leads to Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, Right , Concentration ( Cultivating the good) which leads to Right View and Right Understanding.*

## 2. THE THEORY OF DEPENDENT ORIGINATION (PATTICCA SAMMUPPADA DHAMMA)

The Noble Eightfold Path is the one to be followed diligently by any one who wishes to be free from this "unsatisfactory state" or suffering. But this is exactly what many of us fail to do. We know what is "right" but most of the time we do what is "not right". What we practice is not the Noble Eightfold Path but its opposite, namely, the Ignoble Eightfold Path of Wrong Speech, Wrong Endeavour, Wrong Livelihood, Wrong Effort, Wrong Mindfulness, Wrong Concentration, Wrong View and Wrong Understanding.

In the theory of Dependent Origination, the Buddha provides an explanation of how this can happen. If we know "how", then we have the potential to arrest the operation of the Ignoble Eightfold Path and get on to the Noble Eightfold Path, not all at once but gradually.

The theory of Dependent Origination is a chain of twelve factors with each factor building on the previous one for its existence, hence the name "Dependent Origination". Each one of the twelve links, starting with **IGNORANCE** and ending with SUFFERING is necessary for the subsequent one to exist. If IGNORANCE is eliminated then each subsequent factor is also eliminated ending in the elimination of SUFFERING.

IGNORANCE (*Avijja*) is ignorance of impermanence, suffering and non-self (*Anicca, Dukka, Anatta*) which leads to volitional formations (*Sankhara*), leading to consciousness (*Vinnana*), leading to name and form (*Namarupa*), leading to six sensory organs (*Salayathana*), leading to contact (*Passa*), leading to (*Vedana*), leading to craving (*Thanha*), leading to clinging (*Upadana*), leading to cycle of births and deaths (*Bhava*), leading to birth (*Jathi*), leading to old age, disease and death etc. (*Jara, Marana, Soka, Parideva, Dukka, Domanassa*).

Avijja is a distorted understanding of how things work; a delusion arising from the operation of the Five Hindrances (*PancaNivarana*), which are Desire for Sense Objects (*Kamachchanda*), Ill Will (*Vyapada*), Sloth and Torpor (*Tina, Midda*), (*UddaccaKukkuka*), Doubt (*Vicikicca*). If the Hindrances are weakened, the lesser is the Suffering.

Having very concisely introduced certain basic principles of Buddhist teachings we follow, let me now turn to the ***Fourth Industrial Revolution*** and how it could be related to Buddhism in view of Global Leadership and Shared Responsibilities for Sustainable Societies which is the main theme of this conference.

The phrase ***Fourth Industrial Revolution*** was introduced by Klaus Schwab, the Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum based in Davos-Klosters, Switzerland, in 2015. In October 2016 at a meeting of the Forum it was decided to open a center in San Francisco to serve as a platform for interaction, insight and impact on the scientific and technological changes that are changing the way we live, work and relate to one another. This is a welcome opportunity for Buddhist Scholars and leaders to actively participate in shaping the direction the Fourth Industrial Revolution should take. This opportunity should not be missed by leaders of nations such as India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, China and Japan who have inherited a Buddhist culture. They should guide those at the San Francisco Center to follow the Buddhist path to Global Leadership, Shared Responsibilities and Sustainable Societies by developing and applying appropriate and relevant technologies that are harmless. In the words of Schwab himself, "There has never been a time of greater promise, or one of greater potential peril."

From the 18th to 19th centuries in Europe and North America mostly agrarian and rural societies got transformed into industrial and urban societies. The main roles were played by steam and water power and iron and textile industries. This was the First Industrial Revolution. During the last three decades of the Nineteenth Century and the first two decades of the Twentieth Century use of electricity for mass scale production in existing industries as well as new ones such as steel and oil heralded the Second Industrial Revolution. It was during this period that major technological advances were made for wide use of telephones, phonograph, electric lighting and internal combustion engines. The Third Industrial Revolution began around 1980s with digital technology and continues to this day. It is during this period that we started using personal computers, internet, and information and communication technologies.

The Fourth Industrial Revolution, according to Schwab and others is being built on the Digital Revolution and by "emerging technology breakthrough in a number of fields, including robotics, artificial intelligence, nanotechnology, quantum computing, biotechnology, The Internet of Things, Blockchain, 3DPrinting and autonomous vehicles." So the Fourth Industrial Revolution, in their own words "will make ways in which technology becomes embedded within societies and even the human body."

Having described very briefly the four industrial revolutions that impacted on our society in the past three centuries and are affecting our human society and the planet even today, it is time we pay attention to the role Buddhism, which survived for over twenty-six centuries and the role it should play in relation to the present and future societies human beings are attempting to build applying these new technologies.

At the inception of this paper I mentioned about the deep respect for all life we have to cultivate as Buddhists. Similarly I spoke about the importance of adhering to a minimum of five precepts to live a peaceful and happy life. I then described how a human being strives to awaken his personality to the fullest by extending the practice of *Sila, Samadhi and Pragna*. When we compare this Buddhist approach to the way western science and technology developed, it had no moral or spiritual foundation to conform to or a spiritual goal to aspire for. It was free to pursue research for a universal knowledge and develop numerous technologies one may use for betterment of oneself or annihilation of one's enemies irrespective of its positive or negative impact on the broader society. Their main objective was craving for wealth or power or to satisfy the six senses. Beyond that materialistic desire there was no other spiritual ideal to look for in both research and application.

Who gained from the past three industrial revolutions? Certainly, they were not the people in general or those who deserved it the most. On the contrary from all these revolutions the wealthy, the ruling classes, industrialists, multinational investors, imperial powers and such other privileged classes benefited while the farmers, labourers, small landholders and non-professional masses suffered.

*"The richest 1% of the population now owns over half of all household wealth"*

*Source: Credit Suisse's Global Wealth Report 2015.*

Oxfam's new report presents an even more dramatic concentration of assets, finding that 62 individuals controlled more assets than the poorer 3.6 billion people combined who constitute half the world's population.

Whatever the damage done to poorer communities in the world, especially to those who were under western imperialistic powers in the past like those of us in Sri Lanka and Vietnam and the present neo-colonialist ways, our economies are controlled by rich countries and multinational corporations, we still have to view the future realistically. We have to clearly identify the positive aspects of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and develop a common approach for the world to follow based on Buddhist principles and practice which will result in the wellbeing of all humans and also ensure the preservation of all life on this planet. We have to keep in mind the Buddha's directive to the first sixty enlightened disciples (*Arahats*) He sent out to the world to teach His Dhamma."Bhikkus, wander forth for the welfare and happiness of the many, for the compassionate assistance of the world."

In this spirit Buddhists both clergy and lay have a great responsibility to re-educate the world as to how best we can remove inequalities, injustices and ignorance from human society which originated right from the first, second and third industrial revolutions. There are communities in the world who are still living in the pre-industrial age. There are a vast majority of communities who have yet to experience the second and third industrial revolutions. If the Buddhist ideal of serving humans, other forms of animals, plant kingdom and nature as a whole is truly practiced in the new industrial era that has begun, the past mistakes can be rectified. It is possible to bypass or leapfrog the first two or three phases and straight away help the weak and poor communities enter the fourth phase with a chosen mix of technology to deal with predetermined issues such as mass scale poverty, disease and social conflicts, if only those who are in control of technology

are educated in Buddhist teachings of *Loving Kindness (Metta), Compassionate Action (Karuna), Dispassionate Joy (Muditha) and Equanimity (Upekkha).*

Buddhist practitioners have a great responsibility of engaging themselves in a global survey to identify communities who have to be immediately helped using appropriate technologies that are available to us. All this become possible if only a universal scale transformation of human consciousness is launched successfully. At the present moment Buddhists have easy access to the communication technologies which can initiate and accelerate this renewal. When a critical mass of such consciousness transformation occurs only, people will begin to think and question certain commonly accepted beliefs and practices. Their greed will be replaced with giving or charity (dana)'.

In my opinion we have to first identify those relevant technologies which could be used for such a global consciousness shift by Buddhists. Secondly we have to identify the issues that have to be immediately dealt with in relation to the vast majority of people in the world who are struggling to survive without even having enough to eat. Thirdly we have to develop a clear perception as to how these technologies and their applications will affect the life support systems and the conservation of nature and secure the living world from disasters like the worsening climate change and global warming.

For a moment let us look at the materially advanced societies like Japan in our region and how technological advances affected their individual, family and community lives. In these so called highly advanced societies suicide rate is said to be the highest in the region. Interpersonal relationships have become so distanced and estranged that an individual no longer can turn to his or her parents, elders or the community for advice and help. The inbuilt value systems that prevailed in the pre-industrial society are no longer there. The human personality is lost in a barren desert of dumb technological gadgets and networks. In this kind of helpless situations mental disorders are on the increase in the same way as suicides. The human beings almost from the adolescent age have no vision in life to live for. Besides endless gratification of the six sense faculties they hardly have any other reason to live for.

On the positive side we are aware that these technological industrial revolutions have brought about numerous benefits to ordinary populations as well even though most of the benefits were acquired by the privileged classes and countries. Depending on the governance and fair economic systems common people have got the freedom to access to the best of health care, medical treatments, educational opportunities and other forms of services such as in the areas of travel, leisure and entertainment to live a comfortable and happy life. Humanity from its inception has been cursed by famine, disease and violence. The industrial revolutions along with advancement of democratic governing systems are successfully combating these three evils.

The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that 'the right to life' is the most fundamental value of humanity. Various UN bodies like FAO, WHO and the Security Council along with other intergovernmental bodies and non-governmental organizations have immensely contributed to save human lives from these three enemies. Yet we have a long way to go before we can say that humanity as a whole is free from hunger and disease. In the case of violence and war the very advancements made in nuclear weaponry keep those who possess them to refrain from confrontations because of mutual fear and instead resort to peaceful negotiations to resolve their conflicts. On the contrary individual and group violence are on the increase due to various social factors such as poverty, communalism, ideological and racial rivalries.

Scientific researchers with support from billionaires, bankers, and dictators who wish to be immortal are exploring ways to remain young, without getting old or dying. They are very serious about it and some have publicly declared that by 2050 they can overcome death. While a few of them who never stop craving for more and more will continue on pursuits like that, we should concentrate on a selective application of a mix of available technologies to show the world the path of Buddhism for all those who are yet to satisfy their basic human needs and others who do not find happiness in all the material affluence they have acquired from the industrial revolutions. There is no doubt that the vast majority of human beings will consider the Middle Path (MajjimaPatipada) or the

Noble Eightfold Path as a sensible way of life to meet the present-day challenges.

The Buddha's advice to the monks was as follows:

"*Monks, this life of human beings is short; one must pass on to the future life. You should reflect wisely, do good , and live a pure life (brahmacharya). One born cannot avoid death; one who lives long lives a hundred years or a fraction more."*

*"Short is the life span of human beings , The good man should disdain it. You should live like one with head aflame. No one can avoid death's arrival"*.

According to the Dhammapada a collection of sayings of the Buddha in verse form and one of the most widely read and best-known Buddhist scriptures "Mind precedes all phenomena. Mind is their chief; they are all mind-wrought. If with a pure mind a person speaks or acts happiness follows him like his never-departing shadow".

In the Dhammapadawe also come across the following stanza:

*Arōgyā paramā lābhā*
*santutthiparamamdhanan*
*vissāsaparamā nāthi*
*Nibbānanparamamsukhan*

The meaning of this stanza is:

"*Health is the ultimate profit, contentment is the ultimate wealth, trust is the best relative, Nibbana is the ultimate bliss*".

Buddhism is not a religion as such. It is an explanation of the human personality in relation to the rest of the living world and a time frame in which there is no beginning or end. If the stake holders of the Fourth Industrial Revolution examine the teachings of the Buddha in the above four spheres of health, contentment, trust and bliss from a scientific viewpoint, certainly immense good results could be achieved for humanity as a whole. There are diseases which are the result of polluted air we breathe, chemically poisonous food and unhealthy drinks we consume all of which are by products of the so-called revolution. Kind of entertainment to which our eyes and ears and all other faculties of our bodies

are tuned to and endless possessions our minds crave takes good health and inner peace away from us. Buddhism shows us to place confidence or trust in the Dhamma for the good of present life and lives to come.

Sadly, with the onset of the new techniques, systems and disciplines the very structures of biological organisms is now brought to the sophisticated level of manipulating individual genes. This has resulted in manipulating the very codes of life, thereby giving rise to the likelihood of creating entirely new realities for humanity as a whole. According to Buddhism, there are five Cosmic Laws or natural processes (Niyamas) which operate in the physical and mental realms and which should not be meddled with. The Buddha taught us that these five factors at work in the cosmos cause things to happen. They are :

**Bija Niyama**: Cosmic Law pertaining to genetic order, living matter or what we call biology, Bija Niyam governs plant life, germs, seeds and nature of all life plant and animal..

**Utu Niyama**: Cosmic Law pertaining to Seasons, Climatic Cycles, weather and all inorganic phenomena. Natural disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamies and cyclones are not caused by Karmic factors.

**Kamma Niyama**: Cosmic Law pertaining to Kamma (Karma in Sanskrit) is the law of moral influence, Cause and Effect.

**Dhamma Niyama**: Cosmic Law pertaining to the twelve factors of Dependent Origination, Impermanence Suffering and Egolessness and such other phenomena .

**Citta Niyama**: Cosmic Law pertaining to consciousness, thoughts and perceptions.

I wish the scientists took time to study these five cosmic laws before they started experimenting with genes and cloning either naturally or artificially. Only then they would have realized the degree of damage caused to humanity. At times I wonder whether all these advancements contribute to the degeneration of our historic, intellectual and cultural roots on which our civilization was built.

The Buddha declared that His Teachings are not for the ignorant.

Buddha Dhamma is meant for the intelligent and wise people. It is not like all forms of technological advancements which produce mass scale goods and services to quench the unending desires of human beings, corporations, governments and other organized bodies. Buddha Dhamma is principally meant for those who want to spend a happy and contented life in the present existence and strive heedlessly to achieve supreme happiness of Nibbana.

In conclusion, I believe that Buddhist have a critical role to play in propagating the real Dhamma. Buddhists around the world should use every possible communication methodology to educate masses to apply the principles of Buddha's teachings. Number of Sutras like Mahamangala Sutra, Karaneeya Sutra, Singalovada Sutra must be made available in all possible languages. Similarly, industrialists and businessmen should be made familiar with Sutras like the VyaggaPajja Sutra which explains four principles they should follow for right kind of business and industry. They are Efficiency in production (Uttana Sammapada), Conservation with regard to raw material as well as the products (Arakka Sampada), Social environment in which employers and employees live in harmony (Kalyanamittata) and purpose of which Production is made (Samajeevakata).

*With regard to rulers it is necessary to educate them about Buddhist principles of Sharing of power (Dana), Morality (Sila), Recognition and promotion of talent (Pariccaga), Uprightness (Ajjava), Impartiality in judgment (Majjavam), Composure in conduct (Tapam), Non-hatred (Akkodo), Non-violence (Avihinsa), Patience and Forgiveness (Khanti) and Non-revengefulness (Avirodhita).*

The Four Noble Truths, the Noble Eightfold Path and the twelve factors of the Theory of Dependent Origination cannot be realized with any technological gadgets or tools of Artificial Intelligence except by a highly cultivated and enlightened mind. Only enlightened communities, leaders and rulers can bring true peace, happiness and prosperity to the humanity and the rest of the living world.

# LOTUS SUTRA
# THE LIGHT OF HUMANISM AND PEACE

by Ven. Dr. Thich Tam Thien*

**ABSTRACT**

On the occasion of the celebration of the United Nations Day of Vesak 2019 in Vietnam, and in commemoration of the great and noble Dharma teachings of the Shakyamuni Buddha, I would like to offer some reflections on the Lotus Sutra—one of the last Dharma lectures given by the Buddha at the holy mountain of the Vulture Peak (*Gṛdhrakūṭa*), also known as the Holy Eagle Peak, in what is now Bihar, India.

The Lotus Sutra (*saddharma puṇḍarīka sūtra*) is one of the most popular sutras in the Mahāyāna Buddhist tradition, which is also sometimes referred to as "Developed Buddhism." According to Mahāyāna scholars, the philosophy of the Lotus Sutra is very important, and can guide us in dealing with modern-day problems. All the causal origins of human suffering—from inner anguish to poverty, sickness, and all kinds of wars and conflicts within each person, family, community, nation, and even worldwide—were illuminated through the Buddha's wisdom (*Tathāgata-jñāna*) in the Lotus Sutra. The sutra's resolutions are generous and thoughtful, and pertain not only to the issue of division and conflict among divergent Buddhist schools in ancient times—around the first century AD when the Lotus Sutra was disseminated—but also to

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the problems of today. In fact, in our day, the wars are still there, discrimination is still there, inequality and bigotry are still there, social injustice and poverty are still there, and the dream of world peace is still earnestly expressed in our daily prayers. And the Lotus Sutra's teachings are still there. They may serve as the spiritual light that will guide us, the sons and daughters of the Buddha, in securing peace and happiness.

## 1. THE PHILOSOPHY OF HUMANISM IN THE LOTUS FLOWER

The first message of the Lotus Sutra comes from its title: "The Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma, the Dharma for Bodhisattvas, the Dharma upheld by the Buddhas" (The Lotus Sutra, 2012), or in Chinese, "妙法蓮華教菩薩法佛所護念." (Sanskrit: *saddharma puṇḍarīka, bodhisattvāvavādam, sarva-buddha-parigraham; The Lotus Sutra, 2015).*

Wonderful Dharma (妙法, *saddharma*) is the highest truth, the absolute truth, the supreme noble Dharma, the true wisdom of the Buddha (*Tathāgata-jñāna-darśna*), which contained the Buddhahood, the essence of the pure mind. In Sanskrit, the term Tathāgata-jñāna means "the insight of Tathāgata," which indicates not only the Shakyamuni Buddha's wisdom but also the Buddhahood that is latent in all sentient beings. The Buddhahood inside each of us is the potential to become a Buddha, to reach full enlightenment. This ability is implicit within every individual, regardless of age, race, or gender. In the second chapter of the Sutra, we read:

"*Śāriputra! What is the one great purpose for which the Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, appear in the worlds? The Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, appear in the worlds in order to cause all living beings to open (the gate to) the insight of the Buddha, and to cause them to purify themselves. They appear in the worlds in order to show the insight of the Buddha to all living beings. They appear in the worlds in order to cause all living beings to obtain the insight of the Buddha. They appear in the worlds in order to cause all living beings to enter the Way to the insight of the Buddha. Śāriputra! This the one great purpose for which the Buddhas appear in the worlds.*" (The Lotus Sutra, 2012).

All sentient beings have the ability to reach the state of full

enlightenment and become a Buddha by nature. For this reason, the Buddhas come into the worlds with the one great purpose to open, to show, to cause sentient beings to obtain and enter into the Way to the insight of Tathāgata (*samādāpana/samdarśana/pratibodhana/avatārana*) (The Lotus Sutra, 2015).

In reality, everyone carries a different karmic condition—different kinds of happiness and sufferings, different kinds poverty and riches. The same can be said of nations and the global community. Certainly, the life of each living being and every nation depends on the karmic forces of both the individual and the collective. For human beings, our impure karma is like a muddy puddle. But it is this very muddy puddle from which a beautiful lotus flower can germinate, grow, and blossom into the air. Indeed, mud, water, and air are the three necessary conditions for a lotus flower to bloom. In the symbol of the lotus flower, given in the title of the Lotus Sutra, Lord Shakyamuni Buddha has given us a great and unique path of spirituality.

However, being human, we are unable to reject our own karmic force, to be free from sufferings and to live in happiness, even temporarily. In the same way, the wars and conflicts of our time cannot be resolved by sheer will; they are in bondage to the collective karmic force. Only through the personal practice of mental purification can karma be transformed, as when leaching water out of mud. Thus, the Buddha taught that we are unable to run away from our sufferings; we must transform them and generate our own source of happiness by meditating deeply on the true causes of sufferings. Put another way, in order for our dream of peace and happiness to become true, we must reflect on the true nature of life. The Buddha spoke of that true nature of life in the teaching of the Ten Suchnesses—that is, the factors common to all things: their appearances as such, their natures as such, their entities as such, their power as such, their activities as such, their primary causes as such, their environmental causes as such, their effects as such, their rewards and retributions as such, and their equality as such (The Lotus Sutra, 2012, chapter 2). The Ten Suchnesses govern the operations of both sentient and non-sentient beings, humans and the cosmos, completely recognized by the wisdom of the Buddha.

In the Lotus Sutra, the parable of the poor son (*daridra-puruṣasya*) (The Lotus Sutra, 2012, p.90) reminds us that no matter how poor and miserable a man is, he still possesses a priceless heritage—that is, the Buddhahood (*buddhatva*) inherent in each person. Thank to this intrinsic Buddhahood, a person has the ability to become a Buddha, to overcome all troubles and adversities, and go beyond the three worlds of afflictions (*trailokya*). [1] Therefore, if the wonderful Dharma (妙法, *saddharma*) or the insight of the Buddha (知見仏, *tathāgata-jñāna-darśn*a) did not exist perpetually within each person or each sentient being, where could a person's spiritual journey lead? Also, if the final destination of a spiritual journey of a religious practice is merely to be reborn in a higher realm of happiness, that journey is somewhat meaningless. In the Lotus Sutra, Lord Buddha taught that the aim of spiritual practice is to obtain the insight of Buddha (*Tathāgata-jñāna-darśna*), to become a Buddha, or to be fully enlightened, and that only the insight of Tathāgata—the ultimate state of full enlightenment—brings a spiritual journal to its complete and perfect end. From these noble teachings, a new dimension of the spiritual journey, a true path of enlightenment and liberation, which is by nature creative, proactive, and independent, has been opened to all sentient beings, especially to human beings. On this path, everyone—no matter who they are—can practice Dharma with the multiple means available in the teachings of the three vehicles (*tri-yāna: śrāvaka, pratyekabuddha, and bodhisattvā*).

In the light of universal Buddhahood, we are able, despite our many differences in culture, geography, and race, to join together in harmony and overcome all diversities. Clearly, in such a divine teaching, differences in skin color or race have no meaning at all. Here, the light of wisdom of the wonderful Dharma is indeed shining brightly. That light is one of humanistic philosophy. Perhaps it is hard for us to find such a Dharma in any system of philosophy, whether ancient or present.

There is a story in the Lotus Sutra, in the chapter "Devadatta," about the Dragon-king Sāgara's daughter (*sāgara nāgarāja-duhitā*),

1. Karmaloka (realm of desire), rūpaloka (realm of form), arūpaloka (realm of formlessness).

who became a Buddha when she was just eight years old (The Lotus Sutra, 2012). The story is striking because it conveys the true universality of Buddhism, namely, that even an animal—one that is still so young, and a female—shows the potential to become a Buddha and that this potential is present in equal measure in all living beings regardless of age, gender, or race. This story appeared more than two thousand years ago in India, in the context of great discrimination against social classes, women, and children. It is indeed a great progressive and liberal doctrine.

Even in our modern societies, war and conflict often originate in disagreements over or misunderstandings about beliefs and religious philosophies. In such circumstances, we are able to recognize the nobility and compassion in the teachings of the Buddha in the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma. Its message that all sentient beings have the seed of Buddha within is the true insight of Tathāgata; it is the divine wisdom that is able to liberate human beings from the bondage of blind belief such as being a slave to an unknown spirit. From this point of view, our lives become more harmonious and transcends all barriers established by prejudice.

## 2. THE WAY OF SECURING PEACE AND HAPPINESS

Following the phrase "Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma" is the phrase "Dharma for Bodhisattvas" (教菩薩法, *bodhisattvāvavādam*), literally translated as "the Teachings for Bodhisattvas." Some people may think that these teaching are only for Bodhisattvas, and they exclude themselves from concerning about the teachings. But this is not so. When Lord Shakyamuni Buddha delivered the Lotus Sutra, the audience included all kinds of sentient beings. As recorded in the first chapter of the sutra, there were Arhats, Bodhisattvas, Śakra-Devānām-Indra, Dragon-Kings, Asura-King, Garuda-King, King Ajātaśatru, bhiksus, bhiksunis, upasakas, upasikas, gods, dragons, yakasa, gandharvas, asuras, garudas, kinnaras, mahoragas, humans and non-humans, accompanied by hundreds of thousands of their attendants. The Buddha often emphasized that he had, by many means (*upāya*), expounded to sentient beings the Dharmas of three vehicles (*śrāvaka, pratyekabuddha, and bodhisattvā*) with which audiences

of different levels may follow in the Buddha's way. But only the Buddha-vehicle (*buddhayāna*) is the uppermost Dharma.

In order to enter the Buddha-vehicle, devoted Buddhists must study and practice the way of the Bodhisattvā. A Bodhisattva is a person who vows to put all personal efforts into caring for other's sufferings and hardships. A Bodhisattva practices his or her own aspirations without any concept of self or ego. Therefore, the true life-mission of a Bodhisattva is to rescue sentient beings and to teach the Dharmas to all. In the Lotus Sutra, the Buddha stressed the spirit of saving others. He himself had given a prophecy of enlightenment—not only for his present audience but for all the audiences of the future, after the Buddha had reached nirvana. Those who reflect on the Lotus Sutra with joy for even a moment, believing in the ability of all to become Buddha, will eventually attain enlightenment. Consequently, the Bodhisattva's aspiration, according to the Lotus Sutra, is that no sentient being should be excluded from achieving enlightenment, no matter who they are, no matter what they are guilty of.

The image of the Bodhisattva Sadāparibhūta (The Lotus Sutra, 2012, chapter 20) who bowed to anyone he met and praised each person's potential to become a Buddha, is an excellent example of the Bodhisattva's way. Bodhisattvas are ready to sacrifice their lives to help cultivate the Buddhahood implicit in every being. Sharing the light of spiritual enlightenment with others is truly necessary, as once a person attains personal enlightenment, its value will stay with him/her forever. That kind of work is not easy, but is the very noble path of spiritual practice. Helping others cultivates merit, benefiting both self and the other.

Moreover, the Buddha taught that not only is the human world constantly unsafe, but also that the three realms of karma, form, and formlessness are like a burning house (*The Lotus Sutra*, 2012, p.52). Transcendence beyond the burning house of the three worlds is the true destination of Buddhist practitioners. From this point of view, in order to have a true life of peace and happiness, one should think of not only the sufferings of those around them but also those of the whole world, because in that world, we have relatives—both secular and spiritual. Suppose that a person is lucky enough to have happiness and peace; however, how can we live happily and

peacefully while the world around us is full of anguish, hostility, distress, conflict, and fighting? We must help those who are sunken in the realm of afflictions and misery to recover their own peace, particularly inner peace. This is the thoughtful mentoring work of a Bodhisattva. This is also the basic work of a Buddhist, especially one in a place of leadership in a family, community, society, or nation.

There is a famous Zen saying in Buddhism: "Peace in the mind, peace in the world." When the individual mind is at ease, the world can have peace. Individual happiness has a great effect on family and society, but the suffering of each individual has the same effect, no more no less. Thus, dwelling in the realm of quietness and maintaining a sense of personal satisfaction as illustrated in the nirvana of Śrāvaka (*the Hearer*) is not the ultimate destination of the Bodhisattva's will. Hence, the Lotus Sutra praises and promotes teaching the Dharmas as a road of cultivating merit and virtue dedicated to all sentient beings, and thus together achieving the Buddhahood; that is the highest and perfect awakening (*anuttara-samyak-saṁbodhi*). The Buddha Shakyamuni Tathāgata himself is, as we learn in the Lotus Sutra, still walking on the path of Dharma teaching. "The Life Span of the Tathāgata," chapter 16, says that the Shakyamuni Tathāgata, from past uncountable kalpas (*aeon*) until now, is still on the path of Dharma teaching in the Sāha world (*human world*) as well as worlds outside this world, and that he will never enter nirvana. Thus, the Shakyamuni Tathāgata illuminates the true meaning of peace and the true path to peace.

### 3. ALWAYS UPHELD BY THE BUDDHAS

The last phrase of the Lotus Sutra's title is "Dharma upheld by the Buddhas" (佛所護念, *sarva-buddha-parigraham).* Literally, this means that the Buddhas always uphold and protect this Dharma. The Shakyamuni Tathāgata affirms that the Lotus Sutra is the hidden core of the transcendental powers of all the Buddhas,—the Tathāgatas of the past, present, and future—and that those who embrace, read, recite, expound upon, and copy the Lotus Sutra, even one verse or one phrase, or even for a moment think of it with joy, are upheld and protected by all the Buddhas of the past, present, and future. This gives us a clear message about the significance of the Lotus Sutra's philosophy of saving sentient beings, who are all

deemed to possess Buddhahood deep within. This is the very basis for sustaining world peace. If there is no commonality, persons from different backgrounds cannot join together in harmony. But we know that people always want to live in happiness and experience the ultimate truth of life, no matter where they live or who they are. The ultimate truth, as explained in the Lotus Sutra, is the very *Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma (saddharma puṇḍarīka)*.

In the limited frame of human history, the Shakyamuni Tathāgata, from birth to nirvana, taught the philosophy of saving sentient beings in various methods suitable for sentient beings of all levels and capacities. He taught this truth not only to human beings but also to celestial beings in the three realms. Although celestial beings live at a higher level of merit than human beings, the Buddha taught them to practice Dharma and guided them toward a still more perfect realm—that is the realm of complete enlightenment (*anuttara-samyak-saṁbodhi*). In the wisdom of the Buddha, both suffering and happiness arise from wholesome or unwholesome karmas. Thus, even the blissful life of celestial beings cannot last long. Nothing can secure life in the heavens if it is not illuminated and directed by the light of enlightenment (*saṁbodhi*).

For this reason, before entering nirvana, the Shakyamuni Tathāgata once again emphasized one Dharma, which is protected and upheld by all the Buddhas in the past, present, and future. This is the supreme Dharma: to help germinate the seed of Buddhahood in all sentient beings. One particularly lively image that illustrates the Buddha's veneration of this one Dharma is recorded in chapter 11 of the Lotus Sutra, "The Emergence of the Treasure Tower".

A Buddha named Many Treasures Tathāgata (Prabhūtaratna) had passed through many thousands of billions of kalpas. His body was placed in a stūpa (tower) and worshipped. When the Shakyamuni Tathāgata was delivering the Lotus Sutra in this world, his stūpa appeared so that he was able to directly listen to, prove, and praise the truth of the Lotus Sutra. For in the past, when the Many Treasures Tathāgata was yet practicing the way of Bodhisattva, he made a great vow: "*If any one expounds the sutra called the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma in any of the worlds of ten quarters after I become a Buddha and pass away, I will cause my*

*stūpa-mausoleum to spring up before him so that I may be able to prove the truthfulness of the sutra and say 'excellent' in praise of him, because I wish to hear that sutra*" (The Lotus Sutra, 2012, p.187).

Although this story has many levels of meaning, the essential point of it illumines the spirit of compassionate protection of all the Buddhas over all those who desire to receive the teaching of the one Buddha vehicle (*buddhayāna*). The protection of all the Buddhas, past, present, and future, is the original source of Buddhist spirituality, which is not confined to this life or the afterlife, but exists permanently, always and everywhere. It is like the moon in the sky, which presents itself constantly even if the moon in the lake appears and disappears.

The Shakyamuni Tathāgata, for all his life, expounded the one Buddha vehicle (*ekayāna/buddhayāna*) equally to all living beings. On the path of teaching such a Dharma, there is no discrimination between this person or that person; the difference is in the level of teaching only. The content of the Dharma is always the same. As Buddhahood has only one taste, so does the truth also have only one taste. If a Buddhist practitioner and a Hindu Brahmin walk on the same road, the road of buddhayāna, the destination for each is the same: Buddhahood. In this sense, the Wonderful Dharma (*saddharma*) is considered the universal truth of great wisdom. Thousands of years before or thousands of years after, this truth is the same. Thus, Buddhists around the world firmly believe that all the Buddhas of the three lives (*past, present, and future*) constantly and silently give protection and assistance to those who have devotionally borne the bodhi heart of enlightenment.

In brief, although we live more than 2600 years after the Buddha, the ancient Dharma lecture on the Lotus Sutra from Shakyamuni Tathāgata at the peak of the holy mountain Gṛdhrakūṭa is yet shining on us. Like the golden sun in the east, the spiritual power from the message "Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma, the Dharma for Bodhisattvas, the Dharma upheld by the Buddhas" (*saddharma puṇḍarīka, bodhisattvāvavādam, sarva-buddha-parigraham*) still saves us and helps us transcend all barriers and overcome all afflictions. Indeed, the concept of peace would be empty if the Buddhahood were not there. Religion would also fade if there were no light of enlightenment. And human happiness will not last long if the bodhi heart is absent.

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"/*śāriputra tathāgatasyaika-krtyam eka-karaniyam mahā-krtyam mahā-karaniyam yena krtyena tathagato 'rhan samyak-sambuddho loka utpadyate/ yad idam tathāgata-jñāna-darśna samādāpana-hetu-nimitam sattvānām tathāgato 'rhan samyak-sambuddho loka utpadyate/ tathāgata-jñāna-darśna samdarśana-hetu-nimitam sattvānām tathāgato 'rhan samyak-sambuddho loka utpadyate/ tathāgata-jñāna-darśnavatārana-hetu-nimitam sattvānām tathāgato 'rhan samyak-sambuddho loka utpadyate/ tathāgata-jñāna-darśna pratibodhana-hetu-nimitam sattvānām tathāgato 'rhan samyak-sambuddho loka utpadyate/ tathāgata-jñāna-darśna mārgāvatārana-hetu-nimitam sattvānām tathāgato 'rhan samyak-sambuddho loka utpadyate/*"

# MAKING SENSE OF NON-RELIGIOUS CULTURAL FORMATIONS OF BUDDHISM[1]

by P. K. Sasidharan*

**ABSTRACT**

The present paper attempts to develop a theoretical or methodological perspective called 'Cultural Buddhism', in order to make sense of various kinds of non-religious cultural formations of Buddhism. A non-religious Buddhist perspective would require to highlighting the characteristic difference in which the Buddhist ideas getting adapted in changing times and situations.

The domain of religion seems to have become the worst ever, especially when it is being affected by the competitive ethic of globalization, and found to be the source for perpetual conflicts that prevail all over the world. In the context of a heightened religious conflict and intolerance that keep triggering various kinds of terrorism and ethnic cleansing, the ongoing projections of Buddhism as one among the world-religions will look insignificant. It appears to provide a little hope towards the establishment of global peace and justice that required for a sustainable world. This would be putting someone in a situation of dilemma while hoping for Buddhism to be a reliable source of peace. And this appears to

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1.This paper forms part of an ongoing independent research related to the idea of Cultural Buddhism. Some ideas that occur here have already been discussed in different occasions.

have made imperative to seek the possibility of regaining Buddhist insights for a better engagement with the changing situations of existential and social forms of suffering and liberation. This points to the pressing need of the contemporary times to figure out those non-religious adaptations of Buddhism that have been emerging with a view to engaging with the wider questions of ethical life and social order.

Keeping the above interest in view, the present paper wants to explore the possibility of reinventing Buddhism as Cultural Buddhism, which could further the liberating potential of different Buddhist teachings without being constrained to any form of religious Buddhism. It might raise the questions relating to understanding the nature of those cultural or ideological practices that go with the characterization of "Buddhist". What does the tag Buddhism mean when some actions or perspectives are featured so? Or in what sense something being characterized so becomes Buddhist? This question becomes pertinent in the context that the most popular way the term Buddhism goes as a religious philosophy or faith practice.

## 1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The term 'Buddhism', in general, refers to doctrines, practices, movements that follow the teachings of the great spiritual leader, Gautama Buddha who lived in the 6th century BCE in India. It is a fact that Buddhism is widely understood as a religion, and being described as one of the prominent world-religions. At the same time, there are some fundamental ideas of Buddhist spirituality that get often invoked for distinguishing it from other religions of transcendental divinity, prophetic mediation, and priestly ritualism. The conception of a non-theistic spirituality, divination of human spiritual heroes, non-existence of soul and permanent self, cultivation of dis-possessive mind as the basic requisite for liberation from sufferings, loving compassion for the liberation of others instead of being egoistically reclusive, etc., are some of those ideas embodied in the larger corpus of Buddha-teachings. And these seem to have served as an ideological source for some of the non-religious cultural formations that have been emerging from

within the wider conceptual spectrum of Buddhism. Such non-religious ideologies and practical engagements are rather a kind of socio-cultural and ethico-spiritual engagements in relation to the changing world.

The perceived new development, rather deviation or transgression from within Buddhism, can also be understood in general as cultural adaptations of Buddhism. The movement seemed to have a specific thrust of revival; a thrust of reinventing Buddhism from the state of disintegration and disappearance happened in the historical context of Asian countries, especially in India. The context of revival also includes its expansion and reception in the cultural terrains of Europe and other nations.

On the whole, the non-religious Buddhist movement has not been part of any organized effort made from the side of any Buddhist community followers, who lost continuity with their tradition. Nor does it form part of any programme designed from some ideological quarters. It does not find to be going by any centralized ideological and institutional scheme or orientation. The movement of cultural adaptation of Buddhism seems to be still in an emerging process. It yet remains to be figured out as a movement as such. But what appears to be taking place in a disorganized fashion would make sense a different purpose. They seem to share some common concerns for regaining some of the Buddhist values and insights beyond the framework of theological ritualism. And that too goes in response to the varied nature of socio-cultural contexts and historicity. It is exactly this dynamic feature of what goes in the label of Buddhism that allows us to formulate here a theoretical perspective called 'cultural Buddhism' in order to take forward some of the penchant needs of the changing time and world where the Buddha being called for again and again.

Therefore, the proposed attempt to make sense of different ways of cultural adaptations of Buddhism would require to map out those aspects which keep propelling them in different times and locations, and thereby kept Buddhist ideas kept alive and afresh. Accordingly, it would argue that Buddhist ideals of liberation seem to have been triggering varied kids of non-religious cultural practices, even while those ideas are presented as being part of the Buddhist religion.

## 2. THE LOGIC OF DIFFERENTIATION

Theorization of Cultural Buddhism presupposes a working/strategic differentiation between religious and cultural practices of Buddhism. Despite Buddhism being treated as a religion, and indeed, there are many religionized practices, all that go in the name of Buddhism do share any theological concerns. In the case of religionized forms of Buddhism, it has many identical elements to share with theological, cosmological, ethical, and ritualistic foundations of any institutionalised religion. In India, it is apparently seen as a form of Hinduism. Hinduist imaginations very well accommodate Buddhism within its theistic diversity. Hence, it could better be termed as 'Hinduised Buddhism.'

In the Indian context, the religionist conceptions of Buddhism are not seen as equivalent to the English term 'Buddhism.' It is also a fact that what is being signified by the English term does not exhaust with the religionist conception. The English term 'Buddhism' is not used here to mean simply as one of the great world religions. That is, there are different ways and terms in which the ideology of Buddhism or identity of the Buddha being referred to. Following are some of them: Samanam, Sramana, Nairatmyavada, Kshanikavada, Bouddham, Boudhayanam, Boudhatantram, Boudhavada, Boudhachinta, Bouddhadarsanam, Boudhadhamma, DhammaMarga, Bouddhamarga, Madhya Marga, Madhyamika, Marga, Attamagga, AshatangaMarga, Siddha, Buddha Siddhi, Dhammadeva, Dhammaraj, Piyadassi, Atthadassi, Dhammadassi, Theravada, Mahayana, Vajrayana, Yogachara, Sunyavada, Vipassana, Navayana, etc.

Many other regional specific names and characterizations are also there. Other religionists had denounced Buddhism as Nastika (atheism) and demonic (rakshasam). Lamaism, Zen, Nichirianism, Soga Gaki international, Order of Intervening, Mindfulness movement, Interbeing, etc., are some other derivatives or representations of Buddhism in outside India. Buddhist movements such as engaged Buddhism, progressive Buddhism, feminist Buddhism, socialist Buddhism, secular Buddhism, atheist Buddhism, agnostic Buddhism, are some of the modern trends, which seems to transgress the delimitations of rigid or strict notions

of religion. Besides the non-religious socio-spiritual Buddhist movements and ideologies, there are also many contemporary adaptations of Buddhism in the forms of varied academic research disciplines and analytical perspectives that hardly based on any theistic foundation of religious Buddhism. Buddhist Economy, Buddhist Psychoanalysis, Neuro-Buddhism, Cognitive Buddhism, Aesthetic Buddhism, etc., are some of the non-religious theoretical articulations, which make explicit affiliation to Buddhist ideas without any commitment to any theological cosmology and ritualism. These apart, there can also be traced innumerable forms of incognito adoption of Buddhist insights as analytical tools and guiding principles for varied purposes.

### 3. SOME ACCOUNTS OF NON-RELIGIOUS BUDDHISM:

What is perceived here as 'non-religious' expressions or dimensions of Buddhism have already been noticed by some academic scholars. The modern Buddhist studies, sometimes find it inappropriate to apply the western notion of 'religion' to Buddhism. Hence, those argumentations against the misrepresentation of Buddhism as religion would rather be serving only an indirect testimony for the hypothesis on the prevalence of non-religious elements of Buddhism. However, it is very relevant here to take note the consideration of academic scholars engaged in Buddhist studies as a particular category of Buddhists, by an Indian author, M. Rajagopala Rao. While accounting the global level expansion of Buddhism over the centuries since its inception in sixth century BCE, Rajagopala Rao has discerned following types of Buddhists.

Those that are born in Buddhist families and inherit Buddhist faith. They automatically follow their family traditions – Hinayana, Mahayana or Tantrayana. They constitute the greatest majority of Buddhists over the world and they are the practicing Buddhists.

Those that undertake the practice of Buddhism out of conviction and commitment to the ideals of Buddhism and become Buddhists by some form of administration of oath either of Upasakas or Bhikkus. They observe the three saranas and five silas in a modernized form.

Those that take up Buddhist studies out of personal interest and

make every effort at understanding, elucidating and disseminating Buddhism. Some of them assume titles like 'Bodhi', 'Upasaka', 'Sravaka', 'Buddhadasa', Bauddha' to express their commitment to Buddhism. They take interestin studying the various aspects of Buddhism – philosophy, religion, morality, science and so on. They constitute 'scholastic Buddhists' (2012:146).

As Rao asserts here; following the views of other authors, that the scholastic Buddhists 'have come to realize that Buddhism was erroneously regarded as 'religion' in its current Western usage by projecting back to the ancient system of Buddhism'. The expression 'scholastic Buddhists' would be of specific interest for the present purpose for it suggests the need for categorizing certain kind of Buddhist practices that cannot be taken as religion as warranted by the earlier history of Buddhism itself.

Similarly, another author S. K. Pathak brings out the concepts such as 'ethical spirituality', 'social spirituality,' to some non-religious manifestations of Buddhism. It also comes in the context of taking stock the developments of Buddhist studies, particularly in India. Pathak says, '… the mass acceptance of Buddhist faith by Babasahe B. R. Ambedkar and his large number of followers may be regarded as a unique instance of 'Social Identity Transfer' in Indian Sociology. Buddhist Studies in India since 1956 have entered in a new dimension from the ethical spirituality to social spirituality' (2012:129). Pathak has noted that Buddhist studies promoted by the academicians, the intellectuals, the litterateurs and the artists of India prefer to have a hold on 'the Buddhist social model with humaneness'.

It is also worth noting that Pathak draws attention to the fact that many academic scholars and knowledge practitioners having a nonreligious affiliation with Buddhism through their professional expertise. He says, '...the Indian indigenous health management programs revoked by the Tibetan Medicine deserve a special attention. Similar may be case of metal technology of the ancient Indian Buddhists for development of aesthetic techno-crafts of modern days, Bands of hard physical scientists, the astro-scientists feel interested in the Buddhist mathematics and other scientific observations sporadically followed in different parts of Asia. In this regard, Buddhist Studies have entered in a new horizon since the

Europeans have been in ardent enthusiasm to study the Buddhist Ecology of socio spirituality, Buddhist Economics, Buddhist Ethical spirituality and Buddhist aesthetic creativity among the Indians, and those of Asian Buddhists.' (130)

It is also found that a notion of 'non-formal Buddhist' is being invoked by some scholars to characterise those who have been declaring their Buddhist affiliation with a distinctive manner from those of very popular in its history. Some observe that though Buddhism had to undergo untold brutality in the country of its origin, and often taken to have become disappear, it continues to hold its vibrant presence all through the untainted genius, existential struggles and popular wisdom. As Dipak Kumar Barua states, '... Buddhism maintained its firm footing in India with its distinctive characteristics and very much influenced the Indian life and thought and its undercurrents flooded the attitudes, philosophy, and sociology of the majority of the Indians who were not formally Buddhists'. (2012: 3) Indeed the nature of Indians who are not formally Buddhist is a matter of dispute (are they formally Hindus or any other religionists, or are they nonreligious Buddhists?), it seems to suggest the prevalence of a category of people who practice or uphold Buddhism in non-formal or nonreligious ways.

A trend that Buddhist Ethical sensibility getting extended to the socio-political domains can be noticeable feature seen in some of the twentieth century developments within Buddhist movements in India and elsewhere. S. K. Pathak writes, 'Since the last decades the Buddhist Ethics have been experimented at the global socio-political level on account of oscillating power polarisation and multi-national commercialization. Among the Buddhists, awareness against the present day economic casteism and the enslaving of the inhabitants of the Third World Countries has been strong. The latest trend is nomenclature as the Ethics of Engaged Buddhism in practice to redress the collective suffering of the downtrodden with geographical boundaries. That refers to what Gautama the Buddha advised his followers to go the many who had then suffered. In the case of India, a concrete case of the Navayana ideal of Baba Saheb Ambedkar be referred. That does undergo to redress the existing human hegemony and the social injustice.' (2012:134)

Inspiration for such nonreligious ideological formations within Buddhism seems to have emerged from the global level thinking and activities of a visionary leader of Buddhism revival from Sri Lanka, Angarika Dharmapala. Dipak Kumar Barua has the following account on him: "... like Emperor Asoka Ven. Dharmapala did promulgate the Buddhist Culture in the form of a humanized culture in the Parliament of Religions in 1893 at Chicago, U.S.A. He was, in the present era, probably the first Buddhist whose personality won demonstrative recognition in the western countries. His own paper titled The World's Debt to Buddha, which was read there on September 18, 1893, was bereft of either theology or anthropomorphism" (2012:15).

Expressions and ideas such as 'scholastic Buddhism,' 'ethical spirituality,' 'social spirituality,' 'non-formal Buddhist,' 'Buddhist socio-political ethics,' 'Buddhist humanized culture' have been advanced by above authors in order to signify some of ways in which Buddhist ideas and practices get adapted for nonreligious purposes.

**4. NATURE OF CULTURAL BUDDHISM:**

This different variety of Buddhist ideological expression cannot simply go with the concept religion. Therefore, the idea of cultural Buddhism, as alternative to the idea of religious Buddhism has been invoked here in order to articulate every kind of ideational and practical engagement connected to the name of Buddha as sharing some common features in respect of understanding the nature of human life and its problems. While there are having many differences in the emphasis, and in views on the pace towards the pathway for seeking solution to the existential problems of humanity, various Buddhist schools and groups seem to bear some specific markers of human cultural expression goes for self-efforts or self-creation of bondage and liberation.

The idea of cultural Buddhism, unlike that of religious Buddhism does not reduce the entire expressions that go with the term Buddhism as pertaining to the cultural activity of devotion and worshipping. Whereas it would also be signifying matters related to devotional practice as one among other matters. Despite the

fact that every Buddhist idea and practice are not religious as such in their nature and purpose, the popular ways in which Buddhist cultural expressions are being understood and practised would go definitely by the name religion. In this sense, it is an undeniable fact that, nowadays, the Buddhism is being considered and practised widely as religion. Indeed, there are many salient features in Buddhist belief practices that distinguish it characteristically from the institutionalised notions of religion. Absence of a concept of god or any transcendental being forms to be the specific point in this regard. The historians of religion, therefore, often qualify Buddhism as a non-theistic religion. This would be suggesting the possibility of understanding the phenomenon of belief practices, as well as the idea of religion, on the basis of their distinguishing feature whether holding on to an entity of god or not. The non-theistic or non-theological religion sometimes even termed as secular religion. Nevertheless, this non-theological framework of religion need not be useful to account the entire history of the belief practices of Buddhism. Because, there may find different cultural expressions of Buddhism that come closer to the features of theological or theistic religion.

There are also many Buddhist practices and movements that are not based on some beliefs or ritual practices, but rather consist of some sort of mind harnessing exercises and socio-ethical practices. However, they do not seem to have been distinguished much from those religionist, even from those of non-theological, non-theistic practices. This kind of accommodative identification or religionising of spiritual and ethical continues to be undifferentiated nebulous occurrences within the wider spectrum of the Buddhist ideologies and movements. Such a spectrum of the Buddhist schools can better go by the category of Buddhist cultures, wherein there is an undefined coexistence of different persuasions with different historical and cultural trajectories. If so is the case, it would warrant an exploration for advancing a logic of cultural Buddhism where the adherence to a particular Buddhist practice could be justified on the basis of contestable cultural reasons (which include socio-ethical, spiritual, aesthetic, and religious ideologies) without being succumb to any dogmatic non-cultural and transcendental logic.

## 5. WHY CULTURAL BUDDHISM?

At the outset, it needs to be stated that the present study is not on Buddhism(s) as such; as something of separate and purely religious or cultural phenomena. Rather the emphasis has to be given to the study of cultural hybridization that took place within Buddhism, while it expanded to different cultures. This could possibly be achieved through the study of Buddhist legacies existed in the past and existing in the present. It is to understand liberative potential of Buddhist cultures, including the Buddhist religious cultures, in the present day world. By moving away from a religious perspective, instead of repudiating it, what is proposed is a reconstruction or reinvention of something like 'cultural Buddhism', as an ethico-political ideology. One could suggest that while dealing with the entire Buddhist matters as Buddhist cultural phenomena, using of the term 'cultural Buddhism' might throw some new light on the value of Buddhism as such.

The concept 'cultural Buddhism' is yet to be defined adequately, this idea is proposed basically as a methodological perspective for understanding the varieties of Buddhist cultures. This may also include an analysis to see how Buddhism has been supplanted by other religions and ideologies. This approach implies that different Buddhist cultures and movements do not follow strictly any set of institutional doctrine or authoritative power structure. Hence every Buddhist cultural expression has to be accounted for its unique specificity. Because Buddhist cultures have been independent adaptations of various Buddhist ideas conforming to the requirements of regional cultural and ideological interests or needs. Therefore, the cultural Buddhism would look for learning or adapting from various Buddhist cultural expressions as required for the contemporary engagements with the reality of sufferings. This is to propose a sense to cultural Buddhism as an ideological tool for exploring the liberative concerns of everyday life.

By 'Buddhist Cultures', we intend to include all those ideas, institutions, knowledge systems, arts, beliefs, rituals, lifestyles and other cultural practices that bear some marks of contact, inheritance, or influence of the wider tradition of Buddhism/s. Buddhist-matters, thus, would include both the historical remnants

and the continuing forms of institutions and practices related to Buddhist cultures. A critical engagement with some of the broader concerns of Buddhisms is often seen to be a need felt of the time in which it takes place. It takes place in a way of speaking through a language of ideals from the general fund of freedom-ideology. Even in wishful poetic thinking about the ethics of freedom or peace, metaphors of Buddhism seem to occur as preferred choices of better communicative idioms. The urge for speaking through a language of virtue has also always been better articulated in the ethical vocabulary of Buddhism. Sometimes, a peculiar adherence to Buddhism, from the spectrum of different ideologies by recourse to its imagery, is seen as response or reaction to reasserting cultures of violence and power. The current period is defined predominantly by the proliferating of consumerist culture, which is bound to cause various crises for human existence and ecological sustainability. With the onset and onslaught of the neo-liberal and world-order of globalism, a peaceful co-existence of the diverse cultures has become tremendously threatened. Various strands of cultural imperialism, including ethnic and religious imperialism, are on the fast track of gaining priority. Sensitive minds from across the world tend to invoke the Buddhist imagery for meeting the challenges posed by the growing consumerist penetration and peregrination.

However, a recourse or return to the Buddhist imagery need not be a call for the revival of Buddhism on the conventional line of adhering to any particular school of Buddhist thought or religious community. Hence, the present proposal to try and learn from cultural legacies of Buddhism would be in line of seeking contact with the ideological sources that enable the cultural engagements of time. Rather, being part of a process of getting connected to all possible sources of liberation and well-being, some insights from the wider ideological horizon of Buddhist imagery may become readily adaptable for practical purposes. Thus, this attempt of seeking possibilities of treating Buddhism as an open-ended way of engaging with emerging crises of the period need not be especially on the conventional line of committing to a particular religious or philosophical institution. Going by such open-indebtedness and engagements in relating to Buddhism, seems to imply or suggest a methodological perspective that can be termed as 'Cultural Buddhism'.

Buddhism, as a spiritual, ethical and intellectual movement, had prevailed widely in the Indian sub-continent for a long period of time in history. And although it is said to be a non-existing religion in India, remnants of Buddhist culture continue to prevail widely; if not in the name of Buddhism, then in other forms. How it may be, it continues to be a great ideological force for many intellectual and social movements in India and outside it. Even as a religious system, it continues to prevail even today widely across the bordering countries of India.

The period that might be very well qualified as 'Buddhist-India' is said to have made remarkable achievements in the various fields of local social and cultural life. Many claim that those achievements were revolutionary and unparalleled in the Indian history. Different monastic orders and schools of thought, which emerged within the broader label of Buddhism, can be seen as standing testimonials of its potential for the cultural adaptability, even with and the absence of a centrifugal force of unified doctrine and authority. They also gather the expressions of divergent ways of engagement dealing with the problems of human desire (trsna) and existential sufferings. If this is indeed a fact, then the potentiality of Buddhism to challenge the existing power structures is of great importance to not only historians but to contemporary politicians making decisions that effects social structures. It might just be that this importance may include the strength of Buddhist ideas to challenge the social structure of segregation based on birth status (jati or caste), as it is still in force all over India today. The possibility of such an adaptability of Buddhism would seem to be having crucial and devastating consequences on contemporary sociality in India today.

Nevertheless, the continued presence and force of the Buddhist ethos has not been considered as having any crucial importance in the formulation of public/societal policies and political programs. Instead, its self-defeatism seems to have gained a loud voice against it in the prevailing discourses on Buddhism in India. The self-defeatist argument appears to hold on to two contradictory assumptions. They are, firstly, Buddhism was originated in India and spread across Asia as any other prophetic religions. And, secondly, Buddhism declined in India following the aberration

and degeneration developed within Buddhism due to the lack of a unified conception of a transcendental principle. The treatment of Buddhism as one among the many competing religions with theistic conceptions of spirituality have blocked a proper understanding of its worth in the past and determines our mode of dissemination today. The perception that Buddhism is a theological system of thought combined with ritual practices seems to have emerged from the colonial archaeology. Colonial archaeology of the nineteenth century is said to have re-discovered Buddhism from its debris; from the texts, images, architectural finds and other artefacts that are identified as mere monuments of a disappeared religion. And archaeological discovery was mainly pertaining to the Buddhist Empire of Asoka.

Such a discourse of rediscovering hardly considers the fact the Buddhism became popular in its early centuries not through any Royal promotions. In fact, Asoka became compelled to embrace Buddhism in order to legitimize his centralized rule in the lands where Buddhism had been popular among working class and tradesmen. The intellectual and/or ideological discourse concerning Buddhism evolved there from has ignored the various practices through which Buddhism continue to prevail among popular life in contemporary society. It also appears to be indifferent to a creative engagement with the history of the various traditions of Buddhist practices in India, as well. While such a barrier can be a common factor in the history of Buddhist-matters throughout India, the south Indian case seems to have a worse story to narrate because Buddhism is not a monolith of any kind. Though Buddhism has come to be treated widely as religion, it was originated mainly as a spirituo-ethical (ethico-spiritual) movement. Buddhism as religion has a wide ranging expression, similarly the case with its socio ethical thoughts and movements. All of them had revolutionary contributions in different areas of common people's life in India and elsewhere. But their revolutionary nature seems to have cost the very existence of them. Now Buddhism is said to have disappeared from India; its birth land. It is to contest such assertions that the present collective wants to undertake the extensive study of Buddhist cultural expressions. Our basic hypothesis is that India is not a graveyard of Buddhism but it continues to be a prolific

(robust) playground of Buddhisms. That is to say that, Buddhism is not a gone thing of the past. It continues to prevail in society in the form of different cultural practices. Of course there may have occurred many disfigurations. Sometimes they may not be even identified or known to be Buddhist.

## 6. REINVENTING BUDDHISM

The attempt to develop the theoretical perspective called 'Cultural Buddhism' forms part of a larger project of theorising cultural or community knowledge practices. Though the perceived non-religious Buddhist practices do not dwell on any theological sources, they are not bereft with the non-theological cultural resources. As it is found in the wider conceptual spectrum of Buddhism, there are greater ideological fund and vast cultural heritage, even if they have been the legacy of religious Buddhism, seem to have served as an ideological source for some of the non-religious cultural formations that have been emerged outside of any centralized institution of Buddhism.

Since the attempt to develop the theoretical perspective of cultural Buddhism forms part of a wider exercise of theorizing cultural or community knowledge practices, the perceived contradiction of religious resource becomes basis for non-religious cultural adaptation is taken to be justified as a critical strategy towards the Eurocentric positivism that prevails in the analysis of indigenous cultural practices, especially of non-western traditions. The ever threatening dangers of the contemporary consumeristic lifestyle and the competitive ethic of globalization do call for reinventing all those cultural ethos knowledge practices that peace and organic sustainability, as against the violence of centralized institutions of power and their accompanying developmental models.

The concept 'cultural Buddhism' is yet to be defined adequately, this idea is proposed basically as a methodological perspective for understanding the varieties of Buddhist cultures. This may also include an analysis to see how Buddhism has been supplanted by other religions and ideologies. This approach implies that different Buddhist cultures and movements do not follow strictly any set of institutional doctrine or authoritative power structure.

Hence every Buddhist cultural expression has to be accounted for its unique specificity. Because Buddhist cultures have been independent adaptations of various Buddhist ideas conforming to the requirements of regional cultural and ideological interests or needs. Therefore, the cultural Buddhism would look for learning or adapting from various Buddhist cultural expressions as required for the contemporary engagements with the reality of sufferings. This is to propose a sense to cultural Buddhism as an ideological tool for exploring the liberative concerns of everyday life.

It is plausible to argue for the development of a conceptual perspective called 'Cultural Buddhism', in order to account various kinds of non-religious cultural formations of Buddhism. Though the perceived non-religious Buddhist practices do not dwell on any theological sources, they are not bereft with the non-theological cultural resources. As it is found in the wider conceptual spectrum of Buddhism, there are greater ideological fund and vast cultural heritage, even if they have been the legacy of religious Buddhism, seem to have served as an ideological source for some of the non-religious cultural formations that have been emerged outside of any centralized institution of Buddhism.

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# PURE LAND SECT OF BUDDHISM: AN APPROACH FOR BUILDING HARMONIOUS SOCIETY IN VIETNAM

by Bachchan Kumar*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In this paper, I have discussed the pure land Buddhism which has considerable contribution for building of harmonious society in Vietnam. Each and every societies of the world have foundation on their religious beliefs and practices. A harmonious and ideal society is based on spiritual principles. A society will remain strong if it is based on moral law in one form or other. In this respect, religion understood as moral law stands for the essential governing principles of a society.[1] A strong social system can be built up if the members of the society lead a virtuous life. The Vietnamese have an ideal, strong society based on the religious principles of Buddhism. This ideal society has seen ups and down due to they have history of struggle. The Buddhist thoughts and belief provided them peace and prosperity. Both Hinayana and Mahayana sects of the Buddhism prevail in this country. But Greater vehicle or Mahayana sect is deeply rooted in the social order and majority of the people of this country follow Mahayanist sect.

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1. Siddhi Butr-Indr, The Buddhist Social Philosophy, Mahamukut Buddhist University, Bangkok, 1995, p. 8.

## 2. THE PURE LAND SECT

The term "Pure Land" is used to describe both the abode of Amitabh that can be better understood as "Pure Land sect" or "Pure Land teachings," or a separate Pure Land tradition. Pure Land sect is a mainstream of Mahāyāna Buddhism, which can be considered to be one of the most popular schools in the in East and some parts of South East Asia. This school is deeply rooted in Vietnam and it is called as Tịnh Độ Tông). The Pure land sect stresses sincere faith in Amida, meditation and recitation of the Amitabh's name in order to take rebirth in the pure land or Western paradise.



Figure 1: Amitayus in Sukhavati, IGNCA: GSL5571

The most common characteristic feature of Pure Land is the sincerely recitation of Amitabh Buddha's name to achieve rebirth in the Pure Land. The reason of the popularity of this sect are:

- The teaching is based on compassion, on faith in compassionate vows of Amitabh to welcome and guide all sentient beings to His Pure Land.
- It is an easy method to achieve goal (rebirth in western pure land as a stepping stone towards Buddhahood) and practice (anywhere, anytime with no special liturgy and guidance).
- This is all kinds of sickness and purification of mind to take birth in the realm of Amitabh Buddha.
- It is democratic method that empowers its adherents, freeing from arcane metaphysics as well as dependence on teachers and other mediating authority figures.



Figure 2: Amitayus in Sukhavati, IGNCA GSL 5572

Seeing simplicity and effectiveness of this Buddhist sect, Elizabeth quotes:

There shall be no distinction, no regard to male and female, good and bad, exalted or lowly; non shall fail to be in his Land of Purity after having called, with complete faith, on Amida.

The Buddha appeared in this world to accomplish a great mission which was essentially to explain the paths to enlightenment in all the various ways for the benefit of sentient beings. With the passage of time, many philosophy and method of approaching enlightenment appeared in it but non could be received such popularity what the pure land achieved. The Pure Land path that leads one away from evil, and towards the right aspirations or the path that leads to disentanglement from the worldly desires, the quintessence of the Buddhist teachings is always the same. However, due to the differing conditions, causes, times and places of our birth, the Pure Land path seems to be easy to lead one to get mindfulness in life and enlightenment anywhere and anytime by the method of practicing the Pure Land path. So, one should make a great vow to be reborn in Sukhāvatī by believing and reciting the name of Amitābha Buddha upon hearing His name.

### 3. THE PURE LAND TEACHINGS (BUDDHA REMEMBRANCE)

Pure Land Buddhism centers on faith in Amitabh Buddha, the Buddha of Infinite Light and Infinite Life. Amitabh (Buddha) has promised rebirth in pure land to all those who single-mindedly invoke his name. Cleary[2] opines on Pure land of Amitabh, called as "The Land of Ultimate Bliss." It is a pure realm where the ills of our world do not exist. Once born in Pure Land, we are freed from the defilement and fixations that block the path to enlightenment here in our mundane world, and we can continue our spiritual progress under the direct tutelage of Amitabh and the assembly of saints and sages. The Pure Land is centred on the Amitabha infinite-Light. Amitabh is also known as the Buddha Amitayus (Infinite-Life). His name is shortened to "Amituo" (in Chinese), "Amida" ( in Japanese), "Adida" (in Korean) and *Tịnh Độ Tông* (in Vietnamese).

The Pure Land basically reflects a concept associated with the Bodhisattva practice of purifying the Buddha land (Buddhasetra-parisuddhi; Buddhasetra parisodhana; ksetram parisodhayati etc.). Purification in this context refers to the spiritual process of leading all beings dwelling within the Bodhisattva's realm to enlightenment. The Pure land Buddhism is sometimes designated by the term "Amidism" in English. The Pure land teaching points to the notion of Karmic (Sanskrit : Karman; Pali: Kamma) rebirth in another realm of consciousness called the Pure Land) or "Sukhāvati". (Sukhāvatī: Sanskrit term for "Land of Happiness" or "Land of Bliss".

The Pure Land teachings discusses the presence of the Amitābha Buddha helping devotees to be "reborn" in his realm. This make a person abled for the rapid progress leading to enlightenment that lead to away from the world of suffering. It is also believed that in Pure Land, there is none of defilements or delusions. Instead, people who attain rebirth in Pure Land never ever fall back in lower realm such as hell realm, ghost realm or animal realm, etc. Since it largely depends on one's effort of cultivation and one's own karma, the decision would hold one short or long of lives in the Pure Land

2. Joji Okazaki, Pure Land Buddhist Painting, p. 14, Elizabeth ten Grotenhuis, tr. Kodansha, Tokyo, 1977.

until complete enlightenment.[3]

The Pure Land Buddhist teachings also believe that Śākyamuni Buddha saw their people indulged in more afflictions, worries, and wandering thoughts. Due to deep-seated bad habits, which tend to become even more entrenched over thousands of lifetimes, it becomes impossible to liberate the solely by our their own efforts. The Buddha knew that to end one's problems and attain lasting happiness, many people would need the help of other such as Amitābha Buddha, the Buddha of Infinite Light and Infinite Life. The place for people who preside or attain over a Buddha-realm is known as Sukhāvati. It is a realm of rebirth in which all impediments to the attainment of final Enlightenment are nonexistent. This place is also known as the Realm of Bliss the result of accumulated merit of the Bodhisattva Dharmākara

The Land of Bliss commonly known as the Pure Land narrates the story that countless eons ago, a king named Dharmakāra met a Buddha named Lokeśvararāja and renounced the throne to pursue the Bodhisattva path. After witnessing the suffering of sentient beings, he spent thousands of millions of years studying all the Buddha lands. Dharmākara then made forty-eight vows (Pranidhāna) or (in Sanskrit forty-six vows)[4]. He declared that he would not attain Buddhahood unless his vows for a perfect Pure Land known as Sukhāvatī, where all beings would advance along the Buddhist path and never again fall back into the cycle of rebirth, were accomplished. Once his vows were accomplished, Dharmākara Bodhisattva became Amitābha Buddha. He is now teaching the Dharma in his Pure Land and helping all who are truly sincere in their personal vows to be reborn there.

The Pure land teaching also combines the efforts to both efforts i.e. own's reliance as well as the efforts of Amitabh to get our mindfulness, through the strength of his vows, help us to reborn in the Pure Land the place which is totally peaceful without any miseries or suffering. It precisely explains why the object of Pure

3. J. C. Cleary, Mind – Seal of the Buddhas, Sutra Translation Committee of the United States and Canada, New York- San Francisco- Niagari Falls- Toronto, 1997, p. 3.

4. Ibid. p. 2.

Land to be re-born into the Realm of Bliss, which requires the practitioner to the following three: (i) Faith; (ii) Aspiration or the Vow for Rebirth; (iii) Practice, single-minded effort aimed at Buddha Remembrance *Samādhi*, in Sanskrit "*Buddhānusmrti*".

The contemporary Vietnamese Pure Land traditions see the Buddha Amitābha preaching the Dharma in his Buddha-field (S: *Buddhakṣetra*), called the "Pure Land" or "Western Pure Land" a region offering respite from karma transmigration. The Vietnamese also use the term "Tây Phương Cực Lạc" for the "Western Land of Bliss, or more accurately, the "Western Paradise". Pure Land believers show their faith in Amitabh's promise by taking vow to be reborn in Amitabh's Pure Land. They practice their faith by reciting the name of Amitabh Buddha, by contemplating his qualities, by visualizing his image. Pure and practice focuses the mind on Amitabha.

## 4. THE PURE LAND SUTRAS

The pure land text has three primary texts, known as the "Three Pure Land Sutras". They are:

The *Longer Sukhavativyuha Sutras* (Infinite Life Sutras);

The *Amitayurdhyana Sutras* (Contemplation Sutras); and

The *Shorter Sukhavativyuha Sutras* (Amida Sutras).

### 4.1. The Longer Sukhavativyuha Sutras (Infinite Life Sutras)

It is one of the two Mahayana sutras which describe the Pure Land Amitabha along with shorter *Sukhavativyuha Sutras.* Origainally this kind of Sutras were translated into English by Louis Gomez in the title *Land of Bliss*. Some scholars believe that the *Longer Sukhāvatīvyūha Sūtra was* compiled in the age of the Kushan Empire during first and second centuries by an order of Mahisasaka's monastics who ruled in the Gandhāra region. It is likely that the longer Sukhāvatīvyūha owed greatly to the Lokottravada sect as well for its compilation. It contains sutras that contain many elements that are common with the Mahavastu. The earliest of these translations show traces of having been translated from the Gandhari Langaug, a prakrit used in the Northwest. It is also known that manuscripts in the Kharoṣṭhī script existed in China during this period.

Traditionally the *Longer Sukhāvatīvyūha Sūtra* is believed to have been translated twelve times from the original Sanskrit into Chinese from 147 to 713 CE. Of those, only five translations are extant in the Chinese Buddhsit Canon. The earliest of the five translations is attributed to Zhi Qian, who is supposed to have arrived from Kuṣāṇa kingdom to Luoyang during the decline of Han dynasty.

The most well-known version of the *Longer Sukhāvatīvyūha Sūtra* is the two-fascicle *Fó Shuō Wúliángshòu Jīng* which translates to «The Buddha Speaks of the Infinite Life Sūtra." This translation is traditionally attributed to the Indian Buddhist monk Saṅghavarman who translated the text in 252 CE at White House Temple in Luoyang. However, the common opinion now is that it was more likely a work of the later Indian monk and translator Buddhabhadra (359-429 CE).

The Sutras discusses the core philosophy of Pure land tradition of Buddhism. The Sutras discusses the fundamental vision of Mahayana Buddhism[5].

The Sūtra elaborately describes this Land of Bliss and its inhabitants. It also details how sentient beings are able to attain rebirth into Land of Bliss. The Sūtra also contains the Forty-eight Vows made by the Amitābha Buddha to save all sentient beings. Especially, the eighteenth vow is among the most important as it forms a basic tenet of the Pure Land school. This vow is most commonly known as "ten recitations certain rebirth" it states that if a sentient being makes even "ten recitations" of the name of the Amitābha Buddha they will attain "certain rebirth" into the Pure Land. The passage of the Vow that as follows: "Provided I become a Buddha, if any sentient being in the ten quarters who hears my name and is thus awakened to the highest faith and aspires toward rebirth in my land, recollects that thought for as few as ten times, that being will be reborn there, with the exception of those who have committed the five grave offenses, or who have blasphemed the Dharma. Otherwise may I not attain enlightenment."

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5. Paul Williams, Mahāyāna Buddhism: The Doctrinal Foundations, Great Britain, Edmundsbury Press Ltd., 1989, p.253.

As a matter of fact, the form of vows of the Boddhisattva Dharmākara was be the moderate and rational doctrine of the Pure Land is perhaps the most important contribution to all the while attending to the welfare of all sentient beings. Besides, the Bodhisattva vocation with its initial set of vows and subsequent accumulation of merit through austerities, the attainment of supreme enlightenment, and the creation of a land through stored merit for the salvation of all sentient beings. So, the actual practice of the Pure Land in the Larger Sukhàvatì-vyùha Sūtra can only be undertaken on the basis of a true cognition of life.

Furthermore, According to the scripture may be pointed out that one of the fundamental contribution of the Forty-eight vows of the Larger Sūtra in the sphere and image of a sacred duty to be applicable to the environmental ethics. And on the other hand, the form and content of the Sukhàvatì-vyùha Sūtra filled with the "Law of Cause and Effect".

**4.2 The Amitayurdhyana Sutras (Contemplation Sutras)**

There is a commentary on this Sutra by a priest of China named as Shandao (613–681). It gives a detailed account of the misfortune that befell the royal family of Magadha, which led to the Buddha's preaching of this sutra. The outline of the Sutras is as follows:

At one time Śākyamuni Buddha was staying on Vulture Peak together with one thousand two hundred and fifty monks and thirty-two thousand bodhisattvas. Incited by Devadatta, Ajātaśatru imprisoned King Bimbisāra and later Queen Vaidehī too, because she brought food and drink to the king. In utter despair she requested the Buddha to help her. The Buddha immediately sent two disciples to her, and afterward himself appeared in the prison where she was confined. As she wished to be born in a land with no sorrow, he showed her many buddha lands to let her make her choice. To the Buddha's satisfaction, she chose the Pure Land of Amitāyus. Vaidehī was thus able to visualize the Pure Land through the Buddha's power. For the sake of later generations, the Buddha expounded a method of contemplation in thirteen stages (sections 9–21):

Contemplating the setting sun until one has a clear vision of it whether one's eyes are open or closed. This and the next

visualizations are preliminary contemplations of the surroundings of the Pure Land. 2. Envisioning that the western region is flooded by water and that the water turns into ice, then into beryl. The ground of the Pure Land is made of beryl and is supported by columns made of various jewels. 3. Contemplating the ground of the Pure Land until one visualizes it in a state of samādhi. This and the following four are visualizations of the actual surroundings. 4. Contemplating the jeweled trees ornate with glorious adornments. 5. Contemplating the water of eight excellent qualities in the ponds. 6. Contemplating various objects, such as myriads of jeweled towers. 7. Contemplating the lotus throne of Amitāyus. Prior to the Buddha's exposition of this, Amitāyus, accompanied by his two attendant bodhisattvas Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta, had appeared before Vaidehī. 8. Contemplating images of Amitāyus and his two attendant bodhisattvas. This is the stage preliminary to visualizing the actual Buddha and bodhisattvas. One who accomplishes this contemplation attains the samādhi of mindfulness of the Buddha (nian-fo, or nembutsu samādhi). 9. Contemplating Amitāyus himself with boundless physical dimensions. One who visualizes him also beholds all the buddhas, and so attains the samādhi of mindfulness of the Buddha. 10. Contemplating Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (Guanyin). 11. Contemplating Bodhisattva Mahāsthāmaprāpta (Shizhi). 12. Contemplating the aspirants themselves as they are born in the Pure Land. 13. Contemplating the images of Amitāyus and his two bodhisattvas everywhere in the Pure Land. The next three contemplations are of the nine categories of Pure Land aspirants in three grades (sections 22–30).[6]

### 4.3 Shorter Sukhavativyuha Sutras (Amida Sutras)

Tradition says that the *smaller Sukhavativyuha* was translated into Chinese around 402 C.E. by Kumarajiva. Although the same tradition has it that there were three Chinese translations, only two remain. The other translation that remains is the *Cheng-tsan ching-t'u-fo she-shou ching* (T. 367), in one fascicle, done by Hsuan-tsang. Hsuan-tsang's translation is somewhat longer than Kumarajiva's and differs from it in some particulars. It appears to

6. Encyclopedia of Buddhism, vol. II, p. 698.

be based on a different Sanskrit original. There also is one extant Sanskrit version found in Japan. This Sanskrit version is thought to have been brought to Japan by Ennin during the Heian period (794-1185). It was printed during the Edo period in 1773. Max Muller published an English translation of it in the *Sacred Books of the East* of all the Pure Land manuscripts found at the Tun-huang site in China [7]. Kumarajiva's translation of the *A-mi-t'o ching* is most popular. It discusses the "Samanta-mukha-parivarta of the Lotus Sutra.[8] One hundred ninety copies of this work were discovered there. Four copies of Hsuan-tsang's translation were found at Tun-huang.

In 1910 during the Meiji period (1868-1912), Otani Kozui, Abbot of Nishi Honganji of the Jodoshin sect, sent the Otani mission to Central Asia. This mission consisted of Tachibana Zuicho and Nomura Eizaburo. These two monks found a manuscript of the *A-mi-t'o ching* in Tulpan Province in western China.

As per the background to the origin of the Pure Land Texts, the Smaller Sukhàvatì-vyùha Sūtra have been a great matter of Mahāyāna values, begins with an introduction. It gives a concise description of the Land of Bliss and of Amitābha.

On the other hand, the prologue to the Smaller Sukhàvatì-vyùha Sūtra the historical Buddha (Śākyamuni) himself spontaneously speaks to his disciple Śāriputra which is in an uncomplicated setting. The sutra is justified and legitimized by the Śākyamuni and further elucidation of this Sūtra may in fact represent the main universe of the Buddhas (Amitābha). The Sūtra begins and ends with the formulaic opening and closing characteristic of the Mahāyāna Sūtra genre by who barely speaks, and then response the questions of the Śākyamuni. Although, this is the smallest sutras among the three of the Pure Land texts, this has great importance among the Pure Land followers.[9]

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7. Hisao Inagaki (tr.) The Three Pure Land Sutras, 2003, Numata Centre for Buddhist Translation and Research, California, pp. XVIII to XXI.

8. Max Muller, Sacred Books of the East, 49:91-107 & 153-186).

9. Yao-ming Tsai "Soteriological unfolding the Mind, body and abiding –places in the "Samanta-mukha-parivarta of the Lotus Sutra" (in) Kumarjiva : Philosopher and Seer; ed.

It is noteworthy in this regard that those who have faith in Amitābha are protected by him, and that this protection is equivalent to protection of all Buddhas or is guaranteed by all Buddhas. The possession of Amitābha Buddha was limitless merits and wondrous qualities, and his great vows - great compassion and his capacity to accept and welcome all those who have faith into the Pure Land of Amitābha.

The core themes of this Sūtra can be divided into sixth major parts. The characteristic features of this sutras is very simple. They are classified according to the implication of the Sūtra so that each of reader can understand its teaching well.

The Sūtra begins and ends with the formulas of opening and closing characteristic, described by the Lord Buddha (Śākyamuni) while dwelling upon the Land of Bliss and its Buddha.

He names some of the Buddhas in other worlds who confirm the truth of Śākyamuni's message as they praise their own perfected world.

He explains the nature of the trust and commitment required for rebirth in the Land of Bliss, and connects this theme to an alternative title for the Sūtra (embraced by All Buddhas).

It gives grace of all Buddhas, and emphasizes the three essential conditions for rebirth.

It explains how difficult it is to attain Buddhahood.

It preaches the message of the Sūtra unquestionably.

## 5. PURE LAND SECT IN VIETNAM

In Vietnam, there spread a syncretic form of Buddhism consisting of Pure Land (Mahayanist) concept of Bodhisattva, certain elements of Taoism, Zen, Confucianism, Vietnamese folk religion. Other forms of Buddhism are mostly pursued among the monks and nuns, while Pure Land philosophy and practice is preferred by the lay-people. The Vietnamese also use the term "Tây Phương Cực Lạc" for the "Western Land of Bliss", or more

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Shashiala, pp. 88-108, New Delhi, 2015

accurately, the "Western Paradise". Many religious organizations have not been recognized by the government; however, in 2007, with 1.5 million followers, the Vietnamese Pure Land Buddhism Association (Tịnh Độ Cư Sĩ Phật Hội Việt Nam) received official recognition as an independent and legal religious organization.[10]

The Pure Land practitioners recite *sutras*, chants *dharnis* to gain protection through Bodhsattva. It is a devotional practice where those practicing put their faith in Amitābha (Vietnamese: *A-di-đà*). Followers believe they will gain rebirth in his pure land by chanting Amitabha's name. A pure land is a Buddha-realm where one can more easily attain enlightenment since suffering does not exist there.

It is believed that the contemporary Pure Land traditions see the Buddha Amitābha preaching the Dharma in his Buddha-field (Sans: Buddhakṣetra), called the "Pure Land" or "Western Pure Land", a region offering respite from karma transmigration. The Vietnamese also use the term "Tây Phương Cực Lạc" for the "Western Land of Bliss", or more accurately, the "Western Paradise".

In such traditions, entering the Pure Land is popularly perceived as equivalent to the attainment of enlightenment. After practitioners has attained in the Pure Land, they still have to cultivate and accumulate their virtue until they become complete enlightened. Thereafter, they make great vow to turn back to help all living beings is this *Saṃsāra* [11] [world] rather than becoming a Buddha and entering Nirvāṇa (*nibbāna*)], they will return to the six realms as a Bodhisattvas and help all beings.

It may be added that in the esoteric Vajrayāna Buddhism, Amitābha's Western Pure Land (Sukhāvati) is the counterpart to Akṣobhya's Eastern Pure Land (*Abhirati*)[12]. It is recognized in Japapanese Shingon sect, as well as in Vietnam. In Vietnamese Buddhism, the three Buddhas represent the innumerable Buddha in all

10 . Encyclopedia of Buddhism, vol. II, p. 698.

11. "The pure Land Buddhism is recognized by the Government", Viet Nam News. December 27, 2007.

12. Cuong Tu Nguyen & A. W. Barber, Vietnamese Buddhism in North America: Translation and Acculturation, 1998, University of California Press, p. 13

times and spaces. Among the three, Amitabh Buddha has prominent place. Amitabh's statues are usually bigger than the two other Buddhas.[13] The presence of a special place of Amitabh refers to the important of "Pure Land Buddhism" in Vietnam. According to belief, there exist the Pure Land or the Paradise of the West where Amitabh reigns, and dead soul of all creatures can reach it in the retinue of Avalokiesvara and Mahasthamaprapta simply by praying the name of Amitabh again and again. The Amitabh in his world, one reaching the soul, greets them.[14]

## 6. PURE LAND SUTRAS IN THE EARLY PERIODS IN VIETNAM (FIRST TO TENTH CENTURY A.D.)

It is believed that Buddhism introduced in Vietnam during the time of Asoka in 3rd century B.C. It is because that a temple in Vietnam is available of that period which is considered to be constructed for the welcoming the missionaries of Asoka. Moreover, it is considered that during early to 5th century, there were regular visit of Indian monks in Vietnam. In the 3rd century, Indian monk arrived in Vietnam and translated sutras. It in noteworthy that one Vietnamese monk Dao Thanh helped him in translating the sutras. Thus a Centre was developed in Giao Chau where many Buddhist texts were translated.[15]

At this Centre, an Indian monk Dharmadeva's directions several Mahayana sutras were translated under the assistance of Vietnamese monks. Later, Vietnamese monks were so renowned that an eminent translator named as Hue Thang was invited to Jiangsu (China) to interpret the Mahayana sutras. Between 2nd to 5th century several temples were erected for the accommodation of Buddhist sutras and development of Sangha. Beside, Indian monks, Chinese monks visited the temples of Vietnam for the translation of and understanding the sutras. One among them named Tan Hong, belonging the Amitabhs pure land sect, visited there in 455 A.D. and spread Pure land sect of Mahayana Buddhism. He had

13. Ha Van Tan, Nguyen Van Ku and Pham Ngoc Long, Buddhist Temples in Vietnam, 2008, The GIOI Publishers, Hanoi, p. 6.

14. Ibid. p. 6.

15. Ibid, p. 13.

acquired great merit of Amitabha that he used to set himself on the fire at Tien Son temple.

According to the Thien Uyen Tap Ang in 580, a south Indian monk Vinitaruci, a disciple of Seng Can came to Giao Chau. There was construction of a temple in his name. He developed Chan sect in Vietnam. His sect continued in Vietnam for serveral years. According to the Thien Uyen Tap Anh, after the death of Vinitaruchi, Phap Hien built a Chung Thien temple on Mount Thien Phuc, Tien Du district. A Sui emperor Gaizu (Alias Wendi) sent envoy envoys for bringing the relics of the monk. Phap Hien distributed the relics of the monk in different temples of Vietnam for the spread of the sect and the teaching of the sutras. The temples were made of bricks. The bricks were decorated with the statues of Buddha. One can see on bricks the statue of three Buddha. They are sitting on the lotus throne with halos round their heads and their hands are in the position of dhyana mudra. They might be trinity Buddha. In the middle, Amitabha Buddha is identified which lead to belied the development of Pure Land sect.

During the Tang dynasty rule, Vietnamese high ranking people took part in the development of Buddhism. There were high ranking monks too. They went to China to interpret sutras to the Tang emperors and became friends of them.[16]

In connection with understanding sutras, many Vietnamese monks visited India. This is reflected from the work of Chinese monk Yi Jing (635 to 713) entitled *Da Tang Qiu fa gaosend Zhuan*. From this account, the name of Reverend Dai Thua Dang (Sanskrit name Mahayanapradipa) a native of Ai Chau (Thanh Hoa privice).

In 938, the victory of Bach Dang, Buddhism was prospered in Vietnam. The monks were took part in the struggle thus they were not only rich in spirituality but also politically. Thus, political acceptance was also made to Buddhism. The Vietnamese dynasties of that period from Ngo, Dinh and Le through the Ly and the Tran all supported Buddhism. That was considered as the golden period of Buddhism in Vietnam. Even after that period, Buddhism

16. Ibid, p. 15.

prospered much which maintained to build harmonious society in Vietnam. It is because of the benevolence characteristic features.

The Pure Land Buddhism sutras teaches to establish, maintain, develop and strengthen social relationship and to live together happily and peacefully. The members of the society are advised to cultivate a sense of fraternity by practicing the virtue of loving-kindness (*Metta*), impartiality (Upekkha) towards each other and to learn to develop the idea of identity with all others.

Patriarch Ou-I expresses in this way: "Fundamentally all the Buddhas manifest their teaching activities from within the Dhamakaya. They solidify sentient beings's affinity with the truth and setrenthen their seeds of enlightenment… They energize teaching vehicles and expound them to vast audiences. They plungs into the ocean of suffering where sentient beings dwell, and use their compassion to enable them to harmonize with the still light." [17]

The term "Metta" is variously translated as loving-kindness, love, friendliness, benevolence, good will universal love etc. It is defined as the sincere wish for the welfare and genuine happiness of all living beings without exception. Metta is nothing but a feeling of boundless love towards all living beings everywhere. It also embraces all beings either high or low, without measuring poor people, lowly people, evil people, and ignorant people. The Pure Land teachings direct us that Buddha worked for the welfare and happiness of those who love him, as well as to those who hate him and even attempted to harm and kill him. Buddha exercised loving-kindness equally towards own son Rahula, his adversary Devadatta,, his attendant Ananda, his admirers and his opponents. The *Amitayurdhyana Sutras* testfy the the fact that Busddha was even kind and loving to his opponents.

The word "Buddha" is also used to refer to the inherent potential for enlightenment perception that all the people share.[18] According to Mahayana Buddhism, we all have "Buddha-nature" and enable us to function by mean of it in our daily life.

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17. J. C. Cleary, op.cit., pp. 6-7.

18. Ibid, p. 7.

The Mahayana Buddhism refers to taking the name of Buddha or remembering Buddha in daily life. The distinctive of Pure Land is that it teaches that reciting the name of Amitabh Buddha is the most effective and most widely applicable method of remembering him and ultimately achieving to enlightenment. Master Ou-i reflects this perspective on Buddha remembrance too. The Compassion is the basic principles of the teaching of Buddhism. This lead to eke out from moral violation and sufferings.

Compassion or *karuna* is another aspect of Pure land sect. It is the name of a moral volition for eradication of suffering others.[19] It is act on compassionate intention of all living beings. It combats the sufferings of others and act to pacify to release from it. Master Ou-I mentions in Pure Land none suffers of the evils. The sutras states that the by taking multiple times the name of Amitabha, the people are free suffering of the people from pain, from hunger, from sickness, from old age and death.[20] Their own life spans become infinite, they are guaranteed an endless sojourn in the Pure Land, until they too enter the ranks of the enlightened ones.

Master Ou-i further clarifies the view of the wonders of Pure Land. All the adornments of the dwellings in the pure land and the settings in which sentient beings are reborn in the Pure Land are created by the inherently real merits of the great vows and great deeds of Amitabha Buddha. That's why he can adorn all dimensions of the Pure land, and embrace all the ordinary people and saints of all the worlds of the past, present and future, and enable them to be reborn in the Pure Land.

The Pure land sutras passage throw light that "Every morning the sentient beings of this land decorate their garments with multitudes of wondrous flowers and make offerings to hundreds of billions of Buddha in other worlds. When it is meal time, they return to their own land, to eat and circumambulate the teaching assembly.

Master Ou-i commented that "in the Pure Land, every sound, every sense object, every moment, and even every step and every

19. Mahesh Tiwary, Aspects of Buddhism (Based on Pali Sources) ed. H. S. Shukla, Varanasi: Publication Cell, Banaras Hindu University, 2001, p. 200.

20. J. C. Cleary, op.cit, p 10.

snap of the fingers, interpenetrates without obstruction the teaching of Buddha to all the ten directions of this earth. It also shows that in our mundane world the defilements and obstructions are so serious that our world is separated off from the land of Ultimate Bliss even though it is not really separated from it. When we reborn in the Land of Ultimate Bliss, our merit will be so great that we will be separated from this mundane world called Endurance, without really being separated from it."

## 7. CONCLUSION

Early history of Vietnam narrates the story of struggle and oppression. The Pure land sect directs the path of ultimate goals of each and every person by reciting the sutras of Pure Land and taking the names of the Amitabha. It directs the laity to be free from sufferings by removing the worldly lust, abstention from evil, performance of good, and purification of mind. The Pure Land sets forth the parameters for becoming mindful of Buddha by reciting the Buddha-name of Amitabha. It states "the good men and good women who hear the Amitabh Buddha and recite his name wholeheartedly without confusion at the end of their life Amitabha and all sages appear before them and help them not be their mind in delusion and they will attain rebirth in Amitabha Buddha's Land of Ultimate bliss. The Pure Land vision helped the mind of Vietnamese to follow the path of loving-kindness (Metta), compassion, sympathy, equality which led the people for building a harmonious society.

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# A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON SYMBOLISM BETWEEN ISLAM AND TIBETAN BUDDHISM AN INTER -DIALOGUE APPROACH TO SUSTAINABLE PEACE

by Ameneh Shirazinejad*

**ABSTRACT**

A Humanities' approach to the interpretation of the inner meaning of existence and understanding of the intellectual world leads to the study of symbols and symbolism. According to the vast realm of symbols, including verbal to the visual world, it is almost impossible to present a specific description of the term symbol or symbolism. Therefore, the study of symbolism in any subject, such as religion, philosophy, linguistics, etc. involves different views and meaning.

In the philosophical view (theistic view), everything in the universe is symbolic and is a shadow of its higher level or its higher existence. Perennial philosophy or *philosophia perennis*, which is the study of the heart of all religions and traditions, views the universe symbolically as well, and focuses on fundamental similarities in primordial wisdom. Moreover, *philosophia perennis* believes in the hierarchy of every aspect of being including Beyond Being, Being, to Existence and existence.

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This paper studies the similarities in symbolism between two great traditions, Islam (specifically Sufism, the mystical view of Islam) and Tibetan Buddhism.

As far as Islam was started by the revelation of the Quran, symbolism in Islam is more verbal because the Archetype of symbols in Islam are found in the Quran or the Word of God, whereas, symbolism in Tibetan Buddhism is more visual since it belongs to a non-Abrahamic religion.

## SYMBOL AND ITS MEANINGS

The word *symbol* is derived from the Greek word *symbolom*. In ancient Greece it was a custom to break a slate of burned clay into several pieces and give an individual in a group one piece as a mark of identification. When, at a later date, they met and fitted the pieces together (Greek -*symbollien*) is confirmed that the persons were the same ones, or representatives of those, who had received the pieces of clay in the first place. The use of the word *symbol* was widened to include the engraved shells that were employed by those initiated in the mysteries, both as marks of identification and as essential components in ritual gatherings. Therefore when we talk about symbols and symbolism coincidentally we mention their association with something which is linked in memory, imagination, correlation or analogy with an object, idea, person, or event.

The study of symbolism consists of various dimensions of the Humanities from the world of advertising to political slogans and emblems to religion. Symbolism in religious studies, regardless of what traditions or locations to study shows that the symbols are systematically formulated and translated into rational terms which logically are connected with one another. In addition, the study of symbolism shows that certain symbols, myths and rituals keep turning up over and over again.

There are different approaches employed in the study of symbolism in religion and philosophy. Mircea Eliade (1907-1986) as an historian of religion, in his "patterns in comparative religion" examines the nature of symbolic thinking and shows the different categories of symbols. He mentions that "symbolism effects a permanent solidarity between man and the sacred". Moreover, he

clearly shows, with many examples, that all myths are symbolic but the collection of symbols and signs have made the stories of gods, heroes and their supernatural world. In fact, the majority of hierophanies are susceptible of becoming symbolic.

Therefore, many traditional symbols cannot be explained as having a single, constant meaning. Meaning, each religion has its own forms and ritual or exoteric content. In each context from religion to art to nations and so on, symbolism involves its own forms and incarnations as well.

Perennial philosophy and the traditional interpretation of symbols and symbolism

Study on symbolism is one of the major dimensions of Perennial philosophy which have been studied in different traditions and religions with the new interpretations of symbols and their important role in the world by perennialists.

Perennial philosophy (Latin: *philosophia perennis* "eternal philosophy") is the study of the similarities between all traditions (or religions) to emphasize that there is a significant point of the similar concept of the intellectual and the spiritual aspects of religions. Also, some other phrases are used in the same content such as "*Religio Perennis*" or "*Sophia perennis*". The *sophia* refers to wisdom. Moreover, the Islamic thought refers to the exact definition of this religious point of view while the Quran talks about "*the primordial religion*" or "*al din ul-fitrah*". In fact, rudiments of the perennial philosophy may be found among the traditional lore of primitive peoples in every region of the world, and in its fully developed forms it has a place in every one of the higher religions…"

*Symbol* and *Symbolism* in the perennial philosophy view, are *"the reflection or shadow of a higher Reality,"* i.e. symbols have a mysterious identity with its Archetype. However, no symbol can possibly reflect all the aspect of its Archetype, because symbols are not Archetype. This distinction can be clearer with the symbolism of the spider's web, which was expounded upon by *Frithjof Schuon*. In his, *The Track of Buddhism,* the image of the spider's web is used as a reference for the created universe. The concentric circle of the

spider's web is an excellent symbol to address the hierarchy of different worlds, that is, the different planes of existence, as the web is woven out of the substance of its creator. Therefore, metaphysics recognizes a divine Reality substantial to the world of things and lives and minds. And, man was made in the image

*"The body itself is like the earth, its bones like mountains, its marrow like mines, the abdomen like the sea, the intestine like rivers the veins like brooks, the flesh like dust and mud. The hair on the body is like plants, the places where grows like fertile soil and where there is no growth like saline earth. From its face to its feet, the body is like a populated city, its back like desolate regions, its front like the east, back the west, right the south, left the north. Its breathing is like the wind, words liken thunder, shouts like lightening. Its laughter like the light of noon, its weeping like rain, its sadness like the darkness of night, and its sleep like death as its wakefulness is like life. The days of its childhood are like spring, youth like summer, maturity like autumn, and the old age like winter. Its movement and acts are like the movement of the stars and their rotation. Its birth and presence are like ascending constellations and its death and absence like their setting."* ***Religion and the order of Nature, Nasr, Seyyed Hossein, p.254***

Therefore from the perennialists point of view, everything in this world – including both verbal and visual object- are symbolic. And then, the world is sacred because everything is theophany of God.

**The Symbolic forms in Islam and Buddhism**

The 'transcendent unity of religion' is the main message of the perennial philosophy. However, 'the unity of religion can only be found on the level of the formless, the inward, or the esoteric dimension.' But when perennial philosophy addresses symbol and symbolism, it considers both domains of their role in human life, including religion and culture, outwardly and inwardly.

In the Islamic language the nearest content equivalent for symbol is tamsil (Misl) or sir (Persian: ramz). Also, the image of God as a Creator in Quran emphasizes the hierarchy of symbolism and existence when says: "He is Allah, the Creator, the Shaper out of naught, the Fashioner. His are the most beautiful names" (Quran, 59:24)

Since Sufis have started to understanding the inner meaning of Quranic verses regarding the *hadith (word)* of prophet that is:

ن طب أ (ن ى ع ب س و ا) ة ع ب س ي ل ا ن طب م ن طب ل و ً ا ن طب و ً ا ر م ظ ن آ ر ق ل ل ّ ن ا

Which means each verses of the Quran has seven (or seventy) inner interpretations and meanings. In addition, the interpretation of symbolism in the perennial philosophy is consequently different from the meaning of symbol in religious studies; denoting in religious studies symbol has the same meaning with the sign and icon, which does not appear in the philosophical point of view.

Regarding Islam, it is generally considered an iconoclastic religion in which the representation of living things has been prohibited from its very beginning. Consequently, Muslim Philosophers (like Avicenna, Suhrawardi, Eyn al-Ghozat) preserved the symbolic stories such as *Salaman and Absal* by Avecenna or *Purpel Intellect,* by Shahab al-Din Suhrawardi. Moreover, some Sufis or mystics like Ibn-Arabi produced the symbolic interpretation of Islamic rituals. For instance, several pages of the *Futuhat Makkiyyah* are devoted by him to the meaning of the postures of prayer (*salat*):

*'The raising of the hands implies that whatever was therein has fallen away; it is as thought the Almighty ,when He commanded this, said, ' When thou standest before Me, stand as a poor mendicant, who owns nothing; fling away everything that thou possessest, and stand empty-handed, setting it behind thee; for I am in front of thee.' Moreover since the hands are the seat of power, by raising his hands he confesses that the power is God's, not his own; he who raises them to the chest is thinking that God is in front of him; he who raises them to his ears is thinking that God is above him. Sitting in prayer is the attitude of the slave before his master, an attitude which he may not adopt without the master's leave,' etc.*

Similar speculation on the meaning of the ceremonies of the pilgrimage are to be found in the works of Ghazali, the special garments worn by the pilgrim, e.g., are to remind him of the grave-cloths wherein he will meet his Maker. Perennial philosophy's interpretation of symbolism regards the relation between the created and the Creator, Beyond being and being, or Absolute Reality to existence.

The esoteric interpretation of symbolism in Tibetan Buddhism involvs the three realms of existence: the sky, the earth, and the subterranean realm. Three distinct categories of being live are in these three realms of existence. Gods live in the sky above, the serpent spirits (nagas) below the earth, and human beings on the earth between. In elemental terms, the sky above is the domain of space, air, and fire. The subterranean realm is the sphere of earth and water, and all the elements are present in the middle realm, the domain of human beings.

At this point it is helpful to explain briefly historical symbolism in Buddhism. In Buddhism, symbols would be divided into two categories regarding the history of the Buddhist religion. Regarding the evolution of Historical Buddha to Transcendent Buddha, the symbols in Buddhism could also be divided to two branches. First the symbols which are mostly represented as natural figures are the Buddhi tree (symbolizes the Enlightment), Buddha's footprint, the Wheel of Dharmma (or Life), Stupa, the Empty Throne (symbolizes the Buddha's presence and Buddha's absence), the Lion and then the symbols of gestures (*mudras*) and postures (asanas). However, some of those symbols could found in Hindu symbolism as well, e.g. they have existed, before the Buddhists had mentioned them as a Buddhist symbols such as the Lion or the Wheel of Life. And, the second branch of symbolism in Buddhism consists of all the Buddha's images, which did not figure at all in the earlier, and the mandalas of the Esoteric (Vajrayana) tradition in Tibet and East Asia.

## COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE SYMBOLISM OF THE PAIRS AND TRIAD IN ISLAM AND TIBETAN BUDDHISM

### The Symbolism of the Pairs

The symbolism of the pairs is a subject which had been observed in the symbolic vision of any tradition including Tibetan Buddhism and Islam. However, it is mentioned in verbal symbolism in the Quran and visual symbols in Tibetan Buddhism.

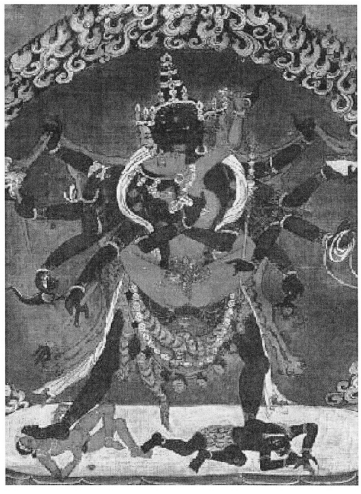
The particular aspect of creation referred to in the opening Quranic verse may be said to have its roots in the Divine Name, Possessor of Majesty and Bounty (Dhu l-Jalal wa l-Ikram) which indicates a polarity of complements mysteriously hidden in

Oneness of the creator. On the basis of this polarity a distinction is made in Islamic doctrine between the Majesty names and the Beautiful names; the same symbolism is also used for heaven and earth, Creator-creation, male and female, sprite and intellect and so on, as Quran says:

*Glory be to Him who created all the pairs, of that which the earth growth, and of themselves, and of that whereof they know not. (Quran: 36:36)*

From the creation point of view, the soul itself has likewise two poles: "As all active knowledge belongs to the masculine side of the soul, and all passive being to its feminine side, thought-dominated (and therefore clearly delimited) consciousness can in a certain sense be ascribed to the masculine pole, while all involuntary powers and capacities connected with life as such appear as an expression of the feminine side."

In addition, in Quran the distinction between *belief* and *unbelief, paradise* and *hellfire, light* and *darkness, hearing* and *deafness, sight* and *blindness, human* and *animals, fertile* and *withered, straight path* and *wandering lost, right* and *left* (especially when it comes to eschatological judgment). These aspects of duality are closely related to an archetype deity in the Tibetan Buddhist symbolism which is *"Paramasukha Chakramavarsa" (Yab-Yum)* in Tibetan language *or (Father-mother).*

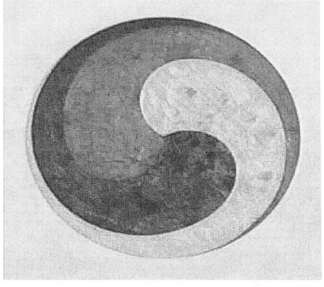


**Yab-Yum**

He-She is the Buddha archetype that engages most directly with the fierce side of the cosmic divinity Shiva, considered by one of several types of Indic monotheist to be the Supreme Being of the universe. The illustration of this Tangka is the best interpreter of the male –female forms that emphasizes the union of compassion and wisdom, and super bliss and transcendent freedom. Likewise, the two Buddha-bodies of form in Tibetan Buddhism could correspond with pairs symbolism. Meaning, there is the Buddha –body of form (rupakuya) which has two apparitional modes-namely, the body of perfect rapture (sambhogakaya) and the emanational body (nirmanakaya.)

**Symbolism of Triad**

There are certain ternaries in the world which may be called true triad in that they are irreducible to any other number except the unity from which all multiplicity proceeds. The three terms, all of the same kind and at the same level of existence, from together a harmonious totality and each is needed by the other two in the sense that its absence would leave a gap and disrupt the equilibrium.



In Mahayana Buddhism the Buddha is defined by three bodies of enlightenment, the so-called *trikaya* of classical Mahayana theory. These include the *dharmakaya*, the body of ultimate reality; the *sambhogakaya*, the body of joy; and the *nirmanakaya*, the Buddha's conditioned, human body of flesh and blood. The three bodies of enlightenment are manifesting in our experience.[1]

1. Dictionary of symbolism. Hans Biedermann

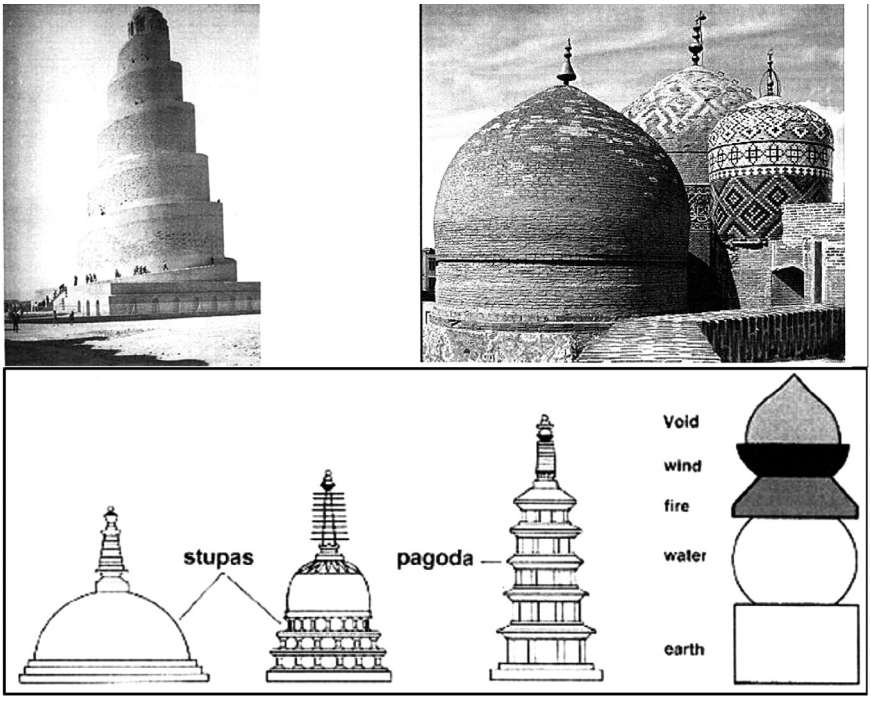
The colors in the *trikaya* symbol also correspond to the triad aspect in symbolism, which refers to transcendence because it is a 'proof' of its archetype. Moreover, the *tipitaka (three baskets)* in Buddhism which is includes Morality, Meditation, and Wisdom is also the impetus for trinity symbolism in Buddhism. In addition, in Vajrayana Buddhism, Buddha has three bodies: Truth Body (Dharmakaya), Complete Body (Sambhogakaya), and Emanation Body (Nirmanakaya).[2] Generally the body, speech and mind of the Buddha are explained as having different manifestations: the body as Avelokiteshvara, speech as Manjushri and mind as Vajrapani, which are explained as the embodiment of compassion, wisdom and energy of the Buddha.

In addition, in Islamic philosophy, the unity of Intellect, Intelligent and Intellectible [3] could correspond to this triad aspect. Moreover, according to the very famous verse of Quran that Sufis mention is "loving them with a love like" *'yuhebuhum wa yuhebunah' (Quran, 2:165)* indicates the unity of the lover, beloved and love. This is seen, in Sufism, corresponding to the three great principles of spiritualities is the triad of fear (*makhafah*), love (*mahabbah*) and knowledge (*marifah*).

(Illustration study)

2. An important point to consider here is the difference between sign and symbol. For example the hand of cap when he/she stops is a sig but the mudras (the Yoga hand gestures) are symbols.

3. For example, the letter A is the first letter of alphabet and because of this is associated with beginning, and has been used to denote the idea of something that comes first, which is indirectly suggests the idea of something good, the best, of the highest quality, etc.




The similarity in iconography in Sufism and Tibetan Buddhism

Minaret of the great Mosque in Samarra.[4]

Islamic Minarets

1: **Minarets** and **Buq'a** (Islamic shrine ensemble).

Are distinctive architectural features of Islamic mosques-generally tall spires with onion-shaped or conical crowns, usually either free standing or taller than any associated support structure; the basic form includes a base, shaft, and gallery. Styles vary regionally and by period. Minarets provide a visual focal point and are used for the call to prayer (*adhan*).

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2: A **stupa** (from Sanskrit: m., स्तूप, *stūpa*, Pāli: थुप "thūpa", literally meaning "heap") is a mound-like structure containing Buddhist relics, typically the remains of Buddha, used by Buddhists as a place of worship.After "stupa," "chorten" is the most commonly

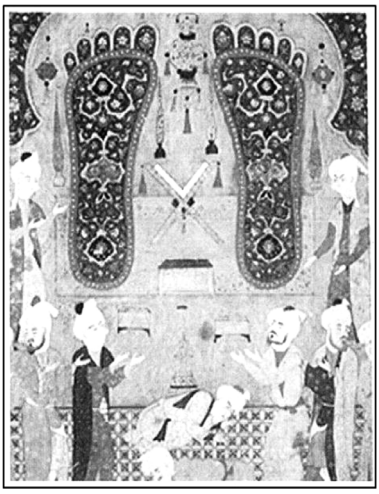
4. Images and Symbols, M. Eliade, p. 37

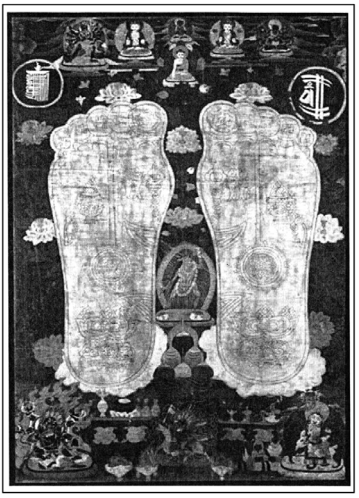
encountered English term. "The shape of the stupa represents the mind of the Buddha, crowned and sitting in meditation posture on a lion throne. His crown is the top of the spire; his head is the square at the spire's base; his body is the vase shape; his legs are the four steps of the lower terrace; and the base is his throne."

Stupa is also the symbol of refuge. There are eight different types of stupas symbolizing victory over demons, enlightment, *parinirvana* and so forth.[5]

3: This striking composition, with its two huge feet placed at either side of a noble, emblematically simplified Qur'an on a stand, is one of the more impressive religious pictures in Islamic art. Dr Annemarie Schimmel has suggested that the feet are effigies of the Prophet's sandals (ni'al-sharif), especially valued because the prophet touched them on the apex of the divine throne during his heavenly journey. Throughout the Islamic world, they are often seen in mosques and tombs'.

4: The ***footprints*** *of the Buddha* (*Buddhapada*) are one of the early representations of the Buddha in the anticonic (no statues) stage of Buddhist art. The *Buddhapada* are highly revered in all Buddhist countries, especially in Sri Lanka and Thailand; symbolizing the grounding of the transcendent. The feet have been objects of respect in India long before Buddhism.[6]





5. Eight Theories of Religion, L. Pals, Daniel, Chapter6 (Mircea Eliade)

6. Symbolisms in religion mostly have studied under the iconography content, as Eliade in his Encyclopedia of Religion brought the articles about symbols in the Icon and Iconography.

5: The **lion** calligraphy, in Arabic, is a eulogy in honour of Ali, the first imam of the Shiites. The letters are groped in the form of a lion. *Haydar* (Lion of God, Asad Allah, Shir and so forth) is a name given to Ali. The lion's face is formed mainly by the word Ali written twice; once in the customary fashion and once in mirror image. In Islam, the most typical and certainly the most widely used means of conveying the Islamic message was and still is calligraphy.[7]

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6: The lion is an ancient Indian symbol of sovereignty and protection. Early Buddhism adopted the lion as a symbol of Shakyammuni Buddha. This white snow- lion is the presiding local deity (**Tib.*gnyan***) of Tibet's snow mountain ranges. Tibet's great yogin, Milarepa, once had a prophetic dream that included the snow lion. His guru Mirpa, interpreted this dream by saying: "the lion pressing on top of the pillars shows yogin's lion-like nature… the lion's roaming free over the mountain peaks shows that the yogin has gained the realm of absolute freedom."

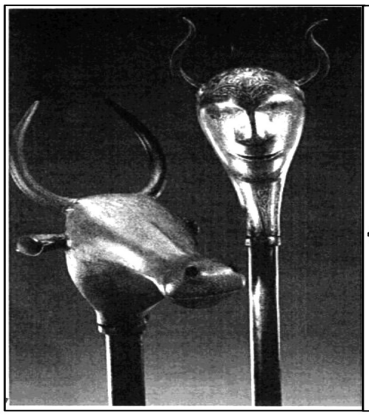


7. For reading more of philosophy of symbolism see Philosophy of Symbolic Forms by Ernest Cassirer (1874-1945). He developed of culture as a theory of symbols.

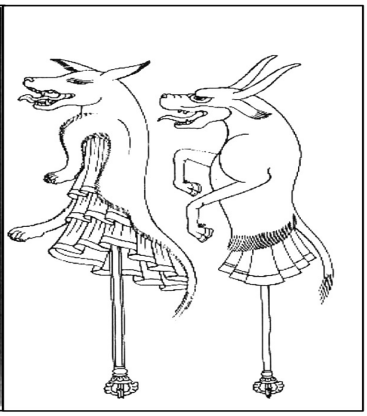
7: These **staves** were not used in battle but have a ceremonial function. They symbolize power over demons and over the evil in the human soul. The ox head is also be seen as a devil's head. In some orders staves of this kind formed part of the ceremonial attributes of the sheikh or Sufi teacher.[8]

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8: Certain minor deities and spirits of the *Vajrayana* wield banners that are formed from the heads and flayed skins of different creatures, symbolizing eleven different methods for overcoming defilements.



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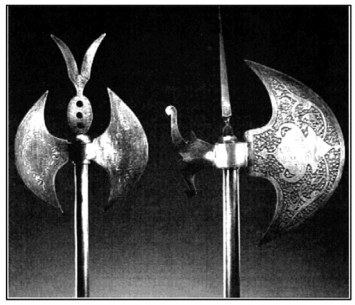
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9: **The axes** are among the ceremonial attributes of certain itinerant orders. They symbolize the dangerous, often lonely existence of Sufi belonging to such orders.[9]

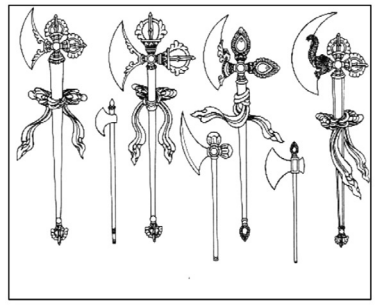
10: **The axe**, in Tibet, symbolizes the serving of all negative notions and concepts from the mind; it cuts through birth and death, root and trunk. The Tibetan term for the axe, *dgra-sta*, means 'enemy-axe', and implies that this weapon is used to decapitate malignant demons or enemies of the *Buddhadharma*.

8. Hierophany: Hiero, meaning "scared" or "holy" and phainein, meaning "to reveal" or "to bring to light".

9. Eliade argues that "the important part played by symbolism in the magico-religious experience of making is not due to this convertibility of hierophanies into symbol. It is not only because it continuous a hierophany or takes place that the symbol is important; it is primarily because it is able to carry on the process of hierophanization … ."



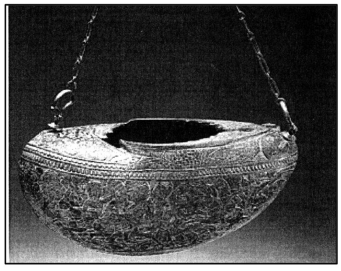
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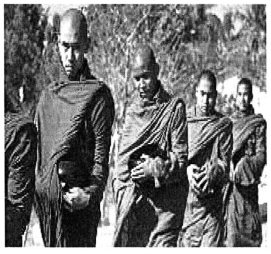
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11: Sufi always carries **a begging bowl** or ***Kashkul,*** in which they keep the gifts they receive. This enables believers to fulfill their religious obligation of the ***sadaqah***, the giving of alms.[10]

12: **Buddhist begging bowl**. One symbol the Buddha employed as a means to convey his teaching on non-attachment was the use of an alms or begging bowl. The alms bowl is considered to be symbol of the monastic life or life of a renunciate, and an aid to the life of the holy and those interested in seeking the truth. Once made from clay, which broke easily, the bowls were then forged with iron for added durability. (See: https://mysticmirror.wordpress.com/2011/08/07/the-buddha%E2%80%99s-begging-bowl/)







10. The phrase was coined by Leibniz, (The Perennial Philosophy, by Huxley, p. vii)

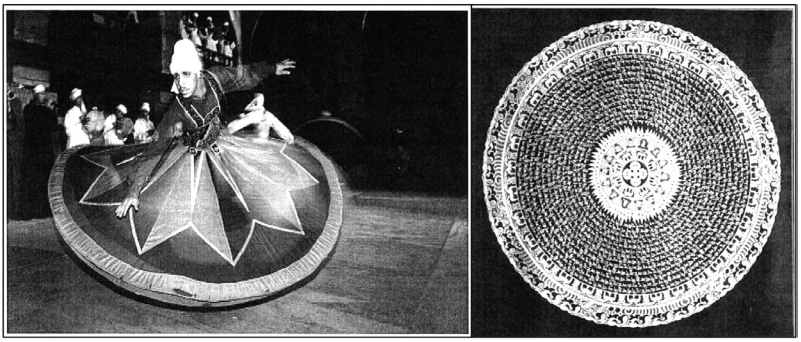
13: **Sufi whirling** (or Sufi turning) (Turkish: *Semazen*) is a form of physically active meditation which originated among Sufis, and which is still practiced by the Sufi Dervishes of the Mevlevi order. It is a customary meditation practice performed within the Sema, or worship ceremony in Islamic mysticism and its aim is to reach the source of all perfection, or kemal. This is sought through abandoning one's egos or personal desires, by listening to the music, focusing on God, and spinning one's body in repetitive circles, which has been seen as a symbolic imitation of planets in the Solar System orbiting the sun. In the symbolism of the Sema ritual, the semazen's camel's hair hat (sikke) represents the tombstone of the ego; his wide, white skirt (*tennure*) represents the ego's shroud. By removing his black cloak (*hırka*), he is spiritually reborn to the truth. At the beginning of the Sema, by holding his arms crosswise, the semazen appears to represent the number one, thus testifying to God's unity. While whirling, his arms are open: his right arm is directed to the sky, ready to receive God's beneficence; his left hand, upon which his eyes are fastened, is turned toward the earth. The semazen conveys God's spiritual gift to those who are witnessing the Sema. Revolving from right to left around the heart, the semazen embraces all humanity with love. The human being has been created with love in order to love. Mevlâna Jalâluddîn Rumi says, «All loves are a bridge to Divine love. Yet, those who have not had a taste of it do not know!»

14: **Mandala symbol**

The Sanskrit word *mandala* means 'circle' in the ordinary sense of the word. In the sphere of religious practices and in psychology it denotes circular images, which are drawn, painted, modeled, or danced. Plastic structures of this kind are as dance figures found, for instance, in Tibetan Buddhism, and the dance figures these circular patterns create also in Dervish monasteries.[11]

11. Frithjof Schuon used the phrase "Religio Perennis" that refers to the essential function of human intelligence which divided the Real from illusory or the Permanent and the impermanent.

13 14



## CONCLUSION

In interpreting symbolism, differences exist between the religious studies' interpretation and the philosophical point of view. In religious studies symbols connote the same meaning as icons and similar to how Mircea Elide examined his patterns in comparative religion. Symbols become religious symbols during history, but from the philosophical point of view, when we talk about symbols and symbolism, we address the archetypes of symbols from its higher reality or its higher existence.

Muslim philosophers in their metahistorical symbolic stories mentioned the hierarchy of existence and Man's role in the Universe ; for instance *Shahab ud-Din Suhrawardi* in his *Purple Intellect,* which is symbolic travel writing, describes the creation of the intellect and The Fall of Man and the process of his development.

Symbolism in Buddhism mention a Buddha being present in all things: "The matrix of Buddhahood permeates all sentient being[12] . All beings are therefore Buddha in themselves. Yet they are veiled by temporal defilements; once the defilements are cleansed, then will they be Buddhas."

In conclusion, understanding symbolism is the reality that allows understanding the hierarchy of being at different levels of existence. The understanding of symbolism and Archetypes is one the significant points of the *perennial philosophy'*s message that criticize the modern world because of its separation from the Higher Reality or metaphysical truths.

12. In this content the philosophy and religion have same meaning.

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# -II-
# ETHICS

# A UNIVERSAL BUDDHIST APPROACH TO ENHANCEMENT OF HUMAN VALUES FOR THE REFURBISHMENT OF A SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY

by R.M. Rathnasiri *

ABSTRACT

One prominent aspect of the perpetual amelioration of any human society is the enhancement of human values and qualities for a sustainable society. Almost all aspects of equity, justice and human dignity in the contemporary world beleaguered by extreme materialism, social atrocities, disparities, mal-governance, undue imperial intervention and religious dogmatism are being atrociously jeopardized in the absence of human values, and this becomes worse on account of the intensity of the root cankers such as extreme greed, ill-will and delusion incurring in man inimical egocentricity that leads to callous exploitation, malpractice, unwholesome livelihood, problematic and mental states at the expense of happiness, social justice, peace and harmony. Human values according to Buddhist tenets are entirely enhanced not in divine inspiration but in human's potential for the reciprocal wellbeing of humankind, environment, mental and physical phenomena based on the universal human values enhanced through universal Buddhist

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principles such as twofold right view, five Buddhist moral policies that safeguard human rights, the purity of morality, right livelihood, sixty one obligations, moderateness in threefold action, forty four effacements (sallekha), four sublime abodes (brahmavihāra), oneness of mankind that establishes equality, principles of good governance, etc. To surmount the aforementioned degradation in qualities in individual, family, social contexts, etc., universally adoptable human values should be enhanced in multidimensional aspects in individual, social, educational, economic, professional, political, mental, spiritual and cognitive contexts by means of universally adoptable Buddhist principles for the refurbishment of a globally sustainable society in the contemporary world.

## INTRODUCTION

Human values such as moral purity, loving-kindness, compassion, altruism, equanimity, generosity, righteousness, considerateness, tolerance, pliability, simplicity impartiality, integrity, uprightness, modesty, moderateness, restraint in senses, etc. based on one's own mental, verbal and bodily actions should be endowed with twofold right view which is the forerunner of all mental physical phenomena. Absence of human values gives rise to multifarious detrimental mental states like selfishness, hatred, jealousy, etc. and problematic behaviors like killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, falsehood, wrong livelihood, exploitation, despotism, dogmatism, etc. which rouse chaotic tensions and miseries in individual, family, social, professional, economic, political, cultural and religious contexts in the society.

## ADOPTION OF ALL-ENCOMPASSING BUDDHIST APPROACH TO ENHANCE HUMAN VALUES

Wellbeing of the mankind in every echelon in the modern society is to be refurbished through the enhancement of human values and qualities in an all-inclusive Buddhist approach that is of universally adoptable potential to bring about a sustainable society irrespective of caste, creed, clan, colour, ethnicity, territory, profession since any discrimination in any aspect is not at all welcome in Buddhism. Human values according to Buddhist stand are entirely exposed in human's potential and can be enhanced

through a Buddhist approach which encompasses universally adoptable principles in ethical, behavioral, mental and cognitive aspects for the refurbishment of a sustainable society. Wholesome behavioral aspects based on the purity of morality (*sīla visuddhi*) as in *Rathavinītha Sutta*, threefold purity in Right speech, Right action and Right livelihood as in *Mahācattārīsaka Sutta*, wholesome behavior as revealed in the Suttas like *Sikkhā*, *Saṅgīti*, *Vyagghapajja*, *Cunda Kammāraputta*, *Sāleyyaka*, all aspects of human development elaborated in the *Sallekha Sutta* etc. conduce to enhance human values for a sustainable society.

## ENHANCEMENT OF HUMAN VALUES IN ETHICAL CONTEXT

The five moral rules which develop ethical deportment enhance human values in individual, family and social life. The observance of the moral rules (precepts) by all the humans in the society safeguards not only the overall human values but also the fundamental Human Rights advocated in the UN Human Rights Convention. For instance, refrain from of killing, stealing, sexual misbehavior, falsehood and taking intoxicants safeguards the basic human rights – right of every man to protect one's life, right of every man to protect his wealth and property, right of every man to lead a peaceful family life, right of every man to know true information and right of every man to keep peace of mind. Thus, the five moral rules lay the foundation for the enhancement of human ethical qualities safeguarding human values which protect human rights bringing about sustainable peace, harmony and trustworthiness in family and society.

## ENHANCEMENT OF HUMAN VALUES IN SUSTAINABLE BEHAVIOURAL CONTEXT

According to the Kodhavagga of the Dhammapada, "*Kāyena saṁvutā dhīrā – atho vācāya saṁvarā, Manasā saṁvutā dhīra – te ve suparisaṁvutā*" (Dhp. Ch.17. V. 234. P.195 – 196), the wise are controlled in bodily action, speech and thought. The three good practices of body, speech and mind, the three forms of purity – purity of body speech and mind and the three perfections – perfection of body, speech and mind are the fundamental moral prerequisites which lay the moral foundation for the enhancement

of human values. As the *Cunda Kammāraputta Sutta* (AN. Vol. V. 10.176. PTS. P.175) explains, being pure in skillful verbal actions in four ways – (1) by abandoning and abstaining from false speech, (2) divisive speech, (3) abusive speech, (4) by speaking words worth treasuring, seasonable, reasonable, circumscribed, enhances behavioral human qualities that illuminate human values. The three kinds of bodily conduct in accordance with the Dhamma introduced in the *Sāleyyaka Sutta*, (MN 41. p. 380) Namely, (1) abandoning the killing of living beings and becoming one who abstains from killing living beings, (2) taking what is not given and (3) from misconduct in sexual desires are behavioral prerequisites that safeguard human values in its overall sense. The reciprocal performance of 61 ethical obligations as exposed in the *Siṅgālaka Sutta* enhances human values in family, educational, professional, economic, social and religious contexts refurbishing a sustainable society.

According to the *Vyagghapajja Sutta* (AN. Vol. IV. 8.54. PTS. P. 187 ff.), the conditions of welfare such as persistent effort (*uṭṭhāna-sampadā*), the accomplishment of watchfulness (*ārakkha-sampadā*), good friendship (*kalyāṇamittatā)*, a balanced livelihood (*sama-jīvikatā*), the accomplishment of faith (*saddhā-sampadā*), virtue (*sīla-sampadā*), charity (*cāga-sampadā*) and the accomplishment of wisdom (*paññā-sampadā*) develop man's dignity by developing moral and wholesome behavioral qualities as well as spiritual qualities for both mundane and supramundane life. One who allows himself to become stained by the blemishes of immoral conduct that causes one's downfall as elucidated in the *Parābhava Sutta* blocks his own road to worldly, moral and spiritual progress and lowers all that is truly noble and human in man's values and dignity. Buddhist ethics elaborated as thirty-eight blessings (the factors that bring about happiness and prosperity) in the *Mahā Maṅgala Sutta* rightly and comprehensively refurbish human values enhancing moral and spiritual progress. These ethics in the form of blessings starting with "avoidance of evil company" develop human values to a higher level that brings about sustainable harmony and progress for the individual as well as for society, nation and mankind and also culminate in the achievement of a passion-free mind unshakable in its serenity.

## ENHANCEMENT OF HUMAN VALUES BY LEADING A SIMPLE AND BALANCED LIFE

The ethical prerequisites shown in the *Metta Sutta* (Sn. P. PTS. 126 ff.) encompass a simple life with fewness of wishes, satisfaction (*santussako*), a light living (*sallahukavutti*) with few duties (*appakicco*), less attachment and less craving, a balanced livelihood (*sama-jīvikatā*) are obligatory behavioural prerequisites which make one endowed with human values of universal potential. As the *Vyagghapajja Sutta* reveals regarding balanced livelihood (*sama-jīvikatā*), a householder knowing his income and expenses should lead a balanced life, neither extravagant nor miserly, knowing that thus his income will stand in excess of his expenses, but not his expenses in excess of his income. The four sources for the increase of amassed wealth through right living – (1) abstinence from debauchery, (2) drunkenness, (3) non-indulgence in gambling, (4) companionship with the good should be developed to lead a simple and balanced life that perpetually maintain human values in its true authenticity.

## RIGHT LIVELIHOOD FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF HUMAN VALUES

Although man is supreme among all other beings on Earth, he has no right to dominate other beings and the environment destroying the mutual and peaceful dependent existence. Human supremacy is to be enriched not through selfish dominance but through the enhancement of human values. Wrong livelihood (*micchā* ājīva) increases selfish exploitation and deteriorates human dignity and its values as engagement in unwholesome occupations destroys values and degrades wholesome qualities in individual, family, society and the whole world in every aspect. According to the *Maggavibhaṅga Sutta* (SN. 45.8. WPB. PP. 1528 – 1529.), right livelihood (*sammā* ājīva), is the abandonment of dishonest livelihood and keeping one's life going with right livelihood through righteous means not through detrimental ways of earning, and so Right livelihood is a preliminary requisite that protects and enhances values of man. As the *Vaṇijjā Sutta* (AN. Vol. III. 5.177. PTS. P.153.) elucidates, the five types of occupations that a

person should not be engaged are wrong livelihood (*micchā* ājīva)– business in weapons (*sattha*), human beings (*satta*) meat (*maṅsa*), intoxicants (*majja*) and poison (*visa*), and other evil and unethical means of livelihood like adulteration (*missikaraṇa*), false weighing (*tulākūṭa*), false measuring (*mānakūṭa*), counterfeit metal or false gold (*kaṃsakūṭa*), dealing with perverting justice or crookedness (*ukkoṭana*), deceitfulness (*vañcana*), fraud or dishonesty (*nikati*), etc. The mind of one who is engaged in such wrong business or occupations becomes unkind, ruthless, rough, wicked, cruel and immoral and destroys individuals, family and society spoiling the human values and dignity. Hence, Right livelihood advocated in Buddhist teachings should be adopted by everyone in every stratum in the modern society to enhance the values of man which is in turn conducive to sustainable peace and harmony among everyone in the society.

## ENHANCEMENT OF HUMAN VALUES THROUGH THE CONCEPT 'ONENESS OF MANKIND'

Oneness of mankind that rejects caste discrimination, etc. enhances human values for a sustainable existence. Oneness of man which is a universal concept as advocated in Buddhism prevents the discrimination of man on the delusive ground of caste, clan, creed, birth, colour, race, territory, occupation, etc. develops human values and dignity. Everyman in the world is of five aggregates, a psycho-physical combination. According to biological, physical, psychological, ethical and mental factors as exposed in the Suttas like *Assalāyana, Vasala, Vāseṭṭha, Ambaṭṭha, Soṇadaṇḍa, etc.*, oneness of man is proved and man cannot be discriminated as high or low by birth, colour, occupation, etc. but by values like virtue, wisdom, etc. According to the *Assalāyana Sutta* (MN. 93. WPB. P.763.), caste, race, social class, national identity, etc. do not determine man's virtue or spiritual potential. As the *Vasala Sutta* (Sn. 1.7. WPB. P.174.) exposes, man is neither low nor high according to his birth but by virtue. Thus, the adoption of this universal Buddhist view on oneness of mankind enhances human values in their overall aspects that lead to refurbish sustainable peace, equality, harmony and justice in the society.

## ENHANCEMENT OF HUMAN VALUES THROUGH THE TWO BRIGHT QUALITIES

The two bright qualities – Moral shame (*hiri*) and Moral dread (*ottappa*) that protect the world also greatly enhance human values. In the absence of these two bright principles that protect the world, the world would fall into promiscuity as with goats, sheep, chickens, pigs, dogs, and jackals and there would not be discerned respect for one's mother, maternal aunt or maternal uncle's wife or a teacher's wife or the wives of other honored persons. The two dark qualities – moral shamelessness and moral recklessness (AN.2.7.WPB. P. 143) makes the world promiscuous destroying human values and dignity. The presence of the two bright principles – shame and fear of wrongdoing (*hiri-ottappa*) protects the world establishing discerned respect for mother maternal aunt or maternal uncle's wife or a teacher's wife or the wives of other honored persons as elucidated in the *Lokapāla Sutta*.(AN.2.9. P.143) Thus, moral shame and moral dread establishes the basis for the moral and mental deportment that enhances human values for a sustainable society.

## ENHANCEMENT OF HUMAN VALUES IN SPIRITUAL QUALITIES

Human values and qualities can be enhanced up to a higher level through the Four Sublime Abodes (*brahmavihāra*) (*Brahmavihāra Sutta*),– loving-kindness (*mettā*), compassion (*karuṇā*), altruistic joy (*muditā*) and equanimity (*upekkhā*). They are known as abodes *(vihāra)* since they should become one's mind's constant dwelling-places. The mind should become thoroughly endowed with them and these four sublime abodes should become inseparable qualities in one's common activities. When loving-kindness is cultivated towards people irrespective of caste, race or social status, etc., compassion is practised in family and social life in every context, joy is altruistically felt and wished in others' success and victory leading no place for jealousy and equanimous attitude is maintained in the vicissitude of life. Thus, the four sublime abodes enhance human values providing answers to all situations arising from social contact, removing tension, bringing about sustainable peace against social conflicts, healing wounds suffered in the struggle of existence,

levelling social barriers, building harmonious communities, reviving joy and developing human brotherhood against the forces of selfishness, jealousy and anger. Thus, the four sublime abodes conduce to enhance human values of higher potential power for refurbishment of a sustainable society.

## ENHANCEMENT OF HUMAN VALUES IN MENTAL AND COGNITIVE ASPECTS

Enhancement of mental and cognitive aspects such as six recollections of good qualities (*Mahānāma Sutta*) (AN. Vol. V. 11. 12. PTS. P. 210.), purity in threefold mental actions (*Cunda Kammāraputta Sutta*) (AN.Vol. V. 10.176. PTS. P. 175.), the three kinds of mental conduct in accordance with the Dhamma (*Sāleyyaka Sutta*) (MN.41. WPB. P. 380 – 381.), 44 effacements (*Sallekha Sutta*) (MN.8. WPB. P. 125 ff.), recollection of good qualities of the Buddha, Dhamma, *Saṅgha*, one's own virtue, one's own generosity and deities as mentioned in the *Mahānāma Sutta* (AN. Vol. V. 11. 12. PTS. P. 210.) and elaborated in the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. Ch. VII. Para 1. P. 204 ff.) makes one's mind not overwhelmed by intense passion, intense aversion and intense delusion. This provides one with psychological strength which prevents moral and spiritual decline and in turn enhances human values and dignity. Human values can also be enhanced based on wholesome mental actions, states and qualities that conduce to mental purity. The *Cunda Kammāraputta Sutta* explains that one is made pure in three ways by mental actions (AN. Vol. V. 10.176. PTS. P. 175.). (1) Refraining from coveting the belongings of others thinking that what belongs to others would be his. (2) By bearing no ill-will and not corrupt in the resolves of his heart thinking, 'May these beings be free from animosity, free from oppression, free from trouble and they look after themselves with ease!' (3) By having right view that there is what is given, what is offered and what is sacrificed. There are fruits and results of good and bad actions. There is this world and the next world. There is mother and father. There are spontaneously reborn beings; there are priests and contemplatives who, faring rightly and practising rightly, proclaim this world and the next after having directly known and realized it for themselves (Vol. V. 10.176. PTS. P. 176.).

One is made pure in three ways by skillful mental actions and this threefold mental purity is an essential mental prerequisite for enhancement of human values. The three kinds of mental conduct in accordance with the Dhamma as exposed in the *Sāleyyaka Sutta* (MN.41. WPB. P. 380 – 381.) are mental prerequisites for enhancing human values. They are (1) not being covetous and not being a coveter of another's property, (2) having no mind of ill-will, with the intention of a mind unaffected by hate and (3) having right view, undistorted vision that there is what is given and what is offered and what is sacrificed, and there is fruit and ripening of good and bad kammas, and there is this world and the other world and mother and father and spontaneously (born) beings, and good and virtuous monks and brahmins that have themselves realized by direct knowledge and declared this world and the other world. (MN. 41. WPB. P. 380 – 381. ) Mental qualities purified in three skillful mental actions as elucidated above enhance man's values.

## ENHANCEMENT OF HUMAN VALUES THROUGH RIGHT VIEW

The twofold Right View is exposed in the *Mahācattārīsaka Sutta* (MN.117. WPB. P. 934.) are also significant for the enhancement of human values for a sustainable society. Human values are deteriorated through the commitment of evil actions in the absence of Right view. Hence, human values should also be enhanced through Right view. Bhikkhu Bodhi says that *Majjhima Aṭṭhakathā* explains Right View as twofold: mundane and supramundane. Mundane Right View is again twofold: the view that kamma produces its fruits and the view that accords with the Four Noble Truths. Supramundane Right View is the understanding of the Four Noble Truths attained by penetrating to the Four Paths and the Fruits of sanctity (MN. 9. 114. WPB. P. 1184.). This is the right view that has merit and results in acquisition. This right view that enhances the moral life is a prerequisite for development of human values for a sustainable society. Ven. Sāriputta, in the *Sammādiṭṭhi Sutta* details that one with unwavering confidence (*aveccappasāda*) in the Dhamma is to develop right view (*sammadiṭṭhi*) on the wholesome and the unwholesome, nutriment, the Four Noble Truths, the Twelve Factors of dependent origination and the taints. (MN. 9. WPB. P. 132 ff.) Right view on the unwholesome, the root

of the unwholesome, wholesome and the root of wholesome is to be developed. The unwholesome is killing living beings, taking what is not given, misconduct in sensual pleasures, false speech, malicious speech, harsh speech, gossip, covetousness, ill-will, wrong view. The root of the unwholesome is greed, hatred and delusion. The wholesome is the abstention from the unwholesome mentioned above and the root of the wholesome is non-greed, non-hatred and non-delusion (MN. 9. WPB. P. 133.). Thus, Right view which helps one's mind to refrain from the unwholesome but to engage in the wholesome enhances human values that are mandatory for a sustainable society. According to the *Mahācattārīsaka Sutta*, Right view is the forerunner as one discerns wrong view as wrong view, and right view as right view, right resolve as right resolve and wrong resolve as wrong resolve, right speech as right speech and wrong speech as wrong speech, right action as right action and wrong action as wrong action and right livelihood as right livelihood and wrong livelihood as wrong livelihood (MN. 117. WPB. P. 934.). Thus, the individual who has such an awareness of right view that enhances the moral life is of full of human values.

## COMPREHENSIVE ENHANCEMENT OF HUMAN VALUES THROUGH SALLEKHAPAṬIPADĀ

Development of effacement as elaborated in the *Sallekha Sutta* (MN. 8. WPB. P. 125 ff.), on thought's arising, on avoidance, on the way upward and on quenching is a very important mental and cognitive development for the enhancement of human values to their highest levels. The instructions on effacement that should be practised by any person to enhance human values are as follows (MN. 8. WPB. P. 125 ff.) (1) not to be harmful although others are harmful. (2) to abstain from killing living beings. (3) to abstain from taking what is not given. (4) to be chaste. (5) to abstain from false speech. (6) to abstain from malicious speech. (7) to abstain from harsh speech. (8) to abstain from gossip. (9) not to be covetous. (10) not to have thoughts of ill will. (11) to have right view. (12) to have right intention. (13) to have right speech. (14) do right actions.(15) to have right livelihood.(16) to make right effort. (17) to have right mindfulness. (18) to have right concentration. (19) to have right knowledge. (20) to have right deliverance. (21) to be free

from sloth and torpor. (22) to be unagitated. (23) free from doubt. (24) not to be angry. (25) not to be hostile. (26) not to denigrate. (27) not to be domineering. (28) not to be envious. (29) not to be jealous. (30) not to be fraudulent. (31) not to be hypocrites. (32) not to be obstinate. (33) not to be arrogant. (34) to be easy to admonish. (35) to have noble friends. (36) to be heedful. (37) to be faithful. (38) to be shameful. (39) to have conscience. (40) to be learned. (41) to be energetic. (42) to be established in mindfulness. (43) to be endowed with wisdom. (44) not misapprehend according to individual views nor hold on to them tenaciously, but shall discard them with ease. Effacement as exposed in the *Sallekka sutta* comprehensively enhances human values to a higher level required for a sustainable existence in the modern society.

## CONCLUSION

According to Buddhism, human values are entirely enhanced in human's potential for the reciprocal wellbeing of humankind based on Buddhist principles that can be adopted in all pervading dimensions. Human values essential for a sustainable existence in every aspect in the contemporary society should be enhanced in multidimensional aspects in behavioural (moral), spiritual (mental) and cognitive (wisdom) capacities for the wellbeing of entire mankind and environment by means of a Buddhist approach which encompasses universally adoptable principles for the refurbishment of a globally sustainable society where justice, prosperity, peace, harmony, happiness are enhanced in individual, family, social, educational, economic, professional and political and environmental contexts.

## ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| AN: | *Aṅguttara Nikāya* |
| Dhp: | *Dhammapada* |
| MN: | *Majjhima Nikāya* |
| PTS: | Pali Text Society |
| SN: | *Saṃyutta Nikāya* |
| Sp: | *Suttanipāta / Sutta–Nipāta* |
| Vsm: | *Vusuddhimagga* |
| WPB: | *Wisdom Publication, Boston* |

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# HOLISTIC BUDDHIST APPROACH TO GLOBAL EDUCATION IN ETHICS

by G. K. Ananda Kumaraseri*

**ABSTRACT**

Education is one of the most misunderstood words in the English language. To compound matters, educators and policy makers differ in their perception and definition on what an education system ought to constitute. It is little wonder that the systems of secular education around the world today are very much wanting and grossly questionable? Numerous indices point to a failure of secular education systems. Beyond question, the formulation and implementation of a sound education system represents a highly critical and urgent challenge facing the world today. It is against this backdrop that Buddhist Education and Pedagogy is presented as a holistic approach to global education in ethics.

A critical starting point is for us to first of all have a right understanding of education and what the term embodies. Education is to draw out the human being in us. An underlying concern of education is the success, well-being and happiness of all people. These overriding objectives of education are to be secured, among other avenues, through the formulation and implementation of a sound education system. In this regard, it is to be noted that a Holistic Buddhist Education is well geared to ensure the total development of a people. Indeed, such a holistic education which embodies a

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Buddhist approach to global education in morals, ethics, human values and righteousness would most certainly help people to live purposeful and happy lives, regardless of their religious beliefs, cultural background, ethnicity, gender, social status and station in life.

We need to recognize that by merely teaching morals and ethics and what is righteous or un-righteous in the conventional way does not automatically transform a person's thinking, speech and behavior. If so, then every student should put into practice whatever he or she had learnt in school. This is certainly not the case for a person does not automatically become what he or she has been taught. That is why, so very often, we come across persons who know all about the undesirable effects of social ills and the painful consequence of committing a crime, yet, may think and behave in such ways which are diametrically contrary to what they know. This is because their minds have remained uncultured and untrained. Unfortunately, in most education systems, skillful cultivation of the mind is not included in the curriculum. This fundamental pre-requisite of the cultivation of the mind which is entrenched in Holistic Buddhist Education is to be gainfully implemented in the Buddhist approach to Global Education in morals, ethics, human values and righteous living.

Aside from highlighting the relevance of Holistic Buddhist Education in ensuring success, well-being and happiness, the paper outlines the rich history and dynamism of the Supremely Self-enlightened Buddha's Pedagogy or teaching methods and techniques. It is significant to note here that the Buddha's Taxonomy of Learning of pariyatti, patipatti and pativeda, preceded by over 2,500 years, Bloom's Taxonomy of the three domains of learning, namely cognitive, affective and psychomotor domain, which is regarded as the cornerstone of modern secular education. Holistic Buddhist Education incorporates a number of other significant guidelines for educating and grooming our younger generation. These include the paramount importance of cultivating a wholesome mental culture which is glaringly absent in modern secular education. Equally significant, is the Buddha's pedagogy of teaching by example. The Buddha's stress on the cultivation and progressive purification of the mind has been amply validated by modern science and

researches. This again can indeed be gainfully incorporated into the Buddhist approach to global education in morals, ethics, human values, wholesome righteous living. In addition, the social, cultural and civilizational dimensions of Holistic Buddhist Education may be adopted and adapted in all climes given their intrinsic values to all humankind. It must be stressed that many invaluable guidelines may be drawn from a better understanding and appreciation of Buddhist Education and Pedagogy. These can be readily adopted and adapted into the systems of education on a global footing. Thus, Holistic Buddhist Education and Pedagogy are presented with a tremendous opportunity to address the serious failures in education systems in general, and specifically, to imbue morals, ethics, human values and righteous living among peoples, regardless of the climes. This task obviously calls for a pooling of expertise, resources, educational materials, teaching tools, research, training and various forms of co-operation among Buddhist organizations and institutions from all around the world.

One of the most striking features of today's world is the vastly higher quality of life. Among other visible aspects is that more children receive a basic education. Also, educational facilities and other inputs are far superior. However, the systems of secular education around the world have generally failed. The failure is all the more paradoxical when we consider that the underlying purpose of education is to promote wholesome thinking and behaviour by ensuring rational, competent, responsible, contended, humane and happy citizens. The unprecedented exacerbation of social ills and crimes among all strata of society is glaring evidence of this. The bourgeoning number of adolescents, youths and adults who are guilty of delinquent behavior underscores the need to meet the real goals and expectations of education. The foregoing cogent facts compel an urgent and critical re-evaluation of the curriculum content as well as the pedagogy of contemporary secular education systems as a matter of global priority. Herein lays the significance, and indeed, the imperative of advancing the Buddhist approach to Global Education in morals, ethics, human values and wholesome living. Buddhist Education and Pedagogy are well endowed to effectively imbue morals, ethics, human values and wholesome righteous living among people which are desperately needed in contemporary

society. In this regard, many invaluable guidelines may be drawn from a better understanding and appreciation of Buddhist Education and Pedagogy. Further, the rich Buddhist heritage can be readily adopted and adapted into contemporary secular education systems. This clarion call demands a pooling of expertise, resources, educational materials, teaching tools, research, training and various forms of co-operation and collaboration among educational organisations and institutions.

Given the limitation on wordage prescribed, this paper perforce can only outline some of the more significant elements of this global challenge, which also significantly presents a challenge, and at the same time, a great opportunity for the global Buddhist fraternity to make a profound contribution for the benefit of all humankind.

## FAILURE OF SECULAR EDUCATION SYSTEMS

Modern secular education systems are plagued by serious shortcomings. Foremost is the failure to draw out fully the wholesome human qualities innate in students and enable them to realise their full inborn potential. This represents a fundamental goal of education in the correct meaning of the term. Regrettably, despite the vastly greater spread of educational opportunities and facilities available today, progressively increasing numbers of adolescents and youths are found to be unethical, immoral and delinquent in thinking and behaviour. Ever-increasingly frightful numbers are involved in substance abuse, gangsterism, sexual misconduct and other serious social ills and crimes. Equally alarming is the fact that today the age of offenders recorded is shockingly as low as 9 years old, who invariably drop out of school and the education system. They usually get into all sorts of problems and troubles with the school authorities and the law. Also, though morals, ethics, civics and religious studies may be included in curriculums, often they are not effectively taught and thus have failed to pre-empt the steep degeneration in contemporary society.

## ADVANCING FROM KNOWING TO BEING VIDE CULTIVATION OF THE MIND

The general expectation of education is to produce responsible,

cultured and socially equipped citizens of sound character. It logically follows that those who are educated would avoid actions that are harmful to them and to others. But while students may be taught to distinguish between wholesome and unwholesome thoughts, speech and actions, it does not necessarily follow that they have imbued these elements, especially since the wherewithal of '*being*' or '*living*' righteously is overlooked. *'Knowing'* about the dangers of the various social ills and crimes does not mean that a person would automatically avoid unwholesome activities. We need to just ask any youngster who abuses drugs or indulges in any social ill or commits a crime as to whether he or she was aware of the wrongdoing. The response in almost every case is an unequivocal yes. The same goes with various other serious breaches in morals and ethics, despite the offenders having been taught these subject-matters.

By teaching morals and ethics and what is righteous or unrighteous does not necessarily condition students' thinking, speech and actions. If this was so, then every student should scrupulously live according to what is taught in school. That is why, so very often, we come across persons who know all about the undesirable effects of social ills and the serious consequence of committing crimes, yet act diametrically contrary to what they know. This is principally because their minds have remained uncultured and untrained, notwithstanding the education they received. Copious other examples abound of people whose thinking and behaviour run contrary to the knowledge they possess about the various wrongdoings they commit. A classic illustration is found among medical doctors. Many of them smoke though they know only too well about the serious damage this causes to one's health and also to others who are subjected to secondary smoking. We frequently come across obese nutritionists and dieticians whose very profession is to regulate among patients a balanced diet and so on.

The point to note is that these wrongdoers know about the impropriety of their actions. They committed the wrongs not due to a lack of teaching, or learning, or knowledge, but because of the failure to internalize a righteous wholesome life through the cultivation of a wholesome mental culture. They would then

think, speak and act righteously in accordance with the moral, ethical and righteousness compass that is implanted through a trained or cultivated mind. A right understanding of the mind and the cultivation of a wholesome mental culture as stressed by the Supremely Self-enlightened Buddha thus should form an integral of the global education in morals, ethics and righteousness and wholesome living.

It is most unfortunate that in most education systems, skillful cultivation of the mind is not included in the school curriculum. Cultivation of the mind, among other important goals of education, enhances mindfulness of all our thoughts, speech and actions. This fundamental goal of education which is deeply entrenched in Holistic Buddhist Education may be gainfully incorporated into modern secular education systems.

## TOWARDS A RIGHT UNDERSTANDING OF EDUCATION

It would be useful at this juncture to examine briefly the correct meaning and purpose of education. This will enable us to better appreciate how best we can address the serious flaws in modern education systems, including the pitfalls that are evident in teaching morals, ethics, human values and righteousness. A primary goal of education is to draw the innate capabilities, talents and skills in individuals and to help them to develop as well groomed, responsible, righteous human beings. This entails their total development, which includes their physical, emotional, social, psychological, cultural and spiritual make-up in preparation for future adult life. As such, education should not be concerned with merely providing knowledge on various secular subject-matters falling within the prescribed curriculum, but also aim to bring about a holistic development of students to include the cultivation of the mind and imbuing morals, ethics, civics, human values, righteousness and living.

It is to be noted that since the agricultural and industrial revolutions, virtually all secular education systems derived from the Western world have failed to adhere to this underlying goal of education. This is because their primary objective of education was to produce employable persons for to meet the workforce for the

ever-expanding agricultural and industrial enterprises. This narrow concept of education continues to be promoted through rout learning and the '*paper chase-job orientated'* education systems and culture which are clearly evident across the world.

It is gratifying to note that in sharp contrast a holistic approach to education which is deeply embedded in Buddhist Education goes well beyond the narrow objective of obtaining a paper qualification in order to be gainful employment. Without question, education should not aim to simply churn out what may be termed as *'human robots'*. No doubt facts, data and information are essential for one to evaluate matters and to make objective and balanced actionable decisions. But this should not be the primary goal of education systems. However impressive a person's knowledge may be, if she or he cannot utilise his or her thinking ability and innate personal skills and talents to contribute towards a safer, sustainable, enriching world, then the education received would be of limited relevance to society.

A Holistic Buddhist Approach to Global Education in ethics significantly entails the development of a complete human being. The overriding goal is to produce well-adjusted rational citizens who harmoniously relate with and feel for other members of society and Nature around in a wholly humane, moral and ethical and righteous ways. This involves the painstaking preparation to live successful, purposeful lives guided by sound moral and ethical conduct and an ever-abiding sense and responsibility to live accordingly. Based on the foregoing understanding of holistic education, schools would eschew unhealthy features and trends such as pressurizing students to rely on route learning and memorization in order to score as many straight A's. Regrettably exaltation of super-scores in prescribed examinations typifies contemporary secular education systems. Instead, due attention should be placed on right understanding and thinking, enhancement of living skills and innate potential, and, the development of sound emotional, social, cultural and spiritual make up through cultivation of the mind. Such a holistic education would create a society characterised by humanism, high morals and ethics and a deep commitment to social responsibility. This means that schools would function as nurturing and caring environments where children are seen, accepted and treated as special in their own

making. In addition, schools would provide learning environments that enable students to develop at their own pace, according to their particular personality and the innate talents and skills they possess individually.

## HOLISTIC BUDDHIST APPROACH TO TEACHING AND LEARNING

A quick glimpse of Buddhist Education and Pedagogy would serve to provide a better understanding and appreciation of holistic education that may be gainfully incorporated into the envisaged Global Education in Ethics, regardless of the clime. In a sentence, Buddhism is a practical and disciplined way of life that is steeped in morals, ethics, human values, and above all, the cultivation of a wholesome mental culture to ensure righteous thinking and wholesome living. The Dhamma the Buddha unraveled spells out in precise terms daily practices that are to be ingrained for living a fulfilling live. Indeed, the Buddha's Teaching provides in clear precise terms a comprehensive education and a self-training framework to help us to actualize a meaningful, peaceful and happy life. That is why it is often asserted that Buddhism is a practical as well as a self-directed complete education and comprehensive training program for actualizing one's innate potential in life and lasting happiness. Simultaneously, by understanding and practicing the Buddha Dhamma through the holistic education system, we would be able to face the wide spectrum of aversions, anxiety-producing tensions, worries, fears and stresses which we constantly encounter in the high-pressured and hurried modern world we live in.

Typical of the Buddha's approach to teaching, learning and training is the practical way He taught the Sublime Dhamma. His pedagogy or teaching and training methods and techniques are applicable to all human beings, regardless of their religious beliefs, cultural background, gender, ethnicity, social status or station in life. The Buddha's Teaching had a singular orientation to the present existing condition one invariably is confronted in life. Further the Buddha advised us to have a Right Understanding or Right Perspective, in particular of the realities of human existence and Nature all around us. Realism and reality are cornerstones of Buddhist Education. Reason and logic are deeply embedded in the Buddha's holistic approach to teaching and stress on self-directed

learning and training. True to the rational being the Buddha personified, he emphasised that by merely resorting to external worship, ceremonies and prayers and to supplication from an almighty Creator God, one cannot expect to progress and realise one's full potential. He likened this to one wishfully asking the opposite bank of the river to move closer in order to get across to the other side. Without the commitment of one's positive, personal effort to cross the river one will not be able to get to the yonder bank. In the same vein, without a firm commitment and right effort or *viriya* to rightly understand and practice the Dhamma, one cannot expect to realise a successful, wholesome, happy and peaceful life. These principles of holistic education are as relevant today as in the time of the Buddha and need to be infused in the Global Education in Ethics.

Based on the foregoing brief insight, Holistic Buddhist Education represents a practical, clear-cut and comprehensive tried and tested comprehensive education as well as a complete self-directed training program that is to be practised in daily life. It encompasses a method and technique of living that help us to effectively meet the various problems and challenges we face in life and to make the best of the limitless opportunities that life offers.

Buddhist Education is far from being an academic pursuit to satisfy one's intellectual gratification. On the contrary, Buddhist Education calls for resolute self-effort and a firm commitment to skilfully train oneself by *'living'* the Dhamma. Towards this end, Buddhist Education engages one's emotions as much as one's mental culture by emphasising the wholesome cultivation and purification of the mind. The Buddha did not want us to blindly follow His Noble Teaching. It was for this reason that He consistently laid stressed on self-reliance, self-effort, self-inquiry, intellectual curiosity, intellectual freedom and intellectual integrity as among the cardinal requirements for us to actualize success, wellbeing, happiness and inner peace here and now in this very life. Imbuing of morals, ethics and the cultivation of a wholesome mental culture etc. are ingrained in Buddhist Education and Pedagogy. These ingredients of holistic education and can readily be incorporated into the Global Education in Ethics.

## CULTIVATION OF A WHOLESOME MENTAL SELF-CULTURE: THE KEY

Thus, a primary object of the Buddhist Approach to Global Education in Ethics is to develop *sila* (virtues), *samadhi* (a wholesome mental self-culture through purification of the mind) and attain *panna* (Insight Wisdom). The purification of one's mind forms its very kernel. In recognising the pivotal role of the mind, the Buddha placed high emphasis on understanding its nature and the need for us to develop mindfulness through self-discipline and meditation. This fundamental Teaching is underlined in the very first two passages of the Dhammapada:

*The mind precedes all mental states.*
*The mind is their chief;*
*They are all mind-wrought.*
*If, with impure mind a person speaks or acts,*
*Suffering follows like the wheels that follow the hoofs of an ox.*
*The mind precedes all mental states.*
*The mind is their chief;*
*They are all mind-wrought.*
*If, with pure mind a person speaks or acts,*
*Happiness follows him like his never-departing shadow.*

## DYNAMICS OF BUDDHIST PEDAGOGY TO GLOBAL EDUCATION IN ETHICS

The paramount importance given to the development of a wholesome mental self-culture which is unique to Buddhist Education is also distinctly evidenced in the importance given to the psycho-motor domain of learning. Buddhist approach to Global Education in morals, ethics, human values and righteousness can be effectively imbued through the Buddha's unique Pedagogy. According to modern teaching psychology as outlined in Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning, three domains are identified. These are referred to as the cognitive, affective and psycho-motor levels of learning. The cognitive domain deals essentially with cognition such as bare information, facts, figures, data and theories which is

essentially geared towards acquiring, memorising and regurgitating what is taught at prescribed examinations. The thinking processes, emotional intelligence, inter-being, reflection, lateral thinking etc. remain largely untapped and consequently are not developed. It is because of these inherent limitations in learning psychology that the cognitive domain is described as '*passive learning*'.

In contrast, the affective domain involves, among other things, critical observation, self-reflection, self-analysis and the synthesis of facts and information, originality, thinking out of the box etc. The thrust is for one to develop a deep, probing, inquiring mind. This is similar to the penetrating, analytical and objective, mental make-up and thought process that characterised the Buddha persona since childhood. Briefly, in this domain the learner has to establish what is significant, analyse the facts and synthesize them to form his or her viewpoint. The learner hence progresses from just having knowledge of a subject to developing observational skills and the ability to reflect, sieve, conceptualise and evaluate information and facts. In this way objectivity is sharpened which enables the learner to think critically. Affective learning also stimulates and inspires creativity, originality and the development of ones latent talents, skills and aesthetic sense**.**

The psycho-motor domain advances a learner to yet a higher rung in the learning process. As the term suggests, this level of learning deals with the total person, that is, the body as well as mind are involved concurrently in the learning process. That is to say, both the psychological (meaning the thinking, attitude, mental make-up, emotions, sentiments and feelings) and the behavioural (in regard to personal skills, talents, conduct and volitional actions) aspects of learning are simultaneously engaged. This helps to condition thinking, attitude and behaviour as the learner advances from '*knowing*' to '*being*' what is taught and learnt and so internalizes and '*lives*' what is learnt.

## THE BUDDHA'S TAXONOMY OF LEARNING

Over 2,550 years ago, long before Bloom's Taxonomy of learning was espoused in 1956, the Buddha had identified three distinct domains of learning, namely *pariyati, patipatti and pativeda. Pariyati*

constitutes the theoretical foundation required for understanding the Dhamma. The Buddha had pointed out that knowledge *per se* does not constitute a pre-requisite or pre-condition for moral, ethical, righteous development and spiritual uplift. He stressed that a person could still experience emancipation without having to be erudite in the scriptures or religious texts, or be able to recite the *sutras* eloquently and to quote them by chapter and verse. Buddhist scriptures are replete with examples of how disciple monks and lay followers possessing relatively average intelligence could realise high moral, ethical and spiritual attainment.

A theoretical study of the sacred scriptures hence is not to be looked upon as the be-all-and end-all of Buddhist Education for this will limit one to only a superficial understanding of the Buddha's Teaching which focuses among other important aspects of wholesome life, on the realities of human existence and of Nature. Accordingly one is encouraged to advance to the *patipatti* domain of learning, which is, the actual practice of the Dhamma in daily life. The Buddha had consistently stressed that in order for one to come to grips with the realities of life and progress, one has to advance beyond the theoretical plane and textual knowledge. He pinpointed that we must immerse ourselves in practicing and applying the Dhamma in daily life with Right Understanding. Further, we should develop important human qualities such as *shraddha* or confidence, *viriya* or wholesome energy and *vinaya* or discipline to actualize excellence in our endeavours and to experience wellbeing and real lasting happiness. The Buddha laid emphasis on treating the Eternal Doctrine as a way of wholesome living steeped in moral, ethical and spiritual practice rather than as an esoteric philosophy for theorizing ideas and concepts.

*Patipatti* (the affective) and *pativeda* (psycho-motor domains of teaching and learning) relate to the *'living'* or *'being'* aspects of Buddhism where the individual lives the Dhamma while simultaneously developing his or her wholesome mental culture. A primary focus of learning and training is on developing one's moral and ethical fibre and cultivating human values and virtuous humane qualities such as *metta, karuna, muditha* and *upekkha*. Putting the Dhamma into practice in one's daily life, whereby one not only

knows the Dhamma but lives it daily, is absolutely necessary in order to progress to the *pativeda* domain of learning and training. In this way, one would be able to attain *panna* or Insight Wisdom. What this means is that the teaching and learning of morals, ethics, human values merely as cognitive subjects to be memorised and subsequently tested at year-end examinations as conventionally observed in modern secular education should not be the goal. More important still, is the practice and practical application of these in daily life.

## BUDDHA'S PEDAGOGY OF TEACHING BY EXAMPLE

The Buddha admonished that a *bhikkhu* who has simply learned a great deal and only talks about the Dhamma is not one who is well versed in the Doctrine. Whereas a *bhikkhu* who has learnt if only a single stanza, but is able to fully comprehend the Buddha's Teaching and is ever mindful of his thoughts, speech and actions is the one who is truly well versed in the Dhamma. This underlying principle of the Buddha's Pedagogy is so very much wanting in contemporary systems of education. The Buddha's pedagogy of by example underlines a cardinal principle in education which has witnessed severe erosion in modern secular education systems. In the context of the Buddhist Approach to Global Education in morals, ethics, human values and inculcation of righteousness, it calls upon parents, elders and teachers to reinforce teaching the younger generation by internalising and practising what they teach.

The superb role model the Buddha portrays as an Enlightened Teacher provides guidance as well as inspiration to all of humankind and not just to those engaged in education. The Buddha's Pedagogy of teaching by example bears great importance in underlining another significant, if not indeed a critical maxim, in the proposed Global Education in Ethics. The Buddha lived by example and reinforced his Teaching through example. His pedagogy of teaching by personal example of practising what He preached and preaching what He practised, stands out as one of the most powerful timeless illustrations in the history of education.

## INTERNALIZING MORALS, ETHICS AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

The systems of secular education we witness around the world are very much marooned in the cognitive domain of learning as

evidenced in their pre-occupation with the mere assimilation of knowledge, information and facts and multiple choices testing of lessons taught. This essentially passive approach to teaching and learning has been further diluted as a result of glorifying the memorization of prescribed texts in the syllabus which students are expected to regurgitate. It is not surprising therefore that though morals and ethics are taught in schools; these are hardly internalized in students through practice in everyday life. They are merely studied just like other subjects. As a consequence the learning is not ingrained in their thinking, speech and behaviour.

By internalizing morals, ethics and human values we are able to reinforce positive thinking and responsible behaviour in children from a young age. This in turn helps them to strengthen their shraddha in the moral and ethical practices and reinforce their self-image, self-worth, self-reliance etc. Operating in combination, these positive human qualities would form a strong bulwark against negative influences from various external sources/stimuli while growing up. On the other hand, a child devoid of shraddha is inclined to be timid, withdrawn and lack initiative. Such a child would find it difficult to socialise and interact freely with peer groups from both inside and outside the school environment.

## THE BUDDHA'S PEDAGOGY OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

It is to be duly appreciated that Buddhism is a religion of '*being*' and not one of just '*knowing*' the religious texts and scriptures. The Buddha had consistently maintained that *'knowing'* the Dhamma alone is inadequate. We should truly *'live'* the Dhamma if we are to experience its richness and benefit therefrom in multifarious ways here and now in this very life.

The Dhamma is likened to a flower of beauty, radiance and fragrance. However, we should always remind ourselves that the value, benefits and richness to be drawn from the Dhamma can be experienced only by *'living'* the Buddha's Sublime Teaching. He advised that a brief life laced with virtue and wisdom is far better than a long life filled with unwholesome thoughts, speech and actions thus, "*Though one should live a hundred years without wisdom and self-discipline; yet better, is a single day's life of one who is wise and*

*meditative."* (Dhammapada 111). In line with this fundamental Teaching of the Buddha, we should progress from just *'knowing'* to *'being'* the Dhamma. Likewise morals, ethics, human values and righteous living are to be practised in daily life and ingrained in a person from a young age. As such a primary goal of the Holistic Buddhist Education Approach to Global Teaching in ethics, morals, civics etc. is to internalize these human values so that they become an integral part of students. Only then will they feel and experience directly the Dhamma's true meaning and purpose and thereby enjoy the blissfulness that this invariably evokes.

It is also noteworthy that the Buddha taught this fundamental principle through His typical anecdotal-style of communicating complex ideas and concepts in an easily comprehensible way to the ordinary masses. He likened a beautiful thought or concept or ideal that is not accompanied by corresponding wholesome deeds to a bright and beautiful flower that has no fragrance and so fails to realise its innate productive potential. Such a flower is only good to look at. Beyond this, it does not serve much purpose. For, beautiful though to look at and admire, it will not form into a fruit. Being devoid of a sweet fragrance it would not attract insects and butterflies necessary for pollination and its ultimate fruition. On the other hand, a flower even if unattractive, but possesses a sweet fragrance would attract insects, get pollinated and become a fruit. The illustration which serves as an excellent example of the Buddha's Pedagogy of Experiential Learning is an equally pivotal ingredient of the Buddhist Approach to Global Education in morals, ethics and righteousness.

## SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DYNAMISM OF BUDDHIST EDUCATION AND PEDAGOGY

Among other notable contributions, Buddhist Education helped to engender a powerful burst of creative energies which were largely evoked through a culture of freedom of thought and free expression torched by the religion. The free human spirit had encouraged creativity and the flowering of innate, talents, skills and genius, in a variety of fields of human endeavour. The social and cultural dynamism which Buddhist Education and culture

sprang forth have been amply borne out throughout Buddhist history and civilization. The liberal outlook of Buddhist Education and the creative impulse they triggered added to the richness and vibrancy of the cultures among the peoples from different climes who embraced the religion. Wherever Buddhism spread, creative genius found expression in a variety of art forms literature and scholarship. These rich heritages of creativity and originality are truly inspiring not only in terms of their artistic beauty, but also in the magnificence of their expressions in art and other human and other pursuits.

Evidence of the creative genius that blossomed in the lands touched by Buddhism is as pervasive as they are awe-inspiring. These glorious showcases of creative excellence are magnificently depicted in the world-renowned well springs of Buddhist art, architecture, sculpture, literature and culture. They boast of an array of captivating temples, monuments, images, stupas and a host of other awe-inspiring artistic works which bespoke brilliantly of the creative dynamism that Buddhism spawned among peoples who embraced the Buddha Dhamma.

Viewed from a broader sociological and cultural perspective, the positive impact of Buddhist Education on human society is equally impressive. In its organised form, Buddhism brought tangible social and cultural spin-offs to the larger community. The religion's many ceremonies and festivals incorporated a wide variety of customs and traditions wherever the religion traversed. This largely explains the rich social and cultural expressions we find in traditional Buddhist countries. Examples abound in many countries since historical times such as during the period of the Tang and Sung Dynasties in China, ancient India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia and other regions in Asia where Buddhism profoundly inspired the literary and creative genius and the adventurous spirit of peoples. The volumes of Buddhist scriptures and commentaries produced by thousands of Indian, Chinese, Sri Lankan, Japanese, Korean, Burmese, Tibetan, Mongolian, Thai, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Malay and Indonesian scholar-monks, nuns and pilgrims, speak volumes on how Buddhism profoundly inspired peoples from these climes. Many

had to brave great hardships and grave personal dangers in pursuing their religious zeal and in spreading the Sublime Dhamma and its glorious heritage, including Buddhist Education and Pedagogy. So deep and abiding was their *shraddha* in the Buddha Dhamma that many of them dedicated their entire adult lives to teach the religion and produce invaluable scriptures and other erudite religious accomplishments.

It is therefore hardly surprising that the social and cultural dynamism which Buddhist Education spawns are self-evident and impressive. Children in particular are encouraged to cultivate Buddhist customs, traditions, human values and a positive outlook as they familiarise and live a Buddhist way of life. This is realised by encouraging them to participate in or observe Buddhist ceremonies and activities from a young age. Youths and adults too gain profoundly from their involvement in the religious, cultural and social activities which is entrenched as a way of life among Buddhist communities. In organising, managing and participating in these functions, noble Buddhist values, morals, ethics, cultural traits and customs are progressively ingrained and eventually becomes second nature.

It is also worthwhile to note that Buddhist Education is strongly orientated towards fostering a wholesome and harmonious family life. Since the time of the Buddha, fathers, mothers, sons and daughters all flocked to the viharas to learn the Dhamma. The practice of the Dhamma was encouraged as a total family commitment for the benefit of the entire family and not just as a Doctrine confined to monks and nuns. The emphasis on the family as a unit based on clearly understood duties and responsibilities for each member had been yet another impressive feature of Buddhist Education. The *Sigalovada Sutta* and numerous other discourses of the Buddha explicitly underline this noteworthy social and cultural significance in Buddhist morals, ethics and culture.

The religious functions, celebrations and ceremonies observed among Buddhist communities generally took the form of family get-to-gathers on some auspicious occasion or happy event. To this day, community-based social and cultural celebrations often are combined with religious observances. Major events in

the life of devotees were likewise laden with Buddhist practices and ceremonies. The conception of a child, spiritual fortification of expectant mothers, the birth of a new born, the naming of a child, infant learning and development, *'home education'*, child development and upbringing of children, marriage, the loss of loved ones etc. incorporated numerous religious ceremonies and traditions, which are practiced to this day, form an integral of informal education.

Furthermore, the community activities and the sermons that were associated with religious ceremonies and celebrations formed an essential platform for religious upbringing for the entire family as well as for the community, in particular among the younger generation. Such religious rearing or grooming among Buddhist communities was accorded importance as informal education for the community as a whole. Though informal, the community-based functions and religious ceremonies constituted an important process of inculcating Buddhist values and practices and the learning of the Dhamma from the outset of one's formative years. The thinking, attitude and mental make-up of the young as regards morals, ethics, human values and righteous living were thereby shaped and channelled along a positive path through such informal Buddhist Education and upbringing from childhood.

It can thus be asserted with confidence that Buddhist Education and Pedagogy provide a fertile nursery for the seeds of creativity inherent in every child to germinate and blossom into brilliance. Children are also motivated to realise a more wholesome and self-fulfilling life-experience. These positive elements in turn would trigger a forward momentum for learning well beyond what is normally extended in contemporary education systems. For indeed, in Buddhist Education and Pedagogy we find learning to include the broadening and enrichment of the mind and imbuing of morals, ethics, human values and righteousness as key ingredients of wholesome human development and progress.

## BUDDHIST EDUCATION AND PEDAGOGY REVISITED

It is gratifying to note that in the past few decades, progressively increasing numbers of people from all across the world have

become interested in Buddhism because of the happiness and inner peace the religion offers. However, for many the interest has been largely confined to the study of the religion than on understanding the Dhamma and applying the Buddha's Sublime Teaching in daily life which is the more challenging but profoundly beneficial path. One could gather all the facts and information about the life of the Buddha and His Teaching, but this would not be very much different from learning about other historical personages. In learning about the life of the Buddha one would no doubt come to appreciate His Supreme Self-Enlightenment. This does not necessarily mean that one would diligently practice the Dhamma and experience the far more beneficial results one can expect if one was to do so. What this implies is that the emphasis in Buddhist Education and Pedagogy is not on providing and acquiring knowledge of the Dhamma as a matter of academic interest or as a subject to be studied for an examination. The focus instead should be on the practice and practical application of the Buddha's Noble Teaching in daily life.

The Dhamma is a noble and complete practical guide for peaceful, harmonious, fulfilling wholesome living. Buddhism is therefore not to be merely read and studied as an academic subject. The Buddha in fact repeatedly reminded us not to just study the Dhamma, but to '*breathe*' and '*live*' His Noble Teaching and thereby benefit from it in this very life. In His very words, *"it is better for a person to live a day in accordance with the Dhamma than to chant a thousand suttas a thousand times over."* This is simply because the Dhamma is a complete system of learning and skilful self-training of one's body and mind to experience *sukha* or real lasting happiness. Further, the Dhamma is wholly rooted in internalizing morals, ethics, human values and righteousness in one's life journey. This holistic Buddhist approach is proffered in the Global Education in Ethics, morals and human values.

In summation, we need to be mindful that Buddhist Education and Pedagogy stresses imbuing of morals, ethics, human values and righteousness vide a holistic education system incorporating a tried and tested highly successful training programme for personal self-development. The Sublime Teaching of the Buddha is not meant to be studied and passed in a prescribed examination. The stress in

the Sublime Teaching of the Buddha should remain anchored on '*living*' and '*being*' the Dhamma and not on just seeking knowledge about the belief-system. In line with this principle, the method, manner, means and the technique which one is to employ to put the Dhamma into practice have to be accorded top priority. Just gaining knowledge about the Buddha and His Noble Teaching would not be sufficient for one to be "*awakened*" from the slumber of ignorance of the realities of life and Nature all around us. As the Buddha had succinctly advised, *"Even if a man recites a hundred verses but does not practice them, he is like a spoon which carries the honey but does not know its taste*".

A major challenge set before the world Buddhist fraternity is to produce educational tools that could be gainfully incorporated into the modern education systems. This will profoundly enable the global community to effectively realise the goals of education in its true definition, meaning and purpose. At a personal level, I have made a modest endeavour to produce text books for teaching English and Buddhism concurrently, based on the principles of Holistic Buddhist Education and Pedagogy. These include the publication of, "My Alphabet Book: Buddhist Pedagogical Approach, My First Word Book: Buddhist Pedagogical Approach, Siddhartha: My First Story Book, Angulimala: Transforming Life, Matu-Posaka : Joy of Honouring Parents, SIDDHARTHA: Prince of Peace and King Bimbisara the Great: A Father's Unremitting Love". These works represent mere samples of what can, and indeed must be done by Buddhist organisations, institutions and erudite scholars to promote Buddhist Education and Pedagogy as an integral of the global education of ethics. It is my fervent prayer that the expertise, scholarship and talents which are in abundance among the Buddhist fraternity would be inspired by these modest efforts to pool resources and expertise for the larger good. Hopefully they would be motivated to soon produce a reservoir of educational resources and tools for the benefit of all humankind. I dare say that their efforts would serve to ensure a peaceful and happier world for not only the present generation, but also for those who are yet to come.

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# CONTRIBUTION OF BRAHMAVIHĀRA IN SOLVING THE PROBLEM OF GLOBALIZATION

by Ven Dr. Thich Trung Dinh*

**ABSTRACT**

The four sublime states which are called *Brahmavihāra*, namely: pure love, (*Mettā*), compassion, (*Karuṇā*) sympathetic joy, (*Muditā*) and equanimity (*Upekkhā*) and these four principles constitute the moral and spiritual foundation of man, being at the same time real sources of peace and happiness.

According to Buddhism, we should solve problem of globalization in *Brahmavihāra* for rationalism, democracy and practical, ethical conduct in religion. Buddha's Teachings are harmonious to any society and modern society. In this respect, I will explain in detail how and why the *Maṅgala Sutta*, the Teaching of the Buddha is applied to the New Global society.

The Buddhist tradition makes the claim that among persons that appear in this world for the welfare of mankind, a fully enlightened Buddha is the greatest. The Buddhist terms used in the sense of 'welfare' are terms such as '*attha* and *sukha*'. The claim made by Buddhism is that the Buddha engaged in a serious search of what in reality conduces to welfare.[1]

According to the *Ariyapariyesana Sutta* he left the mundane

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1. Fausboll, *Jātaka Atthakatha*, Vols. 1- 5, London, UK: PTS, 1990-1991, p. 66.

comforts of the royal palace disenchanted with the so-called pleasures of the mundane life in search of what constitutes the greatest good of mankind. After achieving the goal of his noble search He spent forty five years of his life teaching, preaching and providing guidance to people of all walks of life intending nothing other than the welfare of mankind.

After He was able to share the liberation of mind and the liberation through insight that he attained with sixty others who followed his instructions, He called upon them to devote their life as well for the happiness, well-being and welfare of the multitude.

However the Buddhist teachings contend that its concept of social welfare does not appeal to those who are blinded by passions and mundane concerns and conceive welfare only in terms of the gratification of the desires of the senses. From the Buddhist point of view those who are obsessed with sense pleasures interpret Buddhism as social, life denying, otherworldly doctrine that is concerned solely with the self- interested pursuit of individual salvation.

In their view, Buddhism does not promote an attitude to life which enables human beings to face life's challenges, but encourages the solitary pursuit of inward peach and calm, forgetting about the rest of the society that toils and suffers in the face of social injustices, economic depravities, and a variety of other social problems. This is a criticism that Buddhism has to meet in defense of its notion of social welfare.

Obviously, there is serious disagreement regarding what constitutes 'welfare' between those who advocate the Buddhist worldview and others who advocate worldviews that radically differ from it. This is matter that the Buddha himself is represented in the early scriptures as having reflected upon before he embarked on his long career of active involvement in the welfare of mankind.

His problem was that of convincing others who were engrossed in the mad pursuit of sense gratification, impelled by craving, about what constituted their real happiness and welfare. It is pointed out by the Buddha that what is seen as happiness by the noble ones is seen as unhappiness by others and what is seen as happiness by others is seen as unhappiness by the noble ones.

The implication of the above is that one cannot talk about social welfare meaningfully without dealing with the philosophical and conceptual issue of how welfare is to be conceived. The term 'welfare' is like some other terms that we use in our language, a value loaded term.

It is not one has an entirely descriptive meaning. It belongs to the family of terms such as 'good', 'happiness', and 'welfare'. It is to be noted that similar conceptual incompatibility is likely to occur between the Buddhist and the common notion of 'development'. Buddhism poses a challenge, to the way certain human values are commonly conceived and it aims at an insightful revision of such value concepts.

There is an attempt in Buddhism to bring in a value dimension to even such concepts as wealth (*dhana*) and poverty (*daliddiya*) that are usually interpreted purely in material terms. According to Buddhism, one may be very rich in material wealth but poor in the moral riches. One can be said to be poor in an ethical sense not because one lacks material wealth but lacks the seven kinds of noble wealth (*ariyadhana*).[2]

Therefore when we discuss the theme ´Buddhism and social welfare we should not try merely to see how Buddhism fits into the common notion of social welfare, but penetrate deeper into the issue of how Buddhism reinterprets this notion in terms of its own philosophical and conceptual orientation. What I expect to do in this chapter is to draw the implications of such an investigation.

After getting enlightenment, the Buddha preached the Dhamma for well-beings of the many (suffering beings). By the method by which friendliness increasing in the world, by that method the Buddha preached Dhamma. In course of the preaching of the Dhamma there is the description of *Brahmavihāra*. Brahma is supreme, exceptable, smooth, and faultless, dwelling in this way, the supreme dwelled in *Brahmavihāra*. It was the highest dwelling in this world.

2. Morris, R. and Hardy, E., ed., *Aṅguttaranikāya Atthakatha*, Vols. 1-2, London, UK: PTS, 1989-1995, p. 96.

In course of explaing the *Brahmavihāra* the four elements are explained: friendliness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity. Dwellings which is the combination of these four elements and which appear in the world is called *Brahmavihāra*.

## 1. IMPORTANCE OF *BRAHMAVIHĀRA* IN THE AGE OF GLOBALIZATION

In this topic, I will mention the *Abhidhamma Vibhaṅga*, these four sublime states are mentioned to be *Appamañña*: measureless states. Because their scope is found to be immeasurable, so, measureless states their name. Then, the *Brahmavihāra Dhamma* has been explained as *Appamatta*, the term is derived from the word "infinite" or "boundless".

It has been named as *Appamañña* because when developing *Mettā* it could be done with unlimited or perfect exercise of the qualities of friendliness, or universe if it has a boundless region when cultivate these by pervading. It is said thus: "*Loving-kindness towards all in the world, one should cultivate an unbounded mind, above and below and across, without obstruction, without enmity, without rivalry*."[3] The gist of it is to develop unlimited loving kindness (*Mettā*) towards all being in all ten regions and wish all of them happiness.

In developing and radiation *Mettā*, there is no limit in regard to the place or region and to the kind of beings present in all those places. It covers a very wide range. Next, there being no angry feeling against all living beings, one is free from internal dangers, and also, having no animosity or grudge against any kind of beings as an enemy, one is also free from external dangers. Dealing with above verse makes *Mettā* unlimited and universal.[4]

## 2. THE PROBLEM OF MODERN SOCIETY

If we have *Karuṇā* (compassion), we can solve any problem in modern society. Compassion is English translation of the Pāḷi word '*Karuṇā*' which may be further expanded as: that which moves a

3. Silakkhandhavagga Pāḷi, Vol. I, Yangon: Government of Myanmar, 1993, p. 253. ("Mettañcabbalokasamiṃ, Mānasaṃbhāvayeaparimāṇaṃ. Uddhaṃadhocatiriyañca, Asaṃbadhaṃaveramasapattaṃ.")

4. Dīgha Nikāya, Vol. II, Wisdom Publications, Boston, 2012, p. 128.

good man's heart at the sight of suffering of other people. Its main characteristic is the desire to remove suffering from people; its chief function being the overcoming or discarding of cruelty. It's not just a feeling, but a principle, going beyond mere wishing by the actual doing of kind and helpful actions.[5] True compassion goes hand in hand with helpfulness and willingness to sacrifice self-interest in order to promote the welfare and happiness of mankind. It should be realized and remembered that its indirect enemy is grief, grief and sorrow not being compassion in the real sense of the word since they are morally weak states, whereas true compassion is morally strong and give strength. By cultivating the principle of compassion in ourselves we overcome cruelty, in the course which we cultivate wisdom and perfect wisdom is the crown of compassion.

Compassion is generally taken to exist in connection with other people, but really, true and pure love or compassion for oneself should come first in order to diminish our own cruel tendencies. In meditation, therefore, we first meditate on compassion for ourselves for the purpose of achieving this aim; moreover, it is impossible to radiate thoughts of love and compassion unless we ourselves have properly developed these qualities. If one can say that one loves oneself and is compassionate towards oneself, one should, by meditation, help oneself to entertain always pure and beautiful thoughts so that any words or deeds, as a result of which they may become manifest, are also pure and beautiful.[6] Can we, I wonder, really say we love ourselves and are compassionate towards ourselves in a true sense? If so, we should never do harm to ourselves by allowing thoughts, words, and deeds of craving, anger and delusion to arise, for by such action we should definitely be harming ourselves. In the form of self-help, therefore, pure love and compassion in the true sense should be for oneself first.

The Buddhist method is always to deal with oneself first, for by so doing we are helping ourselves to be in a position to understand and help others more effectively. Should we ourselves have selfish, angry thoughts and misunderstanding, we not only harm ourselves

5. Ibid., p. 87.

6. Treatise on the Pāramās, Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1996, p. 41.

but other people at the same time. Very often to some people that by talking and dealing with external matters it is easier to help others rather than to help oneself, but if one is incapable of helping oneself efficiently one is certainly not capable of helping others efficiently. "One who profits himself will profit others"; and it should constantly be remembered that no enemy can harm one so much as one's own evil thoughts and craving, these are our inner enemies who follow us day and night and from whom we must try to keep away. If a person cannot find happiness within himself, he will not be able to find it anywhere.[7]

People who can't control themselves cannot find happiness by performing services for others, because since they themselves are not calm they cannot create a calm atmosphere. Those same people in performing social services may be telling others what to do, but they still find unhappiness in themselves and so tend to blame other people, saying, "We do our best, but others are not willing to accept our services", and so on. Such people are not really fit to render these services. A person with true compassion based on understanding, confers a double blessing; he helps others with true, pure motive and because of his own calmness he feels happiness within himself as well as happiness in helping others. It takes great effort to cultivate pure compassion for oneself, but to tell others what to do need only words. It will be observed in the *Jātaka* stories that a Bodhisatta always tries to strengthen and help himself and so improve his work for the welfare of humanity.

## 3. THE PROBLEM OF MODERN HUMAN BEING

The Buddhist concept of human being is unique among the religions of the world. To be born as a human being is one of the rarest and the most valuable opportunity one can have according to Buddhism. Buddhism teaches equal compassion towards all beings irrespective of their innumerable differences. Just like a mother protects her only child with her own life, in similar manner one should develop unlimited thought of loving kindness towards all beings. Yet when it comes to depriving creatures of

7. Norman, Kr., Tr., *The Group of Discourses* (*Suttanipāta*), Vols. 1-2, London, UK: PTS, 1992-1995, p. 79.

their lives, the gravity of the crime depends on the importance of the relevant creature.

Killing a human being is a grave offence. In the case of a *bhikkhu* (monk) if he deprives a human being of his life intentionally the *bhikkhu* commits one of the gravest offences (*pārājika*) which makes him loss of *bhikkhu*-hood. Therefore it is quite evident that Buddhism esteems the state of human being highly among other beings. The reasons behind this are well explicable in the light of main tenets of Buddhism.

The Buddhist Summum Bonum, i.e. the *Nibbāna* is to be realized only by the human beings in this world. *Nibbāna* is not metaphysical reality, it is to be attained here and now in one's own life. And the Buddha has mentioned that the number of human beings in this world is inconceivably minute in comparison with that of other beings. Therefore the enormous difficulty to be born as a human being is well depicted in Buddhist literature through a famous simile of one-eyed turtle which comes out from the bottom of the sea once in hundred years to see the sky through a hole of a yoke which floats in the ocean. This is of course to indicate the rarity of human-birth. Buddhism accepts that human beings are born with great potentialities which are to be properly and gradually developed under suitable guidance so as to achieve the optimum fruits of their human beings. The gradual path prescribed by the Buddha consists of three essentials, namely *Sīla* (morality), *Samādhi* (concentration), and *Paññā* (wisdom).[8]

As seen by some observers of the relationship between Buddhism and society, Buddhism advocates a worldview that promotes the lone pursuit of escape from suffering by means of developing an attitude of indifference towards everything outside oneself. The Buddhist ideal is seen as non-engagement in the conflicts and turmoil characteristic of social living so that individual seekers of inward peace could strive to achieve goal in the cloistered environment of the forest hermitage. It is seen as promoting a life of total withdrawal from social concerns for the pursuit of self-interest this way of looking at the Buddhist ideal is based on the assumption

8. Dīgha Nikāya Pāḷi, Vol. II, Op. Cit., p. 27.

that there is a fundamental incompatibility between one's own well-being and the well-being of others.

The Buddha classified persons into four kinds on the basis of one's attitude towards one's own interest and one's attitude towards the interest of others.[9] The first type of person is referred to as one who adopts a way of life that conduces, neither to the welfare of oneself nor to the welfare of others (*nevaattahitāyapaṭipanno no parahitāya*). The second type of person is one who adopts a way of life that does not conduce to one's own welfare but conduces to the welfare of others (*parahitāyapaṭipanno no attahitāya*). The third adopts way of life that conduces to one's own welfare but not to the welfare of others (*attahitāyapaṭipanno no parahitāya*). The fourth is one who adopts way of life that conduces, to one's own welfare and the welfare of others, (*attahitāyacapaṭipannoparahitāyaca*). According to the Buddha, it is the fourth type of person who is most praiseworthy.[10] The first kind of person is the most blameworthy. In the comparative evaluation of the second and third type of person, the Buddha takes the position that the third one is better than the second. The question is whether in view of such an assessment of the worth of persons in terms of their way of life, Buddhism expresses a preference to the pursuit of self- interest over the pursuit of the welfare of others.

In order to understand the significance of the above classification it is important to consider what Buddhism means by 'welfare' in this context. It should be noted that there are three mental qualities that arise in people, which are detrimental to their welfare. They are greed, hatred and delusion. Overwhelmed by these three mental qualities people destroy life, they steal the belongings of others and they indulge in the wrongful enjoyment of sense pleasures and speak what is false. They commits acts that produce suffering to themselves and suffering to others. According to Buddhism, the self-interest of a person consists in the cultivation of a personality that is perfect in moral goodness and insightful understanding of reality.

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9. *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha* (*Saṁyuttanikāya*), Tr., Boston, USA: Wisdom Publication, 2002, p. 40.

10. Rhys Davids, T.W. and Carpenter, J.E., ed., *Dīghanikāya Pāḷi* , Vols. 1- 3, London, UK: PTS, 1992-1995, p. 83.

The influence of such persons on society is twofold. On the one hand the behavior of such persons does not have the consequence of producing suffering to the rest of the society because they are never motivated in their behavior by what Buddhism describes as the roots of unwholesome action. On the other hand by virtue of the fact that they have perfected the qualities of mind that are considered as wholesome (*kusala*) such as mindfulness, equanimity, kindness and compassion whatever they do is beneficial to the rest of the society.

Traditional Buddhist societies have shown the highest veneration to members of this community and some aspects of the current social crises experienced by such-societies under the rapid social changes that have recently taken place may be attributed to the breakdown of the structure and relationships that existed in the past.

Coming back to the issue of giving priority to one' own welfare over the welfare of others, Buddhism is evidently drawing attention to the necessity of dealing with a person's inner nature as a prerequisite for genuine social commitment. This is in recognition of the fact that persons whose inner nature is defiled produce more harm to society than good when they interact with society. Social action, if it is to be productive of social welfare has to be motivated by what Buddhism describes as the roots of whole some action (*kusalakamma*). The cultivation of *kusala* is what ultimately benefits the individual as well as the society. Hence Buddhism defines *kusala* as that which does not result in harm to oneself, harm to others and harm to both, and is conducive to the production of happiness.

From the Buddhist point of view there is no ultimate conflict between what conduces to the welfare of oneself and what conduces to the welfare of others. As the Buddha has put it, "one who takes care of oneself takes care of others. One who takes care of others cares of oneself. One takes care of oneself by moral training, moral culture and moral development. One takes care of others by harmlessness, by goodwill and by compassion". "Whether one wants to see that one's own good should be brought about or one wants to see that the good of both should be brought about it is necessary to cultivate one's character diligently". When one is overwhelmed by greed or hatred one cannot see one's own welfare or another associated with intense physical suffering.

Those who engage in providing guidance to others to escape from that condition are engaged in social welfare in the highest sense. They are capable of serving society with a totally detached attitude, and with no ulterior motives, but purely through compassion for the suffering masses. The Buddha and his reputed disciples did commit themselves to the service of society throughout their lives in this sense. It remains valid to this day that the greatest service that Buddhists could do to mankind is to lead them on the way to the attainment of this liberation. That is the greatest social welfare that Buddhism can promote.

One of the most potent sources of suffering in society is the cruelty and insensitivity of man that is reflected in the pursuit of self-interest. Human conduct becomes a hindrance to social welfare when it proceeds from the roots of unwholesome motivation that Buddhism describes as greed, hatred and delusion. Numerous social crises that produce immense suffering in society are frequently a product of human cruelty. If the recent history of human civilization is considered more human suffering has resulted from cruelty of man towards man than from any other causes such as natural disasters that are unrelated to human conduct and intentions.

## 4. IMPORTANCE OF *BRAHMAVIHĀRA*

During his life time, the Buddha taught a huge number of *Dhamma*, globalization without impartial by selective preferences or prejudices. Especially, the Buddha taught and singles out four mental qualities. He described them as noble, lofty, and sublime and strongly encouraged their development. They can transform the way of living and the world giving beauty, joy and meaning. These are called *Brahma Vihāras*. They are as follows; Loving-kindness (*Mettā*), Compassion (*Karuṇā*), Sympathetic Joy (*Muditā*), and Equanimity (*Upekkhā*). In Pāḷi, the language of the Buddhist scriptures, these four are known under the name of *Brahma Vihāras*, a term which may be rendered as excellent, lofty, or sublime states of mind; or alternatively, as Brahma-like, god-like or divine abodes. If disciples who follow his teaching live with *Brahma Vihāras*, he is said like *Brahmā* because *Brahmā* also lives with these along its life. This is only the way pointed out by the Buddha for Buddhists that how to live in life without feeling of attachment to, anger, and delusion at least temporary.

## 5. CONTRIBUTION OF *BRAHMAVIHĀRA* IN SOLVING THE PROBLEM OF GLOBALIZATION

According to Buddhism, we should solve problem of globalization in *Brahmavihāra* for rationalism, democracy and practical, ethical conduct in religion. Buddha's Teachings are harmonious to any society and modern society. In this respect, I will explain in detail how and why the *Maṅgala Sutta*, the Teaching of the Buddha is applied to the New Global society.

The Buddhist tradition makes the claim that among persons that appear in this world for the welfare of mankind, a fully enlightened Buddha is the greatest. The Buddhist terms used in the sense of 'welfare' are terms such as '*attha* and *sukha*'. The claim made by Buddhism is that the Buddha engaged in a serious search of what in reality conduces to welfare.[11]

According to the *Ariyapariyesana Sutta* he left the mundane comforts of the royal palace disenchanted with the so-called pleasures of the mundane life in search of what constitutes the greatest good of mankind. After achieving the goal of his noble search He spent forty five years of his life teaching, preaching and providing guidance to people of all walks of life intending nothing other than the welfare of mankind.

After He was able to share the liberation of mind and the liberation through insight that he attained with sixty others who followed his instructions, He called upon them to devote their life as well for the happiness, well-being and welfare of the multitude.

However the Buddhist teachings contend that its concept of social welfare does not appeal to those who are blinded by passions and mundane concerns and conceive welfare only in terms of the gratification of the desires of the senses. From the Buddhist point of view those who are obsessed with sense pleasures interpret Buddhism as social, life denying, otherworldly doctrine that is concerned solely with the self- interested pursuit of individual salvation.

In their view, Buddhism does not promote an attitude to life which enables human beings to face life's challenges, but encourages the

11. Fausboll, *Jātaka Atthakatha*, Vols. 1- 5, London, UK: PTS, 1990-1991, p. 66.

solitary pursuit of inward peach and calm, forgetting about the rest of the society that toils and suffers in the face of social injustices, economic depravities, and a variety of other social problems. This is a criticism that Buddhism has to meet in defense of its notion of social welfare.

Obviously, there is serious disagreement regarding what constitutes 'welfare' between those who advocate the Buddhist worldview and others who advocate worldviews that radically differ from it. This is matter that the Buddha himself is represented in the early scriptures as having reflected upon before he embarked on his long career of active involvement in the welfare of mankind.

His problem was that of convincing others who were engrossed in the mad pursuit of sense gratification, impelled by craving, about what constituted their real happiness and welfare. It is pointed out by the Buddha that what is seen as happiness by the noble ones is seen as unhappiness by others and what is seen as happiness by others is seen as unhappiness by the noble ones.

The implication of the above is that one cannot talk about social welfare meaningfully without dealing with the philosophical and conceptual issue of how welfare is to be conceived. The term 'welfare' is like some other terms that we use in our language, a value loaded term.

It is not one has an entirely descriptive meaning. It belongs to the family of terms such as 'good', 'happiness', and 'welfare'. It is to be noted that similar conceptual incompatibility is likely to occur between the Buddhist and the common notion of 'development'. Buddhism poses a challenge, to the way certain human values are commonly conceived and it aims at an insightful revision of such value concepts.

There is an attempt in Buddhism to bring in a value dimension to even such concepts as wealth (*dhana*) and poverty (*daliddiya*) that are usually interpreted purely in material terms. According to Buddhism, one may be very rich in material wealth but poor in the moral riches. One can be said to be poor in an ethical sense not because one lacks material wealth but lacks the seven kinds of noble wealth (*ariyadhana*).[12]

12. Morris, R. and Hardy, E., ed., *Aṅguttaranikāya Atthakatha*, Vols. 1-2, London, UK:

Therefore when we discuss the theme ´Buddhism and social welfare we should not try merely to see how Buddhism fits into the common notion of social welfare, but penetrate deeper into the issue of how Buddhism reinterprets this notion in terms of its own philosophical and conceptual orientation. What I expect to do in this topic is to draw the implications of such an investigation.

**6. WHAT IS MEANT BY SOCIAL WELFARE?**

As seen by some observers of the relationship between Buddhism and society, Buddhism advocates a worldview that promotes the lone pursuit of escape from suffering by means of developing an attitude of indifference towards everything outside oneself.[13]

The Buddhist ideal is seen as non-engagement in the conflicts and turmoil characteristic of social living so that individual seekers of inward peace could strive to achieve goal in the cloistered environment of the forest hermitage. It is seen as promoting a life of total withdrawal from social concerns for the pursuit of self-interest this way of looking at the Buddhist ideal is based on the assumption that there is a fundamental incompatibility between one's own well-being and the well-being of others.

The Buddha classified persons into four kinds on the basis of one's attitude towards one's own interest and one's attitude towards the interest of others. The first type of person is referred to as one who adopts a way of life that conduces, neither to the welfare of oneself nor to the welfare of others (*nevaattahitāyapaṭipanno no parahitāya*).

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PTS, 1989-1995, p. 96.

13. Smith, Helmer, ed., *Suttanipata Aṭṭhakathā*, Vols. 1- 3, London, UK: PTS, 1977 -1989, p. 42.

14. Morris, R. and Hardy, E., ed., *Op. Cit.*, p. 162.

According to the Buddha, it is the fourth type of person who is most praiseworthy. The first kind of person is the most blameworthy. In the comparative evaluation of the second and third type of person, the Buddha takes the position that the third one is better than the second. The question is whether in view of such an assessment of the worth of persons in terms of their way of life, Buddhism expresses a preference to the pursuit of self- interest over the pursuit of the welfare of others.

In order to understand the significance of the above classification it is important to consider what Buddhism means by 'welfare' in this context. It should be noted that there are three mental qualities that arise in people, which are detrimental to their welfare. They are greed, hatred and delusion.

Overwhelmed by these three mental qualities people destroy life, they steal the belongings of others and they indulge in the wrongful enjoyment of sense pleasures and speak what is false. They commits acts that produce suffering to themselves and suffering to others. According to Buddhism, the self-interest of a person consists in the cultivation of a personality that is perfect in moral goodness and insightful understanding of reality.[15]

The influence of such persons on society is twofold. On the one hand the behavior of such persons does not have the consequence of producing suffering to the rest of the society because they are never motivated in their bahavior by what Buddhism describes as the roots of unwholesome action. On the other hand by virtue of the fact that they have perfected the qualities of mind that are considered as wholesome (*kusala*) such as mindfulness, equanimity, kindness and compassion whatever they do is beneficial to the rest of the society.

Such persons are considered in Buddhism as the ethical models that the rest of the society should emulate. According to the *Sigālovāda Sutta*, a community of such persons is an essential component of a harmonious and prosperous society.

Wherever such persons live location is said to be delightful. They

15. Smith, H., ed., *Op. Cit.*, p. 678.

are not be conceived as persons who has escaped from the dutiful engagements of the social life to live an indolent, self-centered and care free life which is supported by others who have to toil in order to procure the material needs of their life.

They are looked upon as the rich fields for others who live the lower life of sense-pleasures to sow their seeds of meritorious deeds. Social well-being requires the maintenance of such a community paying high respect and veneration to members of the community. The implication of these ideas is that Buddhism does not conceive of the possibility of promoting the welfare of a community in the absence of a social structure and a network of social relationships in which there is adequate provision made for the giving and receiving of moral guidance in the conduct of its affairs.[16]

Traditional Buddhist societies have shown the highest veneration to members of this community and some aspects of the current social crises experienced by such-societies under the rapid social changes that have recently taken place may be attributed to the breakdown of the structure and relationships that existed in the past. Coming back to the issue of giving priority to one' own welfare over the welfare of others, Buddhism is evidently drawing attention to the necessity of dealing with a person's inner nature as a prerequisite for genuine social commitment.

## 7. BRAHMAVIHĀRA IN SOLVING THE PROBLEM OF LIFE

It is very important to understand that non-violence is an effective and very powerful response to conflict. It does not mean doing nothing. It is actually a powerful force that can be acted upon. Buddhism and Equanimity- Why Equanimity Is an Essential Buddhist Virtue, by Barbara O'Brien. Peace is not merely the absence of war. Peace is a proactive, comprehensive process of finding ground through open communication and putting into practice a philosophy of non-harm and sharing resources. Creating a culture of peace is an active process. Equanimity; the ability to maintain a spacious impartiality of mind in the midst of life is changing conditions; one of the four sublime abodes; one of the

16. Rhys Davids, T.W. and Carpenter, J.E., ed., *Op. Cit.*, p. 99.

seven factors of enlightenment.[17]

As we often emphasise the importance of being human, we would like to suggest that as we are still human there are moments when we like and moments when we dislike - such reactions can still be there. So here again we would suggest that if you are reacting, just to realise that you are reacting and then to find out in your own experience, when you like something, when you are holding onto it, how it creates suffering for yourself. When you are resisting something, when you dislike something, how it again creates suffering. So from our reactions, from a reactive mind, we can also learn. When you are reacting, just know that you are reacting, to take that as a learning experience and learn not to react to it.[18]

And when you are not reacting just know that you are not reacting, and see for yourself the results, the benefits of it. So if you can really learn to be open to both the reactive mind and the non-reactive mind and to see the difference between the two that can be considered something very important. Now learning to do this in everyday life as well may be more difficult, but this is the practice. So if you can be observant, if you can be aware in everyday life, you can catch yourself: seeing how in certain situations we like certain things, we want them to continue, we like to give them plusses; and in other situations we don't like them, we want to get rid of them.

## 8. BRAHMAVIHĀRA IN SOLVING THE PROBLEM OF UNIVERSAL

The Buddha taught that we are constantly being pulled in one direction or another by things or conditions we either want or hope to avoid. These include praise and blame, pleasure and pain, success and failure, gain and loss. The wise person, the Buddha said, accepts all without approval or disapproval. Equanimity is spacious balance enabling us to work with, rather than against, change. It is equipoise, sustained presence of mind and confidence to meet all of life's incessantly changing circumstances with increasing poise and acceptance.[19]

17. Norman, H.C., ed., *Dhammapada Atthakatha*, Vols. 1- 3, London, UK: PTS, 1993, p. 143.

18. *Ibid*., p. 71.

19. *Ibid*., p. 107.

Equanimity dissolves away the tensions in the mind associated with the struggle between light and dark. Here in the middle path is an all-inclusive stance that graciously works with each juncture of the awakening process. Indifference is the near enemy of equanimity. Indifference is the sad and tragic pretence of equanimity. It is a cold distance from a heartfelt sense of life. It is a state of utter isolation. Its impulse is towards superiority. By nature it suffers a scornful, contemptuous reaction to the beauty of the human process. Indifference blocks the potential to engage the love and freedom life has to offer. Ajahn Chah points to the practice of equanimity when he suggests that we cultivate a mind that knows how to let go. When we can let go a little, we have a little peace. When we can let go a lot, we have a lot of peace. When we can let go completely, we have complete peace. Equanimity practice cultivates a mind that knows how to let go. Therefore, whenever we are not practicing the fulfillment of perfection or one's enlightenment, we should try to cultivate our mind with practices including with *Mettā, Karuṇā, Muditā* and *Upekkhā*. So we cannot face the conflict or corrupt or quarrels on our world.

## 9. BRAHMAVIHĀRA IN SOLVING THE PROBLEM OF HUMAN RELATIONS

I would like to express about the *Brahmavihāra* in solving the problem of, definition and explanation of *Mettā* or Loving-kindness for present world. I prefer to write my research work accordance with *Mettā* in *Brahmaviharās,* because it is the essential connection for our society, communities and even our families, it brings to non-violence, peace and harmony. The Pāḷi word *Mettā* is a multi-significant term meaning loving-kindness, friendliness, goodwill, benevolence, fellowship, amity, concord, inoffensiveness and non-violence.

The Pāḷi commentators define *Mettā* as the strong wish for the welfare and happiness of others. It is one of the ten *Pāramīs* of the Theravāda School of Buddhism, and the first of the four sublime states (*Brahmavihāra*). This is love without clinging. Essentially *Mettā* is an altruistic attitude of love and friendliness as distinguished from mere amiability based on self-interest. Through *Mettā*, one

refuses to be offensive and renounces bitterness, resentment and animosity of every kind, developing instead a mind of friendliness, accommodativeness and benevolence, which seeks the well-being, and happiness of others.

True *Mettā* is devoid of self-interest. It evokes within a warm-hearted feeling of fellowship, sympathy and love, which grows boundless with practice and overcomes all social, religious, racial, political and economic barriers. Mettā is indeed a universal, unselfish and all-embracing love. *Mettā* makes one a pure font of well-being and safety for others. Just as a mother gives, her own life to protect her child, so *Mettā* only gives and never wants anything in return. To promote one's own interest is a primordial motivation of human nature.[20]

When this urge is transformed into the desire to promote the interest and happiness of others, not only is the basic urge of self-seeking overcome, but the mind becomes universal by identifying its own interest with the interest of all. By making this change, one also promotes one's own well-being in the best possible manner. *Mettā* is the protective and immensely patient attitude of forbear a mother who all difficulties for the sake of her child and ever protects it despite its misbehavior. *Mettā* is also the attitude of a friend who wants to give one the best to further one's well-being.

If these qualities of *Mettā* are sufficiently cultivated through the meditation on universal love, the result is the acquisition of a tremendous inner power, which preserves, protects and heals both one and others. Loving-kindness exists in itself, not relying on owning or being owned. Like the pearl, loving-kindness can only by itself, because loving-kindness is not a matter of currency or exchange. No one has enough to buy it but everyone has enough to cultivate it. *Mettā* reunites us with what it means to be alive and unbound.

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20. Rhys Davids, T.W. and Carpenter, J.E., ed., *Op. Cit.*, p. 182.

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# MORALITY AND WISDOM SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS FOR SOCIETY

by Most Ven. Thich Duc Truong

## CAUSATION

From the old age to the present time, mankind has always struggled seeking happiness and lasting peace. But he utterly fails and continues sinking into the darkness of poverty, sickness and death… At the present time we are at the turning point of the Technology Revolution 4.0, and mankind witnesses great advancement in mechanical, biology, electronics… Despite with much materialistic mankind does not have an ample and happy live and yet seems to sink deeper into the individualism and the thread of the divisiveness between the rich and the poor as well as the winner and the looser has escalated to its peak. Those dangers all are caused by human himself from greed, anger, illusion, conceit, doubt and wrong view.

## THE BUDDHA VIEW

The lasting solution that leads mankind to peace and happiness has been taught by the Buddha after he attained enlightenment under the bohdi tree and that is morality and wisdom. The Buddha has emphasized this point in the Lotus Sutra by the analogy that morality and wisdom like the 2 priceless gemstones which are hidden in the garment hem and the bun of a poor man. That 2 gemstones would make a poor man rich as well as a lowly (humble) one into a wise and clever one. In other word, morality and wisdom, according to the Buddha view, are the ingredients that would enable one having a lasting good life.

**What is morality?**

Morality connotes the characters and values of a person. A moral person is someone who has learned and practices ethics, lives his life with high standard of morality, exults beauty both in his outwards and his soul. Buddhism morality always shows the definitive and clear distinction between the good and the evil. Anguttara Nikaya affirms that the difference (distance) between good and evil is as (far as) the sun and the earth, as the vast ocean, as sunrise and sunset... At the same time the Anguttara Nikaya also states clearly that the basic causes of "Good" are not greedy, not hatred, not deluded and the basic causes of "Evil" are greedy, hatred and deluded. This Nikaya also explains how "Good" brings happiness in this life and and the one after, and how "Evil" brings misery in this life and the one after. The act of "Good" and "Evil" are considered respectively as not taking life or taking life, giving or stealing, proper living or improper living… And those good or evil thoughts in the mind are clearly explained as well. That's why the world renown Albert Schweizer has stated that *"The Buddha has created the most perfect morality"* and *"on that subject, the Buddha has spoken of the momental moral truth, has developed the morality not only for the people of India but for the world as a whole. The Buddha was the greatest and the best ethicist that the world has ever seen."*

Buddhism morality, in addition to being "consistency", is built on the law of "cause and effect" and "Karma retribution" which are the most subjective and just principles. The law of "cause and effect" and "Karma retribution" praise the responsibility of individual to himself, to the community and society at large. According to the Buddha teaching Karma is action. And "Karma retribution" is the result of action. The retribution is correspondent to the action, i.e. the Karma. It is the principle that everyone can accept.

Buddihsm considers this principle as the key to explain all happenings and phenomena which take place in nature and society. Buddhism rejects Theocracy and Indeterminism. If all happenings in the world were arranged, initiated by god or the creator then all efforts to live a moral life is useless, meaningless. The same applies for Nondeterminism. If all happenings in society occur in an

arbitrary and random manner (without any governing rule) then why one ought to live a moral life.

Predeterminism and Destinism despite not being Theocracy, with regards to the moral actions of the human being, have the same passive thoughts as Theocracy. If all occurences in society and for a human being are from fate or from past arrangement then all human efforts in the present are powerless and useless. The human being merely and passively accepts and endures wht life brings. In Homère's writing we often find the concept of fate and destiny. In my opinion, they are just passive explanations for those happenings to individual or society at large.

On contrary, Buddhism proclaims *"Human being is the owner of his action and at the same time he is also the heir of that action"*, i.e. it is the human being who acts by his free will and has to accept the consequence of that action. Moreover, the human being is the heir of his action but he is not the slave to action. Sentient with great moral effort in the present life could completely change, reduce the past Karma and even could completely undo Karma and transform them to good Karma. Just as a person because of Karma in past lifes was born with a thin and weak body, could become a strong person or even a muscular person or an athlete thanks to utmost and continuous training effort. Buddhism always affirms that the human being's potential is limitless if he has the strong will to strive for, he, himself, and his cirscumstance both could improve for the better.

It could be stated that a proper understanding of the law of "Karma Retribution" and "Cause and Effect" of Buddhism enables human being to have a high level of responsibility to himself and the society. Because, according to the law of "Karma Retribution", each action, word and thought of a human being has an impact on oneself, in the present and the future, and at the same time also impacts the society and thus creates what Buddhism terms as 'differentiated karma' (karma for oneself), and 'general karma' (karma for the society). Society is genericly refered here as small or large community and in there the individual lives and interacts as a family, commune, organization, country and society… To live with good consciousness with full responsibility means to clearly recognize that each action, each word, each thought all have impact

more or less on ourself (differentiated karma) but also on others, on our environment (general karma). In a higher position with higher power of course the impact of person's action is broader, not necessary restricted within friend and family circle.

Another feature of Buddhism morality is the practical and dynamic meaning of its moral principles, we must practice these each moment of our lives. Each sentient must regularly express moral acts, moral words and moral thoughts. And thanks to that the society will get better.

**What is Wisdom?**

According to the Buddhist dictionary (The Institute of Buddhism Study, Ha Noi) wisdom is defined as: knowledge, insight, being able to perceive the right and wrong) plus the ability or power to discern things and their underlying principles, to decide the doubtful, fully and throughout understand things. Thorought understanding material things as well as immaterial things is wisdom. In other words, one part of wisdom is assertion and the other is selection. So knowing the "converntional or ordinary truth" is the first step to wisdom and knowing the "ultimate truth" is the second.

Abhidharmakośa[6] states "the feature of the first part of wisdom is the attribute of assertion and the feature of second part is the thoroughly distinguishing the essential elements of the truths. Buddhaghosa defines wisdom as: "wisdom has a special characteristic which is to pierce throught the truth. Wisdom has to destroy the darkness of illusion that covers the roots of all truths. Its manifestation can not be dimmed and deluded because meditating is its direct cause." (Tinh hoa và sự phát triển của đạo Phật, dịch giả Chơn Pháp - Nguyễn Hữu Hiệu - Tu thư Đại Học Vạn Hạnh, Saigon, 1970).

According to Buddha teaching in the Nikaya wisdom is illustrated as instinct helping us differentiate the good and the evel, the pure and the unpure/ filthy, the happiness and the suffering, the winning and loosing. Wisdom is likened to a shining lamp helping us to choose good vs evil, right vs wrong, enabling us to recognize what ought and ought not to do, allowing us to lead ourselves to peace with joy and enlightment. This effective analogy has been skillfully

used by the Buddha to explain the characteristics and attitudes of two kinds of people: the fool and the wise. Chapter "Three", section 'The Fool and the Wise' in Anguttara Nikaya depictes the vast difference between the wise and the unwise: "Bikkhu three things the fool can be known by: by bad conduct of body, speech and mind. Bikkhu three things the wise can be known by: by good conduct of body, speech and mind."

Human being has two kinds of emotions, one related to body and the other to mind. The Buddha has likened an unwise person being inflicted by one arrow, yet suffering both in the body and in the mind. Since the unwise is ill-instructed he feels anger when suffers and thus the feeling of pains remains in him for ever and grows more. He seeks to escape his suffering by satisfying his sensual pleasures (since he knows of no other discern escapes). And because of satisfying those sensual pleasures, greed and lush for feeling of pleasures remains and increases. He does not actually know "the origination", "the cessation", "the allure", "the danger" and "the escape" of that feeling. Thus ignorance with regards to the feeling of neither pleasure nor pain stays with him and increases, as thought he obsessed by it. In Samyutta Nikàya IV-36-6 the Buddha taught "the unwise is ill-instructed, bounded by birth, illness, aging, death, with sorrows, lamentation, pains, destresses and dispairs. I say that he is bounded by sufferings".

And the well-instructed disciple of the Noble one, when is touched by the feeling of pain, does not sorrow, grieve or lament, does not beat his chest nor becomes distraught. He only feels the pain, the suffering in the body but not in the mind. The Buddha likened that disciple being inflicted by one arrow and only feels the physical pain but not the mental one. Furthermore, the well-instructed when feels pain, does not become angry and thus the feeling of pain does not remain nor increase. He finds the escape out of the pain and suffering but not resources to sensual pleasures. Since he does not seek to satisfy sensual pleasures greed, lush of feeling of pleasures does not remain nor increase. He actually knows "the origination", "the cessation", "the allure", "the danger" and "the escape" of that feeling. And ignorance with regards to the feeling of neither pleasure nor pain does not remain nor increase.

Henceforth, the well-instructed feels the feeling of pain, of pleasure, of neither pain nor pleasure not like those are bounded by them. In this regard, the Buddha taught "the well-instructed is not bounded by birth, illness, aging, death, with sorrows, lamentation, pains, destresses and dispairs. I say that he is not bounded by sufferings" (Samyutta Nikàya IV-36-6).

When asked the difference between the wise and the unwise with regards to the physical body whileboth (the wise and unwise) are obstructed by ignorance, bounded by evil knots the body results and because of love for the body, their six senses and their feeling of pain and pleasure exist. Thus what is the difference between the wise and the unwise? The Buddha taught "Bhikkhu, being obstructed by ignorance, being bounded by desire, thus the body of the unwise results. That ignorance can not be exterminated by the unwise. That desire can not be eliminated by the unwise. Why it is so? Bhikkhu, the unwise living with good conduct is not because he sincerely wants to exterminate the suffering. So when this body ceases another one originates. And thus he is not freed from birth, illness, aging, death, sorrows, lamentation, pains, destresses and dispairs. I say that he is bounded to suffering." (Samyutta Nikàya II-12-19). "Bhikkhu, being obstructed by ignorance, being bounded by desire, thus the body of the wise results. That ignorance is exterminated by the wise. That desire is eliminated by the wise. Why it is so? Bhikkhu, the wise living with good conduct is because he sincerely wants to exterminate the suffering. So when this body ceases no other one originates. And thus he is freed from birth, illness, aging, death, with sorrows, lamentation, pains, destresses and dispairs. I say that he escapes from suffering" (Samyutta Nikàya II-12-19).

When speaking of wisdom's power to awaken and emancipate, the Buddha has further shown us the ultimate effect of wisdom: "*Wisdom means the understanding with total concentration (abhinnàttha), the complete understanding (parinnattha), and annihilation (pahànattha).*" So wisdom is able to know through meditation and concentration, wisdom also exhibits the ability to know completely, thoroughly and finally wisdom has the ability to cleanse the "Three taints" (the taint of desire, the taint of existence, the taint of ignorance), to annihilate of greed, hatred, delusion, to end

suffering. To be clear we need to differentiate perception (*sanjànàti*) which comes from senses (*sanà*) and understanding (*jànàti*) which comes from the mind, the thinking (*manas*). Perception, consciousness and insight are the three earthy knowledges that bring us science, technology, philosophy, etc. In addition to the 3 above-mentioned knowledges and understandings Buddhism also contributes 'knowledge through total concentration' and 'insight that see thing as it is'. However, wisdom is not an end it is only a mean to nirvana. With such wisdom he becomes disgusted, dispassionated, and fully released as "From being disgusted he becomes dispassionated, from being dispassioned he becomes fully freed. In him who is fully freed there is knowledge 'I am emancipated'. He discerns 'Rebirth is ceased, holly life is fulfilled, and the task is done. There is no more of this to come" (Samyutta Nikàya IV-35-28).

As such the role of wisdom is to filter out, to select the objects to comtemplate, to concentrate and from this process one becomes disenchanted, dispassionated, and finally fully released. According to the Alagaddùpama Sutta, the objects to contemplate are the Five Aggregrates: form, sensation, perception, volition and consciousness. Irregards of which 'five aggregates', past, present or future, interior or exterior, coarse or fine, inferior or superior, far or near, they are to be contemplated and concentrated on: "This is not me, this is not mine, this is not myself. Seeing that, the well-instructed noble disciple become disgusted with form, sensation, perception, volition and consciousness. From being disgusted he becomes dispassionated, from being dispassioned he becomes fully freed. And in him who is fully freed there is knowledge 'I am emancipated'. He discerns 'Rebirth is ceased, holly life is fulfilled, and the task is done. There is no more of this to come". (Majjhima Nikāya I 22).

## THE BUDDHIST APPROACH

The Buddha has affirmed that a good society can not have in it those bad individuals and the good individuals are foundation for a good society. Because the morality, the way of life of individuals have effect the society. The Buddha life and the lives of his great deciples are eloquent examples. Their good conduct lives coupled

with esteemed morality and the wisdoms shinning like the guiding light become the exemplary standard to teach individuals as well as the society. The Buddha during his 46 years of spreading his teaching has expended great effort to improve mankind with respect to morality and wisdom rather than appeal to change the society.

**Look to the inside**

According to Buddhist point of view, the approach to make social changes is to effect the change in mankind mind step by step. This approach may not be consistent with Western thinking because it seems too passive. Western approach is more active and direct, by making changes to the social structure and condition. But with regards to long lasting and sustainability then the approach that directs toward mankind mind seems much more superior.

In deed, Buddhism affirms the social unrest originates from greed, hatred, delusion, arrogance, mistrust, evil thoughts, etc. When human solves these unsettlings then the society becomes better. In Magazine of Phylosophy Dr Hoàng Thị Thơ, head of Eastern Phylosophy department, Phylosophy Faculty, Social Science Institute Viet Nam, has stated "The inward thinking of Buddhism is a feature by-product of the Indian historical thinking from the Middle Ages, at the same time an outstanding feature of Eastern thinking. Buddhism was born after India has had a substantial philosophical and religious foundation with a history of more than 1500 years before BC and has transitioned to the third stage of thinking, it has passed the mythology and theocracy stages and reached the humanism era, i.e. it has begun to denounce sacralization and theocracy and take up humanity as focal point."

Inward characteristic of Buddhism teachs that human being needs to cultivate morality and wisdom and that is key to all sustainable solutions for the society.

**The effectiveness**

"Turning the Wheel of Dharma" is the greatest deed the Buddha has done for the world, it brought to human the solution to happiness and peace. After enlightment the Buddha has given thought to seek those individuals who could listen, understand

and absorb Buddha's teaching. At first the Buddha thought of the two teachers, Alara *Kalama andà* Uddaka Ramaputta, but he heard that they were no longer alive. Then the Buddha sought out the 5 brothers Kaundinya. In 2 weeks after being taught by the Buddha about 'The Four Noble Truths' and the Anattalakkhana Sutra the five brothers attained the Arahantship. Then Yasa and his group of friends who have learn the Dharma from the Buddha became the next 55 Arahants. These first 60 Arahants together with the Buddha have spread the message of emancipation to humankind.

The Buddhas has been very successful in approaching individuals with good characters, who had great influence to others and community. For instance, when coming back to the Uruvela, a small village near Bodhgaya, the Buddha converted 1000 folowers of the three Kassapa brothers and then 250 disciples of Sariputta and Maha Moggallaan. In a short time the Buddha has had 1250 Bhikkus who then attained Arahantship.

In addition, the Buddha also imparted emancipation to such kings as Bimbasara, Pasenadi, etc. Once listening to the Dharma from the Buddha king Pasenadi became so reverent to the Buddha that he happily spoke to the Blessed One: ""*Magnificent lord! Listening to the Blessed One's Dharma I feel like the one who was in darkness suddently found light, I feel so incomparable joyful and happy. To the Blessed One I am tremble and much awake, I wish to worship and to be taught by the Blessed One on those things that I still don't understand. The Blessed One is the Great Teacher who bring Dharma to this country, our people are so blessed to see the ultimate truth brought by the Blessed One's teaching. I believe that all people lifes will be at peace and prosperous for a long time.*" After the Buddha entered Nirvana, India has seen such great kings as Asoka, Harsha-Vardhana who have provided great support for Buddha's right doctrine by applying the Buddha teaching in governing their countries.

With the profound wisdom the Buddha has helped those influential sentients and thus helped quickly propagating Buddha teaching to the nobles, the hollies as well as the commoners at large. The Buddha not only brought Buddhism to mankind but also the solution to suffering, sorrow and changed the pessimistic weary thoughts, etc.

## SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL SOLUTION

The Buddha taught that the causes of all sufferings, of both individual and society, are ignorance and desire. In other words, it is that greed, hatred, delusion are the root causes of all disputes, unjusts that eventually brings anxieties, sorrows and discontents. The effective method to transform the mind is that we have to discipline ourselves to adhere to Precepts, Meditation and Wisdom to get rid of greed, hatred and delusion, our life is then contented. Since greed will break Precepts, hatred will break Meditation and delusion will break Wisdom.

'Right Understanding' helps sentient seeing and understanding correctly is thus the foundation to develop Wisdom. In deed with right understanding then the stream of thoughts become clear thus sentients must carefully deliberate because thought will result in action. Actions will become habits. And eventually the habits become our personalities, our characters. Whether life is easy and light or stormy, turbulent it is because of our personalities, of our ways of life. In other words, because of ignorance sentients mistakenly lean on Body, Speech and Thought to create one own (good or bad) Karma and then from there our life is governed by karmic power. Madame Marie Curie has said "*Nothing in life is fearful (difficult) once we (fully) understand it*". Buddhist would not cause difficulty to oneself nor to others and in order to become fulfilled sentients must return to a moral and humanistic life, i.e. to live free of desires and bad deeds.

The Buddha affirmed clearly that it is we who will reap that had been sowed but no one else, not even the Buddha, the Avalokitesvara or God could change that. In other words, the Buddha, God, Devil, etc. are not involved in some one's Karma (and its retribution). If one does good deeds then one will be reborn in the good realm without the intervention from any third party. If one does bad deeds then after death, the bad Karma is correspondent to the realm of those did bad deeds and when reborn one has to endure hardship to repay for the bad deeds. There is no God who has sent that person to hell.

The Karma doctrine and the law of causality are very important

teachings from the Buddha. They open up to humankind the understanding of the reality of one's action, speech and thought. In order to maintain a rich and thriving society Buddhism places its concerns to each sentient and especially the leaders who have great influences on people and society. Thus the author has the following suggestions for the leaders, those:

Continue to develop the leadership with regards to a good personality and characters, always think of the people and for the people, and have good impact on the leaders of other countries with regards to humanity.

Adopt those good teachings such as Karma doctrine and law of causality, etc. as moral criteria, improve the education and eliminate the ignorance in the society.

Facilitate and support programs to bring the Dharma to the people just like king Asoka has sent many delegatons to spread Buddha Dharma to many territories in the world.

And finally best wishes to a successful symposium and wishes that Vesak festivity always remain within us.

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# MINDFUL LIVING: A BUDDHIST MODEL FOR A SUSTAINABLE WORLD

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Mindfulness has been used worldwide to help treat all kinds of physical and mental illness. However, not many understood that the purpose of using mindfulness in the Buddhist practice is to maintain a lifestyle that helps sustainable to the environment as the Lord Buddha had done during his lifetime. Our goal on this paper is therefore to study the research literature and the hypothesis that mindful living which is mindful practices in eating, consuming, doing simple household tasks or chores, and breathing. Following our Buddhist model, one will be greatly benefit physically and the spiritually. It might even help clarify one 's truer goals and values with more compassion. As a result, it encourages pro-environmental behaviours and transforms one's attitudes towards the planet Earth, which essentially help us while also help to preserve mother nature that has been supporting our well-being.

While some parts of our world are becoming prosperous and thriving in the past several decades, our environment is paying the dearly for those developments. According to the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA, 2005: 1) Almost sixty percent of the ecosystems were degraded or being used unsustainably: "The Condition and Trends Working Group found that over the past 50 years, humans have changed ecosystems more rapidly and extensively than in any comparable period of time in human

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history, largely to meet rapidly growing demands for food, fresh water, timber, fiber and fuel. This has resulted in a substantial and largely irreversible loss in the diversity of life on Earth."

In theory, technological means are our solutions to the problem, but the international emission agreement is still in a rudimentary stage of the process and some other big emission countries, such as United States of America and China, are not participating. Even if all nations are agreeable on solving the problems of climate change via technological development, we still face an escalating usage of limited resource consumption from the approximately three billion more middle-class consumers projected to emerge in the next 20 years, which is a huge addition to today's 1.8 billion (McKinsey, 2011). The Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports in 2018 that the rising of global warming is estimated to 1.0 degree Celsius, above pre-industrial levels. The likely range is 0.8 degree Celsius to 1.2 degree Celsius, and "global warming is likely to reach 1.5 degree Celsius between 2030 and 2052 if it continues at the current rate". (IPCC, 2018). In four model pathways, IPCC suggests that social, business, and technological innovations need to work together to resolve the CO2 emission problems. In addition, "Governments, businesses, media and the public pay increased attention to the environmental and social aspects of development."

In light of the recommendation of IPCC, unfortunately the world governments and world communities are still in disagreement on many fronts. Buddhist organizations need to come together to set a new standard for our Buddhist fellows and the world to follow. It is our responsibility and accountability to exercise the standard originating from our Lord Buddha. We, Buddhist people, ought to understand how our Lord Buddha valued nature in His life time, as He was born, enlightened, and reached Nirvana under trees – a representation of the nature and the environment. It would be ignorant of us not to see how our responsibility and accountability contributes to the world as we live in today.

In Sammyutta Nikaya, Gaddula Sutta – The Leash (SN 99:22), the Lord Buddha had said: "There comes a time, bhikkhus, when the great earth burns up and perishes and no longer exists, but still, I say, there is no making an end of suffering for those beings roaming

and wandering on hindered by ignorance and fettered by craving" (Bhikkhu Bodhi, 2000). In this case, we as human all get caught by our own ignorance and we need to wake up to sustain life, not only for ourselves, but also for our planet Earth.

Though we all agree that sustainability is one of our best solutions, not many agree on how best to approach that. Many argue that: "a transition to sustainability requires a shift from materialist to post-materialist values, from anthropocentric to ecological worldviews." (Leiserowitz et al., 2005). Also, there is "the widespread emergence of a new set of social priorities as an enabler" (Tibbs, 2011), which raises the issues of how we humans lead our life to be fair to our societal relationships and to the nature as well (Jamieson, 1992). Others pointed out that we should look more into "compassion, equity, fairness, and an ethos of sustainability than… on science, law, or technology" (Cains, 2001). Regardless of how many different views there are, people all argue that we have to envisage huge sacrifices to achieve our common goal, and a trade-off needs to be made between human's well-being and the sustainability of the environment, as if they are unavoidably in conflict. However, studies have shown that a trade-off is not necessarily, and mindfulness is one of the important solutions to our conflict today (Wamsler et al., 2017; Ericson et al., 2014).

The question is how the transition to sustainability using mindful living can be achieved. Everybody, regardless of their beliefs or religions, can practice mindfulness. Thus, it (mindfulness practice) maybe is now a concrete solution to our sustainability issues, and no longer just a special practice for Buddhists only. There is a wealth of research on mindfulness and its contributions to human's well-being physically, and health-related mental issues. But still, not much studies on how it affects our lives spiritually. Many mindfulness models related to Buddhist ways of living have been introduced to the public and mostly are modified to be more suitable for lay (non-Buddhist) people. However, they tend to focus more on the physical benefits of mindfulness and less on the mental parts. In this paper, we discuss mindful living as one of possible contributions to our conflicts on sustainability. A practical model of mindful living needs to be applicable on both the physical

and the spiritual according to the Buddha's teaching on the four foundations of mindfulness, which are on the body, the feeling, the mind, and the mental object (Bhikkhu Bodhi, 2000).

Mindfulness is a mental training technique that promotes mental awareness and a mindful way of living, which consists of some basic daily activities, such as eating, consuming, doing simple household tasks or chores, breathing, etc… There is a full array of studies on individual mindfulness effects on their body and feeling relating to their health and emotional issues. Many found that there are positive linkages between the health and emotion of individuals who lived mindfully on daily basis (eg., Guendelman et al., 2017; Wamsler et al., 2018).

Our goal on this paper is therefore to study the research literature and the hypothesis that mindful living which is mindful practices on eating, consuming, doing simple household tasks or chores, and breathing following our Buddhist model, will be greatly benefit both the physical and the spiritual for individuals. It might help to clarify one 's truer goals and values with more compassion. As a result, it also encourages pro-environmental behaviours and transforms one's attitudes towards preservation of our planet Earth.

## 1. MINDFULNESS IN EATING

While eating, which is a regular activity in our life and, if we are not hungry, it can be boring and monotonous. However, if we apply mindfulness to it, it can be interesting and enjoyable. Eating mindfully can seem tough because when we are ravenous, we cannot seem to hold back from devouring the food in mere seconds. However, being mindful while eating can benefit the body and the mind, as it allows time for the body to register its fullness and appreciate the food and flavours more. Furthermore, mindfulness in eating can make us feel more in tune with our body and better able to manage how we are feeling when eating our meal.

There is a great amount of research on mindfulness in eating and how it positively affects people's diet. Applicable mindfulness techniques have been instructed to people with health related issues, such as diabetes, obesity, and so on… to help them cope with these problems and get better (Dalen,

2010; SLRG, 2015). However, most are about the physical benefit and less on the mental.

In the book: *Mindful Eating, Mindful Life* (2014), Dr. Lilian Cheung, co-writing with Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh, indicates that mindful eating is an important practice in the 21st century. She stated that in a digital age, people are busy with multitasking and always on and connected. Therefore, they tend to develop poor eating habits which often increases risk for obesity and diseases. Furthermore, fast food, snack food, and soft drink companies use the latest in neurosciences (fMRI, EEG) to study and trigger the subconscious desire of youth making them susceptible to advertising. In addition, studies showed that mindless eating tends to get us eat more. For instance, "moviegoers eat 34% more stale popcorn when served in big buckets than in medium-sized buckets, and restaurant goers fed soup in self-refilling bowls ate nearly 75% more than people with a normal bowl without ever realizing it." (Wansink et al., 2006).

In this Buddhist model, we eat mindfully, contemplating on the five subjects: 1. This food is a gift of the earth, the sky, numerous living beings, and much hard and loving work; 2. May we eat with mindfulness and gratitude so as to be worthy to receive it, 3. May we recognize and transform unwholesome mental formations, especially our greed, and learn to eat with moderation, 4. May we keep our compassion alive by eating in such a way that we reduce the suffering of living beings, preserve our planet, and reverse the process of global warming, 5. We accept this food so that we may nurture our sisterhood and brotherhood, build our sangha, and nourish our ideal of serving living beings. (Thich Nhat Hanh, 2000). The purpose of the five contemplations is not only to remind us to value our food, not to waste it; but also to show our appreciation to what we are having at the moment. It may be tough to remember all of these contemplations. But we do not have to memorize them all at first. We can go from one item on each mealtime; then try to combine them all later. The more we practice this mindful eating, the more we see the intimate connection between ourselves and the environment. Food comes from the environment, and food is our basic need to survive, it supports our sustainment and could be considered our saviour. With that mindfulness in eating, our

attitude towards our food and the environment will evolve over time and therefore, we tend to be more sustainable in our way of living.

## 2. MINDFULNESS IN CONSUMING

Living in a modern world we tend to think that we are living in a material world. Our relationship to material goods is undoubtedly inevitable. Our basic needs to protect ourselves, such as eating, drinking, sheltering, and clothing, must be fulfilled. We take the materiality of these tasks so much for granted that many of our daily decisions pass almost unnoticed beneath the cognitive radar. The problem is "our enormously productive economy demands that we make consumption our way of life," furthermore, "we convert the buying and use of goods into rituals, that we seek our spiritual satisfactions, our ego satisfactions, in consumption… Whether we like this process or not, we need things consumed, burned up, worn out, replaced, and discarded at an ever increasing pace" because relentless consumption is needed, just to maintain our economic stability in this modern world (Lebow, 1955).

Mindful consumers understand the power of consumption, which plays a vital connection between material objects and the concepts of status, power, and value. The symbolic power of material goods carries certain meaning and allows us to communicate things to others and to ourselves without the need for words, definitions, or discussion. For example, we simply wear the ring or carry the bag and know that its symbolism will be interpreted and understood (Childs, 2015).

Mindful consumers also understand the concepts of wants and needs. We do not just consume to provide for our basic needs and necessities such as food, water, and shelter, but also to fulfil our additional desires and wants. Distinguishing between needs and wants is also very important for mindful consumers because needs can be considered as a relatively necessity for survival, while wants are more flexible, as they are shaped by the perception of what is regarded as something to fulfil people's desires, statuses, or powers.

Greed is one of the three defilements or unwholesome states of the mind, (greed, aversion, and delusion), which is a common teaching of our Lord Buddha. If we feed thoughts of greed and

encourage them to grow, by repeating them over and over in the mind, they will manifest into unwholesome and unskilful actions, causing harm to ourselves and others. We are often conditioned and encouraged to look outside of ourselves for happiness which triggers our wanting minds and overconsumption into actions. As a result, it shapes us to become more materially dependent.

In this model, we focus more on mindful of our greed, desires, or cravings. We also practice mindfulness in our consuming, which heightens our awareness of what we truly *need* verses what we actually just *want* to have. This heightened awareness keeps our greed, desires, or cravings, as well as our consuming at bay. With mindfulness, we can be aware of our desires, our consuming thoughts and, instead of feeding them and acting on them, we can step back and observe them. Being mindful will also help us recognise how often we focus on our worries, fears or what we do not want. Developing habits that support our needs and remember that the more repetition and emotion associated with those needs, the easier it becomes ingrained into our life. Practicing this regularly allows us to experience greater peace, joy, contentment, and wisdom instead of acting on our self-manifested defilements.

What billions of consumers consider valuable is significantly important and definitely enable a huge difference to our ecosystem. And if their desires, feelings, or emotions are greatly dependent on material consumption, they will not only degrade the ecosystem, but also drive it to the irreversible end. Mindfulness in consuming will greatly rescue the ecosystem and pay back to what have been stolen from the next generations.

### 3. MINDFULNESS IN SIMPLE HOUSEHOLD TASKS OR DAILY CHORES

Mindfulness helps to discipline the unruly minds, and there are so many benefits of practicing mindfulness in life. To name a few: it prevents eating in excess; manages our weight; heals diseases; helps with digestion; enjoys our food more; consumes less and spend more time with our family… Mindful household tasks or chores, such as washing the dishes, cleaning the house… might be important to improve our way of living. Do you rush through

chores while distract yourself by thinking about other things? What if you took a different approach to a chore such as washing the dishes? What if you slowed down and immersed yourself in the sensory experience of being at the sink? Many people are surprised to discover that they can enrich their live experiences by becoming more mindful throughout the day.

Although there are little research articles on mindfulness effects to the simple household tasks, there are numerous researches on how mindfulness positively helps people with mental health problems and issues. Currently many therapists are applying the concept of mindfulness on chores to help their clients cope with psychological issues, such as stress, anxiety, depression. Furthermore, mindfulness helps them stay focused on one task at a time, instead of multitasking, which may induce more unnecessary stresses.

It seems unfathomable that mindfulness can be a sole solution to all physical and mental problems in this day and time in the modern world. Thich Nhat Hanh in his book The Miracle of Mindfulness (2012) beautifully described his perspective on doing the dishes: "While washing the dishes one should only be washing the dishes, which means one should be completely aware of the fact that one is washing the dishes. At first glance, that might seem a little silly. Why put so much stress on a simple thing? But that's precisely the point. The fact that I am standing there and washing these bowls is a wondrous reality. I am completely myself, following my breath, conscious of my presence, and conscious of my thoughts and actions. There's no way I can be tossed around mindlessly …"

In the model, all chores are considered the subjects of mindfulness. For instance, mindfulness on washing the dishes can be both satisfying and grounding. Feel the warm water on your hands; let yourself enjoy the experience of making something dirty clean again. Do not think about finishing or what you'll do when you're finished. Focus solely on the doing. In the Buddhist tradition of Mahayana, monks and nuns have 'gathas', or mindfulness verses, to silently chant while doing the chores, or any activities around the temple as part of their daily practice. For example, gathas for washing the dishes is "Washing the dishes is like bathing a baby Buddha. The profane is the sacred. Everyday mind is Buddha's

mind"; or for floor sweeping: "As I carefully sweep the ground of enlightenment, a tree of understanding spring up from the Earth." (Thich Nhat Hanh, 2006, pp 36, 41). This silent chanting helps monks and nuns stay focus with what they are doing at the present moment, and they all have to learn by heart since they were young or during their first year training as a novice.

Mindfulness in doing chores helps people to let go of their worries, stresses, or psychological concerns. The more they practice with this kind of mindfulness, the easier for them to maintain a healthy and well-being lifestyle. Having better health and well-being is not only beneficial to us, but also have a positive impact on how we view and approach sustainable behaviors.

**4. MINDFULNESS IN BREATHING**

Although breathing is commonly described as a simple repetitive, and autonomous function that sustains life, it has long been known to have certain impact on higher-order behavior and thinking. Mindful breathing has been the subject used to test and treat a whole lot of physical and mental diseases by a great number of studies and research. It has been largely known to mental health communities that mindful breathing is one of the most effective way to treat mental disturbances. Practitioners of pranayama yoga, for instance, used slow, controlled breathing and other forms of meditation to promote mental calming and contemplative states, and it is used clinically to suppress excessive arousal and stress such as certain types of panic attacks. Although the effect of breathing on behavior and mental state could easily be indirect, there could also be more direct connections and impact of the breathing center on higher-order brain function (Brown, R.P., Gerbarg, P.L.,2009).

Thich Nhat Hanh in his book The Miracle of Mindfulness (2012) described the function of mindful breathing: "Thus mindfulness is at the same time a means and an end, the seed and the fruit. When we practice mindfulness in order to build up concentration, mindfulness is a seed. But mindfulness itself is the life of awareness: the presence of mindfulness means the presence of life, and therefore mindfulness is also the fruit. Mindfulness frees us of forgetfulness and dispersion and makes it possible to live fully

each minute of life. Mindfulness enables us to live. You should know how to breathe to maintain mindfulness, as breathing is a natural and extremely effective tool which can prevent dispersion. Breath is the bridge which connects life to consciousness, which unites your body to your thoughts. Whenever your mind becomes scattered, use your breath as the means to take hold of your mind again."

As a string to connect mind and body, breath plays a vital role in balancing and synchronizing our well-being. We all know that when mind and body do not get along well, we may easily develop a problem. As a matter of fact, mindful breathing is a solution to our healthy life because it means that our attention is influenced by our breathing and that it rises and falls with the cycle of respiration. It is possible that by focusing on and regulating our breathing, we can optimize our attention level and reciprocally, by focusing on our attention level, our breathing becomes more synchronized and balanced.

In the model, we propose four types of mindful breathing techniques, which include: 1). counting the breath, 2). following the breath, 3). placing the breath, and 4). observing and contemplating the breath. They can be used interchangeably, respectively, or in combination.

**4.1. Counting the breath**

It seems hard at first, as you try to synchronize your in and out breaths, while attempting to straighten your body into a good sitting position. Your breath, your mind and your body appear to be out of synched. As such, counting is used as a mechanism to rein in your mind, your body, and your breath into one single attention spot. The procedure is as following: as you count one, two, three, four during each of your inhale; then one, two, three, four, five, or six during each of your exhale, you start pulling your mind to get synched with your breath. Each cycle of in and out breath, you count as one. Until the fifth cycle, then you start with a new round by counting one again until the fifth cycle. You do this over, over again for 5 to 10 minutes. Every time you lose track of your count, you go back to restart the count while being mindful to your breathing regularly. Each time when the count is lost, simply return

back to the process to recover. Especially, do not get disturbed by losing count because it is just a mindful breathing tool and nothing more. Utilize your breath as an anchor, return to your breath every time you feel lost or lose count. This technique is the method of anchoring down your breath and your consciousness, and by itself is an exercise of mindfulness.

**4.2. Following the breath**

Once you are able to maintain a steady attention on the counts, you have reached the maturity point at which you can begin to abandon the counting method and begin to concentrate solely on the breath itself. This second technique requires you to keep track of where your breath is. That why it is called following your breath literally. Just like a policeman following a criminal, you constantly keep track of the location of your breath, whether it is out of your nose, inside your belly, or in the middle of your chest. You feel the flow of your breath in and out of your body. Keeping track of your breath is itself an act of mindfulness, which is also the wondrous method of taking hold of your consciousness. This technique tests your skill of how to maneuver mindfully without being distracted by the moving breath. Mindfulness is not when you are mindful on a single spot, but you are able to move around skilfully without losing your awareness. This is more applicable for us in real life situations, which we deal with on daily basis.

**4.3 Placing the breath**

Again, after you are able to master your skill of following your breath, you then abandon it and start placing your breath on a single pointed concentration, or Samadhi, a Pali term for a state of intense concentration achieved through meditation. You may place this single pointed spot anywhere in or around your body such as the tip of your nose, or your nostrils, your mouth, lips, or the top of your head… The point is to maintain a constant attention to that single pointed spot where your in and out breath is placed as long as you can. Once in a while, a thought pops up here and there, just take notice; then return back to your attention spot. Do not feel bad or disturbed, if you are unable to maintain your spot for even a few seconds. Always return back to your spot after any disruption.

More practice may be needed to build up a constant and longer concentration on the single pointed spot.

### 4.4 observing and contemplating the breath

If you have a hard time placing the breath, you may now release it; or if you are able to maintain a constant attention to your single pointed spot; then it is time for you to abandon it and start the process of observing and contemplating the breath. In this process, you are literally watching the state or characteristic of your breath while contemplating on the four elements - earth, water, air or wind, and fire or heat, that are made up of your physical body according to the Buddha's teaching. You observe and contemplate on whether the breath is heavy (earth element), or moist or cool (water element), or light or airy (air or wind element), or hot or harsh (fire element); or it may combine more than one element. Furthermore, you also watch and contemplate on the impermanence of the breath - how it is changing from one thing to the another in just one second or a few. But it is constantly changing its state, never remains the same for long.

This technique helps you realize how fragile our life is. Breathing is our life line but it is so impermanent and constantly changing. There is nothing we can do to keep it constant and stable. It may stop any time and that would be the end of life.

So, how does this practice has anything to do with the sustainability? As research has shown mindfulness has positive impacts on both well-being and empathy, and it can enhance the awareness of an individual's 'actual' value sense. People with mental problems such as stress, depression or health-related issues such as physical pain may have a hard time to take into account societal concerns such as climate change, poverty, inequality, or racism. Instead, their attention is likely to be attracted to their personal problems, thus neglecting other concerns (Shah et al., 2012).

## 5. VALUES AND COMPASSION

Several studies indicate that people with egocentric, materialistic values and goals directed toward money, status, and power tend to have more negative attitudes to the environment and are less likely to behave in a pro-environmental manner (Brown and Kasser, 2005;

Crompton and Kasser, 2009). According to Rosenberg (2004), mindfulness training can help people to become more aware of their thought processes and less receptive to persuasion by others. As a result, mindfulness may help clarify one's values and reflect more objectively, so that we can "rediscover and choose values that may be truer for us." (Shapiro et al., 2006; Carlson, 2013).

In terms of compassion, according to Jazaieri et al. (2013), compassion may be considered to be a predictor of psychological health and well-being, while also promoting altruistic behaviour and generosity. Kemeny et al. (2012) found in a study of an eight-week meditation/emotion training intervention on a group of healthy teachers. They were assigned to either a treatment group or a wait-list group that the states of mind of those in the treatment group became more behavioural positive than those of the wait-list group. They also found prosocial responses like compassion was increased with the negative affect reduced significantly and maintained five months after the program. Similar results are found in other studies (Jazaieri et al. 2013; Weng et al. 2013). These results support the notion that compassion can be taught and learned.

## 6. NEED FOR FURTHER RESEARCH WITH PRACTICAL MODELS AND POLICY CHANGES

Even though it has been proven by so many research that mindful living helps promote people's life and well-being, as well as transform people's behavior to sustainability. There is still a lack of applicable models of living that show the true connections between the effectiveness of mindfulness to sustainability. In general, most studies or models are based upon executed experiments and they clearly indicate the underlying positive changes from mindful living is possible. Another key factor at play is many countries are still indecisive on whether they should change the policy to more pro-environment and delay the developments of their countries or go ahead with the developments and change the policy later when more advanced technological means for sustainment are available. As a matter of fact, a need for a model of mindful living that promotes both the development and the sustainability is greatly and urgently needed than ever.

A change in policy of all Buddhist institutions around the world regarding more widespread educations on the benefits of sustainability among Buddhist followers is definitely needed. In addition, the leaders of the international Buddhist organizations and United Nations officials also need to come together in an effort to help raise more awareness of the issues of sustainability around the world.

## 7. CONCLUSION

Due to the rapidly growing demand for resources, the loss of diversity of life on Earth is substantially and largely irreversible. With three billion more middle-class consumers in the next 20 years, we are facing a daunting task in putting a stop to a more increment of consumption of resources. Mindfulness may be one of the last resorts in helping change people's view from materialistic values to well-being that is not heavily dependent on consumption. In this paper, we have highlighted the contribution of mindful living to well-being through different mindfulness methods following the Buddhist approach. If well-being is achieved through a sustainable way of living and less dependent on consumption, the environment will be less likely to be distressed and able to make a comeback. Many researches have shown that mindful living can contribute to sustainable behaviour and more environmentally friendly. However, the results from these studies also suggest that sustainable way of life and better well-being may also be achievable through policies that promote environmentally friendly behaviors in schools, workplaces, and more widespread education to the public about the benefits of sustainability.

As Buddhists, our contribution towards sustainment must be practical and also helpful towards our studies and practice. As such, practice mindful living helps ourselves and could also help to sustain our world.

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# EDUCATION AS HEART-MIND TRANSFORMATION CAN WE WORK TOWARDS A GLOBAL ETHIC OF EDUCATION? ARISTOTELIAN AND BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVES COMPARED

by Heinz-Dieter Meyer*

ABSTRACT

In this paper I draw on Aristotelian and Buddhist scholarship and wisdom to consider education as a process of intellectual and moral formation, a process of "sentimental education" or transformation ("ex-ducere"), by which the student is guided out of intellectual and moral ignorance and towards intellectual and moral skill. Whereas much modern educational practice rests on the assumption that education is mostly about developing the rational mind, both Aristotelian and Buddhist conceptions of education emphasize the need to shape and transform the student's sensibilities so that morally appropriate (virtuous) behavior becomes second nature rather than merely a matter of rational cognition. Yet, while both traditions share key assumptions and formative strategies (which set them apart from the dominant Western model), they also differ in interesting and illuminating ways.

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Both traditions assume, for example, that moral development and growth require the student's transformational change from a state of incontinence (Aristotle) or defilement (the Buddha) to a state of temperance and wisdom. In a state of incontinence / defilement, a person is a slave to their craving (Buddha) or appetites (Aristotle) framed as aversion, greed, delusion in Buddhism and as the vices of gluttony, lust, anger, greed, pride etc in Aristotle. In this state, reason is often used merely to rationalize what the cravings and appetites dictate.

To get out from under the enslavement of the appetites, Aristotle's Nichomachean Ethic prescribes a path of developing habits of moderation, and developing and strengthening settled dispositions of virtue ('character') through repeatedly engaging in virtuous acts. On that basis, the young person is thought to acquire intellectual knowledge, learns to resist acting on his or her incontinent urges, and acquire a degree of practical wisdom (phronesis). Finally, by learning to live convivially with virtuous friends, a person becomes ready and capable for the highest life, the life of theoria or contemplation (often mistranslated as 'life of study').

Buddhism, too, recognizes the importance of contemplation as end and means towards the development of virtuous dispositions. In fact, there are similarities between the path prescribed by Aristotle and the noble eight-fold path. Both include training in virtue (correct action, speech, and livelihood), training in contemplation (correct effort, mindfulness, and concentration) and training in wisdom (correct view and intention). But there are also crucial differences in that the ultimate end of the Aristotelian path is "the good life," while the ultimate end of the eight-fold-path is complete release from suffering.

Still, in an increasingly globalizing world, it seems important that we become aware of the shared goals in Western and Eastern educational traditions that emphasize the development of virtue, ethics, and inner peace.

"Suppose, monks that the rice seedlings have ripened and the watchman is negligent. If a bull fond of rice enters the paddy field, he might indulge himself as much as he likes. So too, the uninstructed worldling who does not exercise restraint over the six bases for contact indulges himself as much as he likes in the five cords of

sensual pleasure." (Samyutta Nikaya iv 195)[1]

"One may be puzzled how a man with a correct view of a situation can be weak of will. For some deny that this is possible if he really knows what is the right thing to do. [Such a person is] like a city that votes for all the right decrees and has excellent laws, but does not apply them." Aristotle, 1152a20.

## OVERVIEW

In the above quotes, Aristotle and the Buddha talk about a person without proper self-restraint. Often this is a person who knows right, but does wrong—a self-indulgent or "incontinent" person whose deliberating or "rational" faculty is overwhelmed by their greed for sense pleasure or their aversive sense of hatred or resentment. To educators, this type of "uninstructed worldling" or "akratic" person represents a formidable problem as we cannot be satisfied to raise people who may have high levels of knowledge, intelligence, or technical "competence" but who lack the self-regulation and moral compass to apply these competencies to good and wholesome ends. In fact, the recognition is growing worldwide that our education systems too often err on the side of education for competence and neglect the side of moral development, character, and wisdom, producing what some have called "smart fools" (Sternberg 1990, 2007; Steel 2014; Seligman 2009; Lewis 2007; Zajonc 2006; Meyer 2016; Meyer 2018). At a time of rapid globalization which exposes people to great varieties of different and seemingly incompatible moral codes, this need to integrate rational-cognitive and moral development and to help young people grow past the point of akrasia and self-indulgence is of ever greater importance. If globalization is not to issue in lasting moral confusion and hostility, the community of educators needs to evolve standards of moral development that can be shared by educators worldwide. I propose here that moving towards virtue, wisdom, and contemplation can provide such a standard. In fact, two major global ethical traditions,

1. Vina Sutta: The Lute. Cf. Thanissaro Bhikkhu's alternative rendering: "Suppose that corn had ripened and the watchman was heedless. A corn-eating ox, invading the corn to eat it, would intoxicate itself as much as it liked. In the same way, an uninstructed run-of-the-mill person, not exercising restraint with regard to the six media of sensual contact, intoxicates himself with the five strings of sensuality as much as he likes." Samyutta Nikaya, iv 195.

the Aristotelian and the Buddhist, coincide on this point. They share a conception of education as "heart-mind transformation" in opposition to what is often called a "banking model" of education (Freire) preoccupied with forming the cognitive mind only (and often in ways that do not facilitate independence of judgment). Exploring the similarities and differences of these two influential perspectives provides us with a useful point of departure for a constructive dialogue about the possibility of a global ethic of education.

## INTRODUCTION

On the United Nations celebration of Vesak in 2000, the Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi said in his speech at the United Nations Assembly in New York City:

"Buddhism can provide helpful insights and practices across a wide spectrum of disciplines—from philosophy and psychology to medical care and ecology—without requiring those who use its resources to adopt Buddhism as a full-fledged religion."

He went on to say that Buddhism proposes "a practical path of moral and mental training … for tackling the problems of the world in the one place where they are directly accessible to us: in our own minds."[2]

In this paper I want to consider the contribution Buddhism can make towards evolving a global ethic of education for peace, morality, and insight. Specifically, I will suggest

a) that such an ethic requires that we approach the educational task as one of *heart-mind transformation* rather than merely cognitive training—a process that conceives of education as changing not only our knowledge and cognitive faculties, but also our moral sensibilities, skills and discernment;

b) that Buddhism shares this concern with other moral traditions, including those of Western provenience, and that understanding these shared concerns through developing a shared conversation

2... Bhikkhu Bodhi, The Buddha and his Message. Past, Present, and Future. Lecture on Vesak Day. United Nations, 15 May 2000.

is helpful, even vital in building education into a global arena of cooperation and community;

c) that Buddhism as a highly developed path of moral and mental training can contribute significantly to such a conversation.

Concretely, I will compare the Aristotelian tradition of virtue education and its emphasis on effecting the student's moral transformation with the Buddhist tradition of mental and moral training—two traditions that, although they have lastingly shaped educational practice in the world's two hemispheres, have, to date, rarely communicated or explored their common concerns.

***The Need for a Global Ethic of Education***

It hardly needs emphasizing today that we are living through a time of rapid, even dramatic globalization bringing in its tow formidable challenges to steer a path between its opportunities and perils. Judging from the changes of just the past few decades, the forces that drive this global trend seem nowhere near exhausted. Over the next several decades we will likely witness further acceleration of the trends that raze traditional boundaries of community, prompt yet unforeseen further technological revolutions, continue social changes including mass migration, and further reshape the way we communicate and interact with each other. Recent experience shows that these trends can forge new ties and new bonds, but they can also exacerbate ancient differences and adversities.

These trends pose a profound challenge to educators the world over: how to educate our young so that they are able to live convivially and peacefully with themselves and with others in a sustainable and balanced fashion, without exploiting our limited planetary resources, without exploiting or excluding those others of different view or tradition, and without exploiting themselves in a quest for ever more economic growth or material acquisition. While a balanced growth of our economic resources is important, it must not come at the price of sorting the world into winners and losers, causing cultures or civilizations to clash, or facilitating short-term gains that are unsustainable and even ruinous in the long run.

There is reason to be concerned that, to date, we—as global-minded educators—are not meeting this challenge. Often

our education practice and policy seems more committed to competitiveness than conviviality, more to standardization and uniformity than to respectfulness of diversity, and more to "winning" in a game of ranking than to expanding our moral commons and cultivating tolerance (Meyer and Benavot 2014). The ethic that often seems to dominate educational practice is an ethic of education for economic success rather than moral development, an ethic of outranking rather than of solidarity and compassion.

Yet, what is the basis for an ethical shift that emphasizes our common concern for peace, solidarity and sustainability, when education is traditionally shaped by diverse moral and religious traditions with their seemingly irreconcilable differences? And how can such an ethic become more than window dressing that adorns our speeches or textbooks? How can the moral transformation towards virtue and insight become second nature?

In what follows I discuss the contribution Buddhism can make towards a global conversation for an ethic of education for peace, morality, and insight. I propose that such an ethic benefits from approaching the educational task as one of *heart-mind transformation* rather than mere formation of the cognitive faculties. It will benefit if we can demonstrate that there is substantial common ground in this regard with other traditions of education and moral development, my test case here being Aristotle's virtue ethic.

The paper is organized in three main parts. I will begin with a discussion of key points of the Aristotelian virtue ethics, followed by an exposition of related aspects of mental and moral training in Buddhist teaching, and end with a discussion of common concerns of the two traditions and how they can become building blocks towards a global ethic of education.

## ARISTOTLE'S CONCEPTION OF MORAL DEVELOPMENT: VIRTUE, WISDOM, CONTEMPLATION AND THE OVERCOMING OF AKRASIA

It is hard to overstate Aristotle's influence over Western thought. At the time of the founding of the University of Paris, Aristotle was often referred to simply as "the philosopher." The work of leading philosophers like Augustine, Boethius, and especially Thomas

Aquinas, had kept Aristotle alive for generations of students who were steeped in a curriculum that was often a long echo of his towering reign. Even modern founders of education like Humboldt (Meyer 2017) and Newman were indebted to Aristotle. And while his virtue ethics suffered a temporary eclipse as utilitarianism rose to prominence, the decades since the 1980s have brought about a strong resurgence in interest, due, not least, to the work of Hans-Georg Gadamer, Alasdair MacIntyre, and contemporary writers like Wiggins, Davidson, Burnyeat, Kosman, Rorty. Lately, this turn has also found its way into education through the work of philosophers like Joseph Dunne (1997) and Sean Steel (2014) and psychologists interested in character ethics and the proper shaping of school culture (e.g. Seligman et al 2009; Galla and Duckworth 2015).

**Action over Cognition**

Aristotle's Ethic has often been summarized as revolving around the idea of virtue conceived as "the habit of moderation according to right reason." That can be seen as both the property of an action as well as a person. When seen as property of an action it consists "in the reasonable moderation of the affection from which the action proceeds." Seen as property of a person "it consists in the habit of this reasonable moderation, in its having become the customary and usual disposition of the mind."

I take the above quotes from Adam Smith's summary of Aristotelian virtue because it is both representative of the consensus in a vast secondary literature on Aristotle, as well as to remind us that, as Amartya Sen has pointed out, that Smith was a moral philosopher who sought the cultivation of the "moral sentiments" to be the human task par excellence—one to which the development of markets and economic wealth was subordinate (Sen, in Smith 2009, p. xiii).

Smith is also perceptive of the difference that distinguishes Aristotle's account of virtue from that held by (Plato's) Socrates: "Virtue, according to Plato, might be considered as a species of science, and no man, [Plato] thought, could see clearly and demonstratively what was right and what was wrong, and not act accordingly." By contrast, Smith summarizes Aristotle as holding

the view that "no conviction of the understanding was capable of getting the better of inveterate habits, and that good morals arose not from knowledge but from action." (323)

Smith is very perceptive in emphasizing that for Aristotle a person becomes virtuous not by an act of the intellect, but by a gradual reshaping of his or her sensibilities or affections in the process of building a habit of virtuous actions. We not so much think but act our way into becoming virtuous. In fact, in his ethic Aristotle—quite like the Buddha (who sidesteps all questions that do not contribute to the end of suffering)—shares a singular concern with practice. In the Nichomachean ethic, he frequently states his goal not to present a theoretical understanding of virtue, but rather to demonstrate how people become virtuous:

"A state [of character] arises from [the repetition of] similar activities. Hence we must display the right activities, since differences in these imply corresponding differences in the states. It is not unimportant, then, to acquire one sort of habit or another, right from our youth; rather, it is very important, indeed all-important" (pg. 35)

"We must examine the right way to act, since, as we have said, the actions also control the character of the states we acquire" (pg. 35)

Aristotle makes it abundantly clear that he wants his Ethic to be read as a treatise on the practical steps, the path, if you will, that one needs to pursue to become virtuous. Unlike Plato, whose chief practical concern was the education of an elite of guardians headed by a philosopher king, Aristotle wanted to lay out a path towards moral excellence and happiness that was—in principle—accessible to everybody.[3]

By emphasizing the role of acting rather than thinking or cogitation our way into virtue Aristotle has bequeathed us with a challenge: how is this action to be structured in practice? Where do we start and where can we expect to end? The Ethic, to be

3. The fact that Aristotle excluded slaves and women from eligibility has been frequently remarked upon as a reflection of the limitations of Aristotle the historical individual, but not a limitation of the validity and viability of his principles. It is noteworthy, however, that the Buddha explicitly rejected any conventional limitations of the Dhamma to certain classes of people.

sure, encompasses an enormous range of moral development: beginning with baby steps of an initially rather formulaic aiming for the mean between moral extremes (e.g. courage as the mean between cowardice and recklessness, or generosity as the mean between stinginess and spendthrift) and ending with developing in the practitioner a taste for *theoria*, the contemplative life as the highest life. Along the way we are to advance through consolidating habits of moderation, developing intellectual virtues like open-mindedness, reflective deliberation, and practical wisdom, and the skill of sociability with similarly high-minded friends. As we do so, we become increasingly able to appreciate man's highest life and highest potential in contemplating "what is noble and divine and noble and divine in us." But to arrive at that end our sensibilities need to undergo major transformations, especially with regard to how we perceive pleasure. We must grow, as it were, from the taste for pleasure at the level of sense pleasures to an appreciation to an appreciation of the higher pleasures of well-spiritedness, wisdom, and contemplation This requires a reordering of our tastes and loves as we realize that cultivating the lower pleasures blocks the path to the higher pleasures.

***Virtue as a Transformation of Heart and Mind—The Kosman-Burnyeat-Rorty Thesis***

A frequent reading of Aristotle emphasizes a point made early in Nichomachean Ethics (NE): that happiness/eudaimonia is "an activity of the soul in conformity with excellence or virtue;" that virtue is a state, condition, or disposition [a *hexis*] that reliably aims at the mean between excess and deficiency; and that habits of moderation are crucial in becoming virtuous. This account leaves out much of what concerns Aristotle in the latter half of the NE, in particular the parts that have to do with moving a person beyond the point of mere continence. To move beyond continence—a state of mere outward pacification and moderation—and towards temperance—a state of inner peace and equanimity—the person must evolve from somebody who acts virtuously as a matter of habit to someone who acts virtuously as a matter of wisdom. Burnyeat (1980), Kosman (1980), and Rorty (1980) importantly influenced a re-reading of Aristotle on this point. Though their contributions

were distinct, they are meaningfully complimentary. Hence, to simplify matters, I treat them as a single theorist.

***Virtue requires a change of heart: "becoming properly affected"***

Kosman is one of the writers most explicitly interested in the *affective* dimension of the changes required for a person to become established in virtue as a robust disposition to choose well (a *hexis prohairetike)*. He offers a reading of Aristotle whereby the question of ethics is not simply how to live well, but "how to become the kind of person readily disposed so to conduct myself." 103. This involves learning not only "how to act well but also how to feel well" (105) or, in keeping with his title how to "*become properly affected*." Moral philosophy and in particular Aristotle is thus about a person's "sentimental education," the "cultivation of feelings" or what the early Adam Smith called the "moral sentiments." 106.

Kosman thus challenges the long-standing assumption that feelings are 'primordial' and preclude choice. If this were so, we could not cultivate feelings and cultivate them towards a particular end where we are, say, frightened, shamed, or inspired by the right things in the right way.[4] Kosman's Aristotle holds that "becoming properly affected" is within the compass of human volition. We can, albeit gradually, cultivate a disposition to affectively respond to the world in the right way. But the acquisition is not the result of a simple act of willful calculation or deliberate choice. The affections must be cultivated, grown, developed (111).[5] For this, we need to imagine the process of affective cultivation as a path with a temporal dimension, a path that extends in time as a person directs their moral self-development.

**Virtue as a Developmental Path**

Burnyeat's reading of Aristotle's Ethic develops the temporal

4. [this is different from the social psychology of the Western enlightenment which takes the passions as primordial and beyond our power to shape, transform, or cultivate. The best we can do is to rationally devise institutional regimes that limit the passions' negative and facilitate their positive consequences by, for example, breaking absolute power into several separate branches and setting them up so that they check and balance each other.]

5. Jonathan Jacobs has extended this argument into an argument about "choosing character."

dimension of building moral sentiment, reading the Ethic as laying out a "temporal" path across a person's formative years (presumably from their early years to adulthood). Importantly, he also emphasizes Aristotle's repeated point that moral change is not synonymous with intellectual learning (Aristotle: "if arguments were in themselves enough to make men good, they would justly … have won very great rewards").

This moves his interpretation of Aristotle away from the standard reading that the Ethic is about leading a person to happiness and the good life by their acquisition of virtue by becoming habituated to a path of moderation. But if the Aristotle wants us to morally grow over years (perhaps a lifetime) and if that growth is not chiefly effected by deliberate choice nor by the formation or schooling of the intellect, then how and to what end does this growth occur?

Here Burnyeat suggests an interesting trajectory that has several stages:

--first, there needs to be a starting point in that the young person needs to hear about what Aristotle calls the object of moral development, "the that." Without knowing the object of moral formation the whole process is blind and aimless. That object must be "the noble and just." The young person must know that there are high aims to strive for and he/she must gradually want to strive for them on their own volition and for their own sake.

--becoming self-driven and self-direct towards the good for its own sake can, however, not be the uninitiated person's state. At first, their "knowledge" will only be at the intellectual level. The young person thus has to accept it on trust from their parents or trusted teacher. But hearing it, it will not immediately "sink in" and become second nature to him.

--for this to happen, the young person needs to gradually build 'doing the right thing' into the firm and reliable pattern of his daily living. For this, they ideally need the guidance of trusted teachers. Aristotle is quite clear that there is an element of paternalism here. The young person's knowledge of the noble and just can grow deeper only as they reliably and consistently perform noble and just acts. Aristotle seems to assume that a person who sees themselves acting

unselfishly or courageously gradually develops a settled preference, a taste for acting unselfishly and courageously. But importantly and characteristically for Aristotle: the active deed precedes the insight. We start by imitating trusted teachers and grow inner conviction in the process of doing so.

--the reward from acting virtuously is twofold: a) it teaches the young person that they have the capacity to act virtuously; b) it delivers a reward to delight in, e.g., seeing that by foregoing a short-term pleasure one secures deeper, more lasting ones; or seeing that by acting unselfishly one adds to the well-being of another person. "…practice has cognitive powers, in that it is the way we learn what is noble or just" (73).

--it is through repeatedly acting virtuously that a person becomes virtuous, or better perhaps: enters the path of virtue. He thus learns about "the because" of virtue, the deeper reasons and rewards of the virtuous life that allows him to desire "the noble and just" on his own and for its own sake. As that happens, virtue becomes more than skin-deep, it becomes second nature. As a result the maturing person develops an "ethos"—the character of a virtuous person.

Thus Burnyeat underscores that, for Aristotle, moral development involves a reordering of what one loves. As sentient beings, all humans start out disposed to seeking pleasure and avoiding pain. As we morally develop we must learn that not all pleasures are choice-worthy. Cultivating the disposition of seeking sense pleasures and avoiding pain can lead to a self-indulgent, immoderate life or a moral development arrested at the akratic stage. There are pains (e.g. associated with strengthening one's health) that are worth to tolerate. And there are pleasures that when indulged or indulged in excess weaken our ability to choose well. Hence, our initial affective ordering needs to be transformed. We need to become "a lover of what is noble" and learn to "find pleasant what is by nature pleasant." 76

**Akrasia as Failure of Character: Akrates, Enkrates, and Phronimos**

Kosman and Burnyeat demonstrate Aristotle's point that to learn to choose right requires that we know not only know the good with our head, but also our heart. But this does not mean that the

development of the head, the intellectual virtues is unimportant. Open-mindedness, deliberation, and good judgment are needed to arrive at the right choice, the right course of action. While the young initiate has to rely on the initially somewhat formulaic "aim for the mean between extremes" method of choosing, the morally maturing person confronts challenging and novel situations where conflicting demands and values must be weighed and integrated into the right choice. The person must move past the akratic and enkratic stage and develop "practical wisdom" (phronesis) and become a "phronimos."

Technically, the akratic person can be the 'victim' of two different kinds of failures, an intellectual and an appetitive one. At the intellectual level he may falsely discern the stakes. For example, although he knows that a rich desert after a full meal depletes the person of energy, he may falsely conjecture that cheesecake is not a rich desert. At the appetitive level, the person's appetitive urges may be so strong as to temporarily deceive him against what he knows to be the case (as when anger or lust blind us to seeing clearly) or they may simply override the intellectual knowledge. "[D]ragged around by pathos" he is not yet "properly affected."

The enkratic person, by contrast, does not give in to the urge of sense pleasure. "He is tempted by pleasure: he can be affected by it as much as the akrates. The difference is that he does not act from his reactions: he holds out against them and continues to act in accordance with his ends (1150a9-32)." Rorty, 274.

Finally, the phronimos: "…the phronimos does not have to use knowledge to resist the lures of pleasures (1145b13-14). Because he does not perceive what fails to accord with his ends as pleasurable, he is in the fortunate position, as the enkrates is not, of being unconflicted." 274. The phronimos / temperate person is properly affected. For him, heart and mind feel and perceive in unison. He can trust his sensibilities and motive energies and does not need to suspect or suppress them. His inclinations have been transformed.

Aristotle's solution is thus, according to Rorty's reconstruction, that the akrates is deficient not in knowledge but in a proper reordering of his sentiments or character. "But the akrates' failures

of knowledge are not merely failures of knowledge…" they are "a failure of character." More specifically: "[h]e has habits that give his pathe undue dominance in the determination of his actions." 279. Thus, Rorty's answer seems to be that the akrates has failed to (or not yet progressed to) acquire the right character. He or she suffers from immature heart-mind transformation.

Virtue as a Package Deal: The Role of Wisdom and Contemplation

The Burnyeat-Kosman-Rorty thesis takes us a long way past the notion that Aristotelian virtue simply consists in a settled disposition to choose right. It properly emphasizes the need to morally grow towards acquiring reordered affective sensibilities that lead us to temperance, where we overcome being internally conflicted. But one may wonder whether even that notion goes far enough, as it makes little use of the final stages of NE, in which Aristotle extols the life of wisdom and contemplation as the highest life.

In the latter part of the NE (books VI through X) Aristotle develops a program to deal with the problem. In these sections, the role of habits of moderation recedes into the background in favor of the person's learning to weigh moral goods (deliberation), judge and act wisely (phronesis), develop deep friendships with morally superior people, and, finally, enter into the delights of wisdom (sophia) and contemplation (theoria). Without wisdom and contemplation, the moral agent is still affected by the impatient urges of sense pleasure. He still does not delight in the goods that are "by nature good."

Hence, for Aristotle virtue was not the final or highest stage in a person's moral development. Rather it was both part of and a prerequisite for clearing the path towards a person's ability to delight in the highest goods of wisdom (sophia) and contemplation (theoria). In some sense, virtue could only be perfected in a life that would open us up to these delights, for only the person dwelling in wisdom and contemplation would do the right thing not from habit but for its own sake.

An important contribution to this discussion is Thomas Smith's (2001) "Revaluing Ethics," especially the concluding chapter which offers, to my mind, the most sensible explanation of what Aristotle

meant when he pointed to the life of "theoria" as the highest life. In line with philosophers like Pierre Hadot and Josef Pieper, Smith interprets Aristotle's "theoria" as mindful contemplation, rather than as "life of reason" or "theoretical study" (Irwin), life of "pure thought" (Charlesworth), "review or survey of existing knowledge" (Barnes), or similar renderings that bring 'theoria' close to the kind of purely cognitive, discursive thinking that professional philosophers presumably engage in. By contrast, Thomas Smith (like others in the practical philosophy tradition) renders theoria as a life of "detachment from external goods" that fosters "peace and balance" resulting from "doing 'nothing' and clear[ing] one's mind from fretting about the concerns that constitute the bulk of the so-called practical life." Such a life demands "a mindfulness and attentiveness to realities that most of us are only dimly aware of" (p. 250).

Clearly, for Aristotle the pursuit of virtue is not completed when a person has established habits of moderation. Rather this is a fairly early stage in moral development which prevents us from acquiring unwholesome tastes. At some point, we need to outgrow these habits of moderation like training wheels, thus clearing the way to become established in tasting and practicing the "that": the noble and just.

## THE BUDDHA'S STRATEGY OF MORAL DEVELOPMENT: AKRASIA AS LACK OF SKILL

Above we saw that Aristotle thought that akrasia could be overcome as a person grows along the path of acquiring the skills of virtue, wise deliberation, wise judgment and action, noble friendship, and, ultimately, developing a taste or love for wisdom and contemplation as the highest manifestation of the human search for happiness. The Buddha's suggestions on this score parallel Aristotle, but also go further. The student who wants to train in self-restraint and morality is encouraged to cultivate heart-mind transformation and moral skill building cultivating the factors of the noble eightfold path. These teachings can take the practitioner all the way to liberation or arahantship. But the Buddha's teaching is "graduated." He tempers his teaching to suit the needs of his audience's level of development, whether they are ordinary persons ("uninstructed wordlings") (1), people "with little dust in their eyes" (2), or "disciples" that have chosen the path of higher training.

In the morality cluster of the eight-fold path the training aims at virtue (sila / morality) by way of cultivating right speech, right action (moral restraint via keeping the precepts), and right livelihood are key for lay and monastic followers alike. In the wisdom cluster, the training aims at development of discernment/wisdom by way of right view (understanding existence in terms of the four noble truths and the three characteristics) and right intention (of non-ill will and harmlessness). Thirdly, in the concentration cluster, the training aims at right effort, right concentration, and right mindfulness on which I will focus here. While there are interesting points of family resemblance with Aristotle's developmental path, together they exhibit a different and, in many ways, more refined and practical way of tackling the person's mirred in sense pleasures.— Given space constraints, I will limit myself in what follows to some examples from the three factors of the concentration group.

**Right Effort**

Right or correct effort is effort that is comprehensive, capable not only to stave off wrong action and encourage the occasional virtuous action, but effort that eventually establishes the practitioner firmly in wholesome states of joy and tranquility. An approach to merely avoid negative states would leave a lot of doors open for our interior experience to be shaped by the defilements of greed, anger, and delusion. To ward that off we need a four-pronged right effort that aims at a) preventing unarisen unwholesome states from arising; b) uprooting arisen unwholesome states; c) causing wholesome states to arise; and d) expanding, stabilizing, and cultivating arisen wholesome states.

This corresponds to a typology of defilements at three levels: at the coarsest level, the defilements drive us to act and transgress against others and ourselves (corresponding to Aristotle's stage of "incontinence"). At the next level the person is sufficiently self-controlled not to transgress in their outward behavior, but their inner life is still in the grip of these defilements in the form of inner dissatisfaction and frustration (the manifest stage). Finally, even when greed, anger, and delusion no longer manifest in one's inner life, they may continue to be operating at the subtlest level of

"underlying tendency" (Bodhi 2006).[6]

For example, when sense desire has not yet arisen, the disciple is oriented to invest in the continuous non-arising by generating wholesome states through virtuous action and by cultivating dwelling in the "divine abodes" of good will, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity.

When sense desire has arisen the disciple is directed to bring to mind an awareness of negative consequences of unwholesome action by reflection and foresight to forestall or shorten unwholesome behavior. When thoughts of sensual desire arise the disciple reflects that "this leads to affliction and away from Nibbana. When I considered 'this leads to my own and others affliction, it subsided in me." (quoted in Goldstein, p. 17).

Further, wholesome states are generated and consolidated when the practitioner "rouses his will, stirs up energy, exerts his mind and strives" (AN 4:13) and develops the seven factors of enlightenment: mindfulness, investigation, energy, rapture, tranquility, concentration, equanimity. The practitioner will seek seclusion to help keep in mind a favorable object that has arisen (through meditation and contemplation).

***Right Concentration***

Through right concentration the practitioner overcomes the mind's lust for endless and often aimless proliferation and pondering. An untrained mind becomes easy prey for unwholesome akratic desires. In the grip of ignorance and delusion it sees the alluring surface of sense pleasure, but ignores or does not fully know the hook in the bait. There is an important difference here to the Aristotelian scheme in that Buddhism views not only the "appetites" but also the mind as a sense organ with an inclination towards greed and self-indulgence.

6. Tillemans (2008) offers a stimulating account of akrasia in Buddhist, in particular Santideva's thinking revolving around the idea that akrasia reflects "a defiled intelligence reifying persons" (159), i.e. a mind that has not fully uprooted the self-view. This would be an example for the person who has moved past the "manifest" stage but not yet uprooted the "underlying tendency" to, in this case, self-view.

Overcoming akrasia is hence a matter of checking the "monkey mind" tendency to seek ever further pleasures on the next tree, and the tree after that. "Quivering, wavering, hard to guard, to hold in check… Like a fish pulled from its home in the water and thrown on land: this mind flips and flaps about, to escape Mara's sway." This mind is tossed around by circumstance like a leaf in the wind.[7] The Buddha's view of the untrained mind differs somewhat from that of Aristotle: the untrained mind not only is lacking knowledge or reason. Greedy for experience, a magnet for delusory experience and distraction, it lacks concentration and stability. To undo and overcome this tendency, it does not suffice to fill the mind with epistemic knowledge. It becomes necessary to train the mind in wise attention and inattention; mobilizing countervailing states; and skilled investigation.

***Guarding the Sense Doors***

Training to "when seeing, just see" the practitioner does not overlay the eye-consciousness with mind-consciousness. When a particular object (like a bowl of ice cream) comes to view, the eye-consciousness in and of itself does *not* lead to an urging of the appetites to indulge it. For that to happen requires that eye-consciousness combines with mind-consciousness—e.g. the thought that the taste buds will rejoice when we eat the ice cream.

"*And how does [a practitioner] guard the doors of their senses? On seeing a form with the eye, they do not grasp at any theme or details by which—if they were to dwell without restraint over the faculty of the eye—evil, unskillful qualities such as greed or distress might assail them. […same for hearing, smelling, tasting, touching] Endowed with this noble restraint over the sense faculties, they are inwardly sensitive to the pleasure of being blameless. This is how [a practitioner] guards the doors of their senses.*" (Long Discourses, 2.64).

7. In the modern West, we are often prone to see a volatile mind as a reflection of desirable qualities like "curiosity" or "imagination." But even the Aristotelian and post-Aristotelian tradition did not see an ever meandering mind as a positive thing: curiositas is seen as greed for news (which survives in the German term "Neugier", literally 'news-greed'), not too different from gluttony which is greed for food-related sense pleasure.

***Avoid Mental Proliferation***

"Dependent on the eye and forms, eye-consciousness arises. The meeting of the three is sense-contact. With sense-contact as condition, there is feeling. What one feels, that one perceives. What one perceives, that one thinks about. What one thinks about, that one mentally proliferates."

But we are not helpless victims of this kind of proliferation. We can train the mind to arrest proliferation by practicing "when seeing just see (don't proliferate); when feeling, just feel (don't proliferate), etc…"

***Generating Counter-Balancing States***

When the pull of sensual desire is very strong, the Buddha recommends that we generate counter-balancing states. A well-known example is to counterbalance the allures of the senses by heightening awareness of the transient nature of these allures. This can be done by meditations on the body in various forms of aging or on the dead corps in various forms of decay. When plagued by persistently unwholesome urges we can mobilize disgust and think, for example, of the ultimate end of gluttoneous indulgence. The Buddha advises his son Rahul, "Make disgust strong in you." P 30.

Together, these trainings aim at a skillful use of our attentive powers. Without such training, the mind's default state is being scattered and fragmented—a state in which a person is the easy prey to akratic temptations. In contrast to Aristotle, the Buddha offers teachings that are more encompassing (the untrained monkey mind is as much a source of attachment to sense pleasure as the "appetites"), more detailed and more practical.

***Mindfulness: Continuous and Comprehensive***

The Buddha's highlighting mindfulness as a key factor of moral development is the clearest difference to Aristotle. In mindfulness the moral agent is encouraged to train in keeping continuous and comprehensive watch over the four main aspects of our mind world or the "four frames of reference:" body, feelings, mind states, and mental qualities (Analayo 2003; Goldstein 2013; Thanissaro 1996). If we want to train our minds to see things as they are, we cannot

selectively train in some areas—say our feelings—and neglect others, e.g., the way we construe or frame phenomena. To know and experience them correctly requires that we penetrate all of them "with [right] view." This means, that we train ourselves to see any object or event in terms of the three characteristics, as void of self, unsatisfactory, and impermanent. To the extent that the disciple becomes skilled on this path, she can no longer be tempted by coarse states like greed or aversion. Beyond the reach of greed and aversion and with delusion dispelled, she "knows" objects of sense pleasure to be "empty." They thus lose the urgent pull that rice paddies have for the indulgent bull, and a mindful person experiences no desire for them.[8] Heart and mind are now "one." The dualism of head and heart, of cognitive and emotional experiencing is overcome. The disciple sees with a faculty that fluidly and appropriately *discerns:* an act that integrates and unifies rational and emotional aspects of perception into one act of "direct knowing." Direct knowing dispels misperception and readily discerns wholesome and unwholesome.

Wisdom or direct knowing and insight dispels illusion of selfhood and investigates phenomena in terms of the five hindrances, the five aggregates, the three characteristics, and the four noble truths. This training will eventually uproot the underlying tendency for craving and attachment. Insight is a form of discernment into the conditioned nature of sense objects gained through sustained contemplation of experience in terms of the three characteristics (impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, no self).

The goal of mindfulness training is to make mindfulness continuous and comprehensive rather than selective and episodic. In the West we often find conceptions of the educated person that delight in shunning coarser forms of greed, but indulge greed that attaches to refined objects of aesthetic experience especially when they are also useful as a status marker and a strategy of social distinction (e.g. Bourdieu's "Distinction"). Likewise, one finds that aversion and resentment are often condoned if they attach to approved or "correct" targets.

8. Socrates famously attributes wrong action to not knowing in Protagoras ([2], 357d) and in Gorgias: "As for me, if I act wrongly at all in the conduct of my life, you may be assured that my error is not voluntary but due to my ignorance" ([4], 488a).

Although the Buddha and Aristotle's concerns bear a family resemblance, they are not identical. Most importantly, the Buddha does not share Aristotle's essentialism.[9] Objects are void of an essential nature. They are not intrinsically pleasant or unpleasant. They are what they are; the mind construes them into being pleasant or unpleasant. We can train our minds to know the feeling tone to which objects give rise as pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral and to see their inherent lack of permanent essence. Knowing that a certain object gives rise to a "pleasant feeling" we can dwell in this awareness without greedily seeking to indulge it. This is the path to dispassion and freedom from the fetters.

***A Graduated Path***

Like many other aspects of the Buddha's teaching, mindfulness, too, offers fruit for practitioners at a range of skill levels, from elementary to mature. The beginning practitioner can practice on achieving mindful awareness of her bodily formations and feelings. (This is practiced today in a growing number of schools and colleges.) As mindfulness of body and feelings matures, mindful watch of thought states and finally, of mental qualities and phenomena, comes within reach.

***Renunciation: From Lower to Higher Pleasures—The Gathering of Momentum***

The practitioner develops a preference for the higher delights and avoids the lower pleasures because they block access to the higher ones. But advancing on the path generates its own joys:

"*If, by forsaking a limited ease*
*He would see an abundance of ease,*
*The enlightened person*
*Would forsake the limited ease*
*For the sake of the abundant.*" (Dhammapada, 290).

As one engages in these practices, there is a progression here

9. William James: "There is no property ABSOLUTELY essential to any one thing. The same property which figures as the essence of a thing on one occasion becomes a very inessential feature on the other" (PP 959).

from relying on the will / right effort ("fabrication") to a generation of momentum that is nourished by a realizing a "delight apart from sensual pleasures … which surpasses even divine bliss. Since I take delight in that, I do not envy what is inferior…" p 127. One realizes "pleasure that has nothing to do with sensuality" and "pursue[s] pleasure within." "I am no longer afraid of that pleasure that has nothing to do with sensuality." (Middle Length Discourses, MLD 36.31) MLD: 139.9: "One should know how to define pleasure, and knowing that, one should pursue pleasure within oneself." "[A] heedful person, absorbed in jhana, attains an abundance of ease." 8 Finally: the blamelessness that is the result of the virtuous life gives rise to a state of joy

## DISCUSSION

In this section I will discuss important commonalities and differences between the two traditions.

### *Transformative Conceptions of Moral Development: Educating the Heart-Mind*

Buddhism and Aristotelianism share a conception of education and moral development as a transformative process by which a person not only develops their cognitive faculties, but rather develops both heart and mind, and, importantly, develops them together.[10] In other words, the process is neither one of mind over heart, nor of heart over mind. While the modern educational practice (as for example in Bloom's famous 'taxonomy') construes education largely as a process of cognitive formation, Aristotle and the Buddha teach that neither part can be trained well in isolation. Their separability is an illusion.

Both traditions stand in opposition to the modern view that an effective transformation of the heart is beyond an external agent's deliberate effort. The best we can do is to establish the rational mind (the intellect) in reason and rationality and then let reason take control over the heart. This is largely the view that informs dominant education practice and public policy.

10. For a recent Buddhist articulation of this notion see Thanissaro Bhikkhu, "Head and Heart Together. Essays on the Buddhist Path." 2010.

The separation of heart and mind in moral development has, of course, frequently met with suspicion and there are two often found alternatives to the modern view which, yet, differ from the one held by Aristotelians and Buddhists:

***Equal and separate***

One alternative view is the idea that heart and mind are equal but master over separate spheres, each in their separate sphere and dominion. This view is expressed famously in LaRochefoucauld's aphorism: "the heart has reasons that reason does not know." The implication here is that reason ought to understand and respect the heart's different logos and share its dominion over our actions with the heart (thus articulated in Thomas Jefferson's "Dialogue between the Head and the Heart") but each operate in their separate spheres. In some kind of co-determination, in matters of personal interaction and family the heart should rule; in matters of politics and society the head.

*Heart First*. Another alternative view is the romantic reversal of the modern "mind over heart". This is the view that a well-tuned heart should direct reason as the best path towards happiness and flourishing. The mind (understood as intellect) should largely take its cues from the heart. Most fully articulated by Schiller's Aesthetic Letters, education should focus on developing and maturing the heart. In practice this stipulates a focus on aesthetic education through the arts and free play.

In Buddhist thought, language fortunately and advantageously mitigates against the artificial separation of heart and mind that has taken root in Western thought. The mind ("citta") combines the faculties of head and heart, intellect and affect, and translators use both terms, "heart" and "mind," to translate the Pali word "citta." In recent Western research there is an attempt to open to this more realistic and comprehensive view of the mind through work on "*embodied cognition*."

***Renunciation as the Heart of the Transformation: A Reordering of High and Low***

The process of becoming virtuous must involve a reordering of what one loves… from loving sense pleasure to noble delights of

virtue and wisdom and acting in accord with them. This is where the transformative part is most clearly visible. The carnal pleasures become less, and the delights of noble pursuits more attractive and compelling. In Greek thought this is, of course, the case as people move from loving lower goods like sense pleasures, power, or fame to develop *philo-sophia*, a love for the path of wisdom, which for Aristotle at least includes a love for what is "noble and divine and noble and divine in us." We see this in the important shift in Aristotle's treatment of pleasure in book VI and X. Aristotle believes that the good life cannot do without pleasure, but the key is the changing appreciation of what constitutes pleasure. The Buddha likewise and perhaps more trenchantly points out that advancing along the path opens rather than closes the mind for those things that are truly and lastingly pleasant (see above quote from the Dhammapada).

Becoming virtuous is thus a sustained transformative process that, once it is in motion, is increasingly agent-initiated and agent-driven. The student's desire to become virtuous is kindled and maintained by "small wins" as a result repeated experience of choiceàfruitàinsightàdesire to continue. This increasingly self-authored process confirms the notion that virtue cannot (and need not) be "taught" (in the sense in which certain kinds of epistemic knowledge can be taught), but rather must be aroused and awoken ("recollected") by removal of the defilements.

Rejection of mere Intelligence / Cleverness; The Deinos; Studying Like a Snake

Another important point of convergence between the two traditions is their rejection of the merely clever person, the "smart fool" (Sternberg) whose head is highly developed at the expense of the heart. Aristotle emphasizes that the person who merely develops their intellect cannot deliberate properly because they know nothing of ultimate ends. Such a person is a "deinos"—someone "capable of anything." Literature and art (and history) supply plenty of examples of such a type (one thinks of Shakespeare's Iago or Dostoyevski's Raskolnikov). In German the smart fool is called by the harsher name of "Fachidiot" ("expert idiot"). In the Buddhist tradition there is the injunction against studying for personal gain only, which is called "studying like a snake." And the Visuddhimagga

holds that "virtue without learning" is less harmful than "learning without virtue."

*A Point of Difference: Habit, Will, and Skill*

Both traditions agree that for people to become virtuous the untamed longings must be transformed, the locus of control must move from external (fear of sanctions) to internal (failing to meet one's own self-defined standards). Although there is a need for the exertion of energy and will, a transformation that would consist merely in willful self-discipline is unsustainable and would not yield the desired fruit. Rather, in time, this transformation must be buoyed by growing insight, discernment, and renunciation, as a result of a sustained process of cultivation where one develops a taste for the higher goods.

But while there is agreement on the role of willful resolve, there is a different emphasis on the factors of habit versus skill. In the traditional reading of the NE, habits play an all-important role. Aristotle says that one becomes virtuous by making virtue a habit (by repeatedly engaging in virtuous acts). I suggested above that in the latter parts of the NE habits seem to take a backseat behind the intellectual virtues and the growing taste for wisdom (sophia) and contemplation (theoria), which would suggest that for Aristotle habits play the role of training wheels or crutches to be eventually discarded. Yet, in much of the secondary literature, they remain all-important as they do in William James' influential treatment.

By contrast, the moral and mental training taught by the Buddha foregrounds skills rather than habits. Choosing wisely requires the skill of discernment; the skill of wise attention and inattention; skillful effort, concentration, mindfulness. The idea here is that advancing on the path laid out here is like moving from being able to strum a few chords on the guitar to virtuoso skill levels.

There are good reasons that construing moral maturity as skill-building is better than habit formation:

--habits don't require choice; they are a "dumb" way of doing the right thing;

--habits don't allow for deliberation. It's hard to imagine someone making a tough decision as a matter of habit.

Even someone well-established in virtue will need vigilance and discernment as they respond to a given situation (e.g. a friend who is not speaking the truth). Secondly, virtue requires correct perception of a situation and settled habits at the level of perceptions would make us see only what we are used to see. As Lichtenberg (quoted by Nyanaponika) says: "I wish I could disaccustom myself from everything, so that I might see anew, hear anew, feel anew. Habit spoils our philosophy." 105. Likewise, Rousseau points out: "…habit kills imagination. Only new objects reawaken it." Virtue, it would seem, does not thrive under the rule of fixed mental habits. It requires open-mindedness and discernment, or what Zen Buddhists have called "beginner's mind."

To the extent that good habits are useful in the early stages of the transformation, their use resembles that of training wheels—to be discarded or transcended by the more mature practitioner. During these early phases their use would seem mostly negative as good habits help to ward off the possibility of acquiring bad habits, i.e. Tocqueville's "depraved taste for the cause of one's affliction" that are hard to shake later.

Easing the weight otherwise borne by habits would also address the problem of virtue as a result of "moral luck." When habits are all important then for a person to be "capable of rational choice… depends on whether he developed the appropriate sorts of habits at a time before he could have determined those habits himself." 280 this creates the problem of "moral luck:" that only by having the kind of upbringing that sets a person early on the proper path of character development can one become virtuous.

## CONCLUSION

In this paper I aim to show a) that a 'global ethic of education' is not a pipe dream; that we have common ground to stand on in the concern to realize a pragmatic degree of shared concern while honoring our diverse moral traditions; b) that Buddhism is uniquely positioned to act as a catalyst and contributor to the development of such a global ethic.

While I could only explore the similarity between Buddhist and Aristotelian concerns for virtue / sila, the approach could readily

be extended to include Christian (e.g., Weil 1952), Confuican (e.g. Li 2012), Daoist (Slingerland 2014), Hebrew (Blau 2000) or Muslim (Bucar 2019) traditions. Other prominent educational philosophies like the German tradition of Bildung (Sockness 2010) or Dewey's philosophy (1932) have strong virtue foci as well. The point is that upon inspection there may well be a robust fund of shared concerns with education as moral formation towards virtue and self-regulation that a global ethic of education can draw on. Not cultivating that unifying common ground at a time when differences of culture and civilization threaten so forcefully to pull us apart would seem both derelict and foolish.

Patience and toleration, generosity and good will, compassion and empathetic joy, equanimity and wisdom are moral skills without which young people (and adults) are unlikely to be able to

-share wealth justly;

-understand and deal with strangers empathically;

-use the world's limited resources sustainably;

-find the inner peace and equanimity to judge and act reasonably.

These skills would seem every bit as important as the engineer's skills to build cars and bridges, the researcher's skills to contain epidemics, or the administrator's skills to govern fairly and efficiently. It would stand to reason that our common weal and wealth today is endangered less by whether the global economy grows by a percentage point faster or slower or whether this or that school system rises faster in certain rankings than by our ability or inability to act wisely and indwell peacefully.

While educators across the globe have recently been exhorted to push their students into competitions to learn faster and achieve more, we have spent less energy on cultivating a dialogue over the values we share and the virtues we need to do our part to extend peace and well-being in the world.

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# EXPLORING CHANGE AND INTERDEPENDENCE TO PROMOTE ETHICS EDUCATION IN SECULAR CLASSROOMS

by Sue Erica Smith*

**ABSTRACT**

As Buddhist communities, worldwide are grappling with the challenges of educating young people growing up in a fast-paced globalised world, I reflect on my earlier work (Smith 2013) that implemented a Buddhist curriculum into secular government schools in Australia. I also draw upon my current work teaching undergraduate teachers and 'both-ways' education in remote Indigenous Australian communities.

Dharma shares foundational principles with the human sciences, generally, and Indigenous communities specifically. They are each based on an ontology of impermanence and inter-connectedness, although amongst Buddhists and Indigenous peoples these are invariably foregrounded more than in the conventional studies of the Humanities. However, this provides fertile ground from which to grow modern Buddhist education and move beyond hybridised monastic styles of education. Children need to become aware of inevitable change, and this can be readily understood, and with observation of the repercussions of activities the ethical imperatives can be brought forth. No being wants to suffer.

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These principles and the ethics borne of them also present ways in which the populist mindfulness movement (both with children and adults) can further ethical education. Mindfulness exercises are already proving to promote wellbeing and resilience in secular education, and have become a strategy within the Global Competencies and C21st Skills agendas that are shaping educational directions in the SE Asian region.

These agendas will be well-served by expanded discourse and practices from Buddhist educators who will explicate the meta-ethics of Wisdom and Compassion. From these the Eightfold Path and the Paramitas form their identities and calls to practice.

Finally, as I review the Buddha-Dharma as a pedagogy of personal development, I will present a model of the 'self' to be educated as a potential way to shape education into the future.

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The Buddha Dharma offers a path that can lead people from dissatisfaction and ignorance to full liberation. Hence, this path can rightly be considered a pedagogy of personal development. It is pedagogy in the sense that it presents both a theoretical framework in texts and treatises, and the imperative to practise, cultivate and actualise the tenets through strategic guidance for both teachers and students. The Dharma elucidates how the world we live in works and thus is predicated on three marks of existence: impermanence (*anicca*), unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha*), and soullessness (*annata).* This ontology provides the foundational justifications for moral and compassionate activity, and for the cultivation of wisdom through contemplation and meditation.

These marks of existence are deemed universal, and as such provide a good place to start as we explore how the Dharma might inform 'what' our young people are taught and 'how' they might be taught in ways that are relevant to them in today's increasingly globalised and secular world.

The inevitability of change is irrefutable, regardless of culture and places in history. It can be readily understood by very young

children while awareness of the inevitable transiency of all things provides a perspective that can promote resilience and perseverance throughout a lifetime of learning. Introducing young people to the concept of dissatisfaction presents something more of a challenge for educators, particularly in the western world where youth are bombarded with unabated avowals of dream fulfilment, material acquisition and social media fame. Yet young people deserve to not only know the ephemerality of these tropes, and they also deserve to be equipped with the tools of presence of mind and critical discernment to navigate these throes. The biggest, and arguably the most pressing, challenge for educators is to discern how the wisdom inherent in *annata* might translate into meaningful learning. The key here is to foreground the interconnectedness of phenomena, rather than a focus on a 'self' or Ï that exists inherently. This provides opportunities to look ever deeply into the subsequent effects that can arise from actions and means to encourage young people to explore the ethical imperatives that are concomitant with actions, and the cultivation of wisdom.

According The Dhammapada, Dhammananda (1988) writes in a helpful footnote to v. 258 that *panna* (wisdom or knowledge) is the right understanding of the world as described above in the three marks of existence. Furthermore:

*Knowledge is of three kinds:*

*(i) Suttamaya Panna* – knowledge acquired orally

(ii) *Cintamaya Panna* – knowledge acquired by thought. The practical scientific knowledge of the West is the direct outcome of this kind of knowledge.

(iii) *Bhavanamaya Panna* – superior kind of knowledge acquired by meditation and contemplation. It is through such meditation that one realises truths which are beyond logical reasoning.

Wisdom is the apex of Buddhism… It is wisdom that leads to purification and to final Deliverance." (p.472).

Because knowledge is acquired through the practices of hearing, reflecting, and meditating, that supports the goal of cultivating wisdom, education informed by the Dharma is distinct

from orthodox 'western' ways of acquiring knowledge, and while reflection, contemplation, mindful attention and, in recent times, bringing wisdom to the fore in education, Buddhist perspectives and experiences serve to enrich these fields. This is an ambitious task but current alignments with educational developments, and the expressed needs of students such as those described later, provide a fertile field for such endeavours.

## 21ST CENTURY SKILLS AND GLOBAL COMPETENCIES

As Buddhist educators we are well placed to pursue this directions. The new building blocks for learning in a complex world with wide uptake in the Asia Pacific region are the 21st Century Skills and Global Competencies Frameworks. These map out the skills needed to survive and thrive in a complex and connected world. From Trilling and Fadel's (2009) earlier work that set three main categories: learning and innovations skills; digital literacy skills; and life and career skills these have been refined and expanded to include the basic core subjects of reading, writing, and arithmetic-but also emphasizes on global awareness, financial/economic literacy, and health issues.




*Figure 1. C21st Learner*

In Figure 1 above the framing puts the student at the centre of the learning process, and while the overall thrust is to develop science and technology Lay and Kamisah (2017) draw attention to teaching strategies based on constructivist and constructionist learning theories: (i) engage students in discovery and problem-

solving task through teamwork, (ii) provide opportunities for communicating ideas, and (iii) involve students in the process of design. These are the skills that our Buddhist teachers require, whether teaching the Dharma or other subjects.

Global Competencies, as presented below in Figure 2 are also guiding much of the education reform that is occurring in the region. The shift places the student at the centre of the learning process (as opposed to curriculum or assessment), core learnings such as literacy, numeracy and digital fluency are embedded in creative, inquiry-based learning activities – students are encouraged to question, imagine, experiment, with considered awareness of their own conduct and concern for others. Students are encouraged to collaborate, think critically, solve problems and communicate effectively. The teacher's role is to provide a learning environment that will engage the students and be responsive to their ideas, ongoing professional development is ideal, curriculum becomes dynamic and assessment is formative, ongoing and not reliant on end-point summations. Student well-being, equity and achievement are the overarching principles. These Global Competencies provide both a common language for educators in the SE Asian and Asia Pacific regions to communicate and a framework from which Buddhist education can grow and become more visible.

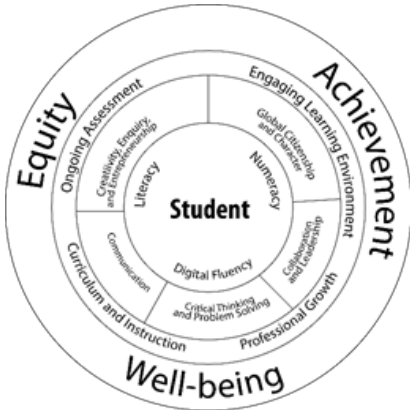



*Figure 2: Global Competencies*

These constructs set high standards, as Hilt, Riese and Søreide (2018) have noted. They present quite an idealised conception of a student – creative, responsible, cooperative, engaged, self-regulated

and in complete control of herself, her learning and her future, and again, an imperative to revitalise our teacher education and professional development and equip our teachers with the skills to promote these types of learning.

We notice that in both Figs. 1 and 2, Character development is included. Mindfulness features in Fig.1. These are domains that are pertinent to Buddhist educators because the Dharma offers a systematic guide to the cultivation of these qualities. Character development and ethical thinking, also feature prominently in the Australian Curriculum alongside Social and Emotional Learning, and many teachers are using various permutations of mindfulness exercises with their students. However, the links between ethical understanding and mindfulness, and indeed some clear articulation of ethics/ values / morals is at best ad hoc. Because the system and educational practices are student-centred, and because the system nominally separates public education from religion, there has also been a historical reluctance to purposefully teach ethics.

I frame this type of education below:

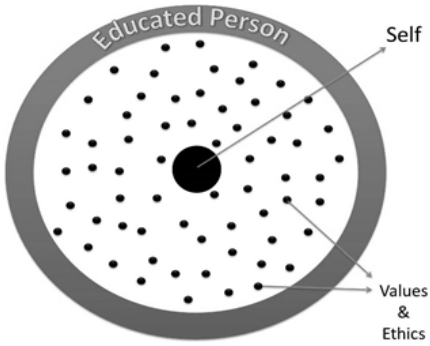



*Figure 3. Individualised self and ad hoc ethics education (Smith, 2014)*

## THE EDUCATED PERSON

The ethical imperatives of education, and societal expectations that an educated person will be an ethical and engaged citizen are universal, and have a long history in liberal democratic systems, most noticeably via Dewey's (1916) democratisation of education and the seeds he planted for experiential child-centred learning. In the work of the influential education philosopher R.S. Peters we can

find agreement between Buddhist aspirations and public education. For Peters, education is much more than skills acquisition. It is about doing something worthwhile and for human betterment, which necessarily includes an ethical imperative:

"Educational practices are those in which people try to pass on what is worthwhile as well as those in which they actually succeed in doing so. Success might be marked by general virtues such as a sense of relevance, precision, and the power to concentrate and by more specific virtues such as courage, sensitivity to others, and a sense of style" (Peters, 1970, p. 26).

The notion of an educated person is developed by Peters in a later publication where he creates further distance between what education can and should be, and instruction and indoctrination. By enabling students to transform knowledge by understanding the reasons for things, rather than simply react, Peters links education to understanding connections and consequences, the inclusion of multiple perspectives and subsequent moral reasoning:

"Any moral judgement, for instance, presupposes beliefs about people's behaviour and many moral judgements involve assessments of the consequences of behaviour. An educated person, therefore, will not rely on crude, unsophisticated interpretations of the behaviour of others when making moral judgements; he will not neglect generalizations from social sciences, in so far as they exist, about the probable consequences of types of behaviour" (Peters, 1973, p. 240).

At a time in Australia when character and values education had fleeting prominence Lovat and Toomey (2007) drew special attention to the essential role of the teacher as an ethical role model and companion guide. The role of the teacher, *guru* in Sanskrit, is central in the Buddhist tradition and remains a worthy pursuit for Buddhist pedagogues to critically examine practices in light of Guru Shakyamuni's example – teaching to the needs of the disciple/student.

In the Australian Curriculum, shown in Fig.3 we can see how child-centred framing is individual and separate. With this type of individuation, as opposed to the child who is taught to understand

themselves as an inter-relational being, the impetus to act ethically is diminished – more so where ethics education has little visibility. Here lies a gap in education and teacher education that Buddhist educators can work to fill.

Byker (2013) calls for a global cosmopolitan view. We do not necessarily all expect our children to be Buddhist, but we nevertheless hold responsibility to guide them towards being happy individuals and good global citizens.). Moreover, as Byker, Erik and Marquardt (2016) argue this is an imperative. Globally religion is politically charged. Hurd (2018) delineates what is effectively three religions (expert, lived, and governed) and it is incumbent upon Buddhist educators to be mindful of these three domains of influence.

## GLOBAL YOUTH

The student as centre of the education endeavour, and educators are having to respond to their wellbeing, resilience and happiness through democratic and child-centred pedagogies have been themes throughout this discussion. Hence it becomes obvious that as educators we must know our students.

Much of what is known is alarming.

In Australia: around one in 35 young Australians aged 4-17 experience a depressive disorder; one in 20 (5%) of young people aged 12-17 years had experienced a major depressive disorder between 2013-14; one in fourteen young Australians (6.9%) aged 4-17 experienced an anxiety disorder in 2015; one in four young Australians currently has a mental health condition. Suicide is the biggest killer of young Australians and accounts for the deaths of more young people than car accidents (*https://www.beyondblue.org.au/media/statistics*)

These trends are echoed around the world. Even in high performing education sectors in Asia such as in Japan, Korea and Singapore policies that include initiatives such as the 'exam-free' semester, character building and violence-free schools, that aim to increase the happiness and well-being among learners are being adopted to redress the pandemic of youth stress and is increasingly being viewed as a vital factor for effective learning.

UNESCO has a robust history of championing important causes, some of which have grown to become independent entities, such as the Open Education Consortium. Something similar could grow from the UNESCO 2016 report - **Happy Schools! A Framework for Learner Well-being in the Asia-Pacific.** The report highlighted a number of external and internal factors that are undermining learner happiness and influence the way that we view not only the quality of life but also the quality of education, such as increasing inequality, growing intolerance and the rise of violent extremism. Technological advancement has also become rife with competition and 'information overload', leading increasingly to a focus on 'the numbers' as educational outcomes. The report cautions that those elements that are recognized as contributing to enhancing happiness, whether in schools, life or work, are rarely counted as part of the equation.

The report includes mindfulness is a key strategy, and recognises the Buddhist roots of the practice. This will be discussed late in this paper, but for now we will keep the focus on what we can learn from our youth.

These are post-secular times (Harris and Lam, 2018) and young (Buddhist) people, who overwhelmingly remain altruistic are seeking ethical guidance in ways that are relevant and practical. Traditional structures have changed dramatically and are continuing to do so. Changes to the education of lay children, that has traditionally been a family and community concern, have also occurred:

"The impetus to teach children to be aware of what they think, say and do and act with kindness has been an assumed and informal component of Buddhist parenting and teaching . . . . children absorbed Buddhist teachings by learning from their parents' modelling, by developing relationships with village temple monastics, and through moral lessons in scriptures and stories" (Loundon, Kim, & Liow, 2006, p. 338). With globalisation these structures are less robust than in more localised and traditional times.

Recent work on minority Buddhist youth in Australia has suggested that these young people draw on their spirituality to

engage positively in civic life (Harris and Lam, 2018; Lam, 2018). In other words, their spirituality is relevant *because* they can be active in the their society.

My own research (Smith, Suryaratri and Adil, 2016; Smith 2018) with minority, Buddhist pre-service teachers in Indonesia I found Indonesia paints a slightly different picture in that their system of education is different.

The curriculum at the college currently holds a hybrid identity, being a combination of monastery style learning e.g. Abhidharma, suttas and rote teaching methods, Pancasila, and streams of English and Information Technology and the college's English Language Centre. One year it staged a theatrical production of The Little Mermaid complete with gamelan orchestra, Javanese costumes, and acting that echoed the comedy and stylized movement of Wayang puppetry. This was Javanese Disney. Other students were adamant that the curriculum should include Javanese culture and language and the English Language Centre actively seeks to bridge these divides.

The students perceived the tensions in the directions of the curriculum and the need for more practical applications of both need Buddhist and teaching theories was highlighted.

A high level of theory not applicable in the working world. The teaching methods are old fashioned and their language is too high. They do not have interesting and practical teaching strategies.

Through modernization and globalization traditional paradigms are changing, not just in Indonesia but the world over. The pressing challenge for contemporary Buddhist communities is to a) discern the most useful texts to teach and b) provide learning opportunities that have relevance to the lives of their Dharma learning communities.

## ALIGNING BUDDHISM WITH CONTEMPORARY EDUCATION

We know that centres, institutes, temples, pagodas, gompas, wats and viharas are all places for teaching and learning that serves a deeper curriculum aimed to develop wisdom, compassion, awareness and responsibility. These institutions sit with in broader

societal frameworks where traditional roles are being challenged and even eroded. Wadia (1948) made the prescient observation that Western education had profoundly affected the religious outlook of the educated youth in India. Theism was being challenged, agnosticism was an option, and spiritual values were under the pressure of materialistic thought. He surmised that Buddhism could provide a satisfying substitute.

From the ontology outlined at the beginning of this paper we have seen that Dharma shares foundational principles with the human sciences, and over the past forty years especially Buddhists have sought to articulate their spirituality in terms of mainstream education. Buddhist scholars such as Buddhadasa (1988), Conze, 1980), Nyanatiloka (1982), Sivaraksa (1994), Batchelor (1989) and other scholars such as Smullyan (1977) and Sternberg (1990) have seen benefit from drawing on Buddhist philosophy to reshape education. Erricker furthers these arguments by proposing that education inspired by Buddhist philosophy is both radically democratic and child-centred" (Erricker, 2009, p.87). These scholars find agreement with Batchelor (1989) who deem that a hallmark feature of such pedagogy will be where students learn how to think, and not what to think. This sits neatly with the child-centred inquiry based and experiential approaches already reviewed. The filed has advanced considerably with the proliferation of mindfulness exercises both in lay populations, clinical applications and, as is our focus here, education.

## MINDFULNESS

Research evidence suggesting that mindfulness improves learning environments through social and emotional competence (Jennings et al., 2013; Schonert-Reichl & Lawlor, 2010; Brown et al., 2012), and the promotion of general wellbeing in schools (Huppert & Johnson, 2010; Rocco, 2012; Albrecht, Albrecht, & Cohen, 2012) continues to grow. Worldwide there exists some 700 mindfulness apps, although a review by Mani, Kavanagh, Hides, & Stoyanov (2015) concluded that there is scant evidence that these actually develop mindfulness. Often these apps are used in classrooms, and teachers might be learning and practising

mindfulness with their students. This can be good, but from a Buddhist perspective we know that it could be better.

Best practice dictates that teachers of mindfulness need to be proficient in the practice themselves (Hassed and Chambers, 2014; Jennings, 2015) agree that teachers need to cultivate their personal mindfulness practices before teaching it to their students. Crane, Kuyken, Hastings, Rothwell and Williams (2010) caution a crucial difference between practicing mindfulness and teaching mindfulness, particularly when pertaining to youth, and here Buddhist educators are very well placed to assert leadership in the field.

The field of mindfulness education is slowly broadening to include mindful self-compassion where initial work also reveals that self-compassion is positively correlated with reflective and affective wisdom (ability to see reality as it is and develop insight), personal growth initiative (making changes needed for a fulfilling life), conscientiousness, and curiosity (Barnard and Curry, 2011).

"Mindfulness is the foundation for self-compassion" (Neff and Germer, 2018) with compassion for the self, other and environment also considered to be a critical component in the majority of mindfulness programs (author reference withheld, 2014; 2016: [20]. The prominence and receptivity of mindfulness in the Western world has helped fuel the contemporary interest in the construct of self-compassion (Kyeong, 2013). The additional element of the focus on self-compassion over just mindfulness is that there is an intentional effort to be compassionate towards any mindfulness of suffering; it is the deliberate act of self-compassion that encourages the self-soothing elements of healing.

The interest and attention self-compassion as a modern construct derived from mindfulness derived predominately from two research articles that defined and measured self-compassion – the Self-Compassion Scale (SCS) by Neff (2003,a). She conceptualised self-compassion of consisting of three main elements: kindness, common humanity and mindfulness

Self-kindness - extending kindness and understanding to oneself rather than harsh judgment and self-criticism

Common humanity - seeing one's experiences as part of the larger human experience rather than seeing them as separating and isolating, and

Mindfulness - holding one's painful thoughts and feelings in balanced awareness rather than over-identifying with them (Neff, 2003,b).

Neff has continued to lead research in this field (Neff, 2011) and has recently produced a workbook (Neff and Germer, 2018).

Smaller studies have affirmed that the compassionate element added to mindfulness supports undergraduate students resilience and retention in their studies (Smeets, Neff, Alberts and Peters, 2014; Neely, Schallert, Mohammed, Roberts and Chen, 2009; Jokic, Albrecht and Smith, 2019).

These practices can easily be integrated into higher education institutions, and especially into teacher education courses where teachers can practise mindfulness and learn ways in which to teach mindfulness.

Buddhist universities and colleges are particularly well placed. To explore and research the four foundations of mindfulness practice as expounded in the *Satipatthana Sutta*, and also research the practice (Dorjee, 2010; Sīlānanda, Nandisena and Silanda, 2009).

From a Buddhist point of view the potential in education for mindfulness, that goes on to include mindfulness of mind and all phenomena is yet to be tapped.

## WISDOM AND SKILFUL MEANS

Wisdom per se is embedded in education discourse but latterly is resurfacing as a discrete and vital topic amongst educators. Reyes (2012) has added wisdom to western mindfulness discourses. Wisdom acknowledges the internal experience; the suffering, ruminations and illusions just as they are and more importantly, exhorts skilful actions that can help to transform the suffering.

The place of wisdom in western discourse inevitably leads to the ancient Greeks. In a collection of essays edited by Lehrer (1996) the educational applicability of the wisdom teachings from

Socrates, Plato and Aristotle are discussed. For Aristotle virtues are interdependent, and happiness (eudemonia) requires all the virtues, and that more of a virtue is not always better than less – a position that accords with a Buddhist perspective. that Aristotlean 'practical wisdom' has an executive function that uses discretion to temper the exercise of other values and virtues.

Biesta, G. (2012) takes up the importance of practical wisdom in the teaching profession and raises questions about the future of teacher education, backgrounded by policy developments that not only frame teacher education predominantly in terms of competencies and scientific evidence, but that also do so within a language that focuses predominantly on learning. education always needs to engage with questions of purpose, content and relationships. The question of purpose, he deems, has to be understood in a multidimensional way, which requires that teachers are able to make situated judgements about what is educationally desirable. He suggests that the capacity for such judgements should not be seen as a competence nor as something that can or ought to be replaced by scientific evidence. The capacity for educational judgement should be seen as a quality of the person. Hence, the key question for teacher education is not how to become competent or skilled in the application of scientific evidence but how to become educationally wise and outlines three parameters for the future of teacher education: a focus on the formation of the whole person towards educational wisdom; a focus on a holistic approach in which educational judgement is a central element from the very start; and a focus on learning from the virtuosity of other teachers.

Yes, wisdom is practical, and yes, wisdom is never isolated from compassion in a Buddhist approach. The latter resonates closely with educators such as Almond (2007), Barton (1999) and Kekes (1995) and the philosophic thought from Midgley (1981; 1989a, 1989b) and Gilligan (1989) who define wisdom to include expressions of care, empathy and subsequent moral conduct.

However, where public educators have been reticent to incorporate ethics into learning, they have been even more reticent about wisdom. Again, the Buddha Dharma provides clarity. Ma Rhea (2018) has forged into this field by incorporating the wisdom

of morality, concentration and insight understanding onto her teacher education courses. She delineates between 'Higher' wisdom and 'worldly' wisdom, and she encourages her students to practice meditation and reflection. Ma Rhea also concede that this pursuit of wisdom challenges the educators capacity to act skilfully, and, that this field is in its nascence.

My own work draws on the Mahayana that foregrounds particular values and ethics in the *paramitas* (Sanskrit) that are practised on the path of awakening mind. These are variously ten or six perfections. In Sanskrit these are: *dana* generosity, *sila* morality, *ksanti* insight, patience and forbearance, *virya* vigour, *dhyana* focused contemplation, *prajna* wisdom and insight. Loving kindness, compassion and equanimity are also assumed within these.




*Figure 4: a Buddhist conceptualisation of education (Smith, 2014)*

In Figure 4 above I have attempted to synthesise a Buddhist conceptualisation of education. The Self is constructed as a more mutable 'thou' (Buber, 1958) that recognises interdependence and change as marks of identity. The 'other' oriented conception of self is promoted through cultivation of charity (giving), morality (ethics), concentration (focused attention), patience, joyful endeavour (effort) and reflection (insight) form what is a curriculum for 'awakening mind ' i.e. Buddhahood. This soundly befits what might be an educated person, and indeed a wise person.

Certainly wisdom, ethical conduct and contemplation are not the sole preserve of Buddhists, but rather, more universal features that can be found in spiritual, cultural and educational traditions. The degrees and the ways in which these are expressed certainly

vary according to various dispositions and heritages. However, wisdom, ethics and kindness that the Dharma spirituality embraces, are universal concerns, made all the more compelling if education systems are to proactively progress how young people are to be educated to be well, resilient and good citizens.

It is timely therefore that Buddhist educators respond to these in terms of their pedagogical practices, particularly placing the needs and capabilities of the student central, as did Gautama Buddha. We Buddhist educators are particularly well-placed to teach mindfulness meditations to our students, and teach in an authentic way that includes the transcendent potentialities of ethics and wisdom. We are also very well placed to contribute to global education imperatives. May Buddhist education institutions provide places to refine our practices, teach skilfully knowing how and what to teach to promote the well-being of individuals and communities, harmony and peace.

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# ETHICS AND THE JĀTAKAS: CAN NARRATIVE SUPPORT A SECULAR ETHICAL CODE?

by Sarah Shaw*

**ABSTRACT**

In many Southern Buddhist regions, the *Jātaka*s offered ethical codes, an informal rule of law, and, indeed, in some areas such as Myanmar/Burma, a narrative means of communicating a code that could establish precedent in courts of law (Shaw 2006). Can they contribute now to the growing international discussion on secular ethics? Describing the Bodhisatta exercise of both *sīla* and the deep resourcefulness in *Jātaka*s, that results in great adeptness at skill in means in variously described situations, Charles Hallisey coins the term 'moral creativity' with regard to these tales (Hallisey 2010). It covers, as he notes, not just the ability the Bodhisatta demonstrates in the five precepts, but also, through enactment in narrative, a means of demonstrating great resourcefulness in ensuring benefit – not only for himself but others too. Such moral creativity, he suggests, is crucial to a more nuanced understanding of Buddhist ethics as they are enacted in *Jātaka*s. Citing commentarial stories from the *Mahosadha/Ummagga Jātaka* (J 546), Hallisey demonstrates that the Bodhisatta is often not just satisfied with doing 'the right thing', but prefers to do the positively helpful thing: the action or course of actions that ensure all parties are aided.

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In this paper, I argue that 'moral creativity' is also a very helpful concept in attempting to teach Buddhist ethics to those who have not grown up within the tradition and absorbed Buddhist stories and tenets in their childhood. As some Buddhist understandings have filtered through to the international discussion about secular health and wellbeing, in the field of mindfulness teaching in particular the ethical has been underplayed and even ignored, though that balance is starting to be redressed (Williams and Kabat-Zinn 2011; Baer 2015; Brown 2016; Samuel 2016;). I conclude by suggesting narrative and the notion of 'moral creativity' that the *Jātaka* collection embodies, can help to communicate the principles of an ethical code, and a daily habit of mindfulness, that is applicable in secular contexts too.

## TEACHING BUDDHISM TO WESTERNERS

Before moving on to the stories, I would like to describe some of the difficulties one can find in introducing the topic of ethics in the West. For the last thirty years I have been teaching Buddhist theory and practice in the UK, at university and college level. These are both university classes and classes for adults who have an interest in finding out about Buddhist theory. When I first started teaching Buddhism, I noticed that the factors of the eightfold path involving speech, action and livelihood, did not arouse much interest. Material relating to non-self and dependent arising aroused considerable attention and discussion; information about different types of meditation and mindfulness techniques, so popular in the West, also prompted questions and debate. Monastic *Vinaya* was considered intriguing, as many had seen Buddhist monks and been impressed by their presence and wakefulness. Lay codes of practice and how to behave in the world, however, appeared less attractive and mildly boring, to all age groups. In discussion of *sīla*, it was clear that people were politely waiting to get 'to the more interesting stuff'. Much mid twentieth-century scholarship in the West, unfortunately, supported this stance. The notion that there were two types of Buddhism, a salvific kind that was aimed at monastics, and a lay version, simply directed at the possibility of a higher rebirth, fostered a kind of split in Western understanding, so that lay activities were seen as 'just' *sīla* based, and not of any great

significance in attaining a soteriological goal. The notion embedded in *Jātaka*s, often dismissed as being simple folk stories, that any rebirth could further one's development of the ten perfections, and that the Bodhisatta himself needed many lives as a layman, as well as an animal, in order to perfect these qualities and to find the resources needed to teach as a Buddha, was until recently rarely discussed. Buddhism was, and still is sometimes, discussed purely for its 'theories' and no sense of context within a narrative or balanced discourse was allowed to intrude.

But any reading of the Bodhisatta vow suggests that the lay life itself, with *sīla* and generosity, can and is a crucial and key part of a full Bodhisatta path, or, if that is not the aim, a way in itself of enacting Buddhist principle. The *jātaka*s are one of the nine limbs (*aṅga*) of the teaching (Shaw 2006). They demonstrate, as *Sutta*s, Abhidhamma and Vinaya cannot, because the Buddha is in a teaching, monastic role, how the Bodhisatta, and others in the 'real' situations of the stories, deal with all sorts of new and unfamilar problems in a 'lay' manner (Shaw 2010). So there is a natural predisposition to secular teaching in *j*ātakas: they often take place when there is no Buddha, so no Buddhism, and the ideals and standards promoted are often applicable in a general sense too. The highest expression of this is seen, of course, in the pan-Indic ideal of the universal monarch, where a regal rebirth is seen as a possibility to develop the ten principles of kingship (*rājadhamma*s), to rule by dharma not force, and to practise and encourage both *sīla* and the positives of a lay life – generosity, well performed skills in one's career, and the promotion of a just society (Shaw 2017). Meditation is also practised in such lives, as one of the rare *j*ātaka-like *sutta*s, the *Mahāsudassana Sutta* (D II 169–199), attests.

So, prompted by the advice of other teachers of Buddhism, I started to talk about the five precepts in connection with mindfulness of daily life, and more in terms of 'ethics' and 'mindful awareness of others' rather than morality. Indeed it struck me that ethical considerations and deliberations do form a great part of people's daytime thought and action, but that most of the time we did not really realise this. So, after teaching the five precepts, and the guidelines contained in the *Sīgalovāda Sutta* (D III 180–193)

or the *Maṅgala Sutta* (Sn 258–269), I started to set the class a quiz to illustrate this point.

The quiz involves a series of about ten questions. I ask people to make answers that fulfil the five precepts. What is the right thing to do in a particular situation? Here are some sample questions, that illustrate some important issues raised by ethics in daily life:

Is it in accordance with the five precepts to pick up toiletries left for you in a hotel and take them all home with you?

Is it right to take home a book someone else has left on a train when they leave?

Do you kill a wasp buzzing around in your car on the motorway?

A friend of yours has just got the sack from work and wants you to get drunk with them; what do you do?'

Your friend is wearing a dress that does not suit her. Do you say so?

If you see some vegetables and fruit left in a box at the side of the road, is it right to take them?

The answers to these questions vary considerably, but students all engage in thinking about the five precepts seriously. Some regard taking toiletries from a hotel just to take home is 'taking what is not given'; others think it is not (1). The book taking arouses an interesting level of discussion. Some books feel throwaway, and so people feel no compunction on taking them home. Some, however, seem expensive and hard to find: the person who left it may ring the train company and may ask for it back (2). The questions always make people think about ethics in a new way, applicable to new situations, and recognise that this exercise of itself it requires creativity and adaptation. People debate the rights and wrongs of each one, and often have to come up with resourceful solutions. In the wasp situation, you don't need to act hastily and kill the wasp; just stay calm, open the window, and it will eventually fly out. There is no need to break the first precept (3). In the situation of a friend losing a job, you don't get drunk with your friend – you just need to think about the problem creatively, and with compassion. Why not suggest a meal out to chat instead? In that way you do not upset the friend, show empathy for their predicament, and also protect

them from their own self-destructive behaviours, which could have involved you both breaking the fifth precept (4). The question about telling the truth makes people laugh as of course it is necessary to be very creative to think of an answer that is truthful but will not upset their girlfriends or wives (5)! The one about the vegetables is a kind of trick question: in the UK, it would not be theft to take them if you lived in the country; there is an unwritten custom that if you have too many fruit and vegetables you leave them on the roadside for anyone to take. In cities, however, no one has heard of this custom, and you just would not take them at all (6). So, it is necessary then to consider local practices and customs, the people with whom you are dealing, and sometimes, to behave with tact and alertness. Is it rude and unkind to behave in this setting, in this way? Or is it appropriate and in accordance with the unspoken rules of a particular culture and setting?

The quiz shows many things: it shows that a moral code is not an abstract ideal, devoid of humane feeling and awareness of others. Good ethics and *sīla* often need resourcefulness, a willingness to adapt – and sometimes, some adjustment to where you are and the people you are living amongst. This exercise prove very helpful in understanding, in a lighthearted way, exactly what ethics means in practice, and how large a part it plays in our daily lives. It also demonstrates to students that such ethical considerations do indeed form a large part of our thought, and are often the cause of many of our problems, when they lead to worry or guilt. But perhaps most of all it shows how ethical thinking can be, and often is, creative too. The skilful mind (*citta*) in Abhidhamma describes factors such as the six pairs, spontaneity, if it is the first skilful *citta*, ethical path factors and mindfulness. And mindfulness is *always* in Abhidhamma accompanied by one of the divine abidings (DhS 9; Shaw 2019: 71–89). So, inbuilt into the notion of the healthy mind is the understanding that the mindful consciousness, well established, has a number of supporting features that *always* accompany it: self-respect (*hiri*) and fear of consequences (*ottappa*) for instance, that guard the mind, some friendliness towards the object, and, of course crucially, an inherent, even intuitive, ethical discernment. Each situation is different, and just as the skilful consciousness of the Abhidhamma suggests that the six pairs are present in

right speech, action and livelihood, so in new circumstances and confronted with new problems, we find that the five precepts, alongside their important concomitants, generosity and the divine abidings (*brahmavihāras*), require us to look creatively at each new circumstance as it arises. The quiz helps people to see this. Buddhism's ethical code is embedded in flexible adjustment to new conditions, and a sense of our interconnectedness with other beings: this is a potentially secular code, and one that it seems many can see applicable in their lives too.

So what has this to do with *Jātakas*? The precepts set the guidelines; but it is in the narrative traditions where resourceful adjustment to the surprising, the unfamiliar and the difficult, essential elements of a potentially secular ethical code, are most clearly seen, in ways that the other Buddhist genres, simply because of their different parameters and constraints, cannot. So, this is where it is helpful to look at these stories, which I often read with students in class. They sometimes present such situations in thought-provoking and also sometimes funny ways, and allow readers to view ethics, and the role it takes in their lives in a fresh and helpful way.

## JĀTAKAS, EMBODIED ETHICS AND MORAL CREATIVITY

In *Jātakas* the Bodhisatta, usually as an animal layman, or god, and sometimes as a human ascetic, employs great quickness of wit, moral courage, and, usually, a sense of empathetic connectedness with other beings participating in the action, even when they are hostile. So let us explore Hallisey's notion of a 'creative morality', mentioned at the outset of this article and apply it to the 'ordinary' person, and a story where the Bodhisatta, while a human being deals with testing and difficult situations.

We find this very evident in some of the famous situations of the *Mahosadha-jātaka*. For it is here, it seems to me, that a kind of blueprint of good behaviour and skill in means is established by the Bodhisatta, as he demonstrates what it is to have skilful citta not as a Buddha, but as an 'ordinary' layperson in the world, interacting with others and getting into difficult situations just as we do.

In the riddles posed to the Bodhisatta he is in the position of the

detective in a modern thriller story. He is still a child, of course, but sorts out the mysteries that are presented them, and successfully fields the 'trick' riddles of the king, designed to wrong-foot him. Not yet accepted within the king's court, he has to prove his credentials, which he does through what are in effect a series of legal test cases (*aṭṭā*). In these he finds solutions that help everyone: they detect wrongdoers and bring about the resolution of conflict and difficulty.

Let us take one simple example, that demonstrates a pattern we find in many of the detective puzzles. This is the third, 'The Question of the Threaded Necklace' (Ja VI 336). A certain very poor woman weaves together some threads of different colours and makes them into a pretty necklace for herself. She then decides to bathe in the water nearby. Another young woman, watching her, comes over to admire the woven thread necklace, and asks her how much it had cost her to make it, and what its measurements are, as, she says, she would like to make it herself. The friendly woman who made it, still batheing in the pool, urges her just to try it on for herself to see. But the admiring woman runs off with the necklace. When the first woman has got out of the pool, and accosts her, she claims she has made it for herself, and that she has stolen nothing. What to do? The Bodhisatta is approached. As in all these problems, the Bodhisatta spots the dishonest party immediately. But, exhibiting the 'moral creativity' which is the real hallmark of his wisdom, based in skilfulness, he devises a test that will demonstrate to everyone else too the real owner of the necklace. He asks each woman what perfume they usually wear. The thief says 'All-flower bouquet', clearly an expensive commercial amalgam of a number of flower essences. The poor woman says she cannot afford that kind of scent: the necklace was scented simply with panic grass, available to everyone. Here good *sīla* is clearly not enough: a sense of resourcefulness and the skill in means are what the Bodhisatta, in this situation, needs. We should also note that the impoverished lady is considered equal to the rich one in her need for justice, a demonstration of an egalitarianism in early Buddhist narrative that is often overlooked.

In other situations in this story the Bodhisatta likewise uses alertness and an attentiveness to others to settle a simple dispute

that cannot be resolved otherwise (Appleton & Shaw I 196–202). Other characters also demonstrate this. The Bodhisatta's wife, Amarā, for instance, is highly resourceful in spotting the malign motives behind the 'gifts' that arrive at her house, which will be seen as stolen property from the palace, and resourcefully marks a date and time that each one arrives, so that she can protect her husband from blame when he is subsequently accused of theft (Ja VI 364–370; Appleton & Shaw I 198–99, 242–249).

## THE COLLECTIVE, YET SECULAR ETHICS OF THE PEOPLE

But there are other stories where the Bodhisatta, and the other characters, do not have self-confidence, and where all are troubled by the kinds of deliberations and doubts with which most of us in the modern world are all too familiar. In the *Kurudhamma Jātaka* (J 276; Ja II 365–381), the Bodhisatta is a king, of a great and noble people, but is tormented by self-doubt of an unhelpful kind. His kingdom is that of the Kuru, who are frequently praised in commentarial literature as being of exemplary behaviour and virtue. They are described as the audience of the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna-sutta* (M I 55–63), for instance (Ma I 227; Soma 1981: 17–18). According to the commentary, the Kuru laymen and laywomen dress in white and hear the teaching on *uposatha* days, thus rendering them also worthy of the address *bhikkhave* within the Buddha's discourse. In the *Kurudhamma-jātaka* (J 276), the good fortune arising from such exemplary *sīla* and generosity is explored.

In the 'present' story of this *jātaka* tale, which prompts the Buddha to tell the tale, the Buddha reproaches a young monk for killing a goose in play, saying that in times past even laity were more careful and alert to others in their dealings. He then tells the following story: The people of Kuru, who all kept the five precepts, were once ruled by the Bodhisatta. At that time the people of *Kāliṅga* suffered terribly from drought. The king sends brahmin emissaries to the state of the Kurus, where rain is plentiful, to plead for their rain-bringing elephant. This lucky symbol is a famously important feature of the *Vessantara-jātaka* too, as it is the gift of this elephant, also to *Kāliṅga* brahmins, that so enrages the less worthy populace and the king so Vessantara is exiled; the story's resolution sees it subsequently returned (Ja VI 488–494). The gift does not,

however, bring the much-needed rain. So the king of the *Kāliṅga* sends the emissaries back, asking them to find out the secret of the Kurus' good fortune. They take golden plates, on which to inscribe the findings of their research, and interview eleven key people in the city to find out what secrets they have to which they attribute their good luck. Starting with the king, the Bodhisatta, they ask each interviewee to give guidance and rules to take back with them. But each interviewee suffers from doubt, and poses obstructions to their engraving right at the outset. For each one feels he or she has a guilty secret and at first demurs.

Here we find out what the people of this exemplary state really think of themselves. The Bodhisatta-king feels his good code of action is compromised, and, because of doubt, finds his *sīla* does not gladden his mind (*cittaṃ āradheti*). In an arrow-shooting festival, he does not see one arrow land and thinks he must have inadvertently killed a fish. Worry (*kukucca*) over this still troubles him. The emissaries remind him:

"*But, great king, the volition (cetanā) 'I will take life' never arose for you. Without that consciousness (citta), there is no taking of life*" (Ja II 372).

Reassuring him with what is essentially an Abhidhamma understanding of the relationship between volition or intention, one of the seven universals of consciousness, and action (DhS 9), the emissaries record his account of the five precepts, but, on his advice, ask someone he considers better qualified than himself to speak of them. This is his mother. Yet she too suffers from comparable unhappiness: she feels remorse, for she feels she has given a nicer present to one daughter-in-law than the other. Again the emissaries reassure, saying a gift should be given as one wishes, but again are sent on, this time to her daughter-in-law. But she in turn feels that she has breached *sīla*, for she has looked on her brother-in-law with desire. Once more the messengers congratulate, saying that as no action has been committed on the basis of that moment, there is no breach of *sīla* in the world of action. And so it goes on, with each interviewee regretting some action or thought that they feel compromises their happiness. A driver feels he over-tired some Sindh horses when it rained, and they became exhausted. But, as the emissaries discover, the consciousness (*citta*) did not arise in the driver that wished the

horses tired, and without that volition in the moment, there was no correspondingly bad *kamma* (*acetanakaṃ kammaṃ nāma na hoti*). A business man thinks he has mis-measured some rice, making unfair allocations, but needs reassuring that 'no consciousness arose in you relating to theft' (*tumhākaṃ theyyacittaṃ n'atthi*). Finally, they are sent to the courtesan. She had been given a large sum of money by King Sakka to be his mistress. When her funds were running low, however, she had been on the point of accepting another client, and held out her hand – but had pulled it back immediately. The messengers reassure her; her *sīla* too is of the highest purity. Delighted with what they find in all the participants, they record the ethical code of each before returning home. Their city is thereupon immediately blessed with abundant rain; and the people of Kuru have been reassured in their doubts.

All Buddhists know the five precepts, the undertakings not to kill, steal, practise wrong or excessive sensory pleasures, lie, or become intoxicated. Here, however, the *jātaka* has explained the precepts in an embodied manner, by exploring their application in daily life, but also taking care that they do not become absurdly rigid and lacking in humanity. Doubting how one has behaved, and berating oneself for omissions, is not the same as *sīla.* The inhabitants are relieved to find that their doubts are dismissed. This is done so by using a simple mode of questioning about the state of mind present as the so-called culpable action is actually undertaken. What was the state of mind present at that time? Was it skilful (*kusala*), or was it unskilful? How does the volition of the moment relate to action? Can culpability on those terms be assigned to a time when the mental state was skilful? The whole story, and its funny explication of some of the pitfalls open to those earnestly trying to enact Buddhist principle, depends upon the notion of a healthy mind and skilful *citta*, and the understanding that excessive doubts and ruminations on the basis of past actions are not skilful, and indeed very unhelpful, causing the depression that each character feels. 'Creative morality', in the way the story ensures the messengers make the characters see their own doubts as unhealthy, is enacted, and by all participants in the narrative.

So, the story represents a collective goodness that is possible in the

lay life – and, by having the Bodhisatta as a king, it demonstrates, as many other *jātaka*s do too, that the lay life is not just a compromised 'holy life'. It offers an arena where there are great possibilities to accrue the ten perfections in an existence that too may constitute an important lifetime in the achieving of one's soteriological aim, whether as a Bodhisatta, *arahat*, or *paccekabuddha*.

When people confront most Buddhist texts, the Buddha is the teacher. But he cannot enact ethics as a lay person would, creatively, in the world (see Shaw 2010). In these stories, he does, and the principles of such ethics are recognizable to anyone, anywhere. They also, importantly, do not need the Buddhist background story. Ethical principle is rendered humane and grounded, in the situations of 'real' people as they conduct their lives. The 'teachers' who explain the inhabitants' *sīla* within the story are brahmins from a less worthy state, themselves flawed, who are anxious for advice. This is a world without a Buddha, and even the Bodhisatta himself is not even in a teaching role. He too is a layman, subject to the hindrance of worry (*kukucca*), an unskilful *cetasika* in the Abhidhamma system. Yes, there are five ethical precepts, but they depend on the presence of an element ever crucial in Buddhist texts, volition or intention (*cetanā*). In modern psychological terms, 'rumination', the kind of thinking about the past that is depressive and self-destructive, is carefully warned against when considering the aspect of *sīla*. So the story goes to the heart of many of the problems associated with modern living, where such destructive self-doubt is so endemic. As has been noted:

Targeting rumination was considered considered particularly important because a tendency to rumination in nondepressed populations has been found to be predictive of subsequent onset of depression (Deyo et al. 2009: 265–271.)

This very human and nuanced understanding of ethics, and the five precepts, prevents an understanding of Buddhist principle that is abstract or formulaic: each situation is different, and it is volition as well as skill which is crucial.

One does not have to be a Buddhist to appreciate the psychological precision, compassion, and dramatic tension

here: these really are secular stories, or more properly perhaps 'universal' fables anyone can appreciate (Skilling 2019).[1] In the *Kurudhamma-jātaka* we see not only moral creativity, in a story that highlights and combats such potentially destructive ruminations, but also a compassionate and mindful discrimination in the midst of changing events. For mindfulness of the present moment, such ruminations are unnecessary and even harmful.

Such an embodied understanding is perhaps really only possible through a literary form. Repetition of the kind found in this story is key in oral literature and through employing it with comic rhythm, the story offers its explanatory commentary in what is a fabular *jātaka* world. It is a fictional device, that enacts the doctrine in an embodied way. As such, the *jātaka* fulfils an essential role in the transmission of this ethical doctrine. The *suttanta* explanations of the five precepts do not explore such scenarios at all, and simply deliver the content of the precepts in a general way as part of the teaching (A IV 245; A V 263). *Suttanta* methodology on this subject does not apply the precepts in a number of different 'ordinary' situations. There is no close examination of the feelings of those acting and behaving in the texts where ethics are described. In addition, in *sutta*s the Buddha is always there as teacher, or implied as the validator of other teachers. The Abhidhamma only delineates the factors present on *whatever* occasion any consciousness arises; it is not applied to actual situations. So this story represents a kind of text that is essential in the Buddhist textual corpus to demonstrate how such things work in action. It has its own literary style and way of expression and applies the notion of intention (*cetanā*) to actual people, in their momentary experience, in *atīte*, once-upon-a-time land, where there are usually no Buddhas, and where all other *jātaka* stories occur. It makes sure that people really understand how the five precepts need to be taken in spirit, not as causes for self-reproach. Only in such a literary scenario could skilfulness be demonstrated not just in the participants but in the compassion with which the story asks each interviewee – and perhaps the listener too – to examine their own simple volition at the time of any given action. It is this, as the story attests, that lies at the heart of *sīla*.

1. I have just read this article as I submit it, and prefer now the word 'universality' to 'secularity'.

## SECULARISM AND JĀTAKAS

So how could such narratives be of use? It seems to me that the introduction of Buddhist stories could greatly help group and class discussion in the field of ethics, and bring it to greater prominence in psychological contexts too. I have found students greatly enjoy them, and find them helpful means of looking at their own attitudes to mental states and ethics too. As was mentioned at the outset, ethics can seem a bit boring to some students: linked to consideration of their own actions and mental states, and supported by narratives that humanise the precepts in an understandable and useful way, the whole field starts to become interesting, and particularly useful in association with practices and trainings concerned with developing mindfulness in daily life. It is the kind of small ethical dramas that are enacted in *j*ātakas that cause us so much concern and worry, as much as the sometimes bigger ones.

Such an element does seem to be needed in some of the modern discourse about wellbeing and the movement towards a greater concern for psychological health. In modern Western psychology, the influence of Buddhist understandings of mindfulness have, of course, been significant (Williams & Kabat-Zinn 2011; Bodhi 2011, 2016; Baer 2015; Bishop et al. 2004; Harvey 2015). The area where no such development is particularly obvious, however, is that of ethics. In cultures working with an often misunderstood Christianity as their basis, words associated with any kind of morality can be unpalatable, and inappropriate for secular usage. In a western context, any discussion of 'goodness', or 'skilfulness' has to be qualified (Keown 2001: 119-120). The recent impact of the mindfulness movement has had a great effect, on the mental health and wellbeing of countless people. But is any consideration of ethics involved? if you look at otherwise very good online sites, where the application of mindfulness is taught in a secular context, it is noticeable that the field of morality is rarely mentioned (see, for example, 'Mindfulness NHS' 2017). Perhaps necessarily, no mention is made, as it so often is in Buddhist texts, of the relationship between *sīla*, or good ethical behaviour, and happiness (Virtbauer and Shaw 2018; M I 76; M III 170–178). This does not of course mean that ethics are not present, in clinical practice, participants

at either side of the therapist/client relationship, or in the teaching and practice of mindfulness. They are just not introduced as an obvious attraction, as possible benefit, byproduct, or indeed as a particular factor that might influence or shape, for ill or for good, the arising of mindfulness in any given practitioner. Those most experienced in administering and teaching mindfulness techniques are aware of attendant problems: as was noted recently by two of the most distinguished figures in the field, 'the rush to define mindfulness within Western psychology may wind up denaturing it in fundamental ways,' and as such there is 'the potential for something priceless to be lost' (Williams & Kabat-Zinn 2011: 4).

The reason for what is in some regards a sensible decision to downplay ethics in mindfulness training is fairly clear to those who come from traditional Western backgrounds, and of course explains why so many students in the UK find the whole field of ethics a little off-putting. In reaction to a rather punitive sense of what morality and goodness involve, based on our misunderstanding of Christian teachings on these matters, educated late twentieth-century westerners reacted violently against the perceived negative and destructive effects of guilt, worry, anxiety and tension that we felt our often flawed educational system had instilled. It should be stressed that Christian teachings, particularly those from the early days of the tradition, did not encourage excessive 'scruples'. The notion of a 'change of heart' (*metanoia*), key to early Christian doctrines in particular, and became a kind of self-mortificatory 'repentance' that was felt to be enjoined by the church. Hebraic associations of guilt were also felt, again not accurately, to be encouraged within other faiths, such as Judaism.

So, many secular and modern Buddhist articulations of the *teachings* of mindfulness involve terms which are, quite deliberately, removed from any association any states of mind which could prompt unhealthy ruminations, and exacerbate mental trouble and a lack of health. In part to avoid such unhelpful personal interventions and perplexity, carefully termed guidance that encourages 'bare attention' and 'non-judgmental awareness' are frequently employed, cited and applied in mindfulness teachings (Bishop et al. 2004: 232; Nyanaponika 1962; Shaw 2019 153–8).

In this such instructions are highly effective, and in many cases essential 'skills in means' that successfully encourage practitioners to avoid the negative mental states of guilt, worry, and self-judgement. The terms, of course, derive from the *vipassanā* discourses of the twentieth-century Buddhism, where, again, they are regard as importantly helpful terms to apply when training a particular kind of minimal, non-interventionist alertness in the practitioner for the development of insight (eg Nyanaponika 1962; see also, for comment, Bodhi 2011; Gethin 2011; Harvey 2015). Mindfulness teachers in the West understandably want to draw patients away from potentially unhealthy ruminations, and so do not really stress ethics.

But there is a risk that, to use the popular expression, the baby is thrown out with the bathwater. By excluding ethical considerations and the notion of volition from mindfulness programmes, many of our daily preoccupations and our sometimes unhelpful 'ruminations' are not fully addressed. As those involved in Buddhist practice and theory know, right mindfulness is considered just one aspect of an eightfold path, in which it features as an interdependent element in several domains, and where the practice of the three factors of right speech, right livelihood and right action are inseparable. In the Abhidhamma, mindfulness is a determinant of skilful consciousness; skilful consciousness cannot arise, in any situation, or any state of mind, without mindfulness, and, in the skilful *citta* involving action in the world, ethical considerations too. In the *Abhidharmakośa* a more universal application of mindfulness is suggested, where it features as a factor in all consciousness, as a universal (Pruden 1988–1990). This mindfulness however, needs purifying if it is to be regarded as a concomitant of a healthy, rather than an unhealthy state of mind (Cox 1992; Gethin 2011; Harvey 2015; Shaw 90–106). So mindfulness is associated with 'goodness' or 'skilfulness' in quite a fundamental way within Buddhist training, and indeed is felt to promote a kind of ethical instinct by its very existence. The *Questions of King Milinda* support this, where mindfulness is said to be like the 'treasurer' and 'advisor' to a universal monarch, able to discern what is good and make sure that what is not helpful to the mind or to others does not intrude (Miln 34–39). The traditional image of the gatekeeper for mindfulness, who rejects what is not

suitable, reinforces this (A IV 107). The story traditions allow such mindfulness to be demonstrated, rather than defined. They give a sense of a living tradition of skilfulness, of which mindfulness is just one, if essential component.

Can we include this ethical sense in our secular understandings of the wellbeing involved in a 'mindful' mind? Is it realistic to speak of ethical instincts in a secular context, and can we see the path factors of right speech, livelihood and action as realistic concomitants of an international and secular understanding of the healthy mind? In Buddhist texts, a stated link is made between mindfulness, ethical practice and happiness (Virtbauer and Shaw 2018). Can this be a link applicable in secular contexts too?

As I hope to have suggested in this brief paper, we can introduce ethics into the discourse about secularity, in particular where it relates to mindfulness and education in behaviours, and can do so in a number of ways. By citing the examples based on my own teaching experience of Buddhism, I have attempted to show how the subject of ethics can engage interest in students, and that it can be a revelation to many that we spend a great deal of time thinking about it and, unfortunately, regretting our omissions and falling victim to depression and guilt. By emphasising volition, a new perspective emerges on mindfulness of our own actions and thoughts, and of our understanding of ethics. It is in this regard that the Buddhist narrative traditions offer surprisingly helpful means of seeing one's own mental states in a mindful, yet ethical way; they do so with frequent humour and compassion too. When we consider secular mindfulness training we need not ignore such issues: indeed, in the fuller development of mindfulness practice, they can become a central feature in arousing a deeper, yet still secular notion of mindful living that permits also the undertaking of other spiritual paths, including Buddhism. Buddhist stories of the *j*ātaka type engage interest, empathy and discussion. We can all relate to the situations they describe, and see our own mental patterns reflected in the way people respond to them. As Martha Nussbaum wisely noted a few decades ago: "[l]iterary form is not separable from philosophical content, but is itself, a part of content - an integral part, then, of the search for and the statement of truth" (Nussbaum

1990 3). Recent commentators on mindfulness note how it could be possible to consider the ethical, and indeed the spiritual, within an understanding of mindfulness training, that does not need to compromise secular principle (Baer 2015; Brown 2016; Harvey 2015; Samuel 2016).

As I hope has been suggested, we can see how *Jātaka*s, through their compassion and integrity, embody, as well as describe, an understanding of ethics that could be directly translatable to the international stage. An understanding of this 'creative morality', that is not just reactive, passive and observational, but resourceful, generous and considerate of others too, could help the now pressing demands for a secular consensus of what constitutes well-being, the healthy mind, and a workable way for people of different traditions and backgrounds to relate with one another.

## ABBREVIATIONS

Pali Text Society editions used of the following:

| | |
|---|---|
| A | *Aṅguttaranikāya* |
| D | *Dighanikāya* |
| DhS | *Dhammasaṅgani* |
| Ja | *Jātakatthavaṇṇanā* |
| M | *Majjhimanikāya* |
| MA | Commentary to M |
| Miln | *Milindapañhā* |
| Sn | *Suttanipāta* |

Individual *jātaka*s are denoted by J 276 etc.

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# READING CONFLICTS, ACHIEVING PEACE DHAMMA IN THE CONTEMPORARY INDONESIAN BUDDHIST SHORT STORIES

by Ary Budiyanto[*] & Latifah[**]

**ABSTRACT**

Indonesian contemporary Buddhist literature is a reflection individual dhamma experiences in the context of their respective cultural and social settings as a minority in Indonesia. In this case, Buddhist literature reflects the appreciation of their dhamma in dealing with life problems, both in managing conflict or in efforts to build peace in accordance with their context at the individual and social level. Even though it is imaginative, conflict in literary works not only provides entertainment effects, but also education because of the essence of literature as a work of art that is dulce et utile. This article describes the process of developing conflict, how conflicts occur, what factors influence or hinder conflict, what character needs to be developed to minimize the occurrence of conflict, and how to manage conflict within Indonesian Buddhist individual figures or society who live up to the teachings of the Buddha and local knowledge. The literary works that are the source of the data in this study are ten short stories from antology namely *Sihir* (Magic, 2015) by Bhante Don Atthapiyo, *Menunggu Papa:*

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*Kisah Gadis Kecil yang Akhirnya Berdamai dengan Dirinya* (The Story of a Little Girl Who Finally Peaceed with Herself, 2015) by Yanah Sucintani, a collection of short stories *Asal Usul Pohon Salak* (the Origin of the Salak Tree, 2011), and *Ketika Metta Memilih* (When Metta Chose, 2014) by Hendry Filcozwei Jan. With a qualitative content analysis study approach, it focuses on analyzing formal structures from a narrative perspective. By reconstructing and describing the structure of the narrative based on actions, choices, difficulties, conflicts, complications, resolutions, and developments experienced by the characters, this study shows that Buddhadhamma plays a role in dealing with conflicts. It encourages people to overcome suffering (dukkha) through self-reflection, looking inward. However, conflict transformation requires not only a "search inside", it needs continuous efforts to train empathy (karuna), non-violence (ahimsa), and creative-wisdom (prajna). Thus, Buddhist literature as a medium of learning, planting Buddhist values can be more effective because it is more concrete, practical, grounded, active, and pleasant. The internalization of Buddhadhamma through this literary work is strategic in its role in developing the character of love of peace and empathy which is a condition for the creation of sustainable internal and external peace to achieve a state of self-harmony.

## BACKGROUND

Harmony and conflict can be seen as two different sides of a coin. The synthesis of both can provide new insights about conflict and disagreement (Anedo, 2012: 17). Conflict is a necessity in life, something that cannot be avoided as a consequence of a choice, decision, or condition. Therefore, the skill of managing conflict is a significant thing in the effort to attain and create peace. However, as stated by Miller (2005: 23-24), it is very rare for conflict to be completely finished, but only limited and muted. Therefore, conflict management is an ongoing effort to look back on the problems that have ever existed. Efforts to prevent conflict also do not mean avoiding conflict, but avoid increasing the impact or escalation of conflict, such as violence. In this case, the right resolution or intervention on conflict depends on identifying minor disputes that act as an early warning system.

Related to the role of religion in conflict and efforts to build peace, religion is often seen with simplification, namely religion as a source or solution to conflict. A deeper meaning of religion can be done by seeing how religion is understood and experienced by individuals. "By observing how religion operates and interacts with other aspects of human experience at the global, institutional, group and individual levels, we can gain a more nuanced understanding of its role (or potential role) in both conflict and peacebuilding" (Silvestri, S., dan Mayall, 2015:1). Religious literature, namely literature written based on religious values, is one way to see the religious experience of individuals in the context of their respective cultural and social settings. In this case, Buddhist literature, namely literature written by Buddhists and based on Buddhist values, is a reflection of the religiosity of life's problems. Buddhist literature can show the role of religion or its potential in either conflict or efforts to build peace in its context. This context is an important matter to consider in looking at the role of religion related to conflict, both at the individual and social level based on the perspective that religion is a liquid entity, not static and isolated (Silvestri, S., and Mayall, 2015: 2).

In the context of Buddhism, discourse about conflict is one of the main themes in the framework of releasing suffering to achieve happiness through pure awareness. Therefore, conflict needs to be understood with dhamma in an effort to create peace, outside and within individuals. Indeed, in general conflict is indeed something that tends to be avoided because it brings inconvenience. However, in literature, the existence of conflict is significant without it "there will be no stories, there will be no plot" (Nurgiyantoro: 1994: 122), so the authors actually create conflict dramatically to bind the interest of the reader. Even though it is imaginative, conflict in literary works not only provides entertainment effects, but also education because of the essence of literature as a work of art that is *dulce et utile*. Readers can learn about the process of developing conflict, how conflicts occur, what factors influence or inhibit conflict, what character needs to be developed to minimize conflict, and how to manage conflict in accordance with the teachings of the Buddha and local wisdom. The experience of reading and appreciating contemporary Buddhist literature provides an applicative

description of dhamma values, such as the Kalahavivada Sutta which is related to the causes of mind-centered conflict as suggested by Kustiani (2014: 192). Thus, Buddhist literature can be applied as a medium for learning character education in Buddhist educational institutions, especially the Buddhist Sunday School. Therefore, researchers are interested in conducting research on Buddhist values related to conflict resolution represented in contemporary Buddhist literature, especially from the anthology namely: *Sihir* ('Magic', 2015) by Bhante Don Atthapiyo, *Menunggu Papa: Kisah Gadis Kecil yang Akhirnya Berdamai dengan Dirinya* ('The Story of a Little Girl Who Finally Peaceed with Herself', 2015) by Yanah Sucintani, a collection of short stories *Asal Usul Pohon Salak* ('The Origin of the Salak Tree', 2011), dan *Ketika Metta Memilih* ('When Metta Chose', 2014) by Hendry Filcozwei Jan

Before limiting the problem of this research, it is necessary for researchers to provide the purpose and direction of research based on the problem of research that is describing Buddhist values in conflict resolution represented in Buddhist literature. The research problem includes the discussion of the structure of literature which includes intrinsic and extrinsic elements which play a role in building conflicts in accordance with the types of conflicts that are built, such as inner, social, or physical conflicts. In this case, it is necessary to look at Buddhist values or the teachings of the Buddha as a worldview that underlies the attitude of the writer.

This analysis can then be developed as the design of character education learning related to conflict management which is then expected to be a driving factor for social transformation. The theoretical significance of this study is to increase knowledge in the realm of conflict studies and peace-making in the perspective of Buddhism. This research also serves as the basis for conflict and religious studies so that religion is not seen narrowly only as a source or solution to conflict. The results of this study are expected to be useful for the development of social and multicultural education theories.

Practically, this research contributes significantly in uncovering and elevating the Buddhist perspective to create a harmonious and peaceful life in the midst of today's conflict-ridden world. This research can also be used as material for the development of character

education in public schools (formal education institutions) and Buddhist informal and non-formal educational institutions. With Buddhist literature as a medium of learning, character education or planting Buddhist values is expected to be more effective because it is more concrete, practical, grounded, active, and pleasant. The internalization of Buddhadhamma through this literary work is strategic in its role in developing the character of love of peace and empathy which is a condition for the creation of internal and external harmony. For policy holders, this study of conflict management based on the perspective of Buddhism contributes ideas to determine direction in taking action to anticipate and deal with conflicts at the national level, even in inter-state relations as stated Ikeda (2016: 94).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Kustiani (2014: 191-198) examines the causes and ways of dealing with conflict based on the Kalahavivada Sutta and analysis of Abidhamma. According to the Agganna Sutta Digha Nikaya, conflict (viggaha) can occur when people begin to recognize their physical characteristics so that they are trapped in an attitude of superiority and inferiority. Another source of conflict is ownership that is sometimes violated by others. Whatever the cause, conflict occurs in a polluted mind. The way to reduce conflict is to create a peaceful mind because, as the Buddha said, "The mind is the forerunner of everything." In the Kalahavivada Sutta, Suttanipata, there is a question, "What causes various arguments, disputes, together with selfishness, vanity and pride ? "The answer is that all conflicts occur from what is loved. This position will cause someone not to be neutral to accept everything as it is, but based on likes or dislikes. Therefore, everyone needs to guard his mind to prevent subjective perceptions based on desire and greed.

The overflowing of desires that led to this conflict underlies much of the creation of literary works such as the Syair Burung Pungguk (Brown Boobook Bird poem). This study of Malay literary works was carried out by Hadi Rumadi (2015) with a focus on the inner conflict of the character. The source of the data used is the text of the Pungguk Bird poem which contains political problems, especially the problem of state finances wrapped in love stories among upper

class society. The inner conflict of characters is discussed with respect to the ego, id, and superego. The enlightenment gained from the mandate in the discussion was that at the height of the conflict of love problems, the character surrendered to God above all his prayers and efforts. Thus, it appears that conflict does not only play a role in building stories or creating tensions that generate interest and entertain the reader, but also provide wisdom behind the story, an educational value.

Literature, especially prose, is considered as the most effective character education media because it is interesting and easy to understand, especially by children at the elementary school level. This is a conclusion in the research conducted by Tantri (2017). A novel entitled Tantri (Woman Who Tells Story) by Cok Sawitri contains character values, namely values of religious character, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creative, independent, democratic, curiosity, nationalism spirit, love for the country, respect for achievement, friendly or communicative, love peace, love to read, care for the environment, care for the social, and responsibility. However, this research is limited to the identification of character values in the Tantri (Women Who Tell Stories) novel and recommends it as a medium for learning character education. Thus, further research is needed to see the process of applying literature as a medium for character education.

**Theoretical Framework**

In literature, conflict is a structural building element that is generally built through the presence of two opposing poles, the protagonist and antagonist. Two-polar conflict will give birth to internal (psychological) conflict that causes the character's mental suffering. In addition, conflicts can also occur outside the character's self when dealing with outside forces that are the obstacles to his goal (https://literarydevices.net/conflict/). Thus, conflicts in literature can be grouped into physical conflicts and inner conflicts, external conflicts and internal conflicts. Various types of conflicts are identical to something that is not liked and tends to be avoided (Nurgiyantoro, 2002: 122-124).

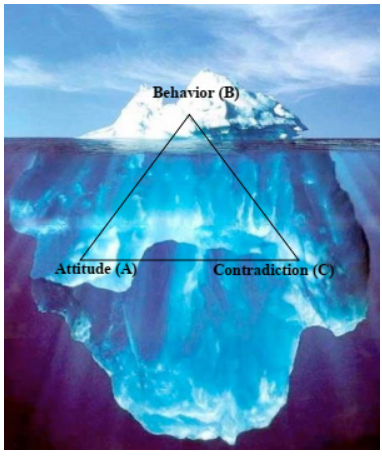
Individual and community attitudes toward conflict are

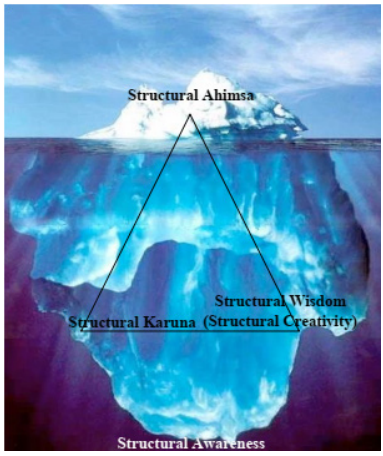
influenced by their respective cultural backgrounds as reflected in literature. Soedjijono (2018) explained that the approach to conflict in Western aesthetics is not in accordance with the personality of the Indonesian culture that does not "celebrate" conflict, but tends to "dampen" conflict. Therefore, a study of Indonesian literature needs to be done through the theory of local wisdom-based prose study. His study of Pengakuan Pariyem, for example, shows that the work of prose based on Javanese values contains the peculiarities of structural elements, including "almost no conflict" (2009: 58). Avoiding and minimizing conflicts or replacing physical conflicts into inner conflicts is characteristic of local wisdom-based prose conflict elements.

Arai (2017) explores the contribution of the Buddhadhamma in overcoming conflict to developing the theory of conflict transformation. In his paper entitled "Toward A Buddhist Theory of Conflict Transformation", Arai accumulates an understanding of Buddhist structural peace and theories about peace studies that have been built by previous scientists, especially Galtung. The purpose of developing this theory was done through the selection of concepts of peace and conflict from a Buddhist point of view. This is a precursor to conceptualizing an approach inspired by Buddhist values about simple analysis and transformation of interpersonal conflict, which later becomes the basis of complex structural transformation.

As Arai acknowledges, one of the challenges to building Buddhist theory about the analysis of conflict and transformation lies in the spiritual "inner-directed" character of Buddhism. Buddha is a religious tradition that seeks to encourage humans to overcome suffering (dukkha) through self-reflection, looking inward. On the other hand, the transformation of conflict does not only require "inward search", but also comes out to improve relations between the disputing parties. In this case, by referring to the theory put forward by Galtung (1996) on the transformation of social conflict, Arai explained that conflict transformation is an ongoing process to actively train empathy, nonviolence, and creativity. In this way, conflict can transform into positive energy. To realize conflict transformation, Arai (2017: 24) combines the triangles of ABC

(Attitude-Behavior, and Contradiction) that Galtung put forward with Buddhist teachings so that structural awareness and three types of skills are built: empathy structure which is an extension of karuna; nonviolent structure which is an extension of ahimsa; and the wisdom structure which is an extension of the prajna, as illustrated in the following model (*A Buddhist Theory of Structural Conflict Transformation – A Revised Iceberg Model*; Repro from Arai, 2017) in which when recognizing the existence of conflict, stay mindful of non-self (anatta) and interdependence in order to transcend the perceived separation of Self and Other:




## METHOD

This research is a qualitative descriptive study using qualitative content analysis. In qualitative content analysis, narrative analysis focuses on analyzing formal structures from a narrative perspective. The research procedure is carried out by reconstructing and describing the narrative structure based on actions, choices, difficulties, conflicts, complications, and developments experienced by the characters. In this case, researchers act as competent readers (Hijmans, 1996: 93-108).

Naratology helps understand, analyze, and evaluate narratives. However, the textual description produced with the help of this theory cannot be considered as the only adequate description. Different descriptions may be produced by using the same concept differently and with emphasis on other aspects of the text. This

variation in analysis, description and interpretation is unavoidable because reading is basically a subjective activity. Bal (2017: 4) calls it a form of "democratic use of theory" which is intersubjective. However, as Bal hopes (2017: xvi), to overcome its limitations that are positivist and formalist in character, narrative analysis needs to be accompanied by concerns and other theories to open up new possibilities for interest. Therefore, this study also uses the Reader Respond Approach approach to involve the cognitive and affective aspects of the reader in reflecting moral teachings contained in contemporary Buddhist literature. In this approach, respondents, namely Buddhist students, as readers, have the support to show and articulate their understanding of written literary texts as stated by Chua Seok Hong (1997: 7).

As stated by Nawawi and Hadari (2006: 4), the selection of data sources needs to pay attention to the accuracy of determining population characteristics and samples. In terms of sampling contemporary Buddhist literature, validity is not determined based on the quantity (amount) of literary work that is the source of data, but the accuracy of the selection of literary works in accordance with certain considerations that underlie the character as purposive sampling so as to represent the population in answering the research problems. The main consideration in choosing a data source is the structure of a coherent and cohesive literary work so that it can be an ingredient in analyzing the role of its elements in forming or reducing conflict. Another criterion is the background of the author's beliefs as a Buddhist so that data can be processed and analyzed to what extent Buddhist values inspired his work, especially related to conflict resolution. Therefore, this research data includes short stories "Amarwati" in the antology of *Sihir* (2015) by Bhante Don Atthapiyo; "Mengatasi Kemelekatan" (Overcoming Attachement), "Belajar Memaafkan" (Learning to Forgive), "Radio Rusak" (Broken Radio), "Dua Kali Menjadi Istri" (Two Times Being a Wife) in *Menunggu Papa*: *Kisah Gadis Kecil yang Akhirnya Berdamai dengan Dirinya* (2015) by Yanah Sucintani; "Selamat Jalan Koko" (Goodbye Koko), "Nasi Basi" (Stale Rice), and "Puding Kasih" in the *Asal Usul Pohon Salak* (2011); "Siapa Bilang Tak Boleh Bohong" (Who Said You Can't Lie) and "Aktris Tanpa Piala Citra" (An Actress without Citra Trophy) in *Ketika Metta Memilih*

(2014) by Hendry Filcozwei Jan. At first, sorting of the material objects was carried out using a data card system by providing labels in accordance with the research objectives.

The study of stories with a narrative perspective is carried out by analyzing stories in level of sign, text, and fabula. Aspects of story include temporality, sequential ordering, rhythm, frequency, characters, space, and focalization, while elements of fabula includesevents, actors, time, and location (Bal, 2017). At the level of story, abstraction determines constituent units of the story using the criteria of change, choice, and confrontation as explained Mieke Bal (in Ridho, 2018 pp. 57-58). In addition, the story level analysis also reveals the temporal succession and causality (Rimmon-Kenan in Ridho, 2018 pp. 61). The series of stories are arranged in a narrative sentence which is a complete sequence including the initial balanced state, modifying action, imbalance, modifying action and a new balanced state that leads to the interpretation of the conflict of story (Ridho, 2018 pp. 67-68). Conflict arises from the rules of change in story as unbalance, but change also leads to resolution of conflict as a new balanced state. However, the analysis of the narrative interpretation of Buddhist stories in this research is not purely structuralist, but enriched with a Buddhist perspective. Thus, this study can be regarded as contextualist narratology because it deals with specific culture, thematic, and ideological context (Chatman, 1990 pp. 309-328).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the contextualist of the analysis narrative, the study of contemporary Indonesian Buddhist stories underlines two main themes in the context of conflict and conflict resolution in a Buddhist perspective, namely metta-karuna and anattā. The first main theme is in the story "Amarwati" by Bhante Atthapiyo, "Nasi Basi" by Vimalavati Vita Felicia, "Aktris Tanpa Piala Citra" by Hendry Filcozwei Jan, dan "Puding Kasih" by Selfi Parkit. In this theme, individual conflicts are related to social relations, namely conditions that afflict others. In Amarwati's story, an unbalanced condition arose with Amarwati's nightmares which disturbed the peace of her family. In her dream, she saw a bad condition experienced by Melisa, her husband's late first wife. Melisa also asked Amarwati for help to

get rid of her bad condition. Melisa experienced this bad condition because of her inner darkness before she death. She envied on the happiness of the Amarwati family, so Melisa was happy that the disaster had befallen the family. To help Melisa, Amarwati conducts a Sharing of Merits or Pattidana so that Melisa can find happiness again. Indeed, after doing the Pattidana, in her dream Amarwati met Melisa in better condition. Thus, conflict arose precisely because Amarwati's affection for other beings. Amarwati did not close her eyes or be ignorant of the bad conditions of other beings. Amarwati felt sad because the suffering of other beings. In addition to the sense of metta-karuna, this problem was overcome by Amarwati with her wise decision by meeting and asking for advice and then following Bhante's advice well, namely conducting pattidana.

Inner conflict was also raised in the story "Nasi Basi" (Stale Rice) which tells of Maman's attempt to do good. In a Buddhist perspective, good karma is not only obtained by recipients of virtue (hands below), but especially by those who are virtuous (hands above) who have the opportunity to do good deeds. Despite his intention to do good deeds, Maman had to find a way to be able to convey his dāna (the practice of cultivating generosity) in a good way. Maman who works as an office boy intends to use leftover food in his office to people in need. However, it is not easy to find people who want to receive leftover food so that a lot of stale food accumulates in his house which creates unpleasant conditions. The good karma was to bring him together with Embul, a person who secretly picks up the stale food that Maman threw away. Despite his difficult situation, Embul did not want to commit violence by stealing or robbing so he only dared to pick up the stale food that Maman had thrown away. Embul's honesty prompted Maman to do more to help him find a job Embul where he worked even though Embul's education was inadequate.

Creativity and policy really need to be done to be able to do good deed or dāna. "Aktris Tanpa Piala Citra" recounts Friska's efforts to help Oma, her elderly neighbor and mistreatment from her family. Oma's household assistant who hopes to help her turns out to be rude to Oma. Friska also had to find a way so that she could still help Oma without offending Oma's family. She visited Oma

when Oma's family came out. However she knew of the various ill-treatment of the family, she kept it a secret, not spreading this evil to others. She sold jewelry gifts from Oma to pay for Oma's various needs so that Oma is better cared for and can feel happier. Thus the structure of consciousness, namely prajna, ahimsa, and metta becomes conflict resolution in helping Oma.

Good karma that was percieved through dāna also became the story idea of "Puding Kasih". Recognizing the condition of his family living in economic hardship, Khanti always looked for ways to make his family happy. Khanti experienced an inner conflict because she felt how heavy the burden of her life was. Various ways she did such as taking a second job by giving private lessons. One of her private student families gave her a pudding. She struggled to bring the pudding home while riding a public vehicle, with a happy shadow of his mother and sister who could enjoy the luxurious food. However, when she saw homeless people on the street, she gave them the pudding. These Metta-karuna actually bring more happiness to her because by looking at their circumstances, she can be more grateful for her condition and the burden of her life no longer feels heavy. By releasing, she actually gets more, namely the spirit of life, "The renewal that includes her unites with her enthusiasm to fight in life, but at that time no longer for herself and her family, but also for the welfare of those who live on one side of her world" (Parkits, 2011 p. 107). Thus, conflict resolution does not only overcome the inner conflicts individually, but can also have a wider effect, namely social transformation in creating social justice.

Inner conflict resolution that has an effect on the social by overcoming attachment is also an inspiration for the story of "Mengatasi Kelekatan" (Yanah, 2015 pp.37-46). This story, based on the real experience of Yanah's life, tells the story of the ups and downs of her life as a housewife who is also an activist in Buddhist organizations. Yanah activities made her close to the monks who were often judged negatively by the people around him. She wants to let go of this negative view because "my life has become very chaotic when I always pay attention to what others are talking about" (Yanah, 2015, p.43). Yanah does not want to face hatred with hatred (ahimsa). Yanah reflection brings her to the awareness

of trying to "get out of the circle of possessiveness" and "forgive therapy" of those who hate her (pp. 43-44). She prevented post power syndrome by releasing various positions in an organization she had held for too long. This self-reflection by removing the ego does not only transform itself personally, but also has a broad influence because of her social activities. Thus, anatta which is part of the structure of consciousness, especially wisdom (prajna), becomes the resolution of the conflict.

Removing the ego by returning to self becomes the basis of self-reform in overcoming conflicts in various aspects of Yanah's life in the book collection of stories *Menunggu Papa.* Adult Yanah has a dialogue with Little Yanah to overcome her past traumas in her life's journey as a child of a second wife who feels passionate longing for her father. Yanah managed to break the cycle of hatred embedded in her subconscious by forgiving her father as told in "Belajar Memaafkan Papa" (Yanah, 2015 pp.23-35). This self transformation makes Yanah able to control her ego when educating her children as told in "Radio Rusak". Yanah realized that she was overprotective to her son. "If I have counseled my son, I will continue to repeat until I'm satisfied and sure my child understands what I am saying" (p. 58). As a result, her child is less appreciative and feels uncomfortable with her. Reconciliation is also done by means of self-control, controlling her own worries, being more relaxed and refined towards her child. Her relationship with her husband was improved when she controlled her ego to overcome what she called *mother-wife stress syndrome*, which is told in "Dua Kali Menjadi Istri" (pp. 14-22). "Through mind technology training from a mind expert, my knowledge was opened, which has not been right. I began to improve my mindset about domestic life and learned about 'the language of love' (p. 20). Yanah is not only aware of her emotions, but is also creative in overcoming them by attending training in order to be more in control of her mind, replacing anger with the language of love, so that the atmosphere in her home can be more enjoyable and children can grow up to be happy people.

In the family, the wisdom to overcome conflict often arises from listening the language of love. The story of "Siapa Bilang Tak Boleh Bohong" (Jan, 2014 pp. 16-27) tells the wisdom of a mother facing

the problem of her daughter being anxious because of a sense of guilt. Mita wants to release her guilt for being forced to lie to help her friend. Mita was very aware of the meaning of *musavada veramani sikkhapadang samadiyami*. However, after listening carefully to the problem, the mother wisely gave an understanding, "What we plant, is what we will pick later. Lying, whatever the reason, it will still produce kamma-vipaka, the result of what we do. In the face of a dilemma, what we have to choose is actions that produce smaller bad vipaka and better vipaka "(Jan, 2014 p. 23). Furthermore the mother explained,

"Like water in a glass, Mama's good deeds are like clear water and without taste, salt is a symbol of bad deeds. When we do bad things, it's like we sprinkle a little salt in a glass. The water will change to become slightly salty. The more bad things we do, the water will become more salty. If we do good, it's like we add water to a glass. The salt in the glass will not decrease but the saltiness will decrease if we continue to add water to the glass "(p. 24).

The mother did not immediately judge her child so that her child felt comfortable telling stories and learning from their parents. Mother's wisdom is the provision for her child in making moral judgments in dealing with various life problems in the future. The story shows that the wisdom expressed in the language of love is not only a solution in overcoming family problems at the same time, but is a moral foundation in creating sustainable harmonious life.

Beyond grouping the two main themes above, namely metta-karuna and ananta, both are actually inseparable and complementary. This can be seen in the story "Selamat Jalan Koko" by Cici Metta (2011, pp.30-43). Ming or commonly called Koko (a.k.a brother) wants to find the meaning of life when he was dying before because of chronic kidney. However, it is not the threat of death itself which becomes his inner conflict towards his death but the attitude of his family, wife and children, who do not care for him, even want his death soon because they fear that the medical expenses will consume their property. On the other hand, he regretted ignoring his other family, namely his father, mother and younger siblings. "I deeply regret my attitude to papa and mama. Only because of my selfishness and ignorance to see my parents' love "(p. 39).

However, the family he had ignored did not respond with hatred. His parents were never angry with him and his younger sister, Cia, received him back with open arms whenKoko returned to visit her often and his family for his lamentation. "I just understood now, children can be disappointed and so hurt at the attitude or mistakes of parents. But parents are different, love is so deep. Never parents complain about the disappointment felt by children's attitudes "(p. 39). He also conveyed the final message to his sister, "Thank you Cia for your kindness, even though all this time Koko rarely gets close to you. You are a good little sister ... "(p.41). Thus the karma that Koko received was abandoned by his son and wife who only thought of themselves after Koko himself ignored his parents and siblings because of his selfishness. However, karma is not an absolute condition that cannot be changed. At the end of his life, he again found the meaning of life thanks to the metta-karuna of her little sister who was heartened to accept him again.

## CONCLUSION

Narrative analysis of the ten short stories contextually based on buddhadharma shows two main themes related to conflict resolution, namely *metta-karuna and anatta*. The first theme appears in the story "Amarwati", "Nasi Basi", "Puding Kasih", and "Aktris Tanpa Piala Citra". The second theme is contained in the story "Mengatasi Kelekatan", "Belajar Memaafkan", "Radio Rusak", "Dua Kali Menjadi Istri", and "Siapa Bilang Tak Boleh Bohong". However, it cannot be denied that the two themes are intertwined as shown in the story "Selamat Jalan Koko". The theme evolved as conflict resolution based on structural awareness framework consisting of *ahimsa* (nir-violent), *prajna* (wisdom and creativity), and [metta-]*karuna* (emphaty), which is the development of the Galtung ABC (Attitude, Behavior, and Contradition) triangle with Buddhadhama. Here the elements of *Ahimsa* and *Prajna* is the basis of an immediate struggle attaining a state of Anatta (Pure Awareness) in order loosening to the metta-karuna inclination on self-attachment. Thus it appears that a typical Buddhist conflict resolution that pivots on returning to the internal (internal) needs to also be supported by creative efforts to improve external conditions. The History of the Teacher Gotama Buddha taught

that peace does not only mean avoiding conflict or discomfort, but instead dares to face "unbalanced conditions" or out of comfort zones for self transformation, even social transformation.

In addition to being a means of self reflection and dialogue at the family level, this short story study can be developed into a learning model of internalizing Buddhist values so that Buddhist students and lay people get a concrete picture of Buddhadarma in accordance with changing times. Students or children are asked to retell the story based on their interpretation and giving their comment. To further enliven the learning atmosphere, this appreciation of Buddhist short stories can also be enriched with media-based strategies such as realizing interpretations of reading in the form of comics or videos so that the process of internalizing religious teachings is not indoctrinative. Futhermore, the transfer of media can also further disseminate the universal values of Buddadharma contained in these short stories so as to maximize their contribution to the creation of a peaceful and harmonious world.

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# ENRICHMENT OF THE SPIRIT FROM THE SIX ETHICS OF THE MIND

by Bhikkhu Chang Sui*

**ABSTRACT**

This essay focuses on providing a solution for establishing Global Ethics through the Six Ethics of the Mind that we all must diligently work on together. The special feature of the Six Ethics, which responds to and reflects on current society in Taiwan, as well as current international circumstances, are different from the Five Relationships in traditional Confucianism—the ethical relationships between sovereign and subject, father and son, husband and wife, elder and younger, and friends. Of the Six Ethics, daily life ethics, environmental ethics, family ethics, school ethics, workplace ethics, and ethics among ethnic groups are dimensions representing our modern era, and these transcend the range of the traditional Five Relationships.

In ancient India, Mahayana Buddhism holds that all sentient beings have the Tathagata-garbha or Buddha-nature, which has been characteristic that everything is connected and originated from the mind just as numerous rivers returning to the sea all have the same taste. In modern society, each one of us plays not only a single role, but also actually multiple roles. For this reason, if we respect and learn from one another within each of the different areas covered

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by the Six Ethics of the Mind, we can supplement our own lack with the other's abundance, develop our virtues and reform our faults.

*The Awakening of Faith in Mahayana* says, "When the mind arises, all things arise; when the mind perishes, all things perish." Therefore, it is believed that enrichment of the spirit is a more precious wealth than material possessions, by Chinese Ch'an (Zen) Buddhism which is characterized by a simple way of life. In the Ch'an school, practitioners can gain freedom and peace of mind through keeping their perspective of emptiness and eliminating the desire for material things in their lives. When one's spirit is enriched by practice, one will not be stimulated or tempted by the external material environment, neither will one harm others and damage the natural environment. If we can praise the commonness while appreciating the differences and seek common ground while maintaining our uniqueness, then the interactions between individuals, ethnic groups, and religions will be characterized by mutual benefit, and prosperous coexistence.

## 1. MYSTERY OF IMPERMANENCE

About fifty years ago, a layperson in his eighties came to live with the monks in the Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Culture (CHIBC) in Taiwan[1]. He was often in agony and pain, as he suffered from the loss of his beloved wife. This caused his blood pressure to suddenly shoot up at times. Although this man had been practicing for a long time, he was not able to get over this agony. While staying at the monastery, he would talk about impermanence with sadness and repeatedly said, "We were married for fifty years. Time really flied and passed so quickly. Fifty years and now she left me. It is really impermanent." A young monk spoke with the founder of CHIBC, Ven. Master Dongchu, about this old man. He was very sarcastic and laughed about the old man, saying "Ah, look at him, so useless. He lost an old partner and is getting so sad about it. What is so great about an old woman? Neither pretty, nor useful at all. Why is he like this?" The master just replied, "Well, you talk this way just because it did not happen to you and because she is not your

1. Hu Muin, Sharing Dharma Drum Mountain : a white paper on happiness (Taipei : Dharma Drum Corporation,2005)

wife. They were married for fifty years. If you had a wife, would you think like this?" The young monk then scratched his head and said, "Hmm, I didn't think about it that way." It is easy to talk sarcastically if you haven't walked a mile in someone else's shoes.

Similarly, in 2005 there was a retired professor in his eighties, an old friend of Ven. Master Sheng Yen. Master quite often got in touch with him, asking every time, "How are you getting on?" The professor sighed, "Ah, impermanence." Master asked why? He said, "Oh, recently my dad passed away." After some time, they again met. Over and over, he sighed, "impermanence" to Master, when recounting the passing of his mother and wife. When Master called him a fourth time and asked, "How are you getting on? How is your son?" He said, "Oh, my son had a child, so I have a grandson." When Master said, "Congratulations! You have a grandson," he still replied with a sigh, "Ah, impermanence." "Why? It's good news, a happy event. Why are you sighing?" Master asked. He said, "Since my son had a baby, they moved out to set up their own family. So I'm left alone. My family is getting smaller and smaller." He was a Buddhist, that's why he understands impermanence. He started out by himself, single, and then grew a family with many members. Eventually the family got smaller and smaller, leaving him alone, a bachelor again. Ultimately impermanence will happen to him[2].

In 2005 Master Sheng Yen delivered a dharma talk about no-form in the Sixth Patriarch's Platform Sutra[3] at a ten-day retreat at Dharma Drum Retreat Center in New York, explaining:

*"For a practitioner, the attainment of no-form is through the understanding of impermanence. However, it is not so when things happen. One understands no-form amidst form. When there are forms one sees the forms, and instantaneously one sees no-form with this realization and understanding of impermanence. If not, then that is not the practice."*

After the passing of his family members, essentially

2. Sheng Yen, Sheng Yen Fashi Jiao Huato Chan 聖嚴法師教話頭禪 (Taipei : Dharma Drum Corporation,2009) available for free download at http://ddc.shengyen.org/pc.htm

3. Nanzong dunjiao zuishang dasheng mohe bore boluoni jing Liuzu Huineng Dashi yu Shaozhou Dafansi shifa tanjing南宗頓教最上大乘摩訶般若波羅蜜經六祖惠能大師於韶州大梵寺施法壇經. S. 5475, edited as T no.2007; Liuzu Dashi fabao tanjing 六祖大師法寶壇經. T no. 2008.

impermanence; and the departure of his son, also impermanence; this retired professor expressed his situation to Master Sheng Yen using the term of impermanence but was still burdened with sadness, agony, disappointment and vexations. In fact, even when associated with form, for example in the context of a happy family gathered together, one should see there is no-form amidst this form before impermanence happens. There will thus not be any vexations. While one does see form, this understanding of impermanence means instantaneously one sees impermanence and no-form with equanimity. This old practitioner was just like that old man at the Chung-Hwa Institute. Both were in agony because they understood impermanence only as a term, but were not able to realize the concept of no-form.

Economic development and advancements in both logistics and communications have greatly compressed the distance among people, giving rise to globalization and the advent of the global village. While today's world is increasingly becoming an integral entity witnessing frequent interactions among different regions and cultures, deeply rooted misunderstandings and prejudices have also been laid bare. Conflicts arise even without our being aware. Particularly, growing conflicts and chaos in our families, in our daily lives, in our workplaces, in our schools, in the environment, and among ethnic groups, have seriously threatened the security and peace of human beings in recent years.

In light of these concerns, Master Sheng Yen, a world-renowned Chan master and educator[4], proposed the formation of shared ethics and values through mind changing. Master referred to this as "the Six Ethics of the Mind." Based on the Six Ethics of the Mind and the no-form doctrine of Huineng, this paper will explore how to transform all conflict forms into harmony and thus achieve a lasting peaceful mind through the three key interrelated doctrines of no-thought (*wunian*), no-form (*wuxiang*), and non-abiding (*wuzhu*)[5]. We will contemplate how to enrich the spirit and transform hostility

4. Dan Stevenson, Hoofprint of the Ox : principles of the Chan Buddhist path as taught by a modern Chinese Master (New York : Oxford University Press, 2001), pp.1-13

5. Sheng Yen, The World of Chan (Taipei, New York : Dharma Drum Publishing, 2015), pp. 30-33.

into mutual tolerance, acceptance, and intercultural understanding thereby developing shared human values and ethics.

## 2. THE PRACTICE OF NON-DUALITY

Victor Henry Mair said, "The Platform Sutra is a seminal scripture of Chan/Zen/ Seon Buddhism. Its influence in East Asia is enormous and its impact extends far beyond China, Japan, and Korea. Readings of the Platform Sutra is a judicious and generous presentation of the best scholarship on this unique and vital text. It is certain to prove a reliable guide for anyone with a serious interest in the history, meaning, and practice of early Zen."

The most important ideas, for which the Sixth Patriarch's Platform Sutra is known, are elaborated in section17[6]. Master Huineng(638–713) begins by emphasizing the centrality of the three key interrelated doctrines of no-thought (*wunian*), no-form (*wuxiang*), and non-abiding (*wuzhu*), followed by brief definitions of each:

"Wholesome and learned friends, the practice, the method of my teaching since the beginning, whether it is gradual or sudden, is established based on no-thought as the tradition or school [*zong*], no-form or characteristic as it's body or substance [*ti*], non-abiding as its nature [*ben*]."[7]

In the passage above, the three concepts of no-thought, no-form, and non-abiding expound on the meaning of Buddha nature. How do we become enlightened and see the Buddha nature? It is through cultivating and practicing that one attains enlightenment and realizes Buddha nature. Even after enlightenment, one continues to practice according to this teaching. What are these three concepts

6Peter N. Gregory, 'The platform sūtra as the sudden teaching' Readings of the Platform sūtra , New York : Columbia University Press.

7. This text is one of the great masterpieces of Chinese Buddhist literature. Good full text English translations are available, including Philip B. Yampolsky, The Platform sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976); John McRae, The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch (BKD English Tripitaka, Berkeley, CA [US] : Numata Center of Buddhist Translation and Research, 2000), available for free download at https://www.bdk-kamerica.org/bdk-tripitaka-digital-downloads; Martin Verhoeven PhD & Heng Sure PhD, ed., The Sixth Patriarch's Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra (Ukiah, CA [US]: Buddhist Text Translation Society, 2014).

all about? Master Huineng explains each of these three concepts in turn, beginning with no-form:

*"No-form- one is amidst form and at the same time does not abide in the forms; no-thought- one is amidst thoughts and no-thought; non-abiding as one's original nature. Every thought is not abiding."*

Earlier in the text, Master Huineng begins with no-thought and then no-form and non-abiding. In this passage no-form is discussed first, followed by no-thought and then non-abiding. Why is the order different?

When embarking on cultivation, one begins with the practice of no-thought, which means to transform the mind such that the mind doesn't give rise to scattered thoughts during cultivation. Starting with thoughts, one progresses by getting deeper into the method and the practice. Eventually, no wandering thoughts arise in one's mind, meaning that no-thought are arising out of self-centered attachment. All these illusionary thoughts manifesting in one's mind are the basis of self-centered attachment. When one practices up to the point where eventually all the thoughts that arise are no longer self-centered, self-centered attachment disappears. This is the objective or the goal that one strives towards. Therefore Master Huineng established no-thought as the main tradition or school [zong], which refers to the goal or the objective. Practice begins with no-thought, until that goal of no-thought is eventually attained. It is clearly important to begin with the objective of practice, and then understand where one starts and when one eventually reaches one's goal.

No-form means there isn't the existence of duality. The self exists and things exist with reference to the self because the self is a characteristic. There is the form of the self. Then there will be the characteristic of others in relation to the self. The Diamond Sutra states that there are four types of forms: the self, others, sentient beings, and longevity. Longevity refers to the forms that change over time, including the self, others, and sentient beings. Whatever exists in time refers to the entire world, the whole universe. When there is no-form, there is no self-centered attachment, which gives rise to the characteristic of the self and others. One just needs to

realize no-thought and attain no-form. Once realized and attained, one will reach the third state which is non-abiding.

The Diamond Sutra states that one should give rise to the mind, or the mind should arise without abiding[8]. What is this mind that arises? It is the wisdom mind, or the functioning of wisdom without abiding to the self. However, when one reaches the state of non-abiding, it doesn't mean that one does not engage in activities. One's mind, arising from wisdom and compassion, is able to function and deliver all sentient beings without self-centered attachment. Upon hearing these two sentences, Master Huineng attained enlightenment, saw the Buddha nature and gave rise to the mind without abiding. It is important that one must realize no-thought, attain no-form, and then one will be able to function without abiding.

Why does the text begin with the explanation of no-form, rather than no-thought? In fact, that is how one should engage practically. From the beginning one sets out to achieve or to realize the goal of no-thought, but it's not easy to do that. The anchor point starts from no-form. So, Master Huineng taught his first disciple, Chan Master Huiming, to practice in this manner:

*"Since you have come for the Dharma, if you follow what I say, you will be able to obtain the Dharma. Please first eliminate the various conditions. Do not think of good, and do not think of evil. At just such a time, what is your original face?"* [9]

In this case, the self does not think about which is good and which is evil. Additionally, there is the self inside which has one's original nature. Apparently, this self or this person inside is a form or characteristic. However, this characteristic or form can help anchor one's method and practice in the cultivation process. It is only through working on the form first that one realizes all these forms are illusionary; they are unreal, empty and void in nature. One starts out with a basic understanding of impermanence, including the self- body and mind. Then, this understanding of impermanence

8. Jingang Bore Boluomi Jing金剛般若波羅蜜經(Vájracchedikā Prajñā Pāramitā Sūtra). Kumārajīva (Jiumoluoshi鳩摩羅什, 344-413). T no. 2737.

9. Ibid 5

will lead to the understanding of no-form. No-form provides the anchor for our practice when striving to realize no-thought.

In fact, these three concepts no-form, no-thought, non-abiding, complement one another; they are all related in the practice of non-duality. They do not exist independently by themselves. In the very beginning of the cultivation of Chan, if there is no-form, no-thought, then there is no anchor for practice. But one must have an anchor to engage in practice and cultivation. The relationship of form to thoughts is that of object to subject. Thought is the subject of one's practice. On the other hand, form is the object that is being utilized in one's practice. The goal of cultivation is to practice to the extent that no-thought, no-form, and non-abiding all become a totality and are unified. However, even if not unified, one must still engage in practice as these three concepts complement one another. This complementary relationship is realized over time through a gradual approach which follows a system of practice step by step.

### 3. ENRICHMENT OF THE SPIRIT

As indicated in the Platform Sutra, one must depart from form to achieve no-form. When striving to be free from form, one should realize that form is the ownership or possession of anything or any relationship and that all of these are impermanent. But how does one depart? One departs without attachment. When one has ownership or possesses things, one should not be attached to them. Be free from form, even though they still exist. One utilizes these forms as tools for practice. This is the attainment or practice of no-form.

The Platform Sutra states, "In the midst of thoughts with no-thought." In this way, one should cultivate observing that all forms are without form because of their impermanent nature. Seeing this impermanence is seeing no-form. This is the mind or the self which is observing. When the mind observes, there is an uninterrupted flow of thoughts from moment to moment. Engaging in the observation process, one analyzes and observes forms that are impermanent in nature and have no-form. When the mind engages in this process, there is mental activity. This mental activity refers to thoughts or mental formations, which signify the self. During this observation process, one further observes thoughts after thoughts, all of which

are impermanent, not real. The uninterrupted flow of thoughts, also referred to as the mind or even the enormous ego or "I", is impermanent. The practice of no-thought occurs when one does not attach to these thoughts as reality, as the real self. But this is not the case for the one who enters into Samadhi. When one enters into Samadhi, thoughts do not arise, only very subtle volition. These thoughts refer to the working or mental formation of the mind. The mind is working and, at the same time, one realizes that the mind is impermanent and does not attach to all these thoughts.

In non-abiding, there are two classifications. The first classification means that thought after thought arise and perish, are in constant motion, are impermanent, are constantly flowing, are non-stop. The second means that one does not abide in, attach to, and dwell in the uninterrupted flow of thoughts. Since these thoughts are non-stop, it is not possible to abide. Therefore one does not dwell or attach. At the same time, thoughts flow ceaselessly and continuously. When one looks at one's mind, the intellectual activity is slightly different from thoughts. The intellect is made up of numerous thoughts. This mind or mental intellect can be detected using modern devices. When one is relatively calm and the mind is stable, brain activity is quite regular, creating little movement in the devices monitoring the brain. Thoughts, though, can be very subtle. The non-practitioner is constantly engaging in wandering and scattered thoughts causing the graph to fluctuate up and down; to move up and down in slopes. If one is very angry, then movement will be even more drastic, resulting in numerous extreme ups and downs. This is the mental state and original nature of human beings.

According to certain Buddhist records, in the time that we use to snap our fingers, sixteen cycles of thoughts have arisen and perished. Another record states, "In a snap of finger tips there are sixty cycles of thoughts arising and perishing." In this appearing and disappearing of thoughts, in these cycles of the way thoughts work, there are another two stages: the staying and the changing of the movement of thoughts. These thoughts which arise, stay, move or change, and then perish, all go through these four stages with regard to the arising and the perishing of thoughts. Most people

are not aware of this cycle of thoughts. When one does not abide in these thoughts, one is able to see the nature of enlightenment, the empty nature of all these thoughts. When one sees Buddha nature or attains enlightenment, "Space is shattered; the earth drops off." It means that one breaks away from the flow of thoughts that chain of continuous ceaseless thoughts in the mind. At this point of time, the mind becomes the immovable mind. According to the Surangama Sutra, this immovable mind is the mind that is solid, stable, not moving, and not turning.

Non-abiding means one does not attach to thoughts. There is no continuous chain of thoughts, because one breaks away from all these illusory thoughts. There is no attachment and no continuous motion of these thoughts. The Dharmakaya, or the Dharma body, will manifest when one attains non-abiding, attains enlightenment, and realizes the nature of emptiness. This is the Dharmakaya of one's self, also known as the Dharma body of the Buddha, or the Dharma-nature body. The Dharma-nature is the nature of emptiness. The nature of emptiness of the Buddha is the Buddha nature, or tathata-garbha. To see the Buddha nature is ultimately to enrich the spirit, to see the original purity of the mind, which entails seeing through the illusory character of the defilements. This presumes that an illusion is dispelled as soon as it is seen as illusory.

*"In the process of having thought after thought, at this time one does not abide in all phenomena or the dharma. If one abides in a single thought then every thought will be in abiding. In that case, one is bound. If in all phenomena, every thought, thought after thought, one does not abide then that is not being bound. This is the nature or the substance of non-abiding."* [10]

The second classification of non-abiding also means that one does not abide in all phenomena or dharma. Dharma refers to all phenomena, whether they are worldly or world-transcending phenomena. Worldly phenomena refer to secular methods, things, events, thoughts, understanding, and opinions. Non-worldly phenomena refer to liberation or freedom from the secular world. This is Nirvana, or liberation. If one abides, then thoughts arise

10. Ibid 5

and are associated with worldly and non-worldly dharma[11]. This abiding means that one is attached to phenomena or the thoughts that arise in the mind from the secular perspective, whether from the body, mind, and all other matters. From the non-secular perspective of non-worldly phenomena, one thinks and seeks liberation or Nirvana and then attaches to the thinking that this Nirvana or liberation is something that can be attained or realized. Since there is an attachment, then one is abiding because the goal or the objective of one's practice is to attain and realize no-mind [12]. If methods or phenomena exist in one's mind and take up space or a place in one's mind, then there is attachment. This is not the state of no-mind. If one has a single thought that is abiding, then all thoughts will be abiding. Because the self is still present, there is self-centered attachment. The existence of this self-centered attachment indicates that one has not achieved the state of no-mind.

## 4. THE SIX ETHICS OF THE MIND

When one engages in the practice of non-abiding, one should still practice, cultivate and use the method, but without attachment. However, one should not be overly concerned about how one is doing or whether there can be any improvements. With non-abiding we are not focused on the body. The body is not in the constant flow of the mind. However, that does not mean that we do not take care of the body. The body is a tool to be utilized for practice, though without attachment. This state, which is called "giving rise to the mind without abiding," is the goal of practice and is also the Buddha hood that one will attain after enlightenment.

*"Wholesome and learned friends, one should depart from all phenomena, or all form or characteristics, and that is no-form or no characteristics. If one is able to depart from forms and characteristics, the self-nature will be pure. This is using no-form or no characteristics as the body or the self-nature. With respect to all objects [jing], whether external or internal, one is not contaminated or defiled, and this is no-thought. When one's thoughts depart from external and internal objects, in this case one's mind does not give rise to thoughts of interaction with*

11. bid 4
12. bid 5

*phenomena, then one is free. However, if one does not think at all- if there is no arising of thoughts- then without one's thoughts it is as if that one is dead. In this case one will reborn. A practitioner on the path, how does he cultivate the mind? When one does not think about the meaning of the Dharma then one becomes mistaken. Therefore, it is important that one should not act in this manner. Even worse is when one does not know the teaching and advises and guides others not to contemplate the teaching- so the deluded are leading the deluded. Not able to see that one is deluded and vexed at the same time, this will result in scandal to the Dharma. Therefore it's wrong. In this case, we have to establish no-thought as the objective. When the deluded person has thoughts with respect to internal and external objects, then with these thoughts come erroneous and inverted views. Or all thoughts are illusory, like dust that contaminates and clouds up the mind, and as such they arise in this manner."* [13]

After describing non-abiding in detail, Master Huineng devotes the remaining section discussing no-thought and no-form. One should practice without attachment to the form, whether the self, the method, or the mind. Within this context, thoughts refer to the mind, which becomes impure and contaminated with attachment. This attachment gives rise to three matters. First, one craves or is attracted; second, one is revolted or repelled; third, one discriminates. It is this mind of attachment that gives rise to the discriminating mind. This discrimination manifests in attractions or cravings or desires, or gives rise to revolting, repelling or ill views. Under such conditions, the mind is impure, already contaminated and defiled. This discriminating state of mind, whether repelled or attracted, will then give rise further to thoughts of good and bad, likes and dislikes, right and wrong. When one practices with a discriminating mind, one abides in all these forms of good and bad, like and dislike, right and wrong. Buddhist practice leads all of us to interact with equanimity towards all objects. Do not try to change others and make them into another 'I'. Instead of judging phenomena subjectively, one should handle what comes and goes according to each situation until one reaches the state of not abiding in objects. This is the cultivation of no-form, which signifies that one's mind is pure.

13. bid 5

Many people misunderstand the concept of no-thought. They think that no-thought means the mind does not engage in any mental activities, so the mind cannot think, analyze, or function and that there is no intellectual activity. In fact, only a dead person has no intellectual activity. In this case, no-thought means that one does not attach to thoughts that arise from one's self-perspective or from a self-centered attachment. It is important that whatever one considers, one does not look to a self-perspective or self-centered attachment.

A lot of people think, "I'm so thoughtful. I plan everything well for you, everything is so good. All you need to do is to follow what I say."However, in the end, your thoughts are still your thoughts. They are not necessarily the thoughts of others. What most people are doing here is providing a framework for another person. This is, in a sense, the same as providing someone with a hat. People would say, "I made this hat for you and you must put it on," creating some sense of obligation. These sorts of cases usually happen between husbands and wives, couples, or even between brothers and sisters.

In 2004, Master Sheng Yen proposed the concept of "global ethics" in his speech at Dag Hammarskjold Library Auditorium at the United Nations Headquarters in New York [14]. The speech was well received. He later supported an international project focusing on the reconstruction of global ethics. In 2007, he initiated a new movement named the Six Ethics of the Mind[15]. This movement encouraged everyone to live an ethical life in the six aspects of life: family, daily life, school, environment, workplace, and ethnic groups.

The Six Ethics of the Mind starts with the mind; it starts with individuals themselves. The concept is similar to "Protecting the Spiritual Environment" that Dharma Drum Mountain has been promoting. When protecting the spiritual environment, one starts with the mind, the mind of conscience and sincere faith. We must

14. Sheng Yen, Establishing Global Ethics, ed. Ven. Chang Ji and Kristion Mayo (Taipei: Sheng Yen Education Foundation, 2008) also available for free download at http://ebooks.dila.edu.tw/series/DDM_en/books

15. Sheng Yen, The Six Ethics of the Mind (Taipei: Sheng Yen Education Foundation, 2011) also available for free download at http://ebooks.dila.edu.tw/series/DDM_en/books

then ask: What is the value of ethics to us? Is it a way of life? We should experience this with our heart, putting this into practice with sincerity.

"Ethics" and "morality" are usually mentioned in the same breath. "Ethics" means doing one's duties and observing one's role. "Morality" means respecting and caring for each other in relationships with others. Although they are closely related, they are not identical. For example, the domain of morality does not necessarily include ethics, while the realization of ethics must be based on morality.

"Ethics" refers to how we conduct relationships with other people. An individual may have to play several different roles at the same time in his or her life. As we try our best to fulfill our duties and responsibilities, that constitutes the realization of ethics. The meaning of morality is helping all those we interact with to obtain benefits and peace, and, as such, it includes the function of making friends, a concept that is taught in the Analects of Confucius.

A healthy and happy family lays the foundation of a happy and harmonious society. Each family member, regardless of his or her position in the family, should think of how to contribute to the family. Each should fulfill their duties and responsibilities, and play their roles. Be grateful and respectful towards our elders. Care for family members of our own generation and the younger generation. Take care of all our family members with a caring heart.

Our needs are few; our wants are many. We should try to lead our lives both frugally and simply. Apart from living our daily life with mindfulness, we should, at all times and in all circumstances, reflect on what we do, refraining from producing garbage or making noise. Moreover, we should often think about how to bring forth more convenience, benefit, and happiness for other people.

The subjects of school ethics are teachers, students, and parents. The ethical relationship among teachers and students is nourished on the basis of mutual love and respect. We promote school ethics of harmony, peace and wholesomeness, so that students behave like students, teachers behave like teachers, and parents behave like parents. All fulfill their own duties, respect one another, do what should be done and refrain from what shouldn't be done.

Mother nature is a big body commonly shared by humanity. It is closely related to our daily living. Living within the natural environment, we should avoid doing harm. Furthermore, we should also foster ecology, maintain an eco-friendly environment, and enhance the beauty of nature. At the same time, we may help people around us to realize the importance of environmental protection, so we can all fulfill our responsibility of protecting and caring for the natural environment, starting with saving energy and reducing our carbon footprint.

Workplace ethics means that we should regard all management, employees, shareholders, customers, and consumers as part of a community sharing the same fate, so that everyone helps and takes care of one another. If every member in the workplace would consider their workplace as their own home, and treat every colleague as their own family, it would bring benefits to all of society.

The concept of ethics among ethnic groups is to place one's own ethnic group within the larger domain of an extensive ethnic group, and to take care of the welfare of all ethnic groups as a whole, including overall health, happiness, and peace. While a small ethnic group supports the big one, the big ethnic group protects the small one, safeguarding each other, bringing about prosperity and support, and satisfying each other's needs.

The more chaotic our society becomes, the stronger the need to promote ethical education and ethical concepts. Whatever roles we play, we should follow ethical principles: to contribute by fulfilling our own interests or squandering personal or public resources. While seeking our own benefits we should respect others and care about our environment. In this way, our minds and the society as well will be purified, so we all can enjoy peaceful, happy and healthy lives.

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Pelliot Collection of Dunhuang manuscripts, held at the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris. Manuscripts designated Pelliot chinois. Abbreviated as P.

Stein Collection of Dunhuang manuscripts, held at the British Library, London. Abbreviated as S.

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# THE PROBLEM AND THE NEED FOR A SCIENTIFIC CLASSIFICATION OF MEDITATIONS

by Vinogradov Yu. V.*

ABSTRACT

The article considers the problems of meditation classification facing the scientific community. Meditation as psychological developmental technique and medical psychophysical training should be placed near such technics like self-hypnosis, autogenic training, self-analysis, etc. It suggests ways to find options for objective and practical types of meditation classifications. The article also reveals the theoretical and practical importance of the meditation classification task. Different examples of important classification types are provided. It is shown that solutions to existing problems in the scientific understanding of meditation cannot be found without creating the necessary classifications.

At this stage of science development, quite a lot of research has been made showing that meditation practices have a beneficial effect on the body and mind. Related research descriptions can be found in numerous review articles [Vinogradov, 2018]. As part of this first phase of studying meditation, successful attempts were made to show that meditation deserves the attention of the scientific community. It is possible to say that in general, this stage of the study of meditation is over.

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The study and application of meditation has become part of the scientific psychological culture. Scientifically-based meditation programs that are used in official medical institutions in the West, such as the MBSR [Praissman, 2008], MBCT [Zindel, Williams, Teasdale, 2013], already exist.

Researches of scientists are mainly aimed at studying the effectiveness of these programs as a whole within the framework of the medical purpose for which these programs were developed. However, the scientific approach also implies a clear understanding of how individual elements of the meditation techniques used, contribute to the outcome of the program, including both breathing and visualization exercises, yoga exercises, etc. But in the field of studying the effects differences of various meditation techniques, modern science is faced with as yet unresolved difficulties. This is due to the large variety of meditation techniques and the mixing of heterogeneous psycho-physiological elements within each specific meditation technique. In addition, in the practice of meditation different elements are combined in different ratios.

Realizing the importance of an underlying components of the meditative program, the creators of the MBSR and MBCT mention in the names of these programs that they are based on mindfulness. However, only a scientific study of the role of different elements of meditative practices in these programs can show whether mindfulness is the main tool for making positive changes in the practice of these programs. It is also possible that visualization techniques or other elements play a key role. Mindfulness is at the first place in many respects because the traditional, for example Buddhist [Nyanaponika-mahathera, 2001] understanding of the techniques used in these programs indicates attentiveness as the basis of the meditative effect. In addition, attention is one of the most widely studied mental processes in science and makes it easier to include these meditation programs in a scientific context. So, even a superficial study of the most scientifically based meditation programs of the MBSR and MBCT allows us to understand that their effect is determined not only by mindfulness, but also by other psycho-physiological processes. For example, mountain and water visualization exercises [Potter]. In order to form the most effective balance of elements within the

framework of meditation, it is necessary to understand the meaning of each specific program element.

Many traditional meditation techniques have a complex structure. This is especially common in Vajrayana Buddhism. One meditation can simultaneously use chanting mantra, visualization, praying to the demons and other elements. On the other hand, Theravada Buddhism meditations have a simple structure. A simple structure makes it easier to explore meditation. Thus, the study of the Theravada Buddhism meditation practice can be the basis for understanding how different elements contribute to the complex Vajrayana Buddhist practices.

An important task is to provide an evidence-based definition of the most appropriate psycho-technical elements, both to achieve certain semantic accents of meditation, and to understand the mutual influence of various elements within the framework of the integrated practice of meditation. It is also important to study in which cases more monosyllabic techniques of meditation in the spirit of Theravada Buddhism offer advantages, and in which cases complex practices in the spirit of Vajrayana Buddhism are more preferred. On the other hand, it is equally important to justify the need to use different practices of meditation for people with different levels of psychophysical training, different types of nervous system and level of mental health. All this seems impossible without the presence of scientific classifications of meditations and its elements.

Within the framework of understanding the nature of the effectiveness of meditation and its classification, science faces two difficult, but long-known, scientific tasks: identification of significant fundamental and practical grounds for the classification of meditation, and the ability to identify the mutual influence of the elements of meditation within the framework of holistic practice.

Existing meditative practices both in traditional approaches and in scientific programs have been singled out mainly empirically in combination with the use of one or another ideology within the framework of a particular traditional approach. Purely scientific studies at this stage mainly concern the effects of meditation practices already established on an empirical basis. For the experimental

formation of new complex meditation techniques it is necessary to create a scientific classification of the variety of psycho-physiological and semantic elements of meditation. This will help the correct formulation of experiments to determine the influence of the activation of various psycho-physiological processes and work with the meanings during meditation. The classification will also help to determine relationships of meditation elements. The latter, in turn, will provide an opportunity to formulate predictions about the effect of the insufficiently studied elements of meditation. In addition, it is assumed that in experiments, the influence of different qualities of the same element of meditation on the effectiveness and course of meditation can be detected. So, probably in the experiment it will be possible to isolate the general features of the stretched and short elements of the practice. For example, the short and lingering pronunciation of the same mantra. It will also identify the differences between short mantras of several words and long prayers containing a set of sentences. Differences in the influence of monotonously repeating sequences of words and other texts.

Understanding the complexity of setting up and conducting experiments that make it possible to single out the peculiarities of the influence of different elements and their qualities on the effect of meditation, only this way is seen as the only opportunity for science to move from observing and stating the qualities of meditation practices to the active creative formation of new most effective techniques. This requires meaningful and practical classifications of meditations, elements of meditation and qualities of elements of meditations.

Possible grounds for the classification of meditations.

For different purposes, it is necessary to create classifications of meditations on different base. Bases can be divided into fundamental and practical. A classification based on fundamental principles, which include, for example, the division into semantic and psychophysiological elements of meditation, can serve as a basis for studying the influence of meditations. While practical classifications of elements of meditation will proceed from the effect found in basic research and will help practitioners and teachers to choose sets of practice elements and complex meditative techniques in accordance with the goals, state of health and level of training.

Also the choice of the basis for the used classification of meditation will be influenced by the method of the study of meditation used in the experiments. Thus, it will be convenient for neurophysiologists to classify elements of meditation from the point of view of the activation of brain networks at the time of their practice and from the point of view of accumulating neurophysiological changes with regular long-term repetition of the meditative element. For psychologists, one of the most productive and fundamental type of meditation classification is classification from the point of view of mental processes.

In addition, there are elements of the environment that influence meditation on the physical level. For example, the noise level when it crosses a certain physiological threshold. Other features of the environment that are within the intensity of the normal influence for the psyche, it is possible to consider purely from a psychological point of view, as those or other incentives. It is also very interesting to separate the influences of the meditation elements from the point of view of the participation of volitional processes in them. This refers to the following two situations, when introducing an element into an area of consciousness requires a willful effort, and when an element is introduced into consciousness at the expense of its power to capture the attention of a person. A similar interesting situation lies in the ability to distinguish the effect of cases when an object enters the consciousness of meditation as an existing one, and it remains only to pay attention to its perception, and when the object is generated by consciousness, for example, as a visualization. It is obvious that the organization of mental processes in each of these situations will occur in different ways. There are quite a few such interesting interactions of the elements of meditation and the nature of their falling into the area of consciousness in the process of painstaking research.

The separation of meditatative elements into semantic and psychophysiological is based on the fact that the semantic elements of meditation are based on psychophysiological, but are not limited to them fully. Semantic elements allow using the same psychophysiological means receive different results. For example, this concerns the creation of a facility for the activation or inhibition of

psycho-physiological processes. In addition, the semantic elements allow you to interact with the motivational elements of the psyche, as well as with the mental elements associated primarily with the second (verbal-semantic) signal system of the human psyche. Awareness of the meanings of symbols - a technique actively used in Buddhism meditations - refers to the semantic layer of the mental elements of meditation. On the other hand, the psycho-physiological continuum contains the most physiological elements of meditation, such as posture, state of the body during meditation, the presence of disease. Empirical experience shows that it is more difficult for a beginner to deal with disturbances that create physiological states that are not very suitable for meditation. While experienced practitioners are relatively less dependent on physiological conditions.

The interaction of mental and physiological occurs with varying degrees of intensity. Thus, the usual meditative posture can eventually become an anchor, accelerating immersion in meditation, regardless of the actual physiological qualities of the posture relative to meditation, because the brain has already formed stable neural connections that allow one to dive into the state of meditation faster.

Meditative practice refers to the methods of psychophysical self-regulation, and the methods of self-regulation in this article are understood as scientifically based methods of self-influencing oneself with the help of intra-mental means. Thus, studying meditation and classifying it, you can use the lessons created in the study of autogenic training [Shoyfet, 2010], neuromuscular relaxation [Lars-Göran, 1987], self-hypnosis [Straus, 1988], self-analysis [Horney, 2002] , ideomotor training, etc.

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this article was to address general issues related to the classification of meditations. In the first part of the article, the current state of science was considered in the key to the study of meditation. It was shown that in order to move away from the empirical stage of creating meditation techniques to the experimental one, it is necessary to create classifications of meditations. Also, classifications of elements of meditation are necessary for a truly

scientific understanding of the effectiveness of a particular technique of meditation, understanding how meditation achieves the expected effect and how to improve the results. Attention was paid to the fact that science in its development has already proved the effectiveness of meditation in a general sense and is ready to move to the next level of detail on the effectiveness of meditation, but it stagnates due to difficulties associated with a clear understanding of certain elements of meditation, including the lack of suitable classifications of meditation. On the other hand, the article attempted to show the difficulty of classifying meditations related to the interaction of the elements of meditation with each other. In the last section of the article, the variants of the grounds for classifying the elements of meditation for different tasks were considered. Some difficult moments of interaction between various mental processes and their qualities in the framework of one meditation were also mentioned.

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# *METTĀ* IN BUDDHISM: A REMEDY FOR WORLD PEACE

by Ram Nakshatra Prasad*

It is a well-known fact that selfishness is a natural phenomenon of every being born in all worlds of beings. Every one of not only the human being but all beings of the world intend to get prosperity, accomplishment and all success in their lives. In fact, everyone takes birth on this world has right to strive for his welfare and utilise natural resources. This is too the right of everyone to endeavour for betterment in his worldly life. But we see that people who have an abundance of resources not only utilise them to satisfy their selfish needs but also deprive other people engaged in the struggle for existence. This has resulted in eternal conflict between the haves and have nots. Man by nature is peace loving. But, it is also a fact that unfortunately the history of human world has been the history of war. Leaders of every society proclaim publicly that they aspire to live in peace and harmony. Yet, at the same time they prepare for war also. The ways which are being followed by human society at present world, created a very turmoil juncture in every corner of the world. All revolutionary changes incurred in past twentieth century have badly shaken the human minds. We have amazingly developed all the amenities in the field of our material life. Consequent upon Science and Technology, the researchers have been accelerated the on-going processes of unprecedented growth in all the facets of human resources. People are now planning to dwell on other

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planets despite rigorous struggle for basic human needs in early ages. Information technology has been played a vital role in shrinking world in to one village. The scientists are feeling proud of their researches despite, in the next moment their researches are being superseded by new researches. Automatic machines are effectively enhancing productivity and at the same time a gigantic problem of unemployment are being witnessed in developing countries particularly in Indian sub-continent.

On the other hand the world today has boarded on a way of destruction which is built up by the unwanted competition of acquiring armaments in the name of security and defence. A few leaders of the some countries are of the opinion that the collection of heavy guns and missiles can save us in a situation of war. They allocate a huge portion of their annual budget for manufacturing or acquiring such kinds of destructive weapons. We all have experienced that if the mind of a ruler gets deluded with thoughtless juncture, the possibility of war increases and sometime it takes place. We have experienced that on the end of war both the fighting nations more or less become looser and due to the heavy loss of national properties, people get bounded to face many difficulties. It is also a fact that all of us are familiar to a lesser or greater degree the horrors of the warfare, the hatred that divides different people and the cruelty that degrades humanity. War is not a solution of any dispute between the individuals, communities and nations. It always results in damage of wealth, health, environment, mental status and its consequences reach to the next generations.

We all can remember the incident took place after four years of enlightenment of Lord Buddha where a war began between two city states of Kapilavastu and Kilivastu over the use of irrigation water. Being heard of this, Buddha came to that place and stood between two armies up roaring and about to start fighting. They said that 'Now we see the world honoured-one, we cannot shoot the arrows at our enemies. They threw their weapons down and became attentive to words of *Shakyamuni Buddha* who asked the chiefs of both the armies, "Why are you gathered here like this?" They replied "For fighting." Buddha again queried," For what cause you are to fight?" "To get water for irrigation" was the answer. Buddha

then asked to them," How much value do you think water has in comparison with the lives of men?" In reply they told "The value of water is very minor than the lives of men." Then Buddha asked," Why are you to destroy valuable lives for valueless water? Having got no answer from them Buddha taught them-"Since people cause war due to misunderstanding, thereby harming and killing each other, they should try to understand the problems of each other in the right manner." In other words he taught them that the water they wanted to use was to irrigate the farms which produce crops and the crops would be for men. If men are killed, who will be the beneficiary of the crops? Thus the armies of two city states were put off from fighting each other.[1]

Apparently, when the people and the leaders of the nations intended to manufacture or to procure heavy weapons to secure their properties or nations, they were not conscious about this kind of terrible juncture. At present, the circumstances are totally against the human society and the situations are beyond the capacity of so called progressive world. The entire world now feels them as very helpless and hopeless to escape.

Besides, as high the graph of so called material developments has gone up, our moral values have also been deteriorated severely. The people are indulging themselves in cruelty, enmity, jealousy, hostility and violence. This scenario can be witnessed at every level of the society like individuals, communities, States, Nations etc. The actions of robbery, snatching, looting, stabbing, killing and even massacre are seen everywhere in the world. It happens some time strangely in the name of religion also. Consequently the

1. kapilapurakoliyapurānaṃ antare rohiṇī nāma nadī pavattati. Sā kadāci appodakā hoti, kadāci mahodakā. Appodakakāle setuṃ katvā sākiyāpi koliyāpi attano attano sassapāyanatthaṃ udakaṃ ānenti. Tesaṃ manussā ekadivasaṃ setuṃ karontā aññamaññaṃ bhaṇḍantā "are tumhākaṃ rājakulaṃ bhaginīhi saddhiṃ saṃvāsaṃ kappesi kukkuṭasoṇasiṅgālāditiracchānā viya, tumhākaṃ rājakulaṃ susirarukkhe vāsaṃ kappesi pisācillikā viyā"ti evaṃ jātivādena khuṃsetvā attano attano rājūnaṃ ārocesuṃ. Te kuddhā yuddhasajjā hutvā rohiṇīnadītīraṃ sampattā. Evaṃ sāgarasadisaṃ balaṃ aṭṭhāsi.Atha bhagavā "ñātakā kalahaṃ karonti, handa, ne vāressāmī"ti ākāsenāgantvā dvinnaṃ senānaṃ majjhe aṭṭhāsi. Tampi āvajjetvā sāvatthito āgatoti eke.Evaṃ ṭhatvā ca pana attadaṇḍasuttaṃ (su. ni. 941 ādayo) abhāsi. Taṃ sutvā sabbe saṃvegappattā āvudhāni chaḍḍetvā bhagavantaṃ namassamānā aṭṭhaṃsu, mahagghañca āsanaṃ paññāpesuṃ.

whole world is facing a big crisis of loss of amity, peace, tranquillity, equanimity and harmony. In fact all the inhumane actions like deluded impulses of greed, hatred, enmity, agony, avarice and intolerance are seen everywhere. The behaviour of people has been turned into so harshness as it was never seen earlier. Irritation amongst communities and nations has been translated into hazardous enmity. The humanity has been torn and morality has almost been disappeared. An unprecedented competition of acquiring destructive weapons has created an imbalanced situation all over the world. Thus, today the whole world is in huge crisis.

Apparently, behind all these unpleasant situations there are reasons like greed, hatred, delusion, avarice, intolerance and ego of power dwelling in the minds of human beings. Thus, all the misdeeds are being executed first in our wicked mind. So, we have to first remove all the unwholesome thoughts from our minds. This practice is not so easy but, in terms of establishing peace and harmony at this planet we have to commit to make our minds free of every destructive state. The right efforts with commitment in this regard are certainly a hard task but, not impossible. This is well-known fact that any of our mental states is not permanent in its own and there could not be the positions of two contrary mental states. Our mind can only be in wholesome or unwholesome state at a point of time. It means it is upon us to keep our mental status good or bad. It is known that acquiring quality in any field is always difficult task but always worthwhile despite, the nasty elements come spontaneously and affect our mind without any attempt but, always worthless. Buddha's words are-

*Sukarāni asādhūni attano ahitāni ca*
*Yaṅ ce hitañca sādhuñca taṅ ve paramadukkaraṅ*.[2]

Keeping in view the above facts, one has to purify his mind in respect of wholesome deeds because, only a person with a mind free of greed, hatred and delusion may perform right action bodily or oral whatever it may be. This theory is equally indispensible for both a lay person and head of a community or nation. Hence, the head of a community or a leader of a nation are responsible for any

2. dhammapada, attavaggo, 163.

loss or gain in the perspective of a large number of people; he has to have more purity in his mind than a lay person. Any wrong decision taken in haste with greedy and angry mind would cause heavy loss to their people. They don't have the freedom to speak or perform on their wish ignoring the interests of their people. Unfortunately, the scenario today is different. Number of individuals and leaders don't have any indication of sense of peace and amity because of their ego, jealousy, misery and avarice. Consequently our human community is bound to sleep in a very turmoil situation. Here, I would like to quote a story, very famous in Tibet. A painter once drew a roaring lion. As result of his tireless effort the painting he drew became so live. At a point of time he used to have close look at the image he sketched. Because of the liveliness of his painting he felt that a living lion in attacking him. He became so scared and depressed for all the time. The almost same situation we can witness today of human beings of all the corners of the world. The entire scenario of modern world has been changed and we are overwhelmed with our so called progressive lives but, at the same time as the other side of coin, this series of developments has also created some adverse effects. We have become more troubled, anxious, tense and fearful. People are facing numerous health problems due to various chemicals and gases being used for different material productions needed for modern life style. Our respiratory as well as digestive systems are badly affected by air/water pollution. Though, the average age of human beings has been increased but, at the same time the hazards have been increased comparatively more. The entire human community is bound to be in tense and fear. Accordingly the common cry all over the world is the cry for peace. There is a great desire to find peace of mind of the individual and also have world peace. The word peace is the matter very much related to our mind which is originally calm and peaceful. It gets affected by the occurrences in outer world. It is our prime duty to protect our mind from unwholesome effects of our surroundings just like Buddha has said in the context of preaching of Eightfold Noble Path (*ariyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo*)- *anuppannānaṅ akusalānaṅ dhammānaṅ anuppādāya. uppannānaṅ akusalānaṅ dhammānaṅ pahānāya. anuppannānaṅ kusalānaṅ dhammānaṅ uppādāya. uppannānaṅ kusalānaṅ dhammānaṅ*

*bhiyyobhāvāya chandaṅ janeti, viriyaṅ* ārabhati.[3] One should desire and start endeavour not to create the unwholesome thoughts which are not yet created, to cease the unwholesome thoughts which are created, to create the wholesome thoughts which are not yet created and to increase the wholesome thoughts which are already created. At present these practices should be performed as our foremost duties to keep our mind and the world peaceful and harmonious.

Accordingly, on emergence of huge crisis in world community, once again the importance of peace and tranquillity is being realised by the sensible human society. In this perspective, the whole human community is now forced to think upon the stability and development of peace, harmony, amity and good relations among the people, different societies and the nations. It is universally accepted that every human being desires peace. Whenever one is faced an inner conflict the remedy prescribed in this regard is to perform acts of morality or seek assistance from the sacred scriptures. In this context the scriptures created and provided to us by Buddha over two thousand five hundred years ago and by his disciples later are amazingly illuminating. The massage given in that scriptures are a living massage today, enshrined in our hearts and we can draw inspiration from it to face the troubles and difficulties that threaten to overcome us. Once again the eyes of peace loving leaders and societies are looking at the doctrine of Shakyamuni Buddha with optimistic approaches especially on the practice of *Mettā* the Loving Kindness one of the Four Sublime States. The essence of Metta practice is only to attain peace in mind. The Buddha's teaching of Metta enable a person to keep his mind at peace and demand peace from others. The peaceful mind of a person is always a source of an act of peace. This may be the right speech, right deed and right thinking. As Buddha has said-

*Santaṅ tassa manaṅ hoti santā vācā ca kamma ca.*
*Sammadaññāvimuttassa upasantassa tādino.*[4]

The fundamental goal of Buddhism is peace, not only peace

3. aṇguttaranikāya 4.2.3.
4. dhammapada, arahantavaggo, 96.

in this world but peace in all worlds. The Buddha taught that the first step on the path to peace is to understand the causality of peace. When we understand what causes peace, we know where to direct our efforts. We have to understand the root cause of peace. Suppose, we stir a boiling pot of soup on a fire, the soup will not cool until and unless we remove the pot from the fire. If the boiling water is removed from the fire, it will cool on its own, and our stirring will hasten the process. Stirring causes the soup to cool, but only if we first remove the soup from the fire. In other words, we can take many actions in our quest for peace that may be helpful. One of the best actions to this regard is to train our mind on the way righteous actions. This can only be possible if we are capable to distinct between right and wrong having left any prejudiced states of mind. In fact, any mental practice cannot be performed with preoccupied mind. So, at the outset we have to clean our mind and to strive for inner peace followed by peace in outer world. The Buddhist vision is a world in which all lives are sacred, in which selfishness, greed, anger and foolishness, does not interfere with the basic interconnectedness of all living beings.

This type of peace can be achieved by practicing Buddha's teachings keeping in heart Four Sublime states (*bramhavihāra*) of Loving Kindness (*Mettā*), Compassion (*Karuṇā*), Gladness (*Muditā*) and equanimity (*Upekkhā*) which have been defined as the sincere will for the genuine welfare of all living beings of the world without exception. These four attitudes are said to be *excellent* or *sublime* because they are the right or ideal way of conduct towards living beings *(sattesu sammā paṭipatti)*. They provide, in fact, the answer to all situations arising from social contact. They are the great removers of tension, the great peace-makers in social conflict, and the great healers of wounds suffered in the struggle of existence. They level social barriers, build harmonious communities, revive joy and hope long abandoned, and promote human brotherhood against the forces of egotism. These are the ways to peace. The word *bramhavihāra* signify a sublime or divine state of the mind. Though, the practices of all Four Sublime States create peace in one's mind nevertheless, the role of first one is more substantial. That is why, Loving Kindness (*Mettā*) has been particularly mentioned at many places by the Buddha in his preaching.

The feelings of difference between self and other have been natural phenomena since the beginning of human society. Its termination is almost impossible but, by practicing equanimity, the jealousy and annoyance between two can be terminated. Since, the human being is selfish by nature; he has to correlate self and other by developing his sentimental approaches. One has to present himself as a victim on the place of other to experience his grief because, self-experience is the basis to experience others feelings. That is why, it is said in Buddhist doctrine that if you intend to extend your Loving Kindness to other, you first have to be happy, griefless and free of troubles and then you can experience that 'like me, every being desire to be happy, griefless and free of troubles. Like me, every being likes to live and do not want to die. In this way you would think about the happiness of all the beings. The Buddha's words in *Samyuttanikaya* are -

*sabbā disā anuparigamma cetasā*
*nevajjhagā piyataramattanā kvaci.*
*evaṅ piyo puthu attā paresaṅ*
*tasmā na hinse parmattakāmo.*[5]

I visited all the directions with my mind but, I could not find any dearer than myself. Self is likewise to every other dear so, one should not harm other for his own need. In this way, he extends loving kindness committed for self to others. Extension should be in a sequence starting from self to dearest one like his teacher, father and mother etc. In next attempt it should go to the dears, middle persons and then to the enemy. The last target is so difficult to achieve because, when a person try to extend Loving Kindness to his enemy, the previous deeds done by the enemy come repeatedly in his mind and he gets irritated. Whenever he strives it comes again and again. Consequently his mind gets unfriendly. How a person can escape this juncture? Lord Buddha suggests that at this stage we have to remember the shortcomings of anger. An angry man first kills himself and then others- *pubbe hanati attānaṅ pacchā hanati so pare. Suhatam hanti attaānaṃ vītamseneva pacchimā*[6] and

5. Samyuttanikaya, Sagathavaggo 3.8, Nettippakarana,Nayasamutthanam
6. Theragatha 1/10.

*na hi verena verāni sammantīdha kudācana. Averen ca sammanti esa dhammo sanantano*.[7] The enmity cannot be resolved with enmity. It can be resolved by amity, this is the universal religion.

If the anger again deludes one's mind he has to think like this "why should I be angry to this person? I have taken countless birth in this world having countless beings as my fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters. This being may have been one of them and having plenty of burden for my livelihood in any of my lives. How right is to be hostile at this person? While applying these therapies, one is required to recall the result of Loving Kindness expedient in many ways. The Pali Canon says that there are a number of benefits of practicing *mettā* meditation:

*Sukhaṃ supati, sukhaṃ paṭibujjhati, na pāpakaṃ supinaṃ passati, manussānaṃ piyo hoti, amanussānaṃ piyo hoti, devata rakkhanti, nāssa aggi vā visaṃ vā satthaṃ vā kamati, tuvaṭaṃ cittaṃ samādhiyati, mukhavaṇṇo vippasīdati, asammūḷho kālaṅkaroti, uttari appaṭivijjhanto brahmalokūpago hoti. Mettāya, bhikkhave, cetovimuttiyā* āsevitāya *bhāvitāya bahulīkatāya yānīkatāya vatthukatāya anuṭṭhitāya paricitāya susamāraddhāya – ime ekādasānisaṃsā pāṭikaṅkhā*[8]

1. *Tattha* ***sukhaṃ supatī****ti* Metta practitioner sleeps easily, unlike a man sleeps changing sides repeatedly and snoring.

2. ***Sukhaṃ paṭibujjhatī****ti* He wakes easily just like blossoming lotus unlike others who wake changing sides, yawning.

3. ***Na pāpakaṃ supinaṃ passatī****ti* He dreams no evil dreams but, dreams well-being like worshiping or listening ambrosia of *dhamma*.

4. ***Manussānaṃ piyo hotī****ti* He is dear to human beings.

5. ***Amanussānaṃ piyo hotī****ti*– He is dear to non-human beings.

6. ***Devatā rakkhantī****ti* The *devas* protect him.

7. ***Nāssa aggi vā visaṃ vā satthaṃ vā kamatī****ti* Neither fire and poison, nor weapons can touch him.

7. Dhammapada 1/5.

8. Patisambhidamaggatthakatha Sāvatthinidānaṃ.

8. ***Tuvaṭaṃ cittaṃ samādhiyatīti*** His mind gains concentration quickly.

9. ***Mukhavaṇṇo vippasīdatīti*** His complexion is bright.

10. ***Asammūḷho kālaṅkarotīti*** He dies consciously just like go to sleep without confusion.

11. ***Uttarimappaṭivijjhantoti*** If he dies takes birth in the Brahma's world

Eventually, one has to analyse the body of his enemy. He should query himself as: To whom you are getting so irritated? He is a combination of so many elements. You are getting angry for his hairs, for his furs, nails, faeces or urine? Are you angry for his body element like water, fire, wind, earth? Are you angry for his eyes, ears etc.[9] Thus, by analysing the material body of his enemy looks false and the mind of meditator becomes relaxed. There will be no apace in his mind for anger like the no painting in sky and no stands for mustard seed on the edge of a saw. Lastly, creating the mind of offering something to him, one can cease enmity feelings towards his enemy. He should develop his mind for offering and giving. If he gets anybody deprived of basic needs for survival should provide his own things to him. Thus, he gets rid of anger on the enemy and his mind becomes very calm and peaceful.

Having reached this stage, a person's endeavour should have similarity of mind towards all four types of abovementioned people. Then this boundary of Loving Kindness should be extended to all the sentient beings of all the directions and apparently, to all the worlds of beings.

The above stated way of developing mental peace is taught by The Buddha to his monk disciples to purify their minds for meditational purpose; hence, this helps also a laity in same intensity. If a recluse can attained purification of mind by practicing *mettā* and proceed to the stage of liberation, then a layman also can remove the noxious element from his mind and proceed towards the founding of a harmonious and peaceful human society by performing so. We can improve the rapidly deteriorating health of our society if every individual resorts the way of *mettā* practicing. Peace is necessarily

required for the good health of human civilisation. If there is peace in the minds of people of a nation there is no presence of greed, hatred, anger and enmity and in the absence of these, there will be no poverty, dishonesty, irritation, cruelty, hunger and starvation but, the states of prosperity, harmony, cooperation, brotherhood and gladness. There shall not be the competitions for spreading boundaries of the countries, but the boundaries of nations and Irelands shall get smashed. Consequently the dream of a world village will take shape.

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# BUDDHA - THE ENLIGHTENED LEADER AND PARAGON OF PEACE

by Suresh Kumar*

**ABSTRACT**

The world renowned entrepreneur Bill Gates once said that as we move and look ahead into the next century, the leaders will be those who will empower others. Mindful leadership aims for sustainable development and everlasting peace. It is not merely a profession infact it is a mentality, state of sound mind and a philosophy of mutual love with co-existence. Grabbing power with any mean is the corrupt form of leadership while mindful leadership means securing life and dignity for the coming generations. Akin to this, we come across a mindful leader who set forth new milestones for the people of his time and for the generations to come. Buddha, undoubtedly, can be regarded as one of the foremost enlightened leader with mindful approach who stood firmly for the establishment of peace in the society. Although, the world recognizes him as the propounder of Buddhism, but throughout his monastic life he struggled, advocated and worked for establishing an equitable society where all humans be secured with their rights and privileges besides delivering sermons for the attainment of spiritual advancement. It was due to this, he always emphasized for the social, spiritual and religious developments of each and every individual as he (the Buddha) was of the view that the peace can

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only stored if we inculcate the fundamentals of mindfulness living and behavior among one and all.

If we observe minutely, a leader is a person who leads the society towards righteousness and before advocating or imposing the morality on others must have accumulated and lived upon at his own. In case of the Buddha, we find that before instructing to his followers he himself realized the essence of his teachings and sermons whether it is *ariyo-aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo* or *majjhimā paṭipadā, paṭiccasamuppāda, pañcasīla, dasasikkhāpadāni, p*āramitās, *sīla, samādhi, paññā, kusala dhammas, rājadhammas, four appamaññās or brahmavihāras etc.*

The Buddha categorically refused any kind of inequity, violence and hatred that has resulted his followers to assemble under the common umbrella i.e. *Saṅgha*. Through the *Saṅgha,* the Buddha has succeeded in framing the path way for mindful leadership and a sustainable peaceful society.

In the proposed paper efforts will be made to have a thorough and analytical study of the sermons of the Buddha which distinguishes him from others in proving him greatest leader for laying the foundation of peace, prosperity and brotherhood in the society of his time vis-à-vis making a roadmap of sustainable peace for the generations to come.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Unfortunately, in the present time the acts of violence, hatred, and selfishness are spreading their wings across the globe thereby pushing the humanity and human values towards hell fire. In this blind race of competition where every society, nation, community and individual is mad to show its superiority over others are posing great threats for a peaceful co-existence. Today, the peace-loving people across the globe are looking for a leader who can establish the law of *dhamma* (righteousness) so that a sense of rightful and meaningful life, prosperity, equitable development and at the most peace may prevail. Here, in this context when we talk of a leader then it's not merely a political leader who simply wins the election and rules a country by enjoying the administrative powers. Here, a leader means as world renowned entrepreneur Bill Gate said '*as we move and look ahead into the next century, the leaders will be those who will empower others*'. In

view of this, when we trace the pages of history we find an enlightened leader who with his wisdom and foresightedness has shown the path of righteousness and well being of all thereby setting up the milestones for the restoration of peace. He is none other than the Siddhartha Gautama, to whom the world knows as the Buddha. Undoubtedly, he (Buddha) can be considered as one of the most influential with powerful convincing personality who has taught the world mutual co-existence in a peaceful manner based upon ideal way of living.

Although, generally people recognizes him as the propounder of Buddhism, but throughout his life he struggled, advocated and worked for establishing an equitable society where all living creatures be secured with their rights and privileges besides delivering sermons for the attainment of spiritual advancement. It was due to this, he always emphasized for the social, spiritual and religious developments of each and every individual as he (the Buddha) was of the view that the peace can only be attained if we inculcate the fundamentals of mindful living and behavior among one and all. The basic reason behind individuals' enhancement given by the Buddha is that he always considered an individual as a part and parcel of society. He was of the view that instead of making the society righteous as a whole in single entity, the efforts should be made at an individual because if all individuals will become righteous, pure and non-violent physically, vocally and mentally then the society will automatically turn to be an ideal one.

No doubt, it is not an easy task as there are evidences of differences in thoughts and ideas rift & conflict and war at the individual and international levels due to one reason or the other. Herein, the Buddha turns out as an enlightened leader as well as paragon of peace with his ultimate basket of milestones when he reveals that peace comes from within and suggests not to seek it without. The idea is that anger and other negativities are not the solution of any problem. As well stated in *Dhammapada:*

> *"Na hi verena verāni, samnantīdha kudācanaṃ /*
> *Averena ca sammanti, esa dhammo sanantano //"*[1]

1. Thera N., 2013 (rpt.), *Dhammapada*, verse no. 5, Kolkata: Mahabodhi Book Agency, p. 6.

## 2. BUDDHA AS AN ENLIGHTENED LEADER

As the present papers motive is to highlight the qualities of a leader who is enlightened enough for establishing the peace in the society, therefore, I have jotted down teachings, sermons, thoughts and ideas adopted and delivered by the Buddha which makes him one of the greatest leaders of his time.

If we observe minutely, a leader is a person who leads the society irrespective of any caste, colour or creed towards righteousness and before advocating or imposing the morality on others must have accumulated and lived upon at his own. In case of the Buddha, we find that before instructing to his followers he himself realized the essence of his teachings and sermons whether it is *ariyo-aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo* or *majjhimā paṭipadā, paṭiccasamuppāda, pañcasīla, dasasikkhāpadāni, p*āramitās, *sīla, samādhi, paññā, kusala dhammas, rājadhammas, four appamaññās or brahmavihāras etc.*

The social stratification in the Indian society at the time of the Buddha is well known to all of us. The then society was divided into a couple of distinct groups. The first group which was numerically less was dominating and exploiting the other groups which were numerically very high. The Buddha realized this fact and as a good and wise leader he revolted against this negative dispensation. Similarly, the second major step initiated by the Buddha was the whole hearted support to the *rātyas*. The *Vrātyas* were the offspring of the heterogamy and hypogamy marriages. This finds mentioned in the *Atharvaveda* also where this new sub *varṇa* is eloquently placed after the four *varṇas*. It is essential to be mentioned here that the Buddha was the only person who supported the cause of *Vrātyas.*

He was deeply disheartened over the practice of discrimination among human beings on the basis of caste. He out rightly discarded it and tried to replace from the consideration of deeds instead of birth which is evident from this beautiful verse:

"*Na jaccā vasalo hoti, na jaccā hoti brāhmaṇo /*
*Kammunā vasalo hoti, kammunā hoti brāhmaṇo //*"[2]

2. Dharmarakshita B. (ed.& tr.), *Suttanipāta*, verse nos. 21 &27, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publisher, p. 34.

It was due to this approach that when the Buddha established *Saṅgha* he declared the entry of all irrespective of any discrimination of caste, creed and family. There are many references wherein the high position in the *Saṅgha* is occupied by the people of low caste. He was of the view that our *Karma* must be the only factor to deicide our social position in the society. No doubt for the Buddha too, *Brāhmaṇa* remained the supreme, but his concept of '*Brāhmaṇa'* was entirely different. It was indeed based on purity of action irrespective of any caste, as we find in *Dhammapada*:

> *"Na jaṭāhi na gottehi na jaccā hoti brāhmaṇo /*
> *Yamhi saccaṃ ca dhammo ca, so sucī so ca brāhmaṇo //"*[3]

Generally speaking, Buddhism developed five main arguments against social stratification— biological, evolutionary, sociological, ethical and spiritual unity of mankind. Biologically, all human beings are from one single caste. Evolutionary argument throws light that how caste name originated must be mere conventions. With division of the nature of job or work such conventional grouping becomes necessary. Third argument is based on sociological considerations. In a society one finds two caste systems and in some other societies there is no caste system at all. Ethical and spiritual arguments reveal the privileged position desired by some communities in order to maintain their status in the religious sphere.

However, he did not stop here. Rather he talked of developing a sense of equality, loving-kindness, and compassion towards one and all; which could be possible only when one gives up the notion of false complex of superiority and inferiority and treats everybody just like himself.

The following are few exemplified features which show the Buddha being an enlightened leader:

- He laid the foundation of his *dhamma* (religion) purely on the basis of human morality instead of any avatāra, prophet or an inspired teacher;
- He never imposed any thought/teaching on his followers;

3. *Dhammapada*,verse no. 393,op. cit., p. 251

• He always keep boosting the moral of his followers for attaining the same heights and becoming equal;

• As according to modern leadership thinkers, the most essential ingredient in leadership is the clear vision and mission, in accordance to this we find the Buddha with a clear vision for achieving the goal of supreme knowledge and make others also enlightened and free from the cycle of re-birth;

• As a wise leader has to listen the problems and address them in a friendlier way, the Buddha was full of this quality and that is why he is also called as *anukampāya hitesina*[4]. The *bhikkhus* could approach the Buddha any time and discuss their problems or experiences;

• Being a good and noble leader when he realized that all the human life is full of sorrow he taught the *Four Noble Truths*.[5] Being learned persons he not only told that there is suffering but he identified the cause behind it and ultimately gave the solution of its cessation. Further, through *Eightfold Path*[6] he lead the peoples towards purification by showing them the benefits of :

***Sammā Diṭṭhi* (Right View or Understanding)**— *"Yaṃ kho, bhikkhave, dukkhe* ñāṇaṃ*, dukkhasamudaye* ñāṇaṃ*, dukkhanirodhe* ñāṇaṃ*, dukkhanirodhagāminiyā paṭipadāya* ñāṇaṃ*, ayaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, sammādiṭṭhi."*[7]

***Sammā Saṅkappo* (Right Resolution)**— *"Nekkhammasaṅkappo abyāpādasaṅkappo avihiṃsāsaṅkappo, ayavṃ vuccati bhikkhave sammāsaṅkappo"*[8]

***Sammā Vācā* (Right Speech)**— *Musāvādā veramaṇī, pisuṇāya vācāya veramaṇī, pharusāya vācāya veramaṇī, samphappalāpā veramaṇī, ayaṃ vucati, bhikkhave sammāvācā"*[9]

***Sammā Kammanto* (Right Action)**— *"Pāṇātipātā veramaṇī, adinnādānā veramaṇī, kāmesu micchācārā veramaṇī ayaṃ vuccati,*

4. W. Rhyds Davids & William Stede, 2007(rpt.),, *Pali-English Dictionary*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd, p. 34.

5. Keown D., 2003, *Dictionary of Buddhism*, New York: Oxford University Press, p. 96; Shastri D. S.(ed. & tr.), 2009, *Dīghanikāyapāli, vol. 2,* Varanasi: Bauddha Bharati, pp. 533-540.

6. Shastri D. S.(ed. & tr.), 2009, *Dīghanikāyapāli, vol. 2,* Varanasi: Bauddha Bharati, p. 540

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.

*bhikkhave, sammākammanto"*[10]

***Sammā*** Ājīvo **(Right Livelihood)**— *"Idha bhikkhave, anuppannāvako micchājīvānaṃ pahāti, sammā* ājīvena*, jivikaṃ kappeti, ayaṃ vuccati bhikkhave sammā-ājīvo"*[11]

***Sammā Vāyāmo* (Right Effort / Endeavour)**— *"Idha bhikkhave, bhikkhu anuppannānaṃ pāpakānaṃ akusalānaṃ pajahati ayaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, sammāvāyāmo"*[12]

***Sammā Sati* (Right Mindfulness)**— *"Idha bhikkhave, bhikkhu kāye kāyānupassī viharati* ātāpī *sampajāno satimā , vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassaṃ vedanāsu pi citte pi dhammesu, dhammānupassī viharati* ātāpī *sampajāno satimā vineyya loke, abhijjhādomanassaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, sammāsati"*[13]and

***Sammā Samādhī* (Right Concentration)**— *"Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu vivicce, vā catutthajjhānaṃ upasampajja, viharati ayaṃ, vuccati bhikkhave sammāsamādhi"*[14];

• Further, the Buddha prescribes the path of gradual purification. It has three steps namely: *Sīla* (virtue), *Samādhi* (concentration) and *Paññā* (wisdom). *Sīla* helps in curtailing the physical and vocal misdeeds. *Samādhi* minimizes the pollution of mind. *Paññā* removes the darkness of ignorance and unfolds the nature of reality. In words of Prof. Mahesh Tiwary, 'the man having such soothing light of wisdom, finally destroys the chain of attachment and achieves a state of desirelessness. It is named as *Nibbāna*.[15]

• Furthermore, for the well being of every individual of the society, a leader should be equipped with the following characteristics[16]:

*i. Dāna*[17] (sharing with the populace): An enlightened leader is a benefactor in such a way that he works to deliver, to

10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid., 540-41.
13. Ibid., 541.
14. Ibid.
15. Tiwary M., 1991, Forward, In: Labh B. (ed.), *Paññā in Early Buddhism,* Delhi: Eastern Book Linkers, p. iii.
16. Payutto P.A., 2006, *A Constitution for Living: Buddhist principles for a fruitful and harmonious life,*(tr.) Bruce Evans, Thailand: Sahathammika Co. Ltd., pp. 27-30.
17. *Pali-English Dictionary*, op. cit., p. 318.

give and not to take or gain. He should devote himself to administering services and providing welfare and aid for one and all to ensure well-being, convenience and security. He should render assistance to those in distress and difficulty and support and reward those who do well.

*ii. Sīla*[18] (maintaining good conduct): A leader should be impeccable in conduct and restrained in physical and vocal actions. He should set an example for the people, so that he could command their respect. Besides, he should remain free from any cause for comfort.

*iii. Paricca* (working selflessly): A leader should be capable of sacrificing personal comfort, even in his own life, for the benefit of the people.

iv. Ājjava (working honestly): A leader should be honest and upholds the truth.

*v. Maddava*[19] (deporting himself with gentleness and congeniality): Despite being tough in his administration, a leader should not unnecessarily behave arrogantly, rudely, harshly or in a congenital manner. Nobility and dignity is expected from him in his outlook and public behaviour.

*vi. Tapa*[20] (rejecting indulgence through austerity): An ideal leader destroys defilements and unnecessary cravings and does not allow them to overpower his mind. He should restrain his mind in such a way that it does not get lost in sensual pleasure and debauchery.

*vii. Akkodha* (adhering to reason, not to anger): He does not resort to lose temper or fiery outburst and does not make judgements or act out of anger, but has a heart of good-will, suppressing anger, he judges and acts righteously with a mind that is subtle and calm.

*viii. Avihiṃsā*[21] (bringing tranquillity through non-violence):

18. Ibid., p. 712.
19. bid., p. 518.
20. Ibid., p. 297.
21. Ibid., p. 85.

He does not let his power go to his head or use it to repress his subjects; he is rather kind and does not find a pretext for punishing a subject out of vindictiveness or hatred.

*ix. Khanti*[22] (overcoming difficulties): A leader endures a heavy work load and preserves in the face of tiredness; no matter how difficult or depressing the work may be, he does not give in; no matter how much he is provoked or ridiculed, or with whatever harsh and abrasive words, he does not despair; he refuses to abundant a task that is rightfully done.

*x. Avirodhana*[23] (not doing that which strays from righteousness): he should not transgress the principles of public administration that are based on moral values and aimed to welfare, happiness and righteousness of the people and the country. He does not oppose what the people rightfully desire and demand. He does not stand in the way of those activities which are for the common good; he establishes himself firmly in righteousness, steadfast and unwavering in the face of pleasant and un-pleasant words, gain and loss, desirable and un-desirable conditions.

We see that the Buddha, in totality, was full of these aforementioned qualities and has always emphasized for the adoptability and implementation of the same in his as well as in his followers life.

## 3. BUDDHA AS A PARAGON OF PEACE

Since antiquity this central tag line of Buddha's philosophy *pāṇātipātā veramaṇī*[24] is quite relevant as it indicates his concept and determination of non-violence, love, compassion, good-will etc. Etymologically, it implies that a person should have to refrain himself from killing, cause to killing or sanctioning the destruction of a living being. However, it is to be keep in mind that, according to the Buddha, the living being does not merely stands for humans

22. Ibid., p. 232.

23. Ibid., p. 85.

24. Labh B., 1993, *Buddhist Pañcasīla vs political Panchasheel,* Jammu Panorama, J&K, vol. 9, p. 45.

only but it covers all animals, birds as well as plants and vegetations. In its strictest sense, anything that has life comes under this category. Through this precept, the Buddha has tried to make a person realize that he has to understand that all living beings are like him and as he gets disturbed by pain similarly when injury is done to any living creature, they too experience the same unpleasant feeling. The concept is more clearly mentioned in the *Dhammapada* as:

*"Sabbe tasanti daṇḍassa, sabbe bhāyanti maccuno /*
*Attānaṃ upamaṃ katvā, na haneyya na ghātaye //"*
*"Sabbe tasanti daṇḍassa, sabbesaṃ jīvitaṃ piyaṃ /*
*Attānaṃ upamaṃ katvā, na haneyya na ghātaye //"*[25]

Further, the Buddha teaches that people can live in peace and harmony only if they abandon negative emotions such as anger from mind and cultivate positive emotions such as love and compassion for others, as it is strongly believed that the mind of all the living creatures are somehow interconnected and interrelated, whether someone is consciously aware of it or not. In other words, each being has his own transmitting and receiving stations and is constantly broadcasting to all others his or her state of mind and in a similar fashion receiving the same. Each thought in our mind, brings the world either a little closer to the brink of global disaster or move the world a little farther away from the brink.

It is because, when we cultivate such feelings in ourselves we enter into the state of eternal satisfaction and we feel the whole universe as our own family. As a fact, everyone whether its human or animal wants to live and not only to live but to live in a conducive, friendly and peaceful atmosphere. For achieving this goal, the Buddha believes that world peace can only be achieved if we first establish peace within our mind because according to him mind control all activities whether good or bad. It is well described through the following verses:

*Mano pubbaṅgamā dhammā mano seṭṭhā manomayā /*
*Manasā ce paduṭṭhena bhāsati vā karoti vā /*
*Tato naṃ dukkhamanveti cakkaṃ'va vahato padaṃ //*

25. *Dhammapada*, verse nos. 129-130, op. cit., p. 101.

*Mano pubbaṅgamā dhammā mano saṭṭhā manomayā /*
*Manasā ce pasannena bhāsati vā karoti vā /*
*Tato naṃ sukhamanveti chāyā'va anapāyinī //"*[26]

If I talked in purview of the Indian religious tradition as well as societal customs and practices although emphasis has been laid down on the inner powers of mind, but the Buddha has given special importance to mental culture. George Grimm in his book, *The Doctrine of Buddha,* emphasizes on the significance of mental aspects. The inner power of mind and resources are infinite, and Buddhism aims at developing them fully through the process of meditation, clearing all cobwebs of *kilesas* (defilements). It is the thought, volition, cognition that matters most in the development of personality. It has been rightly said that war first begin in the mind of men and then appear in physical form. This is the reason the Buddha identifies volition or determination of mind as the action-'*Cetanāham, bhikkhave, kammam vadāmi. Catayitvā hi kammam karoti manasā vācāya kāyena va*'. Furthermore, *Dhammapada* quotes that a misdirected mind can engulf a man in the worst misery which even an enemy cannot, and the right mental attitude can do more good than even one's own parents:

*"Diso diasm yantam kayira veri vā pana verinam /*
*Micchā panihitam cittam pāpiyo-nam tato kare //*
*Na tam mātā pitā kayira aññe yāpi ca* ñātakā */*
*Sammā panihitam seyyaso nam tato kare //"*[27]

When we look at Buddhism and the basic tenets borne by it, we find the elements of humanity and the ways and means of translating those values into practical life. While dispatching the first batch of sixty arahata disciples, the Buddha had very clearly revealed that the basic purpose of their life and mission would be maximum good for maximum beings. These beings included not only humans but celestial beings as well like gods. The answer may be sought in his sayings—"*sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhitattā" , "sabbe*

26. Ibid., verse nos. 1-2, p. 1-5.
27. Ibid, verse nos. 42-43, p. 35-36.

*pāṇī arogā hontu"* and so on, spoken in different terminologies at different places and in different contexts.

In my humble understanding, the term *'bahujana'* indicates to an ever increasing number and dynamic notion of involving more and more beings without any full stop, which get proper exposure in the concept of four *Brahmavihāras*[28]. Buddhism being a psycho-ethical system and pragmatic way of life, analyzes 'peace' as a mental state, which is lost due to various internal as well external factors. However, let us try to identify the possible reasons.

More than any other religion or philosophy, Buddhism presents a clear vision of peace. The Noble Eightfold Path— *Sammā ditthi, sammā saṅkappa, sammā vācā, sammā kammanta, sammā* ājīva*, sammā vāyāma, sammā sati, sammā samādhi,* unambiguously maps out the way to achieve personal peace. It is a perfect way shown by the Buddha for a tensionless, tranquil and peaceful life. It is a self discipline of body, word and mind. It is the path of self-purification. The essence of the path has been put forth in one verse by the Buddha:

> *"Sabbapāpassa akaraṇaṃ kusalassa upsampadā /*
> *Sacitta pariyodapanaṃ, etaṃ Buddhāna sāsanaṃ //"*[29]

If everyone could perfect his/her own life, world peace would come almost naturally. Buddhism preaches love, kindness, compassion and respect for all lives.

## 4. CONCLUSION

The Buddha categorically refused any kind of inequity, violence and hatred that has resulted his followers to assemble under the common umbrella i.e. *Saṅgha*. Through the *Saṅgha,* the Buddha has succeeded in framing the path way for mind full leadership and a sustainable peaceful society. The human qualities given by the Buddha such as equanimity, compassion, good-will, love etc. must be cultivated and sustained through systematic means of life in a conducive social environment so that a more humane world may emerge. These qualities must be inculcated right from the

28. Nārada Mahāthera, *The Buddha and His Teachings,* p. 614
29. *Dhammapada,* op. cit., verse no. 183.

childhood. We cannot wait for the next generations to make this change; in fact we have to make efforts in this context. We need to set an example by practicing these moralities of Buddhism at our own instead of convincing others. We must live up to the same high standards of integrity and sacrifice that we ask of others. I am quite hopeful that by keeping the Buddha's teaching as a centric force we can lead the society towards equitable development with the foundations of equality, peace, prosperity, and brotherhood.

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# THE CULTIVATION OF BUDDHIST MEDITATION (BHĀVANĀ) IN CONNECTION WITH INNER AND OUTER PEACE

**by Pranab Barua***

**ABSTRACT**

Meditation (*bhāvanā*) is a vital and fundamental set of techniques for calming, quieting the mind, restraining and disciplining conduct. According to Buddhist perspective, the cultivation of meditation leads to reach a state of perfection and personal development. Two forms of meditation are described in the canonical texts i.e. calmness (*samatha*) and Insight (*vipassanā*). *Samatha* practice i.e. *Brahmavihāra* – loving kindness or friendliness (*mettā*), compassion (*karuṇā*) etc. and Breathing Mindfulness (*ānāpānasati*) as profound mental tranquility or stillness that can lead to powerful transformative process and momentarily block mental defilements, right concentration (*sammā-samādhi*) and can be realized the mental adsorptions (*jhāna*). *Vipassanā* starts with four foundation of Mindfulness (*Satipaṭṭhāna)* – are used as key techniques for promoting mindfulness.

This paper will investigate how the cultivation of *samatha* will help to assuage depression, fear and worry, disturb the mind and how it temporally undermines unwholesome actions (*akusalakamma*), violence (*vihiṁsā*) and five hindrances (*nivāraṇa*) and will also

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investigate how the cultivation of *vipassanā* will help to purify the mind permanently from five Hindrances. These practices are used as the foundation for the inner peace (*ajjhatta santi*) and outer peace (*sāmaggi*).

I will also examine what the significance of Buddhist meditation and ethical values is for peace. What exactly is meant by inner peace and outer peace from Buddhist perspective and what is the relation between inner and outer peace? How is the cultivation of Buddhist Meditation connected with inner and outer peace, how can inner peace bring outer peace and then transform this into world peace?

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Meditation (*bhāvanā*) is a vital and fundamental set of techniques for calming, quieting the mind, restraining, disciplining conduct and peace of mind. The 14th Dalai Lama considered Buddhist meditation as the "science of the mind". According to Buddhist perspective, the cultivation of meditation leads to reach a state of perfection, personal development and to develop awareness. Two forms of meditation are described in the canonical texts such as Serenity meditation (*samatha bhāvanā*) and Insight Meditation (*vipassanā bhāvanā*).

This article describes major types of Buddhist meditation and specific techniques of *samatha-bhāvanā* i.e. *Brahmavihāra* – loving kindness or friendliness (*mettā*), compassion (*karuṇā*) etc. and Breathing Mindfulness (*ānāpānasati*) as profound mental tranquility or stillness that can lead to powerful transformative process and momentarily block mental defilements, right concentration (*sammā-samādhi*) and can be realized the mental adsorptions (*jhāna*); and *vipassanā-bhāvanā* help to purify the mind permanently from five Hindrances as key techniques for promoting mindfulness. These practices are used as the foundation for the inner peace (*ajjhatta santi*) and outer peace (*sāmaggi*).

This article also clarifies the connections among Buddhist meditative practices and the cultivation of inner & outer peace and integrates aspects of Buddhist meditation within peace efforts, the meaning of peace in Buddhism, its significance and ethical values for peace, an interdependent relationship between inner and outer peace and transform of inner and outer peace into world Peace.

## 2. THE MEANING OF BUDDHIST MEDITATION

According to the early Indian texts, the word and meaning of mediation differently used and described by the various religious schools in India. Most of the Buddhist and *Brāhmanic* texts are commonly used '*Dhyāna* (meditation)' in Skt. The word "meditation" is derived from the Pāli which is called '*Bhāvanā*' and translated as "mental development" or "mental cultivation". The word 'bhāvanā' is a Pāli term which literally means "development" or "cultivation". It usually appears in conjunction with another word formation such as *citta-bhāvanā* (development or cultivation of the mind), *mettā-bhāvanā* (the development of loving-kindness).

T.W. Rys Davids's (1921, 559) Pāli Texts Society Dictionary, "Dictionary" mentioned that '*bhāvanā*' derives from the root '*bhū*' or '*bhava*' which means 'to become' or the subjective process of arousing mental states, producing, dwelling on something , putting ones thoughts to, application, developing by means of thought or meditation and cultivation by minds. Meditation is a state of absorbed concentration on the reality of the present moment which is called *Dhyāna* (Skt.) and *jhāna* or *samādhi* in *Pāli*. The cultivation of meditation leads to reach a state of perfection and personal development. Therefore, we can say that Buddhist meditation is simply for the purification of mind, which is the heart of monastic life to developing mind, to become free from defilements and bondage to be freed from wheel of existence.

## 3. HOW MORALITY ASSISTS FOR MEDITATION

The Buddha prescribed all the necessary guidance to maintain the holy Order and develop the concentration (*samādhi*) as well as aspect of life. Intention in *Pāli* is called '*cetanā*' and also called *Sīla*. Here moral intention is not deeds unwholesome actions by the three doors such as bodily, verbally and mentally. It is stated in *Jatā Sutta*: the Tangle (SN 7.6) that a man established on virtue, developing the mind and wisdom, a *bhikkhu* ardent and discreet; he can disentangle this tangle. One who has been destroyed the greed, hatred and ignorance, he is disentangled the tangle. Gunaratna's (36), "A Critical Analysis of the *Jhānas* in Theravāda Buddhist Meditation" mentioned that The Buddha said, "If a monk

should wish 'may I be one who obtains at will, without trouble and difficulty, the four jhānas pertaining to higher consciousness can abiding in peace and happiness here and now' – he should fulfill the observance of the moral code of conduct".

Thānissaro Bhikkhu's (1994, 1), "The Buddhist Monastic Code-I" and Ñāṇamoli's (1996, 16), "Visuddhimagga: The Path of Purification" pointed out that the connection between discipline and release, from *mundane* to *supramundane* and the benefit of practicing morality for meditation spelled out in as passage as "Moral discipline is for the sake of restrain, restrain is for the sake of freedom from remorse, freedom from remorse is for the sake of joy, joy for the sake rapture, rapture is for the sake of tranquility, tranquility of the sake of pleasure, pleasure is for the sake of concentration, concentration is for the sake of knowledge and vision of things as they have come to be, knowledge and vision of things as they have come to be for the sake of disenchantment, disenchantment is for the sake of dispassion, dispassion is for the sake of release, release is for the sake of knowledge and vision of release, knowledge and vision of release for the sake of total unbinding through non-clinging". There are four kinds of pure higher morality which work as foundation of peace, namely;

i. Restrain in accordance with the disciplinary code (*Pāṭimokkhasaṁvara Sīla).*

ii. Morality pertaining to the sense-restraint *(Indriyasamvara Sīla).*

iii. Morality pertaining to purity of livelihood *(Ājīvapārisuddhi Sīla).*

iv. Morality pertaining to use of requisites pertaining to life *(Paccayasannissita Sīla*).

Above mentioned these four kinds of pure higher morality are collectively called *Sīlavisuddhi* (purification of virtue). Phra Rajyanvisith's (10), "A Study Guide for Right Practice of the Three Trainings" mentioned that this *pārisuddhi sīla* is the foundation for purifying the mind and attaining the insight wisdom. Through the cultivation of morality, we can get the heavenly realms, the human prosperity in this life and gain the ultimate prosperity that is *Nibbāna*. Therefore, one has to be purify morality. This is how

morality assets for doing meditation and establish the stability and peace in mind.

## 4. DIVISIONS OF BUDDHIST MEDITATION

According to Nyanatiloka's (1980), "Buddhist Dictionary" *bhāvanā* means 'mental development'. The mental development (*bhāvanā*) has two broad categories as i) the development of tranquility (*samatha-bhāvanā*), i.e. concentration (*samādhi*) and ii) the development of insight (*vipassanā-bhāvanā*) i.e. wisdom (*paññā*). Bhikkhu Bodhi states that "there are two major types of Buddhist Meditation such *samatha* (serenity) and *vipassanā* (insight). The development of insight meditation (*vipassanā* bhāvanā) is the distinctively Buddhistic form of meditation. Bhikkhu Bodhi's translation (2000, 329), "A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma" mentioned that this system of meditation is unique to the Buddha's Doctrine (*Dhamma*) and is intended to penetrate direct personal realization of the truths which is discovered by the Buddha Gotama, whereas the development of serenity meditation (*samatha bhāvanā*) has also been found in non-Buddhist schools of meditation.

1. *Samatha bhāvanā*- Nārada Mahāthera's (1979, 440), "A Manual of Abhidhamma" The term '*samatha*' is derived from the "*√sam"*- to lull, to subdue, denotes 'tranquility' or 'quietude'. It is variously translated as "calmness", "serenity", "quiescence", or "tranquility". It is synonymous with concentration (*samādhi*) which leads to the development of *jhānas*.

2. *Vipassanā bhāvanā*- The term '*vipassanā'* is derived from *vi* + *√ dis*- to see, literally, means perceiving in diverse ways, which is impermanency (*aniccā*), suffering (*dukkha*), and soullessness (*anattā*). It is rendered by 'insight', contemplation', 'intuition', 'introspection'. *Vipassanā,* when fully developed, leads to enlightenment (*bodhi*) and *Nibbāna*.

## 5. BUDDHIST MEDITATION AS FOUNDATION OF INNER AND OUTER PEACE

Peace (*santi*) which means the state of inner tranquility or inner peace (*ajjhatta santi*). Sometimes, it refers to the term "*nibbāna*" which means enlightenment. According to Buddhist text, tranquility

of mind comes from having successfully transcended inner poisons i.e. greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*) and ignorance (*avijjā*). It is clear that the Buddhist Meditation approach to peace begins from the overcoming these inner poisons. With the practice of meditation, the energy of inner poisons can be transformed in its entirety into the enlightened wisdom (*paññā*). So this transcendence of inner poisons is known as inner tranquility.

Here Buddhist meditation plays an important role as foundation of inner tranquility or inner peace (*ajjhatta santi*) as well as outer peace (*sāmaggi*). *Samatha* and *vipassanā* meditation works as an interdependent relationship between inner and outer peace. With the practice of *samatha-bhāvanā*, we overcome the depression, fear, worry, disturbing mind and purify our mental unwholesome activities such five hindrances, three poisons (greedy, hatred and delusion) and the purification of mental unwholesome activities leads us to attain *jhāna*. *Samatha bhāvanā* generates inner peace as well as outer peace. The serenity of meditation (*Samatha)* helps as thought to concentrate the mind which provides for the establishment of insight meditation.

## 6. CULTIVATION OF *SAMATHA* MEDITATION

There are many techniques to cultivate the *samatha bhāvanā* such as *Brahmavihāra* – loving-kindness or friendliness (*mettā*), compassion (*karuṇā*) etc. and Breathing Mindfulness (*ānāpānasati*) as profound mental tranquility or stillness that can lead to powerful transformative process and momentarily block mental defilements, and right concentration (*sammā-samādhi)*. Generally, *samatha* is considered as the mental peace and stability that is generated through the cultivation of concentration (*samādhi*). *Samatha* is also called "peace" and "pacification" of the mind and thoughts. It is technically defined as the specific degree of concentration necessary, which generate insight (*vipassanā*) into reality and thus lead to the destruction of the afflictions.

The purpose of *samatha* meditation is subduing the defilements known as the five hindrances (*pañca nīvaraṇa*)[1] in order to achieve

1. Sensual desire (*Kāma-chanda*), Ill will (*Vyāpāda*), Sloth and torpor (*Thīna-middha*), Restlessness (*Uddhacca-kukkucca*) and Skeptical doubt (*Vicikicchā*).

wisdom (*paññā*) through the practice of insight meditation (*vipassanā bhāvanā*). *Samatha* leads to assuage depression, fear and worry, disturb the mind and temporally undermines unwholesome activities (*akusalakamma*), violence (*vihiṁsā*) and five hindrances (*nivāraṇa*) or the attainment of *jhāna* or meditative absorption.

## 7. APPLICATION OF FOUR SUBLIME STATES (BRAHMAVIHĀRAS)

The cultivation of *brahmavihāras* (four sublime states) is considered as the most effective methods of *samatha bhāvanā*. The four sublime states are loving-kindness (*mettā*), Compassion (*karuṇā*), Sympathetic-joy (*muditā*) and equanimity (*upekkhā*). See Maha-Rahulovada-Sutta (MN 62) translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi, the Buddha explained in *Maha-Rahulovada-Sutta* to his son, Rahula, how contemplation of four sublime states helps to assuage depression, fear and worry and anxiety, and how contemplation on *brahmavihāras* plays an important part for establishing inner and outer peace or inner happiness. The Buddha mentioned to his son thus: Rahula, develop the contemplation of loving-kindness (*Mettā*); if you develop the contemplation of loving-kindness, all malevolence will be overcome. Rahula Develop the contemplation of compassion (*karuṇā*); if you develop the contemplation of compassion, all aggressiveness will be overcome. Rahula, develop the contemplation of sympathetic joy; if you develop the contemplation of sympathetic joy (*muditā*), all discontentment (*arati*) will be overcome. Rahula, develop the contemplation of equanimity (*upekkhā*); if you develop the contemplation of equanimity, all reluctance will be overcome. The four sublime states (*brahmavihāras)* work as a path to the inner and outer peace. This paper will explain how four sublime states play an important role for the establishment of inner and outer peace as well.

## 8. CONTEMPLATION ON LOVING-KINDNESS (*METTĀ-BHĀVANĀ*)

Loving-kindness is called *mettā-bhāvanā* which means developing thought of loving-kindness toward others. Loving-kindness meditation basically is to focus benevolent and loving energy toward oneself and others. One should conduct the wholesome actions to gain the state of peacefulness, this meditation can develop. One who cultivates regularly loving-kindness meditation is able to develop

his capacity for forgiveness, connection to others. It is mentioned in *Sāleyyaka-Sutta* (MN 41) and *Mettākathā* (Pts. II) that we can cultivate loving-kindness meditation or *mettā-bhāvanā* by saying thus; *"May all beings abide in well-being, freedom from hostility, freedom from ill-will, freedom from anxiety, and May the maintain well-being in themselves"*. Through the contemplation on loving-kindness, we can imagine what that particular condition would feel like to ourselves or to the person to whom we want to send the wishes. Loving-kindness can be developed through meditation only. This practice helps us to forgive and forget any offence against someone.

According to *Mettānisamsasutta* (AN 11.16), there are 11 types of advantage by the cultivation of loving-kindness meditation thus;

i. One sleeps happily

ii. One wakes up happily

iii. One sees no bad dreams

iv. One is dear to humans

v. One is dear to non-humans

vi. One is protected by devas

vii. Fire, poison and weapons cannot harm one

viii. One's mind easily concentrates

ix. One's countenance is serene

x. One dies unconfused and

xi. If he penetrates no higher, he goes to the Brahma world (*Brahma-loka*)

Through the cultivation of loving-kindness meditation, we are directly able to transform an emotional landscape of negative emotions into positive emotions. This meditation really contributes to make us a greater life and brings life satisfaction. It indeed assuages depression, fear, worry, anxiety, and ill-will. Loving-kindness meditation also releases the aspects of stress and develops our attitude to life that is infinitely beneficial to emotional well-being, peace of mind and joy. It makes us feel happier for a moment and the momentary block defilements. The repeated cultivation of loving-

kindness meditation helps to adapt to our personal circumstances and it deeply remains in our heart and potentially transformative process which keeps the mind calm and generates inner peace and happiness.

### 9. CONTEMPLATION ON COMPASSION (*KARUṆĀ-BHĀVANĀ*)

Contemplation on compassion is called Karuṇā-bhāvanā. The cultivation of compassion is the most effective way to put our meditation into action. By cultivation of compassion, we can turn the thought of compassion into a reality. We can cultivate the attitude of compassion, when someone is unfortunate or having some difficulties. Compassion is to recognize the suffering of others, and take action to help them. This meditation develops the awareness of our own activities and suffering as well as the suffering of others as well. We can cultivate the contemplation on compassion by reciting silently thus; *May all living beings be free from suffering, pain, stress*. The compassion meditation (*karuṇā-bhāvanā*) approaches as a way to prevent aggression, violence, anger, annoyance. The *Sangīti Sutta* (DN 33) mentioned the early and later texts unanimously see in the practice of *karuṇā* the direct antidote to anger, annoyance and the notion of an alienated and isolated self.

### 10. CONTEMPLATION ON SYMPATHETIC JOY (*MUDITĀ-BHĀVANĀ*)

Contemplation on sympathetic joy is called *muditā-bhāvanā*. This practice refers to meditation on to feel joy at the success and good fortune of others. It is also called a sublime nobility of heart and intellect which knows understands and is ready to help. Sympathetic joy is like a mother's happiness at her child's accomplishment. It is exactly rejoicing in the success and happiness of others. That is why *muditā-bhāvanā* is considered as a profound rewarding practice. The cultivation of *muditā* has as its major benefit the removal of all discontent and displeasure (*arati*). In its aspect of empathetic joy, it is the opposite of envy and jealousy. Sympathetic joy (*muditā*) is one of a mother's joy over the success and youthfulness of her child. Akincano M. Weber's (2006), "The role of the Brahmavihāra in Core Process Psychotherapy" mentioned that in Buddhist tradition, the brief reflective contemplation on *muditā* is chanted thus: *May all beings not be parted from the good fortune they have attained.*

The great commentator Buddhaghosa in his commentaries of *Sāleyyaka-Sutta* (MN 41) and *Mettākathā* (Pts. II) says thus; if a dear person is unhappy, one still can cultivate by the contemplation or remembering his or her past greatness and anticipating his or her future success or happiness. So the main purpose of contemplation of sympathetic joy is to see others success and happiness with gratefulness, humility, wholesomeness and loyalty. Through the contemplation of this, we can develop our emotional attitude towards those who are doing well and be better than us.

### 11. CONTEMPLATION ON EQUANIMITY (*UPEKKHĀ-BHĀVANĀ*)

Contemplation on equanimity is called *upekkhā-bhāvanā*. It is considered as a serene balanced and calm mind that is rooted in wisdom and insight knowledge. It plays a role in breaking the mental cycle which is also known as dependent origination. It describes a complete openness to experience, without being lost in reactions of love and hate. *Upekkhā-bhāvanā* also can be considered as the balancing factor which keeps our mind stable in the opening of the heart. Contemplation on equanimity develops a balanced mind, becomes con-reactive, to see external reality as transient. It teaches us to put ourselves in the other person's shoes and to treat one another impartially.

### 12. CULTIVATION OF MINDFULNESS OF BREATHING

The mindfulness of breathing (*ānāpānasati*) is one the most effective meditation subjects for developing concentration. Having developed and cultivated the mindfulness of breathing and the four absorptions of tranquility meditation (*appanā-jhānas* of *samatha bhāvanā*), one can be realized the mental adsorptions (*jhāna*), Insight meditation (*vipassanā bhāvanā*), the development of the path (*maggabhāvanā*). As the Buddha said in *Mahā-Saṭipaṭṭhāna-Sutta* (DN.22) thus;

"*Ekāyano ayaṃ, bhikkhave, maggo sattānaṃ visuddhiyā,*

*sokaparidevānaṃ samatikkamāya dukkhadomanassānaṃ atthaṅgamāya ñāyassa adhigamāya, nibbānassa sacchikiriyāya, yadidaṃ cattāro satipaṭṭhānā*"

"Monks, this is the sole path for the purification of beings, for

the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the disappearance of pain and grief, for reaching the noble path and for the realization of *Nibbāna*, namely, the four foundation of mindfulness". Therefore, the mindfulness of breathing (*ānāpānasati*) is considered as the appropriate antidote because it is the entire practice of the four ways of establishing mindfulness can be developed with a single meditation object as the mindfulness on breathing and thus all four ways[2] of establishing mindfulness as well. Through the mindfulness of breathing, we can overcome from obstacles as the five hindrances (*nivāraṇa*) and transform the mind to right concentration and right concentration to wisdom.

## 13. ATTAINMENT OF *JHĀNA* AND ITS FACTORS

To attain the *jhānas*, one should eliminate the unwholesome mental states which are considered as inner obstacles – five hindrances: Sensual desire (*kāma-chanda*); Sensual desire in five sensual objects which consist of sights, sounds, smells, tastes and touch; Ill-will (*bhyāpāda*): Hatred, malevolence, aversion; Drowsiness (*thīna-middha*): Sleepiness, laziness sloth, torpor, languor; Restlessness (*uddhacca-kukkucca*): Restlessness, worry and anxiety; Doubt (*vicikicchā*): Perplexity, skepticism, indecision and uncertainty. T Gunaratana's (1985, 49), "The Path of Serenity and Insight" *and* Nārada Mahāthera's (1979, 440), "A Manual of Abhidhamma" mentioned that the absorption of mind on its object such as five mental states – initial application or thought (*vitakka*), sustained application or thought (*vicāra*), rapture (*pīti*), happiness (*sukha*), and one-pointedness (*ekaggatā*). See *Sallekha Sutta* (MN.8, 123), and *Mahāvedalla Sutta* (MN.43, 390-391), translated by Bodhi and Ñāṇamoli, in which clearly described that this five factors remains in first *jhāna* which is accompanied by applied thought and sustained thought. Second *jhāna*—this *jhāna* contains only three component factors: rapture (*pīti*), happiness (*sukha*), and one-pointedness (*ekaggatā*). Third *jhāna*—having fades out the rapture (*pīti*), one enters and dwells in the third

2. Mindfulness of the Breath-Body (*Kāyānupassanā*), Mindfulness of Feelings (*Vedanānupassanā*), Mindfulness of Mind (*Cittānupassanā*), and Mindfulness of Mind-Object (*Dhammānupassanā*).

*jhāna*. Then only two absorption factors remain happiness and one-pointedness. Fourth *jhāna*—having fades out the happiness, one enters and dwells in the fourth *jhāna* which has neither pain-nor pleasure and purity of mindfulness due to equanimity. One's mind becomes one-pointedness (*ekaggatā*).

Finally, we can say that the mindfulness of breathing (*ānāpānasati*) leads to develop both the *jhāna*s and insight (wisdom) as to *Nibbāna* through accomplishment of the four foundation of mindfulness (*Satipaṭṭhāna*). This meditation actually shows the method of how to tranquilize mind and develop wisdom at the same time by seeing the true nature of existence which means observing impermanence (*aniccā*), suffering (*dukkha*), not-self (*anattā*), along with seeing and realizing the cause and effect relationships of Dependent Origination (*Paṭiccasamuppāda*).

## 14. CULTIVATION OF *VIPASSANĀ* MEDITATION

Insight Meditation (*Vipassanā bhāvanā*) is one of the most ancient and effective meditation techniques in Buddhism. *Vipassanā* translated as "insight" is defined as the direct perception of the three marks of existence that characterized all phenomena which are impermanence (*aniccā*), suffering (*dukkha)* and or non-self *(anatta)*. The Main object of insight meditation is to see things as they really are, in order to gain emancipation. Nārada's (440-441), "A Manual of Abhidhamma" pointed out *vipassanā* is not ordinary sort of vision or seeing, it is considered as special meaning of vision such as the observation on inquire the reality within oneself, the entire reality of body and mind.

According to Bhikkhu Bodhi's (330), "A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma", "*vipassanā* is explained as seeing in diverse ways (*vividhākārato dassana*), through direct meditative perception of phenomena in the terms of three characteristics of impermanence, suffering and non-self". The serenity of Buddhist meditation helps as thought to concentrate the mind which provides for the establishment of insight meditation. *Vipassanā* meditation is the personal purification of the mind by eradicating all craving and attachment. He can understand the moral intoxicants (*āsava*) and the four noble truths. Having attained *samādhi*, the mind

becomes concentrated, purified, stable and calm, and then with the cultivation of insight meditation, one's mind becomes more and more purified, stable and calm.

## 15. TRANSFORMED OF INNER INTO WORLD PEACE

Buddhist meditation (*bhāvanā*) plays an important role for the promotion of peace and developing a peaceful world. Through the above discussion of serenity and insight meditation, we came into understood that Buddhist meditation is the fundamental techniques to generate inner and outer peace. With the respect of Buddhist meditation, it is proven and demonstrated that Buddhist meditation helps to cultivate inner peace effectively within and inner peace is considered as a symbol of world peace. World peace begins internally of individual while others are searching for peace from externally. Here world peace is a collective effort from individual. The way to enhance its efficiency, connections and networking are the basic for sharing important concepts, ideas and co-operation among others with the same attitude.

The cultivation of Buddhist meditation in developing the wholesome nature of humanity is to develop the inner peaceful world, by which one can deal with the outer physical world as well. Juichiro Tanabe's (2016, Vol. 21, 9), "Buddhism and Peace Theory: Exploring a Buddhist Inner Peace" mentioned that human beings will become specious in this successful attempt as with inner peace generate happiness in the human condition. We can say that living in peace generates peaceful aspects in all causal condition and can live in peace with all sentient beings. Therefore, the 14$^{th}$ Dalai Lama emphasizes the importance of inner peace in the world and mentioned that the real and lasting world peace concerns human beings. Therefore, human feelings also concerns at its roots. Through inner peace, world peace is can be achieved. The significance of individual responsibility is an atmosphere which is first created within ourselves, then gradually expanded in include our families, communities and ultimately the whole world.

## 16. CONCLUSION

Through the above discussions about Buddhist Meditation (*bhāvanā*) i.e. *Samatha* and *vipassanā bhāvanā*, we came to

the conclusion that Buddhist Meditation is the most effective practice in meditation and it has connection with inner and outer peace as well. Buddhist Meditation can be integrated into peace efforts to cultivate inner peace. The real source of happiness is contemplation of loving-kindness, Compassion, mindfulness of Breathing etc. which promotes inner happiness or inner peace. After having achieved inner peace, we overcome the all the mental impurities or poisons and unwholesome activities— depression, fear, worry, disturbing mind, five hindrances and three poisons; attain the final state of absorption that is inner peace. Then, having nourished serenity meditation, seeing the things as they really are – impermanent as impermanent, suffering as suffering and non-self as non-self; achieves ultimate inner peace. With the contemplation, when inner peace moves to all living beings that are searching for, it really helps to establish the outer peace or world peace. Finally, we have strongly come to consideration that Buddhist meditation is the foundation of inner (*ajjhatta santi*) and outer peace (*sāmaggi*).

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# -III-
# SOCIOLOGY

# SOCIAL STRATIFICATION AS REFLECTED IN THE BUDDHIST TEXTS

by Bhikshu Satyapala, S.M. Haldhar*

**ABSTRACT**

The problem of the stratification of society as reflected in early Buddhist texts has been a major concern of many historians and sociologists. Almost every serious writer on Buddhism has expressed some opinion on the Buddhist attitude to caste and the existing inequality in society. The fact that questions about caste and the claim of Brahmanas to superiority appears so frequently in Buddhist texts suggests that this was a major pre-occupation of the early Buddhists themselves. This explains at least to some extent, why the subject has generated such interest among modern scholars.

Some of the major ways in which societies may be stratified are according to the principles of caste, class and power. However, only caste has received the attention of scholars in the study of ancient Indian society, largely because of the emphasis on the Brahrnanical view point, either as the focus of study, or as the point of reference for a study of stratification. We shall attempt to analyze the problem of stratification by taking the Buddhist texts as main focus and try to unravel the system of ideas reflecting the Buddhist point of view.

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We shall also try to locate the empirical basis of these ideas. The Brahmanical system cannot be ignored and will feature wherever relevant. Since ideas about caste and class are both present in Buddhist literature, it is necessary to indicate the sense in which we are using the terms. 'Caste' is used in the sense of an ascribed status group which is a component in a hierarchical arrangement of groups. 'Class' on the other hand, represents the relative importance of a group controlling the means of production.

## BUDDHISM AND CASTE

Two differing positions have been taken on the problem of the Buddhist attitude to caste, which was by then already emerging as the major system of inequality in Indian society. Rhys Davids[1] has argued that if one considers the position of the Buddha on the question of recruitment into the Sangha - the only organ of society, over which he had complete control over advantages or disadvantages arising from birth, occupation, and social status were completely irrelevant. He gives numerous examples to support his argument: of Upali, the expert on the Vinaya, who had been a barber, of Sunita, who was a Pukkusa[2], of Sati, who was a fisherman; of Punna and Punnika, who had been slave girls; and of Subha, who was the daughter of a Smith.[3] Rhys Davids argues further that on the subject of caste outside the Sangha the Buddha tried to influence public opinion by a 'constant inculcation of reasonable views' as for example in the Amagandha sutta of the Sutta-nipata, where he argued that defilement does not come from eating this or that, prepared and given by this or that person, but from evil deeds and words and thoughts.[4] In fact, Rhys Davids believed that, had the Buddhas views won the day, the evolution of social grades and distinctions would have developed differently and the caste system would never have been built up.[5] Rhys Davids has been the major

1. T.W. Rhys Davids, D.B., 1, p. 102.

2. The pukkusas are one of the five groups frequently mentioned in the Buddhist texts. They were associated with sweeping flowers. Actually Sunita is described as a pupphachadda-ka in the Theragatha (khuddaka Nikaya, Vol. 11, pp. 330.

3. D.B., 1, p. 1OL

4. D.B., 1, p. 104 see also Sutta Nipilta, Kliuddaka Nika Vol. 1, pp. 304-7

5. D.B., 1, p. 107.

proponent of the view that Buddhism was antagonistic to caste. This view has gained popular currency and the image of the Buddha as a social reformer led Ambedkarian Mahars to adopt Buddhism when they rejected Hinduism as system of institutionalised inequality.

Oldenberg, on the other hand, has pointed out that despite the fact that Buddhist theory acknowledged the equal right of all persons to be received into the Sañgha,[6] the actual composition of the Sangha suggests that it was by no means in keeping with the theory of equality "and that a 'marked leaning to aristocracy seems to have lingered in ancient Buddhism'.[7] He also gives examples of the young brabmanas Sariputta, Moggallana and Kaccana, of Khattiyas like Ananda, Rahula and Anuruddha; and of great 'merchants' like Yasa, who were 'men of the most respectable classes of society with an education in keeping with their social status'. People like them gathered round the teacher, who himself belonged to the Sakya nobility.[8] The problem of the social origins of early Buddhists recurs frequently in the debate on the Buddha's attitude to caste. These are actually two separate questions: one relates to practice, and the other to ideology, and we should guard against confusing the two. We will attempt to deal with the question of ideology.

On the subject of social inequalities outside the Sangha Oldenberg is even more emphatic. According to him, there was nothing resembling a social upheaval in India. The inequality inherent in the caste system had no value for the Buddha and Oldenberg argues that it is historically untrue to treat the Buddha as a champion of the lower classes.[9] Similarly, Fick states that the development of caste was in no way broken or even retarded by Buddhism.[10] According to him the Buddha's doctrine did not aim at a transformation of social conditions and it was taken for granted that they were unchangeable.[11] Eliot also suggests that while

6. H. Oldenberg,The Buddha, p. 154. He, however points at that even this position was not unique to the Buddha, and long before his time there were religious orders who received members from all castes.

7. Ibid.,p. 155.

8. Ibid. p. 156. Ibid, p. 153.

9. Ibid. .....

10. R. Flick, The social organization of North East India in Buddha's time, p. 335 .....

11. Ibid.

Buddha attacked both the ritual and philosophy of the Brahmanas, so that after his time the sacrificial system never regained its earlier prestige, he was less effective as a social reformer.(12) Eliot argues that although the Buddha denied the superiority of the Brahrnanas he did not preach against caste, partly because it existed only in rudimentary form at the time.(13)

The point that, while Buddhism was anti-Brahamanic, it did not affect the caste system, has been elaborated by Bougle who states: 'certainly Buddhism, more than any other sect, must have appeared formidable to the Brahamanas: it tended to make them superfluous by limiting the place of rituals, It is clear that the Buddhist Community worked to undermine the Brahamanas, Clientele and the conflict of interests is undeniable.(14) However, Bougle argues that Buddhists were for "reconstructing the edifice of Hindu society according to new plans: if they worked at replacing the roof, they never gave although to changing the foundations."(15)In a similar vein sonant also writes that the conflict between the Buddhist and Brahmanas was primarily a struggle for influence and that there was nothing in the Buddhist stand which aimed at changing the entire caste system.(16)

Weber's study of Buddhism pointed out that the membership of the Sangha was predominantly recruited from the great noble families, the rich 'burgiers' and the Brahmanas as who were distinguished representatives of a 'cultured laity'. According to him, Buddhism had no tie with any social movement and it ignored caste on the status order'. In his view, early Buddhism as a whole was the product not of the underprivileged but of very clearly privileged strata.(17)

Both these attitudes to early Buddhism have been treated as historically unsatisfactory by Chattopadhyaya. Chattopadhyaya argues that while it is true that Buddhism was supported by monarches, merchants and contemporary aristocrats, it would be

12. Charles Eliot, Hinduism and Buddhism, Vol. 1, p. XXII.
13. Ibid.
14. Celestin Bougle, Essays on the caste system, p. 73
15. Ibid
16. E. Senart, Caste in India, p. 205
17. Max Weber, The Religion of India, p. 225-7.

superficial to see only this aspect of Buddhism. In Chattopadhyayas opinion Buddhism was destined to become for various reasons the 'biggest socio-religious movement in Indian history'. He believes that the Buddhas attitude to injustices of caste system and his attack upon Brahmanic ritual were significant reasons for its appeal to the people. However, Chattopadhyaya also argues that the Buddha only created an illusion of liberty, equality and fraternity by modeling his Sangha on the tribal values, whereas in reality these values were being trampled upon in the world outside the Sangha.[18] While Chattopadhyaya suggests a dialectical relationship between Buddhism and the new society emerging in the sixth century B.C. He does not explain or analyse the Buddhist attitude to social stratification, or the relationship between Buddhism and the actual social categories of the time. Hence earlier controversy has remained unresolved. The points of view here summarized are not based on a systematic analysis of the relevant Buddhist sources and it appears that the two contrasting positions discussed above do an injustice to the complex pattern of ideas on social stratification depicted in the early Pali canon. It is important to first try and understand the Buddhist system of stratification and then relate them to actual developments in Buddhism.

## TWO SCHEMES OF CATEGORIZATION IN THE BUDDHIST TEXTS

A comprehensive reading of early Pali texts reveals the cause of two different schemes of categorization: one which reflects the existing Brahmanical divisions of society into Brahmanas, Khattiys. Vessas and Suddas and a second, as being unique to the Buddhists- that of the Khattiya, Brähmana and Gahapati.[19] While both schemes are evident throughout the texts without any clearly defined pattern being immediately apparent, the existing division of Brahmana, Khattiya, Vessa and Sudda, is associated most often with situations in which the Buddha converses with a Brahmana[20] occasionally the fourfold division also occurs in discussion with kings.[21] It is frequently mentioned while making the point that

18. D.P. Chattopadhyaya, Lokayata,pp. 466-7.
19. Or sometimes the Khattiya, brahmana, gahapati and samanan.
20. D.N., 1, pp. 80, 209; M.N., 11, pp. 404-13
21. M.N., 11, pp. 310-11; M.N., 1, P. 375

all divisions of people in to these social groups are irrelevant in relation to their potential for salvation. It is never mentioned in discussions with the laity. The second scheme of classification is never used by the Brahmanas, nor by the Buddha while conversing with Brāhmanas. It is used frequently in the context of wealth, learning and eminence, in situation where Buddhist monks or the laity were present.(22)

Buddhist references to the fourfold division of society are not replica of the Brahmanical system of differentiation. The Buddhists invariably place khattiyas first in the serial order of social groups being enumerated with Brahrnanas following next.(23) This contrast with the Brähmanical enumeration of the fourfold scheme in the same text.(24) The Brahmanical stand on the question of the superiority of Brāhmanas as a social group over all others, including khattiyas was emphatically denied by Buddhists.(25) Throughout the Buddhist texts a special tension is noticeable between the khattiyas and brāhmanas(26) so that in any system of classification khattiyas were placed above brahmanas(27). If one looks at the Agganna Sutta, the Buddhist genesis nyth, the difference in the brähmanic and Buddhist points of view is striking. It is the khattiyas here who is first marked out from the mass of the people and represented as essential to the social order, not the brahmana.(28) In fact, in this myth the brahmana appears very similar to the bhikkhu who lives on the periphery of society, collecting alms from villages and towns and returning to the forest to meditate.(29) There is no evidence that the brahmana plays any role in society.

The brahmanical arrangement of categories in a hierarchy of

22. AN., 11, p.89; M.N., 1, p.122; M.N. , 11, p. 70; Cullavagga, p. 255

23. D,N., 111, p. 64; D.N., 1, pp. 80, 204; M.N., 11, pp. 311-12, 370

24. M.N., 11, p. 440

25. D.N., 1,p. 86;D.N., 111,p.64;D.N., 11,pp. 442-8; MN., 11, pp. 310-16.

26. R. Thapar, 'Social Mobility in Ancient India', Ancient Indian Social History, p. 131 ..

27. Dumont has remarked on the relations between the brahmanas and the khattiyas. He says 'In theory power is ultimately subordinate to priesthood, whereas in fact priesthood submits to power'. (L. Dumont, Homo Hierarchicus, p. 111.). Buddhism reflects the actual position when it places the khattiyas over the brahmanas.

28. D.N., 111, p. 72.

29. Ibid.,p.73.

services in which the low automatically serve the high is rejected in Buddhism. Even where the Buddhists mention the four fold scheme. In the Majjhima Nikaya, the Brahmana Esutcart states that brahmanas have ardained three types of service, first where a brahmana may be served by another brahmana or a khattiya, a Vessa or a Sudda; second, where a khattiya may be served by another khattiya, vessa or sudda and third where the sudda may be served by another sudda since 'who else could serve the sudda:'[30] The young Brãhrnana Ambattha also refers to the three varnas of khattiyas, vessas and suddas as serving the brähmanas.[31] The Buddha refused the brähmanical division of the society based on service and reject Brahmana attempts to force their opinions upon the people when the people did not accept them.[32] He however held that receiving services is not conditioned by one's position in a status hierarchy, but on one's ability to pay for service. In the Madhura Sutta of the Majjhima Nikaya the Buddha pertinently refuted the brähmana claim to superiority based on the criteria of the lower Varna serving the higher. He pointed out that anyone including suddas who had wealth, cam, gold and silver could have in their employment others who would rise earlier than the employer, rest later, carry out his pleasure, and speak affably' to him.[33] It is significant that in the Agganna Sutta the suddas are associated not with the service of the higher vanijjas but with hunting and such like trifling pursuits'.[34] Their low level of culture accounts here for their status at the bottom of social scheme. It is evident therefore, that the idea of the sudda as one whose specific function was to serve the brahmana, khattiya and vessa[35] finds no parallel in Buddhist texts.

30. M.N., 11, p. 441, M.L.S., 11, p. 366.

31. D.N., 1, p. 80.

32. M.N.,ll,,p.441.

33. M. N., 11, pp. 311-12; M. L. S., 11, p. 274. The Buddhist texts also do not indicate the existence of judicial privileges based on caste. The Buddha argues that anyone committing a crime would be punished by the king, regardless of his varna (M.N., 11, pp. 319-15).

34. D.N., 111, p. 74; D.B., 111, p. 91

35. In fact the Apastamba Dharmasutra states that the higher the caste which is served by the sudra the greater is the merit he gains. (The sacred laws of the Aryas S. B. E., Vol. 11, p.2). For references to sudras serving the higher castes see Gautama Dharmasutra, The sacred laws of the Thyas, S. B. E., Vol. 11, p. 230; Vashishta Dharmasutra. The sacred laws of the Thyas, S.B.E., Vol.XIV, p. 11; and Baudhayana Dharmasutra. The sacred laws of the Thyas, S.B.E., Vol. XIV, p.199.

## TERMS OF CATEGORIZATION

An important feature of the Pali texts is the use of a variety of terms to categorise people in society. Three terms are used frequently - varna, jati and kula. In addition a fourth categorization also appears which does not explicitely refer to varna, tali or kula but which is left unspecified. A comprehensive classification of the use of these terms leads to certain conclusions: first, that the four fold scheme of khattiysa, brahmana, vessa and sudda appears most often under the brahnianical varna and jati system of classification. On the other hand, the Buddhist scheme of khattiya, brahmana and gahapati is never classified as either varna or as jan. It is used frequently in the context of kula. Alternatively, it is left unspecified. The second conclusion that emerges is the existence of the notion of high and low within all the systems of classification. It is pertinent that the Buddhists did not have a complex linear system of ranking. Instead, they had a simple two-tier system of stratification. The linear order of castes of the brahmanical texts, where the four varnas are ranked one below the other, were reduced to two strata by the Buddhists in one passage of the Majjhima Nikaya where king Pasenadi asks the Buddha whether there could be any distinction between the four varna.[36] The Buddha answers saying that among the four varnas the khattiyas and brahrnanas are pointed to as cheif (settho) in the manner in which they are addressed, saluted and served. The vessa and sudda are opposed to the khattiyas and brahrnanas here in an implicit relationship of high and low. However, the khattiya and brahrnana appear to stand in a relationship of equality between themselves. We shall refer to some situation where khattiyas are placed above bmhmanas by the Buddhists. However this invariably occurs in situation where the Brahmanas are claiming a pre-erriinent position for themselves. The situation seems to be designed to humble the claims of Brahmanas to special privileges. In situations where Brahmanas were not present, brähmanas and khattiyas were placed together along with the gahapati.

## HIGH AND LOW STRATA IN BUDDHIST TEXTS

A basic opposition between high and low appears in the context

36. MN. 11, pp. 375-6.

of jati, kula, kamrna(work) and sippa (craft); thus there are high jatis and low jatis; high kulas and low kulas; high kamma and low kamma; and high sippas and low sippas. The conception of high and low is quite explicit in the classifications of jāti and kula.[37] A long passage in the Vinaya texts represe1ts jāti, kula, gotta, kamma and sippa as being the two kinds: Ukkattha (high) and hina (low). Thus Ukkattha Jati is defined as khattiya and brahmana, while hina jail is defined as candala, vena, nesada, ratthakara and pukkusa.[38]The latter categories are conventioIally translated as low casteman. Bamboo-worker or basket maker, hunter, car weight and floor sweeper or scavenger, by Buddhist scholars. The same division is repeated exactly in the same form further on in the Vinaya pitaka.[39]

In the Añguttara Nikaya we get an unusual scheme of jatis: the khattiya, brahmana, vessa, sudda and candata-puk kusa, but they are nor classified as high or low.[40] An important point to note in the above mentioned classifications of jati is the absence of the vea and sudda from the list of categories which is difficult to account for, Oldenberg has drawn our attention to the fact that the text gives no indication of the possibilities of any other jati being considered either high or low.[41] We hall return to this problem later in the chapter.

According to the Buddhist kula classification the khattiyas brähmanas and gahapatis candala, vena, nesada rathakam and pukkusa are considered low.[42] In one reference the high kulas of khattiya, brahrnana and gahapati are associated with white and the low kulas of candala, vena, nesada, ratthakara and pukkusa with black.[43] Further, the high kulas or the unit of khattiya, brahmana and gahapati are invariably associated with attributes which are evaluated

37. Pacittiya,pp. 10-12; B.O.D.,II, pp. 173-6.

38. Ibid. p. 10. These five hina jatis are frequently repeated as a group in the Buddhist texts. They are unique because this specific combination does not appear in the corresponding Brahmanical and Jaina texts

39. Pacittiya, p. 22

40. A.N., 1, p. 149.

41. H. Oldenberg, 'On the History of the Indian Caste System', Indian Antiquany, 1920, Vol. XLIX, p. 225.

42. A.N., 11, p. 89; M.N., 11, p. 447.

43. A.N., 111, pp. 94-5.

as high such as wealth, eminence and learning.[44]In contrast the Candala, vena, nesada, rathakara and pukkusa are described as low and it is stated that lools will be born into such kulas in their next life.[45]It may be noted that there is a correspondence between the Buddhist enumeration of the jati and the kula categories except for the marked inclusion of the gahapati among the high kulas which is missing in the high jatis. This is significant for our argument.

## REGIONAL DIMENSION OF STRATIFICATION

The division of kamma (work) and sippa (craft) into low and high in the Pacittiya passage of the Vinaya piaka already cited throws some light on the Buddhist view of stratification. Low kamma is defined as Kotthaka kammam (work of a storeroom keeper) and pupphacchaddaka kammam (work of a flower sweeper), or 'what is disdained, disregarded, scarned, treated with contempt and despised in these dishicts'.[46] High work is defined as kasi (agriculture), vanijja (trade and gorakkha (cattle keeping), or 'what is not despised' in the area.[47] It is evident from this passage that the Buddhists were reflecting an existing conception of high and low sippas is related to what was discldaired and despised in the region and what was not. Thus, we have the Natakana, Sippam (craft of the potter), Cammakara Sippani (craft of leatherworker), Nahapita Sippam (caft of the barber), and Pesakara Sippam (craft of the weaver) rated as low and mudda (reckoning on the fingers), ganana (accounting) and lekha (writing) were classified as high.[48] What is significant in the context of the jan division into hina (low) and ukkatta (high) is that the additional factor of what was disdained and despised does not appear. It can be argued that the notion of high and low in the case of jati was not related to a specific area but was more widely prevalent, unlike the case of kamma and sippa, where regional differences were recognized. The regional criteria of ranking touched upon by Dumont[49] is already noticeable in the Buddist text, where kamma

44. M.N., UI, p. 248; M.N., 11, pp. 281, 287.
45. MN. 111, p. 240.
46. Pacittiya, p. 11
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid.,
49. L.Dumont, Homo Hierarchicus, p. 82.

and sippa divisions of high and low were related to an area within which a similar system of ranking was prevalent.

## THE RELATIONSHIP OF KULA, KAMMA AND SIPPA

Some of the categories of the Buddhist texts can be classified under different heads. For instance, kasi, vanijjä and gorakkha are both kamrna and sippa. In the Majjhirna Nikaya, kullaputtas are associated with certain sippas such as kaiyä (agriculture), vanijjaya (trade), gorakkhana (cattle keeping), issatthena (bowinanship), rajaporisena (king's service) and with muddaya (reckoning on fingers), gananaya (accounting) and sankhanena (computing).(50) However, regardless of the heads under which the classifications are made, groups are always consistently high and low. For instance, whatever the classification, kasi, vanijja and gorakkha were invariably ranked as high Thus kulaputtas or young men of good families are associated with agriculture, trade or cattle keeping(51) or with computing, accounting and writing, all of which are rated as high work or skills.(52) On the other hand, individual barbers and potters are identifies as low.(53) One of the low kulas, the pukkusa is described as flower seepers. This had a parallel in the low kamma of the pupphachaddaka whose function is to sweep flowers.(54) Similarly the low kula of vena decribed as basket weaver has a parallel among one of the low sippas in the craft of the nalakara or basket maker. It is thus possible to establish a correlation between kula, kamrna and sippa in the Buddhist literature especially in the context of categories that were ranked as high. Similarly one can also draw a correlation between low kulas, low kamma and low sippa.

| | Kula | Kamma | Sippa |
|---|---|---|---|
| High : | Khattiya, Brah-mana, gahapati | kasi, vanijja, gorakkha | mudda, ganan, lekha, rajaporisena, issathema |

50. M.N., 1, p. 119.
51. A.N., 111, pp. 375, 378.
52. M.N., 1. p. 119
53. Pācittiya, p. 421; M.N., 11, p. 272.
54. Theragatha, khuddaka Nikaya, Vol. 1, p. 300.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Low: | Candala, pukkusa, nesada, vvena, rathakara | pipphachaddaka, kotthaka, kamma | Nalakara, nahapita, kumbhakara, pesateara, cammakara |

## EMPIRICAL RELEVANCE OF VARNA, JATI AND KULA

One important feature of the term varna is that it appears only in the context of abstract divisions of society into various social categories We have no evidence of it being used in any concrete situation.(55) No one is ever described as belonging to the brahamana varna, khattiya varna, vessa varna or sudda varna. He seems to have remained a theoretical concept without any parallel in actual practice. On the other hand, the terms jati and kula appear in concrete situations quite frequently. The Buddha refers to himself as of the Sakya jati(56)and so do others. The young brāhmana Ambattha repeatedly abuses the Buddha for being of the Sakya jati (57)when he is sent by his teacher to meet the Buddha. Ambattha himself is referred to as a dujjato (of low birth) by other brähmanas when they discover that he is a sescendent of a slave girl.(58) When he sees the Buddha for the first time Sundarika Bharadvaja asks the Buddha to which jati he belongs.(59) Similarly, king Bimbisara, having sighted the Buddha approaching from a distance, is convinced from his appearance that the Buddha could only be of the kliattiya jati. When asked about his jati the Buddha replies that his gotta affliation is Adicca, that he is of the Sakya jati, and it is from that kula that he has 'gone forth'(60). In another interesting reference, the Buddha asks the newly recruited bhikkhus Vaseha and Bhanejvaja whether, being brähmanas by jati and kula, they were reviled and abused by other brahmanas for having joined the Sangha.(61) In the Majjhima Nikaya the brahrnana Canki refers to the Buddha as being Sujato (of pure birth), as one who went forth from an adina khattiya kula

55. Except when it is used in the sense of colour or complexion.

56. Sutta Nipata, khuddaka Nikäya, Vol. 1, p. 330.

57. Ambattha is angry with the Sakyas for not having treated him properly on an earlier occasio. (A.N., 1, p. 79)

58. D.N., 1, p. 83.

59. Sutta Nipata, khuddaka Nikaya, Vol. 1, p. 334

60. Ibid

61. D.N., 111, p. 63

(a leading khattiya family) and who is thereby worthy of being shown respect.(62)

From the references cited above some relationship between the ternts jati and kula is apparent. This is more noticeable in the Sundarika bharadvaja sutta. When the Buddha is asked about his jati he replies that even the fact of having originated in a nica kula (low family) is irrelevant in the case of a muni.(63) The two terms must have been closely linked for the Buddha to use kula in answer to a question on jati. To sum up, it can be argued that the varna divisions contituted a purely conceptual scheme which had no actual application and that jati was both a conceptual and acmal scheme of categories based on ascribed status. However, what really seemed to matter to the Buddhists were the kula divisions. The kula categories were used more often than the jati when the Buddhists themselves wished to indicate social stratification. Apart from the numerous references already cited we have instances of good behaviour and wisdom being rewarded with rebirth in the high kulas of khattiyas, brahmanas and gahapatis(64); the opposite characteristics on the other hand would result in rebirth in the low kulas of candalas. nesadas, venas, rathakaras and pukkasas.(65)

A further problem in the context of empirical variability in the absence of certain categories of the brahrnanical schene of stratification. Only two of the social groups of the brahmanical scheme are verifiable as existing categories in the Buddhist texts. These are the khattiyas and brahrnanas. On the other hand, the vessa and sudda categories are theoretical groups which are impossible to locate. Fick is sceptical about the real significance of these groups during the period for which the pali texts furnish on account. He points out that the expressions vessa and sudda occur only in passages where there is a theoretical discussion about caste, but there is nothing which points to their real existence.(66) Both

62. M.N., U, p. 430.

63. SN. 1, p. 167; Sutta Nipata, khuddaka Nikaya Vol. 1, pp. 334-336.

64. M.N., 111, p. 248.

65. Ibid, p. 240

66. R. Fick, the Social organization of North East India in Buddhas Time, p. 252. See also Wagle, society at the time of the Buddha, p. 133.

terms occur occasionally in the jati system of classification but they are associated more often with the varna division of society. In the Brahmanical texts the vessa is associated with agriculture, cattle keeping and trade and the sudda with service.(67) But nowhere in the Buddhist texts are people or groups occupied with agriculture, cattle keeping or trade, referred to as vessas, or those associated with service referred to as suddas. Instead the Buddhist texts associated agriculture with the gahapati; the cattle keeper is described as a gopaka, and the term vanijja is used for the trader.(68)

Another important category in the Buddhist literature was the sehhi but none of these specific economic groups are in any way linked with the varnas. Similarly while there are no suddas there are innumerable references to dasas and kammakaras who are associated not with service of the higher varnas but with providing labour for their masters who are almost invariably gahapatis.

The absence of certain categories which are empirically identifiable extends into the low status groups too. It is not just the suddas who are missing but the hina jatis or nica kulas of the Buddhist texts are also not discernible in real situations. Except for the one example of Matañga, who was referred to as canclala putto sopako(69), nesadas, rarthakaras, venas and pukkusas do not exist as

67. Vasistha Dharmasutra, S.B.E., Vol. XIV, p.11; Baudhayana Dharmasutra S.B.E., Vol. XIV, p. 199; Gautam Dharmasutra, S.B.E., Vol. 11, PP. 232-3.

68. Mahāvagga, pp. 5-6, 255; Sutta Nipāta, Khuddaka Nikāya, Vol. 1, p. 270.

69. Sutta Nipata, Khuddaka Nikāya,Vol. 1, p. 289. It may be pointed out that Matanga is a mythical character in the account where the reference occurs and the refernce to him as a candalaputto may be construed as being used in an abstract sense. According to a personal communication from 0. Devahuti, it is used as a generic term for sudra and occurs as such in Harsa's time. The term candala was probably gaining currency in this period to connote the notion of law as a value in society. Similarly the Digha Nikaya describes a sudda stationing himself at a cross road and giving orders like a king (O.N., 1, p. 90). The whole situation in the narration is treated as ridiculous and in an view, the example suggests that here also the sudda represents the notion of law in the society, in opposition to what is high. Both candala and sudda have been used in the Buddhist value of law in on abstract sense. The early Buddhist period appears to be one in which the two poles of the system of inequality were being defined. The poles ultimately crystallized in the form of the brahmana at one end and tha candala at the other. If the candala were a tribe who were originally on the margin of Aryan society and represented a cultural contrast to the Aryans and were despised for this, over a period of timc whether they actually survived as a distinct identifiable group or not, they became a symbol of the idea of law as a value. Subsequently with the crystallization of the caste system, tribe, race, occupation

real people Instead, names were often associated with a profession which had similarities with one of these categories, but the terms themselves were never used. For example, the bhikkhus Sunita is described as being of low origin and of having performed the work of a puppachaddaka, but he is not called a pukkusa.(70) We also have the examples of nalakaras (basket weavers) who are described as being in their own settlements,(71) and of a bhikkhus committing suicide after accidently falling upon a vilivakaraya (basket maker)(72)and killing him, but in neither situation is there any mention of the term vena. Similarly, there are references to specific hunting groups like the Sakunika (fowler) and kevatta (fisherman)(73) but there are no identifiable nesadas.

We may conclude on the basis of the evidence cited above that the significant factor in Buddhist society for purposes of identification, particularly for the service groups, were the occupational divisions among people.(74) The function actually performed by a person provided the basic identity of individuals. The Buddhist texts clearly indicate that the categories that can be located as having an existential reality were either the various occupational divisions like barber, metal smith worker, potter, etc. or the categories of khattiya, brahmana and gahaputi. It is not possible for us to list here the hundreds of examples that are available to us in the Buddhist texts. Thus Tapussa and Bhallika are referred to

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ditinct cultural traits were synthesized into a system with the candala occupying the lowest status in society. The Buddhists, as is usual with them, use the vocabulary of the brahmanas which they infuse with their own meaning. Candala is used by the Buddhists to express a moral value and not to indicate low birth. In a hand-hitting attack on the brahmanas the Buddha turns the tables on them. He applies the term brahmana candala for a brahinana who leads an immoral and depraved existence but claims at the same time that he can remain undefiled and pure, like the fire which burns unclean things but remains pure in spite of it. (A.N., 11, p. 472).

70. Nice Kulamhi tato ahem daliddo appabhajano, hinam kamnmam mamam asi, ahosiin pupphachaddako (Theragätha, khuddaka Nikya, Vol. 11, p. 330).

71. MN, 11, pp. 478-9.

72. Pārajika, p. 101

73. S.N., 11, p. 212; M.N., 1, p. 315.

74. In the Vasettha Sutta the Buddha states that brahmanas who follow various occupations are agriculturists (kassako), traders (vanijjo), cattle keepers (gorakkho) etc. according to their respective work or occupation (kamma), (sutta Nipata, Khuddaka Nikaya, Vol. 1, pp. 364-5).

as vanijjas[75] traders, Dhaniyaas gopaka[76] (cattle keeper), ullder as a kammaraputta[77](son of a metal worker), a certain monk is referred to as having once been a Nahapita[78] (barber) and the Digha Nikaya refers to a nahapita called Bhesika[79]; Ghatikara and Dhaniya[80] are referred to as khumbhakaras (potters). This association with occupation in particularly true for those groups normally considered to be of low status in Buddhist society.

On the other hand, the status identification of groups which were ranked high in Buddhist literature correspond to the kula divisions of the khattiyas, brahrnanas and gahapatis. Apart from the instances cited where the Buddha is referred to as khattiya, there are numerous examples of clans referring to themselves as khattiyas.[81] In the Mahaparinibbana sutta various clans come forward and ask for a share of the Buddhas ashes saying 'Mayam pi khattiya The terms brahmana and gahapati appear too frequently as status terms to enumerate separately, but it is important to note that the brahmanas had most definitely emerged as a distinct social group who strongly asserted their brahrnanical identity as being based on ascribed status. This was the thrust of many of their discussions with the Buddha. But it is equally clear that the brāhmanas of Buddhist literature were not necessarily associated with the perfonnance and ritual with the pursuit of religious goals at all.

## THE BUDDHIST VIEW OF SOCIAL STRATIFICATION: THE SAIGHA

The early pali texts are unambigious in their assertion that a person's varna, jati or kula are irrelevant in the context of the social world, as represented by the Sangha. In their potential for salvation all are equal and neither the categories of the brahmanical scheme nor the categories of the scheme used by Buddhists have any bearing in the Sangha. In the kurrnakatthala sutta of Majjhima Nikaya, Buddha tells king pasenadi that there is no distinction among

75. Mahivagga, pp. 5-6
76. Sutta Nipata, Khuddaka Nikāya Vol. 1, p. 270.
77. D.N., 11, p. 98.
78. Mahavaqisa, p. 262.
79. D.N., 1, p. 191.
80. M.N., 11, p. 272; parajika, p. 51.
81. D.N., 11, pp. 126-7

people if they posse the proper qualities for striving and make the right effort, regardless of whether they are from khattiya, brahmana, vessa or sudda varna.[82] Similarly Mahãkaccãna tells the king of Madhura that a person from any of the four varnas was known simply as a saimana once he renounces the world, and would be equally entitled to respect.[83] It is said that a man becomes without varna (vevrniyanti) when he joins the Sangha.[84] Describing his dreams, the Buddha says that he saw four birds of different varna (colours) which come and fell at his feet and became entirely white. This is interpreted by him as syinolizing people belonging to the four varnas joining his Sangha and being freed from their original distinction.[85] It is considered unseemly in the texts to question a samana about his jati, and a muki although he might be from a nica kula, becomes noble by his good conduct.[86]People belonging to brahmana, khattiya, vessa and sudda kulas are all equally capable of accomplishing the right path if they follow the discipline promulgated by the Buddha and go forth from the home in to homelessness.[87] Bhikkhus belonging to brahmana, khattiya or gahapati kulas, along with others, would all be equal in the sangha where the best dwelling places and alms would be allocated according to the seniority of the monks, regardless of their social origins.[88] Thus neither conceptual categories, nor empirical categories are relevant within the Samgha.

## TRATIFICATION OUTSIDE THE SANGHA

The problem of determining the Buddhist attitude to the varna, jati and kula divisions in the context of the world outside the Sangha in more complex, however it is evident from the preceding sections that Buddhists had a system of stratification, although this was clearly different from the brahmanical notion of hierarachy The idea of high and low expressed itself if the context of jati, kula,

82. M.N., 11, p. 377; M.L.S., 11, p. 311
83. M.N., 11, p. 316; M.L.S., 11, p. 277.
84. A.N.,IV,p. 210.
85. A.N., 11, p. 482.
86. Sutta Nipata, khuddaka Nikaya, Vol. 1, p. 336.
87. M.N., 11, p. 445; M.L.S., II, p. 370.
88. Mahavagga, pp. 255-6.

kamma and sippa. However, it is important to point out that the systeni of stratification as portrayed in the ph canon depicts a social phenomenon or an existential reality, without religious sanctions, unlike the Brahmanical conception of hierarchy. The Buddhist texts were merely reflecting the situation prevailing in the region in which early Buddhism was located.

It appears that varna divisions were unimportant to the Buddhists even without the social world.(89) This was probably because the varnas were a purely conceptual categorization of society. Jati, on the other hand, seem to have been relevant in Buddhist society. A significant paasage in the Ambattha sutta states that jati vado applies not in the context of 'wisdom and righteousness' (or the social world concerned with salvation) but in the context of marriage, where references are made to questions of jati and gotta.(90) This idea is a fairly recurrent theme in early Buddhist literature and we often come across the idea of pure, unblemished birth (jati) going back seven generations on the side of both mother and father.(91) Another striking example is the reference to degenerate brahrnanas, who are criticized for marrying non-brahmanas in contemporary times. They are contrasted with the good brahmana of old who did not marry non-brahmanas. Significantly, this is the offence of degenerate brährnanas.(92)

Although the Buddha frequently derived the brahmanas art' special values based on ascribed status, the rationale for placing the khattiyas above the brahmanas is precisely of the purity of birth of khattiyas. When the young brahmana Ambattha abused the sakyas as 'based born',(93)thr Buddha reported not by dismissing the notion low birth, but by arguing that his own descent and the sakyas were

89. We have already cited a passage when the Buddha regards the varnas as irrelevant in the matter of service to the higher varnas by the lower varnas.

90. D.B., 1,p. 123;D.N., 1,pp. 86-7. The original reads as follows Na kho Ambaha, anuttarya vijjacharana sampadaya jativadova vacchati, gottavado va vacchati, maha vado va vacchati.... Yatha kho Ambatta avoho va hoti, vivaho va hoti,... ethena vaccfiti jativado va iti pi gottavaso va iti mana vado va iti.

91. MN, 11, p. 430; D.B., 1, pp. 146-7. It was the first in the list of honorable traits possessed by the Buddha himself.

92. A.N.11,p.466.

93. D.N., 1, pp. 78-84.

originally his masters since he was a descendent of a union between a sakya lord and one of their slave girls. In contrast, other sakyas were so conscious of their purity of their blood that when excited they intermarried with their own sisters for fear of spoiling their unblemished lineage.

The Buddha reiterated his point by establishing that Brahmanas were more lax in their disapproval of mixed unions than khattiyas.(94) For instance, the child of a union between a khattiya and a brahmana has allowed to participate in all the activities of the brahrnanas. This would include participation in making offerings to the gods and having access to brahmana women.(95) However, khattiyas would not permit the child of such a union to participate in the abhieka (consecration) ceremony of the khattiyas.(96)The Buddha argued from this that khattiyas were higher (seuha) and the brahmanas were inferior (hina) to them.(97)

The Pali texts suggest that the Buddha's pure birth and an unblemished lineage were one of the attributes which led people to pay homage to him. A notable example of this was the statement of brahniana cank to other brahmanas trying to dissuade him from going to see the Buddha "well then sirs", says Cank, 'hear from me why it is right that we ourselves should go and see the honoured gotama, and why it is right that the honoured gotama should not himself come to see us. Indeed, sirs, the recluse gotama is of pure birth on both sides, of pure descent from his mother and father, back through seven generations, unchallenged, irreproachable in respect of birth. And because the recluse gotama is of pure birth on both sides in reproachable in respect of birth. This is the reason why it is not right for the good gotama to come and see us, while it is right that we ourselves should go and see the honorable gotama"(98).

94. Ibid, pp. 84-6.

95. Ibid.

96. D.N., 1, p. 86. There is no evidence of the varnasamkara theory in early Buddhist texts. It would appear that in the Buddhist period children of mixed castes do not become part of a new caste, but are absorbed in the caste of one of the parents.

97. Ibid., p. 86.

98. M.L.S., 11, pp. 356-7; M.N.11 , p. 430.

## PRINCIPLES OF STRATIFICATION BASED ON KULA, KAMMA AND SIPPA

It is clear that Buddhists acknowledged the importance of jan in the context of marriage and birth. They recognized also a system of stratification for the social world where kula kamma and sippa were either high or low. The kind of family one originated from and the nature of work one performed was an important index to the placement of a person in the social system as either high or low. This categorization of kula, kamnia and sippa into high and low over based on certain principles. First, in the Buddhist system those who work for themselves as owners and producers are ranked high whereas those who work for others are regarded as low. For instance, the gahapati, as we have established earlier was consistently ranked high and represented the category of owner- producer ideally. In this Buddhism clearly displayed a different point of view from the existing brahmanical notion. The brahmanical system of ranking placed economic functions below religious and political functions. [(99)]The Buddhists, however, attached tremendous significance to the economic function and considered it to be as important as religious and political functions. Brahmanical texts refer to the vaisyas or the economic groups as an eminently exploitable category, to be oppressed at the will of the higher varnas.[(100)] The Buddhists, in contrast, always treated the gahapati as an eminently respectable category. Consistent with this, the occupation of agriculture, cattle keeping and trade were rated high, whereas those who performed services for others such as storeroom-keepers (kotthaka kammakara) and flower sweeper (pupphachaddaka), were low. Secondly, among the sippas there is a division of high and low corresponding to non-manual and manual skills, since mudda, ganana and lekha (counting, accounting and writing) were ranked high, whereas basket making, pottery, leatherwork, weaving and the work higher was low. Thirdly, the Buddhists exhibited some notion of racial superiority since aboriginal groups like the nica kulas or the hina jatis (candala, pukkusa, veim, rathakara and nesada[(101)], who

99. Varistlia Dharmasutra, the sacred laws of the Aryas, S. B. E. Vol. XIV,p. 11.

100. Aitereya Brahmana, XXXV.

101. Th. Flick, the social organization of North East India in Buddha's time, p. 324

were probably associated with low material culture were given a low rank.[102] Purity of blood and unblemished lineage was extremely important to the Buddhists.

There is also no indication in the Buddhist texts that social distinction in the Buddhist texts that social distinctions are irrelevant or expiable. In fact, the texts contain the idea of what can be called a 'package deal' where wealth, eminence, beauty and wisdom was associated with high kulas. Similarly, poverty, stupidity and ugliness were associated with low kulas. In the Balapandita sutta, the Buddha states, 'if at some time or other that fool came to human status again, he would be born in to those families that are low, a candala family, or a nesada family, or a vena family or a rathakara family, or a pukkusa family, in such a family as is needy, without enough to eat and drink, where a covering for the back is obtained with difficulty. Moreover, he would be ill favoured, ugly, dwarfish, sickly, blind, or deformed, or lame or paralysed; he would be unable to get food, drink, vehicles, garlands, scents, perfumes, bed, dwelling and lights'[103]. Conversely, if a wise man was reborn, he would be born in to one of those families that are high: a rich khattiya family or a family of rich brahmanas, or a family of rich gahapatis, in such a family as is well to do; of great possessions, of great resources, with abundant gold and silver, abundant means, abundant wealth in grains. Moreover, he would be lovely, good to look upon, charming, evdowed with the greatest beauty of complexion; he would be able to get food, drink, clothes, vehicle, garlands, scents and perfumes, bed, dwelling and lights".[104] The only possibility of escape from this system of stratification envisaged by the Buddhists is the idea that by leading a virtuous and generous life in this existence one can ensure rebirth with an improved social status in the next.[105] Alternatively, joining the Sangha and renouncing the social world it-self was necessary in order to escape from the system of stratification. Bougle has argued that by adopting the vows of mendicancy and Chastity bhikkhus simultaneously turned away from the work of production

102. Pacittiya, p. II M.N., ifi, p. 240.
103. M.N., 111, p. 240; M.L.S., in, p. 215.
104. MM., in, p. 248; M.LS, 111, p. 222.
105. M.N., 111, pp. 282-4; S.N., 1, pp. 92-6.

(or economic effort) and reproduction (family life).[106] We have already demonstrated the existence of stratification in Buddhism, both in the context of marriage and occupation. In the social world everyone had necessarily to be involved both with production and with reproduction and therefore could not evade becoming part of the system of stratification. Only the bhikkhu could possibly escape from the system, for both the nature of occupation and endogamous marriage no longer had any relevance for him.[107]

We have earlier pointed out that Buddhist society does not display a complex system of ranking. The elaborate design of the Brahmanical system is missing. Instead, we have a simpler two-tier system of stratification with a conception of high and low working separately in the context of jati, kula, kamma and sippa. The idea that all these strands can be woven into a comprehensive system with birth, race, occupation and service being accommodated in it clearly does not exist in the Buddhist texts. This was probably because at the time of early pali canon caste was in an embryonic state. It was still in the process of being formulated and did not yet have all the features that it was to exhibit later.

## EVIDENCE OF STRATIFICATION FROM CEYLON

The principles of stratification relevant in Buddhism can be illustrated meaningfully with the empirical evidence of caste in Ceylon This is particularly relevant as Ceylon was the first region in which Buddhist principles of stratification were applied in their own unique form.The idea of stratification was carried there by Buddhists and could develop unhampered by existing traditions in India, however, Buddhist principles had to contend with the existing system of stratification and its elaboration under the Buddhist principles themselves have become somewhat obscured.[108]

It has been established that the Sinhalese caste system is historically and conceptually related to the Indian system, although there are fewer castes in Ceylon. There is also less scope here for

106. Celestin Bougle, Essays on the caste system, p. 73.

107. Ibid

108. Hutton suggests that Buddhist countries reflect an earlier form of caste before the systematization of the Hindu thinkers ( J. H. Hutton, caste in India, p. 148).

ritual pollution through the violation of caste tabus, partly because both the top and bottom strata of Indian caste system are missing in Ceylon of the four brahmanical social castes the sinhalese lack the brahmanana and khattiyas.[109] The fact that they do not exist as social group in Ceylon is of some importance to our analysis. In the monarchical kingdoms mentioned in Buddhist texts, the khattiyas were restricted to the royal family, and were not numerically significant. This accounts for their non-existence in Ceylon, where the khattiyas were reduced to their non-existence in Ceylon, where the khattiyas were reduced to their representation in the person of the king. The absence of brahmana is also logical. In a society based entirely on Buddhist principles, the brahmanas were redundant as their religious function was performed by the bhikkhus.[110]

The absence of the brahmana has been of utmost importance in determining the nature of caste in Ceylon. Than has argued that there is some basis for believing that sinhalese caste, rather than being a pale expression of a classical, rigidly defined hierarchy of ancient times, is instead the modern expansion of a primitive Indian system.

**RYAN SAYS**

The accouterments of caste developed, but without raced systematization as in India and hence with the retention of the essentially secured hierarchy of early times. The period in which the historical ground work of the Sinhalese civilization was laid was one in which caste, as a restive institution, was in its incipient and one might almost say, doctrinal stages. The caste system of Ceylon which first struck the European observer was no degenerate form but an autonomous growth, under Indian influence it is true, but which never knew the structuralizating power of the brahmana.[111]

With the elimination of two of the three high groups of the early Buddhist texts, only the gahapati has revived in the form of

109. Richard F. Gombrich, Precept and practice, p. 296.

110. Consequently there is no opposition between the brahmana pursuing rligious goals and living in the social world, and the bhikkhu who pursues religious goals outside it as in Indian society. Similarly in a purely Buddhist society the conflict between the Khattiya and the brahmana has also been eliminated.

111. Bryce Ryan, Castes in Modern Ceylon, pp. 7-8.

the goyigama or rice agriculturist in Ceylon. They are the highest caste here and are known among themselves as the 'good men', as distinct from the lower castes.(112) The Sinhalese work, the dipavamsa (A.D. 500-1500) also usually divides people into kulina (people of family) and hina (inferiors) and this corresponds to the distinction between the goyigama and the low castes. Significantly, the sinhalese hardly have anyone corresponding to the vast array of Hindu outcastes. Ryan remarks, 'perhaps the most notable feature of sinhalese stratification in its contrast with the Indian is the absence of untouchables in the Hindu sense. In Buddhism no man is 'unclean' in the sacred meaning of the concept. The absence of the Hindu concept has rendered the sinhalese caste system mild and humanitarion when judged by Indian standards'.(113)

The hierarchial position of a caste in Ceylon corresponds to the numerical size. Thus, the highest caste of the goyigama includes almost half the total population.(114) Although the dominant and wealthiest people in peasant village areas were usually goyigamas, not all of them are well off in a material sense. It is often true, however, that among the abjecity poor the goyigama are notably and are represented, and among the wealthy of the peasant village they are notably over-represented.(115) Apart from the traditional occupation of cultivation, Hocart has described the actual function performed by the goyigāma in the kandyan kingdom of Ceylon. They were village headmen and held all the other offices of state apart from the priestly ones; they fed the king and the temple and received service from the lower castes.(116)

The last function is an extremely important aspect of stratification in Ceylon. Villagers when asked 'what is the caste?' replied that lower castes had to perform certain tasks for the cultivator, and this was how castes was generally understood Illustrating what they

112. Richard Gombrick, precept and practice, p 296; A. M. Hocard (caste: A Comarative study , p. 3) also says 'the good people are opposed to the 'low castes', who comprise fishermen, smiths, washermen etc.'

113. Bryce Ryan, castes in Modern Ceylon, p. 15

114. Ibid.,p. 19

115. Ibid.,p.97.

116. A.M. Hocard, Caste: A comparitive study, p.5

could not easily define they said:' the people of X are drammers. They are like servants. When called they must come for dancing, festivals and processions. The farmers give them food and also cash for their hard work'. Hocant concludes that what was uppermost in the minds full his witnesses was the idea of service.(117) Ryan reiterates this point: 'Direct personal services to the goyigāma are preserved in the kandyan provinces, particularly where economic power, usually in the form of rentable land, is in the hands of the highest caste or the goyigarna. Caste status must be approximately congruent with the type of service required.'(118)

The goyigäma is ranked high in sinhalese society and is superior to the low castes because he is an independent owner-producer who may or not work on his own land, but who commands service from others. His similarity with the gahapati of the Buddhist texts is striking.(119)

Other notable features of the Sinhalese caste system relevant to our analysis include the absence of sub-castes and the idea that new caste arise from a breach of endogamous practices. The brahmanic theory regarding the fissiparous origins of a multiplicity of caste division has no significance in Ceylon also corresponds to our conclusion of early Buddhist society. The ordinary term for caste is jati, which is associated with birth and carries the connotation of a species or a category. The more scholarly term varna is never used.(120) The term kula may also signify caste. For instance, the myth of caste origins is called kula bedimak and refers back to the mythological ancestor Maha Sammata who, needing various kinds of services done for him, first divided people into castes.(121)

In the context of family and on marriage also the Sinhalese evidence is valuable. Ryan remarks that concepts of family and marriage provide the most substantial buiworks for the preservation of caste structure. The solidarity of kin as a unit of action and loyalty,

117. Ibid.,p.7-8

118. Bryse Ryan, Castes in Modern Ceylon, p. 192.

119. Ibid.,p. 14

120. Nur Yalman, under the Bo Tree: studies in caste, kingship and marriage in interior Ceylon, p. 61

121. Ibid.,p.89

the concepts of family honour and reputation, the injunctions and custom of marriage all lead to maintenance of caste integrity and to some extent of caste hierarchy. He holds that an indispensable and fundamental characteristic of caste in Ceylon in its restriction upon marriage. The marriage system of the Sinhalese prevents marriage outside caste, and together, with concepts of family honour, is part of the very substance of caste, where family integrity is inevitably defined in terms of caste and birth status.(122)

It is evident from an analysis of Buddhist texts and the empirical evidence of Ceylon, the Buddhists had certain central principles for the social organization of a Buddhist society. Ryan has observed that these principles were not merely the acceptance of a social system by a religious movement but, rather, an ideological integration with it, since through the principle of kamma, it accepted an ideological justification for the existence of social hierarchy. However, Buddhism was not a driving force in building and establishing social hierarchy as a sacred institution. It rationalized rather than promoted caste.(123) The existence of social hierarchy was far from being inconsistent with the ideology of Buddhism, and concepts evident in the early Pali canon probably provided the concrete blue print for the development of the social organization of Ceylon.

The example of Ceylon has been cited to demonstrate the relationship between the idea of social stratification reflected in early Buddhist literature and a concrete expression of these ideas in social reality. Except for the penetration of caste distinction into the Sangha itself, which certainly violated a fundamental tenet of Buddhism, there was a significant convergence between principle and practice in the context of Sinhalese social stratification. It should not surprise us if both caste and Buddhism went to Ceylon from India. One can argue from this that ideas on social stratification as revealed in early Buddhist literature show two features. On the one hand, they may be depicting contemporary notions of social stratification as they actually existed in the popular mind. On

122. Bryce Ryaii, castes in Modern Ceylon, p. 29.

123. Ibid, pp. 36-7. See also the Balapandita sutta and the Culakammavibhanga sutta of the Majjhima Nikaya which state that wrong actions will result in re-birth in families which are poor and of low social status. (M.N., 111, pp. 240, 283; S.N., 1, pp. 92-6).

the other, these ideas may have been the specifically Buddhist conception of social stratification and an intrinsic part of the Buddhist world view. Both features are likely to have been an integral part of Buddhist texts. While the classification of social categories into high and low was probably influences by Buddhist values, the Buddhist point of view itself reflected the system of stratification as it existed at the time, and has related to the empirical categories that were widely recognized in society. Both points are best elucidated by the case of gahapati.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF THE GAHAPATI IN THE BUDDHIST VIEW OF STRATIFICATION

The consistently high status that is accorded to the gahapati in the Buddhist texts is likely to have been, at least in part, the real status of the gahapati in society at the time of the Buddha. This is clear from the relationship that existed between the king as the head of state and the major economic representative of the time. The high status of gahapatis in relation to the people is also evident from the term of address, ayya putta, sometimes used for them.[124] However, the Buddha's own recognition of the significance of the econon1ic function as being basic to any society, despite his advocacy of renunciation as a means to salvation, clearly indicates his specific contribution to ideas on social status. Further by attributing the khattiya, brahmana and gahapati to high status the equated the functions full three on the same scale. Tle khattiya, brāhmana and gahapati were all equally important to the social system. There is absolutely no indication in the three Ucca kula categories of khattiya, brāhmana and gahapati, even though the serial order is always the same. The serial order of the low kula is also always the same and similarly, the pali texts give no indication of a hierarchy of status among them. The question of rebirth in an ucca kula is a good index of the equal status of the three, rebirth in a ucca kula is equally valued whether in a khattiya kula, brahmana kula or a gahapati kula. Simlarly, kulaputtas, or youngmen of good families (which include khattiyas, brhmanas and gahapatis). Pursuing certain occupations such as cattle keeping, agriculture and trade are

124. S.N., 111, p. 269.

placed along with occupation like accounting and joining the king's service. Significantly, the statement about the kulaputtas following occupations such as agriculture, cattle keeping and trade is made to a brhmana and a khattiyas and represents the Buddha's attitude to economic functions. One who produces is not less important than the person who wields power or who teaches and performs religious functions. All three categories contribute in equal measure and perform complementary functions in the social system. In this the Buddha is reversing radically the Brahmanical position wherein the role of the economy is clearly subservient to the role of ritual and power.

The arguments contained in the preceding sections bring us to a crucial aspect of the evidence examined by us. The marked absence of the gahapati from the brahmanical varna and jati schemes both in the brahmanical sources as well as in the references to the varna and jati schemes contained in the Buddhist and Jaina texts. In contrast the gahapati is an inherent part of the kula scheme depicted in the Buddhist literature. Since the gahapatis as a group were intrinsic to the economic domain and more specifically were the owners and controllers of the primary means of production in the form of land, their infusion in the Buddhist scheme is of particular importance. The gahapati were not a caste or a group whose status was based on birth. In fact the gahapati cuts across other social groups since the texts use the word brahmana gahapati for brahmana whose identity was based on ascribed status but who performed the function of a gahapati. The future to accommodate the gahapati in the brahmanical system is greatest failure of the brahmanical model it shows up clearly the model's rigidity and titter distance from empirical reality.

The brahmanical model is weakest in explaining the politic economic domain. On the other hand, the inclusion of the gahapati in the system of stratification is the strength of the Buddhist scheme. The evidence of the Buddhist texts is unambiguous in its representation of the gahapati as an economic category but this does not mean that the gaiapati èan be mechanically equated with the vessa and thereby fitted into the brabmanical scheme. Such an equation militates in the entire weight of evidence available in the Buddhist sources. The vessa and the suddas are theoretical categories in the brahmanical scheme based on ascribed status. The gahapati on

the other hand is clearly a category in the system of production. He is one who commands and hires the labour of the dasakammakara. The term brahmana-gahapati shows the need to move beyond the brahmanical caste categories in order to explain existing reality. It should be noted that it was not the ordinary brahmana who drew services from the suddas in the Buddhist texts. It was only the brahmana-gahapati who drew services from the daskamrnakaras in a relationship that originated from the brahmana gahapati control over land rather that form any notion of ritual superiority of the brahmanas.

The inability of the caste framework to depict the social reality of the period and of the brahmanical scheme to accommodate the gahapati has resulted in portraying not merely a partial view of society but also a distorted view of it. This conclusion is more than borne out by early inscriptions evidence while there are no inscription available for the pre—Mauryan period with which we are mainly concerned, there is considerable inscriptional evidence for the period 200 B.C. to A.D. 200.[125] What is stricking for an analysis of the empirical categories of the inscriptions is not just their close correspondence but their near absolute similarity, with the social categories of Buddhist literature.

The inscriptions make the same distinct use of the words gahapati, setthi-gahapati and setthi, likewise of vanijja, cammakara, kammara and dantakara. There are no direct references to khattiyas and true fact is very significant for us. It has earlier been pointed out that there are no references to khattiyas in the Buddhists texts except in the gana-sanghas which were restricted to specific areas in North-Eastern India. Since the sites of the inscriptions are mostly concentrated in central and South-Central India, the absence of khattiyas supports our conclusion that the khattiyas were numerically significant only in the gana sanghas. Similarly, there are numerous references to brahrnanas, but none to suddas. Instead, there are references to occupational categories which include both skilled and unskilled workers. If these categories were supposed to be suddas, according

125. The inscription relate to gifts of various kinds made to the Buddhist Sangha by donors from a wide range of social groups. .....

to brahmanical theory, it was irrelevant to the donors. They, and others, row themselves as members of an occupational category which gave them a sense of identity. The debate on the question of whether the gahapati was vessa or the kammakara a sudda, was not the major problem for Buddhists.

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# THE BHIKKHUṆĪ LEADERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: THEN AND NOW

by Venerable Kundasale Subhagya*

**ABSTRACT**

Since the new Āryan civilization invaded North India, the subject of women has been a controversial problem. By the time Buddhism arose in the sixth century BC, it had become to a stage for freedom fighters after enormous vicissitudes of their lives. In a dominant society where the Hinduism vs. Brāhmanism was at their peak, women had to come out as a challenging force. As no one could challenge her erudition at the time she was struggling to fix her place in the male dominant environment. The order of Bhikkhuṇī (Buddhist Nuns) was the first woman association and it is a feminist land mark in the world. According to the Buddha, there should be four categories of people to complete the Buddhist dispensation. Such as; monks, nuns, male devotees and female devotees. Even though the ultimate result is Nirvana, not only in the present but also in the Buddha's time, as females the Bhikkhuṇīs were doing such a great service to the Buddhist dispensation. The dynamic philosophical character Bhikkhuṇī Dhammadinnā is great example for that. The contribution of Bhikkhuṇīs was gained for each section of country since historical times. Bhikkhuṇī community

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was struggling with many conflicts in most of the eras. But when considering the Buddhist countries not only in Sri Lanka but also in many other countries, the Bhikkhuṇī gives such a wonderful leadership to Social development. Create wonderful women to the society; the contribution of the Bhikkhuṇī is at an appreciation level. There was an immense contribution from the Bhikkhuṇī for the development of the younger generation and to obtain a great success within a country through it. Devotion of younger generation engages in social work and social development, can be taken as results of this. Chanting Paritta, Dhamma Preaching, Bhodhipūja, pre marriage and marriage counseling are some of services which Bhikkhuṇī are engaging with. Education, knowledge of Tripitaka, experience and discipline is highly helpful for them to engage with the society. The Bhikkhuṇīs are doing much social work in all over the world focusing specially on women and children. There are many associations in the world which are controlled and conducted by the Bhikkhuṇī for social development. But still Bhikkhuṇīs are struggling with gender discrimination, education, resignation and high ordination.

## 1. OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this paper is a study of the Bhikkunī in the Buddhist era and present. This research is based on the slow modifications and changes in each era with the attention on the way Bhikkuṇīs play a leadership role in contemporary society and evaluate their contribution towards sustainable equity with in the society.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The data for the study has been collected from both primary and secondary sources and relevant monographs and religious texts. Ethnographic study has been conducted using observation and interview methods, with Bhikkhunīs, Bhikkhus and Lay people as subjects.

## 3. DISCUSSION

The position of women in the male dominant pre-Buddhist Indian society had been pathetic. Man, by birth, has a strong desire for power. That is why, throughout history, man has fought wars.

Participation by man in these wars was important than that of the woman. This dissertation will investigate the relevant conditions of the pre-Buddhist period and show how the situation changed in the sixth century BC. The epoch-making contribution of women during this period will also be discussed. Historical details and the excavations of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa civilizations (before 3000 BC) had proved, with the seals and the statues found, that woman and man had equal[1] freedom. It is interesting to know that although Indian society was at one time Matriarchal in nature it later became Patriarchal. Women were venerated as Jaganmātā (global mother)[2]. The period of Brahmins was considered as the golden age of Indian history. Brahmanism became very strong this time and they were even about to challenge the Crown. Brahmins clearly understood this situation and women were to be separated completely from the freedom and rites that had been enjoyed during the Vedic period. Thus was established the patriarchal way of society. This was the time the priests and Brahmins did all the religious rituals and the Ksasrīya was the class under them. Women were denied all religious and sacrificial rites[3].

The transformation of the woman to ascetic tradition was a process that took time given the dominant male Brāhmanical tradition. The social background of woman during this period was a changing in the attitude to certain extent. Ven. Jaina Mahāveera, a contemporary of the Buddha, had Śvetāṃbara as female ascetics. When Buddhism arose, women had an inferior position. Indian religions were categorized as Brahmanism to distinguish from Hinduism. Buddhism was the only religion that gave unlimited freedom to women[4]. At the outset of Buddhism, all women were either Hindus or of some other sect. A clear example being that of King Pasenadi of Kosala who had doubts when he heard that queen Kosala Mallikā bore him a daughter. Then, in society, male children were regarded as more useful than female ones. The King was, up to that time, an adherent of Brāhmanical religion and sought guidance

1. Kengan Paul ,Bader: Clarisse women in Ancient India, London:, 1923( p23).
2. Sinha & Bannerjee, History of India- vol.i, (p.42).
3. Clarisse, Women in ancient India (p.28).
4. Clarisse, Woman in Ancient India,(p.18).

and teaching from the Buddha. "A woman child, Lord of men, may prove to be a better offspring than a male".[5] There are several instances where woman have been given fair treatment. There are many suttas which the Buddha preached that one should have regard for women.

Even though[6] the Bhikkhu sāsana (Dispensation of the Buddha) was established after few months of his enlightenment, the Bhikkhuṇī Order was established five years later. Community of Bhikkhuṇī has been a feature of life in Buddhist societies since early times. The Buddha recommended the renunciation path as the most effective means for achieving liberation and many women were attracted to this path beginning with the Buddha's own stepmother, Mahāprajāpatī Gotamī. Like other renunciants in the Buddha's day, Buddhist monks and nuns lived a simple celibate life, limiting desires, attachments and worldly distractions in order to focus on spiritual practice. Free of mundane involvements, Buddhist renunciation was able to concentrate wholeheartedly on achieving liberation and enlightenment[7]. This was the landmark in Indian history as the Buddha allowed women to enter the Order. There were eight special Rules (garudhamma) and were incorporated later in the Bhikkhuṇī vinaya. Even though there are many controversial comments on the eight rules, it was the acceptance of these rules that allowed high ordination for the Mahāprajāpatī. Critical study of the Aṭṭagarudhamma is a major point to understand the status of the women in this era.

The order of Bhikkhuṇī began when Mahāprajāpatī Gotamī asked the Buddha to admit women to the Saṇgha. Despite some initial hesitation, the Buddha acknowledged that women are fully capable of realizing the fruits of the path and achieving liberation. With the Buddha's approval, the Bhikkhuṇī ordination was established. Under the able leadership of Mahāprajāpatī Gotamī the community of Bhikkhuṇī flourished and thousands of women became Arahath, purifying their minds and liberating themselves from suffering and rebirth. The ancient Buddhist texts record the names of many of those Bhikkhuṇīs, who were recognized by the Buddha for their special attainments.

5. Sanyutta Nikaya, iii,2,6.

6. I.B.Horner, Women under Primitive Buddhism: Laywomen and Almswomen, Delhi:Motilal Banarasidass,1989.P.103.

7. Gotami Sutta, A:N.

Throughout Buddhist history there have been great Bhikkhuṇīs, but the lives of Bhikkhuṇīs have generally been overshadowed by those of monks. In patriarchal Buddhist societies, where preference is given to male children in families, schools and monasteries, female children have had to struggle for food, health care, education and the right to live a contemplative life. Even though Buddhist women may pursue a religious life, Bhikkhuṇīs have often been poorly supported, undereducated and neglected. In the last two decades, a new awareness of the inequalities that exist between nuns and monks has developed and changes are being made to correct these inequalities. With the leadership of Mahāprajāpati Gotamī many women were absorbed into the Bhikkhuṇī ordination. Buddha opened the doors of the dispensation to all castes and he said that just as the waters from various directions flow into the ocean and are known as sea water, similarly those who entered the sāsana from whatever the castes would be known as recluses, the sons of the Sākya (*Śamana sākya putta*). All sorts of women were absorbed into the Order for many varied reasons. The Bhikkhuṇī leadership revolutionized the life of women and established gender equality.

The Leadership included Mahāprajāpatī, Yasodharā, Nandā, Ubharī, Khemā, Selā and Alavikā from royal clans; Somā, Uppalavannā, Bhadrā, Kundallakesī, Patacarā, Sujātā, Addhakesī belongs to (*Seṭṭhi*) milliners class; Sundarī and Rohinī were Brāhmin class; Ambapālī, Addhakasī, Abhayamātā, Vimalā were prostitutes (*Nagarasobhinī*); Sumangala mātā got badly treated by her husband; Cāpā was a daughter of a deer hunter; Subhā was a daughter of a goldsmith; Candrā was a begging woman and Kisāgotamī defended her children[8]. Regardless of the controversies surrounding the founding of the order, a successful and vibrant nuns' order, led by Gotamī, ran parallel to the monks' order during the Buddha's time. Gotamī and other nuns were the perfect role models for Buddhist women in the past and historically inspired the society with great influence. An interesting and famous Subha's story is the revelation of her understandings. How far Ambapālī had gone deep into the thoughts of impermanence she says: "my

8. Apadānapāli.

black hair was like the colors of wasps but now they are like jute"[9]. There are more stories which are impressive in every way. The therī verses are more like the best medicines to the society. There were very skillful therīes who did an important service to then society. There were philosophers like Bhikkhuṇī Dhammadinnā, Khemā and so on, as well as great Orators. When following the Biographies of the chief 80 female disciples of the Buddha, it is easy to understand how they contributed to the society.

These kinds of Bhikkhuṇī characters have proved that emancipation or Nibbāna is common and attainable by both genders that follow the right path. The Buddha Offered the Chief places to the Bhikkhuṇīs as well as the Bhikkhus.[10] This shows how Bhikkhuṇī leadership was effective in establishing gender equity in society. The Buddha Offered the Chief places to the Bhikkhuṇīs as well as the Bhikkhus. This shows how Bhikkhuṇī leadership was effective in establishing gender equity in society.

Presently, the Bhikkhuṇīs contribution to the sustainable development of the world is at an appreciable level. Even though the Bhikkhuṇī community vanished from the world for a few decades, reestablishment was highly successful. Now more than ten countries have well established Bhikkhuṇī communities and they work for gender equity and sustainable world development.[11] When considering the Buddhist traditions, not only in Sri Lanka but also in Thailand, Vietnam, Myanmar, Tibet, India, Taiwan and many other countries, the Bhikkhuṇīs are very much concerned about creating wonderful women in the society. The path to the modern Feminism is opened by the Leadership of the Mahāprajāpatī Gotamī in Buddhist era.[12] The Bhikkhuṇīs are doing much social work all over the world focusing especially on women and children. There are many associations in the world which are controlled and conducted by the Bhikkhuṇīs for social development. The Sakyadhita international conference is one of the major steps

9. Terī gātā.
10. Apadāna.
11. Karma Lekshe Tsomo, The Buddhist woman; (pg.59).
12. Karma Lekshe Tsomo, The Buddhist woman; (pg.59).

taken by the Bhikkhuṇīs to give leadership to gender equity.[13] It is conducted by Sakyadhita International Association of Buddhist Women which was established in 1988 in the United States. An international conference is held every two years. The conference brings together lay persons and nuns from different countries and traditions to share their experiences, research and to encourage projects to improve conditions for Buddhist women especially in developing countries since 1987. The conferences feature papers, workshops and presentations on topics relevant to Buddhist women. The global gatherings are open to all, regardless of gender, ethnicity, or religion. The Taiwanese Bhikkhuṇī community gives standard Bhikkhuṇī leadership for sustainable development of social and religious harmony. Presently, there are highly educated Bhikkhuṇīs who are outstanding in fields such as education, social service and the Arts. Bhikkhuṇīs promote Vinaya studies, standing for women's equality in Buddhism, helping Children's developments and female successes, helping poor Buddhist Bhikkhuṇīs in developing countries such as Sri Lanka got the Nagahananda University from Taiwan to help Bhikkhuṇīs in education and annually they give alms donations to the Sri Lankan Buddhist nuns to have a healthy life. Especially in Asian countries the Bhikkhuṇīs are very much forward in religious activities such as spiritual and material development. They are contributing to the same level as the Buddhist monks. In Sri Lanka Bhikkhuṇī Leadership is contributing to the society to drive the eradication of gender discriminations through the All Island Buddhist Nuns Association - SMJM (Silmata Jathika Mandalaya). Besides every province the Bhikkhuṇīs are conducting Bhikkhuṇī associations. But as a 3rd world developing country still Sri Lankan Bhikkhuṇīs also struggling with the Education facilities, High Ordination, Opportunities and Resignation. These problems are very much common for most of the Asian countries.

## 4. CONCLUSION

According to this research the Bhikkhuṇī contribution from ancient times for the continuing existence of Buddhism in many countries. With a new global ethic of social justice and equality for

13. Karma Lekshe Tsomo, The Buddhist woman;(pg: 62).

women, the inequalities present in Buddhist societies have been exposed as being contrary to Buddhist ideals. The Buddha is often held up as a model of social equality and Buddhism is generally regarded as a path that offers equal opportunities for all, regardless of race, class, or gender. The disparity between Buddhist social ideals and the inequalities that exist in Buddhist societies can no longer be ignored. For Buddhism to be taken seriously as a resource for positive change in society today, Buddhists must correct the social injustices that exist in their own societies and institutions, and bring social realities in line with Buddhist teachings. For women, this means gaining equal opportunities for education, ordination, and access to Buddhist teachings. The changes must not been merely token or cosmetic or occasional, but thorough and genuine which requires a transformation of attitudes about women. To demonstrate that Buddhists are acting in good faith and that the Buddhist teachings truly have the power to transform society, Buddhist women must have an equal voice and equal opportunities to achieve well-being and enlightenment. The changes that are occurring for Buddhist women around the world today are very encouraging and can become a beacon of hope for women in other societies.

Bhikkhuṇī Leadership towards gender equity and sustainable social development is equivalent to the contribution rendered by the Bhikkhus in the world. Dedication of Bhikkhuṇīs should be improved more be more equivalent to Mahāprajāpatī Gotamī. Everybody have to work for create a social awareness of the importance of the Bhikkhuṇīs. The governments have to make arrangements to get higher education with government help. All the authorized Buddhist community members have to take a suitable decision about Bhikkhuṇī High Ordination. Every Bhikkhuṇī should get social and religious rights as Buddhist monks. Establishing associations to engage in social works for Bhikkhuṇīs and Bhikkhus together is very important for the successful career of the Bhikkhuṇīs. Bhikkhuṇī Leadership is highly effective in women life to help them escape from the all types of violence, especially Domestic violence. Bhikkhuṇī Leadership always guides the women for the success in the modern life. When comparing to last few decades in present, the Bhikkhuṇīs are very much smart, dynamic and enthusiastic and they are effectible to success Mundane and super- mundane life.

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# BUDDHISTS CONTRIBUTIONS TO BUILDING MORE HARMONIOUS AND SUSTAINABLE SOCIETIES[1]. A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS[2].

by José A. Rodríguez Díaz[*]

Social Harmony and Sustainability are two key issues and central avenues of Buddhist global social and political action towards a better future world.

This paper analyzes how Buddhists contribute to the building of better future societies as it focuses on those attitudes and actions aimed at improving social interrelations and at helping to create environmental sustainable societies.

The analysis of the Buddhist contributions to more harmonious and sustainable societies leads us to explore the social dimensions of Buddhism and to see Buddhism as a social path. Although there are important contributions to its social aspects, the dominant view of Buddhism is as an individual path. However, some key and central elements of Buddhism (and its practice) are beyond the autonomous individual realm and point to the realm of the social (as interrelations).

This seems to indicate that the practice of Buddhism implies a social path. Non-ego, dependent-origination, vacuity, non-duality,

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1. Dedicated to my dear friend and colleague (kalyanamitta) John W. Mohr.

2. This paper has benefited from the help and love of Joanne M. Vitello and Alex Rodríguez.

they all lead to interrelation (the social) as the space providing identity. The Law of Karma points to the causality in the system of interrelations. And the idea of the Bodhisattva, or the idea of Loving-Kindness or the Four Immensurable[3], have a social form in their practice. They all focus on the interrelation with other beings (human or non-humans) looking for their wellbeing and happiness. They constitute a main avenue of values and practices towards the creation of harmonious relations with others, and within and between societies

To explore these social dimensions and social path we focus on the Meanings given and the Practices deployed towards harmonious relations and sustainability.

Using survey data, the paper analyzes the meanings and practices of Buddhists regarding trust and relations to others, war-peace, and environmental protection issues. It analyzes the interrelations among values and actions along with the similarities and differences between Buddhists of different countries or/and of different regions in order to understand some of the social cognitive and action structures existing.

The theoretical and methodological approaches used in the paper are the result of combining, and in some cases fusing, Buddhism with Sociology.

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Paper prepared for the 16$^{Th}$ **United Nations Day of Vesak 2019 Academic Conference**, hosted by the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, to be held at Tam Chuc International Buddhist Convention Centre, Ha Nam Province, Vietnam, 12 to 14 May 2019.

## WHAT

This paper aims to contribute with some insight into the knowledge of the structural form socially taken by the complex system of interconnections and influences among multiple views and actions towards the others. To do so, the paper analyzes values (Meanings) and actions (Practices) of Buddhist people in some

3. Mettam Sutta: The Brahma-viharas. SN 46.54.

Asian countries towards others and the environment. The analysis aspires to understand the peculiarities, the similarities and the differences of Buddhist people of different countries and regions.

The first part of the paper empirically explores, using survey data, values (Meanings) and actions (Practices) of Buddhist people. We use indicators of their contribution to a better world by focusing on the happiness and wellbeing of others and the environment and therefore facilitating harmony and sustainability. To enhance the comparison, I use Multi-Dimensional Scaling (MDS) and Hierarchical Cluster Analysis (HCA) to build social maps which depict countries according to their social distances.

Once I have seen how countries get placed in a new social map of Meanings and Practices, we explore, in the second part of the paper, its social structure. That is to say, how it takes form as structural combination of variables. The combination of systems of relations, of those values, attitudes and actions define the cognitive-action social field. The map of the social field shows the essence of the social cultural identities of Buddhist people.

As a clear example of the non-duality approach, the interrelation of Meanings and Practices yields a social cognitive and action structure we could think of as the Buddhist social DNA. This Meaning and Practices social structure is the central piece of a system of interrelations with Social conditions and with a representation of a harmonious and sustainable society formed by happiness, health and life satisfaction (*Life*) of Buddhist people. *Life* is both a resulting and a causal factor embedded within this large cognition-action interaction system.

## HOW

I use the best and largest global sociological survey currently being carried out (World Values Survey) which focuses on general social values and attitudes and has questions and indicators related to trust and care for others, war, and environmental protection. The latest wave of the survey (2014) gathers information from more than 90 thousand people from 62 countries worldwide with an important presence of countries with large Buddhist populations. This ample data-set allows me to study and compare Buddhists in

Asia, where the vast majority (99%) of Buddhists live[4]. The data-set includes Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia and Singapore along with China, Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan and India. It will provide a glimpse of how, through their positions and actions, Buddhists help to build a better world.

We identify and work with indicators (variables) of Meanings that represent views and orientations towards others and harmonious relations: regarding war and violence, the environment, altruism and tolerance, trust, importance of others, and more human societies. As Practices we have selected activities and behaviors towards harmony in relations with other people and the environment such as: Willing to fight for country, being member and active in civil and in environmental organizations, doing good for society and caring for others and the environment, and trusting people both known and unknown. All these indicators provide a profound view of the role of Buddhist people contributing to harmonious relations and building a better and more sustainable future society.

As technical, and conceptual, apparatus I use Multi-Dimensional Scaling (MDS) and Hierarchical Cluster Analysis (HCA) with the statistical program SPSS (for the first part of the paper) along with Social Network Analysis using UCINET (in the second part of paper).

MDS, using the ALSCAL algorithm in SPSS, is a statistical procedure that calculates similarities and differences between countries and translates them into Euclidean distances in order to place countries in a two dimensional space. The positioning in the Euclidean space is metrically equivalent to the physical distances between all countries at the same time that produces the standard geographical map. Here I substitute physical distances for social distances producing social maps.

Hierarchical Cluster Analysis (HCA), using closest neighbor approach, mathematically identifies and groups together the most similar countries in what we could think of as social regions.

4. Pew Research Center: The Global Religious Landscape. http://www.pewforum.org/2012/12/18/global-religious-landscape-buddhist/

Social Network Analysis (SNA) works with relational matrixes, in this case they are mathematical expressions of the relations among all the variables used in part one of the paper. We can identify and visualize, using the special visualization program Netdraw, the social structure, the social grid and network, of this Buddhist social system.

In the first part of the paper we use a theoretical and methodological individual approach, we treat variables as independent and autonomous entities and we create this artificial duality of Meanings and Practices, values and actions, in a first approach to the issue. We study their distribution and the social proximities generated. In the second part of the paper we move a step further and we use a relational sociological approach in which we do not consider variables as independent and autonomous but rather we focus on the relations between them and how those interconnections create a sort of Buddhist social DNA.

That system of interconnections among all the elements is the social space in which social orientation, social harmony, is created. In this last part of the paper we also look into how this interconnection of elements is linked (in a cause and effect causal relation) with Happiness, Satisfaction, Health. Being them a representation, even partial, of better harmonious societies. And as a base of the structure we have Social conditions and Religion completing a model of the whole system of interactions between views and practices. The whole structure creates a map, a system, where social harmony is based. It is a system yielding and facilitating social harmony and sustainability, and we could view it as a social DNA of Buddhist people.

In this paper we explore, and attempt to contribute to, how the social dimensions of Buddhism are translated and practiced by Buddhist people defining their social role contributing to better harmonious and sustainable future societies.

## MEANINGS AND PRACTICES FOR BETTER SOCIETIES

The values and practices of Buddhist people in the Asian countries studied can be seen as part of Loving-Kindness[5] and The

5. Loving-Kindness is an English equivalent for the term Metta, described in the Metta

Four Immeasurable.[6] They are indicators of their visions and actions contributing to a better world by focusing on the wellbeing of others and facilitating peace, harmony and sustainability (Table 1).

## MEANINGS

A first overall analysis of the Meaning (value system) shows Buddhist clear positions towards harmonious relations. They are opposed, as most non Buddhist, to war (more than two thirds of them) and do not justify violence against others at all (a value of 1,95 in a scale from 1 to 10). In fact, they value Altruism and Tolerance as good qualities to teach children and stand out believing most people can be trusted (more than one third of Buddhist) and that it is important to progress towards a more human society in which wealth could be shared better (Table 1).

Most Buddhist see people around them as very important: family is very important for the majority of them (91%) and almost half (42%) consider friends as very important in their lives. But their proximity to others is not limited to people but rather extended to all sentient beings represented by their concern for the environment. One fourth of the Buddhists (double percentage than the general and non-Buddhist people) believe the deterioration of the **environment to be the most serious problem** nowadays. They also favor, a bit more than the general and non-Buddhist people, **environmental protection over economic development**.

Overall, Buddhist values provide an image of proximity and care for those around them and an orientation and desire for harmony with people and the environment. But the distribution of these values is not even throughout the Buddhist population, existing some contrasting positions and similarities between countries, and also some differences with non-Buddhist populations. Some of the similarities and differences can be seen in Graph 1 and Graph 2.

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Sutta of the Pali Canon's Sutta Nipata (Sn 1.8) and Khuddakapatha (Khp 9)

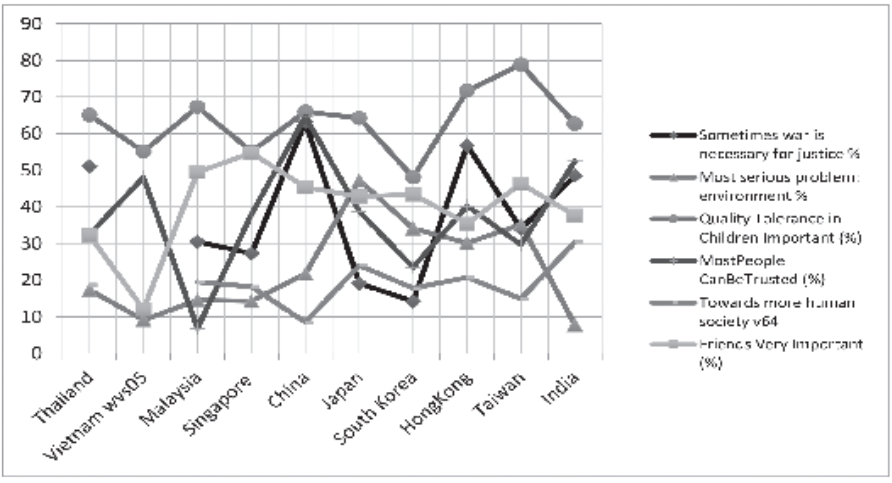
6. Mettam Sutta: The Brahma-viharas. SN 46.54

May all sentient beings have happiness and its causes,
May all sentient beings be free of suffering and its causes,
May all sentient beings never be separated from bliss without suffering,
May all sentient beings be in equanimity, free of bias, attachment and anger.

Even though most Buddhist are **against war** and **against violence**, in some countries Buddhist justify war a bit more (more than half in China, Hong Kong, Thailand) and in India and Singapore they justify violence above the mean level. In contrast, South Korea and Japan stand out for their strong opposition to war and violence. Japan stands out for seeing the deterioration of the **environment** as a serious problem while India is in the opposite extreme. Indian Buddhist people are the ones supporting the most the idea of altruism in children and those from Taiwan and Hong Kong are the ones supporting the value of **Tolerance**. Meanwhile Buddhist people in South Korea are in the opposite extreme well below the mean level (Graph 1).

In China and in India more than half of Buddhists (65% and 53%) believe most people can be **trusted** while, at the other end, in South Korea is less than one fourth of them. India is the country where more Buddhist believe in the importance to move towards a **more human society** while in China is not a relevant goal. The relevance of **friends** in their lives is quite similar for almost all Buddhist with the exception of those of Vietnam with very low rates.

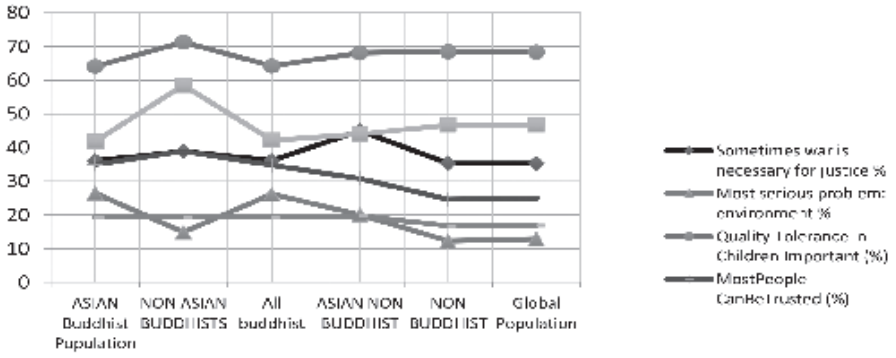
GRAPH 1




Comparing large population groups, the most striking differences are in relation with the justification of war and violence between Asian Buddhist and Asian non-Buddhist, being the last

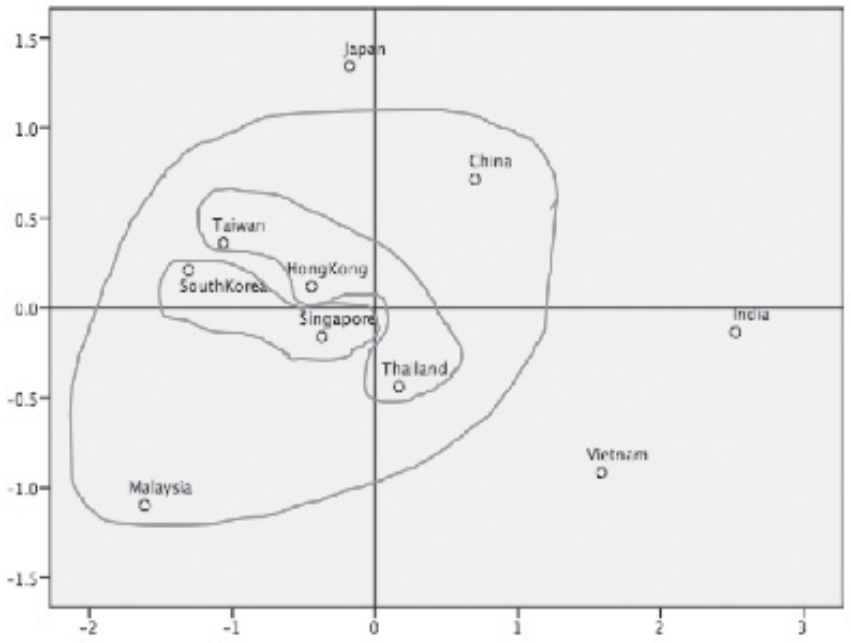
ones much more inclined to justify them. However, Non-Asian Buddhist stand out for the importance given to tolerance and to friends. Overall, Buddhists stand out (well above non-Buddhist) for believing most people can be trusted and, with the exception of non-Asian, for seeing the environment deterioration as the most serious problem (Graph 2).

GRAPH 2




The representation of distances (similarities and differences) between Asian Buddhists populations done with **MDS** produces a social map (with characteristics similar to geographical maps) according to their values towards others and harmonious relations.

In spite of some differences, there is an overall high level of similarity among Buddhists with respect to most values. MDS places the countries (their Buddhist people) spread through the space, some countries grouped close to the center (Taiwan, Hong Kong, South Korea, Singapore, Thailand) and others around towards the edges (Japan on the center top, Vietnam towards the right bottom corner, and Malaysia on the left bottom corner. (Graph 3).




Hierarchical Clustering (HQ) identifies a large clustering of countries with high levels of similarities in the center and China and Malaysia towards the edge of it. Japan, India and Vietnam occupy isolated extreme positions on top, right and bottom right of the space. The axes cut the space providing meaning to the positions. From left to right countries seem to be placed according to the importance given to family, more importance on the left and less on the right. And from top to bottom they are place according to the relevance given to environmental deterioration, less on the bottom and more on top.

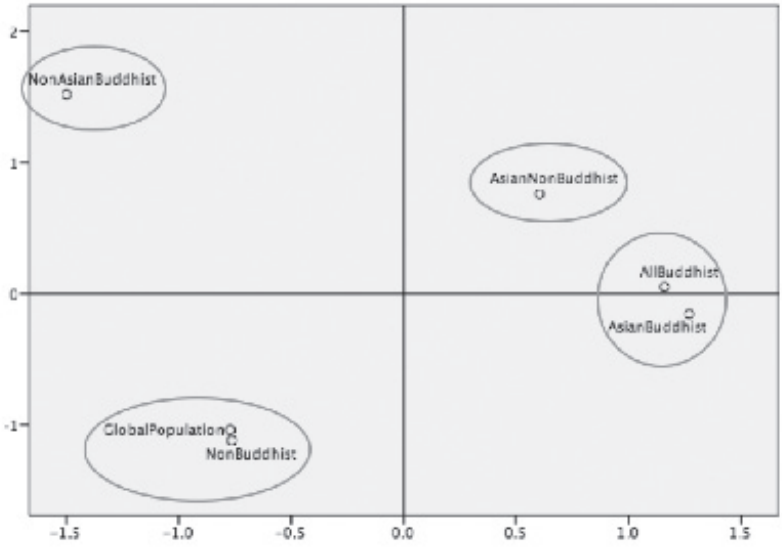
The extreme position of Japan on top reflects its strong believe on the importance of the environmental problems, the extreme position of Vietnam on the bottom right reflects the little importance given to family and friends, and the position of Malaysia is the result of valuing family but not considering the environment deterioration as a central problem. China singles out for its justification of war and India for supporting altruism as a value and the goal of a more human society.

To better understand the role of Buddhist people system of values we create population groups and compare them: Buddhist

population (Asian, non-Asian, and Total), Non-Buddhist (Asian, non-Asian), and total Global population.

In the spatial representation of proximities among group categories generated by MDS (Graph 4) the center is empty and the group categories are pushed toward the edges of the space reflecting four different cosmovisions of meanings. On the left we have, on top, Non-Asian Buddhist, which as we have seen have a rather different system of values compared to Asian Buddhist, and at the bottom Non-Buddhist and Global Population together. Both groups on the left coincide not considering the deterioration of the environment as the most important problem but considering that Tolerance and Friends are very important. They have opposite views regarding others: Non-Asian Buddhist stand out (40% of them) for believing most people can be trusted while Non-Buddhist and the Global Population are the ones least believing it.

GRAPH 4




On the right we have Asian non-Buddhist, on the center of the top quadrant, and towards the center right of the space we find the aggrupation of All Buddhist and Asian Buddhist very close together. Asian Non-Buddhist stand out for their higher legitimation of war and violence (as Non-Asian Buddhist also on the top part of the space) and at the same time for their support to the teaching of

Altruism to children. The Buddhist cluster on the center towards the right border (representing the vast majority of Buddhist) stand out for believing most people can be trusted, the deterioration of the environment is the most important current problem, and that wealth can be better distributed among all.

## PRACTICES

Buddhists also stand out by their high level of social activity, above the means of the global and non-Buddhist populations, defending and caring for others and the environment. Their practices caring for others and the environment place them in the leading positions of the social activity towards a more harmonious and sustainable society.

Even though they are against war, a large majority would fight to defend their country, more than non-Buddhist in general and much more than Asian non-Buddhist. In contrast, and possibly as a result of their belief that most people can be trusted, their level of social closure (number of types of people not wanted as neighbors) is the lowest of all.

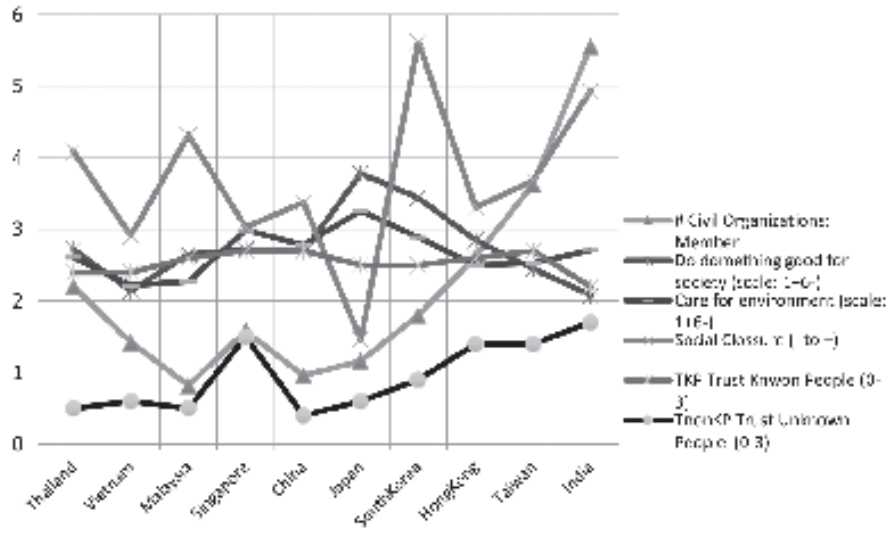
Buddhist people stand out by their actions and practices towards the wellbeing and happiness of others doing something good for society and caring for others and also for the environment. Their higher level of social action matches their higher level of membership in civil and environmental organizations. This points to the socially organized character of their action towards the others, it is the result of collaboration with others. Participation in social organizations increases trust and ties facilitating more extensive and harmonious relations.

As with other indicators analyzed previously, the distribution of these actions and practices is not even throughout the Buddhist population, existing some contrasting positions and similarities between countries, and also some differences with non-Buddhist populations. Some of the similarities and differences can be seen in Graph 5 and Graph 6.

In spite of the overall high level of social activity, there are some differences among Buddhists worth mentioning. The most socially

organized and active Buddhist are those of India and Taiwan and the least those from China and Malaysia. Vietnam Buddhists stand out doing good things for society (along with India), caring for others (along Hong Kong) and caring for the environment (along Malaysia). Japan would be in the opposite extreme with lower levels of action towards the wellbeing of others Graph 5).

GRAPH 5



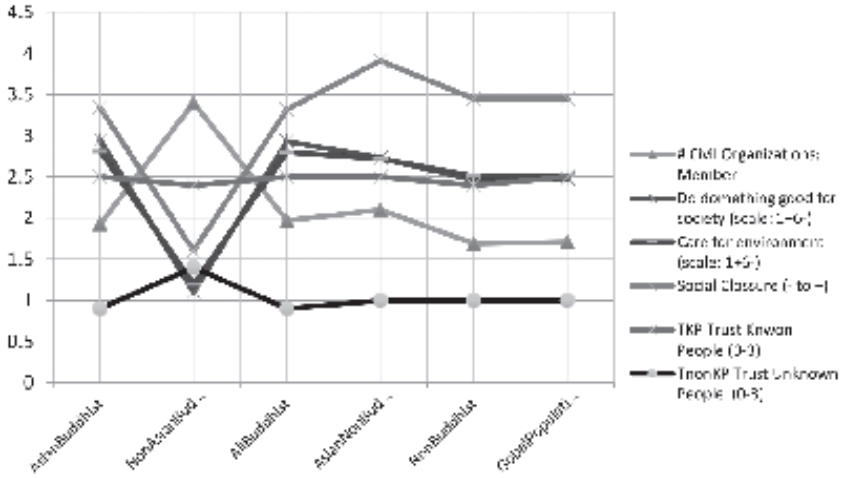

Buddhist in South Korea and India appear to be the most socially closed ones while those from Japan and Vietnam are definitely the ones more open to different people around them.

Another indication of proximity to others is the level of trust to unknown people (unknown, from other religions, from other nationalities). Overall, Buddhist, as non-Buddhist, do not trust unknown people very much. India, Singapore, Taiwan and Hong Kong stand out with higher levels of trust while China, Thailand, Malaysia and Vietnam seem to be more untrusting and therefore distant from people not known.

Comparing population groups, we see two singularities worth mentioning. Asian Non-Buddhist people differ from the rest by their very high level of social closure. Non-Asian Buddhist show a differentiated profile with an open position towards others and a strong social activity agenda with very high participation in civil organizations and also very high rates of care for the environment

and positive actions for society. It all adds up to the highest degree of trust in unknown people and the lowest rate of social closure. The rest of the groups (Buddhist and non-Buddhist) have a very similar pattern of social actions and practices (Graph 6).

GRAPH 6




The representation of distances (similarities and differences) between Asian Buddhists populations done with **MDS** produces a social map (with characteristics similar to geographical maps) according to their practices and actions towards others in the form of harmonious relations.

In spite of some differences, there is an overall high level of similarity among Buddhists with respect to most actions. MDS places the countries (their Buddhist people) spread through the space, some countries grouped close to the center (China, South Korea, Singapore and Malaysia along Taiwan and Thailand) and others around towards the edges (Japan on the left top, Hong Kong on the left bottom, Vietnam towards the right top corner, and India at the center bottom. (Graph 7).

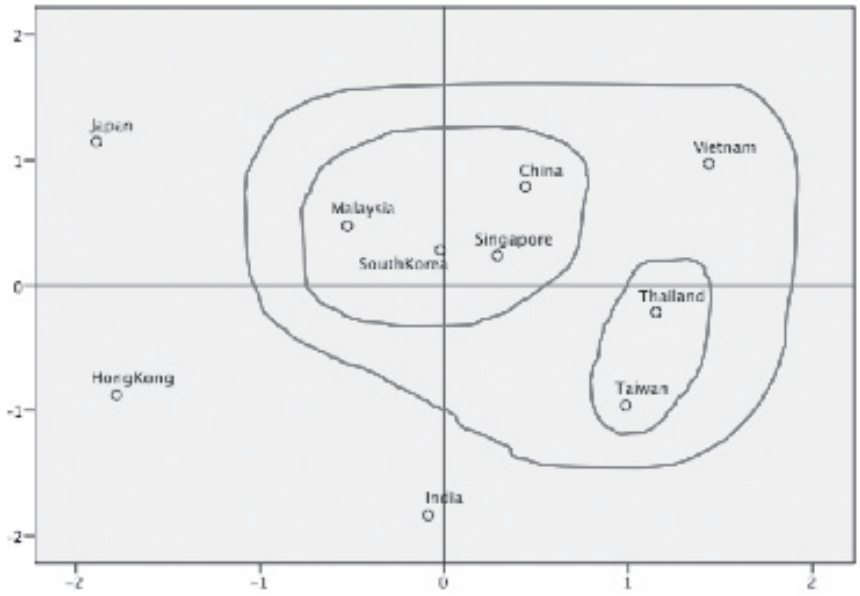
Hierarchical Clustering (HQ) identifies a large clustering of countries with high levels of similarities. In the very center of the system, and of this large cluster, we see a very cohesive and similar group of countries (South Korea, Singapore, China and Malaysia). Taiwan and Thailand (bottom right quarter) are very close together and also a part of this large cluster along with Vietnam (on top of

them). Japan, Hong Kong and India occupy extreme and isolated position towards the left and bottom edges of the system of practices.

The axes cut the social space of practices providing meaning to the positions. From left to right countries seem to be placed according to their disposition to fight for the country, from less resolve to fight on the left to more on the right. From top to bottom countries are placed according to their involvement in social organizations (being member or/and being active), with those at the bottom more involved and those at the top less.

In the center, as references of the system, South Korea and Singapore coincide in their high level of care for the environment. On the extremes, Indian Buddhists stand out by their very high level of social activity and support in the environmental scene. Vietnam (top right) sticks out by its low level of social closure following Japan (isolated on the far left). Thailand and Taiwan coincide and stand apart by their willingness to fight for their country if needed.

GRAPH 7

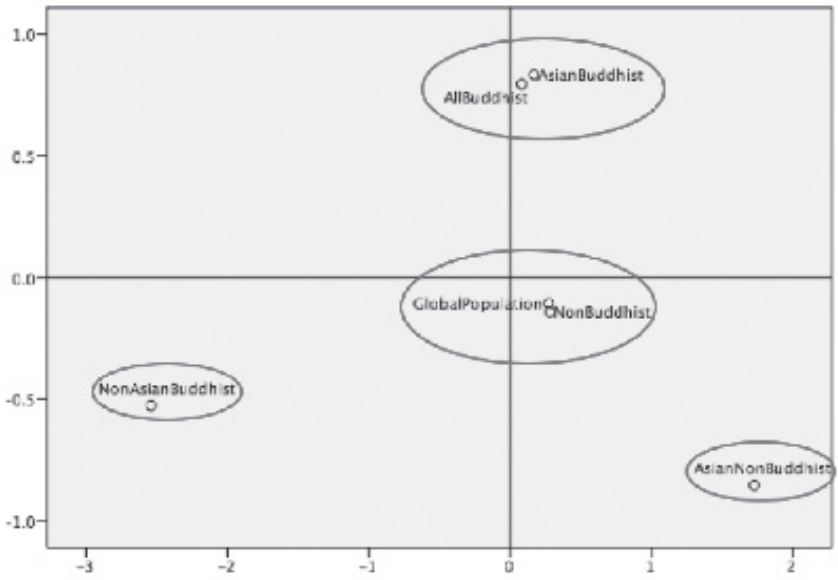



The representation of distances (similarities and differences) between population groups done with **MDS** produces an image (Graph 8) quite similar to the map of meanings seen earlier. Non-Asian Buddhist, with a quite differentiated system of practices,

is placed on the bottom left while Asian non-Buddhist is placed opposite at the bottom right. Non-Buddhist and the Global population groups are together in the center of the system, and All Buddhist and Asian Buddhist are placed on the top center of the social map (Graph 8).

The social space is organized through the axes according to resolve to participate in war (less on the left and more on the right) and level of social activity (from higher at the bottom to lower at the top).

GRAPH 8




All Buddhist and Asian Buddhist stand apart on top because they are socially very active. Low levels of social activity place Asian non-Buddhist in the opposite extreme (bottom right) while Non-Buddhist and Global Population are placed in the middle.

Non-Asian Buddhist are clearly differentiated from the rest by their very high levels of social activity and practices aimed at the wellbeing of others and their opposition to participate in a war.

## MEANINGS AND PRACTICES

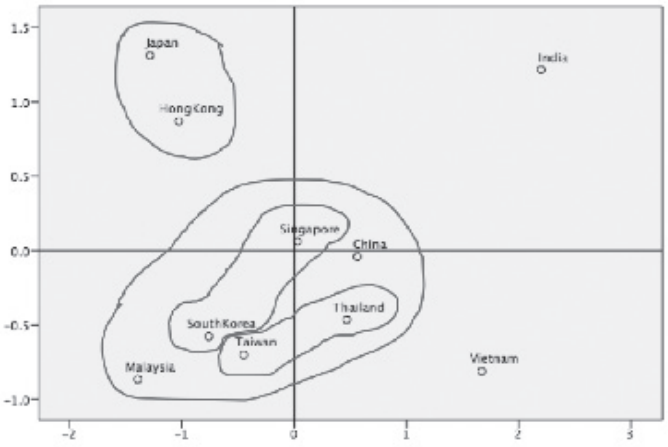
The MDS of the combination of all meanings and practices produces a social map summarizing the proximities and distances

of all Buddhist populations in their ways to see and do, in their ways to understand and see the others and in their ways to establish harmonious relations and act for the wellbeing of others and the sustainability of the planet (Graph 9).

It produces a social spacing quite similar to ones seen before (of meanings and practices). A high level of similarities yields a large cluster of six countries (Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, China and Malaysia) over the center of the space, with Singapore as central reference for the whole system. Singularities result in isolated countries placed towards the corners (Graph 9).

The large cluster seems to represent the reference (dominant common ground) cognitive and action model shaped by high levels of social orientation and action towards harmonious relations and towards sustainability. The extremes represent singular patters worth knowing since they create differentiated versions of the reference model. Japan and Hong Kong (on the top left) stand apart for their opposition to war, India for the very high level of social activity and orientation, Vietnam for the very low social closure, and Malaysia for the importance given to the family.

GRAPH 9



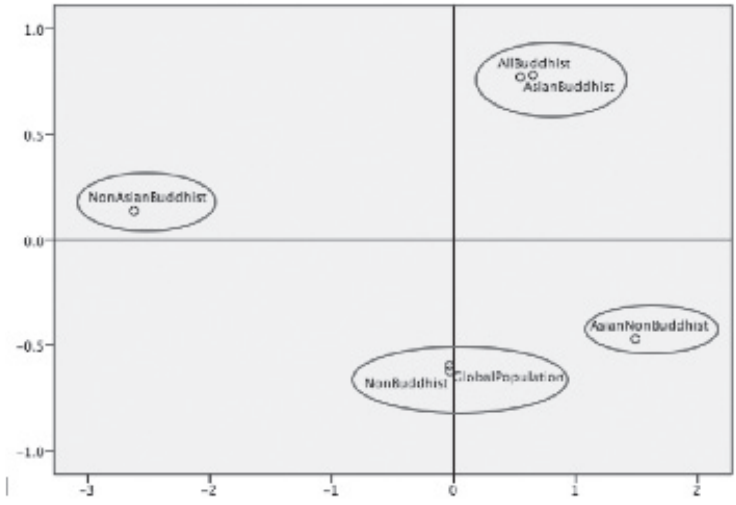

The social spacing of the population groups generated by MDS with all meanings and practices yields a social map representing the cognitive-action distances between them.

It confirms the four different patters we have seen until now. Buddhist and Non-Buddhist are clearly differentiated in the social space, with the first ones on the top side and the latter one packed on the lower side (Graph 10). The differentiation is the result of the fact that overall Buddhist stand out by their belief that most people can be trusted. This indicator of proximity to others matches their higher levels of social involvement and activity and also, with the exception of non-Asian Buddhist, their leading role in views and actions towards a sustainable planet. The main characteristics that distinguish the groups are:

All Buddhist/Asian Buddhist stand out for their belief that most people can be trusted and that deterioration of the environment is the most serious problem. Probably as a response to that, they are the most socially active ones.

Non-Asian Buddhist differentiated by their higher justification of violence and not considering the environment as the most important problem but coincide with Asian Buddhist in believing that most people are trustworthy and their very high levels of social activity.

GRAPH 10




Asian non-Buddhist stand out by their high level of legitimation of war Global non-Buddhist and Asian non-Buddhist are spatially very close as indication of sharing lower rates of social activity.

## MAPPING BUDDHISTS SOCIAL PATHS

We overcome the duality Meanings-Practices and the individualization of values and actions focusing on the interconnections between all of them. The use of Social Network Analysis approach yields graphic representations of the interaction/relational system. We could view and understand this cognitive-action structure as kind of DNA. It is the map of the Buddhist social DNA which portraits the ways through which Buddhist contribute to the creation of more harmonious and sustainable societies.

In the Graphs nodes are the elements forming the Buddhist social cognitive-action system. Lines connecting nodes (those elements) indicate the existence[7] of the causal relation between elements. The size of the nodes indicated its centrality in the system (the number of its direct relations) and the thickness of the lines connecting nodes indicates the intensity (correlation level) of the causal relation between them.

Graph 11 depicts the system of relations between meanings (nodes in red) and practices (nodes in cinnamon). In the network we can distinguish two separated components (structures where all nodes are connected). A very large one, including almost all the elements of the system, and a small one (top right) with two values related to the environment which are not connected to the rest.

In the large component occupying almost all the social space, we can distinguish two connected structures. The larger, very cohesive and most central one is an Action-practices network (B) and its formed by two dense sub-networks. The sub-structure on top represents organized social action (b1), and the other one below represents harmonious relations (b2) and actions and practices towards others. This large Action network is linked to two smaller networks. Hanging from the Action network there is a small structure of values regarding others and relations with them (C). The other structure on the left represents trust and proximity to others (D). We could define it as a Trust network.

7. Significative correlations with a moderate-strong relational intensity (r larger than 0,120).

There are two main connections between the Action network and the Trust network. The first one (lower road) is through elements stressing harmony in smaller social spaces: between Family Being Important and Helping people nearby. The more important connection (higher road) links Trusting Non Known People and Being member and active in Social Organizations and financially supporting Environmental Organizations. This road portraits the socially open projection of the organized social action.

GRAPH 11




The Action network is made up of the Organized Social Action (composed by being Member and being Active in Social civil organizations and in Environmental organizations plus Giving money to Environmental organizations and participating in demonstration for the environment) and the Harmonious Relations (composed of Important for the person to help people nearby, to do good deeds for society, and to care for the environment).

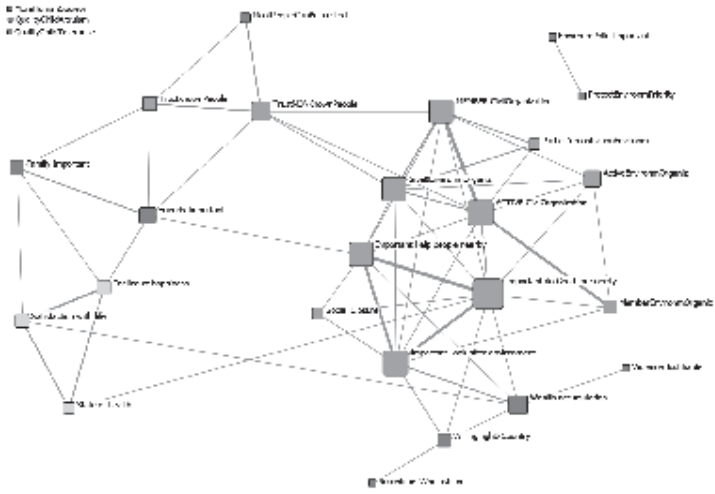
In brief, the Meanings and Practices relational system is dominated by a very cohesive set of practices, organized and towards others, in the center. It is linked to a small sub-structure of harmony oriented values (below) and to a larger sub-structure of values and practices indicating trust and proximity to others and therefore facilitators of harmonious social relations. On top of the map we find a group of values towards environmental protection

(**A**) not connected to the main network at this relational intensity, by being weaker relations.

This Meanings and Practices structure will be the central element in a model aimed at understanding Buddhist contributions to a more harmonious and sustainable society. To this main piece of DNA, we first add a set of elements roughly representing harmony (happiness, satisfaction, health) which are considered as social goals for a better society. To that we will add Social conditions and Religious indicators. All together it represents the Buddhist social DNA which symbolizes ways and roads used by Buddhist people to contribute to better and more harmonious and sustainable societies.

The addition of the triad elements (happiness, satisfaction, health) which we call Life (nodes in green), enriches our vision of these Buddhist social paths (Graph 12). Here it is worth noting the causal relational (bidirectional) between Happiness and Satisfaction with the Trust network (trust and proximity to others) through the direct relation with Family and Friends being important in their lives. Satisfaction with life (strongly connected with Happiness and Health) is linked to the idea that Wealth accumulation could result in its better distribution, and indirectly to the sub-structure of harmony oriented values (at the bottom).

GRAPH 12



Actions and practices are indirectly connected to Happiness, Health and Satisfaction through the Trust network acting as a causal bridge between them. In brief, Trust bridges the road between Actions and Happiness.

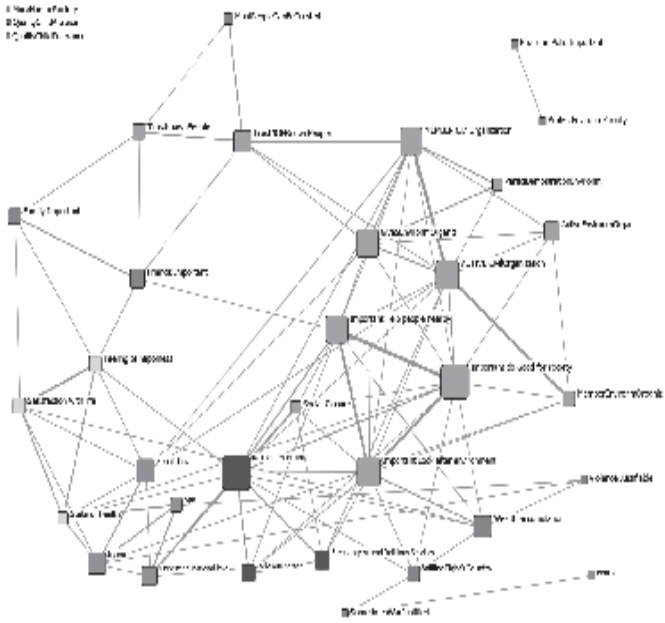
Social conditions (nodes in purple) and Religion indicators (nodes in blue) act like the bases of the system. When included in the system of relations (Graph 13) the level of interactions in the whole system increases a lot. Social and Religious conditions become new additional bridges causally connecting Life with Action. Both Religion Importance and Social Class are directly connected to Happiness, Health and Satisfaction.

In this final image of the social system (that we call Social DNA) we see how the network becomes circular, there is continuous causal flow circulating. From Actions to Trust to Life to Social Conditions to Religion to Harmony oriented values (bottom) to Actions to… and so on. It is a circular causal interrelation system.

We can then use this map to search for roads to Harmonious Societies (and specifically Happiness). The roads to (and from) Happiness are built with the combinations of values and actions. We can distinguish two main roads towards Happiness. The first road (top road) will start on the right connecting the set of values at the bottom with the whole body of actions on top of it. It will later move to the left, to the Trust territory, and towards the Life territory and ending in Happiness. The second road (bottom road) will move from the Action territory and Harmony oriented values to Religion and Social Conditions which will open another access to the Life territory and Happiness, or vice versa.

The map representation of the Buddhist social DNA offers a glimpse to the complex system of interrelations contributing towards better and more harmonious and sustainable societies.

GRAPH 13



## IN CONLUSION

Buddhist values and practices provide an image of proximity and care for others and an orientation and desire for harmony with people and the environment. There is an overall high level of similarity among them but the distribution of these values and practices is not equal throughout the Buddhist population. There exist some contrasting positions and similarities between countries and also some differences with non-Buddhist populations.

The similarities result in a large group of six countries (Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, China and Malaysia) which represents the reference cognitive and action model (dominant common ground) characterized by high levels of social orientation and action towards harmonious relations and towards sustainability

Singularities are Japan and Hong Kong, which stand apart for their opposition to war, India for the very substantial level of social activity and orientation, and Vietnam for the very low social closure.

Buddhist and Non-Buddhist are differentiated as a result of the overall stronger Buddhist belief that most people can be trusted,

their higher levels of social involvement and activity and also, with the exception of non-Asian Buddhist, their leading role in views and actions towards a sustainable planet. Non-Asian Buddhist differentiated from Asian Buddhist by their firmer justification of violence and lower consideration of the environment as the most important problem. And Asian non-Buddhist stand out by their robust legitimation of war and, coinciding with Global non-Buddhist, their lesser rates of social activity.

The analysis of the interconnections between all Meanings and Practices, using the social network analysis approach, yields a map of the Buddhist social DNA which portraits the ways through which Buddhist contribute to the creation of more harmonious and sustainable societies. The most relevant conclusions derived from this network of causal interrelations are:

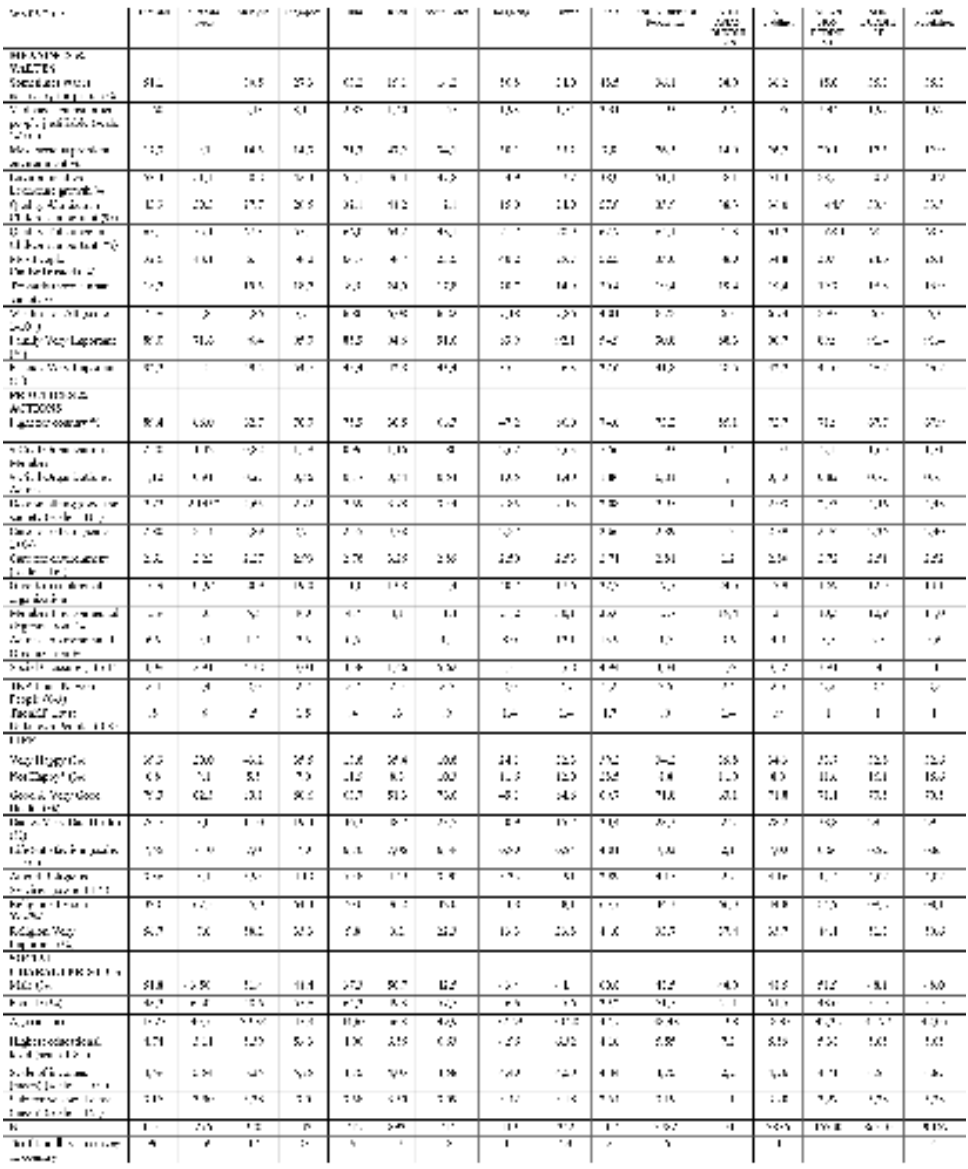
The important connecting role played by Trust between Actions and practices with Happiness, Health and Satisfaction. Trust bridges the road between Actions and Happiness.

The network becomes circular with continuous causal flow circulating. From Actions to Trust to Life to Social Conditions to Religion to Harmony oriented values to Actions to… and so on. It is a circular causal interrelation system.

Using this map to search for roads to Harmonious Societies (and specifically Happiness), we can distinguish two main roads (combinations of values and actions) towards (or from) Happiness: one through the Trust territory and the other through Religion and Social Conditions.

## FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL BEINGS

TABLE 1. BUDDHIST VALUES AND ACTIONS BUILDING A HARMONIOUS SOCIETY



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# AN ANALYSIS BUDDHIST FOOD HABITS FOR WHOLESOME HEALTHCARE

by Nirosha Salwathura*


## ABSTRACT

It is accepted that the main reason for the many diseases especially for non-communicable diseases is unhealthy food habits. The rates of those who suffer from non-communicable diseases have drastically increased in the modern world without an age limit ranging from children to old people. Today the traditional meals have changed to fast food, junk food, oily food, snacks, meat, etc. Moreover, over-consumption of food and irregular meals are other bad food habits that cause people unhealthy. By today not only people suffer from diseases but also their life expectancy has decreased changing their traditional life style. This directly affects the spiritual development limiting their ability to engage in Buddhist rituals and to maintain the peacefulness of mind for spiritual development. The Buddha has introduced healthy food habits and mindful eating for Buddhist monks according to food ethics which are highly wholesome. Such ethics introduced in Sekiya Dhamma in Vinaya Pitaka can be adopted by lay people for their healthy life style. The Buddha's food habit is truly exemplary for people to follow. Thus this research analyses the food habits and ethics in the Buddhist canon in order to introduce healthy food habits for the modern society.


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## RESEARCH PROBLEM

Do food habits lead towards a sound health?

## HYPOTHESIS

Dietary measures and food varieties greatly contribute for a sound health.

## OBJECTIVE

With technological development of mankind in the current society, busy life patterns are firmly twisted with every person in their speedy journeys towards varied directions. Consequently, they have been negligent about their daily eating and dietary measures. This scenario has resulted in various ailments among the people causing severe circumstances in their lives. By this research, people of such life pattern are expected to be educated on proper meals taking and dietary measures through Buddhist teachings.

## METHODOLOGY

The facts in this regard were basically collated by references of Buddhist texts and the internet. Further, the particulars in *Chulla Wagga Pali* and *Sekiya Dharma* were importantly taken into consideration.

## INTRODUCTION

The food is essential not only to live and it causes the formation of person's life system. Though the food is a common requirement for all animals and human beings, a multitude of practices and customs that need to be followed in varied occasions have been defined in various cultures. A mass of traditions and practices related to food can be seen even in the countries with characteristics of Buddhist culture. Those can be considered as established based on the facts in *Thripitaka* and concerned cultural background.

Amidst the facts in Dhamma sermonized by Lord Buddha when a person is disciplined to the path of Nibbana, a special emphasis has been given to the types of foods and practices that need to be followed. As taught by Lord Buddha, all animals depend on foods (*Sabbe Saththa Aaharattithika*) and he further presented a discipline

on food taking that does not clash between a person's existence and mental condition. It can be believed that the Lord Buddha lectured such a concept as human health and other existences are influenced by the foods.

No rule has been imposed by Lord Buddha groundlessly. Each rule was caused by a reasonable background. Those were mostly the rules imposed on higher ordained Bhikkhus and the novices (*Samanera)*. Accordingly, these rules are vastly important to both Bhikkhus and ordinary people to lead their lives smoothly.

More precepts about eating foods imposed on higher ordained Bhikkhus have been described in details in *Paviththiya Pali* and *Maha Wagga Pali* of *Vinaya Pitaka*.

## DISCUSSION

In accordance with the precepts up to that, a monk who is not sick is recommended to eat only one external meal per day received from a resting place. If he takes meals afterward, it causes demerits. Those monks who are capable of going out from the alms house are regarded "not sick" (*Nogilan or Agilana*) and those who are not capable of going out from the alms house are regarded "sick" (*Gilan or Gilana*). Consequently, on the matter of taking meals, they are advised to be conscious on the place, their health and physical condition.

Taking meals at an inapt time except for right occasions is an act of misconduct. The period of sickness (*Gilana Samaya*) has been declared as appropriate for taking meals. Therefore, it emphasizes that eating at inapt occasions are harmful to health and existence.

A time analysis (*Kala Vibhagaya*) in respect of meals accepted for monks has been presented in *Vinaya Pitaka*. I.e. *Yawa kaleena, Yama kaleena, Saththaha Kaleena* and *Yawa Jeewika*. Thus, substances accepted for consumption of monks are classified into four categories. Subsequent to the acceptance, the meals suitable for consumption only in the morning time of the same day is meant as *Yawa kaleena.* Grains and soups prepared using those, curries of meats, fish and vegetables, snacks prepared using flours, the fruits such as coconuts, Jack fruits, Bread fruits, Papaw, Banana, Beli fruits,

Wood Apple, Orange, edible yams, leaves, stalks, ribs, flowers and various meals prepared using those and eggs are taken under the category of *Yama kaleena.*

The drinks suitable to be kept until the evening time *(Pashchima Yama)* of the same day it was offered to drink are taken into the category of "*Yamakalika*". Similarly, fruits juices and other saps fermented in the sun are also considered under *Yamakalika*. As these were recommended to be used, it is obvious that the individual health and physical growth are significantly helped by Buddhist concepts.

The oil varieties such as Ghee, Vendaru, Seismic oil, Coconut oil, Sugar Candy and Sugar Honey… etc. are taken into the category of *Saththaha Kaleena.* Once offered by someone, it can be kept for a period of week and consumed irrespective of the suitability of time. Sugar, Candy and other similar eatables are also of the same category. All the eatable stuffs that are used for medication and not under the aforesaid category are called *Yawajeewaka.* Substances of *Yawajeewaka* category are considered as appropriate for use until the end of life irrespective of the time of consuming. This evidently emphasizes that the foods with medicinal effects are more suitable to eat. Also, the improper foods often give adverse aftermaths irrespective of the time it is consumed.

In the context of Buddhist culture, Ghee, Vendaru, Seismic oil, Bee honey, Sugar Candy, Fish (*Diya Mas*), Meat (*Goda Mas*) and Milk are considered as delicious foods (*Paneetha Bhojanani*). If any Bhikkhu who is not sick requests for those foods and eat, it is considered to be an act of misbehavior that causes a demerit. However, Lord Buddha has explained to a group of ailing Bhikkhus " *Bhikkhus not well in health are allowed to eat Ghee, Vendaru, Seismic oil, Bee honey, Sugar Candy (Pancha Bhesajjaya)"*. The foods with high nutritional abilities have been recommended for them to eat. Accordingly, it is obviously understood that the Lord Buddha has advised to take meals at right time consistent with the physical condition and the need. Also, he has clearly clarified about the foods effective for a sound health and a pleasing life.

As per the Buddhist point of view, Bhikkhus have been advised

on the matter of taking meals timely and untimely. If any Bhikkhu takes meals untimely, it causes a demerit. Same as the precept about untimely eating which has been imposed in *Pachiththiya Pali*, the benefits of eating only a single meal (*Perabathhi*) have been detailed in *Kakachupama* and *Bhaddali Suththa* in *Madjima Nikhaya*. Mealtimes of a Buddhist monk is generally confined only to a one meal. Except liquid diets such as fruit juice, any other meals are not accepted afterward the meal. Even through meals are taken hundred times from sun rise to noon, no further benefits are created in comparison to the accepted single mealtime. Lord Buddha has explained about five (05) benefits of having one meal (*Ekasana Bhojana*);

Free of ailments *(Appa Badhakan)*
Evasion of sorrow *(Appatha Kathan)*
Lightness of body *(Lahuttana)*
Physical strength *(Balan)*
Feeling comforts *(Wasuviharan)*

Currently, the facts have been revealed that not only the Bhikkhus, even laymen are in the practice of this concept of single meal *(Ekasana Bhojana*). It discloses that this practice is resulting in a healthy life. Buddhist concepts on food habits are highly contributive for a smooth life patterns and a good health.

Lord Buddha at different junctures has advised on what to eat and what not to eat. More precepts imposed with reference to this matter are in *Bhojana Wagga* in *Pachiththiya Pali.* As explained therein, there are foods suitable for a Bhikkhu's health and each one has to be conscious of that matter when taking meals. Moreover, this point of view is further confirmed by his revelation about varieties of meats. The facts reveal that there are circumstance where Bhikkhus have cooked and eaten sorts of meat eaten ant left by animals such as Lion, Leopard, Bear and Wolf. As viewed by Lord Buddha, cooking and eating foods that belongs to animals is not forbidden. At another circumstance in confirming this view, he explains that faithful persons have donated even their own flesh. However, people have been advised not to eat human flesh at any circumstances *(Na Bhikkhawe Manussa Mansan Paribhujjithabba Yo*

*Paribhujjeyya Apaththi Thullachchayassa)*. Further, he said that any meat should not be eaten without being well clarified on its variety. This says that proper understanding on what is eaten is compulsory and only what is suitable should be eaten.

Amidst the concepts of Lord Buddha in respect of foods, his elucidation about the portion of meal is of great significance. He described that a person should take meals only up to the level sufficient to live. His description in this regard is with five (05) factors. He further explained that people who are not aware about those factors do not know the right portion of meals.

Pariyesana Maththa – Meals should be taken only up to the quantity required for survival.

Patiggahana Maththa – Only sufficient portion of meals should be accepted.

Paribhoga Maththa – Only digestible portion should be eaten.

Pachcha Wekkhana Maththa - Meals should be eaten consciously.

Wisajjana Maththa – The portion to be given to others should be known.

As said by Lord Buddha, proper understanding on right portion is vital similar to the concept of one meal (*Ekasana Bhojana*) for a good health of a person.

*"Chaththo Pancha Alope Abhathwa Udakan Peecha;*

*Alan Thasuviharaya Yuththa Yogassa Bhikkhuno" -*

It is advisable to drink water when 4 or 5 clots of meals are ahead to finish the meal as it helps life comforts of Bhikkhus. Accordingly, a person is advised to eat rice slightly over a half of the stomach, slightly over the half of the remaining half needs to be filled with water, and the rest of the space should be kept free for air circulation.

Addressing the King; *Pasenadi Kosal* who was used to eating cooked rice of 16 *Nelis*[1] of raw rice together with curries proportionately, Lord Buddha explained that taking meals in excess of right portion results in discomforts. Moreover, he described that

1. An ancient quota used as a grain measure

the person who is always conscious of right portion is free from physical pains and leading a longer life. This evidently witnesses the significance of foods and right practices of eating for a pleasing and healthy life.

Similarly, at the time of taking meals, person's consciousness is required. Each clot of meals should be eaten in order while maintaining the discipline. The Bhikkhu should have self-discipline to eat rice together with curries in right portion. When eating, rice in the bowl should not be mixed with curries from the top. Any curry or potage should not be covered with rice expecting to have more. If not sick, the Bhikkhu himself should not request for any meals to eat. It is not right to look at others' dishes of meals in an idea of insult.

It is not accepted to have very large clots of rice (up to the size of peacock eggs). As per the Buddhist culture, it is not good to open the mouth until the hand gets closer to mouth when a person eats. The hand should not be fully inserted into the mouth when having meals. Talking when meals are in the mouth is not accepted. Meals should not be thrown into the mouth. The meals taken as a clot should not be eaten as broken pieces. When eating, meals taken into the mouth should not be stored in jaw (as monkeys). It is inappropriate to eat meals while waving hands here and there. Further, it is not good to eat meals making sounds through mouth. These advised from Lord Buddha to Bhikkhus are of paramount importance in the purview of personal health, behavior and hygienic condition. Further, the rules and regulations enacted by Lord Buddha in relation to eating have proved its central value in creating healthy and pleasing life. While eating, Bhikkhus are not allowed to make sounds through mouth in the rhythm of "suru suru" as it is highly unpleasant. It is not ethical for Bhikkhus to lick hands or bowl while eating. Licking lips when eating is also an act of making sin. The container of water should not be touched with an unwashed hand while eating. Also, water used to wash hands and bowls should not be thrown with leftovers inside the house.

As per the precept of "*Sannidhikara*" in *Pachiththiya Pali,* the bowl used to eat meals should be kept well-washed and clean. As stated in *Vinaya Atuva,* swallowing a bit of leftovers from a previous meal with a succeeding meal is an unethical act that causes a demerit.

If the bowl used for meal is not well washed for two or three times, diluted meals and oil can be remained. If the bowl becomes oily due to the heat when it is placed under the sun for drying purpose and if stains appear when tightly rubbed by a finger, the bowl should not be used for eating meals except after washing and cleaning again. It is highly immoral for Bhikkhus to use such a bowl without washing as it causes sin.

## CONCLUSION

Based on what was deliberated above, the miscellany of foods and allied practices that need to be followed in taking meals and related ideologies and concepts have been obvious for our in-depth understanding. Even though most of those are rules enacted by Lord Buddha to be followed by higher ordained Bhikkhus and the novices, the values imbedded in those concepts are wide-ranging for both laymen and Bhikkhus.

According to Buddhism, lust and hatred are two feelings that operate in association with body. Consequently, in line with Buddhism, a discipline in respect of eating has been highly significant for corporeal survival. As stated in *Keetagiri Suththa*, avoiding dinner is a cause for pain-free and relaxed life. *Sambasawa Suththa* says that the practice of having moderate meals can result in evading lust for taste. It is believed that the tiredness and perspiration *(Vighatha Parilaha)* liaised with hitches that may be caused by meals can be quenched by the practice of such disciplines.

If any tiredness is resulted from varied evil feelings *(Ashrawa)*, the tolerance for hunger is required to get rid of it. *Sambasawa Suththa* further says the necessity of doing so. *Dhamma Dayada Suththa* states that being in hunger is better than having a meal erroneously. Matter of meals is a concern in the discourse of satisfaction which is a central focus of Buddhist way of life. It emphasizes on being satiated with a meal sufficient to stomach and with a dress fitting to body. According to *Jeewaka Suththa*, a Bhikkhu should not adhere to alms collection *(Pindapatha)* and he should not be cheated and greedy. Further, he should understand the consequences of things while consuming stuffs with an objective to refrain from the association of those stuffs.

In perusal of Buddhist culture, there are some circumstances that give emphasis on the matter of foods. Some stories in *Dhammapadatta Katha* can be exampled herein. For instances, the stories of *Alanghataka Brahmana, Thathrawattika* who had a belly-full meal and could not stand from the seat, *Kakamasaka* who ate meals severely up to level of throat, *Puththawattika* who could not digest and bear his meals are among those. Gatha such as "*Subhanupassi Wiharanthan Digachcha Parama Roga*" says the importance of having proper portion of meals.

Aforesaid facts that are unique only in Buddhist culture are common applied for both laymen and Bhikkhus. The central values of such policies are universal for all. Further, Lord Buddha has emphasized about the nutritional functions of soups *(Yagu)* which is not a great concern in present-day society. Ten qualities of soups are described in *Mahawagga Pali* in *Vinaya Pitaka* and we are advised to offer soups to others if we wish for his comfort. Attainments of longer life, complexion, comfort, power, wisdom and quench of hunger, decrease of air in the stomach, cleaning the anus, quench of thirst and reducing belly are the benefits of having soups.

In light of aforesaid background, the discourse on foods has been a vital concern in Buddhist ideology. In scrutiny of diverse guidelines on dietary practices throughout the world, it becomes obvious that the most significant deliberation on that matter has been presented by Buddhism. A social and anthropological value, and most importantly a psychological perspective have been rooted in these ideologies and attitudes. Consequently, it is a timely requirement to raise the values entwisted in those deliberations that provide significant backing to sustain a healthy life. s

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# THE STUDY OF THE FOUR BUDDHIST MEDITATION SCHOOLS BASE ON THE FOUR FAVORABLE CONDITIONS

by Suchada Thongmalai*

**ABSTRACT**

The four assemblies of Buddhists have studied the Buddha's teachings and proceeded to achieve good results for themselves including having a kind heart. They would like to spread this knowledge to other Buddhists who have never tried to practice and to those who are not Buddhists. This is a good starting point from which to make all mankind experience true happiness, which can be be the basis for creating a strong and peaceful society.

The propagation of teachings, especially the principles of meditation in Buddhist and non-Buddhist countries, has not been clearly described or categorized by meditation school in each place. By this reason, the researcher aimed to study the principles that the Buddhist Meditation schools, namely Goenka Meditation, Dhammakaya Meditation, Plum Village Meditation and Shambhala Meditation, have implemented to successfully spread Buddhism and meditation practice to the local people, and establish it permanently.

The researcher used the concept of Sappāya 4 or the Four Favorable Conditions as criteria to guide a description of each tradition. The results of study showed that; Firstly, rgarding a suitable

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abode (Meditation Center), Goenka and Plum Village are more focused on long period meditation courses, so they do not have separate places for short term practice. Conversely, Dhammakaya Meditation and Shambhala have different places for both short and long period meditation. There are convenient places in or near cities for one day-meditation and there are quiet places in natural environments for meditation retreats. Secondly, regarding suitable food, Goenka and Dhammakaya meditation provide two meals per day and liquid beverages in the evening, as their attendants follow a Theravada Buddhist tradition of keeping 8 precepts during practice. Plum Village and Shambhala provide three meals per day. Thirdly, regarding suitable persons, every school has trained their meditation teachers for a long time and have selected only suitable individuals who practice themselves enough to do this duty. Lastly, regarding suitable practice, it was found that whilst each school has their own meditation technique, they aim for the same results, which are to make the practitioner calm and clear their mind in the present moment until they completely still their mind. At which point, they can reduce attachment in life and better understand other people. Meditation practice can reduce their mental defilements which bring about all suffering in life, and this kind of result takes a long time of continuous practice. Yet normally practitioners could touch a peaceful feeling in the first time they practice. A well-organized and executed meditation course can make its practitioners receive great results in life, bring peace to their mind, before fostering peaceful family life and finally bring a sustainable peaceful society to the world.

## INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, humanity is suffering, stressing and struggling to find ways to live better lives, both socially and economically. Everyone is seeking as much happiness as they can get. People generally think that happiness happens if they have a lot of money. Just a few people know what true happiness is, where to get it and how to reach it. This knowledge exists in Buddhism, which focuses on training our mind through meditation. As the Buddhist scriptures states *"n'atthi santiparaṃ sukhaṃ"* (Dhp 202, p.261), meaning *there are no any kinds of happiness superior peaceful mind.*

Buddhists know that there are three main principles in Buddhism: Generosity, Precepts and Meditation. Meditation is a practice of purifying the mind to keep the mind clean and pure. One who continuously practices meditation will get a stable emotional state of mind until they can get rid of all defilements and attain enlightenment, eventually. These benefits position meditation practice as the heart of Buddhism, which is different from other religions. As such, meditation was key in the Buddha's sermons regarding his sending his disciples to travel to many places to spread the Dhamma as much as possible for the benefit of the world.

At present, the four assemblies of Buddhists, which are Buddhist monks, Buddhist nuns, Laymen and Laywomen in all sects (Theravada Buddhism, Mahayana Buddhism and Vajrayana Buddhism) follow the ancient guidance for both self-practice and propagation of meditation as much as possible. Thus, meditation practice has spread across all continents around the world, enabling individuals who practice to receive many good results from their meditation, which are a stable mind that is detached from troubles and closer to true happiness. For families, meditation practice raises collective happiness, resulting in a peaceful atmosphere in the family and the ease of empathy. When the mind is peaceful, it results in better health and reduced physical disorders caused by stress. In addition, if members of the community are healthy, both physically and mentally, their very nation will be strong and healthy, leading to sustainable peace.

For these reasons, the researcher is interested in studying modern Buddhist organizations that operate meditation teaching centers around the world, which in turn manage meditation courses according to the concept of Sappāya 4 or Four Favorable Conditions, factors favorable to mental development. The main reason for using of Sappāya 4 in this study is that they constitute the important Dharma principle of supporting meditation, which is having a suitable abode, suitable food, suitable personnel and suitable practice. The researcher collected primary and secondary data, and also conducted field research both in Thailand and the United States of America by Observation, Participant Observation and In-depth Interview with local people about a meditation

course based on the Four Favorable Conditions concept. Four Buddhist Meditation schools were chosen to be studied, which are 1) Goenka Meditation (Participating in practice at Dhammadani Center, Bangkok, Thailand on 11-14 May, 2017) 2) Dhammakaya Meditation (Participating in practice at Dhammakaya Meditation Center, US in January-March, 2016) 3) Plum Village Meditation (Participating in practice at Plum Village, Thailand on 24-29 July, 2015) and 4) Shambala Meditation (Participating in practice at Shambhala Center, Atlanta, USA on 18 February, 2016). In addition, the researcher also studied the history and the goal of meditation practice in each school.

## GOENKA MEDITATION

Satya Narayan Goenka was born and raised in Myanmar (Burma). While living there, he had the good fortune to come into contact with Sayagyi U Ba Khin and to learn the Vipassana technique from him. After receiving training from his teacher for 14 years, Mr. Goenka settled in India and began teaching Vipassana in 1969. In a country still sharply divided by differences of caste and religion, the courses offered by Mr.Goenka soon attracted thousands of people from every part of society. Over a period of almost 45 years, Mr.Goenka and the teachers appointed by him taught hundreds of thousands of people in courses in India and other countries, East and West. Today, meditation centers established under his guidance are operating in Asia, Europe, the Americas, Africa and Australasia. (Vipassana Meditation n.d.a)

There is no charge for either the teaching, or for room and board. All Vipassana courses worldwide are run on a strictly voluntary donation basis. Neither the Teacher nor the assistant teachers receive remuneration; they and those who serve the courses volunteer their time. Thus Vipassana is offered free from commercialization. As the study base on four favorable conditions, the details are as follows;

### 1. Place (Meditation Center)

Goenka Meditation currently has about 311 branches (176 centers, 135 non-centers) in 107 countries. The centers arrange for long retreat, especially the first 10 days course. The place is

provided with accommodation, bathroom, dining room, laundry place, meditation hall and so on. (Vipassana Meditation n.d.b)

From participating in practice, the style of decorating the place will depend on each center. Some of the buildings are simple, some are separate small cottages, and some are Indian architectural buildings with a natural surrounding area. Complete segregation of men and women is to be maintained. Participants are not allow to contact each other during the course. A center is a permanent establishment and a non-center is a temporary establishment which can be setup as and when the need arises. It could be within a school or any local place that would be able to accommodate the meditators. Chairs are provided for those unable to sit comfortably on the floor because of age or physical problems. In the dining area seats are provided only for each person.

**2. Food**

From participating in practice, the center provides two meals, from a simple vegetarian menu per day, breakfast and lunch and also soft drink in the evening; outside food is not allowed at the center.

**3. Personnel**

From an interview with Meditation teacher of Goenka, teachers receive no payment, donations or other material benefit. They are required to have their own private means of support. In this tradition, teachers give Vipassana purely as a service to others. All they get is the satisfaction of seeing people's happiness at the end of ten days. (Anonymous 2017)

The duty of Meditation Teacher is to lead meditation by by first turn on audio file of Mr.Goenka's teaching in each round without saying anything and answer questions to clarify the technique of meditators between 12 p.m. to 1:00 p.m., privately and in public between 9:00 and 9:30 p.m. in the meditation hall. Dhamma Service personnel are a volunteers who assist the Meditation Teacher in managing the retreat and serve meditators. These volunteers must have joined the 10 days course two or three times before they can apply for Dhamma Service. When they gain more experience and

practice themselves in a spiritual way enough by passing all courses from Goenga, they might be chosen by the committee to become Meditation Teachers. (Vipassana Meditation n.d.c)

**4. Meditation**

Meditation Schedule: There are definite schedules in each branch throughout the year. The meditation method of Goenka is Vipassana Meditation, which is a way of self-transformation through self-observation. It focuses on the deep interconnection between mind and body. It is this observation-based, self-exploratory journey to the common root of mind and body that dissolves mental impurity, resulting in a balanced mind full of love and compassion. Life becomes characterized by increased awareness, non-delusion, self-control and peace.

*The Courses:*

The technique is taught at ten-day residential courses during which participants follow a prescription of discipline, learn the basics of the method, and practice sufficiently to experience its beneficial results. The course requires serious work. There are three steps to the training. The first step is, for the entire period of the course, to abstain from killing, stealing, sexual activity, speaking falsely, and intoxicants. This simple code of moral conduct serves to calm the mind. The next step is to develop some mastery over the mind by learning to fix one's attention on the natural reality of the ever changing flow of breath as it enters and leaves the nostrils. By the fourth day the mind is calmer and more focused, better able to undertake the practice of Vipassana itself: observing sensations throughout the body, understanding their nature, and developing equanimity by learning not to react to them. Finally, on the last full day participants learn the meditation of loving kindness or goodwill towards all, in which the purity developed during the course is shared with all beings. The essentials of Vipassana can be learned so that it can be applied in daily life. The more the technique is practiced, the greater the freedom from misery, and the closer the approach to the ultimate goal of full liberation. (Vipassana Meditation n.d.d)

Meditation Practice is all day, beginning at 4:00 a.m. with a wakeup bell and continuing until 9:30 p.m. There are about ten

hours of meditation throughout the day, interspersed with regular breaks and rest periods (Vipassana Meditation n.d.c). Every evening at 7:00 p.m. there is a videotaped lecture by the teacher, S.N. Goenka, speaking in English, together with a translation into a local language, which provides a context for meditators to understand their experience of the day.

From participating in practice, no outside communications are allowed before the course ends, which includes letters, phone calls or visitors. Other electronic devices must be deposited with management until the course ends. All students attending the course observe "noble silence", that is, silence of body, speech and mind. Silence is observed for the first nine full days. On the tenth day, speech is resumed as a way of re-establishing the normal pattern of daily life.

*The purpose of practice Goenka:*

It is given that everyone seeks peace and harmony in order to be relieved of their suffering. In this way the technique of self-observation reveals reality in its two aspects, inner and outer. Normally people miss the inner truth. People always look outside for the cause of their unhappiness. Being ignorant of the inner reality, people never understand that the cause of suffering lies within.

By training, people can be aware of their breathing and also of what is happening inside. Whatever it is, breath or sensation, meditators learn just to observe it without losing mental balance. Meditators stop reacting and multiplying their misery. Instead, they allow the defilements to manifest and pass away. Gradually the mind becomes free of defilements, becomes pure. A pure mind is always full of joy at their success and happiness, full of equanimity in the face of any situation. The surrounding atmosphere also becomes full with peace and harmony. Observing reality as it is by observing the truth inside, the meditator transcends basic reality, and experiences a truth that is beyond mind and matter, beyond time and space. It is the truth of total liberation from all defilements, impurities and suffering. It is the final goal of everyone. (Vipassana Meditation n.d.e)

## DHAMMAKAYA MEDITATION

Dhammakaya Meditation teaching is provided by Phra

Dhammakaya temple, which is a Theravada Buddhist temple in Thailand. It was founded in 1970 by the nun Chand Khonnokyoong and the Most Venerable monk, Dhammajayo. It is well-known for its Dhammakaya meditation tradition (Vijja Dhammakaya), was was first promulgated by the master, Most Venerable monk, Sodh Candasaro in the early-20th century. The temple is legally represented by the Dhammakaya Foundation. Initially, the temple was founded as a meditation center, after Maechi Chandra and Luang Por Dhammajayo could no longer accommodate the rising number of participants in activities at Paknam Bhasicharoen temple. The center became an official temple in 1977. Phra Dhammakaya temple was established by the concept of *Build a temple to be the noble temple, cultivate monks to be true monks; and develop people to be virtuous people.* (Phra Dhammakaya Temple 2018, p.17-29). And also they have a goal of making merit follow the Buddha's teaching through doing good deeds and meditation. The temple promotes a community of good friends or Kalyanamittas and aims to become a global spiritual center to help cultivate its slogan *World Peace through Inner Peace* by opening Dhammakaya meditation centers in many countries around the world (Wat Phra Dhammakaya n.d.a). As the study base on four favorable conditions, the details are as follows;

**1. Place (Meditation Center)**

Dhammakaya Meditation centres number about 182 branches around the world. These meditation centers also operate as temples which are synonymous with Buddhist monasteries. Normally, the locations are in peaceful areas in cities, in keeping with the Dhammakaya Meditation center's place-choosing criteria. (Wat Phra Dhammakaya n.d.b)

From participating in practice, for the short meditation sessions (1 day meditation) the temple is used as the place for teaching meditation, the number of people that can accommodate depend on the area of each center. However, for long meditation (3-7 day courses) a separate place in a natural environment far from the city is normally used as a proper place for meditators. The dorm room lodging depends on the site, with some places having shared rooms and some providing small private houses big enough for just one person. There are separate accommodation quarters for men and

women. The meditation hall and dining hall are shared. (Wat Phra Dhammakaya n.d.c)

**2. Food**

From participating in practice, the center provides lunch for one day meditation and two meals per day for long meditation courses, which are breakfast and lunch, supplemented by liquid refreshments in the evening.

**3. Personnel**

From the observation, the staff of the Dhammakaya meditation centers are monks, specifically teaching monks, and lay people, working as teaching monks' assistants, who are normally called Ubasok and Ubasika for men and women respectively. They all dedicate their lives to be permanent staff for the temple. To become a teaching monk, a monk will have had to be ordained for many years and practiced himself diligently enough until the community considers him ready and chooses him.

**4. Meditation**

Meditation Schedule: There are free meditation classes every Sunday and during work days depending on each center. For long retreats, meditators can choose from several scheduled courses a year on local websites.

Meditation Method:

The uniqueness of the Dhammakaya meditation is that it teaches about the center of the body as the natural home of the human mind as well as the inner gateway to enlightenment. Dhammakaya meditation also has moral impact on the mind. A person who meditates regularly will become gentler, kinder, and more peaceful. For the meditation method, the seven bases of the mind, comfortable and relax feeling is very important for Dhammakaya Meditation, they explain in detail thus;

Before starting, it is necessary to acquaint yourself with the various resting points or bases of the mind inside the body. The first base is at the rim of the nostril, on the right side for men and on the left side for women. The second base is at the inner corner of the

eye, on the right side for men and on the left side for women. The third base is at the center of the head. The fourth base is at the roof of the mouth. The fifth base is at the upper center of the throat. The sixth base is at a point in the middle of your abdomen, the meeting point of an imaginary line between the navel through the back and the line between the two sides. The seventh base of the mind is two fingerbreadths above the navel. This base is the most important point in the body. It is the center of the body where the mind can come to a standstill.

The sitting posture, which has been found to be the most conducive for meditation, is the half-lotus position. Sit upright with your back straight, cross-legged with your right leg over the left one. You can sit on a cushion or pillow to make your position more comfortable. Nothing should impede your breathing or circulation. Your hands should rest palms-up on your lap, and the tip of your right index finger should touch your left thumb. Feel that you could sit happily for as long as you like. Softly close your eyes as if you are about to fall asleep. Relax every part of your body. Make sure there are no signs of tension in any muscles on your body. Stop thinking about any worldly things. Feel as if you were sitting alone, create a feeling of happiness and spaciousness in your mind. Feel that your body is an empty space, without organs, muscles or tissues. Gently and contentedly rest your attention at a point near the seventh base of the mind at the center of the body.

If you find that you cannot dissuade the mind from wandering, then your mind needs an inner object as a focus of attention. Gently imagine that a bright, clear, crystal sphere, about the size of the tip of your little finger locate inside at the center of the body. If you find that your mind still wanders, you can bring the mind back to the center by repeating the mantra, *Samma-arahang* silently, as if the sound of the mantra is coming from the center of body and keep repeating the mantra. Eventually the sound of the mantra will fade away. When the mind is perfectly standstill, a new bright, clear, crystal sphere will arise of its own accord. This stage is called *pathama magga* (primary path). You will experience a great happiness that you have never known before. It will give way to a succession of increasingly purer transcendental inner bodies, until

it reaches the Body of Enlightenment known as Dhammakaya. (Wat Phra Dhammakaya n.d.d)

*The purpose of practice Dhammakaya Meditation:*

Meditation is seen as something that people already do in everyday life that allows focusing on the task at hand, but the depth of this meditation is superficial. The surrounding events in the world soon rob people of their attention and their concentration is gone. The mind that wanders outside the body is the source of all types of suffering. By deepening one's meditation until the mind comes to a standstill one can unlock the potential and unused ability within. Dhammakaya practitioners maintain a balance of mindfulness and happiness for themselves, bringing contentment and direction to life in a way not thought possible through any other technique.

Meditation is a part of everyone's life, not least the life of the householder, with family life and life in society contributing to peace in the world. Thus, meditation is especially important for all those leading the family life and for everyone who lives under the same roof as others. Meditation can bring the World Peace, according to the words of the most venerable Dhammajayo in Wat Phra Dhammakaya (n.d.e) website thus;

The human mind can be the starting point of both war and peace. If the human mind is in turmoil originating from greed, anger, or delusion, feelings that are the cause of conflict will arise. Wars and fighting which have exploded from the barrels of guns around the world and caused suffering for human beings, all these originate with the fire found in people's minds.

It is like the small flame from a lit match that spreads to burn down an entire city. At the same time, when the human mind is calm and cool, full of consciousness and wisdom, endless happiness will arise. The result is peace for individuals, for families, for communities, for societies, for nations, and for the world. It is world peace that arises from inner serenity. Therefore, the mind is the important cause of world war or world peace.

Plum Village Meditation

Plum Village is a Buddhist meditation center originating in

southern France. It was founded by two Vietnamese monastics, Thích Nhất Hạnh (a Zen master and Buddhist monk) and Chân Không (a Buddhist nun), in 1982. It is an approach to engage Buddhism mainly from a Mahayana perspective. The way of practice is the application of mindfulness to everyday activities such as sitting, walking, eating, speaking, listening and working, etc. These practices are integrated with lifestyle guidelines called the Five Mindfulness Trainings, which bring peace to one's life and community. (Plum Village n.d.a). As the study base on four favorable conditions, the details are as follows;

**1. Place (Meditation Center)**

Plum Village has about 9 branches in 6 countries around the world (Plum Village, n.d.a). From an interview with Phra Phaptrach, the meditation centers are in the same location as the monasteries. Locations far from the city and close to nature is a criterion in choosing a place for Plum village. The dorm room lodgings are simple with only shared rooms (up to six people per room). Guests are provided with mattresses on bunk bed frames. There is separation between men and women. Tenting is also available with toilets, sinks, and individual showers in the campground. Men, women, and couples are segregated into different areas of the campground. The meditation hall and dining hall are shared with the monastic sangha. (Phra Phaptrach 2017)

**2. Food**

From participating in practice, there are three vegetarian, generally vegan, meals per day. The focus is on the path of simplicity and nature where meal time is a time to practice mindfulness as well. The practitioners are not allowed to talk until they finish.

**3. Personnel**

From an interview with Phra Phaptrach, Most staff of Plum Village are monks. Normally, monks are called *Brother* and nuns are called *Sister*. In order to become a teaching monk or nun, monastic aspirants have to have been ordained for many years and practiced themselves until the community of monks consider them ready. If laypeople have completed a retreat of Plum Village and practiced enough, then they can apply to be a volunteers.

**4. Meditation**

Meditation Schedule: There are definite schedules in each branch throughout the year. There are many retreats provide for practitioners all through the year, thus;

1) Days of Mindfulness

Participants are welcome to visit the monastery on Sunday Days of Mindfulness from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. for joining walking meditation, eating with the community, dharma talks, recitation ceremonies, total relaxation meditation, etc. (PlumVillage n.d.b)

2) Overnight Retreats

During overnight retreats, practitioners are invited to practice sitting and walking meditation, to enjoy mindful eating with the community, to listen to Dhamma talks, to visit nice gardens, and to walk along the nature trails. Each moment of daily life is to be seen as an opportunity to arrive in the present moment. (PlumVillage, n.d.c)

3) Seasonal Retreats

Participants will enjoy the daily schedule of the monastery and the basic practices such as sitting meditation, walking meditation, and mindful eating for 1-2 weeks. (PlumVillage, n.d.d)

4) Special Retreats

Special retreats are the courses for special groups of people, such as the Wake Up (Young Adults) Retreat, Family Retreat, Teen Camp, US Tour Retreat in English, and Vietnamese Retreat. These include basic practices as well as Dharma talks based on the theme of the retreat, dharma family groups for working and sharing, and a schedule that incorporates special activities. (PlumVillage, n.d.e)

*Mindfulness Practice:*

Each moment of daily life is seen as an opportunity to arrive in the present moment. Mindfulness is the energy of being aware and awake to the present moment. Meditators bring their body and mind into harmony while washing the dishes, driving the car, or taking the morning shower. In the practice centers, attendants do most of the same things done at home. In practicing together as a sangha, or community, the practice of mindfulness becomes more joyful,

relaxed, and steady. Sitting meditation is a time of 'returning home' to give full attention to and care for oneself. Practitioners sit upright with dignity and return to their breathing. Meditators bring their full attention to what is within and around them. The mind is allowed to become spacious and the heart soft and kind in keeping with the adage 'Let it come, let it stay, then let it go'. There is no need to push, to oppress, or to prevent arising thoughts. In Plum Village, observing the thoughts and images of the mind with an accepting and loving eye, sitting meditation is very healing. (Plum Village, n.d.f)

From participating in practice, in walking meditation, meditators take one step with each in-breath and one step with each out-breath. Aware of the surrounding sangha, practitioners feel in harmony with the larger body. Everybody moves together slowly and mindfully. Eating a meal together is also a meditative practice. Participants should try to offer their presence at every meal. Serving food to themselves, meditators can begin practicing at once, chewing each mouthful at least 30 times, until the food becomes liquified. This aids the digestive process. Every morsel of food is to be enjoyed mindfully. Practitioners thus strive to establish themselves in the present moment. (Plum Village n.d.g)

*The purpose of practice Plum Village:*

In Plum Village, they practice Zen using the energy of mindfulness and insight but we also say the Pure and is available in the here and the now. When practicing mindfulness, they mean about dwelling in the present moment, living deeply in every moment of life. It start comfortable and clam feeling to release all tensions. Stop thinking of anything by awareness of breathing. Then touch the true happiness that are there, so we can be free in the present moment. In Plum Village, they using the power of insight and mindfulness to bring Zen and Pure Lang together at all time (Niem Hy, C 2016)

*Shambhala Meditation*

The word Shambhala comes from the name of an enlightened kingdom of legend. The global Shambhala network attracts diverse people who are interested in mind-exploration, transformative experiences, and attempting to realize a modern enlightened society. Shambhala is based on trust in human dignity and its

vision is to inspire compassionate, sustainable, and just human societies. Meditation instruction at all Shambhala Meditation Centres is offered free of charge, though long Meditation Retreats have fees of varying amounts to cover the expenses of whichever accommodation participants choose (Shambhala n.d.a). As the study base on four favorable conditions, the details are as follows;

1. Place (Meditation Center)

There are more than 221 branches in 34 countries (shambhala n.d.b). From participating in practice, The place for daily meditation is in the city, or not far from the city which makes sessions easy to join. The longer period meditation practice venues are far from the city in natural environments. Accommodation and meditation space is provided.

2. Food

From an interview with Mr. Jamie Reinhardt, Daily practice is completed only in the morning or evening without food. But for long meditation retreats, three normal meals a day are prepared. (Reinhardt 2017)

3. Personnel

Each center has staff to take care of day-to-day operations, and Certified Teachers, who are local people. Some of them are permanent staff and some are volunteers. From an interview with Mr. Thomas R. Naynes, volunteers have to practice meditation according to the Shambhala guidelines to understand the practice before they can volunteer to help teachers in the class. To be a meditation teacher, individuals must pass the basic, intermediate and advanced levels of meditation from Shambhala, and also have to pass the *Certified Teacher* course and be evaluated by the committee. Then they can go to a nearby meditation center to become a regular volunteer teacher. (Naynes 2016)

4. Meditation

From participating in practice, meditation instructors are senior practitioners who have undergone extensive, careful training. They learn to guide others along the path, drawing not only from the classical sources, but also from their own experience. The result

is practical, friendly advice for integrating a spiritual life with the often hectic everyday world. Shambhala instructors are thoroughly trained to provide guidance, support and direction to students. In the introductory programs, meditators receive the basic meditation concepts to start their journey. These programs typically include open talks, meditation practice, group discussions and personal interviews.

*Mindfulness Practice*

Shambala is a Tibetan meditation practice. The way of Shambhala teaching is mindfulness and awareness meditation practice, which includes walking meditation, intensive sitting mindfulness practice and awareness. Shambhala meditation focuses on the breath to train consciousness. Practitioners breathe deeply in a regular rhythm, slowly inhaling and holding the air for a moment, then slowly releasing the air. Concsious repetition of this action is key to progress. When the breath is consistently on track, the mind will calm down, so the practitioner breathes in this way normally, with consciousness all the time (Shambhala n.d.c). From the Shambhala website (Shambhala n.d.d), there are many meditation courses, thus;

1) Introductory Programs

Most centers hold at least one meditation session per week open to anyone, free of charge. A meditation instructor is present to assist beginners, sitting about 20 – 30 minutes per period with walking meditation for 10 – 12 minutes. Many Shambhala Meditation Centers build into the schedule a time for refreshments and socializing.

2) Half-Day and Full-Day Workshops

These workshops offer a systematic introduction to the practice of meditation. The programs are oriented toward beginners, but are also helpful for anyone who would like to refresh or deepen their understanding.

3) Meditation in Everyday Life

This course is designed to provide participants with the introductory tools and teachings for working with meditation in daily life. With simple instructions and support, mindfulness

meditation practice can become part of life, bringing greater stability, strength, and clarity.

Moreover, there are many meditation courses provide for practitioners who would like to develop themselves in spiritual path, such as the Shambhala Training Level I (The Art of Being Human) and Simplicity Retreats (week session and one-month session). In the Shambhala Buddhist tradition, one-month session or *dathün* is one of the most important training programs. Practicing in a larger groups is seen to be an advantage on these courses.

*The purpose of practice Shambhala:*

Meditation is based on the premise that the natural state of the mind is calm and clear. It provides a way to train the mind to settle into this state, free from agitation. At this point, practitioners discover the basic goodness of the natural mind. The mind is trained to be flexible and tuned into what is happening now which is to be applied in all aspects of life, including one's livelihood, relationships, and spiritual path. Mindfulness is for realizing that life is made of these moments. As the meditator continues to practice, his or her awareness becomes sharper. Mindfulness is seen as the best way to appreciate the world and the sacredness of everything. Having a mind that is at peace with itself is the basis of happiness and compassion. In Shambhala meditation the practitioners aren't creating a peaceful state. Rather, they let their mind return to the way it was to begin with. In that state the mind is able to be present and understand its truth. So the natural clarity of the mind can be utilized on anything its owner decides. Shambhala is a spiritual path of study, a meditation, as well as a path of serving others and engaging with our world. (Shambhala n.d.c)

## CONCLUSION

Considering the above results, it can be seen that all four Buddhist organizations, whether they are from Theravada Buddhism (Goenka and Dhammakaya Meditation), Mahayana Buddhism (Plum Village and Vajrayana Meditation) or Vajrayana Buddhism (Shambhala Meditation), they have well organized Meditation Courses for local people in each location. They intend to allocate the best of the Four Favorable Conditions so that those

who are interested in meditation can follow easily and immediately feel the initial good results at the first time they practice. That is the reason that they can reach local people. It is the duty of Buddhists to follow the Dhamma propagation guidelines of the Lord Buddha through which he wished for a mankind free from suffering who would discover the true happiness within. In each school, there are many branches spread across all continents, which shows that Buddhist meditation is popular with local people in all areas. If the participants were not receiving good results from meditation, then those branches would not continue to exist. Additionally, current Buddhist Meditation practice tends to be able to spread more and more as well since many local people who come to practice meditation enjoy visibly positive effects for themselves and their families, until many move full-circle into volunteering and training themselves earnestly to become local meditation teachers. This effect makes Buddhist Meditation able to settle firmly and permanently.

In addition, when studying the meditation goals of each school, it can be seen that every school has the same goal, that is, the desire for humans around the world to touch the peace within, free from suffering, and reach the true inner happiness. Continuously practicing meditation in daily life will help humans to escape from the desires that are the root of all suffering. Those who practice meditation are those who are mentally stable on account of having peace from within and can live a balanced life no matter what kinds of problems arise. As a result, those around them can experience that peace as well and be inspired to practice meditation in order to meet that happiness similarly. When people in the community receive peace and happiness on their own then it will develop onwards to sustainable happiness in the family and expand to the community. It will be a peaceful, knowledgeable and wise society. Finally, a truly peaceful world will certainly happen.

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# INSPIRED BY THE OLD TOWARDS THE NEW: REVIVAL OF VINAYA-ORIENTED THERAVADHA BUDDHISM IN MYANMAR; ITS CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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Buddhism arrived and flourished in Myanmar since many centuries back. And, it has seen its intermittent rises and falls due to various reasons. Since its arrival, Buddhism in Myanmar looked comparatively more Theravadha according to iconographical and epigraphic evidences. However, even amongst followers of Theravadha Buddhism, there were only a few sub-sects that are strictly Vinaya-disciplined. In this IT age, vinaya-oriented Buddhism along with forest-dwelling practice wanes and is being challenged. However, its revitalization remains within the bounds of possibility. This paper examines the making of a school of vinaya-oriented Theravadha Buddhism in Myanmar and also explores the connection between Buddhist way of leadership and unity in diversity with special reference to Mahavihara Forest Monastery in Hmaw-bi, Yangon.

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## OVERVIEW

This paper aims to introduce arrival of Buddhism into Myanmar plus that of TheravadhaVinaya-oriented Buddhism at the same time stressing its current trend and conditions in relation to forest-dwelling practice, an integral part of TheravadhaVinaya-oriented Buddhism. This archival research is limited to a brief historical overview on the arrival of Buddhism in Myanmar plus the present-day example of Mahavihara Forest Monastery. This work relies much on the narratives and textual references compiled by local historians and researchers in addition to some authoritative sources written by foreign scholars. The scope of the research is to reconstruct the Buddhist understanding on challenges and opportunities of a school of TheravadhaViniya-oriented Buddhism in the making from historical perspective and also to examine the connection between Buddhist way of leadership and unity in diversity.

## ARRIVAL OF BUDDHISM IN MYANMAR

History has it that arrival of Buddhism in Myanmar could be traced back to the lifetime of the Buddha and also in the reign of King Asoka when he dispatched Ven. Sona and VenUttara to Myanmar during his Buddhism missions to nine kingdoms under the guidance of VenAshinMahamoggaliputtatissa in 235 Sasana Era.

Two merchant brothers, namely, Tapussa and Bhallika came to Lord Buddha during his stay under the Linlon (BuchananiaLatifolia) tree on the 49th day after his Enlightenment, and received the Two Refuges (Dvevasikasaranagamana). At their humble request, the Buddha touched his head and gave eight threads of sacred hair relics to the brothers for veneration. On their arrival back at Athitanjana town (today Yangon) near Ukkalapa, they built a pagoda near the city gate, enshrining these hair-relics of Lord Buddha. The descendants of King Ukkalapa are believed to have moved those hair relics from the former pagoda to enshrine them in a new pagoda built atop the Singuttara hill (the present-day location) (Rajanda 2009, pp. 47-49).

After attainment of eight vasa, the Buddha, as requested by VenGavampati, went to RamannaratthaSudhammapura (Present-day Thaton) and conferred six threads of hair to King Thiha after

they sought refuge in the Three Gems. Since then, Buddhism thrived in Ramannadesa(Mahadhammathingyan 2011, P.).

The Buddha also travelled to DanyawaddyRakhine Kingdom at the humble invitation of King Sandasuriya who also sought refuge in the Triple Gem, which was inscribed in Pali in the Taungpaukgyi Inscription as follows (Okkansa 1990, P. 41)(San ThaAung 1974, P. 63) (ShweZan 1997, P. 176);

"Then, the Buddha during His sojourns with 500 disciples visited Dhanyawaddy resting atop the Selagiri Mountain on the eastern bank of Kicchapanadi River."

In his attainment of 20th Vasa, Lord Buddha, accompanied by 499 disciples also visited Vannija village in Sunaparanta Kingdom and received the donation of the Sandal-wood monastery, leaving two giant footprints for veneration at the request of Nammada the serpent King, and Saccabhanda hermit and sending VenMahapunna to stay and promote his Sasana in Sunaparanta Kingdom (Rajanda 2009, pp. 58-59).

In the 235 SasanaEra, King Asoka with the noble guidance of VenMoggaliputtatissa dispatched the nine missionaries to nine kingdoms. In this religious mission, VenSona and VenUttara with other three Theras came to Suvannabhumi and propagate Buddhism there (Rajanda 2009, P.70).

## DIFFERENT VIEWS ON LORD BUDDHA'S ARRIVAL IN MYANMAR

SayaMaga (AD 1913-1988), a Burmese scholar, refuted the Buddha's arrival in Myanmar in his work named "the Sasana Project", seconding the statement made by the Indian scholar RahulaPandit that the Buddha had never visited outside Mijjimadesa. Again, famous Myanmar historian DrThanTun (AD 1923-2005) in his "Old Burmese Chronicle" disagreed with the fact that Buddhism arrived in Myanmar during the lifetime of Lord Buddha, saying that there is no evidence predating their claims about the arrival of Lord Buddha (Than Tun 1969, P. 197). On the other hand, Brahmacari Mon Bo K, an ethic linguist and archaeologist supported the Buddha's arrival in Myanmar as follows;

"It is very interesting to know when Buddhism found its way

to Myanmar. However, we have loads of ancient records, local histories, and inscriptions that claim in unison about the arrival of Buddhism during the lifetime of Lord Buddha. We also have so far found evidences that support their claim (Mon Bo K 1962, P. 76)"

VenCakkinda (AD 1936-2018) also claimed the Buddha's visit to Rakhinein the 20th of His vasa. With 500 disciples the Buddha visited Dannyawaddi. The king of Dannyawaddi named Chandasuriya after hearing the teachings of the Buddha took refuge in the Three Gems. He requested the Buddha to leave His Replica to venerate. Consequently, an alloy image, life-size of the Buddha was cast, later known as the Maha Muni Image.The aforementioned Taungpaukgyi inscription also supports VenCakkinda's claim about the Buddha's arrival in Rakhine, Myanmar (Candamalarlankara 2014, Pp. 180-181).

Therefore, Pali canons also such as Mahavaggakatha, Mahasihanadasutta in MijjimaPannasa, Mahaparinibannasutta state that the Buddha during His lifetime made numerous visits outside Mijjimadesa, the far-off lands and even to the celestial abodes for the welfare of all beings (Mon 2014, Pp. 23-24).

The archaeological findings also support that Buddhism arrived in Myanmar since the beginning of Christian era. Pali verses beginning with "Ye DhammaHetuppabhava" extracted from VinayaMahavaPali Canon were found in gold leaves excavated in Khin-Ba mound and some verses from Nikaya and Abhidhamma such as "CattaroIddhipadaCattaroSammappaddhana" were also inscribed in the gold leaves found inMaungKan's field of Sri Ksetra. These gold leaves are dated back to AD 500. Therefore, we can assume that Theravada Buddhism arrived in Myanmar since then.

## THE NINE MONASTIC ORDERS IN MYANMAR

The population of the Buddhist monks reached over 535,327 (Ryosuke 2018, P. 50). They fall into nine monastic orders such as ThudhammaNikaya, ShwekyinNikaya, DhammanuDhammaMahadvara, VinayanulomaMuladvara, AnaukchaungDvara, Veluvan, CatubhumikaMahasatipatthanaHngattwin, GannavimuttaKuto and DhammayuttiNikayaMahayin. Of them, Thudhamma is the primary Nikaya as it was named after the fact that eight leading Ma-

hatheras got together at Thudhamma Hall in Mandalay Palace on a regular basis to deal with the contentious Samgha affairs (Viniccha-ya) in the King Mindon's era in 19th Century. Other orders were also formed in the late Kongboung Period and so named after the title of their leading Mahatheras. Burmese monastic orders only differ in lineage and organization structure. Of them, Dvara and Shweky-innikayas are better known to be very strict with Vinaya rules. As regards the nine monastic orders, AbhidhajaMaharatthaguru Most Ven. ShwehinthaSayadaw said- "It's actually not fair to say that the nine monastic orders differ. I dare say that there is no monastic or-der that differ in Theravada Buddhist philosophy with each other in Myanmar. It is because all Theravada sectarians follow the same Vinaya rules. Yet, they only differ in the names of their founding Mahatheras (Manitabhivamsa 1994, Introduction)."

## FOREST-DWELLING VINAYA-ORIENTED BUDDHISM

This Theravada practice stands for the Buddhist way of life followed by orthodox Buddhist monks who practice forest-dwelling and "Dutingacaranna" while strictly observing Vinaya disciplines. Today, Vinaya-oriented forest monasteries are hard to establish. Forest-dwelling monks always seek a peaceful place to dwell. In the Theravada Pitakas, most ancient Buddhist monks are found to have followed forest-dwelling vinaya-oriented Buddhism. The outstanding names through ages are VenPyannadassiMahathera, his close disciple VenDhammadassi (aka Shin Arahan) (Bichoff 1995, Pp. 45-48) in Bagan Period (AD 1044), Shwe-Oo-min Sayadaw and TaungbilarSayadaw in Ava Era (17th Century AD), CatugiriTaunglayloneSayadaw in Kongboung Period (18th Century AD), JanalabhiAshinMuninndaghosa and AshinGambhisara, TheeloneSayadaw and KintawyaSayadaw (in the early 19th Century AD) HtutkhaungSayadaw in King Mindon's era), VenKavindha, ShwekyinSayadaw, PineekwinSayadaw, GuphyutawyaSayadaw, PatheinMigadaramaSayadaw and Ven U Silaetc (Hlaing 1993, Pp. 50-208).

## THE PRESENT-DAY FOREST-DWELLING VINAYA-ORIENTED BUDDHISM

Traditional Buddhist monasteries are primarily found in

Myanmar, one of the five Theravada Buddhist countries in the world. Myanmar plays a leading role in Pariyatti and Patipatti practices amongst the five Theravada Buddhist nations and possesses pariyatti monasteries where Theravada Pitakas are traditionally taught from the perspective of normative doctrine.

Vinaya-oriented Buddhism and forest-dwelling practices have been encouraged by the Buddhist throughout the ages in Myanmar like today. In particular, images of Vinaya-observing monks receive public interest and earn respect on social media like Facebook. Intra-religious network is set up and strengthened at the same time amongst the lay Buddhists who are fond of Vinaya-oriented Buddhist practice through Facebook, Viber and Instagram, thus enabling them to more support this esoteric school of Buddhism.

Forest monasteries tend to exist in far-off areas, so creating for monks a space to stay away from the worldly affairs. As mentioned above, lay Buddhists are deeply respectful towards this practice and see that these Vinaya-observing monks meet their daily requirements such as the four requisites. For the most part, the Buddhist missionaries (Mahatheras) in the rural areas send their disciples to the forest monasteries with a view to getting their pupils accustomed to forest-dwelling and Vinaya-observing practices, thus in order for them not to harbor the thought of returning back to layman-hood. Administration is comparatively easy in forest monasteries as physical objects that can cause mental defilements are scarce. The number of forest monasteries in Myanmar is increasing though at a slow pace. Over 600 Vinaya-observing monks reside and practice meditation in Pa-auk TawyaYeiktha, 9 miles away from the south of Mawlamyaing. At the same time, over 1200 Vinaya-observing monks stay and learn Buddhist texts in Mahavihara forest monastery in the southeastern part of Hmaw-bi, Yangon. Likewise, the number of KamatthanaYeiktha where both lay Buddhists and monks can practice meditation also increases, partly making the revival of Vinaya-oriented Buddhism possible in Myanmar. These forest monasteries and meditation centers (Yeikthas) are receiving more interested visitors from across the world.

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE REVIVAL OF VINAYA-ORIENTED THERAVADA BUDDHISM

(The Case with the Mahavihara Forest Monastery)

IT age brings in both opportunities and challenges for Vinaya-observing Mahatheras in their attempts to make Vinaya-oriented Buddhism strong again in Myanmar. IT gadgets like mobile phones, tablets, i-pads and i-pods are testing the tolerance of Vinaya-observing monks, young and old. As Facebook is viral, forest-dwelling monks are no exception because some of them like to argue that it can be an effective tool for spreading the good news of Dhamma and Vinaya over to other devotees across the world. To quote Beikhu Bodhi's words, the Sangha today are in close interaction with the Buddhist lay community like before. Their relationship is interdependent and collaborative in such a way that the laity provides the monastic order with their material requisites whilst the monks in return teach the lay people Dhamma. However, the weightiest factor affecting this relationship is transition probably from a traditional social order to a technological social order (Bodhi 2006). The laity visiting the monastery brings androids and selfie themselves, also video-recording what the presiding monk preaches them. Asking their teacher-monk to explain on their doubts on the phone and making appointment with the monks on the line are unstoppable.However, there is no clear-cut solution on how to avoid scenes and objects that can arouse mental defilements when they are allowed to use Facebook and other social media on their androids. Thus, all monks are prohibited from using hand-phones and if they need to call the laity or parents, they have to go to the lay attendants' office.

Food is another challenge for the monks with health problems like indigestion.According to the Vinaya, three main points arise. First, with regard to acquiring goods, since monks are prohibited from involving themselves in any economic or productive activities, they have to depend on dāna (religious gifts) offered by lay people. Second, with respect to owning goods, monks are not prohibited from ownership of goods, but there are various limitations on what, how much, and how long they can own specific items. For example, they must not store any food other than medicines. They

also must not have more robes and begging bowls than necessary. Third, monks are prohibited from receiving and using money, since money is said to be the universal means of exchange and it unavoidably amplifies the desire for goods. In this way, the rules of the Vinaya severely restrict a monk's ability to acquire, own, and consume goods. In Theravāda Buddhism, this kind of life for a monk is thought to be the optimum approach, although not the only one, to achieve nibbāna. Monks, however, cannot live without any food, so this poses an enormous dilemma in a monk's life—monks have to live according to the Vinaya, but the Vinaya requires monks not to cling to goods, so if monks strictly observe the Vinaya, they might not be able to sustain themselves (Ryosuke 2018, P. 49). In Mahavihara, all monks are supposed to take their lunch with all vegetables, meat, rice and gravies in one bowl as they practice Pattapindikangadhutanga (eating only what is in one's bowl.). As a Pali verse "Sabbesattaaharatthitika" goes, all beings are maintained by nutriment.

Practicing "Tecivarikanga Dhutanga" (using a set of three robes only) causes no problem for forest-dwelling monks. However, it is quite challenging when they fall ill as they are not allowed to wrap themselves in a blanket or rest on a pillow. During the festivals like Thingyan (Water Festival) and the Thadingyut Festival (Light Festival), they are allowed to return back home to meet parents and old teachers or to visit places of their interest. . It tends to be challenging for the forest-dwelling monk who are back home or on a tour to observe all that they normally do back in their forest monastery. A mental dilemma is likely for those monks who are not ardent enough for the Vinaya-observing practice on their return back to the forest monastery, which happens to cajole them into returning to layman-hood. Therefore, before their journey, they are asked to listen to the Mahathera's counsel.

As remote from the urban area, Buddhist monks enjoy peace and tranquility in forest monasteries. Thus, they can cultivate concentration in both of their efforts in Pariyatti and Patipatti, thus enabling them to lead a secluded life. As they become used to residing in a forest monastery, they do not normally wish to visit any public areas. Though away from villages (approximately

6 miles), they can go on their daily alms-round by bus. Forest monasteries always are wide, well-ventilated, unspoiled landscapes, allowing Vinaya-observing monks to serenely pursue such austere practices (dhutanga) as rukkha-mulikanga (leaving the shelter of a monastic dwelling to live under the shade of a tree), abbhokasikanga (rejecting shelter including trees to live in the open air) and arannakanga (taking up residence in a rustic monastery situated at least a thousand yard from the nearest village) in order for them to be able to shed defiling passions.

## MONASTIC STRUCTURE OF THE MAHAVIHARA FOREST MONASTERY

Any presiding sayadaw (Abbot) never rules his forest monastery at his own will or under his own command. All follow Vinaya disciplines and monastic rules formulated at the collective will of the monastic order. The executive body (the Nayakas) is formed under the Mahathera (Presiding Sayadaw). Under the executive body are warden monks responsible for each monastic hostel. Under each member of the executive body are lecturers formed. In addition, surety monks or monks in charge are also appointed in order to take care of health, education and Vinaya-observing practices. Each surety monk is responsible for the maximum of 15-18 student monks. When a monk is summoned towards the Mahathera for any misconduct, the responsible surety monk and the warden monk have to listen to suggestions given by the Mahathera, creating the monastic administration a collaborative work. A warden is also called "a distant surety monk for any student monk residing in his hostel.

A lecture in his daily lecture aims to produce virtuous, Vinaya-disciplined, well-versed and missionary-spirited monks. He is very careful about his students not to end up in getting certificates and degrees, popularity and gifts. He teaches his students so as to strengthen their faith in Kammaniyama and the Triple Gem as well as to enlighten them. In other words, the forest monastic way of teaching is an attempt to sustain the traditional orthodox way employed by ancient Mahatheras with some adaptations wherever necessary.

In any forest monastic education, the primary focus, regardless of the type of Buddhist text student monks choose to learn, is

to strengthen morality, then to be able to differentiate between "Nama" (mind) and "Rupa" (matter), and finally to understand Buddhist causality (dependent origination). The method devised by the teachers of AshinNagasena and AshinBuddhaghosa still survives in the form of Buddhist monastic education in Myanmar. In Pali, "SilaVisuddhi" stands for purity of conduct, in the same vein as "SabbhapapassaAkarannam" (to abstain from unwholesome deeds). Again, "CittaVisuddhi" (purity of mind) is to conduct meritorious deeds, which is also called "kusalassaupasampdha" in Pali. "DitthiVisuddhi" (purity of outlook) is an ability to keep one's view righteous and wholesome, which is also termed as "Sacittapariyodhapanan". When one attains "ditthivisuddhi", one can differentiate between "Nama" and "Rupa" and such innate knowledge is called "Namarupapariccheddhanana". In that stage, one can momentarily dispel "Ditthi" (wrong view). Then, one can understand the dependent origination, which is also called "Picchayapariggahanana". At this stage, one can remove "Vicikiccha" (doubt) in general. Thus, Buddhist monastic education system puts the pupils on the path of the three Sikkha (Sila, Samadhi and Panna) (Vijjananda (Mahavihara) (2010, 9).

## BUDDHIST WAY OF LEADERSHIP INTERTWINED WITH VINAYA-ORIENTED BUDDHISM AND FOREST-DWELLING PRACTICE (THE CASE OF THE MAHAVIHARA FOREST MONASTERY)

TheMahaViharaya of Anuradhapura in Sri Lanka was founded by King DevanampiyaTissa (247-207 BCE). In addition, famous commentators like Buddhaghosa and Dhammapala formed the Theravada Mahaviharan orthodoxy in Sri Lanka. They were very strict with Vinaya disciplines and ardent supporters of Theravada Buddhism. Their model of Buddhist practice was to learn and practice both Pariyatti and Patipatti while observing the morality (sila) at one's best. The Mahavihara Forest Monastery today in Hmaw-bi, Yangon, Myanmar was founded in 2002 following the example of Old Mahaviharaya of Anuradhapura.

Over 1250 monks from across the country and also from neighboring countries reside at present in the MahaviharaForest Monastery. Of them, about 100 monks come from India,

Bangladesh, Cambodia, Thailand, Laos and Sri Lanka whilst the rest from different parts of Myanmar. During the Buddhist Lent 2018, monks from seven local ethic groups and foreign monks from six different countries went into their monsoon retreat here in this monastery as shown below;

**Mahavihara Forest Monastery**

**List of the Monks who went into the Monsoon Retreat during the Buddhist Lent 2018**

| No | Ethnicity/Nationality | Number |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Rakhine | 333 |
| 2 | Shan | 314 |
| 3 | Bamar | 135 |
| 4 | Pa-Oh | 230 |
| 5 | Karen | 60 |
| 6 | Wa | 70 |
| 7 | Lahu | 6 |
| 8 | Cambodian | 36 |
| 9 | Thai | 1 |
| 10 | Laotian | 1 |
| 11 | Sri Lankan | 4 |
| 12 | Bangladeshi | 20 |
| 13 | Indian | 10 |
| | Total | 1220 |

In the Mahavihara Forest Monastery, the counseling Theras guide his pupils to each of their individual goals. Taking examples from the Pali texts, commentaries and Jataka stories, they counsel their pupils on their problems of all kinds. Corporal punishment, swear words and curses are not allowed in Vinaya disciplines. Therefore, monks are asked to collect water or fill the uneven paths with sand or practice meditation or study near their teacher as a punishment for any minor offences they cause. The education system in forest monasteries is interwoven with meditation practice, thus resulting in mental development and maturity for the monks.

Another significant practice adopted in Mahavihara Forest Monastery is confession. A monk or a novice who has committed

an offence comes to their teacher in order to confess to his fault, at the same time asking for an appropriate punishment from their teacher. This practice paves the way to efficient administration under the kind leadership of the Mahathera. In the same vein as "Khirodhakibhuta" (like the milk dissolved in water) as shown in VinayaPitaka, the monks with different backgrounds become assimilated under Buddhist way of leadership.

In the world today, communal conflicts occur due to the lack of loving kindness and morality. Buddhist way of leadership can be a solution to some (not limited) of these pressing problems as it urges leaders and followers alike to do good, not to do evil and to purify their minds, which allows the leaders to be able to lead their followers, holding on to Sila (morality) and Mitta (loving kindness) in one hand, and Panna (wisdom) in other. This is a brief interpretation of Buddhist Way of Leadership. Buddhism spreads over the world at its gradual pace; world peace is within the bounds of possibility.

In conclusion, Vinaya-disciplined Forest-dwelling Buddhism still thrives to a considerable extent while facing the tough challenges. The reasons always go to the younger generation inspired by the virtuous ancestors follow their examples (Ditthanugati), to lay people who devote their energies more to Vinaya-oriented Forest-dwelling practice and to the state leaders who unflaggingly support Buddha Sasana. Leading a monk's life is challenging itself. Still, a forest-dwelling, Vinaya-observing one's life is much more challenging. One inevitably faces physical and mental objects that bring about unwholesome feelings and thoughts amid other forms of physical and mental hardships. In return, one can counter-challenge Akusala with Kusala and Adhamma with Dhamma. As Buddhists, countering these unwholesome thoughts, deeds and actions with mindfulness is undoubtedly a practical way out to the Nibbana.

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# ANTHROPOLOGY OF BUDDHISM: THE CONTRIBUTION OF VIPASSANA MEDITATION TO THE WORLD CULTURE

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& Guided by Prof. Dr. Anjali Kurane**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the Buddhist tradition it is said that the Buddha attained Enlightenment by practising mindfulness of inhalation and exhalation (āna-āpāna-sati) seated under the Bodhi tree. Ever since his Enlightenment, during the rest of his life the Buddha taught the world the path he followed in order to attain Enlightenment, which is insight meditation.

Technique of meditative training of the mind and rapturous experiences attained by such training appear to have been known in India before the emergence of Buddhism. In Buddhism this form of meditation is called 'samatha' serenity/calmness of mind. While samatha meditation is used as the basis, the real Buddhist meditation begins with insight or vipassana meditation.

By practicing vipassana everyday one can discover one's true nature. The purpose of Vipassana meditation is nothing less than the radical and permanent transformation of one's entire sensory and cognitive experience. The Buddha taught his disciples that by

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concentrating on impermanence, sorrowfulness and no-soulness of one's inner-self one is able to rid oneself of pain, despair and suffering.

This paper tries to explain the contribution of Buddhist Vipassana meditation to the world culture and how it has been applied in modern world.

## 2. HISTORY AND THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

Today the Buddhist meditation is not confined to the traditional Buddhist countries. It has become a global phenomenon. The recent book by Jeff Wilson, *Mindful America* (Oxford University Press, 2014) covers the influence of mindful meditation in many aspects of American life. It has been developed to the extent that the scholars by now talk about 'science of meditation' The mindfulness meditation, in particular, has become a key aspect in cognitive science. A number of programs to use mindfulness as a therapeutic tool to cure mental illnesses such as stress, anxiety, depression, and schizophrenia and conditions such as loss of memory have been developed and being used in many countries in the world. Although these programs employ the age-old Buddhist insights of human nature they hardly have any Buddhist identity. It, however, remains a fact that all the mindfulness-based programs are directly or indirectly inspired by the mindfulness meditation (*satipaṭṭhāna-bhāvanā*) taught by the Buddha.

Although the modern interest in mindfulness meditation is not older than five decades the meditation as a religious practice as been there in the world for more than two millennia. In fact, it was not stared with the Buddha. In the Indian religious tradition meditation as a way to understand one's inner reality was started in the Upanisadic period, around 8th to 6$^{th}$ centuries BCE among the seers who meditated in the forest. In the evolution of the Vedic religion, the Upanisad marks a turn into one's inner reality from the interest in external realities such as various gods and heavens. In the Upanisad this turn was marked the concept of 'adhyātma-vidyā' or the science of inner reality. The term 'vidya' comes from the root 'vid' to know. Knowledge was considered to be the key aspect of religious life unlike in the early Vedic period when the sacrifice (or yajña) was considered most important. Now the emphasis was on

understanding of the true inner nature. Meditation or the inner reflection was considered the way to do this.

It is believed that Buddhism arose in India toward the end of the Middle Upanisadic period which is close to the 6th century BCE. In its broad outlook Buddhism also belonged to the group of religious people who believed that knowledge is the path to liberation. KN Jayatilleke characterizes this philosophical background of Buddhism in the following words:

*"We find here [Sangārava-sutta, Majjhima-nikaya] the Buddha classifying his predecessors and contemporaries in respect of their ways of knowing into three classes, viz (i) the Traditionalists (ii) Rationalists and Metaphysicians and (iii) the 'Experientialists' who had a personal higher knowledge of the truth of their doctrines. He also identified himself with members of the third group".* (Jayatilleke 1963 pp.171-172).

Inner contemplation was inherited by the Buddha from this tradition. Even though it is so, Buddhism differed from the Upanisadic tradition from some very significant ways. One of the unique and key features of Buddhism was its rejection of the key conceptual scheme of Upanisadic thinking, namely, Atman and Brahman as constituting respectively the individual and universal manifestation of the world. While Atman was considered to be the essence in the human being Brahman was considered the universal Being. Buddhism rejected the very concept of Atman and taught the doctrine of no-soul (*anātma-vāda*).

In the teaching of the Buddha, the concept of liberation was given a new meaning. It is no longer one's individual soul (*jīva-ātama*) elevating to be united with the absolute soul (parama-ātma) but liberating the mind from all types of bonds (*saññojana*) to the samsaric existence, and this was called liberation/freedom (*vimutti*). Or it was the purification of mind from defiling factors (kilesa) and this was called purification (*visuddhi*). The Buddha presented a threefold training to achieve this goal, namely, virtue (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*). These two last aspects are what is covered under meditation in the Buddhist tradition.

The Buddhist meditation has gone beyond the traditional Buddhist practice and today it has become a world phenomenon.

Among the modern teachers who popularized meditation beyond its Buddhist boundaries are Ajahn Cha (1918 – 1992) of Thailand, and those who studied meditation from him Joseph Goldstein (b.1944), Jack Kornfield (b.1945), Sharon Solzburg (b.1952) are prominent. Meditation as a mass movement was started in Myanmar in the last century by such eminent Buddhist monks as Ledi Sayadaw (1846 – 1932), Mahasi Sayadaw (1904 – 1982) and many other Buddhist monks. U Ba Khim (1899 – 1982) was a lay follower who took into meditation under the guidance of Burmese Buddhist monks, and his pupil Goenkaji (1924 – 2013) of Indian origin was a leading lay practitioner who taught meditation to many thousands of people, both eastern and western.

## 3. MEDITATION

The traditional Pali term for meditation is 'bhāvanā' which derives from the root 'bhāva' to grow, develop, culture or practice. Accordingly, 'bhavana' means development of mind or mind culture. Meditation in Buddhism is a process starting from concentrating mind and extending to understanding of the true nature of life, namely, impermanence (anicca), sorrowfulness or unsatisfactoriness (dukkha) and no-soulness or non-substantiality (anātma/anatta). The meditation which is meant to develop concentration of or one-pointedness of mind is called 'samatha-bhāvanā' or meditation leading to serenity. The Pali word 'samatha' means to pacify one's mind. The second type, insight meditation is called 'vipassanā-bhāvanā'. The Pali word 'vipassanā' Sanskrit: vidarsanā) means, vi + passanā, to perceive or to see in a special manner, namely, to perceive things in the world, which are referred to as 'sankhāra' (Sanskrit: sanskāra) or constructed phenomena, as impermanent, unsatisfactory and non-substantial.

These two types of meditation cannot be separated from each other. In fact, the insight meditation is impossible without serenity meditation. In other words, this means that in order to direct the mind to understanding, it has to be calm and serene. Meditation itself cannot be successfully practiced if one does not have virtue (sila). Thus, virtue, concentration and wisdom constitute the gradual path taught by the Buddha. In the discourses this character of the path is

described as '*anupubbasikkhā, anupubbakiriyā, anupubbapaṭipadā*' – gradual training, gradual action and gradual practice'.

According to this characterization one who is intent on attaining nirvana has to begin with virtue or morality which covers the basic physical and verbal moral behaviour. The Noble Eightfold Path (ariya aṭṭhangika magga) incorporates the threefold training. In it, morality is covered by the three aspects, namely, right word (sammā vācā), right action (sammā kammanta) and right livelihood (sammā ājīva). Under right word are included refraining from telling lies, telling gossip, telling harsh words and speaking meaningless things. Right action includes refraining from killing, stealing and sexual misconduct. Under the right livelihood comes refraining from wrong ways of earning one's livelihood. Morality is covered by these three aspects. For the monastic community, however, morality is much more elaborate (which we will not discuss in this context). Having established oneself in morality one has to proceed to concentration, and with both morality and concentration one has to embark on understanding (panna). In this manner, morality provides the basis for the higher stages in the path.

The purpose of the concentration meditation is to bring one's mind to one-pointed-ness. The understanding of mind behind this emphasis on one-pointed-ness is that the ordinary human mind is always changing from one state to another and is unstable. The main reason why one's mind is unstable is that it is obstructed with a set of factors that obstruct clear vision of mind, which are called nīvaraṇa or obstructions, namely, sensual desire, ill-will, sloth and torpor, worry and flurry and doubt. Thus the concentration meditation has removing these states from mind as its main function. In the Sāmaññaphala-sutta of the Digha-nikaya (2) this process has been described in the following words:

*"Abandoning worldly desires, he dwells with a mind freed from worldly desires, and his mind is purified of them. Abandoning ill-will and hatred … and by compassionate love for the welfare of all living beings, his mind is purified of ill-will and hatred. Abandoning sloth and torpor, … perceiving light, mindful and clearly aware, his mind is purified of sloth and torpor. Abandoning worry and flurry … and with an inwardly calmed mind his heart is purified of worry and flurry. Abandoning*

*doubt, he dwells with doubt left behind, without uncertainty as to what things are wholesome, his mind is purified of doubt"* (Translation from Walshe 1995 p.101).

The state of mind after the removal of the five obstructions is described in the discourse in five similes: (i) It is like how a man, who has repaid a loan he had taken, feels after he repaid the loan; (ii) just as a man, who has been severely ill, would feel when he regained health; (iii) just as a man, who had been in the prison, would feel when he is released from the prison, (iv) just as a slave would feel when he freed from slavery, and (v) just as a man, who was travelling in a desert, would feel when he finally comes out of the desert. All these five similes underscore the sense of freedom and relief one is bound to feel when the obstructions are gone from one's mind.

When the five obstructions are removed from one's mind, with further concentration it reaches stages called 'absorption' (jhāna) in which one experiences blissful states away from the sensory experience. The ultimate purpose of the Buddhist meditation is not this blissful state because it too is impermanent and could cause suffering. The real Buddhist meditation which leads to the termination of suffering begins at this point. This is what is called insight (vipassanā) meditation.

## 4. VIPASSANA MEDITATION

The word Vipassanā (Sanskrit, vipaśyanā; insight) is direct intuition of the three marks that characterize all worldly phenomena: anitya (Pāli, anicca; impermanence), duḥkha (Pāli, dukkha; suffering), and anātman (Pāli, anatta; no-self). These three characteristics are understood as representing the real nature of all constructed phenomena (sankhāra dhamma). In order to understand the insight meditation properly it is good for one to know about the three characteristics of reality mentioned above.

## 5. IMPERMANENCE

According to the teaching of the Buddha all constructed phenomena are impermanent (*sabbe sankhārā aniccā*: Dhammapada), they do not exist in any stable manner, they are born,

they decay and then they die. The world including all things and all beings including human beings is a constructed phenomenon, a phenomenon produced by causes and conditions. Although this character of reality is visible clearly even to the naked eye, what is difficult is to accept it with understanding when it comes to oneself or to the objects or people one loves with deep sentiments.

Some religions hold the belief that the soul of a human being is everlasting although his/her body is not. As we will see in more detail later, Buddhism rejects this belief. The main reason for Buddhism to reject this belief is its recognition of impermanence as a characteristic of reality. There cannot be anything unchanging in the human being. According to Buddhism, a human being has his mind. But it changes all the time. The Buddha says that it changes so fast that a comparison is hard to find. In this manner, the concept of impermanence covers the entire constructed phenomena.

**6. SUFFERING OR UNSATISFACTORINESS**

All impermanent things cause suffering (*sabbe sankāharā dukkhā*: Dhammapada). The suffering referred to in this context is the unsatisfactory feeling one gets when all things around him change. Apart from this feeling, suffering has been described in the teaching of the Buddha as the key characteristic of human existence and experience. In the Four Noble Truth doctrine, which contains the fundamental doctrine of Buddhism, dukkha or suffering plays the key role. In fact, all the four truths are centred around the concept of suffering: suffering, its origin, its cessation and the path leading to its cessation.

In the Dhammacakkapavattana-sutta, the first sermon of the Buddha, suffering is described in the following manner:

"*Birth is suffering, decay is suffering, disease is suffering, death is suffering, to be associated with the unpleasant is suffering, to be dissociated from the pleasant is suffering. To not to receive what one desires is suffering, in brief, the five aggregates of grasping are suffering*".

This analysis starting from what is ordinary concludes with the most philosophical and psychological, the suffering of the five aggregates of grasping. The five aggregates are the aspects

with which human being is constituted, namely, the material form (rūpa), feelings (vedanā), perceptions (saññā), acts of construction (sankhāra) and consciousness (viññāṇa). By analysing human personality into five aspects Buddhism says that there is nothing over and above these five aspects, and human being is the totality of these five, and that there is no soul which is traditionally understood as the real seer, hearer, knower etc. residing within the human being. The most serious source of suffering is the severe grasping one has toward oneself or towards one's five aggregates. For this reason, the aggregates are called 'the five aggregates of grasping'.

Suffering in Buddhism is not merely physical suffering. It is a broad concept encompassing a wide range of meanings. According to the Buddhist texts (Visuddhimagga), suffering is threefold:

Dukkha-dukkha: the gross form of physical suffering characterized by pain, birth, old-age, disease, and death. This is the most obvious form of suffering.

Viparināma-dukkha: suffering caused by change. When things do not last in their most attractive and pleasant modes of existence, they cause suffering. In one's life when the young age passes to the old-age through the middle stage one feels depressed. One tries in vain to stop old-age but, at most, one is able to postpone it. One ends in frustration.

Sankhāra-dukka: This is what was referred to earlier as the suffering of the five aggregates of grasping. 'Sankhāra' refers to the constructed phenomena which are subject to constant change. Everything in the world including the human life comes under sankhāra, and since all sankharas are impermanent they are sorrowful.

## 7. NO-SOUL-NESS OR NON-SUBSTANTIALITY

The last of the three characteristics is anatta (Sanskrit: anātma) which simply says that there is no atma or soul in any beings including human beings in particular. Philosophically, this denial of atma comes from the understanding of reality as dependently arisen which idea is found in the doctrine of Paticca-Samuppada (Dependent Co-origination). According to this teaching, there cannot be anything in the universe which is not dependent on other things. This denies independent existence for anything. In addition

to this philosophical basis, Buddhism provides three analyses of human being to illustrate the non-existence of atma.

The first of such analyses is the five aggregate analysis which we referred to earlier. In this analysis rūpa or the material form represents the physical body of the beings and everything else that is made of matter. In that sense rūpa is understood as materiality or the material aspect of the nature. The second and the third, feelings and perceptions represent affective and perceptive aspects of human being. The fourth, sankhāra (constructions) represent the conative aspect of human personality related to actions. The last, consciousness (viññāṇa) represents the cognitive aspect of human personality. This analysis, which is the key insight of Buddhism regarding the human being covers all aspects of human personality and nothing further is there to a human being. All these aspects themselves are changing all the time, ruling out in this manner any possibility for anything unchanging including atma.

The second analysis is twelve bases (dvādasa āyatana) which analyses the human being into twelve sensory bases, namely the base of eye and the base of form, ear and sound, nose and smell, tongue and taste, body and touch and mind and mental phenomena. In this analysis, the human being is presented as a process of sensory responses. Viewing from a point of view of perception, which is the source of suffering according to Buddhism, human being is an unending process of reacting to sensory stimuli. Usually atma is considered to be the inner agent who really functions by means of the sensory organs. In other words, the eye is not the real seer, it is the atman that sees. This is applicable to the rest of the senses too. By the analysis of twelve bases Buddhism aims to show that there is no perceiver in addition to the senses. According to Buddhism, mind (mano), which is also a sensory organ and changing like other organs, does the coordinating function among the faculties. This role usually attributed to atma is played here by mind.

The third analysis is the one that analyses the human being into eighteen elements (aṭṭhārasa dhātu). The eighteen elements are as follows: the element of eye, the element of form, and the element of eye consciousness, the element ear, sound and ear consciousness, the element of nose, smell and nose consciousness, the element

of tongue, taste and tongue consciousness, the element of body, touch and body consciousness, and the element of mind, mental phenomena and mind consciousness. Like the previous analysis, this too aims at showing that there is nothing in a human being over and above these sensory elements.

The insight meditation is to see the reality as having the three characteristics, namely, impermanence, suffering and no-soul. The discourse on the establishment of mindfulness (Satipaṭṭhānasutta of the Digha-nikaya 22 and also of the Majjhima-nikaya) elaborates on how one should practice this meditation. According to the discourse, one should concentrate on four phenomena, namely, body (kāya), feelings (vedanā), thoughts (citta) and mental phenomena (dhamma). Reflecting on the body, one basically focuses attention of inhalation and exhalation. It is described in the discourse in the following manner:

*And, how, monks, does a monk abide contemplating the body as body? … Mindfully he breathes in, mindfully he breathes out. Breathing in a long breath, he knows that he breathes in a long breath, and breathing out a long breath, he knows that he breathes out a long breath. Breathing in a short breath, he knows that he breathes in a short breath, and breathing out a short breath, he knows that he breaths out a short breath. He trains himself, thinking: "I will breath in, conscious of the whole body". He trains himself, thinking: "I will breath out, conscious of the whole body". … and so trains himself, thinking: "I will breath out, calming the whole body".*

*So he abides contemplating body as body internally, contemplating body as body externally, contemplating body as body both internally and externally. He abides contemplating arising phenomena in the body, he abides contemplating vanishing phenomena in the body, he abides contemplating both arising and vanishing phenomenon in the body. Or else, mindfulness that "there is a body" is present to him just to the extent necessary for knowledge and awareness. And he abides independent, not clinging to anything in the world. And that, monks, is how a monk abides contemplating body as body*. (Translation from Maurice Walshe 1995 pp. 291-292).

In these two passages, the first describes how the mindfulness meditation is practiced. The second describes how this meditation

is directed to insight. The purpose of the meditation is not merely to develop the concentration but also to develop insight meditation by practicing to deal with this experience without grasping it with attachment. The same method is applied to the rest of the aspects of this meditation, namely, feelings, thoughts and mental phenomena. In all these contemplations the focus is on being aware of the relevant phenomena without any clinging to any of those things within or without oneself.

What is described in the Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta is the detailed process of establishing mindfulness. The culmination of this meditation is the knowledge about the extinction of all defilements in the mind which cause suffering. In the discourses, this ultimate stage is described in the following words:

*"And he with his mind concentrated, purified and cleansed, unblemished, free from impurities, malleable, workable, established and having gained imperturbability, applies and directs his mind to the knowledge of the destruction of the corruptions. He knows as it really is: This is suffering. He knows as it really is: This is the origin of suffering. He knows as it really is: this is the cessation of suffering. He knows as it really is: This is the path leading to the cessation of suffering. He knows as it really is: These are corruptions. … He knows as it really is: This is the path leading to the cessation of the corruptions.*

*And through his knowing and seeing his mind is delivered from the corruption of sense-desire, from the corruption of becoming, from the corruption of ignorance, and the knowledge arises in him: "Birth is finished, the holy life has been led, done is what had to be done, there is nothing further here."* (Translation from Maurice Walshe 1995 pp.108-109)

These two passages capture the most important final moments of eradication of defilements by means of knowledge, and the accomplished nature of the final attainment with which one realizes the goal in Buddhism.

## CONCLUSION

Meditation in general and the insight meditation in particular as taught in Buddhism is to attain the final liberation from the samsaric

suffering. Many hundreds of people during the time of the Buddha followed this path and attained the final goal. Throughout the long history of Buddhism many thousands of people in many countries in the world have followed the same path and have achieved the same results. The Buddhist path, however, is not only for those who were motivated to achieve nirvana in this very life. Nirvana as the immediate goal was almost exclusively applicable to the monastic community who dedicated their life for the goal, having left their social life. This was not fitting for the ordinary householders who lived their life in the world with worldly duties and obligations. This society needed a path with a different degree of intensity.

It is important to understand how the path was applied to the lay society. From the very beginning of the Buddhist tradition there was always a lay society which supported the Buddhist monastic community. For this society, the monks and nuns provided guidance to suit their ways of life. This has happened always in Buddhist societies. Today, the difference is that Buddhism has gone out into the larger world from its traditional habitats. It is with this spread of Buddhism in the modern world that meditation captured the imagination of the people in the world.

As we saw in the introductory discussion, although lay meditation started in traditional Buddhist countries like Myanmar and Thailand, it was taken to the western world in the second half of the last century. Today it has become a transformative force particularly in the developed world. Mindfulness meditation has become a solution for many emotional and psychological problems of many thousands of people. Looking from an anthropological point of view, we can see that Buddhist meditation in general and the insight (vipassana) meditation in particular has become a part of the daily practice of the many thousands of people in many parts of the contemporary world.

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# INVESTIGATION INTO THE MODELS OF BUDDHIST STUDY OF THE YOUNG BUDDHISTS IN HO CHI MINH CITY

by Ven. Thich Quang Tinh*


## ABSTRACT

For the country, the youth are the owners of the future of the country, and the main human resources to create material wealth for the society. For any organization, the youth are the reserve team, and the additional human resource. For Buddhism, the young Buddhists are the future of the Dharma, the ones who uphold and protect the Buddha Dharma at the present and in the future.

This research examines the models of Buddhist study for the young Buddhists in Ho Chi Minh City to find the positive and limited aspects and propose a few solutions for this problem.


## INTRODUCTION

According to the General Official Statistics of Vietnam, by 2009, Vietnamese Buddhism has about 6.8 million official followers, accounting for 11% of the population, but the number of influenced people, sympathizers and Practicing Buddhism is much higher. The fact that the number of serious believers of the Buddhism decreases seriously (from 11 million followers in 2005 to 6.8 million followers in 2009) and it is important that

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there is a serious shortage of teenagers coming to the temples. attending the Buddhist ceremonies and events, especially in most monasteries, 70-80% of the attendees are the old and the women. It is good news for other religions because they have the opportunity to evangelize to improve the majority of the youth in society.

For the country, the youth are the owners of the future, the main human resources to create material wealth for the society. For any organization, the youth are the reserve team, the additional human resource. For Buddhism, the young Buddhists are the future of the dharma as well, the ones who uphold and protect Buddhism at the present and in the future.

This research examines the models of Buddhist study for the young Buddhists in Ho Chi Minh City to find the positive and limited aspects and propose some suggestions to solve this problem.

Our study is limited to the space of Ho Chi Minh City, the time range from 1981 until now. (the Establishment of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha), the scope of the research is the Buddhist study for the young Buddhists in Ho Chi Minh City.

We mainly use inductive methods based on the survey of journalistic resources, the summary of Buddhist activities, and the use of relevant research materials as supplementary sources. The study focuses on the needs and operational situation of the young Buddhist models living in Ho Chi Minh City.

## 1. THE ORGANIZATION OF BUDDHIST YOUTH ASSOCIATION

### 1.1. Summary of the establishment

In the 1940's, some Vietnamese Buddhist youth groups were founded in Hue, the Vietnam's Capital at that time, with the aim of encouraging youths to study and practise Buddhism. The original members of those groups were the siblings of a family and its neighbours. The groups therefore were called Buddhist Families and were named after the Dharma names of the families' fathers. The first Buddhist Family was Tâm-Minh, the Dharma name of Dr Lê-Đình-Thám (1897-1969). The aims of all Buddhist Youth Associations are to help youths to develop themselves into

upright Buddhists, and to contribute to the building of a peaceful, prosperous and harmonious society.

Experiencing many variables of the time, by 2016, according to official statistics of Vietnamese Buddhist Youth Association, through the whole country, there are 106,500 heads of parents who are living in 35/63 provinces, accounting for 0, 12% of the population, which means that for every 1,000 Vietnamese people there are 1.12 people who are part of this organization.

In terms of organization, the Vietnamese Buddhist Family currently has 3 independent Guidance Boards, which are the Guide Board of the National Buddhist Family Division under the Vietnam Buddhist Church; The Vietnam Buddhist Family Central Committee directly under the Venerable Sangha Council, and the Central Guidance Committee for Vietnamese Buddhist family.

Particularly in Ho Chi Minh City, according to the report of the Buddhism in 2018, Ho Chi Minh City has 26 units of Buddhist families with 1580 leaderships participating in the pagodas (This is the data of The division of education guidance (GDPT), for the 2 remaining units, we do not have the opportunity to access and grasp the data).

**1.2. Buddhist study program**

Everyone can join the Buddhist Youth Associations. The members of the Buddhist Youth Associations are grouped into three main branches based on their ages:

*i. Sparrow:* For children from 7 to 12 years of age and are divided into 4 levels: Open Eyes, Soft Wings, Hard Legs and Fly.

*ii. Youth:* For youths between 13-18 years of age and are divided into 4 levels: Open Eyes, Soft Wings, Hard Legs and Fly.

*iii. Adult:* For adults from 19 years of age and are divided into 2 levels: Hoa, Minh, Kien and Truc.

In addition, when Doan Sinh Buddhist Family vows to be the leader, he will participate in long-term training courses for the Head, in turn: Kien, Tri, Dinh, Luc and they will take part in similar courses. It is, in turn: Loc Uyen, A Duc, Huyen Trang and Van Hanh.

Regarding the content of study and training, the Buddhist Family has 4 subjects of study: (i) Dharma, the main subject of the Buddhist Family; (ii) the Youth activities; (iii) the Social Activities ; and (iv) the arts.

The program of the Dharma study is divided into different learning levels according to different ages: the Sparrow's age has 4 levels: Opening Eyes, Soft Wings, Hard Legs and Flying.

The age of the youth has 4 grades: Huong Thien, So Thien, Trung Thien and Chanh Thien.

For the Adult branch, there are some steps: Hoa, Minh, Kien and Truc. For the Leaderships, there are levels of study at school: Kien, Tri, Dinh, Luc

The activities of the program will teach some skills that help the Doan Sinh to be able to adapt to all the living conditions such as forest bandage, river crossing, mountain climbing ... and using all skills in daily life cleverly. The activities of the Youth are only a support subject in the process of studying the Dharma of the Buddhist Family. The specialization of this subject includes skills such as: Communication: skills to transmit / receive Morse, Semaphore, and other signals; Password, Gout; Tents; Direction; Estimates; Ambulance; Survival skills.

Program of the social activities includes social-related activities such as: Relief, visits to support, participation in community activities ...

In the cultural content, songs praising the Buddha Dharma, praising the ideal of blue shirt, praising the group activities, the games ... are widely sung and always updated, which is the important content in all studying activities.

## 2. BUDDHIST YOUTH CLUBS

### 2.1. Summary of the establishment

In 2006, originated from the Vietnam Buddhist Academy in Ho Chi Minh City, the Young Hoang Phap Club was born under the guidance of TT Thich Nhat Tu. Human resources are the young Buddhist monks who are studying of the 6th and the 7th courses of

the Academy. This club aims to make use of and exploit the youth and passion to serve of the young Buddhist monks in bringing the Dharma to the remote area.

Within 4 years (2006-2010), the scope of the young Hoang Phap club's activities has been presented in 22 provinces and cities in Vietnam and is expected to operate in all provinces and cities under the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha. Later, the club applies for the permission to establish the Vietnam Buddhist Youth League, in fact, changing the name of the club. However, this suggestion is not approved.

From the inspiration of the young Hoang Phap club, many temples in Ho Chi Minh City have changed dramatically. They established the young Buddhist monks, as an alternative or coexist with the Buddhist family with the aims of creating a new look and vitality in the activities of studying at the basic ashrams.

In fact, the establishment of the young Buddhist monks is also an inevitable result of the inconsistent conflicts in the relationship between Buddhist family Association and monks at grassroots temples.

The Youth Buddhist Club at the Tu Tan Pagoda, Tan Binh District (2007); Phap Van Buddhist Youth Youth Club (Tan Phu District); the Young Buddhist Club of Hai Quang Pagoda (Tan Binh District); Dharma Dharma Club Hoang France Pagoda; Phoenix Club of Giac Ngo Pagoda ... are the Buddhist monks and nuns where there are many followers and with a large number of activities, stable, abundant and typical study content.

**2.2. Buddhist Study Program**

A Buddhist retreat is usually held on Sunday afternoon, usually every 2 weeks. There are three main contents: spiritual practice, Dharma learning and connection to make fun.

The spiritual practice part usually takes 45 minutes to 60 minutes, including reciting Buddha's prayers, then meditating, or reciting Buddha's names. In addition, a number of Buddhist songs, meditation songs ... are presented to increase the variety and attractiveness of the ceremony.

The study of Dharma often lasts for 30 minutes. It can be a short sharing of the monks and nuns, maybe a short lecture on developing the skills of a certain expert; or perhaps a presentation contest, a quiz about Buddhism and social issues.

The activities for fun and making friends usually takes the most time, which can take from 1 to 2 hours. Art and entertainment activities, tea meditation ... are the preferred contents.

In case there is a famous professor, lecturer or someone presenting or exchanging, the lecture / exchange becomes the main of the activity; Or you can have a whole day of activities for fun, picnic, friendship.

### 3. THE ROLE OF THE BUDDHIST FAMILY ASSOCIATION AND THE YOUTH BUDDHIST CLUBS IN THE YOUTH EDUCATION

The Buddhist Family Association comes from the need for living, playing, moral training of children in Buddhism. This Association considers the Buddhist teachings as the core, and makes the moral ideology in practice as well as in all activities. With the teachings on the Three Rules, the Five Precepts, the Crosses, the theory of reincarnation, the cause and effect, the karma ... together with the educational methods which focus on the two aspects of " moral education", "intellectual education" and the Buddhist family trained their students to be good, virtuous, compassionate, joyful, selfless, selfless, compassionate, taught them the ways how to "make good and avoid evil", "love people and love Buddha", and always think of aim to a good and bright future life.

Besides, participating in the youth activities such as camping, ambulance, translation, morse, housewife, cultural activities .... And social relief activities, charity work, which makes people form a resourceful, flexible, dynamic, creative, confident, bravery character. These activities also equip the attendees good knowledge and all the necessary things to help them to step into their life, make them become a useful persons for society. In particular, in Youth and Adult branches, they also learned more knowledge at higher levels of patriotism, national spirit, human love and they are equipped with the ability to defend, resist manipulation, alienation, depraved, reactionary and all other temptations.

For the youth Buddhist club, the content of the activities have practical significance which contributes to educating the young people to become the ones with pure morality, good personality, ideal for healthy living, dynamic and creative in life, deeply patriotic and nationalistic. And help them make more the contribution to the training good citizens for the society- the future owners -who are qualified, capable and moral to ensure to be satisfied with the cause of national construction and development.

In the era of globalization today, although the explosion of science and technology, the rapid development of the economy has created more and more material wealth for society and the human life is increasingly enhanced, people are caught up in the whirlpool of material passions, ordinary desires. This makes a lot of people, including the young one, set their foot in mud puddles of sin, drugs, gambling, prostitution, alcohol, bribery, corruption, indecency, impotence, which corrupts the morality, the lack of life beliefs ... It is this problem that is causing great concern for families and society.

The above-mentioned models have adequate internal rules, regulations, education and training programs with the goal of genuine activities, actively contributing to the repelling of social evils and raising people's awareness through keeping the precepts, especially the 5 principles of Buddhist morality: no killing, no stealing, no adultery, no lying, no use of stimulants.

For the social community, Buddhist families and youth Buddhists clubs also learn the bodhisattva's goodness to save people: help families suffering from the natural disasters and storms and floods; taking care of the old and lonely and helpless people; nurturing orphans; volunteering in the medical examination and treatment organizations for the poor, participating in propaganda on dangerous diseases such as HIV / AIDS, joining in the humanitarian blood donation.

Although these social activities are only educational and spiritual, they represent the compassion of the Buddhas. Young people who participate in these organizations know how to extend their hands, share, sympathize with the pain and unhappiness of the unfortunate people, and help them to overcome their difficulties, to regain their faith and to be more optimistic.

Through catechesis courses, Buddhist teachings courses, social skills teaching courses, young people are educated and imbued with basic moral standards: reverence for parents and grandparents , the sense of origin, ancestry, responsibility for society, which makes them know how to live in accordance with the ethical tradition, the order and the fine traditions of the nation.

It can be said that these models of Buddhist youth activities were born and operated in order to guide young people to perfect their personal morality to build a happy family according to national traditions and The Buddhist tradition. Besides, the models of activities also contribute to the protection of the fine customs, Buddhist culture and national culture.

## 4. SOME SUGGESTIONS

Although the Model of Buddhist family has the traditional teaching and plays a certain important role, it is still not enough for the actual needs of society due to some specific elements of rules, organizational regulations, and contents of study.

Even though the new model of young Buddhist clubs do not have the same consistency as the Buddhist Family, it seems to meet the needs and tastes of the younger people. However, this model has only developed completely spontaneously, lack of specific guidelines and plans. Therefore, in fact, in some places the activities of the clubs develop significantly, the number of attendees increases to thousands, some other places are unable to know where to start.

To have a long-term strategic direction, we should have some suggestions:

Need to select and train the main human resources, especially the leaderships and vice president of the clubs. Choose those who are young, dynamic, enthusiastic, knowledgeable and have the skills to organize club activities.

Constant learning, updating and improving the quality of the club's activities. In order to attract young people to join clubs and retain them, make them stick with the club, we should answer the questions: What are benefits when participating in the activities?

To increase understanding? knowledge? More opportunities to make good friends? Or what's else?

In terms of content, we should pay attention to increase attractiveness, content of activities must be appropriate to the psychology and tastes of young people. Pay attention to the usefulness, excitement, youthfulness and youth characteristics; Avoid repetitive phenomena that cause a boring effect to the attendees in the activities.

Make clear plan to organize trips, camps, campfires, charitable trips, pilgrimage trips, study the ancient places, exchange activities between clubs, share experiences experience, cultural exchanges, friendly sports, camp...

Contact with the local Buddhist committee to make plans of inviting monks and nuns to preach the Dharma; inviting consultants, psychologists, successful entrepreneurs to exchange learning experiences, life skills, career paths, successful experiences, or inviting famous artists, Successful entrepreneurs to communicate, share and inspire.

In order for these models to be more popular, which contributes to universalizing Buddhism into life, it is necessary to have the attention and concerns of the national and local committee. It must be considered as a very important thing, a channel of information to propagate the righteousness to the community, which brings the teachings of the seeds of compassion of of the Buddha towards the young generation of Vietnam, the future preschools of country.

The formation of clubs should have the unified guidance of the national Buddhist Church, by promulgating a model charter on the organization and operation of the Buddhist youth clubs, which is an important document for the new members admitted to the club. This also helps the new ones to understand the principles and purposes of participating in clubs and is also the basis for Vietnam Buddhist Church to examine and inspect the activities of taking advantage of religion, taking advantage of Buddha, e.g. Catholicism to spread its religion.

The established clubs need to develop programs and activities periodically every quarter and every year. Strengthening the guidance in managing and orienting the activities of clubs.

It is necessary to have a plan to create and maintain operating funds for clubs, such as mobilizing funds, calling on the generosity of lay Buddhists and organizers in forming the fund of the club. ... It is necessary to have a stable source of fund to maintain regular activities, and to do the role of the club in accordance with the set goals effectively.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

Whether Buddhism is truly sustainable in the long term depends on the direction of education and training of the relevant departments. In particular, bringing Buddhism into life through the models of studying for the young people plays an extremely important role. Through models of Buddhist studies for young Buddhists, such as Vietnamese Buddhist Families, youth Buddhist clubs etc. young people have many opportunities to interact with the Buddha's teachings, closer to the monks and the charity activities at the temple. At the same time, it contributes to educating the youth generation about morality, behavior, commitment spirit and service as well as fostering more skills for daily life.

The members attending these organizations, by acquiring the core values, the Buddha's philosophical wisdoms, will be able to resist high, away from pitfalls, risk of stalking in life. At the same time, they are ones who introduce the good things to their families, friends and society. Thanks to the actions, it creates considerable sympathy with the social community about a wise and beneficial Buddhism.

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# THE WORSHIP OF MAÑJUSRĪ IN NEPAL

by Miroj Shakya*

Worship generally means homage paid with faith and devotion to a sacred personage or to any object regarded as sacred. In Nepal, the cult of Mañjuśrī has influenced Buddhist practices in many different ways. Mañjuśrī, the embodiment of the wisdom aspect of all Buddhas, is portrayed as a founder of the Kathmandu Valley in the Svayaṃbhū Purāṇa, where he is shown playing a vital role in initiating the Nepalese Buddhist tradition. The Svayaṃbhū Purāṇa, which is believed to be one of the most important texts attributed to Śākyamuni Buddha, focuses on the origin of the Svayaṃbhū Stūpa and the formation of the Kathmandu Valley. The legends of the Svayaṃbhū Purāṇa are still widely popular and the people of Nepal read and recite them even today. Because of his heroic deeds in the legends of the Svayaṃbhū Purāṇa, Nepalese Mahāyāna Buddhists have strong faith in and devotion for Mañjuśrī and worship him as a sacred personage. They recite different versions of devotional songs and hymns of Mañjuśrī in the early morning. People chant the name of Mañjuśrī in many Buddhist monasteries. There are also numerous Mañjuśrī shrines that people visit on special days, during the full and half-moon and so on. In this way, the worship of Mañjuśrī is widespread in Nepal among Buddhist devotees.

As a result, a large number of related ritual texts, festivals and sacred shrines associated with Mañjusrī have come into existence in Nepal. They have not been systematically compiled or studied.

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As it is important to analyze them in order to understand the extent to which the cult of Mañjuśrī has permeated Newar Buddhism, an attempt is made in this article to throw some light on these texts and the associated practices.

## 1. SHORT HYMNS DEVOTED TO MAÑJUSRĪ

In Mahāyāna Buddhism, the recitation of hymns (stotra) is extremely important in the form of worship. Most of the hymns are in Sanskrit, but later were translated into Newari, Tibetan and other languages. At the beginning of the Common Era (CE), great scholars like Ācārya Nāgārjuna, Mātṛceta, and Aśvaghoṣa composed various melodious and meaningful hymns in Sanskrit. Those hymns are still being recited in the vihāras of Nepal.

Because Mañjuśrī is a popular Bodhisattva in Nepal, a number of hymns dedicated to this Bodhisattva have been preserved. In the Stotra Saṃgraha collections, there are many hymns (stotras) dedicated to Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī. Some of their traditional titles are: the Nāmasaṅgīti, Brahmādideva, Nāmāmi mañjunāthāya, Mañjuvajra-stotra (Sasadhara), Mañjuśrī-stotram, Mañjuśrī-nāma-aṣṭottaraśata-stotram, at least two caryā songs on Mañjuśrī and others. Among these Stotras, the so-called Brahmādideva, Nāmāmi mañjunāthāya, and Mañjuvajra Stotra have been published in Sanskrit and Newari in Phanindra Ratna Vajracharya's "Baudha Stotra Samgraha." The Mañjuśrī-stotram and Mañjuśrīnāma-aṣṭottaraśata-stotram were published in Sanskrit in Janardan Pandey's "Baudha Stotra Samgraha." Two Newari caryā songs are included in Ratna Bahadur Vajracharya's "Cacā Muna" (Collection of caryā songs).

### 1.a Nāmasaṅgīti

Most of the shrines and monasteries in Nepal have a daily morning chanting service. They usually recite the Nāmasaṅgīti text for an hour, and then other Stotras. Recitation of the Nāmasaṅgīti has been a very popular devotional practice in the Newar Buddhist and the Tibetan Buddhist community in Nepal.

Nāmasaṅgīti is regarded as a deity. Several shrines in Nepal are dedicated to the deity Nāmasaṅgīti Mañjuśri. Ārya Nāmasaṅgīti

is considered an emanation of Mañjuśrī The subject matter of the Nāmasaṅgīti text is profound in nature. It describes the five wisdoms of the enlightened state of perfect Buddhahood.

Hem Raj Shakya says that "In the Sūtra and Tantra systems, the Nāmasaṅgīti scripture is said to have such high status because it is an anthology of the Five Buddhas' transcendental knowledges, which were revered by the Buddhas of the three times."

Because of the text's profound nature, the people of the Valley have much devotion and respect for this text. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the tradition of the recitation of Nāmasaṅgīti is still kept alive in monasteries of the Kathmandu Valley. The recitation of the Nāmasaṅgīti is one of the practices that has to be performed by Ādikarmika Bodhisattva in Newar Buddhism. Min B. Shakya highlighted,

Ācārya Anupama Vajra NS 218 (1098 AD) in his Ādikarmapradīpa has mentioned some dozen of Buddhist practices for ādikarmika Bodhisattvas. Among these practice the recitation of Nāmasaṅgīti is one of them. Since (the) eleventh century, this practice is continuing till today. Even at present there are several NS recitation groups in three cities of Kathmandu Valley.

This Nāmasaṅgīti hymns explain the ways in which Mañjuśri has profound Wisdom. The Nāmasaṅgīti text mentions him as an embodiment of wisdom:

Om. Homage to Thee, Vajratīkṣṇa (Diamond Sharp), Duḥkhacheda (cutting off of suffering), Prajñājñānamūrti (Embodiment of Insight-Wisdom), Jñānakāya (Knowledge Body), Vāgīśvara (Lord of Speech), Arapacana (Five-syallabled Mañjuśrī).

There are many Hymns which venerate Mañjuśri and his profound Wisdom. These hymns display the glories and profound knowledge of Mañjuśri.

## 2. FESTIVALS ASSOCIATED WITH MAÑJUŚRĪ

### 2.a. Mañju Pañcamī (Śrī Pañcamī)

The Mañjuśrī Pañcamī or Śrī Pañcamī festival is observed on the fifth day of the waxing half of Māgha (of the lunar calendar).

According to the Sūtras popular in the region, Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī arrived in the Kathmandu Valley on this day from Five-peaked Mountain (Wu Tai Shan) in China. It was then that he saw the luminous Svayaṃbhū Jyotirūpa. This festival is widely popular and is celebrated by devotees of all ages. In the early morning, school students take part in worship at the Mañjuśrī Shrine.

On this day, people pay homage to Mañjuśrī by reciting hymns and mantras, and undertaking devotional worship. This day is considered as an auspicious day to begin any kind of study and work. People bring their children to the shrine of Mañjuśrī (Saudya) to write 'Namo Vāgīśvarāya' (meaning 'homage to the Lord of speech', i.e. Mañjuśrī) in order to start their learning career. There is a bit of confusion regarding the name of Mañjuśrī among local people of Kathmandu. They called Mañjuśrī a "Sasudya" in Newari, which means "Sarasvatī." This Hindu goddess is also considered a deity of wisdom. Hindu devotees also celebrate this day, considering it the birthday of the Devi Sarasvatī. Both Mañjuśrī and Sarasvatī are objects of devotion on this day.

If anyone wants to start teaching or learning skills, such as playing musical instruments, they come to worship Mañjuśrī on this day in order to inaugurate their teachings or learning. This festival is described in Hemraj Shakya's Svayaṃbhū Māhacaitya thus: "Anyone who bathes at Taudaha shrine in the morning and brings its waters to offer to the Mañjuśrī shrine will become a great scholar. He will also be a wealthy person equal to the deity Kuvera, the god of wealth." Thus, people still believe that if they worship Mañjuśrī on this day, they will succeed in their studies as well as business.

This Śrī Pañcamī is not only celebrated by Newar Buddhists. The festival is celebrated nationwide and is given the status of a national festival. There used to be a national holiday on this day in the past. On the day of Śrī Pañcamī, because of its auspiciousness, people perform various ritual ceremonies like an ordination ceremony (Cūḍākarma) for boys, Mock Marriage (Ihi) for girls, Marriage, and Old Age Initiation (Janko) for the elderly. On this day, there is no need to check for astrological approval to perform such events.

**2.b. Sakimilā Punhī - The Consecration of Svayaṃbhū**

This important festival is observed on the auspicious day of the full moon of the month of Kārtika. After the arrival of Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī in the Kathmandu Valley, the Svayaṃbhū purāṇa says that he worshipped the Svayaṃbhū Jyotirūpa. As a result of that strong devotion, the text says, "the Ādibuddha Svayaṃbhū manifested himself in the form of five colored rays, the dharma-body of clear light. This was the embodiment of the unified wisdoms of Five Jina Buddhas."

The Svayaṃbhū Purāṇa also describes two important events: the planting of the lotus seed by Lord Vipaśvī Buddha and the luminous form of Svayaṃbhū's appearance on the same auspicious day. So this day is considered very auspicious for all people in the Kathmandu Valley. People celebrate this auspicious occasion for a month, visiting the Svayaṃbhū temple in early morning and praying with devotion every day for an entire month. This is known as Kārtika Sevā, taking place on the full moon day of the month of Kārtika. Thousands of people visit the Svayaṃbhū Stūpa and Mañjuśrī Shrine with offerings and butter lamps, while circumambulating the entire Svayaṃbhū Stūpa area with devotion.

On this day, there is a tradition of displaying cereals (halimali) and reciting hymns in front of the Svayaṃbhū Stūpa and Mañjuśrī Shrine. In this particular month, people finish their harvesting season and bring all the crops and grains home. The crops include red potatoes, taro, and peanuts along with grains, wheat, corn, and various kinds of beans. People bring them home from the field and it is a tradition to offer fresh, newly grown crops to the Buddhas first, then to other deities.

Sakimilā is the compound of two words: saki and milā. Saki is a "taro" and milā means "moon" in the Newari language. On the day of Sakimilā Punhī, people offer taro along with various kinds of beans to the Buddhas and other deities.

During the evening on the day of Sakimilā Punhī, the display of cereals (halimali) takes place in Buddhist shrines, Svayaṃbhū Stūpa, Bahās (monasteries), and Bahīs (monasteries) of each city and every courtyard. People display cereals in artistic ways in front

of Caityas or statues. After the display of the cereals, people lit up the light around the Caitya and worship the Caitya along with singing devotional songs (bhajana). After the singing the hymns, people distribute all the cereals to the participants as gifts and they share these gifts with their relatives and friends.

Every year, a large number of people participate in the display of cereals (halimali) in front of the Mañjuśrī Shrine at Svayaṃbhū Stūpa. Different hymn (tuta) recitation groups (those affiliated with Nāga Baha, Naka Bahī, Bu Bahā, and Uku Bahā ) from Lalitpur are involved in depicting various symbols related to Mañjuśrī, like the sword of wisdom (Candrahāsa), vase of plenty, double vajra, and wisdom book (Prajñāpāramitā text) with the elegant use of halimali and fruit. They also worship Svayaṃbhū Stūpa and Mañjuśrī while singing hymns (bhajana) and, after finishing bhajana, they distribute the halimali to each participant in the ceremony. In such a way, Newar Buddhists commemorate this auspicious consecration day of Svayaṃbhū Stūpa.

**2.c. Samvarodaya Diśi Pūjā (The Arisal of Samvara)**

Samvarodaya Diśi Pūjā is observed by Nepalese Buddhists on the tenth day of the waning half of Mārga month according to the lunar calendar. On this day, Newar Buddhists worship Guhyeśvarī with tremendous devotion, and perform special rituals with certain ceremonies. On this day, according to Svayaṃbhū Mahācaitya:

The day after having a vision of the goddess Guhyeśvarī's universal form, Mañjuśrī visualized Mahāsamvara. On the occasion of receiving blessing from Mahāsamvara, he performed an elaborate offering ceremony and received an empowerment of Vajra water from the sacred Kuṇḍa (pool) of Dharmodaya Guhyeśvarī. Mañjuśrī built this sacred Kuṇḍa magnificently and according to the rules.

On the commemoration of this auspicious day, the Samvarodaya diśi pūjā is celebrated every year in the Kathmandu Valley. Newar Buddhists celebrate diśi pūjā in Buddhist monasteries, secret shrines (digī), shrines (āgama), and in each individual house. Diśi Pūjā was celebrated for three days in the past, but now normally it lasts only one day. People use Vajrayānic methods and sing caryā songs to celebrate this day with a feast. These are some of important

festivals related to the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī. These festivals are still being celebrated with the great participation of Nepalese Buddhist devotees till now.

## 3. SACRED SHRINES ASSOCIATED WITH MAÑJUSRĪ

Many shrines and sites are dedicated to Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī in the Kathmandu Valley, some of which have particular historical importance. They are as follows:

### 3.a. Mañjuśrī Shrine in the Svayaṃbhū Hill or Mañjuśrī Memorial Stūpa

The main shrine dedicated to Mañjuśrī is located on the western side of the Svayaṃbhū hill and is called Mañjuśrī Memorial Stūpa. There is a Maṇḍala of guru Vāgīśvara in front of the Stūpa which is also called "Mañjuśrī Paduka." This Stūpa is enclosed by the walls consisting of images of many gods and goddesses. Along the eastern wall is a gate surmounted by a tympanum (toraṇa) and facing the Stūpa is a rest house.

Śāntikara Ācārya, out of great devotion to Guru Mañjuśrī, had this great Mañjuśrī memorial Stūpa built so that in the future people could practice and cultivate the dharma according to the teaching of Mañjuśrī. At that time, Śāntikara recalled that Mañjuśrī taught the twelve syllable mantra of Ārya Mañjuśrī Nāmasaṅgīti to great Paṇḍita Dharmaśrīmitra by giving him initiation in the Dharmadhātu Maṇḍala. In remembrance of this moment, Śāntikara Ācārya built the Dharmadhātu Maṇḍala in front of the Stūpa. As a result of this, if someone who worships this guru Vāgīśvara with devotion writes Om namo Vāgīśvarāya, then the letters a, ā, i, ī, etc., and recites dhāraṇī, stotra, mantra, and does devotional service, then that person will attain perfection in craftsmanship and master all kinds of science. Ultimately the person will cross the ocean of saṁsara and attain nirvāṇa.

This place is reportedly blessed by the influence of Svayaṃbhū Jyotirūpa and also the place where Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva stayed; thus Śāntikara Guru has established this Mañjuśrī memorial Stūpa as a sacred place, which still stands and is famously known as the Mañjuśrī hill shrine. On the day of Mañjupañcamī (Śrī Pañcamī), people come to this Mañjuśrī memorial in order to commemorate

the arrival of Mañjuśrī, who visited in order to worship the glorious Svayaṃbhū Jyotirūpa and then drain the Kālīhrada. This shrine is not only worshipped by the local people of the Kathmandu valley; Nepal's government has been supporting the rituals there as well. This Mañjuśrī Stūpa is surrounded by many statues and inscriptions. One of the inscriptions can be found attached to the left of the Mañjuśrī Stūpa. The inscription consists of a dhāraṇī that says:

*om namaḥ śrīmañjuśrīkumārabhūtāya bodhisattvāya*
*mahāsattvāya sahākāruṇikāya| tadyathā|*
*oṃ araje viraje śuddhe viśuddhe śodhanī*
*viśodhanī amale vimale nirmale jayavāhinī*
*rūru cale hū hū phaṭ phaṭ svāhā|*

It also describes the merit of reciting of this dhāraṇī:

eka lakṣa jāpena paṇḍito bhavati|
dvitīya lakṣa jāpena vidyādharo bhavati|
tṛtīya lakṣa jāpena mañjuśrī rūpaṁ paśayanti|

Translation: One becomes a Paṇḍita after one lakh recitations of this dhāraṇī,

One becomes a knowledge-bearer after two lakh recitations of this dhāraṇī,

One sees the form of Mañjuśrī after three lakh recitations of this dhāraṇī.

**3. ii. Gopucchagra Stūpa (Old Svayaṃbhū)**

This stūpa is situated at the northern side of Mañjuśrī Hill. There are two entrance gates towards the west and east. The stūpa in the middle is called Gopucchagra Stūpa or Puchagra Stūpa. The Svāyambhū Puraṇa describes its relationship to Mañjuśrī thus: "this Stūpa was established by performing various rituals and putting in the relics of Vāgīśvara Mañjuśrī and other Buddhas in the dome of it." Then the Stūpa became sacred, and after this, guru Śāntikarācārya consecrated it by performing the appropriate ritual.

### 3. iii. Guru Mañjuśrī's Pādukā

Among the various forms of Mañjuśrī, the Maṇḍala of "Mañjuśrī's feet" is very well-known. One of these Maṇḍalas of Mañjuśrī's feet (Mañjuśrī-Pādukā-maṇḍala) is situated near Agnipura, facing west in the vicinity of Svayaṃbhū Stūpa, There are images of Gaṇeśa and Mahākāla on the right and left side of the Pādukā. There is a Mahāmañjuśrī image in the center with beautiful toraṇa on the back side of the Pādukā, Although Mañjuśrī's Pādukā can also be found in other monasteries of the Kathmandu Valley such as Bhāṣkaravarṇa Mahāvihāra in Nyakhachowk, Lalitpur and Ānanda Vihāra, Ikhachhen, Lalitpur (See the pictures below).

The "Mañjuśrī's Pādukā," showing eyes on a pair of feet, is connected with the story of Mañjuśrī and Dharmaśrīmitra. In this Sixth Chapter of the Svayaṃbhū Purāṇa (Svayaṃbhū Utpatti Kathā), the Buddha Śākyamuni explains to Maitreya Buddha that, once upon a time, there was a Bhikṣu named Dharmaśrīmitra in Vikramaśila Mahāvihāra, who was explaining the Nāmasaṅgīti to his disciples. His disciples were more curious to learn about the secret meaning of the twelve syllables of Nāmasaṅgīti. But he was unable to explain the secret meaning at that assembly and he postponed the explanation for another day. Dharmaśrīmitra was embarrassed and felt that without knowing the meaning of the twelve syllables of the Nāmasaṅgīti, he was not worthy to stay at the Monastery. He contemplated Mahāmañjuśrī, the master of all knowledge, who was from great China and knew all the secret meanings (of dharma). Thinking that Mañjuśrī would have a meaning for the twelve syllables of the Nāmasaṅgīti, Dharmaśrīmitra decided to go to see him and left the Vikramaśilā Monastery.

Mañjuśrī, who was staying in Nepal Maṇḍala, knew that Dharmaśrīmitra was coming to learn the meaning of twelve syllables. He disguised himself as a farmer plowing the land with a lion and a tiger. After seeing Dharmaśrīmitra's devotion, Mañjuśrī was delighted and gave him the initiation. He received all the teachings, including the secret teachings. Dharmaśrīmitra paid homage to Mañjudeva. Mañjudeva promised that he would visit Dharmaśrīmitra in his Vihāra. Dharmaśrīmitra, knowing Mañjudeva's miraculous power to appear in many different forms,

wished to know how he could recognize Mañjudeva if he visited his Vihāra, and asked him to give some sign by which he could be recognized. Mañjuśrī told him that he would appear holding an utpala lotus. After receiving Mañjudeva's blessing and worshipping him, Dharmaśrīmitra returned to his Vihāra.

After he returned, disciples of Dharmaśrīmitra gathered in an assembly to hear the explanation of Nāmasaṅgīti. At the moment Dharmaśrīmitra was explaining its meaning, Mañjuśrī, with the intention of testing Dharmaśrīmitra's memory, disguised himself as a dirty and disgusting person and arrived at the assembly of Dharmaśrīmitra holding one utpala flower. Seeing him in the assembly, everyone ridiculed him. Dharmaśrīmitra saw him and recognized him immediately because Mañjuśrī was holding that utpala flower. But he was afraid of being ridiculed by his disciples if he told them that the man in shabby clothing was his teacher. So he just paid homage to him in his mind and ignored him.

After concluding his discourse and all the people of assembly had left, Dharmaśrīmitra stood up and ran to see Mañjudeva. He ignored Dharmaśrīmitra. Then Dharmaśrīmitra begged Mañjudeva for forgiveness and added that he had not noticed his arrival at the assembly. As a result of his lying to Mañjudeva, Dharmaśrīmitra's eyes fell at the feet of Mañjudeva. Then Dharmaśrīmitra confessed his great non-virtuous action of lying to Mañjudeva. Mañjudeva, out of compassion, forgave him and told him that everybody had to accept the result of his karmic action. Mañjudeva gave him the blessing that from now on, Dharma¬śrīmitra would be able to see through his wisdom eye, and would be renowned as Monk Jñānaśrīmitra. He became monk 'Jñāna'-śrīmitra because he did not have his physical eyes any more.

**3.iv. Sasu Nani – Sarasvatī Mahāmañjuśrī Vihāra**

This Sasu Nani is situated at a courtyard attached to the left corner of the Itum bahā complex in Kathmandu. The shrine of one floor was constructed in 1979 CE with bricks and has a domed top. Inside the shine, there is a golden statue of Mañjuśrī. This named Sasu Nani refers to Sarasvatī's courtyard.

### 3.v. Mañjuśrīnaka Mahāvihāra

This Vihāra is situated in the Om Bahā district of Kathmandu and has four floors. The main deity in the Vihāra is Akṣobhya Buddha facing north. In the western side of the courtyard, there is a shrine dedicated to Viśvakarma. There is another Vikamā Bahā situated on the right side of this Vihāra. John K. Locke has described the legend regarding the origin of this Vihāra as follows:

Legend ascribes the foundation of this Bahā to the time when Mañjuśrī came to the valley from "Mahāchin" to drain the Lake. When he came to the valley he heard that the great Viśvakarma had a shrine in this place and he stopped here to pay his respects. Later he founded a Vihāra at this place and it was named after him, hence the name Mañjuśrīnaka.

### 3.vi. Wam Bahā – Mañjuvajra Mahāvihāra (Mahamañjuśrī mahāvihāra)

The Mañjuvajra Mahāvihāra is a unique Vihāra in the Kathmandu Valley which is situated in Kwathandau Tole, Bhaktapur city. It is also called Wam Bahā in Newari. The main deity in a Vihāra is usually Buddha Śākyamuni or Aksobhya Buddha in Kathmandu Valley, but in this particular Vihāra, the main deity of the shrine is Mahamañjuśrī. As John K. Locke points out regarding the figure, "The Kwāpādya is a light brown stone image of Mahāmañjuśrī, the only case of a tantric image serving as the Main deity (Kwāpādya) of a Monastery (Bahā)."

### 3.vii. Mahāmañjuśrī Sthāna

This Mahāmañjuśrī shine is situated at the Thakalmatha (mahāmaṇḍapa) in the Bhaktapur city of Nepal. Thakalamatha is in a remote area of the Bhaktapur city. It is a sacred site for both Hindus and Buddhists. Hindus come to pay respect at this place and know this site as the sacred temple of Sarasvatī, but the Buddhists named this site as Mahāmañjuśrī. Newars of Bhaktapur called this place "Lhāsāpaka Sasudyaḥ" (Sarasvatī cave leading to Lhasa).

This place is linked with the legend of Mañjuśrī's arrival in Nepal. It is said that Mañjuśrī stayed at this Thakalamatha (Mahāmaṇḍapa) before draining the Lake in order to pay homage to Svayaṃbhū Jyotirūpa. In this temple, there is also a statue of the two feet of

Mañjuśrī with eyes on them, illustrating the story of Mañjuśrī and Dharmaśrīmitra.

During the Vasanta Pañcamī, people from inside and outside the Kathmandu Valley come to pay respects to Mañjuśrī at the Thakalamatha. People come there to stay overnight before the Vasanta Pañcamī, and people believe that on that night, Mañjuśrī will come to visit this place. Thus, people put sesame oil on the statue of Mañjuśrī. Devotees, along with Vajrācāryas (priests), stay awake all night while reciting hymns and eating samebaji ('feast' in Newari). At the full moon of the Phālguṇa month, many foreign visitors come to pay respect to Mañjuśrī.

Every year at the beginning of a New Vikrama era, vast crowds from Lalitpur city come to visit this place. From time to time, Tibetans come to pay respects to Mañjuśrī at this place as well. In this way, this Mahāmañjuśrī temple is a famous spot and has been a destination of the devotees dating to the distant past.

### 3. ix. Sasu Nani (Mañjuśrī Lanhe) – Vāgīśvara Vihāra

Sasu Nani is located at Kwalkhu, Lalitpur city, and north of the famous Hiraṇyavarṇa Mahāvihāra which is also known as "Golden temple." Sasu syu mha dya (sasumadya) Sasu Nani means the courtyard of Sarasvatī. This shrine also belongs to the Mañjuśrī cult, but the place is named Sasu Nani after Sarasvatī. This confirms that there is some confusion regarding the identification of Mañjuśrī and Sarasvatī. The shrine of Mañjuśrī, which is a single-storied building in the center of courtyard, houses a statue of Mañjuśrī with the bodhyāṅga mudrā holding stems of two lotuses. There is a sword on the right lotus and a book on the left lotus. There are statues of Gaṇeśa and Mahākāla on the right and left.

## 4. CONCLUSION

The people of Nepal not only worship Mañjuśrī as a Bodhisattva of wisdom, but also as a founder of the Kathmandu Valley. The classic Newar Buddhist text, Svayaṃbhū Purāṇa describes Bodhisattva Manjusri as making the city habitable. This text gives a clear picture of the way in which the people of Nepal have conceived their own form of Buddhism, namely Newar Buddhism, with Mañjusri

Bodhisattva making a great contribution to nurture it. People of Nepal recite devotional songs and hymns and chant his name in each Buddhist monastery daily. Among these hymns, the Nāmasaṇgīti is one of the best known in Nepal's Newar Buddhism. There are many shrines associated with Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī and festivals such as Mañju Pañcamī and Sakimanā Punhī remain popular among people of Nepal. Worshipping Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī in Nepal is not only a tribute to Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī for his contributions, but also a way of sustaining Nepalese culture.

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# BUDDHIST RITUALS OF THE TEMPLE OF THE TOOTH RELIC IN SRI LANKA

by Ramesha Jayaneththi*

The worship of the relics of the Gautam Buddha reflects a great heritage in the Theravada Buddhist world which continually practices after the demise of the Buddha in the 6th Century BC. As a Theravada country, Sri Lanka has a distinguished past of worshiping these relics. Sri Lankan Buddhists believe that in every single pagoda, sacred relics belonged to either the Gautam Buddha or to other famous Buddhist monks who attained Nirvana were deposited. According to the Mahaparinibbāna Sutta (the Record of the Demise of the Buddha), which was sanctioned by the Buddha himself on the verge of his passing away, the Buddha declared that four noble persons are worthy of their bodily remains being enshrined and honoured; the Buddha, the Personal Buddhas (Pacceka Buddhas,) the Arahanths (Buddha's disciples) and the Universal Monarchs (Cakkavatti kings) (Mahaparinibbāna-sutta). As a popular practice, from the 4th century CE, the Buddhists in Sri Lanka devotionally worship the Tooth Relic of the Buddha. Sri Lankan Buddhists believe that worshiping the Tooth Relic in the Temple of the Tooth Relic in Kandy and performing various rituals in that premises are not only honouring the Buddha but also, will be a blessing for their life. These Buddhists devotionally bring many offerings to this temple including various flowers like lotus and jasmines, milk rice and liquid offerings like tea and herbal drinks as

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well as some herbal medicines. Also burning incense and lightning oil lamps outside the shrine are practiced daily.

Not only in the religious life of the common civilians but also in the level of the political hierarchy, this temple is one of the most important temples in Sri Lanka. Many ministers, Prime Ministers and Presidents of the country came to this premise and worshiped the Tooth Relic after got their new appointments. Once Sri Lankans believed that if a king needed to establish his traditional monarchy, he should claim the ownership of this sacred Tooth Relic and worship it as a Buddhist. Therefore, from the arrival of the Tooth Relic to the Sri Lanka, it was secured with a great care and have performed various rituals to honour it. This ritual phase of the sacred Tooth Relic began from the ancient Anuradhapura kingdom.

After about eight centuries of its existence in India, the Tooth Relic was secretly taken away by the prince Danta and the princess Hemamāla to the ancient Anuradhapura kingdom in Sri Lanka. Chronicles state the Abhayagiri monastery in the kingdom was first appointed custodianship of the relic when it was brought after the conflict in Kalinga in India. According to the Chinese Buddhist monk FaXian, there was an annual procession and a ceremony to honour the Tooth Relic. As he mentioned, the procession instituted by the king Kirti Sri Meghavanna in the 4th century, was continued in a grandeur scale (Legge, 2005; 104-105). The Abhayagiriya monastery played a great role in the procession of the Tooth relic in the Anuradhapura period. The sacred Tooth Relic was taken in the procession from the Tooth Relic shrine to the Abhayagiriya temple where the Relic was exhibited for three months with some elaborated rituals. Therefore, it is obvious that, in Sri Lankan Buddhist tradition, the Abhayagiriya or the great monastery which welcomed both Theravada and Mahayana rituals, played a vital role of developing a certain Buddhist culture related to the Tooth Relic worshiping. This monastery had some special links with the contemporary Buddhist communities in the international Buddhist world which influenced these rituals.

After the collapse of the Rajarata kingdom in the North Central Sri Lanka, the Tooth Relic was brought to the South Western

Kingdoms and continually worshiped as it was hounerd by previous kings. The Tooth Relic culture or the Daladā culture became one of the important aspects of the monarchy. Kings granted many lands to the temple of the Tooth Relic. There were many services which allocated to perform for this sacred relic and services tenants who belonged to various service castes devoted to continue these traditional services. Since the king's legitimacy is always intertwined with the political validity of the Tooth Relic, the relic worship was aligned with the routines of the king's palace.

The last kingdom or the Kandyan kingdom also preserved this heritage of the Tooth Relic worshiping. Literary sources indicate that the sacred Tooth Relic was received by king Vimaladharmasūriya I in Kandy with a great veneration and placed in the new three – storied shrine built by him near the royal palace in Kandy. After the king Vimaladharmasūriya established the temple of the Tooth Relic in Kandy, the current tradition of the tooth relic rituals was started. However, in the Kandyan period, various influences including Hindu influences emerged in the kingdom. Therefore, these customs which we practice now in the Temple of the Tooth Relic could be developed in a latter period. K. Migahakumbura, a current secretary of the Temple explained that the king himself allocated some services to the Temple as an honour to the Lord Buddha which was similar to the services in his palace (Interview with Mr. K. Mighakumbura). Therefore, in this temple, there are systematic ritual performances developed as daily basis, weekly basis and annual basis.

According to the ritualistic tradition, '*Tevāva* ' is one of the important aspects of the daily routines of the temple. *Tevāva* would mean a service ritual and offerings conducted daily at regular times of the day in the morning, noon and evening. The Buddha puja or the offerings for the Buddha which usually conducted in the image shrine is similar to this. The difference here is that only a limited number of people, monks and layman, are allowed to take part in the Daladā-pujā (Offerings for the Tooth relic), unlike in the normal Buddha-puja in an image shrine where all participants can take part freely. Some scholars believe that this tradition was influenced from the Hindus. Since Hinduism was entwined with

the Buddhist culture in the Kandyan kingdom, this influence could be emerged. Even today, conducting preparatory service before admitting worshipers to the shrine is a common practice among Hindus. The *Tevāva* of Hindu shrines are also conducted by lay custodians or servicemen at limited times of the day. The Hindu tradition restricts the admittance of worshipers only to the front vestibule. The divinity within the chamber is covered from vision by a curtain (http://www.sridaladamaligawa.lk/Rituals). Similar practice is followed in the *Tevāva* of the sacred Tooth Relic as well.

However, in the Temple of the Tooth Relic, the casket containing the Tooth Relic placed within the chamber is made visible to the worshipers during the *Tevāva* time. The group of people who took the responsibility of the offerings in their *Tevāva* time, bring all necessary items including food and drinks to the premises. At a determined time two monks and two or three traditional servicemen enter the shrine bringing with them the triple robe, flame, cowries, bell, sandalwood casket, camphor flower spray, traditional tooth picks, water vessel, towel, beetle tray, spittoon and a flower basket (http://www.sridaladamaligawa. lk/Rituals). These traditional things are offered to the casket symbolically as if attending to the needs of the Gautam Buddha. The Buddha-pujā is always carried from the kitchen of the temple (Muluthange) in a pingo (Hemakada). In the kings' era, it was prepared out of cloth embroidered with golden thread. During that time, the king himself carried the Hemakada and earned good merits with honouring the relic.

Prior to the bringing of the daily food offerings, the chief service monk brings the key to the shrine and the doors are open by the officer named *Vattorurāla*, who is allocated this function. These service monks are appointed from the main Buddhist sects of the Kandyan temples called *Asgiri* and *Malwaththa*. The Buddha-pujā is offered by the service monks with a great honour. During the kings' era, this puja is offered in the name of the king and the Royal Palace. But after the colonialism, the puja made by the devotees from general public. People believed that getting a chance to prepare offerings for the Temple is a great blessing. Some selected devotees all over the country enjoy this chance as a limited opportunity while others try to get a day to offer *Tevāva* .

In this daily *Tevāva* , the offerings of food in the temple are emptied into special bowls, gold and silver, of different sizes set apart for different grades of officers who took part. The ringing up of the bell announces the completion of service when the food is emptied into large bowls and is carried away. Another tenants clean the chamber and the flower alter in readiness to receive the offerings made by the devotees from the general public. Meanwhile, the general public devotionally come to see the distant view of the Relic casket. All through this period of service the drummers at the lower chamber continue their drumming performance. These drummers and cornet players are belonged to traditional linages and perform their services as a spiritual duty. In the ancient kingdom, these players were granted land plots which called Temple lands and they belonged to the berawā or drummers' caste. Now they are granted with the ownership of the flower stoles outside the Temple which their relatives can sell flowers to devotees.

Except these normal rituals in the temple, one of another attractive ritual among lay Buddhists is the weekly service or the saffron water festival. This also called as Wednesday *Nanumuraya*. The name itself reflected that this ceremony is based on the periodical herbal water bathing. In every Wednesday, this ritual performs in the Temple with the help of some traditional tenants belonged to some specific linages. As in the daily offerings, these tenants are the only spectators of this weekly ritual ceremony except the Buddhist monks belonged to the Asgiriya and Malwaththa temples.

According to the spectators and the participants of the rituals in the inner chamber of the temple, the Buddhist monks have prepared for this event from the Tuesday afternoon. They collect some flowers like jasmines and roses and instruct to the two traditional officers named *Hewārāla* and *Kattiyanarāla* to prepare fragrant water with using flowers and other herbs (Wickramagamage, 1986; 34). In the early morning of Wednesday, these traditional tenants clean the inner chamber of the temple. Then they started the customary water sprinkling ceremony. From the morning, this event is performed as a bathing ceremony of the relic casket of the Tooth Relic. This golden colour casket protects the Tooth Relic and there are some gold and gem jewelers and surrounded, which were offered by kings

and other devotees. Since this ritual is offered weekly, these tenants do not wash the real casket. Instead of that a small silver casket is used to symbolize the real relic casket in the ceremony. The shadow of the small casket is made to fall on a mirror which is bathed with herbal water and oils.

In generally, Sinhalese believe they should not directly look at the casket or the Buddha statue when they perform these sacred bathing ceremonies. According to the traditional belief, looking at directly could be a dishonor to the sacred object and they used a mirror to perform these rituals. Not only this silver casket, they also wash some utensils of the inner chamber with this water. The Buddhist monks contribute their duties to the smooth function of these rituals. While Wattorurāla, one of the main tenants, holds the mirror, the Buddhist monk cleans the casket and golden flower with using oil, lime and the herbal water (Wajira, 1983; 190-192).

During the main rituals of the Wednesday sprinkling ceremony, there are some special tenants of the temple who perform some services. Especially, two service women known as Alatti Ammā used to be employed in this *Nanumura Mangalle* (the sprinkling ceremony). These two women tenants are the only female tenants in this temple who came from some traditional linages. In the schedule of the weekly and daily basis rituals, they perform their services in Wednesdays only for this water ceremony. According to the tradition, all tenants including these women wear white colour clothes. These women tenants used to wave two silver oil lamps in front of the tooth relic and recite some blessing sentences for the Buddha (Interview with the Service Women). While the Buddhist monks and other tenants wash the silver casket and other objects in the inner chamber, the poets of the *Kavikāra Maduwa* or the poets' forum recite poems for the tribute of the Buddha. In these poems, the most common theme is the Buddha's virtue or Bodhisattva's life stories. These poets also use some traditional instruments like small drums called Uddakki, Panthēru and metal gong or cymbal. When people worship the tooth relic near to the chamber, they can listen to these poems and the music but they cannot see the performances inside. Finally, in the inner chamber, flowers are offered to the relic casket in the usual manner. Some other tenants who play traditional

drums called *Dawula* and *Thammattama* and cornets, continually preform music in the ground floor. Especially, in Wednesdays, they go round and round the shrine of the lower chamber as a line and play the traditional music till the end of the ceremony. In the weekly service, normally from the morning to the 10.00 p.m. performances are continued in this holistic manner.

The weekly water sprinkling ceremony of the temple of the Tooth Relic is a reserved event which performs in a holistic manner and it is an essential part of the temple life as well as the life of Buddhist devotees of the country. The cultural aspects including the performances of the traditional Kandyan musical instruments and reciting poems and Ashtakas other than various rituals only can be explained as a great attempt to protect the holistic culture which continues from the Kings' era. This sprinkling ceremony could be connected to the other international Buddhist sprinkling ceremonies. In this comparative view, it can be observed that using water for the ritual performances is an essential part of the hydraulic societies. The Kandyan temple of the Tooth relic is itself based on the farming culture of the area and the main river of Mahaveli in the city. Therefore, as Xishunbanna Buddhists in china are based on the Mekong River, the Mahaveli River was the base of the ritualistic performances of the Kandyan Buddhists.

Though the ordinary lay devotees are not allowed to participate in these sprinkling rituals, there is another step of this water ceremony which related to the general public. After the ceremony, the used herbal water and oils are distributed among the devotees who use them as herbal applications. From the early morning, people wait for this moment and some came from very rural areas to get this small bottle of the pink colour water. There is a long queue around the lower chamber and wait till the ceremony ends. After the ceremony, the temple officers bring this remain herbal water in a special large braze bowl which decorated with traditional carvings. Though the people are in a rush, these officers equally distribute water to the devotees. Some devotees explained that they could overcome some bad fates and emergency illnesses with using this herbal water as an application. Others keep this water safely to use in some special occasions which they need the Lord Buddha's blessings. Especially, when their children

sit for an important examination, they use this water to bless them (Participation Observation at the Temple of the Tooth Relic).

These post ceremonial activities of the temple show the real nature of sprinkling ceremonies in Sri Lanka. In the Sri Lankan tradition, the status of the ritual performers is maintained in a holistic manner. Everyone is not allowed to see or participate in sprinkling ceremonies or *Tevāva* . Therefore, they are not public events and there are reserve type activities included. Most of the time, special officers or tenants and Buddhist monks in the inner chambers of the temple could only perform them. These tenants are also belonged to selected families. In the inner chamber of the temple of the tooth relic, they are essentially upper caste Govigama families. As explained before, there are special duties allocated for these tenants. Even to mix the herbal water and bring it to the inner chamber, there are specific tenants who show the service hierarchy of the temple. Also these Buddhist monks were selected from Govigama upper caste and gave them the ordination.

As mentioned before, in the Kandyan era, the kings granted many lands to the temple of the tooth relic. Therefore, most of these tenants were granted some plots of lands to admire their services. In addition, they were released from the ordinary land taxes and compulsory services which had to be performed for the king or his officers. Therefore, these tenants who originated from these families only can send their blood relations to the temple services and they are the community who still enjoy these land grants. There is not any public water splashing event among people in Sri Lanka as other Theravada Buddhist countries practice. Devotees only share the holy water after the ceremony finished. Therefore, the gap between the devotees and temple officers has always maintained as it was in the king's era. Some lower caste service tenants who perform drums and other musical instruments in the temple could only play in the lower chamber. But they were respected as a valuable as well as an essential community which called Pannikkimura.

One of the other aspects which we can observe is that though the ceremonial tenant group is a small community, no matter which caste they are belonged to, they show a peaceful togetherness and help to the Buddhist monks and the lay trustees to continue the

heritage of the Temple. Therefore, the temple of the tooth relic is considered as one of the highly sacred temples in Sri Lanka. Worshipers can enjoy the holy feeling of a traditional Theravada Buddhist temple though the place is very crowded in the day time. Therefore, one can argue that preserving these traditional rituals as they were performed in the pre-colonial times, gives a value to the temple. It also protects some cultural aspects like music, poems and the caste hierarchy. Hence, even with the modernization and the social mobilization of the twenty first century, the weekly water sprinkling ceremony and other daily ritual performances in the Temple keep continue the devotion of the lay Buddhists all over Sri Lanka. Not only among Sri Lankan Theravada Buddhists, but also among Tamils and Muslims in the country, the temple is one of the attractive destinations to visit. Lots of tourists, both Buddhists and non-Buddhist, essentially visit the temple and enjoy traditional performances especially in Wednesdays.

Devotees and tourists are also attracted to the annual *Esala Perahera* or the traditional procession of the temple in July. The astrologists determine an auspicious time to inaugurate this pageant. It began with the *Kumbal perahera* (procession) after completing some rituals. Drummers and tuskers take part in this procession without any ceremonial costumes. But in the *Randōli Perahera*, the lay trustee or the *Diyawadana Nilame* and other dancers and performers walk in the procession with showing the cultural values of the Perahera. In these days the Casket of the Tooth Relic is taken by a decorated elephant through the streets of the city. In the days of Kings, the chief queens of the king paraded in this procession in palanquins. This procession shows traditional performances of various dancers, traditional drummers, trumpet blowers, Wes dancers, whip crackers, fire ball dancers and flag holders. There are several elephants go along with the procession. This procession is highly related to Sri Lankan customs and rituals. It is a symbol of the Sri Lankan heritage. There are four other pageants along with the pageant of the temple which belonged to four major shrines in the Kandy.

Some ritual performances after this annual *Esala* procession of the temple could be understood as another water ceremony though

it is not a clear sprinkling ceremony. The trustees of the temple and the other related shrines for gods perform a water cutting ceremony with participation of a lay Buddhist crowd and Buddhist monks. The traditional Esala procession with the temple of the tooth relic goes through the Kandy city for eleven nights. After this celebration, in the next morning, they perform the water cutting ceremony at the Gatambe temple as a public ceremony. In a specific ford at Gatambe, the lay officers of the temple cut the water of the river with using an old sword. They perform various other rituals related to this event. This also can be considered as a public Buddhist event related to the water culture of the ancient kingdom. Lay Buddhists could only observe that ritual and make the holy cheer or *Sadukāraya*. This happens only once in a year with the procession.

There is another annual ceremony, which called annual *Nānumura Mangallaya* in this Temple. It is also related to the New Year festival in April. The officers and the Buddhist monks provide herbal applications to the general public to perform their traditional New Year bath. In the God *Nātha* shrine premises of the Temple, this herbal nānu or application is provided. People gather to collect these applications or let the Buddhist monks to apply it on their heads. This is a more public and holistic event which perform according to auspicious times than their weekly service.

Two other annual ritual ceremonies are the Kartika Festival and the Aluth Sahal festival. Kārtika Festival is a oil distributing ceremony which hold in November. In this festival, the delegated men from ancient temples gather at the Nātha God Shrine. It is the tradition to distribute oil to temple authorities who have gathered in this premise, while the required oil is supplied by the Temple of the Tooth Relic. The other significant event on this day is the holding of the *Daladā* (Relic) procession together with the Devāla processions in a mini scale (http://www.sridaladamaligawa.lk/Kartika-Festival). *Aluth Sahal* festival means the New Harvesting Festival which is conducted in the month of January every year. When the harvest of paddy is complete, certain quantities of rice were carried in pingos to the temples and shrines and offered to Buddha and the respective divinities. It is said that King Narēndrasimha initiated this festival after repairing the harvest from the paddy field he

prepared in his resident area, Kundasāle. The day before the festival, the officials of the Daladā temple and the other shrines proceed in procession to Gurudeniya Barn on the outskirts of Kandy. On the festival day the procession with elephants bring bags of rice to the Daladā shrine and the Natha *Devāle*. Milk rice is prepared from this newly harvested rice and offered to the Tooth Relic and the other presiding divinities. The offerings thus made to the Temple of the Tooth Relic signify the offering of food made to the Buddha and his disciples (http://sridaladamaligawa.lk/New-Harvest-Festival).

With all of these periodical rituals, the Temple of Tooth Relic became one of the most famous temples in Sri Lanka. It gives the spiritual leadership to the Sinhala Buddhist community in the country and it also a well-known tourist attraction which spread the popularity of the country as a Buddhist country among the international community.

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# THE SĪLADHARĀ TRAINING: A NUN COMMUNITY IN THE WEST

by Nun Benjawan Wongshookaew*

**ABSTRACT**

This paper aims to address the unique procedure of the Sīladharā Training, the ordained Theravādin women in the West. Sīladharā literally means women who cherish and uphold goodness. The order of Sīladharā has been in existence since 1983, when the first pabbajjā took place in Chithurst Monastery, the first forest monastery under Ajahn Chah lineage in England. At the first stage, the first four nuns had not received formal training but learned by observing and imitating bhikkhus. They adhered 10 precepts and took the 75 sekhiya rules were advised by Ajahn Sumedho, the first western disciple of Ajahn Chah and a leader of Chithurst Monastery at that time. Gradually some community structures and standards were established for proper training. The main purpose of the training has been to develop the internal structure of a community in the way that allows the vinaya to be practiced in its tradition way. Together with granting women the experienced support of the Sangha as one part of the fourfold assemblies (the catuparisā).

The presentation of this paper shows that the Sīladharā have the potential to cross the gendered boundary and be transformed into the field of merit for lay people. Impeccable conduct, religious performances and Buddhist knowledge have proved to be

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requirements for achieving religious legitimacy.

## INTRODUCTION

In 1977 the English Sangha Trust (EST), a charity organization founded in 1956 for the purpose of supporting a Buddhist monastic order in England invited Ajahn Chah (the prominent master of the Forest Tradition in Thailand) to visit Britain. Ajahn Chah[1] brought with him a western monk, Sumedho, who had trained under his guidance for over 10 years at Wat Nong Pah Pong in north eastern part of Thailand. Having seen that there was much interest in Buddhist teaching in the West, He allowed Bhikkhu Sumedho and 3 other bhikkhus to reside at the English Sangha Trust's house in Hampstead, London and make teaching available for those who were interested. In the United Kingdom people were becoming seriously interested in the meditation practice that Bhikkhu Sumedho was offering and in the example of the monastic life that was demonstrated. So in 1978 a piece of woodland about 108 acres in Hammer Wood located in West Sussex was offered by a generous benefactor and the following year Chithurst House, half a mile away from the forest came up for sale with its buildings and land. The Trust decided to sell Hampstead Vihara and brought money to purchase it. This became Cittaviveka, Chithurst Buddhist Monastery where it was the first Forest Monastery in England. George Sharp, the chairman of the English Sangha Trust (EST) from 1972 until 1995, devoted his gratitude to Ajahn Chah that the great support by wealthy Thai devotees of Ajahn Chah was instrumental in funding the struggling beginnings at Chithurst that for Ajahn Chah telling them to support Bhikkhu Sumedho's efforts in England was of great importance. (Amaravati Sangha 2015, p.17).

Even before the sangha community moved from the Hampstead Vihara to Chithurst House in 1979, the teaching of Ajahn Sumedho and the Buddhist monastic way of life of the Forest Tradition was attracting more and more people, women as well men had been a part of the lay community gradually forming around the monks. They had been attending meditation retreats and other ceremonial

1. Ajahn means teacher, mentor, also used as a term of respect when referring to a senior bhikkhu.

events led by Ajahn Sumedho. The beginning point of the first monastic women order started from a woman whose name Pat Stoll, on hearing about Chithurst Buddhist Monastery, she decided to see what she could do to ensure that women also would have the good opportunity to practise as nuns in England. She travelled to Thailand to see how nuns live and to ask Ajahn Chah for permission to train in England under Ajahn Sumedho's guidance. By October 1979 the first four women had arrived at Chithurst to receive the Eight Precepts as Anagarikās (Anagarika literally means homeless one, the term for a novice following eight precepts, Anagarikā used for a woman novice). They were Rocanā (Pat Stoll), Sundarā (Francoise Reynaud), Candasirī (Kathleen Cockburn) and Thanissarā (Linda Mary Peacook). Firstly they had not shaven only closely cropped their hair but after 6 months with the approval of Ajahn Sumedho, they had first shaven heads. They began monastic practice and lived in a cottage was purchased for their occupation nearby Chithurst House about ten minutes' walk along the road. At the early stage the four Anagarikās had received no formal training, other than following the community routines and receiving instruction alongside the community of bhikkhus. They adhered to the eight precepts and were asked by Ajahn Sumedho to keep the 75 sekhiya rules, the basically rules of etiquette or basic monastic behavioral standards. As Ajahn Sucitto who was an appointed teacher to nuns at the beginning time, mentioned that for four years, the group of four women was keeping the eight precepts with shaven heads and wearing the white robe same as Thai Mae Chee (the 8 precepts nun). Although their commitment to the Dhamma and the Sangha was strong, they had no proper way of ordering their domestic affairs and also the bhikkhus themselves never really knew what proper guidance to offer (Sucitto 1985, p.2). Ajahn Sumedho responded to these kinds of concerns by consulting the most senior bhikkhu in Britain, Ven. Dr. Saddhatissa, the possibility of giving the ten precepts to the first group of western nuns. In 1983, having received a permission from the Elders of the Sangha to establish an order of Buddhist mendicants nuns in the West, Ajahn Sumedho announced that he would give the Ten-Precept

ordination (*pabbajjā*)[2] to the first four nuns. The ceremony was within the lineage of the Forest Tradition of Ajahn Chah took place at Cittaviveka, Chithurst Buddhist Monastery on 14th.August 1983. They were at first referred to as Silawatti which means women to live by silā or virtue and afterwards this was changed to Sīladharā, women who cherish and uphold virtue. From that time in the West the Order of Sīladharā has been in existence as Ajahn Sumetho (2001, p.14) declared 'The first women who would be the pioneers-the Founding Mothers-of the Nun's Order, to the ordination of the first four nuns, to the formation of the Order of Sīladharā'.

## THE SĪLADHARĀ COMMUNITY

The original Bhikkhunī Order, as it existed within the Theravāda Tradition five years after the Bhikkhu Order, passed away in the 11th century; however this has continued in Mahāyāna lineage[3]. In this paper I would not touch much the context of Bhikkhunī Order because it is out of my objective to address the procedure of Buddhist mendicant nuns in the West. However I would like to raise up here the idea of the founding the Bhikkhunī Order which Gross (1993, p.36) has reviewed that 'the idea of women without social ties was simply too difficult for most of the Buddha's contemporaries to contemplate. For men to take up this lifestyle was already a somewhat common, option by the Buddha's time; for women to do it was radically unconventional'. In the United Kingdom the evolution of the Sīladharā's community has been a gradually process with a training based on the ten precepts, to some extent, the ways of living and conventions followed by the original Bhikkhunī Order.

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2. Ordination falls into 2 parts: Going-forth (*pabbajjā*) and Acceptance (*upasampadā*). In the Going-forth, one leaves the home life for the homeless life, becoming a novice (*sāmanera*), takes refuge in the Triple Gem and undertakes the ten precepts. The Going-forth is not a Community transaction, whereas Acceptance, the higher ordination, is. (Bhikkhu Anālayo 2013, p.221)

3. During the reign of Asoka the Bhikkhunī ordination lineage was brought from India to Sri Lanka headed by Sanghamitta, the Bhikkhunī order disappeared at some point around the 11th century. In India there was inscriptional evidence indicated that Bhikkhunī existed in the 8th Century, what eventually did fall into decline even though it took well over 500 years that to happen. For the Mahāyāna Threat, there was evidence in the early 5th century a group of Sri Lankan Bhikkhunī established the ordination lineage in China.(Bhikkhu Anālayo 2013, p.116-117, 122)

The initial model of being mendicant nuns in the West was the lifestyle and monastic standards undertaking by Thai Mae Chees (nuns) of Ajahn Chah lineage. Bhikkhu Silaratano gave the explanation of Mae Chee in his book 'Mae Chee Kaew'(2009,p.15) that a woman undertakes training rules, wearing distinctive white robes that reflect the strict division between the lifestyle of an ordained person and that of a layperson. Mae Chee observes a standard code of discipline governing suitable attire, conduct and livelihood. She is instructed to keep in mind that a dignified appearance and exemplary behavior can encourage in others a genuine interest in the virtues of Buddhist practice. However there are the differences between western women and easterners who become nuns which are apparent for western nuns that a more detailed training in Buddhist tradition ways was necessary and appropriate. Bhikkhu Khantipalo (1979, p.157) pointed out that the westerners are 'independent types, already well-travelled, well-educated worldly, etc.,' for these reasons, a western woman will have an inquiry attitude to Dhamma while many Asian Buddhists have a more traditional approach. Great patience and perseverance, as well as adaptability are needed by a western woman to succeed as a Buddhist nun.

After the first pabbajjā in 1983, the first four Sīladharā had formed a nun's community living in Chithurst Buddhist Monastery which so called 'double monastic communities' comprising bhikkhus and male novices community as well as the Sīladharā and Anagarikās community, practicing alongside lay residents. The complex nature of the monastic communities has meant that much effort has been required to establish and maintain harmonious and respectful relationship particularly between male and female monastic communities. Ajahn Sumedho (2001, p.15) called the possibility of a training for western women in the holy life 'new transplants from Thailand' to see whether it was possible to live the mendicant life at all in the West. He also pointed out the difficulty that the heritage was itself extremely conservative and it offered absolutely no precedent or guidance in the matter of a training. Having the male and female monastic communities lived together in some ways there were tendency to have fracturing in

the relationship between both monastic communities. As monks and nuns, awareness is crucial to contain and prevent fractions may occurred from their relationship if a woman see herself through the eyes of a man and vice versa. In this case they can help one another in areas where they are not able to see clearly through the veils of their own conditioning. I was interested in the way that Sujato Bhikkhu put it in a positive aspect of mutual relationship that when entirely separated from nuns, monks may not learn to respect women as equal partners in the spiritual life. Monks are able to relate to women in different ways such as a mother, a daughter or one is the temptress to be feared and guarded against. But never can we relate to women as a sister; a friend as we grow together through our life. (Santacitta, Chandasara 2008, p.6).

However the early stage of the Order of Sīladharā at Chithurst was struggling until the nuns arose a kind of feeling that they needed some more formal guidance and structure. As Sister Thanissarā (2001, p.22) mentioned about the early time of training 'It was a step in the dark for everyone. There was no model that could be followed easily. Ajahn Sumedho, our teacher, not only had no experiences of training nuns; he also had had little contact with women during his previous ten years in Thailand'. Also she was aware of the attitude as a western nun to negotiate with 2 aspects between the conservatism of the Tradition's ancient roots and the more contemporary views of western feminism that she could say it had never been comfortable or easy (Thanissarā 2001, p.23). Thus Ajahn Sucitto, one of the senior monks, was invited to offer guidance and to share his practical understanding of vinaya, training discipline. He began to meet the nuns weekly to formulate the skeleton of a set of rules for Sīladharās and was a supervisory role too, and this came to the forefront after moving to Amaravati Monastery.

In 1984, Amaravati Buddhist Monastery was established by developing a vision for a Buddhist center with a broader remission by Ajahn Sumedho. He therefore envisioned a new monastery as a 'training monastery for nuns' as well as a monastery for some of the community of bhikkhus, and a Buddhist center with facilities for supporting lay people in their practice and offering teaching to

a wider audience. Chithurst Monastery was to remain a monastery for training of monks. This new monastery located on the Chiltern plateau outside Hemel Hampsted in the village of Great Gaddesden where the properties used to be St. Magarret School. The place was built by the Canadians in 1939 with the idea of bringing children from poor areas of London out into the countryside so they can look at natural for a change. It was a school so it had big halls, several kitchens and bathroom facilities where it could be accommodated by lots of people at one time. Ajahn Sumedho (2015, p.28-29) talked about earliest years of getting Amaravati established that Amaravati was to be the ideal situation compared with Chithurst where it was very limited in its buildings and it was in a very highly protected area of Britain. So Amaravati was an extension for more monks to be ordained and practice meditation, also it was not far from London or from Heathrow Airport. In July 1984, the nuns from Chithurst's cottage manage the transition to Amaravati as pilgrimages, to do their journey on foot, in a practice known as 'tudong'[4]. After 3 weeks and roughly 70 miles of walking they arrived at new place on 2nd. August, 1984. The community of Sīladharās entered the gate of Amaravati Monastery and had fully responsible for the ordering of their own mendicant women community. Ajahn Sundarā (2015, p. 43), the most senior Sīladharā at the present concluded that in spite of the amount of physical, organizational and ministrative duties and responsibilities, there always seemed to be an enthusiasm and energy that was inspiring and uplifting. The past is a memory, the future is the unknown, now is the knowing.

Amaravati means 'the deathless' which named after the celebrated ancient monastery of Amaravati in south east Indea. Ajahn Sumedho's attempt to choose this word because during 1980s there was a lot of paranoia in Europe about the prediction of the third world war with the Soviet Union. Yong people were brought up in that atmosphere and they were quite pessimistic about their own lives. In Britain many people were talking about death, destruction and war. So Ajahn Sumedho (2015, p.25) deliberately named this

4. The practice of wandering in the country and living on alms food. The word derives from the Pāli 'dhutanga' which means voluntary ascetic practices that practitioners undertake in order to cultivate renunciation and contentment, and to stir up energy. Vism.59-83.

new monastery 'Amaravati', a deathless realm, which would give the people a perception of the deathless or emptiness. At the celebration 30 years of Amaravati Buddhist Monastery in 2015 Ajahn Amaro, (2015, p.7) the present abbot, gave the reflection of the meaning of the monastery's name that Amaravati was founded to offer spiritual opportunities, to help interested people recollect the deathless as well as death; with an attitude of openness like the great sky that arches above it. The purpose of 'Open the Doors to the Deathless' was to support both men and women in their aspirations toward realization; to offer formal silent retreats and to encourage inter-faith dialogue and mutual understanding.

## THE SĪLADHARĀ TRAINING PROCEDURE

Since the order of Sīladharā has been in existence in August1983, more than hundred women of English and many nationalities came from a variety of countries and cultural backgrounds have taken up monastic training, either as 8 precepts novices (*Anagārikās*), 10 precepts nuns (*Sīladharā*). Many bhikkhunīs as well as eight or ten precepts nuns from other traditions have also spent time in the Sīladharā community to learn about a particular monastic way of life. During 3 months of the Rain Retreat (Vassa) 2018, there were 14 mendicant women including myself taken up the training; there were 8 Sīladharās, 2 nuns from other traditions, 4 anagārikās and 1 Thai Mae Chee. The most senior nun at that time is Ajahn Sundarā (35 vassas or ordained years).

Having started from the first six years until 1991 the training has evolved through practice supervised by Ajahn Sucitto. On a procedure of Sīladharā training, Ajahn Sucitto based the training that he was establishing on both the bhikkhu and bhikkunī pātimokkha[5] as well as on the training for sāmanera, novice monk. He described the need for including parts of the bhikkunī roles because "the ten precepts novice training was designed more for little boys than for mature women" ( Jane Angell 2005, p.26). Rather than proceeding

5. According to the Mahavagga it means the beginning, the head or entrance, the foremost of skillful qualities (Mv.II.3.4), the fundamental rules of the Order Disciplinary Code; the 227 disciplinary rules binding on Bhikkhu and the 313 rules binding on Bhikkhunī which were recited every fortnight.

from a theoretical base of creating the Order of Nuns, Ajahn Sucitto worked on making it possible for women to live together mindfully. The relationship with the established Bhikkhu Sangha and the lay community also needed to be defined, as well as the means for conducting formal procedure.

One of the main propose of the training has been to develop the internal structuring of a community in a way that allows the Vinaya to be practiced in its traditional way while granting women the experienced support of the Bhikkhu Sangha. In every aspects of training in Buddhism there are all concerning with the Dhamma and the Vinaya. P.A. Payutto (2015, p.19, 21) described in his book "Characteristics of Buddhism" that the Dhamma (the doctrine) and the Vinaya (the discipline) are interdependent and harmoniously related to form a united whole, as evidenced from the way the two terms are combined into one word as 'Dhammavinaya'. The Dhamma provides a foundation and support on which the Vinaya or discipline can lean. The Discipline is society's rules, regulations and models. It is a kind of establishment. Hence the process of Sīladharā training is a shift from an externalized hierarchical authority to one of individual authority, the tendency to view the training guidelines as being something imposed externally to an understanding that each individual is responsible for one own training . Ajahn Sucitto (1985, p. 5) insisted the training in term of mutual relationship, he said 'We do have a common identity in Dhamma : brothers and sisters aspiring to liberation. Vinaya helps us to remember this identity and transcend gender'.

The process of entering the Order of Sīladharā begins with women who interested in becoming nuns spent some months in the Nun community initially. When it becomes clear that their interest is genuine, they will be given an agreement that they can be considered for one year of anagārikās Training. Bell gave a definition of Anagārikā in the term for a female novice who is undertaking eight precepts training; this novitiate is partially how the monastics of this tradition have successfully maintained their traditional form in the West (Bell, Sandra 2001). Before the agreement is given, an aspirant is asked to complete a questionnaire that explores her family background, education and medical history including any

emotional or psychiatric problems, as well as religious background and reasons for wishing to take up the training. The questionnaire is followed up with an interview with one of the senior nuns, accompanied by either the guest nun or the novice nun, at which her interest and capacity to benefit from such a training is explored further. After there is full agreement among the nuns and that there are no major concerns from the Bhikkhu Sangha, the candidate is given a date for the ceremony and shown how to prepare her white robes.

The anagārikā precept ceremony may be performed by a designate senior nun, or by the abbot or his representative. It consists of the request for the Three Refuges (*Tisaraṇagamana*) and Eight Precepts; there is also a formal request for Dependence and Guidance (*Nissāya*)[6] for one year. As an anagārikā approaches the end of her year training, there is a formal review. At the meeting of Sīladharā in both the monks and nuns communities feedback is gathered, regarding both strengths and any area of concern; also a general sense of whether the both communities wish to support her continuing in the training, should that be her aspiration. The general feedback from the nuns is shared with the anagārikā. Following her response to this, appropriate guidance and encouragement is offered. At least two years of anagārikā training are needed before being given the opportunity to Going-forth (*pabbajjā*). In general, it has been found beneficial to give a candidate more time to follow the anagārikā training standards, rather than encouraging her to Going Forth before she is really ready. The expected commitment to training as sīladharā is at least five years. Once an anagārikā has been accepted for Sīladharā Ordination, one or more sīladharā are designated to help her preparation, for example, sewing robes, liaising with sponsors, assisting with well composed manner and so on. For Sīladharā, the standard of robes and other cloth items is to be dark brown. The four designated robes called catucīvara; the pāvurana (outer robe), the uttarāsanaga (upper robe), the antaravāsaka (lower robe/sabong) and the kancuka (jacket) which

6. The new bhikkhu needs to request dependence from a teacher, 'Ācariyo me Bhante hohi; ayasmanto nissāya vacchāmi', which means Venerable sir, be my teacher; I will live in dependence on you. (Mv.I.32.2)

has long sleeves and double-breasted style.[7]

The Order of Sīladharā has been established with the material and spiritual support of the longer established the Bhikkhu Sangha, also of the extent that was laid down in the original text. The Sīladharā's custom is to show their deference to bhikkhus in kindness and respect to those, even are junior to them. This aspect of custom may lead to misunderstanding in a western context since they can tend to confuse respect with subservience and a fear of bolstering someone else's ego. However, The Buddha pointed out that paying respect is something that effect on the person to whom respect to be humbling and aspiring to be worthy of that respect. The harmony and loving kindness are emphasized as a foundation for community living to establish the harmonious and respectful relationship between the monks and nuns' monastic communities.

## THE SĪLADHARĀ RULES OF TRAINING

According to the original of the Bhikkhunī Ordination, before Mahāpajāpati Gotami, had received permission from the Buddha to Going Forth, it was on the precondition that she would accept the Garudhammas; Eight Important Rules or guiding principles. When Ānanda was making 2 arguments to the Buddha about women's capacity in gaining enlightenment and the great service of Mahāpajāpati to the Buddha in his childhood. In response to these arguments the Buddha agreed to establish an order of Bhikkhunī. "Ānanda, if Mahāpajāpati Gotami accepts eight rules of respect, that will be her Full Acceptance" (Cv.X.1)[8]. The Garudhammas were summarized as follows;

A nun must always pay proper homage to a monk, no matter what the age or seniority of each.

A nun must spend the rain retreat where a monk is present.

A nun must ask the Bhikkhu sangha every two weeks about the

7. They were designed from the basic set of 4 robes of bhikkhunī, but the outer robe do not made in the standard pattern has at least 5 sections which called khandas.

8. As Hecker (2003, 385) argued it seemed that the Buddha did not absolutely refuse Mahāpajāpati Gotami but perhaps wished to test her determination. It would have been very difficult for women in those days to become nuns and live a hard life subsisting on alms food.

date of the Uposatha and about the instruction of nuns by monks at this time.

At the conclusion of the rain retreat, a nun must participate in Pavāranā[9] before both Sanghas.

A grievously offending nun must be disciplined both Sanghas.

After two years of training in the six precepts, a female probationer must seek ordination from both Sanghas.

A nun may not abuse or criticize a monk in any way.

While nuns may not reprimand monks, monk may reprimand nuns.[10]

The Garudhammas were accepted initially within the Sīladharā Ordination as the basis for their lives in community. This was because it was seen as important that the relationship of the nuns to the Bhikkhu Sangha be made clear to a new sīladharā at the start of her life in the Order. Over time, this formal avowal of them has been found to be unhelpful, so to mention of them were dropped from the ceremony (Candasirī 2009, p. 3).

As a sīladharā received pabbajjā and entered the nun community she complies with taking on a special role within a complete social structure that is set up specifically to support liberation. Having received pabbajjā as a samana, it is expected that she take on the lifestyle of a Gone Forth One. There are certain basic attitudes that directly affect to benefit from the Training offered in community. Firstly, a sense of self- respect that enables ones to learn through observation and to receive guidance in a way that to promote a sense of worthiness. Secondly, a spirit of enquiry that enables investigation both of suffering and of the training process that supports liberation. (Candasirī 2009, p.16).

Every Uposatha Day[11], the Sīladharā Order present the

9. Invitation to speak; the act of invitation others to advise one or to speak of one's offences or any unbecoming behavior; the ecclesiastical ceremony at the end of the rain retreat (the Vassa).

10. As a term of Bhikkhuni refers to female monastics who have received higher ordination, whereas I use here a term of nun to refer to traditions of female monastic.

11. The days for special meeting of the sangha order, the fortnightly full and new moon

Uposatha meeting for the formal recitation in the Rule of Training, to provide a framework for the training and to dispel doubt regarding transgressions so that the purity of mind can serve as a firm foundation for liberation. With the state of purity, sīladharās have cleared any offenses by confession immediately prior to the recitation. The format of the Uposatha meeting generally includes a puja (chanting), the Rule recitation and the determining of the ten precepts and a little time for formal Sangha business.

The ten precepts (*sikkhāpadā*)[12] are designated guidelines to constitute the framework of training, to support the harmonious conduct of the Order; there are

1. Pānātipātā Veramani: this precept supports harmlessness. The undertaking to refrain from deliberately harming any living creature.

2. Adinnādānā Veramanī : this precept supports trustworthiness. The undertaking to refrain from taking what is not given.

3. Abrahmacariyā Veramanī: this precept supports a life of celibacy. The undertaking to refrain from of intentional erotic behavior.

4. Musāvādā Veramanī: this precept supports right speech. The undertaking to refrain from false, divisive, abusive and unnecessary, frivolous speech.

5. Surāmeraya Majjapamādatthānā Veramanī: this precept supports sobriety. The undertaking to refrain from the use of intoxicants that cause heedlessness.

6. Vikālabhojanā Veramanī : this precept encourages moderation in taking food. The undertaking to refrain from eating outside of the proper time.

7. Naccagītavādita Visukadassana Veramanī: this precept supports mindfulness and focus. The undertaking to refrain from

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days, for recitation of the Vinaya rules.

12. According to the Commentary, the customary practice is for novices also to receive training in the Sekhiya rules and Khandhaka protocals, but there is no established standard for imposing offenses on them for breaking any of these rules.

entertainments and distractions.

8. Mālāgandha Vilepana Dhārana Mandana Vibhusanatthānā Veramanī: this precept supports modesty and simplicity.The undertaking to refrain from wearing garlands and beatifying oneself with perfumes and cosmetics.

9. Uccāsayana Mahāsayanā Veramanī: this precept supports alertness.The undertaking to refrain from using high and luxurious beds.

10. Jātaruparajata Patiggahanā Veramanī: this precept supports a life of renunciation. The undertaking to refrain from accepting gold or silver. (Kh.I.1)

Within the bhikkhu and bhikkunī pātimokkhas, Offenses are grouped according to severity; the numbers of each vary slightly from tradition to tradition. According to the Offenses that are observed within the Sīladharā rule of training, there are 3 factors are listed in considering offenses. These are intention, effort and result[13] which have 4 categories of offenses:

1. Expulsion Offenses: There are 6 rules of Offenses. This category is equivalent to the Pārājika (Defeat) in the bhikkhu and bhikkunī pātimokkhas[14]; the transgressor, in effect, relinquished the right to continue in the Training for the remainder of life. For the outcome in the Sīladharā Training is dependent on consultation within the Sangha whether it would be suitable for the person to leave the Order, or to undergo Ostracism or some other form of penalty.

2. Probation Offenses: There are 7 rules of Offenses. This category is equivalent to Sanghādisesa (Formal Meeting)[15]. The

13. In analyzing offenses for the purpose of determining penalties, the Vibhanga divides an action into 5 factors: the effort, the perception under which it is made, the intention motivating it, the object at which it is aimed, and the result.(Pv.VI.4).

14. According to Vinaya Pitaka, Bhikkhu's Pārājika have 4 rules while bhikkunī 's Pārājika have 8 rules. See more details in *The Buddhist Monastic Code I,* (Thanissaro Bhikkhu 2007, p.43-111)

15. According to Vinaya Pitaka, Sanghādisesa (Formal Meeting) have 13 rules which are classified as heavy offenses. A bhikkhu who commits any one of Sanghādisesa offenses must observe a period of probation (pārivasa) for the same number of days as he concealed the

transgressor requires period of pārivasa, the length of which is determined by the number of days the offence was concealed.

3. Admonishment Offenses: There are 20 rules of Offenses. This category is equivalent roughly to Nissaggiya Pācittiya (Forfeiture and Confession)[16] and to some rules of Pācittiya (Confession)[17].

4. Acknowledgement Offenses: There are 20 rules of Offenses. This category is equivalent roughly to Pātidesaniya (Acknowledgement)[18] and to some rules of Pācittiya (Confession).

Besides the 53 Rules of Offenses, there are 9 Rules of the Observances; comprise a number of training rules relating to the ten precepts; which are grouped according to object, for example; the deportment and appearance as a worthy model to lay people, the way to respect the four requisites, the relation with other samanas in a considerate and courteous manners. These are to avoid behavior which is inappropriate and conduct that is disharmonious or which places one in a situation where there is danger of a heavier offence being committed. They are mainly a matter of etiquette and of maintaining an appropriate mendicant appearance. (Candasirī 2009, p.113). Altogether with the 75 Sekhiya rules of training; which is equivalent to the bhikkhu and bhikkunī pātimokkhas; they are the guidance for ways of relating to others; both within the Sangha and with the larger lay community. The group of Sekhiya[19] constituted the way of training for the anagārikā and after received the pabbajjā which were recited in Uposatha Meeting, are defined as 4 groups:

The etiquette in dressing and behaving when in inhabited area,

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offense and after he has completed his probation may he then ask for the six-day period of penance.

16. Nissaggiya means entailing forfeiture. According to Vinaya Pitaka, there are 30 rules in this category which divided into 3 chapters (vagga); the robe-cloth, the silk and the bowl.

17. Pācittiya means to be made known or to be confessed. According to Vinaya Pitaka, there are 92 rules in this category.

18. Pātidesaniya means entailing acknowledgement. According to Vinaya Pitaka, there are 4 rules in this category.

19. Sekhiya means to be trained in, training to be observed. There are 75 training rules which do not impose a direct penalty, though the Vibhanga says that to violate any of these rules out of disrespect incurs a dukkata.(Thānissaro Bhikkhu 2007, p.524)

there are 26 rules.

The etiquette in accepting and eating almsfood, there are 30 rules.

The etiquette when teaching the Dhamma, there are 16 rules.

The etiquette in urinating, defecating and spitting, there are 3 rules.

In concluding, apart from undertaking the ten precepts (sikkhāpadā), the Sīladharā Rules of Training compose of 62 rules of Offences and the Observances, 75 Sekhiya rules; which are equivalent to the Rules of Training within the bhikkhu and bhikkunī pātimokkhas but differ in the numbers of the Rules.

The framework of the discipline, the Rules of Training, are laid down originally by the Buddha for the monastic sangha to support and ensure a degree of uniformity of conduct, to promote a sense of calmness and collectedness; both among those who practice and lay people who associate with. From this point of views, the aims of the Rules and Observations is not to produce some kind of the ideal nuns, but rather to enable and encourage each one in their personal cultivation of the Eight-fold Path as a means of liberation as well as being one part of the fourfold assemblies (the catuparisā)[20] of the Buddha. Thus, through appropriate restraint, compassion, kindness, creativity and wise discernment are brought forth. Inevitability, the training for mind development consists of the system of establishing virtuous friends (kalayānamitta), of providing the favorable conditions (sappāya) and of enhancing the quality of the mind. (P.A. Payutto 2017, p. 996).

## CONCLUSION

The Order of Sīladharā has started from depending on the guidance and supervisory from the Bhikkhu Sangha since they had no experience or confidence to establish such a form in the Forest Tradition way of Ajahn Chah lineage. Gradually there has

20. The fourfold assemblies as part of the Buddhist Community consists of assembly of bhikkhus, assembly of bhikkhunīs (nuns), assembly of male lay followers and female lay followers (A.II.132).

been a process of revolution, changes happening in accordance with the needs and capacity in the Sīladharā's community. They are fully responsibility for steering their own community, for training themselves to free their hearts and altogether granting mendicant women the experienced support of the Sangha as one part of the fourfold assemblies (the catuparisā). However, the important way of training to develop unconventional wisdom is to train oneself to transcend from gendered boundary. As Ajahn Chah said 'You are neither not a man nor a woman. By reflecting on the conditioning of the mind, we are really not any of these conditions in any permanent way'. (Sumedho 1999).

From the beginning until now, the Sīladharā community has become increasingly stable and self-reliance. The development of the Order of Sīladharā shows us the potential of women to cross the gendered boundary and be transformed into the field of merit for lay people. Impeccable conduct, religious performances and Buddhist knowledge have proved to be requirements for achieving religious legitimacy.

There are those who awaken from heedless.

They bring light into the world,

Like the moon emerging from the clouds. (Dhp.172).

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# WHY WAS B. R. AMBEDKAR CONVERTED TO BUDDHISM? HIS THOUGHT AND ACTIVITIES

by Midori Horiuchi*

**ABSTRACT**

Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar (1891–1956) was well known as an Indian jurist, politician and social reformer who inspired the Neo-Buddhist movement and campaigned against social discrimination towards the Untouchables. He was independent India's first law and justice minister, and the principal architect of the Constitution of India. However, his accomplishments and excellent leadership are not very well-known in Japan.

He was born into a poor low Mahar (*dalit*) caste who were treated as Untouchables. According to his biography, untouchable children were not allowed to sit inside the class during his school days. Further, when they wanted to drink water, someone from a higher caste had to pour water in the vessel because they were not allowed to touch either the water or the vessel that contained it. Such his experiences might be based on his later activities as social reformer and politician. The following words that he talked to M. K. Gandhi may express his feelings well. "We untouchables are treated like dogs and cats in India and cannot drink the water. The Hinduism accepts these social discriminations of the untouchable caste. Why

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can we say such a place, India, as the mother country? Why can we say such a religion, Hinduism, as one's own religion?"(Nagasaki 1996, p.179).

Ambedkar thought that it would be impossible to solve the discrimination problem against untouchable people as far as he was in a frame of the Hinduism to justify the caste system. He finally decided to convert to Buddhism to preach 'liberty,' 'equality,' and 'fraternity.' He was converted to Buddhism with 300,000-600,000 people in Nagpur on October 14, 1956. What was 'the way of Buddha' that he wanted to show to people? How was he going to lead his countrymen? How was the Buddhism that he preached going to associate with society?

In this presentation, I would like to examine the influence of Ambedkar's Buddhism conversion and the Neo-Buddhist movement on the Indian society and the South Asia cultures, and reconsider the characteristics of the specific leader Ambedkar to understand 'peace and co-existence'.

## 1. LIFE OF AMBEDKAR[1]

Rediff.com's Getahead, on Ambedkar's 124th birth anniversary, April 14, delivered an article "Lessons[2] from Dr Ambedkar's life." In the beginning it said as followes:

*Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar (popularly known as Babasaheb) used education as a tool to rise above the ordinary and become one of the great leaders of modern India, an effective fighter against the discrimination*

1. This section referred to the following documents. Cultural India: Reformers "Dr. B. R. Ambedkar," https://www.culturalindia.net/reformers/br-ambedkar.html. Keer, Dhananjay. Yanagiwa, Motoo trans.(2005). *Anbedokaru no shogai* [Dr.Ambedkar Life and Mission],Wherever, Tokyo: Kodansha, ISBN 4-334-03295-8. Reddy, G.N. Thimma (2009). *Bharata Ratna Dr. B.R. Ambedkar (1891-1956 A.D) A Tireless Fighter*, Wherever, Anuntapuramu (A.P) : Sri Krishnadevaraya University. (http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/62525/pdf). Rediff.com Get Ahead, "Lessons from Dr Ambedkar's life,"(Last updated on: April 14, 2015), https://www.rediff.com/getahead/report/career-achievers-life-lessons-from-dr-ambedkars-life/20150414.htm.

2. There are three lessons: 1) Education is the key to success, 2) Don't be daunted, 3) Give back to society. The writer states: He did not allow this discrimination to come in the way of his determination to get an education and become a leading figure in the history of this country. And Ambedkar used his education to spearhead the cause of equality, fraternity and liberty. He believed that society will progress only when women are empowered and thus upheld women's right to higher education and employment.

*present in a caste-ridden society, and one of the chief architects of the Indian Constitution. As jurist, economist, politician and social reformer, his life is an example to all of us.* (Getahead April 14, 2015)

Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar was known as Babasaheb Ambedkar, the Father of Indian Constitution. Throughout his life, he fought for the rights of the dalits (the Untouchables) and other socially backward classes. He was awarded the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian honor, in 1990.

He was born to Bhimabai and Ramji on 14 April 1891 in Mhow Army Cantonment, Central Provinces (Madhya Pradesh). His family was viewed as "untouchable" by the upper classes, because of his caste "Mahar." His father was a Subedar in the Indian Army and after his retirement in 1894, the family moved to Satara in Central Provinces. Shortly after this, his mother passed away. Four years later, his father remarried and the family shifted to Bombay. In 1906, 15 year old Bhimrao married Ramabai, a 9 year old girl. His father Ramji Sakpal died in Bombay in 1912.

Throughout his childhood, Ambedkar faced the stigmas of caste discrimination. As his family was viewed as "untouchable" by the upper classes, the Untouchable students were often asked by the teacher to sit outside the class at the Army school. He was not allowed to sit in the same classroom. Furthermore, he could not drink water from the same well that caste-Hindu classmates used to. After shifting to Satara, he studied at a local school but the change of school did not change his fate. Discrimination was always next to him. It is thought that these experiences became the prototypical experiences of his political activity and social reform.

Ambedkar passed matriculation examination and entered Elphinstone College and obtained his graduate degree in Economics and Political Science in the year 1912 from Bombay University. As he also obtained a scholarship of twenty five rupees a month from the Gaekwad ruler of Baroda, Sahyaji Rao III, he decided to join Columbia University as a Gaekwad Scholar in 1913. He was the first Mahar to study in a foreign University. In the same year his father died.

This was a special experience for him, for an untouchable. To him

the life at Columbia University had a great effect on his thought. It was a new world. His life started with a new meaning. He would feel "being free." He completed his Master's degree in 1915 and joined the London School of Economics in 1916 and started working on his doctoral thesis.

Ambedkar had been invited to testify before the Southborough committee, which was preparing the Government of India Act 1919. At this time, he argued about creating separate electorates and reservation for *dalits* and other depressed communities. With the help of the former Bombay Governor Lord Sydenham, he became a professor of political economy at the Sydenham College of Commerce and Economics in Bombay. He treated as an untouchable by his colleagues of upper castes. In 1920, he began to publish the weekly magazine *Mooknayak* (Leader of the Dumb) in Mumbai with the assistance of Shahaji II, the Maharaja of Kolkapur. He used this journal to criticize orthodox Hindu politicians and to fight caste discrimination. He left the college to continue his further studies. He went to England and studied at London University in 1920 at his own expense. He also spent a few months at the University of Bonn.

As soon as Ambedkar returned to India, he started to fight against the caste discrimination up to the end of his life. Even when he was appointed as a Professor at the Sydenham College in Bombay, he began to campaign in earnest for *dalit* rights. In 1920 he started a weekly Marathi paper, which strongly criticized the caste hierarchy and called for a *dalit* awakening and mobilization against inequality. Ambedkar intensified his campaign for social reform by establishing the *Bahishkrit Hitakarini Sabha* (Group for the Wellbeing of the Excluded) to promote socio-political awareness among the *dalits* and raise public awareness of their grievances in 1924. Over the next twenty years, he played a key role in organizing the Untouchables. He demanded public drinking water sources open to all and right for all castes to enter temples. He openly condemned Hindu Scriptures (especially the Munu-smriti) advocating discrimination and arranged symbolic demonstrations to enter the Kalaram Temple in Nashik. In 1932 British Prime Minister Ramsay Macdonald granted the Communal Award to provide for separate

electorates for minorities, including Untouchables. But Mahatma Gandhi could not accept such a split in the Hindu vote and began a fast until death, forcing Ambedkar to backtrack and agree to joint electorates. The relationship between the two became increasingly fractious. Ambedkar became to consider stronger and stronger that caste system was ineffectual and a barrier to *dalit* political rights. When the Congress and Mahatma Gandhi decided to call the Untouchable as *Harijans*, Ambedkar objected to this decision. He would think that the members of untouchable community are same as the other members of the society.

In 1936, Ambedkar founded the Independent Labor Party. He was appointed on the Defence Advisory Committee and the Viceroy's Executive Council as Minister for Labor. When India became independent in August 1947, Prime Minister Nehru invited him to be the first Minister of Law and Justice. Shortly after, the Constituent Assembly appointed Ambedkar as chairperson of the Drafting Committee for the new Constitution. He emphasized on the construction of a virtual bridge between all classes of the society. He put particular emphasis on religious, gender and caste equality.

In 1950, Ambedkar travelled to Sri Lanka to attend a convention of Buddhist scholars and monks. After his return he decided to write a book on Buddhism and converted to Buddhism. He founded the Bharatiya Bauddha Mahasabha in 1955. His book, "The Buddha and His Dhamma" was published after his death. Ambedkar organized a public mass ceremony to convert around three lakh of *Mahars* who supported him to Buddhism on October 14, 1956.[3] Since 1954 he

3. Ambedkar prescribed 22 vows to his followers at conversion to Buddhism on 15 October 1956 at Deeksha Bhoomi, Nagpur in India. They are: 1. I shall not consider Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh as God nor shall I worship them. 2. I shall not consider Ram and Krishna as God nor shall I worship them. 3. I shall not believe in Gouri-Ganesh and other Gods and goddesses of Hindu Religion nor shall I worship them. 4. I don't have faith incarnation of God. 5. I believe that, Buddha is incarnation of Vishnu, is a false and malicious propaganda. 6. I shall not perform shraddha, nor shall I give pind-dan. 7. I shall not practice anything which is against and different from Buddha's Dhamma. 8. I will not perform any rituals to be performed by Brahmins. 9. I believe that all human beings are equal. 10. I shall make efforts to establish equality. 11. I shall follow the Eightfold path as told by the Buddha. 12. I shall practice ten Paramitas as told by the Buddha. 13. I shall have compassion and living kindness for all living

was suffering from serious health problems, and died at his home in Delhi on 6 December, 1956. A Buddhist-style cremation was organized for him.

## 2. COVERSION?

Hinduism refers to the beliefs, ideas and institutions developed by the people in the land of the river 'Sindhu.' It stands for a way of life. Ambedkar quoted S.Radhakrishnan's remark of Hinduism in his article.

"*The civilization itself has not been a shortlived one. Its historic records date back for over four thousand years and even then it had reached a stage of civilization which has continued its unbroken, though at times slow and static, course until the present day. It has stood the stress and strain of more than four or five millenniums of spiritual thought and experience. Though peoples of different races and cultures have been pouring into India from the dawn of History, Hinduism has been able to maintain its supremacy and even the proselytising creeds backed by political power have not been able to coerce the large majority of Hindus to their views. The Hindu culture possesses some vitality which seems to be denied to some other more forceful currents. It is no more necessary to dissect Hinduism than to open a tree to see whether the sap still runs.*" (Ambedkar 2014c, p.66)[4]

However, the structural basis of Hindu Society is caste(s). Caste is not merely a principle of social division, but a comprehensive system of life dealing with food, marriage, education, association and worship. Caste is defined as a hereditary, endogamous, usually localized group, having a traditional association with an occupation, and a particular position in the local hierarchy of castes. Relations

beings and protect them. 14. I shall not steal. 15. I shall not tell lies. 16. I shall not commit any sexual misconduct. 17. I shall not consume liquor/intoxicants. 18. I shall lead a life based on Buddhist Principle of wisdom, Precepts, and compassion. 19. I denounce Hindu religion which is Harmful for my development as a human being and which has treated human being unequal lowly and I accept Buddha's Dhamma. 20. I am convinced that Buddha's Dhamma is Saddhamma. 21. I believe that I am taking new birth. 22. I commit that henceforth I shall act as per Buddha's principles and teachings.(Enoki2010, pp.11-13)

4. This is in the speech, "Annihilation of Caste," prepared for the 1936 Annual Conference of the Jat-Pat-Todak Mandal (Forum for the Break-up of Caste) of Lahore, but not delivered, owing to the cancellation of the Conference by the Reception Committee on the ground that the views expressed in the Speech would be unbearable to the Conference.

between castes are governed, among other things, by the concept of pollution and purity, and generally commensality occurs within the caste. (Reddy 2009, p.13) That is why there has been producing discrimination or prejudice among castes through their own characteristic that affect on Indians, specially on Hindu people mentally and psychologically. Ambedkar says that "Hindu Society is a myth," and "It is only a collection of castes." (Ambedkar 2014c, p.50) If the Hindu Society were a mere federation of mutually exclusive units, the matter would be simple enough (Ambedkar 2014c, p.6).[5] But caste in India means an artificial chopping off of the population into fixed and definite units, each one prevented from fusing into another through the custom of endogamy. Ambedkar concludes that Endogamy is the only characteristic that is peculiar to caste, and if we succeed in showing how endogamy is maintained, we shall practically have proved the genesis and also the mechanism of Caste (Ambedkar 2014c, p.9). He also says that "A Caste is an Enclosed Class"(Ambedkar 2014c, p.15) and that "These customs in all their strictness are obtainable only in one caste, namely the Brahmins, who occupy the highest place in the social hierarchy of the Hindu society ; and as their prevalence in non-Brahmin castes is derivative of their observance is neither strict nor complete…. they were the originators of this "unnatural institution" founded and maintained through these unnatural means."(Ambedkar 2014c, 15) And this institution and this mechanism is supported by religious authority, *Shastras* (sacred books of the Hindus). The *Manu Smriti* is the very one. Ambedkar analyses that "Manu did not give the law of Caste and that he could not do so. Caste existed long before Manu.… His work ended with the codification of existing caste rules and the preaching of Caste Dharma."(Ambedkar 2014c, p.16) According to him, thus endogamy or the closed-door system, was a fashion in the Hindu society, and as it had originated from the Brahmin caste. (Ambedkar 2014c, p.18) And he describes caste as follows:

*It is true that Caste rests on belief, but before belief comes to be the foundation of an institution, the institution itself needs to be perpetuated*

5. This is in the paper titled as "Castes in India: Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development presented at Anthropology Seminar taught by Dr. A.A. Goldenweizer, Columbia University on 9th May, 1916.

*and fortified. My study of the Caste problem involves four main points : (1) that in spite of the composite make-up of the Hindu population, there is a deep cultural unity; (2) that caste is a parcelling into bits of a larger cultural unit; (3) that there was one caste to start with and (4) that classes have become Castes through imitation and excommunication.* (Ambedkar 2014c, p.22)

Ambedkar was born as a Hindu. His family belonged to Mahar, *darit* or an untouchable caste. It is also said as outcaste, people outside of caste-Hindu that means people who are not granted as 'human beings.' Therefore he had to accept discriminations produced by the idea of 'caste.' It is easy to understand that his experiences of discriminations in school days in India have become his motive of social reforming. After returning from America where he experienced 'freedom,' it is thought that he decided to reform the Hindu society firmly. However discrimination in castes was so serious and bad.

On December 12, 1935, Ambedkar received the letter from Mr. Sant Ram, the Secretary of the Jat-Pat-Todak Mandal (Caste Hindu Social Reformers: to eradicate the Caste System from amongst the Hindus ). Mr. Sant Ram asked Ambedkar to explain, "It is not possible to break Caste without annihilating the religious notions on which it, the Caste system, is founded." And he replied that "the real method of breaking up the Caste System was not to bring about inter-caste dinners and inter-caste marriages but to destroy the religious notions on which Caste was founded (Ambedkar 2014c, p.32)." And he wrote many examples of circumstances of the Untouchables as followes:

*Under the rule of the Peshwas in the Maratha country the untouchable was not allowed to use the public streets if a Hindu was coming along lest he should pollute the Hindu by his shadow. The untouchable was required to have a black thread either on his wrist or in his neck as a sign or a mark to prevent the Hindus from getting themselves polluted by his touch through mistake.*

*In Poona, the capital of the Peshwa, the untouchable was required to carry, strung from his waist, a broom to sweep away from behind the dust he treaded on lest a Hindu walking on the same should be polluted.*

*In Poona, the untouchable was required to carry an earthen pot, hung in his neck wherever he went, for holding his spit lest his spit falling on earth should pollute a Hindu who might unknowingly happen to tread on it.* (Ambedkar 2014c, p.39-40)

You will find a report of this in the *Times of India* of 4th January 1928. The correspondent of the *Times of India* reported that high caste Hindus, viz. Kalotas, Rajputs and Brahmins including the Patels and Patwaris of villages of Kanaria, Bicholi-Hafsi, Bicholi-Mardana and of about 15 other villages in the Indore district (of the Indore State) informed the Balais of their respective villages that if they wished to live among them they must conform to the following rules:

Balais must not wear gold-lace-bordered pugrees.

They must not wear dhotis with coloured or fancy borders.

They must convey intimation of the death of any Hindu to relatives of the deceased—no matter how far away these relatives may be living.

In all Hindu marriages, Balais must play music before the processions and during the marriage.

Balai women must not wear gold or silver ornaments; they must not wear fancy gowns or jackets….[~(8)] (Ambedkar 2014c, p. 40-41)

It is very clear that the Untouchables are not treated as humans. Ambedkar would think that neither the social reform nor the political reform (Independence of India) could not be accomplished without canceling the present conditions of the untouchables. To Ambedkar his ideal society is based on Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. He describes that "An ideal society should be mobile, should be full of channels for conveying a change taking place in one part to other parts. In an ideal society there should be many interests consciously communicated and shared. There should be varied and free points of contact with other modes of association. In other words there must be social endosmosis. This is fraternity, which is only another name for democracy. Democracy is not merely a form of Government. It is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience. It is

essentially an attitude of respect and reverence towards fellowmen. (Ambedkar 2014c, p.57) But in the caste system an attempt to appoint tasks to individuals in advance, is selected not on the basis of trained original capacities, but on that of the social status of the parents. Without such freedom to adjust him/herself to changing circumstances it would be impossible for him/her to gain his/her livelihood. He explains: "Making the individual a sharer or partner in the associated activity so that he feels its success as his success, its failure as his failure is the real thing that binds men and makes a society of them. The Caste System prevents common activity and by preventing common activity it has prevented the Hindus from becoming a society with a unified life and a consciousness of its own being." (Ambedkar 2014c, p.51)

According to Ambedkar although the assertion by the individual of his/her own opinions and beliefs, his/her own independence and interest as over against group standards, group authority and group interests is the beginning of all reform, individual Hindus have not had the courage to assert their independence by breaking the barriers of caste.

This is the first and last reason why Ambedkar considered 'conversion.' Without breaking the barriers of caste, there is no ideal society. The Hindu society is the society of castes based on *Shastras*. Therefore he had to need to change his religion in order to change the way of thinking of the untouchables formed in Hinduism. To him Buddhism is the very religion whose teachings work as social morality for the society and that teaches 'Liberty, Equality and Fraternity.'

As a man's power is dependent upon (1) physical heredity, (2) social inheritance or endowment in the form of parental care, education, accumulation of scientific knowledge, everything which enables him to be more efficient than the savage, and finally, (3) on his own efforts, but if a man remains being a Hindu, he or she remains a Hindu as it was. Its reason he states is:

*The names, Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra, are names which are associated with a definite and fixed notion in the mind of every Hindu. That notion is that of a hierarchy based on birth. So long*

*as these names continue, Hindus will continue to think of the Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra as hierarchical divisions of high and low, based on birth, and act accordingly*. (Ambedkar 2014c, p.59)

*The destruction of Caste means a notional change. Caste may be bad. Caste may lead to conduct so gross as to be called man's inhumanity to man. All the same, it must be recognized that the Hindus observe Caste not because they are inhuman or wrong headed. They observe Caste because they are deeply religious. People are not wrong in observing Caste.… The real remedy is to destroy the belief in the sanctity of the Shastras.… Make every man and woman free from the thraldom of the Shastras, cleanse their minds of the pernicious notions founded on the Shastras,* (Ambedkar 2014c, pp.68-69)

*As mentioned the above, the organization of the Hindu society is characterized by the existence of castes which are endogamous and live by antogony. That is, it only allows individuals born in it to its membership and does not allow any one from outside being brought into it. The Hindu society being a federation of castes and each caste being self-enclosed there is no place for the convert for no caste will admit him. (Ambedkar 2014f, p.424) Anbedkar believed that "The Untouchables must develop a collective will to rise and resist and must believe in the sacredness of their task and develop a command determination to achieve their goal'*. (Ambedkar 2014j, p.84)

## 4. CLOSING COMMENT

Ambedkar in pictures did not wear a monk's robe. He was a lay Buddhist but leader of the new Buddhists in India. It is a movement and has worked against social discriminations and for establishment of manhood of the untouchables and minorities. He was an activist through his life. His interpretation of the Buddhism is unique but affects on peoples to activate for the righteousness. But unfortunately he died soon after his conversion to Buddhism. The mass converted to new Buddhists lost their leader. In 1967 Shurei Sasai, a Japanese monk came to Nagpur and became their leader following Ambedkar's intention.

Bhadant Nagarjun Arya Surai Sasai (佐　井秀嶺 Sasai Shūrei), born as Minoru Sasai (佐　井実 Sasai Minoru), is a Japanese-born Indian Buddhist monk who later chose India as his home. He was

born in Okayama on 30 August 1935. He took tonsure as a novice monk at the age of 14 and was given the ordination name Tenjit Surai, 'Light of the Sun, beautiful Mountain Peak,' by his Tendai teacher. In 1955 he joined the monastic order of the Shingon school and in 1966 he travelled to Thailand to study *vipassana* (insight). Sasai came to India in 1966 and met Nichidatsu Fujii, whom he helped with the building of a peace *pagoda* at Rajgir. He saw the untouchables working as labors and recognized their severe circumstances(Sasai 2010, p. 51). He had a vision of someone like Nagarjuna who spoke to him "Go to Nagpur" and came Nagpur in 1968(Sasai 2010, p. 54). Sasai says that when he saw an image of B.R. Ambedkar at Godbole's[6] home, he realized that Ambedkar had appeared in his dream. Thus he knew Anbedkar. At first he was looked strange and could not be familiar with the Nagpur people. But he became popular after he began to greet them with 'Jai Bhim' (victory to Ambedkar) and to build *viharas* to unit Buddhists and to have the pride as Buddhist.

Sasai began to pray regularly in manner of Buddhism, to device Buddhism-style funeral and marriage, and to teach Buddhism. He helps the young to be a monk and works to convert.(Sasai 2015, pp.43-71, 157-164)

In 1987, Sasai was arrested for overstaying his visum but thanks to his followers he was not deported. He was granted Indian citizenship and became an Indian. He is one of the main leaders of the campaign to free the Mahabodhi Temple at Bodh Gaya from Hindu control. As the president of the Bodhisatva Nagarjun Smarak Samstha Va Anusandhan Kendra he supported the excavations at Mansar(Sasai 2015, pp.105-122). Sasai represented the Buddhists as a member of the National Commission for Minorities from 2003-2006 (Sasai 2015, pp.80-83).

Sasai wants to realize the will of Ambedkar, he continue to do missionary and to fight for the untouchables. He believes that Buddhism can make humans live and work here and now with one's own opinion. And he speaks of 'hitsujo'(necessity to live) as his

6. Wamanrao Godbole, the person who had organized the conversion ceremony for B.R. Ambedkar in 1956.

conviction. Buddhism is the religion that helps people to live here and now.

According to "All India Census Data 2011," the population of Buddhism in India is 84,430,000 people (0.70%). It was about 180,000 people in 1951, and 3,200,000 people in 1961 (Dake 2018, p.14) after Ambedkar's conversion. This increase of Buddhist looks that it produces the modern Indian social dynamism, Ambedkar might be in its starting point. At the same time this would be an evidence that verts to Buddhism with self-consciousness are increasing because of Sasai's missionary with socio-political activities for the Buddhists. Through these activities including to study Buddhism, the spirit of Ambedkar, followers could become true Buddhists interpreted by Ambedkar.

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# BUDDHIST FEMINISM: INSPIRING LESSONS FROM FEMALE PRACTITIONERS

by Dipti Visuddhangkoon*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the context of Buddhism and women, some people still tend to think that female birth is a disadvantage for the attainment of the highest goal of liberation. The very thought of considering female birth/form/body a disadvantage is actually a reflection of the tremendous lacuna in the understanding of *anicca*, *dukkha*, and *anattā* on the part of those people who tend to think in such a parochial way. The female body is a wonderfully powerful tool to internalize the truth of *tilakkhana*. This is because the female body changes quite drastically from one stage to the other – pre-pubertal stage, puberty, menstruation, pregnancy, gestation, amniorrhexis, birth pangs, parturition, lactation, the postpartum blues, hot flashes, menopause – every change in the body points to the truth of *anicca* in a very direct way, which when reflected upon can be a great source of reflexive understanding of the 'body' and the changes that mark its every physiological transformation. Female birth is actually not an obstacle in the real sense but rather an advantage for the realization of many dhammic truths. Moreover, there are many enriching mental states deeply embedded in the feminine psyche such as habitual caring and nurturing tendency, generosity, ego permeability, endurance, patience, forbearance etc., that are of great psychological benefit to oneself and others. From

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this very premise which might appear to the non-practitioner of insight meditation as rather essentialization of the femaleness of the female body and mind, this paper aims to discuss the ecumenical role and compassionate activism of Buddhist feminism by critically analyzing the underlying philosophical dimension of it vis-à-vis the universality in its praxis.

While Buddhism in its traditional religious role and feminism in its postmodern contexts have diverse agendas, certain Buddhist concepts like the Four Divine Abidings (*brahma viharas*), the Threefold Training (*tisikkha*) and the Doctrine of Dependent Origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*) alongside feminist ideological struggle against patriarchy and advocacy of equal rights for women in every sphere can be embraced by the followers of either camp with the aim at forging the two into a combined holistic effort for the social upliftment of women in traditionally Buddhist countries in general, and female monastics' predicament in particular. Although Buddhism in its socio-cultural institutional form is not inevitably prejudice-free, the core Buddhist teachings on which individual ethico-spiritual progress rest are inherently ecumenical in nature. Likewise, while feminism with all its philosophical theorizing as a movement aiming for the protection of women's rights and liberty is not absolutely unbiased and non-essentialist in approach, its consciousness raising efforts and struggle against socio-cultural, religious, economic and political injustices against women are universally beneficial for humankind. The issue of osmotic exchange between Buddhism and feminism that shapes the contours of the spirituo-ideological stance of Buddhist feminism is not a form of utopian ideal but rather an empirical truth that is manifested through the practice-oriented lifestyle of many female practitioners.

However, it has to be understood that Buddhist feminism is not only non-replicative of patriarchal models but is also dhammically critical of the essentialist trend in mainstream feminism. Therefore, Buddhist feminism is not anti-male but humanistic and eco-conscious, the universality in the praxis of which can be applied at any time and situation by any interested individual, irrespective of religious, cultural and ideological background. The salient feature of

Buddhist feminism is that it strategically leads to the cultivation of wisdom (*paññā*) and harmonious co-existence through a mindful construction of rigorous compassionate activism at one level and deconstruction of all dichotomous thought-processes at another level. For the purpose of holistic well-being of both the upholders of Buddhist feminism themselves and the receivers of their actions, what is systematically put under scrutiny and deconstructed in Buddhist feminism is not just prejudiced discourses, but the human Ego itself in all its *kammic* dimensions – linguistic, psychological, philosophical, social, ethico-spiritual, racial and cultural orientations. The trained mind of a Buddhist feminist transcends its own ego and at a higher contemplative level proceeds to mindfully dismantle and erase all dualistic notions starting from the very concepts of me and mine, I and the 'Other', thereby encompassing all its activism within the folds of investigative awareness, mindfulness, compassion, non-aversion, altruism and equanimity. This trend is interestingly evident in many female monastics and practitioners like Ayya Khema, Master Cheng Yen, Dhammawati Guruma, Daw Gunavati Guruma, Ajahn Sundara, Dipa Ma, Rina Sircar and many others. By mindfully defying reification of all mental formations (*saṅkhāra*), conditioned states, and binary oppositions Buddhist feminism brings to the fore the supreme importance of cultivation of Right Understanding (*samma ditthi*) in daily life for the well-being and true liberation of oneself and others. That is why Buddhist feminism has great relevance today not only for non-exploitative and non-conflictual interaction between men and women but also for sustaining a healthy relationship between human beings and nature. Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike have much to learn from Buddhist feminism because the resourceful knowledge embodied in it is free from ideological parochialism.

## 2. A BRIEF OUTLINE OF FEMINIST READING

The advent of feminism as a global and revolutionary ideology gave rise to new critical outlook and modes of exegesis in almost every field of knowledge. The 'practice of reading' has become a site in the struggle for change in gender relations that prevail in almost every society. A feminist reading of any discourse aims at asking such rudimentary questions as: how a particular 'text' defines

sexual questions, what it depicts about gender relations and how it represents women. In other words, feminist reading/criticism has come to be recognized as a 'political' discourse: a critical and theoretical practice committed to dismantling the power structures inherent in patriarchal norms. The influential feminist critic, Elaine Showalter points out that two factors – gender and politics – which are suppressed in the dominant models of reading gain prominence with the advent of a feminist perspective. In every area of critical reflection whether it is literary representations of sexual difference or the molding/shaping of literary genres and non-literary discourses by masculine values, feminist criticism has established gender as a fundamental category of analysis. With gender as a tool of interpretation the issue of silencing of the female voice (in all areas of human endeavor, critical inquiry and hermeneutics) has come to the forefront. Appreciating the widespread importance of gender, feminist philosophers resist speaking in gender-neutral voice. They value women's experiences, interests, and seek to shift the position of women from object to one of subject and agent.

Today the concerns, strategies, and positions associated with feminist approach to reading, conceptualizing and activism are extremely wide-ranging. A principal tenet of the feminist perspective is that women's subjugation cannot be understood apart from the social, historical, and cultural context within which it had been made to exist perpetually. As for instance, a distinct feature of feminist reading of women's writing is the tendency to construe the text not as an object, but as the manifestation of the subjectivity of the absent author – the "voice" of another woman. The written text is regarded as the gateway to the "mind" of the author and the reader ought to evoke the person who lives at the centre of the text. To read any woman writer, or for that matter to understand any woman's plight and predicament in general, is to hear her voice, to make her live in oneself, and to empathetically feel her personal dimensions and commiserate with her inner-being. However, it is worth noting here that there is a strong counter-tendency, inspired by French poststructuralism, which privileges the appreciation of textuality over the imaginative recovery of the woman writer as subject of the work. According to Mary Jacobus, "Perhaps the question that feminist critics should be asking is not 'Is there a

woman in this text?' but rather: 'Is there a text in this woman?'"[1] If feminist readings of male texts/discourses are motivated by the need to disrupt the process of immasculation, feminist readings of female 'texts' are motivated by the need "to connect," to recuperate or to formulate the context, the tradition, the situational truths that would link women to women, women writers to their readers, women monastics to women lay devotees/ practitioners, etc.

According to the American psychoanalyst, Nancy Chodorow, because women act as mothers, girls are parented by a person of the same sex "women's sense of self is continuous with others and that they retain capacities for primary identification."[2] Her theory seeks to explain differences in the psychological development of girls and boys. She postulated that the experience of female mothering results in "more permeable ego boundaries" for women. Girls have to fight less to be different from their mothers, so they experience themselves as less separate than boys. As a result they define themselves more in relation to others, and have greater capacity for empathy with others. Extending Chodorow's ideas to identity theory Gardiner states "female identity is a process," and she proceeds to examine the consequences for writing by women. She proposes that "both writer and reader [of a text written by woman] can relate to the text as though it were a person with whom one might alternatively be merged empathically or from whom one might be separated and individuated."[3]

## 3. THE BUDDHIST FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE

Buddhist feminism is a way of thinking, conceptualizing, and critiquing that has the unique goal of leading to 'a state of being' where all gender biases are mindfully deconstructed. In the *Anguttara Nikaya* (7.48), Buddha clearly explains that the person must transcend their gender biases, both masculine and feminine:

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1. Mary Jacobus, "Is there a Woman in This Text?" *New Literary History* 14, (1982), pp.117-41.

2. Nancy Chodorow, *The Reproduction of Mothering*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), p.207.

3. Judith Kegan Gardiner, "On Female Identity and Writing by Women," *Critical Inquiry* 8, (Winter 1981), pp.357-58.

*"And how is there lack of bondage? A woman does not attend inwardly to her feminine faculties, her feminine gestures, her feminine manners, feminine poise, feminine desires, feminine voice, feminine charms. She is not excited by that, not delighted by that [...] This is how a woman transcends her femininity."*

*"A man does not attend inwardly to his masculine faculties, masculine gestures, masculine manners, masculine poise, masculine desires, masculine voice, masculine charms. He is not excited by that, not delighted by that [...] This is how a man transcends his masculinity."*

While the contours of feminist perspective and reading as expounded by many western and third world feminist scholars are forever expanding at the theoretical level, the Buddhist perspective is an alternative domain where all the emerging theoretical exegeses can be de-reified with great objectivity. In *Samyutta Nikaya* (5.2), the Arahant Bhikkhuni Soma deconstructs Mara's derogatory attitude towards her diligent practice with great precision:

*What*
*difference*
*does being a woman make*
*when the mind's well-centered,*
*when knowledge is progressing,*
*seeing clearly, rightly,*
*into the Dhamma.*

*Anyone who thinks*
*'I'm a woman'*
*or 'a man'*
*or 'Am I anything at all?' —*
*that's who Mara's*
*fit to address.*

The words of the Arahant Bhikkhuni are not different from any contemporary meditation master who through his dedicated practice can tease apart the binary of man/woman, male/female in

a practical and fruitful way. Luangphor Liem,[4] one of the foremost disciples of Ajahn Chah in the book "No Worries" says –

*"What we are – male or female or anything at all – is differentiated and characterized by the names and conventions of society, but in essence, people's experiences are the same. The suffering everyone experiences is the same. The happiness or unhappiness, the feeling of satisfaction or disappointment is the same. This is where we need to focus. If we realize that our own body and the bodies of other people are essentially the same, we can experience a state of mind that is conducive to the stilling of desire and craving. In the end there aren't any differences between people. We will start seeing other people in an unprejudiced way. The feeling that somebody is superior, inferior or on the same level as someone else won't arise. We don't assume we are any better or worse than others, or equal to them either. Through maintaining this attitude towards ourselves we cultivate an awareness that is not blocked by the conceit and bias of self-importance."*[5]

This kind of understanding arises directly from genuine mindfulness practice and experiential knowledge derived from dedicated monastic lifestyle as a forest monk. However, this kind of contemplative understanding would not arise easily in people unacquainted with mindfulness training and we have seen that even traditionally Buddhist societies are not altogether free from gender inequality and prejudices. To some scholars and practitioners the difficulties posed in the revival and restoration of the Bhikkhuni Sangha in Theravāda and Tibetan Buddhism are indicative of inherent gender biases. While there is no immediate solution to this issue, effort has been already made in different countries to revive the Bhikkhuni lineage in both the traditions. Ajahn Sundara, a Theravada forest tradition nun expresses the dangers of clinging in one of her talks:

When it becomes clear that grasping is the cause of dukkha, you just let go. Instead of clinging, you just release it. The peace that

4. Luangpho Liem Thitadhammo has been a monk since he was twenty and is highly respected in Ajahn Chah's lineage. He has been the abbot of Wat Nong Pah Pong for more than thirty years.

5. https://forestsangha.org/teachings/books/no-worries

comes from releasing is nirodha, the experience of cessation, the Third Noble Truth which is often hardly even noticed.

The mind, under the influence of the ego, is more inclined to notice what is exciting or interesting. Usually you might be pushing away an experience, or grasping it, or struggling with it, or making something out of it, or becoming it. But then, in this moment of insight, you see these as just the reactive responses we usually have out of ignorance of our mind states, our bodily experiences and so on.

Cessation is peaceful: the ending of grasping, the ending of our problems, the ending of 'me' with my story and all its complexities.

You realize that there is no one there. The mind with its thoughts, feelings and perceptions just seems to arise out of nowhere, disappears and arises again. It is only through our delusion that we are constantly building up a sense of self around that, creating what we hope is some kind of secure landscape. We construct a person again and again out of our misapprehension of physical and mental phenomena.[6]

## 4. LEARNING FROM INSPIRING EXAMPLES OF FEMALE PRACTITIONERS

There are many examples of female meditation masters whose dedicated practice inspired their disciples and still continue to have impact globally. Here we shall provide a brief sketch of the life of Venerable Ayya Khema and Dipa Ma and highlight some essential teachings from their dhamma talks. Ayya Khema was born in Berlin in 1923. Her parents came from Jewish background. During the start of World War II, she escaped from Germany with two hundred other Jew children and was taken to Scotland. Born is the era of hostile wars and rising flames of anti-Semitism, she like millions of other Jews became a victim of racial discrimination. But life's experiences made her take a deep interest in the Buddhist teachings and she began to learn to practice meditation. Her dhamma experiences led her to join nunhood in Sri Lanka in 1979, although not as a fully-ordained Bhikkhuni in the strictest sense

6. Some of Ajahn Sundara's wonderful dhamma talks are found in the book *Walking the World*, Amaravati Buddhist Monastery, 2012.

of the term, since the Theravāda Bhikkhuni tradition was not yet revived then. In 1978, prior to becoming a nun in Sri Lanka, she had established Wat Buddha Dhamma, a forest monastery in the Theravāda tradition, near Sydney in Australia. In Colombo, she set up the International Buddhist Women's Center as a training center for Sri Lankan nuns, and Parappuduwa Nuns' Island for women who were willing to practice intensively and/or ordain as nuns. She was the spiritual director of Buddha-Haus in Germany, established in 1989 under her auspices. In 1997, she also founded Metta Vihara, a thriving monastery not very far from Buddha-Haus. In 1987, she co-ordinated the first international conference of Buddhist nuns that resulted in the creation of Sakyadhita, a world-wide Buddhist women's organization. She wrote over two dozen books on meditation and the Buddha's teaching in English and German. Some of her well-known English language books include such titles as *Being Nobody, Going Nowhere, When the Iron Eagle Flies, Who is My-Self, Be an Island, Visible Here and Now,* and *Come and See for Yourself: The Buddhist Path to Happiness*. Ayya Khema passed away on 2 November 1997 at home at Buddha-Haus. As the legacy of her profound teachings lives on, Buddha-Haus continues to host retreats throughout the year. While trying to create a space for women practitioners, a space that was not readily available to her when she first thought of ordination, Ayya Khema did not restrict herself to playing the role of a mere Buddhist activist in robe but rather laid great emphasis on training the mind. She says,

*"Looking after the mind is essential if life is to grow in depth and vision. Otherwise life stays two-dimensional. Most lives are lived in the realities of yesterday and tomorrow, good and bad, "I like it" and "I don't like it," "I'll have it" and "I won't have it," "this is mine and this is yours." Only when the mind is trained can we see other dimensions."*[7]

Trained in the Theravada forest tradition, she focused on the technique of *anapannasati* (breathing in and breathing out) and kept things simple and down-to-earth urging her students to cultivate mindful awareness in every activity in daily life, not just

7. *Being Nobody, Going Nowhere: The Foundation of Buddhist Thought,* Wisdom Publications, 1987, p.3.

during retreat times. Her focus on everydayness of mindfulness is vividly expressed in the following words

"Meditating on the breath is how one practices the first foundation of mindfulness, mindfulness of the body (kayanupassana). Such mindfulness should also extend to everything we do outside the meditation room, which is something we will often forget, but at least we should direct our attention toward that goal. It is pleasant to sit and try to become calm by watching the breath, but if we do not reinforce our practice with mindfulness outside the meditation sessions, it will not have the desired results. We cannot split our mind in two, one part for meditation and one for other activities. We have one mind and we have to train it as a whole, which extends to whatever we do."[8]

Laying great emphasis on *kayanupassana* or mindfulness practice on the body as object of concentration or focus, she says,

"If the whole universe can be found in our own body and mind, this is where we need to make our inquires. We all have the answers within ourselves; we just have not got in touch with them yet. The potential of finding the truth within requires faith in ourselves."[9]

From cultivating faith in oneself to understanding the three salient characteristics of existence, Ayya Khema mindfully deconstructs the conditioning mind's attachment to itself. She says:

"The mind is 'clever' and manipulative. It can do anything. We call it a magician, which is a good word for it. It can pull a rabbit out of any hat. It can rationalize to the point where we are always right and everybody else is wrong. This is something we must learn through meditation—that it is impossible to be absolutely right. Most of the time all we are doing is defending a viewpoint, which is based on our own ego. Because we have this ego, the "me" delusion, all our viewpoints, all our opinions are colored by that. They can't be anything else. It's impossible. If there is a red tinge on the window, everything on the outside looks red."[10]

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8. *Know Where You're Going – A Complete Guide to Meditation, Faith and Everyday Transcendence*, Wisdom Publications, 2014.

9. http://quotes.justdharma.com/category/ayya-khema/

10. *Being Nobody, Going Nowhere: The Foundation of Buddhist Thought*, Wisdom Publications, 1987.

In order to deal with this clever mind that can easily manipulate its way through the field of unawareness, Ayya Khema explicates the importance of rigorous and reflective understanding of the tilakkhana, especially non-substantiality and impermanence. From her own very deep practice of meditation she comes up with the following understanding that is of great benefit.

*'Whether one has had a direct vision of non-self (anatta) or just an understanding of it, either way one has to bring it back into one's mind and re-live it as often as possible. As we continue to do this, ordinary problems arise less and less. If we remain aware of the impermanence of all that exists, our difficulties seem far less important and the view of self subtly changes.'*

Dipa Ma (1911-1989) was an Indian meditation master of the Theravāda tradition. She was born into a traditionally Buddhist family in 1911, in a small village in Chittagong, East Bengal (then in British India but now part of Bangladesh). Married at the age of twelve, she had a painful life dealing with infertility for almost two decades. When she finally conceived, she had to confront with pangs of great loss – the death of two of her children, her first child, a daughter, and her third child, a son. Her husband's death dealt the final blow to her married life. At the age of forty-six she was left alone with her four-year old daughter, unemployed and helpless, physically suffering from all kinds of ailments in a country (Myanmar) far away from home where she could not speak the language. When a doctor suggested that she learn how to meditate, she attended her first meditation retreat at the Kamayut Meditation Center in Rangoon. Later she attended her second retreat at the Thathana Yeiktha center, where the Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw was teacher-in-residence. Having gradually accomplished in the path of vipassanā, she began to teach in India and soon the number of students greatly increased. In the 1970s, she was a teacher of Sylvia Boorstein, Joseph Goldstein, Jack Kornfield, Michelle Levey and Sharon Salzberg, all of whom later became prominent meditation teachers in the United States. In the early 1980s, Dipa Ma taught at the Insight Meditation Society in Barre, Massachusetts. She passed away in 1989 at the age of 78 in her home in Kolkata, India, while bowing to a statue of the Buddha.

Dipa Ma's support of women had a deep and lasting impact. A woman disciple recalls: "What she said was shocking. Coming from a tradition where women are treated as inferiors, just to talk about equality was a big deal. Then to have Ma say, 'Well, actually women have an edge on the practice,' now that was revolutionary!"[11] Dipa Ma taught all kinds of people from ordinary housewives to semi-retarded people with very low IQ, to extremely dedicated western disciples, without making any discrimination of male/female, native/non-native, rich/poor, literate/illiterate, intelligent/unintelligent, white/brown, etc. Although physically a frail and tiny person, the power of her presence was profoundly felt by everyone who came in contact with her and practiced with her. Amy Schmidt writes in her paper on Ma quoting many of Ma's well-known disciples like Kate Wheeler and Alan Clements, "Ma was a curious entity to Westerners. Physically, she was almost invisible – a frail, old woman poking from her white sari like 'a little bug wrapped up in cotton.' Yet in terms of sheer energy, she was a giant. Entering her presence was like 'walking into force field' where shifts happened. Sometimes these shifts included the experiences of mind-to-mind communication and changes in perception and concentration states. Other times the shifts were calming, as though one were merging into her 'unshakable peace' or finding a place to 'rest in her silence, like resting under a large shade tree."[12]

Ayya Khema and Dipa Ma could not attain to the 'form' of fully ordained Theravāda nunhood or bhikkhuni status in their lives, but that did not stop them from heading forward in the Path of Dhamma. They made insight meditation their prime practice through which they not only went to a very high level of realization but also continually helped their followers and disciples progress in the Path. They were very dedicated and diligent teachers who insisted on the threefold training of morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*). Students were always encouraged to be diligent in keeping the Five Precepts, practice meditation

11. As quoted in "Transformation of a Housewife: Dipa Ma Barua and Her Teachings to Theravada Women" by Amy Schmidt in Ellison Banks Findly ed. *Women's Buddhism Buddhism's Women*, Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2000, p.211.

12. Ibid., p.214.

regularly, sleep just for four hours, etc. Yet, both the Masters neither valorized nor reified the practice, rather kept things simple and down-to-earth. Dipa Ma used to say "If you are busy, then busyness is the meditation. And when you do calculations, know that you are doing calculations. Meditation is always possible, at any time. If you are rushing to the office, then you should be mindful of rushing." Jack Kornfield remembers Ma's unique home-style teachings: "Live your life, do the dishes, do the laundry, take your kid to kindergarten, raise your children or your grandchildren, take care of the community in which you live, and make all of that your path, follow your path with heart."[13]

Both Ayya Khema and Dipa Ma insisted on training the mind to strike a balance in mindfulness practice by developing disinterest in polarities in the emotional domain such as pleasure or pain, self-indulgence or self-abnegation and laying each of them down. Their teachings made it very clear that anyone genuinely interested in Dhamma ought to learn to put into practice the attitudinal disposition of 'letting go' so as to mindfully refrain from getting caught up in the attachments of the world and in relative judgments. The habitual nature of an untrained mind is to grasp at everything that is pleasant and reject with aversion all that is unpleasant without attempting to contemplate that the truth of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and nonself run through both pleasant and unpleasant conditioned states alike. Therefore, clinging to pleasant states brings suffering as much as aversion to unpleasant states does. Within the entire corpus of their teachings there is great emphasis on doing everything with a mind that lets go, that does not expect any praise, reward, or recognition. They realized that 'letting go' is a highly self-reflexive mental exercise that leads to peace, tranquility, and harmony with oneself and one's environment. No doubt it is the most difficult axiomatic and attitudinal disposition, but when put into practice through sustained mindfulness and awareness-building it leads to true liberation beyond all binaries that the conventional world perpetually tend to create and impose. Both Dipa Ma and Ayya Khema are exemplary models of Buddhist practitioners who constantly strove for that innate wisdom the

13. Ibid., p.209.

attainment of which leads to the realization that not only the body but the mind too is not one's own self – not belonging to us, not I, not mine and so all of it i.e., clinging to one's body and mind must be dropped. Thus according to them, real meditation has to do with attitude and awareness in and of one's volitions, activities as well as one's very own self. As Ayya Khema says, "If we resolve to keep still for a moment, finally to take a look, to no longer run away from the unpleasant and no longer grasp at the pleasant – maybe for just one meditation session – we will have learned an enormous amount about ourselves."[14]

Out of their extreme dedication to the path of practice emerged a transformational praxis of mental well-being and spirituo-ethical realization that can be broadly outlined under the following rubrics.

**The ethico-spiritual praxis**

The mind is brought to a state of freedom from defilements – life is geared to constantly train the mind to center upon the routine practice of cultivation of mindfulness through insight meditation and ethical reflection. The practice paves the path for cleansing the mind from all sorts of evil thoughts and unwholesome mental formations. The rigorous training is based on being mindfully aware of all the gross and subtle arising of the defilements of greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*), delusion (*moha*) and getting rid of them through the practice of mindfulness.

Morality is established on a firm footing – with the constant mindful effort at recognizing defilements and then annihilating them, morality comes to be established on a firm attitudinal disposition that is marked by clarity of vision and understanding of the cause and effect chain i.e., resultant positive or negative effect consequent on a wholesome or unwholesome deed performed with one's intentions and volitional decisions. In other words, a wholesome action (*kusala kamma*) begets worthy results and an evil or unwholesome action (*akusala kamma*) inevitably leads to unworthy results.

14. Ayya Khema. *Being Nobody, Going Nowhere*. Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1993, p. 23.

The mind becomes non-confrontational – with unshakeable moral foundation the mind naturally matures to that level when it does not harbor negative emotions like feelings of envy, vindictiveness, competitiveness, manipulative desires, revenge, etc., and so becomes calm, peaceful and non-confrontational. The non-confrontational disposition emerges because in its attempt to eradicate defilements the mind has already learnt to recognize and wage the internal war to vanquish such unwholesome states of mind like greed, hatred and delusion every time they arise.

**The psycho-cognitive praxis**

The mind is enriched by the flow of positive emotions – The spiritual or moral maturity benefits the mind immensely at the psycho-cognitive level, as when in the absence of defilements the mind is enriched by various positive emotions such as contentment, love, fellow feeling, forgiveness, self-reflexivity, etc. The inner healthy state of mind is outwardly manifested in various positive behavioral patterns like happiness, gentleness in speech and bodily actions, non-aggressiveness, moral uprightness, concern for the "Other/s", etc.

The mind is non-reactionary to adverse elements – with the influx of positive emotional states and mindful sustenance of them, the mind remains calm, peaceful and non-agitated and hence non-reactive to negative and adverse forces and unfavorable situations.

Non self-destructive and arising of subliminal joy – when the mind is continually calm and peaceful it is innocuous and hence receptive to positive flow of mental energy that ultimately leads to infusion of inspirational joy in oneself and others alike.

**The philosophico-contemplative praxis**

The mind comes to a state of equanimity – the mind free from defilements and desires and established on virtues gradually acquires the state of equanimity or *upekkhā* as it proceeds to see clearly all sense impressions having a common nature – impermanent, unsatisfactory, and empty of self. In relation to *saṅkhāra*, this state of equanimity is equated with mental balance (*tatramajjhattatā*) and as related to *vedanā*, it is equated with *adukkhamasukha* i.e., a feeling of neither-pleasant-nor-unpleasant.

The mind transcends the ego – when equanimity is maintained the mind gradually recognizes the pernicious workings of the ego and can distance itself from it. With growing mental strength imbibed from the practice of insight meditation and reflective understanding of the fleeting nature of all conditioned phenomena and the truth of *anattā* or non-substantiality i.e., all phenomena are essentially nonself, and that there is no real essence, soul, or self, the ego can be transcended forever. A balanced mind is one that is free from clinging to the ego.

The mind transcends the state of functioning within oppositional polarities – when the mind matures with the transcendence of the ego, the mental state moves to the state of egolessness and once this state is attained the mind ceases to work within the dictates of binary oppositions. This is possible because the mind is trained to see through the process of thought constructions and creation of illusions that arise from continuous clinging to various physical objects and mental formations, both wholesome and unwholesome. The mind that is habitually meditative and mindfully aware realizes that good or evil only arise in one's mind and so to be fully liberated one needs to step out of all dichotomous thought processes that arise from discrimination.

The mind develops non-attachment or non-clinging – transcending the binary oppositions the mind develops non-attachment to the ego, stimuli-driven pleasures or displeasures and all mental formations – valorization of spirituality, emotionalism, intellectualization, ideological commitment, etc. The mind at this stage is tranquil and liberated with pure awareness and calmed of both elation and sorrow. This is when one realizes the Middle Path in one's practice.

The mind is infused with the sublime states – A mind not enslaved by clinging is free from selfish desires and motives and as it realizes the true state of things as being subjected to constant change, dissatisfaction and non-substantiality, it gets infused with certain sublime states of mind such as unconditional love, compassion, empathy and equanimity. The mind's realization of the true nature of everything, including the human self in all its physical and mental composite form as subject to repeated alterations and

non-substantiality or selflessness, empties itself of egoistic self-fulfilling desires and selfish motives, and such an empty mind is the *tabula rasa* into which imprints of the sublime states of mind can get easily encoded without any exertion.

In the numerous dhamma talks of Ayya Khema it is clearly reflected that the trained mind of a meditator transcends its own ego and at a higher contemplative level proceeds to deconstruct all dualistic notions starting from the very concepts of me and mine, I and the 'Other'. It is very clear from her and also from Dipa Ma's exemplary teachings that the salient feature of the form of Buddhist feminism that practitioner Buddhist women tried to live by is that it strategically leads to the cultivation of wisdom (*paññā*) and harmonious co-existence through a mindful construction of rigorous compassionate activism at one level, and dismantling of all dichotomous thought-processes at another level. Philosophically what is deconstructed in Buddhist feminism is the human Ego itself in all its kammic dimensions within the broad contexts of language, psychology, race, sexuality, social norms, ethics, philosophy, aesthetics and cultural orientations. The Ego's dismantling is meant for the holistic well-being of not only the upholders of Buddhist feminism but the receivers of their actions as well. This is where Buddhist feminism differs from all other forms of feminism/s because it purposefully steps out and away from the enclosed space of its own subjectivity and Ego's dictates. While all the different schools of feminism would hesitate to talk from a gender-free perspective, Buddhist feminism moves beyond the female gender's ego-oriented dictates and embraces a nonself-humanistic approach to life and practice for the well-being of all. The trained mind of a Buddhist feminist transcends its own ego and at a higher contemplative level proceeds to mindfully dismantle all dualistic notions starting from the very concepts of me and mine, I and the 'Other', thereby encompassing all its activism within the folds of compassion, non-aversion, altruism, and above all, equanimity. While in this paper we have highlighted only two contemporary masters, Ayya Khema and Dipa Ma, this trend is interestingly evident in many contemporary female monastics and lay practitioners who are dedicating their lives to the cause of dhamma. By mindfully defying reification of all mental formations,

conditioned states, binary oppositions, Buddhist feminism brings to the fore the supreme importance of striking the right balance between the well-being and true liberation of oneself and others. Buddhist feminism thus has great relevance today for productive and sustainable relationship between man and woman, woman to woman, and woman and nature. Since the underlying messages embodied in Buddhist feminism is absolutely free from ideological sectarianism and ghettoism, Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike can find interaction with it fruitful and constructive. The universality in the praxis of Buddhist feminism can be applied at any time and situation by any interested person, irrespective of religious, cultural and ideological background.

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# BUDDHISTS AND HINDUS PEACEFULLY COEXISTED UNDER HINDU KINGSHIP IN NEPAL

by Naresh Shakya*

**ABSTRACT**

Buddha was born in Lumbini, southern part of Nepal. The Kathmandu valley (Nepal Mandala ancient name), capital of Nepal is one of the oldest Buddhist centers in the world. Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya tells the legend of Venerable Ananda visiting Kathmandu Valley. Newars are the community who dwelled in the urbanized society in the towns and villages in Kathmandu valley. They are not homogenous ethnic group but rather are composed of the mixed Indo-Aryan and Mongolian ancestry. Newars are ethnic group who are both Buddhists and Hindus. Xuanzang in Seventh century mentioned in his travel account that there were Buddhist monasteries and Hindu temple side by side in Kathmandu Valley. Even today, Buddhist monasteries and Hindu temples harmoniously exist side by side. Since Licchavī dynasty around fifth century, most of the ruler of Nepal generally were Hindus but Buddhism flourished and coexisted with Hindus in harmonious ambiance till present date.

Licchavī dynasty (fifth to ninth century) was very impartial as they patronized both Buddhist monasteries and Hindu temple but later during Malla dynasty (thirteenth to eighteenth century) they were biased. However, the Newar Buddhists and Hindus lived

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peacefully as their cultural practices embraced both Buddhists and Hindus deities as their own. For instance, local deity Bungadeo (deity of rain) is impersonated as Buddhist God of compassion and Hindu Macchīndranātha. Later during Shah Dynasty and under Rana ministerial rule Hinduism became state religion but Buddhists always followed the peaceful cohabitation even with little suppression from the Hindu rulers. They practice Buddhist principles and never revolted rather they came up with unique methods to deal with Hindu supremacy. One of the very indigenous methods was to express their revolt by popularizing Buddhist deity of Harihārihari Vāhāna Lokeśvara who sites on Hindu God Viṣṇu. Buddhists of Kathmandu were always under the Hindu rulers but there was no violent complicit between the two religions rather they lived peacefully side by side.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Kathmandu Valley, present day capital of Nepal, occupies the tract between basin of the river Gandak and Kosi. It is situated at the height of 4288 ft above sea level and is a low, flat and oval plain that is very fertile. Kathmandu Valley is a great alluvial plain whose surface is level has gradual slope toward the central diameter. The surface level is undulating that has a network of rivers which forms the drainage system of the Valley. The soil contains phosphatic elements which are responsible for its high fertility and couple with its climate and excellent temperature that has a heavy rainfall makes it a good place for civilized habitat. The valley has a valuable forest around it which supplies timber for fuel and finally it is surrounded by the high ranges of mountain which gave it comparative isolation from the outside world in the past. It is only Kathmandu Valley that has a long known history in Nepal. The history of other parts of the country is not much known. In earlier days the term 'Nepal' was applied to Kathmandu valley only and not to the country as a whole as it is done now. Its close proximity with the plains in the south where the republic of the Sakyas had once flourished vests it with special historical significance. Therefore, what we know as history of Nepal is in fact history of Valley of Kathmandu (Nepali 2015, p. 9).

Buddha was born in Lumbinī where Ashoka pillar's inscription

engraved testifying authenticity of his birth place. Lumbinī where Buddha was born is in present day Nepal. At the height of 3.41meters above the rough surface of the stone pillar is engraved an inscription in five line of *Priyadarsi* (Ashoka) recording that after twenty years of his coronation he had come to spot where Buddha was born (Giri 2003, p. 331). Kautilya in his *Arthasātra* mentioned Nepal as a country notable for a special variety of blanket called 'Bhingisi'. Kautilya's utterance of Nepal indicates that the existence of Kathmandu Valley even before his period (Regmi 2007, p.18). Newars are the indigenous inhabitants of Kathmandu valley. The term Newar is applied to number of ethnic group who have through centuries of interbreeding been wielded into homogeneous community with the common traditions of language and other social heritage (Nepali 2015, p. 18). Newars are not one socio ethnic group but a mix community absorbing all the people who entered the Kathmandu valley. They have produced art of pictorial form, stone images, carving on wood, emboss on brass, cast in bronze, painted on plaster, molded terra cotta, made thousands of shrines within the valley for a long period of time (Vaidy and Bajracharya 1996, pp. 12-13). *Mulasarvastivada-vinaya, Genben-shou-yiqueyou-bu-pinaye and Mulasarvastinvada-vinaya, Carmanvastu, Genben-shou-yiqueyou-bu-pinaye pige-shi* in Chinese sources tells about the monks plan to go kingdom of Nepal. It also explains about the Virudhaka atrocity towards Shakyas and how they fled to the west and some to Nepal. The ones who arrived in Nepal were all relatives of the elder Ananda. Later (some) merchants from the city of Śravasti went to Nepal with their merchandise and when the member of Shakya clan saw them, they asked, "we now have encountered so much of suffering, Why does the venerable Ananda not come here to see us?" The merchant when they reached Śravasti, they told Ananda about agony of their relatives. When Ananda heard this he was sad and decided to visit kingdom of Nepal. The kingdom of Nepal is extremely cold and (covered) with snow. Ananda's hands and feet cracked when he return to Śravasti. When the monks saw him they asked why his hands and feet were rough and why were they cracked? He answered that the kingdom of Nepal was a cold place surrounded by high mountains. They asked "how then can your relatives live there?" He answered, "They are wearing *fuluo*

(Skt. Pūla/sandal made of straw)" and monks asked, "Why do you not wear (them)?" "The Buddha has not allowed wearing (them)." Thereupon the monks reported this matter to Buddha. The Buddha said: "At a place which is cold and where there is snow one should wear *fuluo*" (Deeg 2016, pp. 230-231). This account tells us about the existence of Buddhist followers in Kathmandu valley since the time of Buddha.

Later, when Licchavī dynasty (400-800 CE) ruled the Kathmandu Valley, most of the kings were followers of *Śiva* and *Viṣṇu*, though Buddhism was allowed to flourish and given state patronage. The society of the valley, thought divided into Buddhist and Hindu, the rulers were Hindus. The flourish of Buddhism in Kathmandu Valley at the time could be evident from transportation of Buddhism from Kathmandu Valley to Tibet when Tibetan king Srong btsan Gompo (629-650 CE) married Princes Bhṛikutī Devī from Nepal. Though there seems to be no evidence of Princess Bhṛikutī Devī in Kathmandu Valley from contemporary source in Nepal but the strong oral and scriptural traditions of Tibetan people attest this fact (Shakya 1997, p.3). Princess Bhṛikutī Devī diffused the Buddhism and Buddhist art in the Tibetan community. It is evident that Nepal was highly developed at that period and its cultural equally advance. There were numerous Buddhist monasteries/Vihāras and Hindu temples. It is very clear from historical facts that Licchavīs were highly liberal in religious policies. Buddhism and Hinduism flourished side by side and there were royal patronized Buddhist monasteries such as *Sivadeva Vihāra, Sri Manavihāra* and *Cakravihāra*. At the time of Bhṛikutī Devī's marriage to the Tibetan King Srong btsan Gompo, she took the images of *Akṣobhya* Buddha, *Maitreya* Buddha with the gesture of *Dharmacakrparivartana mudrā, Tārā* made from Sandal wood along with many artifacts to Tibet. She also took her Buddhist spiritual master Ācarya Silamanju to Tibet at the time of her marriage. With the help of Thonmi Sambhota and his pupil, Ācarya Silamanju translated the Mahāyānā text *Kārandavyūha Sutra, Karmastaka, Ratnamegha* sutra and many more (Shakya 1997, p. 45). This clearly shows Buddhism was very popular and the rulers of this period were very harmonious to both Buddhism and Hinduism.

A dawn of Thirteenth Century saw new beginning of a new dynasty on the throne of Nepal. This was the Malla dynasty and the first King was Arimalla Deo (1207-2016 CE). The Malla dynasty gave rise to many great rulers who patronized both Hindu and Buddhist religion contributing to great monuments which are still famous in Kathmandu Valley. Later in fourteenth century, King Jayasthi Malla took full sovereignty of Nepal in 1382 CE through his marriage with Rajalla Devī. He was a great patron of art and a firm believer in Hinduism, while he was literally tolerant towards Buddhism (Nepali 2015, p. 15). Towards the close of fifteenth Century, the kingdom of the Valley was split into three principalities among the sons of Yaksha Malla. They patronized both Hindu and Buddhist monuments and festivals, in fact the competition among these three principalities created beautiful Hindu and Buddhism religious monasteries and temple. Peaceful and harmonious cohabitation of two religious groups of Buddhist and Hindu since the early to the modern period is because of the good leadership of kings, religious leaders and local social structure. The local social structure is very liberal to both these religions as they both accept the other religions as their own. Buddhists and Hindus both accept each other deities as their own making their own interpretation to fit each other religious Gods in their festivities. For instance, *Kumarī*, Living Goddess is the Hindu deity of *Taleju* but she has to be from a Buddhist Shakya family. Buddhist *Padmapani Lokeśvara* who is revered as an important God of rain in the Kathmandu valley is worshiped as Hindu *Narayan* by Newar community and participates in the great annual festival in zealous manner by both Buddhist and Hindu communities.

The conquest of Kathmandu valley by Gorkha king in 1769 CE brought a new change. The rulers were strict Hindus and they were less tolerant but because the dwellers of Kathmandu valley were mostly Newars who have strong tradition and culture, the change could not come suddenly. The change came gradually and the Buddhists were mostly suppressed. Though Buddhists were suppressed, there were not incidences of protest by this group. Rather, they accepted new rulers as this is characteristic features of the Newar to accept new conqueror without any expressive protest and adapted to new rules. This is a very phenomenal

leadership quality of Newar community to sustain the eternal peace cohabitating with change and oppression from various forces. The new rulers were very strict Hindus so Buddhist Newar social leaders had to adapt to new rule of religious order. They did not revolt the oppression but rather created peaceful mean to pacify themselves by creating indigenous way make harmonious cohabitation with the new ambiance.

## 2. REMARKABLE COHABITATION OF BUDDHISTS AND HINDUS IN KATHMANDU VALLEY

Lumbinī in Nepal is the birth place of Buddha. Kathmandu Valley which is close to Lumbinī, migrating Shakya clan brought Buddhist culture here since the time of Buddha. Later, Newar community which flourished in Kathmandu Valley embraced both Buddhism and Hinduism and it prospered side by side with harmonious ambience. The Newar community and their leaders structured a very unique method to coexist between Buddhism and Hindus that accepted one another deities as their own. For instance, Buddhist deities are worshipped by Hindus as Hindu deities and vice versa. They created a common culture event to celebrate Buddhism and Hindu festivals. All this supported by Hindu kings since Licchavī Dynasty till Malla Dynasty. One of such deities is *Avalokiteśvara Karuṇāmaya,* Buddhist Lord of compassion who is venerated by Hindus as *Macchīndranātha/Matsyendranāth,* a Hindu saint. *Avalokiteśvara Karuṇāmaya* who is also denominated as *Bunga dya* in local Newar vernacular is found in many chronicles in of Nepal at the reign of Licchavī King Narendradeva. It states, *Matsyendranāth,* the preceptor of *Gorakhanāth,* whose blessing was sought by kings of men and particularly by Narendradeva of Nepal to overcome the calamities of drought and epidemics (Regmi 2007, pp. 572-573). Even present day, this *Avalokiteśvara* is venerated by both Buddhists and Hindus and its festival is one of the biggest among Newars of Kathmandu Valley. The deity is installed on the chariot which is prepared still in the ancient technique of heavy wooden frame on the four large wheel. On the above of wheels is a square wooden platform containing the shrine of *Avalokiteśvara* and the shrine raises a gigantic spire of wooden beams and poles bound together with vines, ropes and cane (Locke 1980, p. 265).

This chariot is pulled around the city centre and Buddhist as well as Hindu devotees join the festivity. This festival of *Bunga dya* has been medium connecting for both Buddhists and Hindus of Kathmandu Valley peacefully for hundreds of years.

One of the indigenous ideas of coherent peaceful social method to united Buddhists and Hindus of Kathmandu Valley formulated by leaders of Newar community is '*Deepankha* (*Yatra*)'. This is great march undertaken when five Auspicious Astronomical and Astrological features coincide together on one day. The day must be the Full Moon Day of the month of Aswin (September- October). The day must be again be Sunday with Harshana yoga and hence this Full Moon must have a Lunar Eclipse. In this great march of *Deepankha Yatra* which is a great pilgrimage, the devotees both Newar Buddhists and Hindus of Kathmandu Valley worship both Buddhists and Hindus deities, monasteries, temples, Stupas, holy river pilgrim sites and so forth. This great march crosses many Buddhists and Hindus sites in about 24 hours starting from Nāgbahāl near Buddhist monastery called Hiṛanya Varna Mahāvihār. This march includes great Buddhist and Hindu sites such as *Avalokiteśvara* in Bungmati, *Avalokiteśvara Adinath* in Chobhar hill, *Echangu Nārāyaṇa* western part of Lalitpur, *Svayambhū Mahacaitya*, Baudha Stupa, Guheśvari (tantric deity for both Buddhists and Hindus), most important Hindu *Pashupatinātha*, *Mahādeva* of Koteswor and ends at the great Ashokan Stupa. This great march was encouraged to bring harmony among Newar communities who follow both Buddhism and Hinduism. Though they follow different religions, they have to live together in one social system that include their daily life so these indigenous methods help them make peace and live harmoniously as a community.

This great march started on the base of the story of '*Neel Thusa*/ Blue Bull Calf' or blue horned bull written as in *Kapisvadana, Maha Vastu Avadana*. It is said that once when Buddha was preaching in the Arama of a famous and benevolent minded Sarthvahu resident of the city of Sravastica, Buddha narrated how in one of his previous lives, he was born as bull with blue horn during the time of *Dipankara Tathagata*. The baby calf was born on the full moon day of Aswin and on Aswini Nakshetra which was an auspicious

date. After the birth of this calf, there began a reign of peace and plenty in the city of Bandhumati. Everyone was struck with the extraordinary beauty and splendor of the calf who was given the name of Ratna Maya Kantimati. The bull met *Dipankara* Buddha and later killed by wild beast. People built a sand mount over the bones which miraculously became a Chaitya of precious jewels. One of the horns was changed into a small bull of pure sapphire (Vaidya 1986, pp. 156-1567). The copper replica of bull can be witness installed on the venue where this great march starts in Nāgbahāl near Hiṛanya Varna Mahāvihār. This *Deepankha Yatra* is the symbol of the communal harmony indigenously started by Buddhist leaders to create peaceful cohabitation of Buddhists and Hindus Newars in Kathmandu Valley.

One other very unique indigenous technique of cohabitation of Buddhists and Hindus of Kathmandu valley is the Living Goddess *Kumarī*. She is personification of *Taleju Bhawanī,* female Goddess who is revered by Hindu as the highest protector. This *Kumarī,* Living Goddess is chosen from Buddhist family of Shakya. In Kathmandu valley, Hindus worship many Gods and Goddess of power regarding them as benevolent deities of protection of mankind. They believe that these Gods and Goddess infuse divine power to supply happiness and long life to the people. Buddhists in other hand have no ground for most of these divinely protective deities. Prince Siddhartha was from the royal birth of Shakya clan so Shakya family here in Nepal is highly respected. In Newar community, Hindu Living Goddess *Kumarī* is chosen from only Buddhist Shakya family. Living Goddess *Kumarī* is mysterious Goddess of Nepal and she is the link between two different religions here in Nepal. This Goddess creates harmony, tolerance, unity and coexistence between two of these religions (Bajracharya 2011, p. 58).

The last King of Malla dynasty of Kathmandu valley Jaya Prakash Malla highly respected Living Goddess *Kumarī*. He was a very religious minded king and did his maximum for the promotion of the religious harmony. He paid equal respect to both Hindu and Buddhist religion and had also contributed to a syncretistic approach in the Newar/Nepalese society. Later dynasties in Nepal were most unjust to Buddhism so Buddhists develop other methods

to create harmony in the society. Jaya Prakash Malla though he was a staunch Hindu following the Brahminism, he had done a lot for Buddhist shrines. The worship of Living Goddess *Kumarī* was and is a classical example of the syncretism of Malla dynasty. Even when he was in exile, he came into contact with a Buddhist, father of *Kumarī,* with whose cooperation he had worshipped *Kumarī*. Being very devoted to *Kumarī*, he thought of constructing a new building beside the royal palace for the Goddess. The *Kumarī* house, residence of *Kumarī* was completed in 1757 CE and great celebration was marked on the occasion. The building was destroyed in 1934 CE earthquake and the reconstruction was done with some of the remaining pieces of terracotta sculpture and wood carvings, it is a symbol of Jaya Prakash Malla's devotion to the Living Goddess *Kumarī* (Vaidya 2018, p. 246-248).

## 3. BUDDHIST NEWARS FORMULATED NEW TECHNIQUES TO COPE WITH RELIGIOUS OPPRESSION AFTER MALLA DYNASTY (MODERN NEPAL)

Although the Kingdom of the Valley had always been Hindu, and had been linked to a caste society from an ancient time, the kings and Brahmins formed only a tiny minority, an aristocracy, until Eighteenth century. The majority of the population was Buddhist/ Buddhamārgī. It follows that Mahayānā represented major religious, intellectual and economic force with which kings were obliged to reckon (Douglas 2007, p.105). Conquest of Kathmandu Valley by Gorkha kings changed the entire equation of the social order. The Gorkha kings were strict Hindus unlike Licchavī and Mallas Dynasties who were Hindus but impartial, they slowly disintegrated the Newar society which harmonized Buddhists and Hindus. The caste system which was addressed by the previous Malla kings strongly implemented which contributed much to decline of Buddhism in Newar society and there were no new Newar Buddhist monasteries built. The remaining monasteries started to decline. But even this period Hindu Newar formed only one third of the population while Newar Buddhist constituted about two third of the population. They have divided themselves into three distinct classes, which in a great measure correspond with three out of four of the Hindu caste. Buddhism, however, is very essentially

a religion of peace, and as such, averse to all bloodshed and war. There is among the Buddhists no military class corresponding to the military caste of kshetria among Hindus (Oldfield 2018, pp. 71-72). With the new Shah Dynasty, there was new system, so Newar Buddhist had to adapt to new rule to pacify their communal feeling by employing yet another indigenous method, this time highlighting *Harihari*hari *Vāhana Lokeśvara*. *Harihari*hari *Vāhana Lokeśvara* rides on *Nārāyaṇa* which rides on *Garuḍa*. *Garuḍa* rides on lion and Lion on Snake. *Harihari*hari *Vāhana Lokeśvara* is very popular in Kathmandu valley. It is related to the origin of Kathmandu valley according to *Svayambhū* Purāna. The *Svayambhū Purāna* recounts how thousand petalled lotus in the middle of Lake Kalihrada shone with a radiant beam of light that was the self Originated Luminous Form (*Svayambhū* Jyotirupa). Guru Mahāmañjusṛi from Wutai Shan came to the valley to pay homage to *Svayambhū* Jyotirupa and he let the water out making a gorge with his sword that drained the water. Then he established a town Mañjupattana in Nepal Mandala/Kathmandu Valley for the welfare and happiness of both human being and Gods. On the process twelve sacred *tirthas* of Kathmandu Valley were made (trans Shakya 2004, p. 525). On one of this *tirthas, Takṣaka Nāgarāja* was performing his *Uposadha Vṛata* when *Garuḍa* tried to attack *Nāgarāja*. *Garuḍa* called *Viṣṇu* for assistance and *Takṣaka* called on *Avalokiteśvara*.

*Harihari*hari *Vāhana Lokeśvara* is one of the unique iconography that depicts both the Buddhist and Hindu deities. Three Hari means three mounts of *Lokeśvara* here: *Viṣṇu, Garuḍa* and Lion. *Lokeśvara* is seated on *Viṣṇu* who rides on *Garuḍa* who in turn is mounted on a Lion. He is white in complexion and has a *jatā-mukuṭa* or matted hair (Chandra 2002, p. 1339). In case of Kathmandu valley, it has five pointed crown. He has six arms, of his three right hands, one hand displays the witness gesture, second hand holds a rosary and third hand displays the *bodhyaṇgamudrā*. The three left hands hold a staff, black jina and a vase (Shakya 2011, p. 85). Two sādhanas in the Sādhanamālā are devoted to the worship of this form of Āray-*Avalokiteśvara* and Dhyāna in one of them describes the god in the following (Bhattacharya 1993, pp. 44-45);

"*Harihariharivāhanodbhavaṃ Bhagavantaṃ* Ārya-

Avalokiteśvaraṃ *sarvāṇgaśuklaṃ jatāmukuṭinaṃ* śāntaveśaṃ, *dakṣiṇakareṇa Bhagavantaṃ Tathāgataṃ sākṣiṇaṃ kurvantaṃ, dvitīyena akṣamālādhāriṇaṃ, tritīyena duḥkuhakaṃ lokaṃ upadeśsyanṭaṃ, vāmena daṇḍadharaṃ, dvitīyena kṛṣṇa-jinadharaṃ, tritīyena kamaṇḍaludharaṃ, siṃhagaruḍa-Viṣṇuskandhasthitaṃ* ātmanaṃ *dhyātvā…."*

*"The worshipper should conceive himself as Hariharivāhanodhava or god Arya-Avalokiteśvara white in all limbs, with the crown of Chignon, clad in peaceful garments, citing Tathāgata as witness with one of his right hands, carrying the rosary in the second and instructing the deluded people with the third; as carrying the staff in one of his left hands, the black deer's skin in the second and the kamaṇḍalu in the third; as riding on the shoulder of Viṣṇu (who rides on) Garuḍa (who is again on the back of a Lion). Thus meditating…"*

In Nepal, this image is made little different than the *Sādhanmālā* describes. There is slight difference in depiction of *Lokeśvara* with his numbers of hands and its attributions. On the rides also there is slight difference like there is an addition of *Nāgarāja* at the bottom of *Siṃha*/Lion or in some painting even *Nāgarāja* on top of *Siṃha*. There are images of this god in Patan with a snake entwining the legs of the lion. It is interesting to note that the word "hari" is also synonym for snake and it is no wonder that the snake is present there, but in the case of sculpture cannot be said to follow *Sādhana* precisely. Sometimes, in the drawings, instead of the deer's skin in one of the hands of the god, we find an elephant (Bhattacharya 1993, p. 45). As Newar Buddhist of Kathmandu Valley developed their own story of *Hariharihari Vāhana Lokeśvara*, they also made the image of their own style. The image from the manuscript painting in Newark Museum is stated *Harihariharivahānalokeśvara* (Buhnemann 2012, pp. 72-73). This image which is not found in any parts of India, is adapted into Newar society as the symbol of making themselves superior to their Hindu counterpart. This image is frequently painted as mural paintings on the façade of residential houses which clearly show their soft protest toward Hindu over their dominance in Newar religious order. As Buddhists are non violent, their protest is reflected on this symbolic iconographic

representation. This is an indigenous way of leading a peaceful protest feeling superior even when you are downtrodden.

Yet another very famous narration of Buddhist superiority over Hindu counterpart is Buddha's *Lumbinīyātrā* (Lumbinī journey). On the Buddha's birthday (Buddha Jayantī), many Newar Buddhists display painting illustrating *Lumbinīyātrā* from the exterior of their homes and this trend started only in the twentieth century. Shakyamuni Buddha rides standing up on a *Nāga* while being attended by Hindu deities in service to him. *Indra* holds an honorific parasol steady over Buddha from Behind. A number of Hindu deities are lined up in a procession and perform specific services, *Kubera* scatters coins from a bag; *Nārāyaṇa/Viṣṇu* blows his conch; *Mahādeva/Maheśvara/*Śiva, trident in hand, sounds his rattle drum; *Sarasvatī* rolls out a large piece of cloth which functions similarly to a carpet; *Vaṛuna* pours water; *Brahmā* sweeps the ground with a broom, *Vāyu* holds up his banner; *Agni* carries an incense burner; blue complexioned *Yama* wields his staff and green complexioned *Nairṛtya* brandishes a sword and a shield. Musicians walk in front and at the close of the procession. It is known as the *Lumbinīyātrā,* which is understood as Buddha's return journey and visit to his birthplace after his enlightenment. This scene is also reflected in Newar Buddhist literature of *Lalitavistara*. This *Lalitavistara* in Newar version is written by Niṣṭhānanda Bajrācārya (1857-1934 CE). The passage on the Buddha's visit to Lumbinī in the first edition of Niṣṭhānanda's *Lalitavistara* reads as follows (Buhnemann 2015, p. 13):

After this the venerable Blessed One came out from the great city of Kapilvastu to go the Lumbinī grove, having been reverenced by people and having acknowledged them. In what way did he go? Here (are) the stanzas (śloka):

*Brahma vaitāliko vedastutiṃ* śankhadhvaniṃ *svabhūḥ*

*Prākaroc ca pratīhāras triśūlī yaṣṭidhāraṇam*

*Dvātriṃśat-dalitaṃ chatram* ādhāya *prānvagāt vṛṣā*

*Daṇḍadhārī yamaś cāgre varuṇo jalasecanī*

*Suvarṇākṣatalājābhṛt vaiśravaṇaḥ puro <>vrajat*

*Vahniḥ dhūpadahī pañcagavyī kravyāc ca duṣṭadā*

*Dhvajī vāyuḥ bhūmiśuddhiṃ prākarot vāyum udvaham*

Śeṣo<> *sau sarvanāgeśaḥ svayam* āstīryavān *mṛdu*

…

*Lumbinīvanam* āśritya *sarvatrāpi vilokayan*

The meaning is: *Brahmā* recited a hymn from the Veda. *Nārāyaṇa* blew (His) conch. *Mahādeva* served as guardian, holding his trident-rod (*trīśuladaṇḍa*). Indra, King of the gods, following, shading him with a jeweled parasol consisting of thirty two leaves. *Yamārāja,* staff in hand, marched in front. The god *Varuṇa* poured a stream of water. *Kubera* walked ahead, scattering nuggets of gold (*suvarṇacurṇa*) and puffed rice (*tāy*). The god *Agnī* waved incense. The god *Nairṛtya* purified (the road) by sprinkling the five products of a cow (*pañcagavya*). The god *Vāyu,* holding his banner, purified the ground by letting the wind blow. Śeṣa, the king of *Nāgas,* the lord of Naga kings, let (Blessed One) place his feet on his soft body so that he did not have to walk on the ground. The group of Gandharvas played the musical instruments. All the gods, of heaven (*devaloka*) showered flowers. (In this way the Blessed One) slowly approached the Lumbinī grove, giving pleasure to all the people. After this, the venerable Blessed One entered the Lumbinī grove and looked here and there. He went around stopping at every place. After the journey (*jātrā*), he assembled the gods and others and gave sermons.

In the *Panpañcasūdanī*, a commentary on the *Majjhimanikāya* ascribed to Buddhaghosa, in the introductory section to the Devadaha sutta refers to the Buddha's stay in Lumbinī on the way from Kapilavastu to his mother's hometown. In the commentary the stay in Lumbinī receives merely a brief mention and it not the triumphal event celebrated as in the Newar Buddhist tradition (Buhnemann 2015, p. 49-50). So the detail of the triumphant *yatrā* is indigenous Newar creation like form of *Avalokiteśvara* called *Sṛṣṭikānta Lokeśvara* who emanates the major Hindu divinities from its different body parts. *Sṛṣṭikānta Lokeśvara* is depicted as the creator of all the Brahmanical divinities. In Kathmandu valley this form is called 'Creator/Marker' *Sṛṣṭikartā,* often written as

*Sṛṣtikānta*. According to *Gunakāraṇḍvyūha*, Newar version of *Kāraṇḍvyūha* of fourth century, when this universe was empty except for luminosity (*prabhāsvara*) Ādhibuddha then appeared. He penetrated on equipoise (*samādhi*) called *Lokasaṃsarjana* with a view to creating universe. First he emanated Āryāvalokiteśvara, who in turn penetrated deeply on the equipoise called *Lokodbhava*, thereby creating moon from his right eye and the sun from his left eye, so that the system of the day and night then evolved. Āryāvalokiteśvara then created *Mahādeva* from his forehead, *Brahma* from his shoulders, *Nārāyaṇa* from his heart, *Sarasvatī* from his upper and lower teeth, *Vāyu* from his mouth, *Varuṇa* from his abdomen, *Mahālakṣmī* from his left knee, *Agnī Deva* from his navel, *Kubera* from his right knee and *Pṛthvī* the earth from the soles of his feet (Shakya 2011, pp. 38-39). Both the images *Lumbinīyātrā* and *Sṛṣtikānta Lokeśvara* emanating Hindu divinities convey the message of the superiority of the most important Buddhist figures over Hindu divinities. These images of Buddha and Buddhist deities representing superiority over Hindu divinities are clear indication of the expression of Buddhists rebellion on the pretext of their dominance by Hindu ruling class. It is these very local ways of the Newar Buddhists clever leadership that made it possible for the harmonious cohabitation of these two religious groups to live in Kathmandu valley for hundreds of years.

## 4. CONCLUSION

Buddha was born in Lumbinī which is in present Nepal. Kathmandu valley being in close proximity of Lumbinī, have a long history of Buddhism. There are some records that state there was Buddhist practice at the time of Buddha in Kathmandu Valley. Later, with the advent of historical records of Licchavī Dynasty, propagation both Buddhism and Hinduism can be seen in the Kathmandu valley. There was peace and harmony among these two religious groups as the rulers were not partial to one religious group. The inhabitants were clearly join to one unit of Newar society. The ruler despite being Hindu always supported both the religions and patronized Buddhist monasteries as well as Hindu temples. They formulated important strategy of binding Buddhists and Hindus with indigenous deities that are venerated by both the religious

group as their own and created a harmonious ambience for the social order. During the Malla Dynasty, the same strategy was followed adding more of the deities into the social fiber that connected the Newar social order of Buddhists and Hindus. This is one of the very indigenous ways of uniting two broadly different religious systems into a compact Newar society. The leaders of Newar society made these peaceful and harmonious leadership techniques to unite two different religious groups to one expansive Newar society. Unfortunately, the later Shah Dynasty and Rana prime ministerial regime destroyed this fiber that linked the social order. Despite this adverse circumstances and oppression from Hinduism over Buddhist community, the leaders of Buddhist communities never involved in any violent rebellious acts, rather they evolved yet another strategy of creating various deities that represent superiority of Buddhism over Hinduism and pacify the pain of suppression. These very techniques created at different interval time in Nepal history eventually created peaceful and harmonious society and there was never any religious conflict between these two groups. This very strategy used by Newar Buddhist and Hindu leaders in different interval of time can be implemented in other social system or other nations for the harmonious coexistence between different religious groups for overall peace and harmony in the world.

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# THE APPLICATION OF SIX HARMONIES IN ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR MEMBERS

by Nguyen Phuoc Thien*

**ABSTRACT**

Managing an organization is ultimately getting things done through group member, so more humanistic and pragmatic ways of organizational management which excel in managerial competencies are needed to sustain in this environment. Buddhism is the most profound and wholesome education directed by the Buddha toward all people. On the other hand, the organization could be seen as "Sanga Communities" was teams which excelled in managerial skills. Buddhism provides an interesting and a pragmatic perspective on the proper management practices in organizations. This paper suggest Buddhist perspectives are effective to be applied in team management and they have more universal application which could improve the team effectiveness and efficiency. It is indicated that creating harmony among team members and respect to achieve the purposes of the organization.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the business environment, the need to bring change through practical wisdom in management is increasingly felt (Billsberry & Birnik, 2010; Melé, 2010); however, how practical wisdom is applied is less explored (Vallabh & Singhal. 2014). An organization is a social unit of people that is structured and managed to meet a need or to pursue collective goals, it is considered as the

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best creation of human to address economic and social issues in the world (Arulrajah et al, 2012).

Fernando et al. (2006) stated that Buddhism plays a significant in the decision making of managers. Buddhism provides an interesting and a pragmatic perspective on the proper management practices in organizations. Dave Valliere (2008) mentioned that form the Buddhist perspective, the entrepreneur aim is to achieve moral objectives in economic areas, and Buddhism offers a framework in which mindfulness is considered as an entrepreneurship form in the creation of social structures and process. Santina (1984) stressed that Buddhist beliefs are terribly in keeping with Western scientific beliefs, he postulated that Buddhism feature a pragmatic orientation, deals with cause and impact relationships, focuses on problem-solving and recognize the importance of observation and verification.

Buddhism offers a motivating perspective on the right follow practice of management. Whereas the literature on the effect on the social control is sort of limit. This study attempts to explore the Buddhist perspective on managerial activities in modern organizations and explore the relationship the Buddhist perspective with interpersonal relations, team building, group harmony, performance management and knowledge management at group and organizational levels.

## 2. BUDDHIST TEACHING

Buddhism is a religion and dharma that including a variety of beliefs, traditions and spiritual practices which based on Buddha's teaching. The Buddha's teachings were passed originally from teacher to followers orally; skimpy care was taken to preserve the Buddha's original words, and a few changes were introduced through interpretations into new language, so the geographic unfold of Buddhism crystal rectifier to complete different faculties with some different emphases in teaching (Bapat, 1956: p.89). The adoption and geography unfold of Buddhism was helped once there have been parallels with existing beliefs like Bon, Taoism, (Harvey, 1990), and also the unfold of it into China and Japan junction rectifier to eight main Buddhist faculties (Bapat, 1956: p.110), so

the geographic unfold of Buddhism has concerned the emergence of many completely different strands of Buddhism in several countries and different cultures. Buddhist isn't a monolithic faith, however a philosophy that has tailored to totally different cultures.

From the Buddha's teaching, he believes that all problems in human daily life come from their activities and behaviors, therefore their philosophy concentrates on people's minds which guide these behaviors. The teachings of Buddha are referred to as the Dharma. The dharma begins with the Four Noble Truth, includes Suffering, Origin to Suffering, the Passing Beyond Suffering and a Way to Calming the Suffering that is called Eightfold Noble Path.

"What, monks, is the truth of suffering? Birth is suffering, decay, sickness and death are suffering. To be separated from what you like is suffering. To want something and not get it is suffering. In short, the human personality, liable as it is to clinging and attachment brings suffering" (The Vision of the Buddha: Buddhism - The Path to Spiritual Enlightenment).

If this suffering is the disease, the prescription was the Eightfold Path. Although described alternately with the metaphor of "path" and "steps on the path" this teaching is not linear.

The Eightfold Noble Path: It emphasizes awareness of various viewpoints and limits. Reflection is inspired on what can be "right" for the context in term of view, think, speech, action, living, endeavor, memory and mediation.

a) "Right View" involves the critique of strictly inconsiderate attitudes; therefore, it will change larger openness to the viewpoints of other. It may contribute to conflict resolution and conflict interference if individuals are willing to review their personal interests within the lightweight of different perspectives.

b) "Right Thinking" encourages shunning of covetousness, bitterness and malice, thereby additionally serving to individuals build a lot of productive relationship. "Right thinking" ends up in the elimination of harmful thoughts and developing such positive state of mind like loving- kindness, which is opposition emotion, ill –will or aversion and developing thoughts of harmlessness or compassion that are opposition cruelty and inventiveness.

c) "Right Speech" involves recognition of the reality, and conjointly an awareness of the impact of idle gossip and of continuation rumors. Human activity thoughtfully helps to unite others, and may heal dissention. "Right speech" also involves the rejection of lying, craftiness, slander and "improper" language. So this encourages honesty and open in dialogue, enhancing trust. By partitioning never to talk unsympathetic, or in paper, a spirit of thought evolves that move us nearer to everyday compassionate living.

d) "Right Action" recognizes the requirement to take the moral approach in life, to think about others and therefore the world we live. This includes not talking what is not happened to human, and having respect for the agreement we create each in our non-public and business lives. "Right action" encompasses the 5 precepts that got by Gautama Buddha, to not kill, steal, and lie, to avoid sexual misconduct, and to not take drugs or other intoxicant. This tread on the path also includes a full approach to the atmosphere, with Right action being taken whenever potential to safeguard the globe for future generation.

e) "Right Living" implies brooding about what it suggests that to work usefully for society, assuring social and environment awareness. "Right living" conjointly implies that people can undertake some work, either as a part of Buddhist community, or in the geographical point, do primarily based or community service. Several communities of monk make sure that every member has daily chores, which inform him of this step on the Eightfold Path.

f) "Right Endeavor" suggests that an enthusiasm, a positive perspective during a balanced way. Just like that strings of a musical instrument, the quantity of effort shouldn't be too tense or too impatient, in addition as too slack or too arranged back. "Right endeavor" ought to turn out a perspective of steady and cheerful determination.

g) "Right Memory" encourages the honest illustration of self, others and also the wider world. It additionally enhances trust.

h) "Mind Mediation" implies that we tend to choose worthy direction for the concentration of the mind, though everything

in nature, stunning and ugly, maybe helpful for concentration. At deeper levels, no subject or construct is also necessary for more development.

Interest in the Buddhist concept has burgeoned over in the last decades as a results of its application in education, mind-body medicine, leadership and management, and the other theoretical and practical domains.

## 3. THE APPLICATION OF THE BUDDHA'S TEACHING IN TEAM MANAGEMENT

Nowadays, team performance is greater than individual performance. In the other words, the collective results are always greater than the summation of its individual parts so the organizations prefer to recruit and retain dynamic team players.

A team is a group of individual, all working together for a common purpose. Through teamwork, the members can do each other, the individual strengths of each member can play better, and avoided their respective shortcoming. Building an effective team is not an easy task because of various problems. Firstly, because of ego, some individuals trend to be a best person, a star in group and lack of spirit cooperation, do not to be a part of team development. Secondly, team members are too concerned with personal gains and losses, with the thinking that the other people get les contribution and have more reward, seriously affected the unity and trust in team. Last but not least, there are many problems in training team members. Many organizations still do not use team based training methods, how can an organization can create a good team? The guiding ideology of Buddhism building good team is the "Six Harmonies". The concept of "Six Harmonies", which includes: body harmony, mouth harmony, spirit harmony, disciple harmony, interest harmony, and the opinion harmony, provides a pragmatic and humanistic way of building business teams (Zhenqun, 2010) and "Six harmonies" tell us how to get a long in groups, as the "Six harmonies" are the basic rules for groups cultivation that all individuals needs to strive to follow:

The first of Six Harmonies is body harmonies. This element mentions people to live together, no kicking, no punching and

willing to help each other, care for, tolerance and respect to each other.

The second element is mouth harmony, which is about verbal purity, speak sincerely, speech soft and peaceful coexistence. In daily life and work place, most of conflicts are come from misunderstanding communication and Zhenquen (2010) also stressed that manager has to attribute more than 85% of his/her working time for communication. By using good words may advantage for discussion, negotiation and compromise solutions.

Spirit harmony as the third element, it stressed something worthy of favor, honest mind, good intention, and ability to work with others in harmonious manner. To meet the organization needs, achieve the goal of all concerns, having this element attribute the goal setting, planning, problem solving and decision making in teamwork, workplace as well as the business. It is easy to face and win internal and external challenges as well as threat when team member possesses spirit harmony. This leads organization can improve its competitive dominance and enjoy the progress of success.

Discipline harmony is following the accepted and desirable behavior in and out form the work place. According to discipline harmony in Buddhism, "discipline follow" keeps common system and statues under the common organizational framework, common code of conduct. Nowadays, organization develop and retain self- discipline employees who can give the maximum individual contribution to organizational success because they accept, respect the rules and organizational standards. By applying this element in the work place, it is possible to function the organization smoothly without disputes and clashed.

Interest harmony plays a crucial role to prevent the fall of the human nature in the work place. It asks everything to be equal without discriminant (Zhenqun, 2010). Most of the human are due to competition for resources. Therefore, in the long run, the team will tend to divide and/or occur clashed if there is no interest harmony.

The last element, opinion harmony, is known as the insight.

Success or failure of the team depends on their decision making and problem solving. Opinion with solutions are to be a high level of unity in the ideology. The most important thing according to the Buddhist philosophy is to know the right view in every aspect of management.

The Buddhist emphases all the good things must do in our best and all things are not done. This is what today organizations practice as efficiency, effectiveness and the productivity. According to Drucker (2009), efficiency is "doing things right" and effectiveness is "doing the right thing, therefore productivity could be redefined as "doing the right thing in the right way which is consistent with the Buddhist perspective of management. Moreover, in Human Resource Management there is an objective to "produce right people at the right time to do the right job under the right cost" (Opatha, 2012).

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

It could be concluded the success of an organization seriously depends on doing the right thing at the right time in the right manner. All these theories and practices in modern management are aligning with the Buddhist philosophy of knowing the right view in every aspect of life.

Buddhism which is based on moderation and impermanency tends to manage people ethically and spiritually. An organization is an association of people who work together toward to realize a common desire. The collective view in Buddhism and Six Harmonies which are discussed in this paper show a wider perspective in building and maintaining effective team in order to reach the common goals without any conflict with well-discipline team member. The belief in "no self" guides them to minimize the contradictory occurrences in team with personal objectives.

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# - IV -
# ENVIRONMENT

# ATTAINING A SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY THROUGH THE TEACHINGS OF THE KHANDHAKA OF THE THERAVĀDA VINAYA PIṬAKA

by Li Wai Sum*

**ABSTRACT**

This paper stems from my readings into to the *Theravāda Vinaya Piṭaka* and my initial finding that many key principles discussed in this ancient book of the 5th century BC have practical relevance for addressing on the concept of attaining a sustainable development of a modern society. Through the understanding of the *Theravāda Vinaya Piṭaka* and the teachings of the *Khandhaka*, my aim is to explore how do Vinaya texts facilitate and contribute to the attainment of a sustainable society, through the practices of non-harming, responsible consumption, and simplification of desires, with the effort and purpose of highlighting the practicality of this ancient wisdom for personal and social growth of contemporary issues.

The *Vinaya Piṭaka* is one of the world's oldest rulebooks that provides specific instructions on how a monastic community should exist and how its members should coexist harmoniously. Still used today, it is a comprehensive law code, there is evidence of extensive discussion about the nature of the acts involved, and the reasoning

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that leads to decisions of those acts. The *Khandhaka* is one important section of the *Vinaya Piṭaka* and it offers a vision of living that counters the unwholesome and unskilful ways to approaching life and interacting with the world and human communities. Following the rules implemented accordingly, it provides injunctions for further enactment of that unwholesomeness. Indeed, the teachings of the *Khandhaka* for exploring contemporary questions on a sustainable development of a society seems in tune with the Buddha's ancient purpose of formulating the precepts: "to better develop the entire Buddhist functionality, to make Buddhism as a whole more harmonious, happy, and tranquil, so that is more conducive to spreading the Buddhist faith, so that Buddhists may improve their lives, and so that, ultimately, Buddhists achieve the perfect life, that is, realization of the great ideal of 'perpetuating the Dharma and liberating sentient beings" (Kai, 2015, p.150).

This paper proposes to undertake a study into the teachings of the *Khandhaka,* seeing it as, far from being simply an item of historical text for monastics, it also offers a vision of living for laymen with the proper attitudes of being careful about the whole range of products we acquire for our lifestyle and by consciously be responsible for the consumption of the things we do choose to exploit, and without harming to others. Therefore, this paper intends to provide directions for reflection on important issues facing in a community through the teachings of the *Khandhaka,* and to discuss with the main focus on the practice of non-harming, responsible consumption, and simplification of desires. The discussion will also be expanded on in the respective sections of the *Khandhaka* as the rules pertaining to the simplicity of food, lodging, and dressing. In addition, discussions will include the implications on how the teachings can meet with the relevance for today's materialism and consumerism, for the purposes of attaining a sustainable society that will help enrich the understanding of anyone who wishes to see why the Vinaya is worth studying and learning in our world today.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

According to Buddhism, disputes and suffering emerge out of desires, hatred, and ignorance. To develop compromise, congruity,

and harmony, it is fundamental to develop virtues and morality which are valuable and insightful, in both social and religious aspects would lead to sustainable improvement, as well as the development of the world. In any society, people make choices in different aspects every day, the factors of whether the choices we make are correct or not are determined by whether they will lead into happiness or suffering (Sraman, 2014, p.248). The teaching of the Buddha in the Middle Way is one of the primary teachings in Buddhism. The Middle Way comprises of eight righteousness, as seen in the Noble Eightfold Path. In tune with the Noble Eightfold Path, the understanding of the Theravāda Vinaya leads to a better understanding of social, political and economic issues. The teachings of the *Khandhaka* in the *Vinaya Piṭaka* is of imperative core values which provide guiding principles toward figuring out how to settle on appropriate decisions that will deliver outcomes which are beneficial to both the monastics, as well as the lay people, to live a full and meaningful life which is, perhaps, in both the ancient and present days.

This paper aims to examine and discuss the concept of sustainability from a context of specific teachings in the *Khandhaka*. It will discuss how the *Khandhaka* texts and the concepts of the sustainable development of society are inter-related, and how do the teachings of the *Khandhaka* be reflected and applied to the modern society in achieving sustainable development. In this paper, the discussion is confined to the particular areas relating to food, lodging, and dressing which are shown in the *Khandhaka*, these areas will be discussed in three subsequent sections for a more in-depth examination of its contemporary application as the practice of non-harming, responsible consumption, and simplification of desires.

## 2. INTERPRETATION OF THE BUDDHIST APPROACH TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE BASIC TEACHINGS OF THE BUDDHA

In Buddhism, there are three fundamental teachings relating to each phenomenon: suffering, impermanence, and non-self. Since each phenomenon is subject to dependent co-arising, they are

also subject to ceasing. Therefore, Buddhism does not encourage clinging to any of these phenomena. As claimed by Kovács Gábor (2011, p.21), sustainable development for a Buddhist implies rather an inner spiritual quality which has to be realized by ongoing practice of virtues, wisdom and concentration. The three teachings above are so significant in the Buddhist teachings that they appear in the Pāli Canon repeatedly. The first factor, impermanence, is characterized in the discourses by the three stages of transitoriness: arising, existing and ceasing. As such, all phenomena are impermanent. This means that clinging to any phenomena which are impermanent lead to unhappiness. Because individual seeks happiness from the impermanent things he or she always meets with suffering. The second factor, suffering, refers to unsatisfactoriness, sorrow, and pain. Since every phenomenon is impermanent, it cannot be made as a basis for obtaining true happiness and satisfactory experience. As the discourses point out, whatever is impermanent that is unsatisfactory. Therefore, for those who misconceive these basic teachings are likely to end up in greed, brutal competition, and conflicts, in the pursuit of their social and economic goals. The third factor, non-self, arises from the suffering of every phenomenon, there is nothing which can be recognized as permanent or self as an I in nature, since this an I is always subject to change, to decay, and to cease.

Since the modern idea of sustainable development of a society requires an ongoing procedure of achieving economic and societal improvement, and it assumes and believes the development should be constantly in progress. Therefore, it is argued that the modern worldview of implementing 'sustainable development', solely based on the Buddhist worldview which rejects the notion of permanency, can't be accomplished.

## 3. THE TEACHINGS OF THE KHANDHAKA AND THEIR CONTEMPORARY APPLICATIONS

The Vinaya, which consists of three parts: the Suttavibhaṅga, the *Khandhaka*, and the Parivāra, which governs and regulates the conducts of the Bhikkhus (Akira,1990, p.71). The name *Khandhaka*, means "mass, multitude" and is used in the names for the 22 chapters of part of the Vinaya. The *Khandhaka* is divided

into two parts: Mahāvagga "great division" and the Cullavagga, "small division" (Hinüber 1996, p.16).

In order to achieve a sustainable society, the wellbeing of the present generation and the future generation are key components for great consideration (Yamamoto, 2010, p.136). Due to the vast content of the text, the following discussion will be confined to the aspects of food, lodging, and dressing. This paper aims at demonstrating a clear approach, as reflected in the *Khandhaka* chapters, towards good moral quality, happiness, and positive procurement, where each individual is recognized himself the personal and social responsibility, for the sake of himself and for others.

**3.1. Practice of non-harming**

In the *Khandhaka,* there are some implications for the ways to achieving sustainable development through the practice of non-harming. On the consumption of food, in the Mahāvagga, there is a rule that explicitly states, "Monks, there should be no inciting (anyone) to onslaught on creatures. Whoever should (so) incite, should be dealt with according to the rule"(Mv.V.10.10, p.259). Moreover, since killing with intent is prohibited, the Buddha encouraged the consumption of meat shall meet with three respects as: not seen, heard or suspected (Mv.VI.31.14, p.325).

Moreover, there are specific rules regarding the prohibition of consuming certain kinds of meat. In the Mahāvagga, it states, "Monks, you should not make use of human flesh. Whoever should make use of it, there is a grave offence. Nor, monks, should you make use of flesh without inquiring about it. Whoever should (so) make use of it, there is an offence of wrong-doing (Mv.VI.23.9, p.298). Furthermore, it states that "One should not consume elephant flesh…horse flesh…dog flesh…snake flesh…lion flesh…tiger flesh…leopard flesh…bear flesh…hyena flesh. Whoever should do so: an offense of wrong doing" (Mv.VI.23.10-15, p.299).

Not only consuming meat killed on purpose is an offense of wrong doing but also hurting the animals is also prohibited. In the Mahāvagga, it states, "Monks, you should not catch hold of cows by their horns, nor should you catch hold of them by their ears, nor should you catch hold of them by their dewlaps, nor should you

catch hold of them by their tails, nor should you mount on their backs. Whoever should (so) mount, there is an offence of wrong-doing. Nor should you touch their privy parts with lustful thoughts. Whoever should (so) touch them, there is a grave offence. Nor should you kill young calves. Whoever should kill them should be dealt with according to the rule" (Mv.V.9.3, pp.254-255).

Furthermore, the practice of non-harming is extended to the protection of small living creatures. In the Cullavagga, the Buddha allows the use of a water strainer which is one of the primary requisites for Bhikkhus (Cv.V.13.1, p.162). As states in the Pacittya 20 and 62, the main functions of using a water strainer are not only to provide clean water but also to protect small living beings in the water from being harmed. Moreover, in the Cullavagga, there is another rule implying the protection of living creatures: "…Whoever returns last from alms-going in the village, if there is left-over food and he wants it, he may eat it. If he does not want it, he should throw it away where there are no crops to speak of or drop it in water where there are no living creatures to speak of" (Cv. VIII.5.2-3, pp.302-303).

The *Khandhaka* concerning the practice of non-harming is also reflected in the utilization of materials for lodging purpose. In the Mahāvagga, there are prohibitions against the use of extensive creature skins and cow-hide: "Monks, large hides should not be used: a lion's hide, a tiger's hide, a panther's hide. Whoever should use (any of these), there is an offence of wrong-doing"(Mv.V.10.6, p.257); "Nor, monks, should a cow-hide be used. Whoever should use one, there is an offence of wrong- doing. Nor, monks, should any hide be used. Whoever should use one,

In the aspects of dressing and personal hygiene, the spirit of the practice of non-harming for the protection of the environment can also be seen in the rules pertaining to the use of natural resources encouraged by the Buddha. Instead of using soap for washing the body, Bhikkhus are encouraged to use an unscented natural powder called chunam. In the Mahāvagga, it states, "I allow, monks, for one who has itch or a small boil or a running sore or an affliction of thick scabs or for one whose body smells nasty, chunams as medicines; for one who is not ill dung clay, boiled colouring matter. I allow

you, monks, a pestle and mortar" (Mv. VI.9.2, p.274). According to the Commentary, Bhikkhus are allowed to use chunam or other natural resources such as dung, and clay for personal hygiene.

Although the use of natural resources is encouraged during the time of the Buddha, a leather footwear embellished with lion skin, tiger skin, panther skin, otter skin, cat skin, squirrel skin, or flying fox skin is not allowed (Mv.V.2.4, p.247). For the purpose of fully utilized an item, the Commentary states that if one removes the offensive part of the footwear, one is allowed to wear what remains.

The concept of the practice of non-harming is extended to the settlement of Community transaction issues, in the manner of trust, unity, and harmony. At the times of the Buddha, when a Community adheres to the correct forms in its transactions, it shows that it deserves the trust of its fellow Communities. Thus, adherence to the correct forms is not a mere formality, it is a way in which Communities earn trust from one another. In the Cullavagga, it states that a duty-issue or a Community transaction is settled by means of one principle: face-to-face (Cv.IV.14.34, p.140) , of what constitutes a valid transaction divides this principle into two broad factors: 1) the transaction must be in accordance with the Dhamma, which means the Community follows the proper procedure in issuing a statement, and it must be united, which means the Community issuing the statement is qualified to do so.

In the modern sense, we can learn from the rule of making transactions legally, acting under the law, and without depriving any interest of other parties, that means the relationship among different parties is based on genuine and mutual trust. Modern people can also learn from the Cullavagga in settling issues, since the Community issues and transactions are settled through the direct face-to face means, and the justification of the settlements are in accordance with the dhamma and morality, it shows that people are intended to seek solution genuinely and sincerely during the process. In contrast to the modern society, people tend to settle disputes through advanced technology, for instance, conversations over the internet or putting the issues to the courts; it implies that those people often tend to seek absolute victory over the other party, based on legal and administrative techniques. Therefore, in

this sense, disputes and conflicts over a range from small companies to different countries are unlikely to be diminished, and perhaps neither a sustainable society nor an everlasting world peace can be achieved.

Since the development of compassion and loving-kindness are fundamental teachings in Buddhism, it can be achieved through the practice of non-harming to others. Being compassionate to others in actions of body, speech and mind help to create harmony among societies. Since the upmost aim of Buddhism is the eradication of suffering, numerous authors affirmed the importance of fulfilling non-harming business activities, for instance, law enforcement against child labour, therefore the next generations from the developing countries can be able to receive education, and not profit-maximization in order to create a healthier atmosphere among societies (Sree, 2014, p.248). In tune with the statement of P.A. Payutto (1992), he emphasizes that decent wellbeing is indispensable for spiritual perfection, it means that the basic needs of human beings must be met, and they must be satisfied exclusively by proper and non-harming labour. Therefore, appropriate wellbeing ensured honest work is not just for the necessary basis, but also a necessity for sustainable inner development which is an ongoing spiritual perfection towards the eradication of suffering.

In order to achieve a sustainable society, to live in harmony with animals and the environment should also be well considered. In the Mahāvagga, not only killing with intent is prohibited but also consuming meat in a moderate approach of not seen, heard or suspected is always encouraged by the Buddha (Mv.VI.31.14, p.325). Throughout the *Khandhaka* texts, we can find that the implementation of the rules by the Buddha is associated with friendliness to the environment, he encouraged his disciples to utilize natural materials instead of using those which may be harmful to the environment. Furthermore, protection and respect of living beings, from the small living creatures in the water to the huge animals in the forest, are also emphasized. The rules pertaining to the protection and respect of the animals from being deprived of extinction which helps to sustain a healthy ecosystem which is also important and beneficial to the human world. In addition, the

protection of living beings is a way for the practice of compassion and loving-kindness, which is crucial to our spiritual development.

### 3.2. Responsible consumption

In the *Khandhaka*, there are rules pertaining to the consumption of food, of lodging material, and of dressing which are of contemporary relevance and modern application through responsible consumption.

Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu states the attitude and reasons for the consumption of food taken by Bhikkhus are for rational purposes which is satisfy their basic human needs: that is a Bhikkhu takes his almsfood simply for the survival of the body, for the support of his holy life rather than for beautification nor any sensual pleasure. Therefore, a Bhikkhu contemplating: "Thus will I destroy my old feelings (of hunger) and not create new feelings (from overeating). I will maintain myself, be blameless, and live in comfort" (Ṭhānissaro, 2013). In the *Khandhaka*, this concept was further developed and extended to the allowance of eating and picking up the food while it has been falling during the course of being presented (Cv.V.26, p.184). This allowance is granted because it represents the way of the relinquishment made by the benefactors and it implies that the receiver should have a responsibility to fully consume and to utilize anything given by the benefactors.

In the Cullavagga, the Buddha allows five lodgings simply on dwelling and protection purposes, they are a dwelling, a barrel-vaulted building, a multi-storied building, a gabled building, and a cell (Cv.VI.1.2, p.205). In the *Khandhaka*, there are rules concerning the effective use of lodging materials which were originally prohibited by the Buddha. There are exception to the use of a dais, a throne, or anything covered with cotton batting which are originally prohibited if the legs of the furniture are cut down to the proper length; fierce animal decoration have been removed in a throne and if a cotton-batting blanket has combed out into cotton down and has made into pillows respectively (Cv.VI.2.6, p.210). In addition, according to the Mahāvagga, if the unallowable remaining of furnishings are made into floor coverings may also be allowed (Mv.V.10.5, p.257). In other words, these prohibited luxury items

should be used only after they have been converted into something more practical and appropriate. In the Cullavagga, it also allows that if for those items which cannot be converted into a more appropriate way, they can be exchanged for other objects which are profitable and useful (Cv.VI.19, p.245). Another application shows that the hut should be dismantled due to inappropriate construction, in a way that the building materials should be used again, and the offender of the inappropriate construction is responsible to take back the materials belong to him (Ṭhānissaro, 2013). Therefore, as seen in the above rules, the Buddha did not make a sharp prohibition as a whole, rather he was lenient by granting allowances on those parts which can be reused, as much as they can be.

This concept can also be found in the aspect of dressing in the *Khandhaka*. There are rules concerning self- responsibility of keeping one's robe in good condition and in good repair. In the Mahāvagga, it states that a candidate for ordination must have a set of robes before admitting to the Community, once the candidate is ordained, he is expected to keep his robes in good condition and to take certain measures to repair them, and to replace them if they get worn after use (Mv.I.70.2, p.115). The functions of using a robe cloth are simply to counteract cold, heat, touches of flies, wind, sun, and retiles, and is simply to cover the bodily parts that cause shame, again, rather than for the purposes of beautification nor sensual pleasure (Ṭhānissaro, 2013).

To repair and to utilize fully a robe is highlighted in the *Khandhaka*. In the Mahāvagga, one is encouraged to get as much as patching materials as needed from a cast-off cloth. In the Mahāvagga, it lists out five means of repairing cloth , they are, patching, stitching, folding, sealing and strengthening (Mv.VIII.14.2, pp.412-413). It reflects that full utilization of robes is encouraged and emphasized. A new robe would be used for replacement only when it is no longer repaired.

The rules set for responsible consumption of robe materials through sharing and giving are also implemented. In the Mahāvagga, it states that if a group of Bhikkhus enters a charnel ground to gather cast-off cloth from the corpses, for those who are able to obtain cloth should share and give portions to those who do not

(Mv.VIII.4, p.399). Therefore, in this way, robe materials can likely be distributed equally, for those who obtain excessively of cloth than what they actually need would not lead to waste through the practice of sharing and giving, and also for those who do not get it originally from the charnel ground can also benefit from it.

In the modern sense, Buddhism teaches us the manner of how to consume different materials. To a monk who has newly been initiated into the sangha, this knowledge is fundamental to practise Buddhist precepts. It teaches him to use his intellect to examine carefully the objects consumed and their end results (Sree, 2014, p.248-249). The *Khandhaka* suggests how one can perform a better and fulfilling life by taking his own responsibility on making consumption decisions which provide guidance for the modern people, for instances, when one received requisites from others, one is more likely to be responsible to utilize fully and wisely of the requisites given. In this sense, we can find that the concept of recycling has already been brought up during the Buddha's time. Another teaching from the text which is of modern relevance is that there is an implication that one is expected to be responsible for his own disposal of materials due to inappropriate construction of lodging, in which the dismantled building materials are required to be used again. In the modern sense, for instance, governments may promote this idea through education, as well as to conduct the law and rules by charging an appropriate rate of fees for handling disposal under self-responsibility.

Furthermore, one can learn from the text which teaches us the way of how to value material things. In the consumerism society nowadays, people tend to stop utilizing or to dispose of material things simply because those items are no longer up to the modern trend and fashion, even though they are still under good conditions. Those modern people tend to dispose of the items, for instance, free gifts from the sellers due to excess shopping or the items which are getting worn out, they act as such with less thoughtfulness of considering whether they can be reused in other productive ways. On the contrary, the *Khandhaka* suggests us on the conversion of goods with others, into something more useful, appropriate or profitable. In this sense, the applications of reuse and recycling own

a large extent of positive deliberation, modern people should have to understand that something which is not suitable or appropriate for one may be suitable and good for one another, and consequently, waste could likely be reduced drastically.

The Buddha encouraged his followers to practice the Four Boundless states of loving-kindness, of compassion, of sympathetic joy, and of equanimity. This practice starts by suffusing one's own mind with universal love and extended it to its family, neighbour, as well as the whole universe. We should take careful consideration when we make a consumption decision, not only we should carefully and mindfully consider about its practical purposes but also how can the consumption be made responsibly, for example, is there any ways which can make our consumption becoming more self-responsible, and also be responsible for ourselves, for our families, and extend it to the whole universe? We should consume both the human and natural resources responsibly without overexploiting them in order to sustain them for our future generations (Sree 2014, p.248).

**3.3. Simplification of desires**

In the *Khandhaka,* there are rules pertaining to the use of luxurious items which provide guidance on how to simplify desires through daily lives. In the Cullavagga, there are rules which are set for the use of luxurious materials of almbowls and bowl rests, it states, "A bowl made of/with gold should not be used. A bowl made of/with silver…gems…lapis lazuli…crystals…bronze… glass…tin…lead…copper should not be used. Whoever should use one: an offense of wrong doing. I allow two kinds of bowl: an iron bowl, a clay bowl" (Cv.V.9.1, p.152). Besides, there is a restriction on the decoration of a bowl rest which promotes the practice of simplification of desires towards material items, for instance, Materials of tin and lead or others which are of less value such as bamboo and wood, are allowed for the making of a bowl rest. Moreover, certain decorations with ornamentation or figures are also prohibited, it states, "I allow you, monks, two (kinds of) circular bowl-rests; made of tin, made of lead…Monks, carved circular bowl-rests should not be used. Whoever should use one, there is an offence of wrong- doing. I allow you, monks, ordinary

circular rests" (Cv.V.9.2, p.153). These rules are set with implications that an item itself serves only the most pragmatic functions and that any unnecessary decoration is prohibited.

Furthermore, the consumption of alcoholic beverage which may lead to the increment of sensual desires is also prohibited in the *Khandhaka*. There is a prohibition against alcoholic consumption. From the second council, a set of questions over alcoholic consumption was raised, in the Cullavagga, it states, "'Honoured sir, is it allowable to drink unfermented toddv?' 'What, your reverence, is this toddy?' 'Honoured sir, is it allowable to drink whatever is fermented liquor (but) which has not fermented and has not arrived at the stage of being strong drink?' 'Your reverence, it is not allowable' " (Cv.XII.1.10, p.418).

In the aspect of lodging, certain decorations of the human and animal body in a lodging place in which they may possibly lead to temptation over sexual desires are prohibited. The Canon forbids drawings of human forms and the Commentary further extends this injunction to any animal forms, it states, "Monks, you should not have a bold design made with figures of women, figures of men. Whoever should have one made, there is an offence of wrong-doing. I allow, monks, wreath-work, creeper-work, swordfish teeth, the five strips (of cloth design)" (Cv.VI.3.2, p.213). However, those drawings may be allowed if the illustration facilitate in the teaching of the dhamma.

In the aspect of dressing, there are rules concerning simplification of desires. There is a prohibition on the use of a mirror for the reflection of one's face. It states, "Monks, a mark on the face should not be examined in a mirror or in a water-bowl. Whoever should (so) examine it, there is an offence of wrong-doing" (Cv. V.2.4, p.144). The Commentary offers another allowance to check for any indications of ageing which is to be used for meditating on impermanence. (Ṭhānissaro, 2013) In addition, there is a prohibition of applying creams, glues to the face, unless for therapeutic reasons, it states, "Monks, the face should not be anointed, the face should not be rubbed (with paste), the face should not be rubbed (with paste), the face should not be powdered with chunam, the face should not be smeared with red arsenic, the limbs should not be

painted and faces should not be painted, Whoever should do (any of these things), there is an offence of wrong-doing" (Cv.V.2.5, p.145). Another similar rule is applied to the context of the instruments for ears, instruments for practical purposes such as cleaning are allowed, provided that the instrument itself isn't made of luxurious or fancy materials; also ear ornaments are not allowed unless for health and meditative purposes, it states, "Monks, ear ornaments should not be worn, chains ornamental strings of beads for the throat ... ornaments at the waist ... bangles ... armlets . . . bracelets . . . finger rings should not be worn. Whoever should wear (any of these things), there is an offence of wrong-doing"(Cv.V.2.1, p.144).

In addition, it is worth to note that there is a consideration of simplifying others' desire as shown in the *Khandhaka*, a Bhikkhu can only put on robes in which the cloth and robe borders are cut. In the Mahāvagga, it states, "Monks, robes that are not cut up are not to be worn. Whoever should wear one, there is an offence of wrong- doing (Mv.VIII.11.2, p.407). From this text, it notes that Venerable Ananda sewed the pieces of cloth together with a rough stitch, so that the robes would be appropriate for contemplatives and not provoke thieves (Mv.VIII.12.2, p.409). The consideration of this act is to reduce the monetary value and therefore it is less likely to be stolen by thieves.

In the modern sense, when a monk who is firstly entered into the sangha, he is trained to be mindful over the five sensual organs therefore he will not mislead himself to the desired path. In the *Khandhaka*, we can find the guidance of how to simplify desires, even in a modern and commercial society which are led by consumerism and materialism. The Buddha set the pragmatic rules on how to simplify desires through simple lifestyle, for instances, the rules in different living aspects which refrain from the use of luxurious materials and ornaments. In a modern society, some people tend to purchase luxurious items because those items represent fame and reputation for themselves. However, what are the justifications of using luxurious items in a modern society? It is argued that it is also important for a modern society to sustain through the diversity of consumption patterns and settings as they are often relating to the development of enterprises, employment, as well as distribution of

wealth. Nevertheless, it could be a practical suggestion to postpone the present consumption on those unnecessary items and to save up the capital for the better use at the latter time, perhaps for the next generations or on the purposes for helping to those in need.

It is generally agreed that simplification of desires helps one to develop tranquillity in mind and it is crucial for one's spiritual growth. Since morality is one of the key components in developing a healthy society, there are modern implications in the *Khandhaka* indicating how one should be aware of oneself over temptation, for instance, sexual temptation, indulgence in alcohol and drugs, in which they may interfere with not only his own spiritual growth in the present generation, but also for the sake of the wellbeing of the next generations. The author states, in order to be successful in life, one is based upon the 'maturation of the heart and spirit' rather than accumulations of material goods (Yamamoto, 2010, p.141). Kovács Gábor (2011, p.31) agrees with this idea and he states that the Buddhist strategy is the opposite of the cultivation of desires as profit motive as it requires ever-increasing demands while Buddhism recommends moderation in consumption, in order to achieve a higher level of satisfaction and real wellbeing.

It is worth to note that, the practice of simplification of desires implies that an individual is willing to put it with entire devotion and happiness. The Canon provides guidance of right attitudes of contentment that a Bhikkhu should develop with whatever he receives from others. According to the Aṅguttara Nikāya, it states that "This Dhamma is for one who is content, not for one who is discontent.' Thus was it said. With reference to what was it said? There is the case where a Bhikkhu is content with any old robe-cloth at all, any old almsfood, any old lodging, any old medicinal requisites for curing illness at all. 'This Dhamma is for one who is content, not for one who is discontent' (AN IV, pp.228-229). Furthermore, a Bhikkhu should also make sure that his contentment does not lead to pride, that means he will not use the requisites given with attachment; even if he is not receiving any requisites, he will not be agitated (AN II, p.27). In this way, the requisites fulfil their intended purposes as tools to the training of the mind.

## 4. CONCLUSION

To conclude, for a healthy and sustainable society, the practices of virtues are found in different aspects in the *Khandhaka*, in the contexts of non-harming, responsible consumption, and simplification of desires. In any society, these virtues should be developed for the sake of not only the present generation but also the future generations. In addition, under the concept of dependent co-arising, any economic and human problems will, therefore, in turn to be more serious if proper actions are not taken (Yamamoto, 2010 pp.138-141). Furthermore, according to the teachings of the Middle Way, it is crucial to fulfill the requirements of balancing between different viewpoints and entities and to avoid getting into extremes. All of these concepts raise the importance of controlling desires and limiting consumption, one shall also put careful consideration the importance and connection of harmony, among people and societies, into their decision making.

Though sustainability in a Buddhist sense is not equivalent to that of a modern sense. Since the necessary material requisites are very important for spiritual attainment and development, in monastics, the purposes of having appropriate wellbeing of a Bhikkhu only serve as a tool for inner and spiritual perfection and their requisites are mostly given by lay-followers and donors. Therefore, we should note that the concept of sustainable development of a modern society can't be interpreted and applied solely based on a Buddhist viewpoint however it provides a tool for modern people when they are engaging in economic activities and making social and personal decision, which the virtues and the teaching of the Buddha can serve as a ground (Kovács, 2011, p.22). Furthermore, achievement throughout everyday life depends on the development of the heart and soul instead of gathering and collections of material merchandise. Even though it is certainly true that the entities which have been discussing are difficult to quantify scientifically, there is no loss for us in holding high expectation and in doing good, rather it is ensuring of the accomplishment of non-harming, responsible consumption, and simplification of desires, in order to achieve the realization of inner freedom from suffering.

## ABBREVIATIONS

AN *Aṅguttara Nikāya*

PTS *Pāli Text Society*

Mv *Mahāvagga*

Cv *Cullavagga*

Kh *Khandhaka*

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# BUDDHIST ETHICS IN THE ESTABLISHMENTS OF GREEN TOURISM

by Ida Bagus Putu Suamba*

**ABSTRACT**

Green tourism comes into existence as a response to increasingly damage of nature caused by uncontrolled desires of human. Converting fertile land, forest, or beaches into tourism infrastructures or facilities under the name of development; this is far from being green tourism. The development has been accelerated with the involvement of science and technology. Now each country in the world are worried about its existence, nature, and culture under threat of extinction; in fact, economic benefits have been gained; and each looks back at its tradition or customs to find out its essential values or wisdoms to be utilized to cope with the ongoing problem. Buddhism even though since its beginning does not explicitly talk about green tourism, however, course of life of the Buddha was very closed to nature and no harm to it. This paper aims at discussing some principles of ethics as revealed in Buddhist cannons which may be contributed to the establishment of green tourism, especially the concept of dependent origination *(Pratitya-samutpada)* and *Brahmaviharas*, like *maitri*, *karuna*, *mudita*, and upeksa. Data are gathered, categorised, analysed, and interpreted using qualitative approach from Buddhist ethical principles, especially of Yogacara of Mahayana tradition. It is found that components which compose nature either tangible or intangible are interdependent and connected to each other of which Conscious-only principle as the

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basis on which nature are understood and utilized. There is a spiritual connection between human and nature, and the disturbance of each, will trigger imbalance amongst elements of nature and human beings. This consciousness especially universal consciousness (alaya) may be utilized in establishing green tourism both as an activity of travelling and as a business. To bring the conception down to earth, certification of green tourism in which Buddhist ethical values may be incorporated is a strategic effort that can be attempted.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Green tourism has been increasingly a popular concept as well as widely adopted practice of tourism in the world todays no matter in Buddhist nominating countries, like Thailand, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, etc. As said by Furqan, Mat Som, and Hussin that green tourism is defined as environmentally friendly tourism activities with various focuses and meanings. In a broad term, green tourism is about being an environmentally friendly tourist or providing environmentally friendly tourist services (2010). Its emergence is due to strong needs to develop sustainable tourism both as leisure and business activities without harming or destroying natural environment. Tourists want to enjoy eco-friendly hotel, healthy environment, products, food, and souvenirs. Some of them promotes conservation of nature and avoiding use of product or action associated with chemicals or materials which can harm nature, like plastic products. Furqan, Mat Som, and Hussin further state that green tourism is important to encourage travel that would help support natural and cultural aspects, while encouraging respect for and conservation of urban resources and cultural diversity (2010). After almost fifty years of tourism practices, worries even threats of the continuity of nature or environment have happened increasingly due to the uncontrolled use of nature. What is obvious that behind the enjoyment of tourism there is a threat even extinction of human race from the earth. It is not an exaggeration to state that capacity of nature is getting less and less and imbalance exists from small to larger scale due to unwise use of it. Huge conversation of land for tourism facilities, excessive use of water even ground water, polluted water/sea due to tourism activities, decreasing farming land and forest have been increasing in the last fifty years.

Owing to these facts, there happened a growing awareness all over the world that the natural world has limits that our current assumptions and activities are quickly exceeding it. Greed-based business wants to take more from nature without giving anything to it. As remarked by Kilipiris and Zardava (2012) that "in real practice, green tourism is used sometimes by the tourism industry as a label, providing information to the tourist such as how to conserve energy, avoid littering in the beach etc., and not actually touching the major impacts of tourism. While strong competition exists between tourist enterprises it seems logical their unwillingness to implement green strategies. There are for instance cases where the economic benefits of tourism very little remain locally and are repatriated to foreign countries". In other words, natural preservation is the corner stones of green tourism, which for the long run, can provide more jobs. Nevertheless, by the end of 20th century, there has been a severe shift of approaches or orientation of tourism from what the so-called traditional or local tourism to global tourism which involves the moving of huge number of tourists from one country to another leading the world economy. Tourism is really a huge business involving huge numbers of workers, tourists, technologies, and nature. Green tourism as a new type of tourism undergoing severe changes of tourism accordingly.

Unfortunately, in the mid of massive business of tourism, the contribution of Buddhist ideas or values to the development of green tourism worldwide is still meagre, in fact Buddhist canons contain some ideas of ecology in which tourism involved in it. Life of the Buddha was often associated with nature; his spiritual journey was in nature. He even achieved his Buddhahood in his interface with nature; under the Bodhi tree he had achieved the enlightenment (Buddhahood) after doing deep meditation. Hence, the conception of green business or green tourism is available in there even though not in a systematic form. The only thing required is attempt to formulate basic principles or ideas which may support green tourism. When tourism as a business is taken into account which widely spread in the post-World War II, it can be understood the conception of green tourism comes from industrial countries in which Buddhism may not become strong inner power in designing or creating a framework of green tourism. Being a global spirituality,

Buddhism is not yet adopted in green tourism. Despite the fact Buddhist values perhaps adopted in local tourism in Buddhist dominating countries, however, they are mixed up with Western views since it is a business practices. They developed it based on business consideration and nature preservation from Western perspectives.

This paper aims at discussing Buddhist ethical values, especially Brahmaviharas and the conception of Consciousness-only doctrine in establishing green tourism as advocated in Yogacara of Mahayana Buddhism. These values may be utilized in the management of green tourism both as a leisure and business activities. The analysis is done from theoretical frame work from Buddhism perspective in viewing the green tourism as an externalization of inner consciousness of mind.

## 2. GREEN TOURISM: LEISURE AND BUSINESS

Increasing number of facts showing the damage of nature due to human behaviours especially in developing countries forcing tourism sector to protect/preserve nature; it is so tourism as a business is basically a nature-based business. Green or eco-tourism will mean nothing unless nature is preserved well not only todays but for the future. As quoted by Buckley (1994) that environmental organizations have generally insisted that only tourism that is nature-based, sustainably-managed, conservation-supporting, and environ- mentally-educated should be described as ecotourism (Baez and Rovinski 1992; Boo 1990; Ceballos-Lascurain 1992; Eber 1992; EAIPR 1992; Figgiss 1993; Lee and Snepenger 1992, Richardson 1993a, 1993b; Swanson 1992; Young 1992; Young and Wearing 1993; Ziffer 1989), which should be persistently applied both in theory and practice.

For a long term business, it should not only think of profit but also the preservation of nature. In other words, it should not only profitable but also be moral; and hence it has ethical dimension which is more important for sustainability of business. Tourism will not be sustained unless nature as a holistic unit is preserve well. There is an interrelationship between nature and the continuity of business whatever is the form. Owing to this fact, a sharp difference happened between environment activity and tour operator or stake

holder as the latter only thinks of their return of capital investments. As remarked by Hudson and Miller that like in many other parts of the developed world, a fierce battle is taking place between conservationists and the tourism industry. Conservationists are arguing for more environmental protection and a restriction on tourism growth, and tourism operators are seeking to upgrade and develop tourism facilities, arguing that it is wrong to restrict access and deny their businesses profits and locals and tourists the opportunity to enjoy some of the most beautiful and accessible outdoor recreation terrain in the world (Theobald, 2005, p. 248). However, when business ethics are taken into account a balance approach will suffice to run green tourism. According to Dodds and Joppe (2001) as quoted by Furqan, Mat Som, and Hussin (2010) that the green tourism concept can be broken down into four components.

i. Environmental responsibility—protecting, conserving, and enhancing nature and the physical environment to ensure the long-term health of the life-sustaining eco-system.

ii. Local economic vitality—supporting local economies, businesses and communities to ensure economic vitality and sustainability.

iii. Cultural diversity—respecting and appreciating cultures and cultural diversity so as to ensure the continued well-being of local or host cultures.

iv. Experiential richness—providing enriching and satisfying experiences through active, personal and meaningful participation in, and involvement with, nature, people, places and cultures

Economic activity is expected for the wellness of the entire universe no matter in tourism since it involves huge number of people. As stated by Jayasaro that by including the "right live hood" in the Eightfold Path, the Buddha recognizes the role of economic activity both in promoting individual wellbeing and in developing a society in harmony with the principles of Dhamma. He taught that Buddhists should take moral and spiritual criteria into account when considering a live hood, in particular by abstaining from live hoods harming other people, animals, or the environment (2013, p.138).

The conception of non-violence (ahimsa) both toward living and non-living entity is corner stone for other moral values. He further states that he (the Buddha) emphasized the importance of making one's living honestly and with a healthy motivation. Honesty leads to self-respect and helps to create an atmosphere of mutual trust in the workplace. When desire is focused on the rewards of work rather on the pleasure of job well done, short term thinking and corruption are always likely to appear. When people's minds are focused on the quality of work itself rather than the material rewards it provides, they become more content, experience less stress, and do better work (Jayasaro, 2013, p. 138). Concentration, dedication, and respect to works itself can create happiness since mind as the site of consciousness develops to its maximum capacities. He further states that in Buddhism terms, the measures of an economy are not to be found in the number of millionaires it can produce, but in the degrees to which it can ensure access to the four requisites for all" (Jayasaro, 2013, p.139). Welfare in the right sense should cover prosperity of all and it should be possible through the implementation of economic system of a country.

Positive Buddhist views on nature can be seen from the life story of the Buddha who is often associated with tree: his birth at Lumbini as his mother grasped the branch of a sal tree, his early experience of states of meditation absorption beneath the tree apple tree, his Enlightenment beneath the Bodhi tree, and his Parinirvana (death) between twin dal trees". (Singh, 2011, p.1). Taking the Buddha was wandering around nature, meeting and teaching values to many people during his course of life, Buddhism supports the operation of green-tourism for wellbeing or well fare for the whole society without harming nature. The wandering of the Buddha exploring nature and community all around India was basically a form of eco-tourism in real sense despite the fact tourism at that period was not yet a form of business rather wandering or travelling from one place to another was for seeking Buddhahood. In other words, whatever kinds of tourism developed, it should not neglect happiness of all and wellbeing. Of this view, it requires values rooted in ethics. Reading from the cannons, Buddhism is rich in ethical values which can be utilized for developing green tourism.

It can be in complementary with modernity in which Buddhism can contribute its values for balancing of those various elements may involve in practice. Since interconnectedness between man and nature is very much emphasized by the Buddhist values as rooted in principles of Pratitya Samutpada, Brahmaviharas like maitri (lovingkindness), karuna (compassion), mudita (joy), and upeksa (equanimity), they can be used to control imbalance of profit oriented tourism with balance of nature. The ethical teaching may be considered in designing, implementing, and evaluating any green-oriented tourism without losing financial benefit. With the involvement of ethical values, tourism is not only directed to its goodness as an agent which serve goodness to customers/tourists but also respects nature in the real sense. Sometimes jargon of Buddhist ethical value is pronounced by business agencies but it is for attracting public interest only without genuine application of the principles in the field.

Amongst ethical values, maitri (lovingkindness) presupposes the sustenance not only the relationship of nature to nature but also relationship of men to men, and man to nature in multiple ways. Love should be the basis on which any efforts attempted to create business including tourism. With regards to greedy economic entrepreneurship, is there any conception of love incorporated in designing and implementing green-tourism? What is obvious for a long run of business, its goal should not spoil the loving attitude to nature; seeking earnings should not spoil sense of love to others. In a reverse direction, lovingkindness should overshadow not only in designing, implementing, and controlling but also the products offered. One will be difficult to respect and love nature without practice loving himself, others and nature. Education training on loving others since childhood in family and school plays an important role since modern education tends to put emphasis more on cognitive rather than on affective domain. Millennium generations who use to spend much time in his/her gadgets will have a little chance to understand, interact, and appreciate nature even for a small scale. When lovingkindness develops in oneself, feeling of sympathy and concern (karuna) to environment will appear. Taking man connected in some ways with nature, ultimately

human being is part and parcel of nature, feeling of sympathy, concern, etc. should be directed to design as well as in implementing tourism program. From top management officer till the tour guide or tour operators will do the same vision to protect nature. When, for instance, visitors throw away plastic bag to a wrong place, tour guide/driver can tell the right place since his/her action can harm nature. Thus, feeling of sympathy and concern should not only happen in top management but also all people involve in the business. Having a feeling of sympathy, concern, or pity to other and nature will give us inner joy *(mudita)*, which is required in life. The key here is feeling being a part of the other; it touches the feeling and satisfies the mind for loving others. Developing joy will be futile without considering the fate of others and nature. Egoistic joy may be reached for some degrees, but it is usually for a short period of time, in fact Buddhism teaches us to reach unlimited happiness through expanding flow of consciousness. When this joy is experienced, one will feel in different with others, *upeksa* (equanimity) can be experienced. Peaceful mind comes out from success in implementing values of maitri, karuna, and upeksa to nature. As stated by Joyadip that in one of the Buddhist sources, the relationship of a tree to human is explained as follows: "the tree indeed is the bearer of the flower and the fruit… the tree gives the shade to all people who come near… the tree does not give shade differently (*Milindapañhā*, VI, 409 –*"rukkho nāma pupphaphaladharo… rukkho upagatānamanuppaviṭṭhānam janānam chāyam deti…., rukkho chāyāvemattam na karoti")"* (2013). When nature gives everything to human beings, we should sustain it and take as minimal need as required for the sustainability of nature. We often treat nature unfair and try to give superficial reason behind action taken to nature.

When positive relation between human being and nature is understood, there should be moral responsibilities for all to protect nature from selfish, uncontrolled desire to harm nature. The task for human is to find the best mode of relationship with nature. From this view, as stated by Jayasaro that education in the domain of conduct, emotion, and intellect may work well provided that there arises positive attitude to nature and having scope both individual

and society. Education conduct requires us to put the well-being of the planet above short-term needs. It means cultivating the will refrain from certain kinds of harmful activities, to adopt a simpler, less wasteful way of life. The changes needed on the level of conduct cannot be made by an educated elite, to be successful they need to be adopted by all. For this reason, they need to be backed by laws, customs, and cultural norms (2013, pp. 148-149). Thing common is awareness does not happen in decision maker level since they always think of profit reward. Jayasaro further said that the education in emotion requires us to instill within our cultures, and within each individual heart, a love and respect for the natural world which makes the destruction of the environment repugnant to us (2013, p. 149). Sense of affection to love our mother earth is getting less since human does not enough time to understand and respect the earth. He further states that the education in intellect requires us to investigate the causes and conditions that underline a sustainable future for the human race. It involves understanding the consequences of our smallest acts of consumption on planet as a whole. It means seeing the drawbacks of our current path (2013, p. 149). Moral responsibilities one have will find the possible mode to keep the relationship run in harmonious way.

Even though these efforts are hardly successful, creating awareness of the importance of education for those elements amongst people involves in tourism should be attempted profiting various medias or channels. What is pertinent that environment is the center of tourism activity; and clean and friendly environment is a guarantee and a key factor of tourism attraction.

### 3. INTER-RELATEDNESS

Buddhist cosmology views that every existence is related to the other; nothing is free from its connectedness; and each works forming a holistic system of nature. "Bringing this insight down to earth it becomes clear that by harming nature we are in fact harming ourselves" (Singh, 2011, p. 2), however not all can perceive this fact. Joyadip states that the ecosystem in Buddhism implies a deeper understanding of the conditioned co-production, seeing things not as beings but as patterns of relatedness. In other words, the modern

theory of the relatedness of man with its surrounding ecosystem totally concurs with the fundamental Buddhist teaching of Dependent co-arising (pratitya samupada) (2013). The existence of an entity is due to the existence of the other and they are related in multifarious relationship. So no point to view that man can do whatever he likes towards nature; it should be some controls to use nature. Taking this view into consideration, nature and man are connected and they are parts and parcel of nature. Joyadip further states everything on earth had served one way or other for living and survival. We humans are related to or made entirely of non-human elements like natural greeneries, earth, water, clouds, sunshine etc. which make us a part of the nature. For the long lasting survival of mankind, the ecosystem needs to be respected highly and preserved. Protecting human life is not possible without also protecting the lives of animals, plants, and minerals. All living sentient beings in one way or another are totally interdependent towards each other for their own survival (2013). With this view, no reason to treat environment just for the sake of fulfilling desires.

Each elements of nature have its own meaning, role, and function to perform even though they are flow of consciousness. This universe can function as it is due to each of its components performs its own function having mutual relationship with other either being or not being, or nature or non-nature. It is complex and multi layers components of universe ranging from small unit to the highest one. Of this view, each serves the other in mutual way for the existence. A plant can grow, develop and give us leaves, flower, wood, etc. due to other entities like soil, water, sun rights, wind, etc. which all give conducive environment to grow. When human lives in nature, they take natural resources like water from nature for living. Joyadip states that natural environment, like forests and plant life, serves men and wildlife with numerous benefits, social, economic, and environmental. (2013). In other words, human has too much debts from nature. Unfortunately, sometimes no sufficient return is given to it. The result of this action causes overuse or exploitation of nature since it generates profit; in fact, it has limited capacities. This action will be dangerous not only for nature itself but for man and the whole system of universe. Owing this fact, nature has a pivotal

role in keeping it still natural. It also plays a critical role in the management of global climate. Global warming, is a clear example of harmful action produced by human which causes the damage of atmosphere. Now everyone worries about this global warming which may cause a big problem of man, nature, biology, ecology, geography, etc. When each is isolated or disconnected from the other relationships, imbalance will occur which further may affect the human life.

Bringing this view down to earth, each and every component that involves in green tourism is related in a mutual manner. People, nature, and culture in a broad sense are always related which require a good system to handle them. Rich culture may be grown up or developed due to the existence of human being who lives in nature. Their relationship should be balanced and mutually profitable without harming any of them. Tourism will mutually depend on nature since visitors like to enjoy something external including nature; it will give them a new or different nuance. Consciousness of universe can be developed through travelling to cultivate inner potential of self. Culture as a product of human arts is dependent on man and nature in keeping sustainable and developed. Components like men powers, accommodation, food and drinks, transportation, business ethics, attraction, etc. they are dependent on either directly or indirectly. Human resources work in this sector is not in small number, rather they work in different job, like hotelier, waiter, waitress, tour guide/operator, translator, driver, local people they meet, government, etc.

## 4. MIND, CONSCIOUS-ONLY DOCTRINE AND ENVIRONMENT

Whatever kind of tourism is to be developed is basically about the role of mind. How mind views itself and the external world? Mind has a strong and strategic role in this regards provided that one has some basic knowledge and positive attitude in it. However, to control mind is really difficult, and here it the problems require a deeper effort. Joyadip states that according to Buddhism, mind plays the most important role in everything we decide. Thus, one should think of a mental solution before finding a physical solution for problems. From the Buddhist moral point of view, all these things

happen due to fundamental insecurity and fear generated by the delusory notion of 'Ego-ness' or so called 'self'. Man deluded with the egoistic misconception of 'self' tend to think all impermanent objects as permanent (2013).

For a better comprehension of the relationship of man and nature in designing green tourism, the doctrine of Conscious-only of Mahayana Buddhism is worth to look at and to find out its contribution for Buddhahood in operating green tourism both as a leisure and business activities. When mind is taken to play an important role in activities of green tourism, it implies the role of its essential nature of Conscious-only doctrine for which the connection between mind and consciousness is indispensable. In this regards, to see in a comprehensive manner the relationship of humanity, society, and natural environment, it is worth to consider views proposed by Yamamoto (1998a) as quoted by Singh (2011); it is expected to be used to solve problems arises from unfair treatment of environment by human beings, as follows. These are (1) Principle of Symbiosis. Concept of nature and environment which are seen in the doctrine of dependent origination in Buddhism are similar to concepts of ecology. Everything is somehow connected... (2) Principle of Circulation. The concept of cycle or cycling that birth and death is repeating in the universe is important for considering the system of cycling in society…, (3) Perspective of Recognition of the World: In Buddhism all phenomenon are understood basically in terms of dependent origination, the idea of the interdependence and interaction among all existences covering three areas: the area of mind vs body, the area of the self vs others, the area of human race vs natural ecosystem; (4) Relationship of Subject and the Environment. The environmental view of Buddhism is a life-centric one, and is life-independent or anthropo-independent too. Both subject and its environment have a mutually interdependent and an interconnected relationship; (5) Intrinsic value of nature: The doctrine of dependent origination shows that everything in the ecosystem is equal in value. Because all living things and non-living things have the Buddha nature, they are regarded as having an equal dignity and an intrinsic value; and (6) The Right of Nature: Though environmental ethics will be expanding the concept of rights from

human rights into the rights of nature, the doctrine of dependent origination in Buddhism argues that human right are based upon the rights of nature (Singh, 2011, pp. 20-21).

When we try to understand the case, deep consciousness is much required for comprehending subtle thought than superficial consciousness. Deep consciousness only doctrine proposed by Yogacara school of Buddhism shows underneath consciousness is a vast realm that can produce deeper thought which is required for understanding complex interdependent of entity or things in this world. It shows that surface consciousness always affects the deep consciousness on the basis of dependent origination doctrine. The surface consciousness and the subsurface consciousness are always changing fluidly. The same way happened between the subject and its environments have a close relation as well as relation which appears as phenomenon at the surface. Owing to this fact, surface consciousness is only tip of iceberg floating on water. It means that there is a vast world that extends under the depths of the consciousness and the phenomenon (Singh, 2011, p. 21). Complex components and interactions of tourism have its centrality in consciousness as the faculty of mind. They are dependent internally as well as externally forming the world of flux.

What is the view of Consciousness-only doctrine to environmental problems? Buddhism view environments as a symbiosis of various component---living and non-living each interacting in a mutual even complex relation that the world is governed by the principles of dependent origination (*pratitya samutpada*) and creating a feedback loop of merciful, good common *karma*. Human being has fashioned environment on the basis of his single minded directed toward the fulfilment of human desires (Singh, 2011, p. 25). Problem becomes serious when the fulfillments is uncontrolled under the name of economic developments. Many environmental problems caused by unwell design of tourism can be taken as the manifestations of uncontrolled human desires enhanced by technology. Since tourism is a promising sector that can earn profit, every country, region or even village wants to developed eco-friendly tourism without deep consideration on the human and natural resources involve in it. It is often people

concern only on capital return rather than natural conservation or protection leaving aside negative impact of it. "The Conscious-only doctrine holds that whatever is manifested in the environment and what kind of environment is created reflect the common *karma*" (Singh, 2011, p.26). There is externalization of inner urges and desires which are unlimited. Human being response through senses and mind to the external object of enjoyments; and sometimes bad idea/action can be done to fulfil desires despite the fact mind may perform double functions: as entity enjoys as well as controls itself.

Observing a close look at the issue, the Consciousness-only doctrine thus sheds light on how humans have formed the environment and how the environment has effected humans. Particular here is the environment depends of common karma of the people who make up the particular society. Hence between human and environment are indispensable parts as flow of consciousness.

When people with full understanding that nature is enlarged projection of themselves, they must work hard to protect healthy and balanced environment (Singh, 2011, p. 26) --- be it living or non-living entity. In this regards the role of alaya as universal consciousness is very strategic as the home all latent ideas. It can be viewed as the potential mind, which through culture and control can stop the illusion of external objects and attachment to them" (Bhattacharyya, 1990, p. 14). "*Alaya vijnana* is the store house of consciousness acting as repository of all mental ideas. It is pure in nature. Due to unconscious tendency of individual consciousness it appears to be divided into innumerable separate consciousness. The apparent distinction of subject and object are due to ignorance. Vasubandhu views *alaya vijnana* evolves in a continuous stream-like water of river". (Acarya, 2004, pp. 524-525). It continuously changing as a flow of flux. Likewise, green tourism as externalization of internal consciousness stored as *alaya* consciousness, undergoes changing at every time due to efforts put by human being in developing it. This conception may be applied in establishment of green tourism commenced from ideas came to happen to create green tourism till its evaluation and development, the Consciousness-only doctrine can be used as the inner spirit for everyone especially decision maker in establishing green tourism.

As theoretical analysis does have any power to force both business sector and government to take action, a certification may be helpful to preserve nature from bad treatment of business provided that both parties are in agreement to do so. In this regards, every country may have some criteria or standards to be implemented in certification. The use of green tourism certification issued by respected body is usually intended (Sasidaharan, et. al., 2002) (1) to control tourism's negative environmental impacts on the natural resources base of destination areas by encouraging tourism enterprises to achieve high environmental standards, (ii) to educate tourists regarding the impacts of their actions and decisions, and (iii) to develop standards for environmentally friendly tourism products and services, as quoted by Furqan, Mat Som, and Hussin (2010). This certification is possible only after there has been natural awareness amongst the people, otherwise it is difficult when business only concerns for profitable action only.

The utilization of green tourism certification in developing countries would slot in with policies relating to natural resource management, environmental conservation and protection, and pollution control while conforming to the concept of environmentally friendly tourism development (Hashimoto, 1999; Erdogan and Tosun, 2009) as quoted by Furqan, Mat Som, and Hussin (2010). Taking Buddhist values as part of attempt to preserve nature and business, its values may be included in the standards or criteria in certification especially in dominating Buddhist countries. This is a real contribution of Buddhist ethics provided that the stockholders, business enterprises, and governments are in agreement to regulate and minimizes negative impacts of tourism to environment.

## 5. TO SUM-UP

Green tourism cannot develop without the involvement of human and nature. Environment is the backbone of green tourism the preservation of it is the task of all especially people or agencies involve including government. Buddhist moral values as expounded in the concepts of Brahmaviharas, like lovingkindness, are relevant to be utilized in the establishment of green tourism. As human part and parcel of nature, nothing exists in isolation as per the doctrine of

dependent origination. Buddhist ethics offer some ethical insights to look at the establishment of green tourism in which everything involves in tourism is connected either internally or externally in mutual or complex relation. The doctrine of Consciousness-only may be used to understand the core in a more comprehensive manner that green tourism is not only emphasizing profit but also respect and protect nature as none can life even doing business unless nature is protected for the well-being. When Consciousness-only principle is utilized to handle the case, one should have some knowledge of Buddhist ethics that the doctrine origination supports green tourism on the basis of mutual relation. The damage of nature is basically the threat even extinction of human race. Since external object or creation is the externalization of inner urges, ideas, then, no reason people escape from the conservation of nature. Green tourism should ideally consider both aspects: leisure and business activities. When this is on agreement amongst business sector, investors, and government to do so, certification is a possible way to control bad impacts of tourism on nature in which Buddhist ethics may be utilized especially in Buddhist dominating countries.

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# THE FRAMEWORK OF RIGHT CONSUMPTION

by Gábor Kovács*

**ABSTRACT**

The planet is now in a new epoch of its history, the Anthropocene, in which humanity exerts enormous impact on planetary processes. Human activities put a huge pressure on the earth system's structure and functioning with detrimental consequences.

The beginning of the age of the great acceleration is dated back to the 1950s, as earth systems trends and socio-economic trends accelerate since the middle of the last century. According to the patterns of great acceleration, socio-economic trends have been deteriorating that changes the future of the planet and the future of humanity.

A decisive part of the socio-economic system beside production and distribution is consumption. In the last decades not just world population, but primary energy consumption, water usage, fertilizer and paper consumption, and the consumption of various services have been increased exponentially.

In respect to sustainability, the central role of consumption was recognized by the United Nations as *"ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns"* is included as one of the seventeen *Sustainable Development* Goals in the UN Development Programme.

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Buddhism should and can reflect on the stressing issue of exponentially increasing consumption patterns in the modern world. According to Buddhism, responsible consumption is *right (sammā)* consumption that is understood as local, wise and mindful, which gives an opportunity for practicing the virtues of sharing (*dāna*), contentment (*appicchatā*) and moderation (*mattaññutā*).

According to the teaching of the Buddha and the conceptions of Buddhist economics, right consumption aims at satisfying *basic human needs* (food, clothing, shelter and medicine) with minimal environmental impact. Furthermore, *simplifying desires* appears in right consumption as an important factor to alleviate the pressure on earth systems. Thus right consumption contributes to the Buddhist ideal of peace and harmony in the age of the Anthropocene.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The paper introduces the Buddhist contributions to the subject of responsible consumption. On the one hand, it presents how the Buddhist approach transcends the traditional notion of sustainable consumption. On the other hand, it demonstrates how Buddhism interprets the notion of responsible consumption. The study recommends some necessary changes in consumption to ensure adaptable consumption patterns for the challenges that humanity faces in the epoch of the Anthropocene.

The first part of the paper introduces the new epoch of the planet's history, the Anthropocene. It investigates the current Earth System trends that drive the planet into a climate catastrophe, and presents the era of the Great Acceleration, in which the magnitude of numerous socio-economic indicators increases exponentially. The second part of the paper introduces the initiative of "Ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns", which is part of the United Nations' Development Programme, and one of the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals. The third part of the paper investigates the Buddhist approach to consumption and gives a framework of responsible consumption, which is regarded as right consumption from a Buddhist perspective. The discussion includes the comparison of the United Nations' and the Buddhist approaches of the subject of consumption. The paper ends with short conclusions.

In his paper, Apichai Puntasen (2007) analyzes the implementation of Buddhist teachings in economics. He introduces the main concepts of Buddhist economics on the three spheres of economics, namely production, distribution and consumption. The frameworks of Buddhist production, Buddhist distribution and Buddhist consumption are integrated in the model of Buddhist economic system that highlights a scenario, which makes the realization of peace and tranquility in economics possible.

Although production and consumption is very closely related in the economic system, this paper investigates in detail only the sphere of consumption, and provides some further insights on how responsible consumption is interpreted from a Buddhist standpoint. Consumption patterns and consumption habits are basically determined by personal decisions. As leading a life in accordance with the Noble Eightfold Path is also a personal decision, Buddhism can provide influential contributions to shape the framework of responsible consumption, which can be regarded as right consumption in the Buddhist terminology.

## 2. FROM CLIMATE CHANGE TO CLIMATE CATASTROPHE

In our days humanity faces with the ever-growing consequences of human-induced changes on the Earth System. Steffen et al. (2015a) identified nine processes and systems that regulate the stability and resilience of the Earth System. These planetary boundaries include climate change, change in biosphere integrity (biodiversity loss and species extinction), stratospheric ozone depletion, ocean acidification, biogeochemical flows (phosphorus and nitrogen cycles), land-system change (deforestation), freshwater use, atmospheric aerosol loading, and introduction of novel entities (organic pollutants, radioactive materials, nanomaterials, micro-plastics, etc.). Four of the nine planetary boundaries, namely climate change, biosphere integrity, land-system change, and biogeochemical flows have been crossed from a safe operating space to a zone of uncertainty or even to a zone of high risks.

Humanity exerts enormous impact on essential planetary processes and planetary boundaries. Human impact has become so profound that it has driven the Earth out from the epoch of

Holocene, in which human societies have developed in the last eleven thousand years (Steffen et al. 2015b). Based on the altered circumstances caused by humanity, the new geological epoch of the planet is called the "Anthropocene" (Crutzen 2002, Steffen et al. 2011), a fundamentally distinct epoch with anthropogenic markers (Waters et al. 2016), in which human activities put a huge pressure on the Earth System's structure and functioning with detrimental consequences.

Based on the twelve global socio-economic indicators like population, real GDP, foreign direct investments, urban population, primary energy use, fertilizer consumption, number of existing large dams, water use, paper production, number of new motor vehicles per year, sum of fixed and mobile phone subscriptions, and number of international tourist arrivals per year, Steffen et al. (2015b) arrive to the conclusion that the prime driver of change in the Earth System is predominantly the global economic system. The magnitude of the twelve socio-economic indicators increased exponentially from the 1950s, which delineates a phenomenon, called the "Great Acceleration". Earth System trends and socio-economic trends accelerate since the middle of the last century. Many of these indicators are related directly or indirectly to consumption. According to the patterns of Great Acceleration, socio-economic trends and the prevailing consumption patterns have been deteriorating, which worsens the chances of the future of humanity.

The interactions of land, ocean, atmosphere and life together provide those conditions, upon which the future of our societies depends. The knowledge that human activity now rivals geological forces in influencing the trajectory of the Earth System has important implications for both Earth System science and social decision-making (Steffen et al. 2018). Adaptation options can reduce the risks of climate change, and have a central role in the survival of humanity in the Anthropocene (Moufouma-Okia et al. 2018).

The patterns of the Great Acceleration show that socio-economic trends have enormous impact on the Earth System and contribute to transgressing planetary boundaries. A decisive part of the socio-economic system, beside production and distribution

is consumption. In the last decades not just world population, but primary energy consumption, water usage, fertilizer and paper consumption, and the consumption of various services have been increasing exponentially. Overgrown consumption, beside the operating mechanism of the prevailing business models is a core factor, fueling detrimental changes in the Anthropocene. Mainstream business and consumption patterns are the primary causes of altered climatic conditions. Thus, introducing and applying alternative business models in production and introducing responsible consumption are at the core of adaptation. Responsible consumption presupposes new consumer behaviors, which contribute to establish consumption patterns that allow to survive the climate catastrophe by adapting to the altered climatic conditions.

## 3. SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION PATTERNS

Although both production and distribution influence the climatic conditions fundamentally, these stressing issues are exceeding the scope of the paper as it investigates in detail only one part of the economic system, namely consumption. In respect to sustainability, the central role of consumption was recognized by the United Nations (UN) as "Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns" is one of the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the UN Development Programme (Goal 12).

Based on global data, the UN warns that currently the consumption of natural resources is increasing. For instance, in case of water, humankind is polluting rivers and lakes faster than nature can recycle and purify, although more than one billion people still do not have access to fresh water. The excessive use of water contributes to the global water stress. Not just the growing use of natural resources, but bad consumption patterns and consumption habits increase general consumption. In case of food, beside substantial environmental impacts in the production phase, households intensify the pressure on the environment through dietary choices and consumption habits. According to global UN data, an estimated one third of all food produced end up rotting in the bins of consumers and retailers, and more than two billion

people are overweight globally. The growth of consumption can also be observed by the increase of vehicle ownership, and global air travel. Should the global population reach 9.6 billion by 2050, the equivalent of almost three planets could be required to provide the natural resources needed to sustain current lifestyles (Goal 12).

The goal of the twelfth SDG is to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns. In doing so, one of the core objectives is to decouple economic growth from resource use and environmental degradation through improved resource efficiency, while improving people's well-being (Transforming, 2015). Thus, sustainable consumption and production is about promoting resource and energy efficiency, sustainable infrastructure, providing access to basic services, green and decent jobs and a better quality of life for all. Its implementation reduce future economic, environmental and social costs, strengthen economic competitiveness and reduce poverty. In general, sustainable consumption and production aims at "doing more and better with less" with the assumption that net welfare gains from economic activities can increase by reducing resource use, degradation and pollution along the whole life cycle, while increasing the quality of life. Realizing sustainable consumption needs to focus also on final consumers, which includes educating them on consumption and lifestyles, and providing them with adequate information through standards and labels (Goal 12).

The reports about the progress towards the SDGs depict a sad picture about ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns. Although the core objective is to decouple economic growth from natural resource use, global figures in 2016 pointed to worsening tendencies (Progress, 2017). According to the 2018 report about the progress, more and more countries are developing policies to promote sustainable consumption and production, and more multinationals and other large companies are reporting on sustainability (The Sustainable… 2018). Although there are changes that seem positive at first glance, as the share of renewable energy in final energy consumption has increased, but overall data confirm the Jevons paradox (Alcott 2005), that despite technological advances, energy use continuously grows, as the rate of energy consumption rises due to increasing demand (The Sustainable, 2018).

The UN's goal to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns operates mostly on national and organizational level. Only two of its eleven targets correspond to the personal level of consumers, namely reducing waste, and providing people the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature (Goal 12). Reducing waste can be done in many ways, from ensuring not to throw away food to reducing the consumption of plastic. Carrying a reusable bag, refusing to use plastic straws, and recycling plastic bottles are also good ways of waste reduction (Responsible… 2018), but raise the question if these measures will be enough to avoid the climate catastrophe or to adapt to the altered climatic conditions.

## 4. RIGHT (RESPONSIBLE) CONSUMPTION

Buddhism, like any other spiritual tradition, cannot avoid facing the problems of modernity. It has to provide answers to the most pressing questions, if it wants to remain a living tradition (Schmithausen 1997). Thus, Buddhism should reflect – beside others – on the issue of exponentially increasing consumption in the modern world. The following part of the paper discusses the approach and the contributions of Buddhism to the sustainable consumption debate by introducing the corresponding ideas of Buddhist economics, many of which concern the personal behavior in economic life.

The ultimate goal of Buddhism is to reach enlightenment and put an end to suffering. It is an inner, spiritual development, which requires only a minimum level of material comfort (Zsolnai – Kovács, forthcoming). Buddhism functions on the personal level, as leading a life according to the Noble Eightfold Path means the perfection of oneself to the highest possible stage of perfection.

Fredrick Pryor (1991) argues that in an economic sense there are fundamental differences between wants and needs. Venerable P. A. Payutto (1994) also draws attention to the teaching of the two kinds of wanting, namely tanhā and chanda, both of which have a fundamental role in consumption. According to Buddhism, tanhā means desire for pleasure objects and chanda means endeavor for well-being. The former could be called wanting, while the latter is

the aspiration for right and skillful. Consumption fueled by tanhā or desire-driven consumption leads to obtaining and possessing, but consumption led by chanda results solely the satisfaction of life's basic needs, which contributes to well-being and forms a solid basis for the further development of human potentialities. Thus, chanda contributes to spiritual development. This point is often overlooked by economists, as modern economic thinking does not make distinction between the two kinds of wanting. Treating them equally leads to a situation in which both of them are to be satisfied by maximizing consumption in the spirit of "the more and the bigger is the better".

Above life's basic needs, one should minimize his or her consumption, thus making minimization the objective function of consumption patterns and consumption habits in the case of desires and desire-driven consumption. Modern economic thinking encourages maximum consumption in order to satisfy desires, but does not deal with what happens after one's desires are satisfied (Payutto 1994). According to the teachings of the Buddha, three kinds of tanhā are inherent parts of human life: they cannot be satisfied, they are ever-emerging, and form the root of suffering (SN 56.11).

Based on the distinction of tanhā and chanda, and on the fact that desires lead to suffering, Buddhism suggests not to multiply but to simplify desires above material needs. It is wise to try to reduce one's desires, as wanting less could bring substantial benefits not only for the person, but also for the community, and for nature (Zsolnai 2007). Thus, the Buddhist approach to desire-driven consumption understands that non-consumption – or the full minimization of consumption – can contribute to well-being. Furthermore, certain demands can be satisfied only through non-consumption, a position which traditional economic thinking would find hard to appreciate (Payutto 1994).

Buddhism offers the methods of Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration as parts of the Noble Eightfold Path to change one's preferences and consumption habits. Leading a Buddhist life encompasses meditation practice, which can be used to tackle with ever-emerging tanhā, which is the root of suffering.

In his formal model, Serge-Christophe Kolm (1985) connects consumption and meditation. He argues that consumption requires labor time, as consumers must work in order to earn the necessary money for that. In general, time can be expended on meditation and work. It is recommended that only as much time should be spent with work that allows satisfying life's basic needs. The rest of the time should be expended on meditation, or could be expended on work for transforming the consumption patterns and consumption habits of life's basic needs to reverse the symptoms of the Great Acceleration.

Payutto (1994) asserts that training the mind through meditation contributes to achieve some inner contentment, which is a virtue, related to consumption and satisfaction. Buddhism proposes contentment as a skillful objective. The correct definition of contentment implies the absence of artificial desires. When we are easily satisfied with material things, we save time and energy that might otherwise be wasted on seeking consumer goods. The time and energy we save can be applied to the development of true well-being.

According to Buddhism, pursuing desires leads to suffering, while desires cannot ultimately be satisfied. Therefore, the following part of the paper investigates the Buddhist approach to the consumption of life's basic needs. From now on, the term consumption in the paper is used only in the context of consuming life's four basic requisites, namely food, clothing, housing and medicine. In doing so, those ideas of Buddhist economics will be introduced that concern consumption and the personal behavior in economic life.

In his book "Small is beautiful" Ernst Friedrich Schumacher (1973) described the two main characteristics of Buddhist economics as simplicity and non-violence. Both contribute to consume less from the scarce resources of the environment, and lead to realize localization. Schumacher was one of the first, who drew attention to the fundamental difference between renewable and non-renewable resources, and urged the utilization of renewables, which is also an important part of today's sustainability debate.

Pryor (1991) emphasizes the importance of moderation in economics and in consumption, which is in accordance with the spirit of the Middle Way. Payutto (1994) formulates it even stronger, when he asserts that at the very heart of Buddhism is the wisdom of moderation, and economic activity must be controlled by moderation that consumption for instance is directed to the attainment of well-being rather than maximum satisfaction. According to Peter Daniels (2006), moderation or the willful reduction of the material and energy flows of economy has become vital. The possibility of a successful adaptation depends on reduction, which is consistent with the ethics of Buddhist moderation.

Frugality means low material consumption, simple lifestyle, and the openness of the mind for spiritual goods. Its synonyms are self-restriction, chosen poverty and voluntary simplicity. The Buddha arrived to the conclusion that frugality is a rational virtue, because desires are insatiable in nature, and their simplification contributes to the alleviation of suffering (Bouckaert – Opdebeeck – Zsolnai 2011).

Based on moderation, with the help of meditation practice, the trap of over-consumption can be avoided. One must be aware of how much is enough in the case of life's basic needs, because today's society encourages over-consumption. For instance, a great many people damage their own health by overeating, thus making themselves ill in the long run. Some become deficient in certain vitamins and minerals, despite eating large meals. Apart from harming themselves, their overeating deprives others of food. Thus, the social and environmental costs of over-consumption, such as depletion of natural resources and costs incurred by health care are enormous. On the other hand, Buddhism offers the possibility of realize moderation and contentment by which a balance without over-consumption can be achieved (Payutto 1994).

Richard Welford (2006) asserts that the main characteristics of Buddhist economics are moderation in consumption, and creativity or the positive utilization of human mind. Mindfulness and creativity allows the elimination of simplistic thinking, the most serious problems of modernity that leads to environmental destruction and stems from scientific materialism. As Clair Brown (2017) asserts, applying Buddhist economics at the personal

level means applying mindfulness in consumption, working together with others, and taking the right actions. There are fruitful initiatives of applying mindfulness in consumption in the contemporary world. Ethical consumerism (Boda – Gulyas 2006), for instance is one of the initiatives that are consistent with the Buddhist notion of mindful consumption. Thus, mindfulness is a fundamental part of enjoying life without relying on consumerism, since only disappointment and despair comes from wanting more and cultivating desires (Brown 2017).

Based on the basic teachings of Buddhism, responsible or right consumption has nothing to do with the satisfaction of desires. It focuses rather on the satisfaction of life's basic needs. According to the ideas of Buddhist economics, right consumption gives an opportunity to realize the Buddhist values of non-violence, moderation, frugality (simplicity), mindfulness and creativity. All of these values are constituent parts of the objective function of right consumption in the case of life's basic needs. Practicing these values regarding to consumption can contribute to facilitate environmental preservation, and minimize the ultimate environmental impact of consumption.

## 5. DISCUSSION

The approach of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals to sustainable consumption and production patterns is a scientific-technical one (Mitroff 1998), in which economic growth is assumed as an axiom of achieving sustainability by enhancing efficiency through introducing new technologies.

Its core objective is to decouple economic growth from resource use and environmental degradation. It uses the vocabulary of economics like sustainable infrastructure, access to basic services, green and decent jobs, and economic competitiveness. It monitors the progress of sustainability with economic terms like economic, environmental and social costs, and resource and energy efficiency. On the personal level regarding consumption the importance of education and waste reduction is also emphasized by the terms of the economic paradigm like introducing standards and labels.

The goal to ensure sustainable consumption and production

patterns is executed in a top-down approach from the level of nations and organizations. Nevertheless, the question still stands if this initiative will be able to help humanity succeeding in adapting to the altered climatic conditions in the epoch of the Anthropocene.

The Buddhist approach of responsible consumption expands the UN's scientific-technical analysis of the subject with an existential-spiritual dimension, affecting significantly also the systemic and interpersonal-social dimensions of the problem (Mitroff 1998).

The objective of right consumption is twofold. On the one hand, it aims to radically reducing or totally eliminating the desires-driven consumption, and on the other hand, to apply the values of non-violence, moderation, frugality (simplicity), mindfulness and creativity in the case of the consumption of life's basic needs, namely food, clothing, housing and medicine. Consumption, driven by Buddhist values contributes to environmental preservation, and minimizes the environmental impact.

The starting point of the arguments regarding right consumption is human nature, and the nature of desires. The Buddhist approach of consumption strives to explain the problem and give a possible solution at the personal level, thus presenting a bottom-up approach of the subject. Right consumption complements and transcends the conventional notion of sustainability, as due to the impermanent nature of phenomena, achieving sustainability is hardly possible according to Buddhism (Kovács 2011).

The conventional approaches of sustainable consumption patterns and consumption habits deal basically with the question of how to achieve sustainability. The Buddhist interpretation includes not simply the methods of right consumption, but presupposes a radical quantitative reduction or the total elimination of desire-driven consumption. The contemporary condition of the Earth System and the climatic conditions do not allow human beings to pursue their desires freely, or hardly allow anymore to practice moderation in the case of desire-driven consumption practices. Thus, not simply moderation or contentment, but the complete minimization should be the objective function of the reduction in the case of desire-driven consumption.

The Buddhist approach of responsible consumption proposes a radical reduction or the total elimination of desire-driven consumption in the first place, than allows people to practice certain Buddhist values regarding the consumption of life's basic needs, thus effectuating the notion of right consumption in practice.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

The possibility of a coming climate catastrophe in the epoch of the Anthropocene makes it necessary for humanity to adapt to the altered climatic conditions of the near future in every possible way. The Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations include some promising initiatives to achieve adaptation, although they have their own limitations.

The paper introduced the approach, by which Buddhism contributes to the sustainability consumption debate. The traditional, primarily scientific-technical approach of the subject is complemented by an existential-spiritual point of view. On the first place, Buddhism urges the radical reduction or the total elimination of desire-driven consumption, by which relieving personal, social and environmental suffering becomes possible. Furthermore, right consumption gives an opportunity to implement the Buddhist values of non-violence, moderation, frugality (simplicity), mindfulness and creativity in the consumption of life's basic needs. Thus, right consumption does not entail desire-driven consumption, but focuses only on life's basic needs, thus it can be a significant part of the adaptation model in the altered climatic conditions.

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# BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVE OF 'RIGHT CONSUMPTION' OF NATURAL RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

by Rahul K. Kamble*

**ABSTRACT**

Rapid industrialization, urbanization, and globalization, on one hand, achieved economic growth whereas on the other led to environmental degradation. This economic growth which is highly influenced by greed, hatred, and delusion resulted in indiscriminate exploitation of limited natural resources. This indiscriminate use of natural resources is 'wrong consumption'. Based upon the Buddhist principle of Dependent Origination every cause has an effect(s). This 'wrong consumption' of natural resources–which is a cause–has resulted in effects such as natural resources depletion, environmental degradation, pollution, threat to species, climate change etc. The purpose of this paper is to correlate the 'wrong consumption' of natural resources to lust, hate, and delusion–the three basic cause of sorrow and furthermore 'right consumption' with the Noble Eightfold Path based upon wisdom, morality and mental culture which will lead to sustainable development. The findings of the study highlight the 'wrong consumption' of natural resources are based on lust, hate, and delusion and resulted in the depletion of natural resources and environmental degradation. To

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overcome these sufferings caused due to 'wrong consumption', 'right consumption' of natural resources virtue has to be developed in an individual. This virtue is based on wisdom, morality and mental culture–the aspects of the Noble Eightfold Path. It is concluded, to have sustainable development 'right consumption' of natural resources are required. It is recommended to achieve the objective of sustainable development through 'right consumption' of natural resources, Buddhist aspects of renunciation, generosity, moral responsibility, calm and stillness, kindness and compassion, non-grasping and non-attachment, sharing, non-violence, awareness of the impermanence of the things and pleasure need to be developed. Furthermore, transforming consumption pattern first at an individual level and then extending it towards society will change the human psyche and will pave towards achieving the goal of sustainable development which United Nations has also identified for achieving better and more sustainable future for all by 2030 by incorporating 17 goals of which "Responsible Production and Consumption" is one of them.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

All means of satisfying human needs, at a given time and place, are resources. The "resources" are means for attaining individual and social welfare. Natural compounds like land, water, minerals, forests, wildlife, energy–or even man himself–are considered as resources as well as resource-creating factors (Santra, 2014). The way in which societies use and care for natural resources fundamentally shapes the well-being of humanity, the environment, and the economy. Natural resources–that is, plants and plant-based materials, metals, minerals, fossil fuels, land, and water–are the basic inputs for the goods, services, and infrastructure of socio-economic systems from the local to the global scale. Research shows that, either directly or indirectly, natural resources and the environment are linked to all of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Restoring and maintaining the health of the natural resource base is a necessary condition for achieving the ambitious level of well-being for current and future generations set out in these goals (IRP, 2017).

If the global population reaches 9.6 billion by 2050, the equivalent of almost three planets will be required to sustain current lifestyles.

More people globally are expected to join the middle class over the next two decades. This is good for individual prosperity but it will increase demand for already constrained natural resources. If we don't act to change our consumption and production patterns, we will cause irreversible damage to our environment. Each year about one-third of all food produced–equivalent to 1.3 billion tonnes worth around US$ 1 trillion–ends up rotting in the beans of consumers and retailers or spoiling due to poor transportation and harvesting practices. Households consume 29 percent of global energy and contribute to 21 percent of resultant carbon dioxide emissions (Why it Matters, 2018).

Approximately 19 million premature deaths are estimated to occur each year globally due to environmental and infrastructure-related risk factors that arise from the way societies extract and use natural resources in production and consumption systems, including essential infrastructure and food provision. About 6.5 million premature deaths (the vast majority in cities) are caused by air pollution related to energy supply and use in homes and industries, as well as transportation and construction sectors within cities (IRP, 2017).

Material demand has continued to shift from biomass and renewable materials to non-renewable materials, creating new waste flows and contributing to higher emissions and pollution. The global trend of moving from traditional to modern technologies, and from agriculture-based economies to urban and industrial economies (along with their fast-growing new material requirements), further accelerates global material use and creates significant challenges for sustainability policy (Steinberger et al., 2010).

Strong growth in natural resource extraction of biomass, fossil fuels, metal ores, and non-metallic minerals continues to support the global economy, and also adds to global environmental pressures and impacts. During the period 1970 to 2010, the annual global use of materials grew from 26.7 billion tonnes to 75.6 billion tonnes. In other words, the last three decades of the 20th century saw a yearly average growth in global material use of 2.3 percent. Annual growth accelerated to 3.5 percent in the first decade of the 21st century–from 2000 to 2010–and the 2008–2009 global financial crises had

a negligible impact on global material use. From 2010 to 2014, global material use grew again by an additional 7.3 billion tonnes, or an average of 2.3 percent per year, to 82.9 billion tonnes. This is significant because, all else being equal, growing material extraction indicates growing environmental pressures and impacts across the globe (IRP, 2017).

We consume the products of the environment and human transformations of natural resources–and in doing this, are increasingly threaten the world's biosphere (Harvey, 2013). Ven. Payutto holds that consumption should be seen only as "a means to an end, which is the development of human potential" or "well being within the individual, within society, and within the environment (Payutto, 1994)."

## 2. UNEQUAL CONSUMPTION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Over the past four decades, a large shift has occurred in material extraction from Europe and North America to Asia and the Pacific and West Asia. This shift has ratcheted up environmental pressures of primary industries as well as resource flows in Asia and Pacific, Latin America and Caribbean and Africa (Schandl and West, 2010; West and Schandl, 2013). While increased material extraction in the South has underpinned poverty alleviation and growing material standards of living in some countries, it is also associated with considerable environmental (Mudd, 2010) and social (Reeson et al., 2012) problems.

Global material resource use may more than double from 2015 to 2050, with high-income countries currently consuming 10 times more per person than low-income countries (IRP, 2017). There are now more than 1.7 billion members of "the consumer class"–nearly half of them in the developing world. While the consumer class thrives, great disparities remain. The 12 percent of the world's population that lives in North America and Western Europe accounts for 60 percent of private consumption spending, while the one-third living in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa accounts for only 3.2 percent. As many as 2.8 billion people on the planet struggle to survive on less than US $2 a day, and more than one billion people lack reasonable access to safe drinking water. The

UN reports 825 million people are still undernourished (State of Consumption Today, 2018).

Despite rising consumption in the developing world, industrial countries remain responsible for the bulk of the world's resource consumption—as well as the associated global environmental degradation. The United States, with less than 5% of the global population, uses about a quarter of the world's fossil fuel resources—burning up nearly 25% of the coal, 26% of the oil, and 27% of the world's natural gas. As of 2003, the US had more private cars than licensed drivers, and gas-guzzling sport utility vehicles were among the best-selling vehicles. New houses in the US were 38% bigger in 2002 than in 1975, despite having fewer people per household on average (State of Consumption Today, 2018).

WWF's Living Planet Index, which measures the health of forests, oceans, freshwater, and other natural systems, shows a 35 percent decline in Earth's ecological health since 1970. Calculations show that the planet has available 1.9 hectares of biologically productive land per person to supply resources and absorb wastes—yet the average person on Earth already uses 2.3 hectares worth. These "ecological footprints" range from 9.7 hectares claimed by the average American to 0.47 hectares used by the average Mozambican. Individuals often face personal costs associated with heavy levels of consumption: the financial debt; the time and stress associated with working to support high consumption; the time required to clean, upgrade, store, or otherwise maintain possessions; and the ways in which consumption replaces time with family and friends (State of Consumption Today, 2018).

The United Nations Human Development Index report 2018 (UNDP, 2018) divided the Human Development Index of the countries into five categories (Table 1). The Very High Human Development category countries comprise of 31.21% (n=59) followed by High Human Development (28%, n=53), Medium Human Development (20.63%, n=39) and Low Human Development (20%, n=38). Gross National Income (GNI) per capita in these category countries indicated a clear demarcation with highest GNI (40041) in Very High Human Development category and least (2521) in Low Development category countries. Natural

resources utilization in the form of fossil fuels among these categories counties was in the order of High Human Development>Very High Human Development>Medium Human Development; whereas in the case of carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions per capita in tonnes was in the order of Very High Human Development>High Human Development>Medium Human Development>Low Human Development. Freshwater withdrawal rate was highest in the Very High Human Development category countries (6.1) followed by High Human Development of 4.8. From the data presented in Table 1, it can be pointed out that Very High Human Development and High Human Development categories countries ecological footprint with respect to fossil fuel consumption, freshwater withdrawal and CO2 emissions per capita was higher as compared with Medium and Low Human Development category countries. On the contrary, use of renewable energy consumption which is the environment and natural resource-friendly had seen the reverse trend and was in the order of Low Human Development>Medium Human Development>High Human Development>Very High Human Development. Forest cover of these category countries was comparable as of 2018.

Table 2 presents the Human Development Index as classified by the UNDP Human Development Index report 2018 into six regions of the world. Arab States is dominated by Islam religion, East-Asia and Pacific with Buddhist and Christianity; Europe and Central.

**Table 1.** Natural resources consumption and Human Development Index groups

| Human development groups according to UNDP 2018 HDI report | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Particular** | | **Very high human development (59 countries)** | **High human development (53 countries)** | **Medium human development (39 countries)** | **Low human development (38 countries)** |
| **Total population (Million)** | 2017 | 1439.3 | 2378.9 | 2732.9 | 926.2 |
| | 2030 | 1503.3 | 2497.0 | 3177.5 | 1291.2 |
| **Human Development Index** | | 0.894 | 0.757 | 0.645 | 0.504 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Life expectancy at birth** | | 79.5 | 76.0 | 69.1 | 60.8 |
| **Gross National Income per capita** | | 40041 | 14999 | 6849 | 2521 |
| **Estimated Gross National Income per capita** | Female | 30276 | 10945 | 3673 | 1915 |
| | Male | 50033 | 18948 | 9906 | 3126 |
| **Gross domestic product** | 2011 total | 57964.1 | 35766.3 | 18684.2 | 2346.9 |
| | 2011 per capita | 40078 | 15280 | 6836 | 2609 |
| **Standard of living (% satisfaction)** | | 74 | 73 | 72 | 44 |
| **Fossil fuel energy consumption** | | 82.6 | 85.8 | 71.2 | .. |
| **Renewable energy consumption** | | 10.4 | 14.6 | 35.8 | 81.0 |
| **$CO_2$ emission per capita (T)** | | 10.7 | 6.1 | 1.7 | 0.3 |
| **Freshwater withdrawal (%)** | | 6.1 | 4.8 | .. | .. |
| **Mortality** | Household and ambient air pollution | 23.6 | 86.2 | 152.2 | 200.2 |
| | Sanitation and hygiene | 0.3 | 0.8 | 15.6 | 45.9 |
| **Forest cover** | (% of total land) | 33.1 | 31.5 | 30.5 | 23.1 |
| | Change %, 1990 /2015 | 1.1 | -1.7 | -9.7 | -14.5 |

Table 2. Natural resources consumption in world regions

| **Regions categorization according to UNDP Human Development Index 2018 report** | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Particular** | **Arab States (20 countries or territories)** | **East Asia and Pacific (24 countries)** | **Europe and Central Asia (17 countries)** | **Latin America and Caribbean (33 countries)** | **South Asia (9 countries)** | **Sub-Saharan Africa (46 countries)** |

| **Religions** | | Islam | Buddhism and Christianity | Christianity and Islam | Christianity | Buddhist, Christianity, Hindu, Islam | Christianity and Islam |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Total population (Million)** | 2017 | 409.5 | 2091.4 | 243.9 | 640.2 | 1869.0 | 1005.8 |
| | 2030 | 513.6 | 2205.9 | 259.3 | 713.1 | 2134.4 | 1394.4 |
| **Human Development Index** | | 0.699 | 0.733 | 0.771 | 0.758 | 0.638 | 0.537 |
| **Life expectancy at birth** | | 71.5 | 74.7 | 73.4 | 75.7 | 69.3 | 60.7 |
| **Gross National Income per capita** | | 15837 | 13688 | 15331 | 13671 | 6473 | 3399 |
| **Estimated Gross National Income per capita** | Female | 5380 | 10689 | 10413 | 9622 | 2694 | 2763 |
| | Male | 25533 | 16568 | 20529 | 17809 | 10035 | 4034 |
| **Gross domestic product** | 2011 total | 6187.6 | 28026.4 | 3753.3 | 9076.7 | 12127.1 | 3486.3 |
| | 2011 per capita | 16472 | 13737 | 15563 | 14469 | 6485 | 3489 |
| **Standard of living (% satisfaction)** | | 63 | .. | 60 | 68 | 74 | 46 |
| **Fossil fuel energy consumption** | | 97.2 | .. | 87.2 | 74.5 | 76.7 | 39.2 |
| **Renewable energy consumption** | | 4.0 | 15.9 | 9.1 | 27.7 | 31.1 | 70.2 |
| **$CO_2$ emission per capita (T)** | | 4.9 | 5.8 | 5.1 | 3.0 | 1.8 | 0.8 |
| **Freshwater withdrawal (%)** | | .. | .. | 14.3 | 1.6 | 23.8 | .. |
| **Mortality** | Household and ambient air pollution | 101.2 | 114.4 | 66.5 | 39.3 | 173.7 | 186.4 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Sanitation and hygiene | 7.0 | 2.2 | 0.5 | 1.7 | 17.1 | 47.7 |
| **Forest cover** | (% of total land) | 3.0 | 29.8 | 9.1 | 46.3 | 14.7 | 28.2 |
| | Change %, 1990 /2015 | -23.7 | 3.8 | 8.3 | -9.3 | 7.6 | -11.7 |

Asia; Latin America and Caribbean dominated by Christianity; Sub-Saharan Africa by Christianity and Islam whereas South Asia with mix religions (Buddhist, Christianity, Hindu, and Islam). Gross National Income per capita in Arab States, East Asia and Pacific, Europe and Central Asia and Latin America and Caribbean was comparable; whereas, in Sub-Saharan Africa it was least (3399). Fossil fuel energy consumption was in the order of Arab States>Europe and Central Asia>South Asia>Latin America and Caribbean>Sub-Saharan Africa. Carbon dioxide emissions per capita was in the order of East Asia and Pacific>Europe and Central Asia>Arab States>Latin America and Caribbean>South Asia>Sub-Saharan Africa. Freshwater withdrawal rate was in the order of South Asia>Europe and Central Asia>Latin America and Caribbean. The ecological footprint of the world religions can be placed in the order of Arab States>Europe and Central Asia>South Asia>Latin America and Caribbean>East Asia and Pacific>Sub-Saharan Africa. Use of renewable sources of energy which conserves natural resources had a reverse trend as that of use of fossil fuel energy consumption and it was Sub-Saharan Africa>South-Asia>Latin America and Caribbean>East Asia and Pacific>Europe and Central Asia>Arab States. Thus it is pointed out, these regions of the world which has a higher gross national income per capita are utilizing more natural resources in form of fossil fuels and emitting higher CO2 emissions into the atmosphere whereas use of renewable sources of energy is minimum.

Environmental impacts are due to rapidly increasing population numbers, increasing efficient technologies, and consumption rates beyond the planet's capacity. These three have been linked with

the equation I=PAT, or environmental impact=population size multiplied by affluence (or degree of consumption) multiplied by technology. Reduce any one of these and the impact drops, increase one or all three, and the impact rises, in some situations dramatically (Kaza, 2000).

The nature of the global consumption of natural resources today is classified as 'wrong consumption' or 'unskilful consumption'. This activity has dire consequences on our environment. In this paper, an attempt has been carried out to ascertain the Buddhist 'position' on the consumption of natural resources on the basis of 'skilful' versus 'unskilful' activity and on Four Noble Truths. The appropriate Buddhist 'response' measures is developed with the emphasis on the Noble Eightfold Path and constructive alternatives of Buddhist virtues emphasizing upon renunciation, generosity etc. that can assist in liberation from environmentally and socially oppressive nature of wrong consumption. The transformation of wrong consumption to right consumption and further from the individual level to community level (Society) will lead to their collective actions which result in environmental conservation and sustainable development.

## 3. CAUSES OF WRONG CONSUMPTION

Figure 1 depicts the causes of wrong consumption of natural resources. The anthropogenic activities are responsible for wrong consumption. The three root causes of all the evil anthropogenic activities are lust (*lobha*), hate (*dosha*) and delusion/ignorance (moha) from which emerge their numerous offshoots and variants: anger and cruelty, avarice and envy, conceit and arrogance, hypocrisy and vanity, the multitude of erroneous views. These three root causes of all evil lead to the development of Wrong Understanding, Wrong Thought, Wrong Speech, Wrong Action, Wrong Livelihood, Wrong Effort, Wrong Mindfulness, and Wrong Concentration. These eight aspects lead to the development of wrong consumption of natural resources which results in environmental degradation based on the principle of cause and effect of Dependent Origination. These three root causes of all evil are primarily responsible causative agents for wrong consumption and further environmental degradation which

is a kind of suffering (*Dukkha*, First Noble Truth). The reasons for this suffering of wrong consumption and environmental degradation are lust, hate, and delusion which lead to the development of Wrong Understanding, Wrong Thought, Wrong Speech, Wrong Action, Wrong Livelihood, Wrong Effort, Wrong Mindfulness and Wrong Concentration (*Samudaya Dukkha*, Second Noble Truth). As environmental degradation due to wrong consumption (*Dukkha*, Suffering) is due to anthropogenic aspects of lust, hate, and delusion (Samudaya Dukkha, Reasons for suffering) and it is possible to overcome this wrong consumption and environmental degradation condition (*Dukkha Samudaya Nirodha, Cessation of suffering*, Third Noble Truth) and to overcome these sufferings there is a way (*Marga, Way,* Fourth Noble Truth). For achieving right consumption maximum environmental conservation the Middle Way put forth by the Buddha has potential to overcome these three root causes of all evils so as to achieve the goal of right consumption of natural resources for environmental conservation (*Marga*, Way for the cessation of suffering, Fourth Noble Truth).

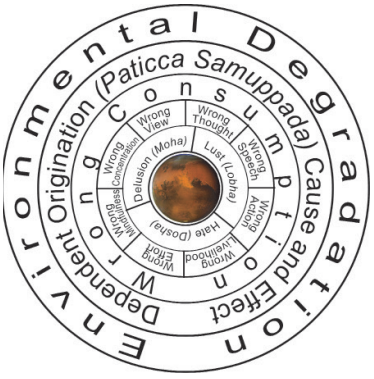



*Figure 1. Wrong consumption cause for environmental degradation*

## 4. WRONG CONSUMPTION AND DEPENDENT ORIGINATION

A number of studies on the causes and effects of environmental degradation have been carried out. A number of evidence from the recent environmental crisis are claimed to be caused by the consequences of environmental degradation. The Buddhist principle of Dependent Origination (Paticca Samuppada) provides us the way to look at a problem by the way of cause and effect and

further, it suggests the way to end the problem from its origin. The doctrine of Paticca Samuppada emphasized that:

*"When this is, that comes to be;*
*With the arising of this, that arises,*
*When this is not, that does not come to be;*
*With the cessation of this, that ceases."*

This conditionality goes on forever, uninterrupted and uncontrolled by any external agency or power of any sort. The Buddha discovered this eternal truth, solved the riddle of life, unraveled the mystery of being by comprehending, in all its fullness, the *Paticca Samuppada*

with its twelve factors, and expounded it, without keeping back anything essential, to those who yet have sufficient intelligence to wish for light. The root cause of wrong consumption can be understood by the teaching of Dependent Origination (*Paticca Samuppada*). The twelve factors of it includes Ignorance (*Avijja*), Volitional Formations (*Sankhara*), Consciousness (*Vinnana*), Mentality-Materiality (*Nama-Rupa*), The Sixfold Base (*Salayatana*), Contact (*Phassa*), (*Vedana*), Craving (*Tanha*), Clinging (*Upadana*), Becoming (*Bhava*), Birth (*Jati*) and Aging and Death (*Jaramarana*) (Piyadassi Thera, 1959). The *Paticca Samuppada*, with its twelve links starting with ignorance and ending in aging and death, shows how man, being fettered, wanders in samsara birth after birth. But by getting rid of twelve factors man can liberate himself from suffering and rebirth. The Buddha has thought us the way to put an end to this repeated wandering. It is by endeavoring to halt this Wheel of Existence that we find the way out of this tangle. The Buddha word which speaks of this cessation of suffering is stated thus:

"*Through the entire cessation of ignorance cease volitional formations;*
*Through the cessation of volitional formations, consciousness ceases;*
*Through the cessation of consciousness, mentality-materiality ceases;*
*Through the cessation of mentality-materiality, the sixfold base ceases;*
*Through the cessation of sixfold base, contact ceases;*
*Through the cessation of contact, feeling ceases;*

*Through the cessation of feeling, craving ceases;*
*Through the cessation of craving, clinging ceases;*
*Through the cessation of clinging, becoming ceases;*
*Through the cessation of becoming, birth ceases;*
*Through the cessation of birth, ceases aging and death,*
*sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair.*
*Thus does this whole mass of suffering ceases."*

(Piyadassi Thera, 1959)

## 5. SKILLFUL AND UNSKILLFUL ACTIONS

Wrong consumption of natural resources is an unskillful action which results in environmental degradation. This unskillful action can be replaced with skillful action which will lead to the right consumption of these limited natural resources. This right consumption will pave the way for environmental conservation based upon the principle of Dependent Origination.

The Buddha has stated "Abandon what is unskillful, monks. It is possible to abandon what is unskillful. If it were not possible to abandon what is unskillful, I would not say to you, 'Abandon what is unskillful.' But because it is possible to abandon what is unskillful, I say to you, 'Abandon what is unskillful.' If this abandoning of what is unskillful were conducive to harm & pain, I would not say to you, 'Abandon what is unskillful'. But because this abandoning of what is unskillful is conducive to benefits & happiness, I say to you, 'Abandon what is unskillful.'

"Develop what is skillful, monks. It is possible to develop what is skillful. If it were not possible to develop what is skillful, I would not say to you, 'Develop what is skillful.' But because it is possible to develop what is skillful, I say to you, 'Develop what is skillful.' If this development of what is skillful were conducive to harm & pain, I would not say to you, 'Develop what is skillful.' But because this development of what is skillful is conducive to benefit & happiness, I say to you, 'Develop what is skillful."—AN2:19

"And which is unskillful? Taking life is unskillful, taking what is not given … sexual misconduct...lying … abusive speech … divisive

tale-bearing … ideal chatter is unskillful. Covetousness … ill will … wrong views are unskillful? These things are called unskillful.

"And which are the roots of what is unskillful? Greed is a root of what is unskillful, aversion is a root of unskillful, delusion is a root of what is unskillful. These are called the roots of what is unskillful.

"And what is skillful? Abstaining from taking life is skillful, abstaining from taking what is not given … from sexual misconduct … from lying … from abusive speech … from divisive tale-bearing … abstaining from idle chatter is skillful. Lack of covetousness … lack of ill will … right views are skillful. These things are called skillful.

"And which are the roots of what is skillful? Lack of greed is a root of what is skillful, lack of aversion … lack of delusion is a root of what is skillful. These are called the roots of what is skillful."—MN9 (Thanissaro Bhikkhu, 2010).

## 6. RIGHT CONSUMPTION OR SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION

Right consumption or Sustainable consumption can be defined as: the use of natural services and related products that respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life while minimizing the use of natural resources and toxic materials as well as the emissions of waste and pollutants over the life cycle of the service or products (so as not to jeopardize the needs of future generations). Ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns has become an explicit goal of the Sustainable Development Goal (Goal number 12), with the specific target of achieving sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources by 2030.

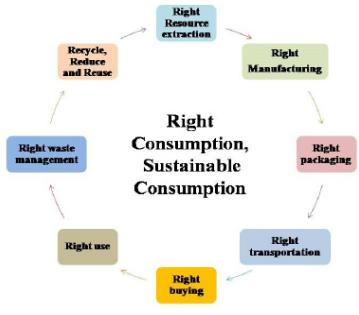



*Figure 2. Aspects of Right Consumption/Sustainable Consumption*

Right consumption is not exclusive term however it is an inclusive term and includes: Right extraction of natural resources, renewable and non-renewable; Right manufacturing, Right packaging, Right transportation, Right buying, Right use, Right waste management and Recycle, reuse and reduce (Figure 2).

Right consumption is to use goods and services "to satisfy the desire for true well-being", and wrong consumption is to use them "to satisfy the desire for pleasing sensations or ego-gratification" (Payutto, 1994). Schumacher (1973) stated that although modern economics "tries to maximize consumption by the optimum pattern of productive effort," Buddhist economics "tries to maximize human satisfactions by the optimal pattern of consumption."

## 7. THE MIDDLE WAY FOR RIGHT CONSUMPTION

The measure that needs to be adopted for Right Consumption of natural resources under the Noble Eightfold Path is depicted in Figure 3. One needs to incorporate various changes in one's lifestyles on the basis of the Buddhist principle of the Noble Eightfold Path. Some of the measures that can be incorporated which lead us to the Right Consumption goal includes:

### 7.1. Right Understanding (View) - Rethinking Your Perception of Green

Right Understanding (View), which is the keystone of Buddhism, is explained as the knowledge of Four Noble Truths. To understand rightly means to understand things as they really are and not as they appear to be. In the practice of the Noble Eightfold Path, Right Understanding stands at the beginning as well as its end. A minimum degree of Right Understanding is necessary at the very beginning because it gives the right motivation to the other seven factors of the Path and gives them the correct direction (Narada Thera, 1996). The roots of unwholesome *kamma* are greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*). Whereas, the roots of wholesome kamma include the absence of greed (a-*lobha*=unselfishness), the absence of hatred (a-*dosa*=kindness) and the absence of delusion (a-*moha*=wisdom).

The foundation for the change towards "Sustainable consumption" is to have accurate information. Environmental and

sustainability policy requires a solid evidence base that makes it possible to monitor the scale of the physical economy, that is the amount of material, energy, water and land used and emissions generated in making, using and providing goods, services and infrastructure systems. Data drawn from up-to-date information on the state, trends, and drivers of the physical economy can help to identify leverage points for targeted and effective policy intervention across sectors and geographical scales. This kind of regularly reported data, such as those drawn from a global assessment of natural resources, can inform the setting of long-term orientation goals, incentive frameworks, and systems of engagement and mutual learning that will pave the way for a transformational change. One can develop and articulate visions and models of what life could be like living without degrading the environment. Furthermore, the right understanding the causes of wrong consumption will give an insight into the problem its consequences and will lead to the path for environmental conservation and sustainable development.

**7.2. Right Thought—Green is a Choice**

Clear understanding leads to clear thinking. Right Thoughts serves the dual purpose of eliminating evil thoughts and developing pure thoughts. Right Though, in this particular connection is threefold. It consists of *Nekkhamma* (selflessness), *Avyapada* (loving-kindness) and Avihimsa (harmlessness) (Narada Thera, 1996). Right Thought includes thought free from lust (Nekkhamma-sankappa), thought free from ill-will (*Avyapada-sankappa*) and thought free from cruelty (*Avihimsa-sankappa*). Thoughts free from lust, from ill-will, and from cruelty are called "Mundane Right Thought" (*Lokia samma-sankappa*) which yields worldly fruits and brings good results (Nyanatiloka, 1967).

"Once one 'knows' something you can't 'un-know' it" and "When you know better, you do better." Both speak right volumes about Right Thought and one's commitment to better choices. One can't ignore what one has learned about the environment so far, or ignore further the rapid fire of new information from a focused community? With Right Thought, change becomes possible (Roberts, 2010). One can motivate ourselves and others to take action and to turn "I ought to act" into "I can do no other"

(Heine, 2014). Right Thoughts will give "ideas" for environmental innovative methods for Right Consumption. Right Thought from different individuals will lead towards the development of more comprehensive environmental conservation measures. Right Thoughts will eliminate wrong thoughts and this environmental degradation will be controlled at the source itself.

### 7.3. Right Speech - Voicing the Spirit of Green

Right Thought leads to Right Speech (Advocacy). This includes abstinence from falsehood, slandering, harsh words and frivolous talks (Narada Thera, 1996). This is called 'Mundane Right Speech' (*Lokiya-samma-vaca*), which yields worldly fruits and brings good results. But the avoidance of the practice of this fourfold-the mind being holy, being turned away from the world, and conjoined with the path, the holy path being perused-this is called the 'Supermundane Right Speech' *(Lokuttara-samma-vaca)*, which is not of the world, but is supermundane, and conjoined with the path (Nyanatiloka, 1967).

Speaking out about the need for Right Consumption is the Right Speech. One can spread the word and inspire others to start changing their consumption patterns and choosing to live more sustainably (Heine, 2014). Awareness about Right Consumption needs a base of Right Speech. Through advocacy, awareness in the society about various simple methods of Right Consumption can be achieved.

### 7.4. Right Action - First Do No Harm

Right Speech must be followed by Right Action which comprises abstinence from killing, stealing and sexual misconduct (Narada Thera, 1996). Abstaining from killing, from stealing, and from unlawful sexual intercourse-this is called the Mundane Right Action (*Lokiya-samma-kammanta*). But the avoidance of the practice of this threefold wrong action is called the 'Supermundane Right Action' *(Lokuttara-samma-kammanta)*, which is not of the world, but is supermundane, and conjoined with the path (Nyanatiloka, 1967).

Right Action refers to upholding the Five Percepts: not killing, not stealing, not abusing sexuality, not lying, and not using or

selling intoxicants. The percepts represent practices of restraint, calling for personal and institutional responsibility for reducing environmental suffering (Kaza, 2000). Better and more efficient production and use of natural resources can be one of the most cost-efficient and effective ways to reduce impacts on the environment and advance human well-being. Identifying efficiencies across the life cycle of natural resources for improving extraction processes and disposal to achieve the same or greater economic and social gains while minimizing negative environmental impacts (including pollution).

### 7.5. Right Livelihood—Seeing the Big, Green Picture

The Right Livelihood can be developed by refraining from the five kinds of trade which are forbidden to a lay-disciple by the Buddha. They are trading in arms, human beings, animals for slaughter, intoxicating drinks and drugs, and poisons (Narada Thera, 1996). Avoiding wrong living gets a livelihood by the right way of living-this is called 'Mundane Right Livelihood' (*Lokiya-samma-ajiva*). However, avoidance of wrong livelihood is called the 'Supermundane Right Livelihood' *(Lokuttara samma-ajiva*), which is not of the world, but is super-mundane, and conjoined with the path (Nyanatiloka, 1967).

Livelihood is ones "expressions" of life, the spirit from which one draws and expands upon each and every day. Expressing ones ecological footprint in ways that benefit and support all aspects of one's life (home, work, and play) is Right Livelihood (Roberts, 2010). This element could be about living sustainably as a way of life rather than just actions you do, or it could be about making changes in the workplace (Heine, 2014). Sustainable livelihood is the need of the hour. The natural resources are limited and their use should be in a judicious manner through our right livelihood. At the same time, the use of renewable sources of energy should be encouraged. By reducing the quantity of natural resource use by an individual, the related emissions and impacts can also be reduced. The Buddha advice to share the products of one's work with others, and to use it for generous, karmically fruitful action (Harvey, 2013).

### 7.6. Right Effort—Going Green One Step at a Time

There are Four Great Efforts; the effort to avoid, the effort to overcome, the effort to develop, and the effort to maintain (Nyanatiloka, 1967). Right Effort is about doing what one can when one can, and because one can. When one applies effort to thinking about the changes one can make toward green transformation (Right Thinking), then take action to make those changes (Right Action), that's Right Effort. Right Effort is not qualified by the size of the action, but the action itself (Roberts, 2010). This could be about continuing to make changes to your lifestyle even when you have done some of the things that are easier for you (Heine, 2014).




*Figure 3. Right Consumption based upon The Noble Eightfold Path for environmental conservation*

Right Efforts include that one which will always take towards sustainability. Environmentally conscious efforts by an individual will lead to the conservation of nature and natural resources and ultimately the achievement of the goal of environmental conservation. A systematic approach for linking the way natural resources are used in the economy to the impacts on the environment and people connects the flow of resources –from extraction through the final waste disposal–with their use and impact on the environment, economies, and societies at each stage of the life cycle. The approach can be used to identify key leverage points; develop resource targets; design multi-beneficial policies that take into account trade-offs and synergies; and steer a transition towards sustainable consumption and production and infrastructure systems.

### 7.7. Right Mindfulness - Green Intention

Right Mindfulness is constant mindfulness with regards to the body, feeling, thoughts, and mind-objects (Narada Thera, 1996). Right Mindfulness is one of the most important factors of the Noble Eightfold Path as the activities carried out by right mind will judge which one will lead to environmental conservation. The activities carried out by the right mind are simple and easy to adopt and has a comprehensive potential for environmental conservation.

One needs to develop Right Mindfulness of how could do better and will be more inclined to "do better" next time. Right Mindfulness isn't about recognizing when you're right, but recognizing what one is doing—right or wrong—and allowing for change where necessary (Roberts, 2010). There are many opportunities for mindfulness such as remembering to turn off heaters when you leave a room or only filling a kettle with as much water as you need and so on (Heine, 2014). Transition to a process of transformation of current systems of unsustainable production and consumption to sustainable ones. Being thoughtful about what one is buying and choosing a sustainable option wherever possible. Carrying a reusable bag, refusing to use plastic straws, and recycling plastic bottles are right initiatives. Making informed purchases about what one is buying also helps.

### 7.8. Right Concentration - How Big is Your Footprint?

Right Effort and Right Mindfulness leads to Right Concentration. It is the one-pointedness of mind, culminating in the meditative absorptions (Narada Thera, 1996). While most people can take a few minutes and find ways in which they could easily change a few habits to produce a better, greener result, commitment to joining the world community and truly doing your part requires greater effort and planning. It means applying sincere effort to green education, a dedication to change both in the home and workplace, and a compelling honestly about your responsibility as a world participant. Right Concentration may result in the degree of that commitment through learning, doing, and teaching, but it begins in the heart and moves through one's spirit to all that connects you to the world (Roberts, 2010). Meditating on environmental

degradation can be a powerful way to change our views of how we want to apply ourselves in relation to the other seven elements.

## 8. INTERLINKING ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION-SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

In Figure 4, an interlinking between environmental conservation-sustainable future-sustainable development is presented. From this figure, it can be observed that the Middle Path which comprises of Wisdom, Morality and Mental Culture if developed in all individuals of the society, the effect of it will (based on the principle of Dependent Origination) lead towards environmental conservation. The right consumption of natural resources measure carried out at an individual level will result in a global level change of sustainable future and sustainable development. In nutshell, changes in the human mindset by incorporating the Noble Eightfold Path will lead to environmental conservation, sustainable future, and sustainable development which will ultimately lead to Nibbana. All these things depend on the Noble Eightfold Path.




*Figure 4. Interlinking between Environmental Conservation-Sustainable Future-Sustainable Development (Kamble, 2015)*

## 9. ENLIGHTENED WAY FOR RIGHT CONSUMPTION

The Noble Eightfold Path will contribute to Right Consumption or Sustainable Consumption of natural resources which will help

in environmental conservation and ultimately lead to sustainable development. To make this path more effective/impactful additional Buddhist virtues needs to be developed in an individual so as to achieve the objective of sustainable development. Figure 5 depicts the enlightened way for Right Consumption or Sustainable Consumption from the Noble Eightfold Path by incorporating virtues such as renunciation, generosity, frugality, loving-kindness, contentment, non-attachment, compassion and equanimity.

### 9.1. Economic security and happiness

Buddha stated that there are four kinds of happiness. The first happiness is to enjoy economic security or sufficient wealth acquired by just and righteous means; the second is spending that wealth liberally on himself, his family, his friends and relatives, and on meritorious deeds; the third to be free from debts; the fourth happiness is to live a faultless, and a pure life without committing evil in thought, word or deed. The Buddha further stated, economic and material happiness is 'not worth one-sixteenth part' of the spiritual happiness arising out of a faultless and good life (Walpol Rahula, 1978). It could be seen that the Buddha consider economic welfare as requisite for human happiness, but that he did not recognize progress as real and true if it was only material, devoid of a spiritual and moral foundation. While encouraging material progress, Buddhism always lays great stress on the development of the moral and spiritual character for a happy, peaceful and content society.

### 9.2. Renunciation

Renunciation means to transcend all antipodal situations, like gain-loss, praise-blame, happiness-misery, to enjoy the peace born of equanimity and detachment. It is also a means to escape from worldly bondage and thus into freedom. A holy life, based on celibacy, voluntary poverty and dispassion, gives concrete shape to renunciation (Buddharakkhita, 2002). Renunciation is accepting that the things will go away. To see and accept that everything goes away–including ourselves–is necessary in order to live serenely (Harvey, 2013). The sign of renunciation is generosity. True generosity demonstrates not only moral development but insight (Harvey, 2013).

### 9.3. Generosity

What land is to a farmer, dana is to Buddhist life. It is the foundation of spiritual practice, the sole purpose of which is to destroy craving and build inner freedom born of selflessness. Therefore in the Buddhist context, giving means giving up i.e. giving up selfishness, attachment, sensuality, acquisitiveness, egotism, anger, delusion, ignorance and such mind-defiling negative kamma producing factors. The Buddha said, "For human beings, dana is the path to release" (Buddharakkhita, 2002).

The Bodhisattva practices the perfections of giving in order to remove desires and greed. He gives not for the sake of acquiring merit and without the thought of gaining a reward for his act of generosity. With this attitude of mind, the Bodhisattva is able to give up his wealth, possessions and even his life without clinging to them in the least (Buddhism for Beginners, 2017). Moreover, bringing pleasure to others can bring real happiness. Generosity and sharing are certainly a source of happiness, and a challenge to a society that prioritizes personal consumption (Harvey, 2013).

### 9.4. Frugality

Buddhist monks and lay mediators are encouraged every day to reflect on why they use the four requisites of life: food, clothing, shelter, and medicine. The purpose of this reflection is to see if they've been using these things to excess or in ways that will develop unskilful states of mind. They're also advised to reflect on the fact that each of the requisites has come about through the sacrifices of many people and other living beings. This reflection encouraged them to live simply and to aim ultimately at a truly noble form of happiness that places no burdens on anyone at all. One should aim for wise eating i.e. moderation in eating: having a sense of just right, of exactly how much is needed to keep one healthy and strong enough to stick with the training of the mind. The same principle holds true for the other requisites. Don't take more from the world than you're willing to give back. And learn to undo the perceptions–so heavily promoted by the media–that shopping is a form of therapy and that purchase is nothing but a victory or a gain. Every purchase also entails losses such as of money and freedom.

Hence, learn to restrict one's purchases to things that are useful, and use the money one save to help advance the higher qualities of life, both for yourself and for those around you. Look frugality as a gift to yourself and to the world (Thanissaro Bhikkhu, 2012).

### 9.5.Contentment

The Buddha has stated that "This Dhamma is for one who is content, not for one who is discontent." The virtues of contentment and fewness of wishes are praised, and it is said: "contentment is the greatest wealth" (Dhammapada, 204) (Harvey, 2013). The Buddhist teaching of contentment further states that "not taking more than one's fair share–using only what is necessary so that the rest is available for other's use." It is living according to nature, taking what we really need (Swearer, Me and Mine, 1989).

### 9.6. Non-attachment

To be non-attached is to possess and use material things but not to be possessed or used by them (Harvey, 2013). Non-attachment is a state in which a person overcomes his or her attachment to desire for things, people or concepts of the world and thus attains a heightened perspective. Non-attachment doesn't mean we don't own things. It means we don't allow things to own us." As the Dalai Lama was once quoted to have said, "Attachment is the origin, the root of suffering; hence it is the cause of suffering."

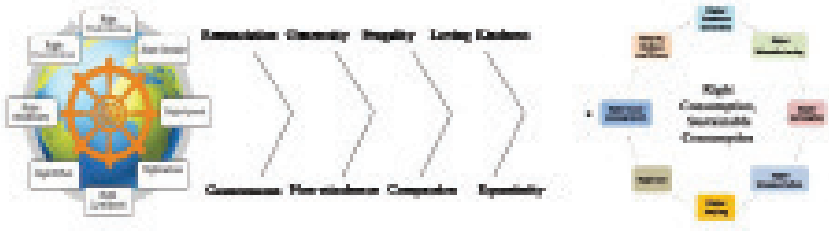


*Figure 5. An enlightened way for Right Consumption/Sustainable Consumption*

### 9.7. Compassion

In Buddhist psychology, compassion is a form of empathy. We sense others' suffering as like our own and naturally wish them deep

freedom from it. A compassionate mind, as opposed to a cruel and angry one, is understood to be much more closely attuned to our actual condition. Thus, compassion is informed by the wisdom that understands our basic situation: the inner causes of our suffering and our potential for freedom and goodness. From a Buddhist perspective, compassion with wisdom is the foundation of emotional healing. Compassion is also characterized as a mental capacity that, when cultivated and strengthened, empowers all positive states of mind as we awaken to our fullest human potential (Makransky, 2012).

**9.8. Loving-kindness**

The perfection of loving-kindness is the wish to provide for the welfare and happiness of the world, accompanied by compassion and skillful means benevolence. The noble virtue of loving-kindness should reflect upon as: One resolved only upon his or her own welfare cannot achieve success in this world or a happy rebirth in the life to come–there must be some concern for the welfare of others.

**9.9. Equanimity**

The function of the equanimity is to see things impartially; its manifestation is the subsiding of attraction and repulsion. Its proximate cause is a reflection on the fact that beings inherit the results of their own *kamma*. Equanimity perfects the power of renunciation, for by its means one overcomes discontent and delight. Equanimity is accompanied by compassion and compassion by equanimity.

**9.10. Agenda for Right Consumption**

Individual play a crucial role in structural changes by setting an example by doing pioneering groundwork, by teaching others new approaches, by advocating for consumerist accountability. The sum of these individual efforts, however, will not add up to system-level changes, to accomplish this, structural agents must change their operational procedures and expectations (Kaza, 2000). This concluding section of the paper shed light on the few aspects of sustainability engaged by a human being will lead to structural change and includes:

**9.11. Righteous reduction**

Righteous reduction of consumption of natural resources can be

carried out by incorporating the activities such as i) Make a list and check it twice: whenever one is going to shop for domestic needs adhering with a list will avoid unnecessary or impulsive purchase ii) Avoid the just-in-case purchase: If at time one is not sure what one needs then assume that one doesn't need anything. An organised person at home will help to know what one has in stock iii) Think about the replacement of new purchase: On purchase of new goods, what it will replace at back home? can old one be donated or recycled? iv) Evaluate want versus need: It is important to give an extra thought to consider it for something one need or want v) Beware of bargainers: Bargains are designed to move merchandise, not necessarily to save one's money (Roberts, 2010).

**9.12. Active reuse**

Numbers of ways are there for reuse of materials by initiating small steps that can be incorporated in daily life, some of them include reuse of totes and bags; waste as a raw material; charitable donation and be creative (Roberts, 2010).

**9.13. Reincarnated recyclables**

Recycling of waste and discarded material have now become an integral part of the processing stream, replacing virgin materials in manufacturing. Use of recycled materials during manufacturing conserves raw materials and reduces energy consumption. Recycling of plastics, metals, paper and other waste and discarded materials can conserve natural resources to a greater extent (Roberts, 2010).

**9.14. An alternate path**

An alternative to conventional sources of energy needs to be explored. Energy obtained from coal, oil, gas etc. contributes to a greater extent to natural resource depletion and environmental degradation. An alternative path to these energy options needs to be explored and incorporated in our daily life. Use of renewable sources of energy such as solar, wind, geothermal, hydal needs to be explored. In addition, biodiesel, electric cars, battery operated vehicles, solar energy driven vehicles/boats, carpool, rapid public transport system, hybrids, use of bicycles or walking needs to be encouraged (Roberts, 2010).

### 9.15. Reduce attachment, reduce packaging

The packaging of goods consumes to a greater extent natural resources such as paper and contribute to a larger extend waste generated from it. Hence, by adopting some common ways to reduce office waste includes: go paperless; selecting proper printer toners and inks (emphasis should be upon recyclable tonner and biodegradable ink prepared from plant origin) (Roberts, 2010). Furthermore, packaging materials such as paper, cardboard, and plastics can be recycled again which will reduce the pressure on the limited natural resources.

## 10. CONCLUSION

Natural resources are exhaustible and indispensable for the overall development of human being. Unequal consumption of these resources among different regions, religions and consumer classes of the world is recorded. Indiscriminate exploitation of these resources has dire non-reversible consequences on the environment. Overexploitation of natural resources is 'wrong consumption' and root causes for this is lust, hate, and delusion in an individual. This leads to environmental degradation which is suffering and can be explained on the basis of the first noble truth. Of the various measures suggested for environmental conservation, Buddhist philosophy can play a vital role which needs to be explored furthermore. Transformation to right consumption behaviour from the wrong one is the Buddhist 'response' to this issue. It is required to reshape consumption and production patterns by transforming resource use in a way that reduces pressure on the environment while promoting human and economic development. Buddhism suggested though material satisfaction is important, the real needs of humans are spiritual. The three aspects of the Noble Eightfold Path i.e. wisdom, morality, and mental culture will lead to the development of 'right consumption' of natural resources virtue in an individual. For an effective 'right consumption' in addition to the aspects of the Noble Eightfold Path, Buddhist precepts such as renunciation, generosity etc. need to be engaged upon. This will pave the way for environmental conservation and eventually sustainable development and sustainable society.

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# WATER MANAGEMENT SKILL IN BUDDHISM A SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF SENSIBLE CONSUMPTION OF WATER IN ANCIENT SOUTH ASIA AND SOUTH EAST ASIA

by Ranjana Mishra*

**ABSTRACT**

With world population rising by 1.6 percent a year, it is anticipated that by 2025, about 46 to 52 countries will face water shortage which would be a major constraint to socio-economic development. According to the finding 21 of the world's37 largest aquifers are losing water at a greater rate than the recharge. Most of the South Asia and South East Asian countries have become water stressed. In ancient time when Buddhism was at its pinnacle its philosophy spread over to South and South East Asian countries. These countries have a lot of similarities with Indian heritage. In all ancient Buddhist monasteries of these countries one can witness channels, cisterns, tanks, natural reservoirs, artificial lakes to store rain water or natural spring water which indicate practice of optimal usage of resources. Of late, rain water harvesting is enjoying a new start in the global ecosphere. In order to draw attention of scholars towards natural water conservation, a study of water storage system in Buddhism in particular have been done with focus on the case

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study of caves of Kanheri in Mumbai and Pandu Leni of Nasik in India and Sigiriya and Dambulla in Sri Lanka. All these sites have a complex hydraulic system, which consists of canals, cisterns, lakes, dams, as well as surface and underground water fountains. Perhaps these types of techniques are oldest in the world. In this research monologue a distinct focus has been made on various methods of rain water harvesting. To explore the ancient methods of water conservation and their technical details the author made the exploration through visits to Buddhist monasteries in India and Sri Lanka.

The Vinay Pitak's various Suttas speak about Buddha's concern about conservation of water, which served the author with primary sources and books by Mirashi on Kanheri and Nasik, Nandana Chutiwongs on Sigiriya and Dambulla by Archaeological Survey of Sri Lanka with translation of inscriptions served as secondary sources. The case study of these two countries caves and details of water supply, distribution, collection, storage can help people to revive the ancient ways to conserve water with similar topography. Due to the limitation of time, the area of study has been restricted to two similar types of caves. The major limitation faced by the author was unviability of survey maps of this area.

*'An image of water is a commodity that is essential to life. In the paradox of value, it is an apparent contradiction that it is cheaper than diamonds, despite diamonds not having such an importance to life'***.** Adam Smith [1]

## 1. INTRODUCTION

NASA and the University of California claim that humans are diminishing underground aquifers around the world at startling rates, which will threaten hundreds of millions of people[2]. The 21 of the world's37 largest aquifers are losing water at a greater rate than they are being recharged[3]. The recent data of water.org shows that 163 million Indians are currently living without access to safe

1. Adam Smith, An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations, Gale ECCO, Paperback 1776, reprinted 2006, pp.45-90.

2. www.nasa.gov/jpl/.../study-third-of-big-groundwater-basins-in-distress

3Report of Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research, University of East Anglia, 2002.

and hygienic water[4]. The situation is worse in rural areas. In 2017, Water Aid's report on State of the World's Water disclosed that 63.4 million people in rural areas are living without access to clean drinking water[5].

In 1995, 29 countries with populations totaling 436 million experienced water stress or scarcity[6]. It was discussed on March 22, 2016 at a World Water Day summit in Washington, D.C. that the threat to global security is neither country nor ideology and weapon, but it is depletion of water[7]. The similar views were put forth by Professor Mike Muller in South African Water and Energy Forum in 2011, who warned that a crisis was looming, world over but worst affected, would be Johannesburg[8]. Sacchidananda Mukherjee, Professor at the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP), avers that countries should invest in water infrastructure, institutions and policy reforms to achieve human development and sustain economic growth. His analysis has proved that in hot and arid tropical countries, the investment in large water storages had given impetus to economic growth[9].

Frugal usage of resources is one of the most important aspects in life is emphasized in Buddhism. The conservation and preservation of rainwater for perennial usage is one of the important characteristics of all the Buddhist monasteries and chaityas. There are right from big ponds in low line areas to small cisterns in their architectural construction.

In ancient times all south Asian countries i.e. Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bhutan, Sri Lanka were either part of India or close neighbors. When Buddhism was at its pinnacle, its philosophy spread over in all these countries. The art and architecture, planning of township, drainage system, and monuments had similar features

4. https://water.org/our-impact/water-crisis

5. https://www.hindustantimes.com/...access-to-clean-drinking-water/story-dWIEyP962F.

6. https://books.google.co.in/books?isbn=0821351400

7Jason Gehrig and Mark M. Rogers, Water and Conflict, Edited by Dennis Warner, Chris Seremet, and Tom Bamat, USA,2009, pp.3-13.

8. www.iol.co.za/.../south-africa/.../water-crisis-forecast-two-years-ago-175

9. An article On Role of Water Resources Management in Economic Development by Sacchidananda Mukherjee, in Yojna ,July 2016,p.7.

in all these countries. In all ancient Buddhist monasteries, there are evidences of channels, cisterns, tanks for water facilities. In course of time all these mechanisms became dysfunctional. The present South Asian countries, like rest of the world, are facing critical water condition. India, one of the countries of South Asia, too is facing two problems simultaneously i.e. water scarcity and poor water quality[10]. India is sitting on water time bomb[11]. In MINT Newspaper, an article on "India's escalating water crisis", dated March 22, 2016, emphasis was not only on various reasons for water shortage like rise in population, pressure on ground water, shortage of water in rural and urban areas but also on measures to fight against such problems through ancient water harvesting methods in modified manner. It also focusses on how our heritage and tradition possess right power to face these challenges and to overcome the same. [12] According to a recent study by United Nation, one way of salvaging the situation is by adopting nature-based solution (NBS). They include rainwater harvesting, planting new forests, reconnecting rivers to floodplains and restoring wetlands etc[13].

The rainwater harvesting is enjoying a new start in the global ecosphere but in reality, rainwater catchment and storage reservoirs were in use, since ancient times in several parts of the world[14]. Palestine and Greece claimed to harvest rain-water for about 4000 years. In ancient Rome, individual cisterns were built with residences. India too had knowledge of hydrology and every region of our country had its own water harvesting techniques, reflecting the geographical peculiarities and cultural uniqueness of different communities. Extensive rainwater harvesting apparatus existed 6000 years ago in Indus Valley Civilization in India. There is evidence of artificial water reservoir at Girnar in Gujarat dated to 2600 B.C.E[15]. The Arthshastra of Kautilya speaks volumes about

10. https://water.org/our-impact/india/

11Nitya Jacob, Exploring India's traditional water management systems: Jalyatra, Penguin book,2008, pp.2-6.

12. In MINT Newspaper dated March 22,2016 in an article on "India's escalating water crisis", Bombay Edition,2016, p.2.

13. An article in MINT on Save Water by MINT Media Marketing initiative,p.6,2018.

14. www.nmwatercollaborative.org/projects/

15. J.C. Rodda and L. Ubertini, The Basis of Civilization-Water Science, pp.27-29.

the construction of dams and bridges as early as 4th century B.C.E. [16]All ancient religions of India like Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism emphasized on frugal usage of water. According to literary and archaeological sources, the ancient rulers of various regions had been practicing the system. The ancient dynasties like Maurya, Sunga, Satvahana ,Pandyas, Chery ,Chola ,Pallava Pala and Sena got constructed tanks, canals, lakes and dams to conserve wasted rain water or tapping underground springs. The Chand Baori, of Rajasthan, in India is world's first well steps. Till today waste rain water irrigation is practiced in most of the places. This method is known differently in different states, for example in Rajasthan it is Kunda, in Maharashtra ,Bandharas, in M.P. , Bandis, in H.P. Kuhal, in Tamilnadu Eris and ooranis and in Bihar ,Ahar. All these natural and traditional methods are less expensive and eco-friendly. Our culture, tradition and a rich heritage teach us a lot many ancient techniques of water conservation and harvesting of rainwater[17]. The need of hour is to have the deep sense of responsibility, a searching vision and an urge to explore these facts. It does not mean that modern technology be defied and neglected but on the contrary, they should modify the old system in synchronized with time, technology and with appropriate repair and maintenance. Winston Churchill had aptly said that the farther back one look, the farther forward one would see. The, present research work is on case studies of two monasteries of South Asia and one of South East Asia.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

Keeping water unavailability in mind, a study of water storage system in other religions in general and Buddhism in particular have been done with focus is on the case study of ancient method of conservation of water in the caves of Kanheri in Mumbai and Pandu caves of Nasik in South Asia and Dambulla and Sigri in South East Asia. In this research monologue, the attention is on various methods of rainwater harvesting, construction of various

16. http://studopedia.org/2-55395.html

17 S. Patnaik, Science and Culture in Indian History, Bhubaneshwar, English Quarterly, Bhartiya Samajik Chintan, News Series, Vol.I, issue April-June,2014, pp.142-149.

channels, wells, pits and small bunds. To explore the ancient methods of water conservation and their technical details the author made the exploration through the visit. These include the observation of open channels, small water tanks, wells, small and big cisterns and reservoirs, and artificial lakes at Kanheri and Pandu caves in South Asia .Water conservation at Dambull and Sigri at Shri Lanka corroborate the facts that usage of wastewater and rain harvesting are intrinsic to Buddhist philosophy. In Vinay Pitak and various Suttas of Buddhist scriptures have shown concern about conservation of rain water . The Extensive primary surveys have been undertaken on the focus area of water harvesting system and analysis of the area has been done on the basis of books by Mirashi and various other authors who have translated the inscriptions have served as secondary data. The author has given various alternative methods to conserve water to avoid famines, drought, farmer's suicide and various environmental hazards. The case study of these to caves and details of water supply, distribution, collection, storage, can revive the ways to conserve water at similar topography. Due to the limitation of time the area of study has been restricted to two similar types of caves in south Asia and South East Asia. The major limitation faced by the author was unviability of survey maps of this area. The topography of the area has been analyzed on the basis of Google maps & thematic maps which are available in Nasik Gazetteers. There is a need to disseminate the information to preserve ancient water conservation system at varied typology to lessen the extensive usage of aquifers.

## 3. THE CASE STUDY OF ANCIENT SYSTEM OF WATER CONSERVATION IN KANHERI CAVES, MUMBAI

The rainfall in Maharashtra differs from region to region. In Mumbai the rainfall is scanty and in Nasik the rainfall is less than 50 cm. In the summer season the climate conditions become very unpleasant with shortage of even drinking water. It was a common practice of the Buddhist monks to retire into solitary sanctuaries away from human habitation to immerse in study & meditation. It must have been one of the reasons for the Buddhist monks of Kanheri caves in Mumbai, to think about innovative method of water harvesting as there is only one rivulet that flows through these

caves and has water in rainy season only otherwise it is spillway of Tulsi lake. It is assumed that Kanheri caves being the abode of monks and center of education had always been crowded more than that these caves were on the famous trade routes, which connected the south to North. The caves in course of time had become abode of a large number of traders, as for their safety and security from thieves and burglars; they wanted to spend their nights with the monks. In order to sustain such huge population water must have been needed for the whole year around. It must have forced them to innovate new ideas for water management. All these factors resulted in continuous construction of cisterns, lakes, channels, which they got from the merchant guilds in the form of donation for quite a long period. Kanheri thrived for nearly a millennium owing to its proximity to the ancient port towns of Sopara (Nalasopara ), known for its trading ties with Mesopotamia and Egypt, amongst others Kalyan, Thane and Bassein (Vasai) as evident from translation of inscriptions by J Stevenson[18]. J Stevenson mentions that there is no date found in any Kanheri inscriptions but as a few inscriptions mention the reigning monarchs that helps in fixing the period of the excavation[19]. There are altogether 109 caves but according to Dr. Suraj Pandit there are about 129 caves by recent excavation. 51 legible inscription ,26 epigraphs and 18 copper plates from Kanheri give vivid information about their ample conservation and frugal usages of water resources[20]. Based upon this, the caves can be fairly placed to around 180 CE[21]. There is enough evidence from these caves that indicates that the residents of these caves had evolved systems to comfortably meet their requirements[22]. The cave

18. puratattva.in/2013/07/25/kanheri-cave-complex-2385

19. puratattva.in/2013/07/25/kanheri-cave-complex-2335

20. Shobhana, Kanheri Inscriptions, Deccan College, Poona, 1975, pp.23-45.

21. puratattva.in/2013/07/25/kanheri-cave-complex-2385

22No 11 of Bird/No 4 of Brett/No 12(14) of Stevenson/No 4 of West/No 4 of Buhler/ No 987 of Luders/No 5 of Gokhale,Location – on the right hand gate post of the Chaitya cave no 3,Characters – Brahmi of 2nd century CE,Language – PrakritStevenson – "King Gotamiputra's imperial descendant Sri Yadnya] Sat Karni had [a nephew named Nagakunda, who in forest] frequented by the feathered tribe [reclaimed land for a field and a garden] to obtain groceries and agricultural pro[duce]; and also bestowed the neighboring village of Anang] for the benefit of his kindred; and in union with his broth[er Ananda, and along] with Gajasena and also Gajami[tra dedicated as a religious assignation two] images of Buddha.

is located on the three hills joined together. They made system to channelize the flow of the rivulet that flows between northern and southern hill in such a manner that before getting joined with Mithi river the water got collected in a tanks and cisterns. The engineering skill of those people must have converted the catchment area into a small reservoir by constructing two small walls. Near about all the caves which are 129 in numbers have cisterns and all of them are connected with these tanks through small channels.

The Kanheri caves are clustered in nature, and their location varies, between 60 and 90m above the surrounding plain. The monks had wisdom to build more tanks, cisterns and water reservoirs than needed so that there was surplus water. These structures acted as flood and drought control mechanism. When rains were plentiful, they wedged water that would otherwise flood the caves or cause river to overflow. Water percolated into the soil and replenished the groundwater tables, nature's great aquifers which sustained them in drought years. The storage requirement must had been determined by a number of interrelated factors. They had a fair knowledge of local rainfall data and weather patterns, collection surface (roof or ground) or size of reservoir possible in case of a subsurface dam,run-off coefficient (varies from 0.15-0.9 depending on collection surface and slope),user numbers and consumption rates or water needs for other uses including productive use. An inscription (No 16 of Gokhale) refers to the queen of the Satavahana king Vasisthiputra Sri-Satakarni (130-160 CE), who had donated for water cisterns. [23] However, the complex of course is older than 160 CE as this inscription only refers to a gift of a water-cistern but not of a cave. The Cave No 5 & 6 are not caves exactly but water cisterns. An inscription (No 16 of Gokhale) there is an inscription that the tank was donated by Samyakupasaka, of the town Sopara, who was a theologists. This inscription engraved on a detached rock

23. No 8 of Bird/No 6 of Brett/No 2 of Stevenson/No 11 of West/No 11 of West/No 994 of Luders/No 16 of Gokhale, Location – Cave no 5 & 6 (over two water tanks on the path up the hill), Characters – Brahmi of 2nd century C.E, Language – Sanskrit, Stevenson – "The charitable establishment of a place for the distribution of water, by S'ateraka, the minister in the Bassein province of Satrap… …." Luders – "A water-cistern (paniyabhajana), the gift of the minister (amatya) Sateraka. Mentions besides the queen (devi) of [Va]sisthiputra Sri-Sata[karni], descended from the race of the Karddamaka kings (rajan), daughter of the mahakshatrapa Ru …."

opposite cave 41, records the construction of a tank by J.J.Punaka. Looking at the well-developed channels, cisterns and tanks one can induce that they must be having people to manage the water and to ensure that the channels were cleaned before rains, the bunds were strengthened and the interconnecting drainage were operational. Dr. Suraj Pandit has written that Kanheri had developed its own peculiarities like a well-developed water system, its own agricultural land, satellite settlements and resources for subsistence. Almost all cells contained a cistern where rainwater from the top of the hill was collected. To support water supply to all these caves, five water tanks were constructed. Most of the cisterns are connected to these tanks and each other with a network of small channels. On the eastern hill, there is a place known as Gomukh where natural spring water was collected. It seems that the inhabitants tried their best to utilize every drop of rain water.[24] . Most of the cisterns are connected to these tanks and each other with a network of small channels The recent findings claim that instead 21types of cisterns mention in inscription, there are 92 water cisterns in Kanheri caves. The caves were functional from 1st century B.C. E.to 10th Century C.E. and without supervision and intervention of water conservation the system would not have survived. This study of water management system at Kanheri provides a glimpse of changes and restorations of rain water harvesting techniques spanning across a millennium. It seems that the inhabitants tried their best to utilize every drop of rain water. Kanheri provides a glimpse of changes and restorations of rain water harvesting techniques spanning across a millennium.



*Water cistern and tanks in Pandav Leni in Nasik*

24.http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/21989/15/15_chapter%204.pdf

The Pandav Leni or Trirashmi Caves is located beneath the mountains and hills of Sahyadri in Nasik. The famous Pandav-caves and Chamar caves are well known for their Buddhist heritage and carvings of 24 caves belong to Hinayana as well as Mahayana cult of Buddhism[25].

Historians aver that the name must have derived from the residence of the Monasteries (Buddhist Monks) who wore the yellow robes and as yellow Ochre Colour" in Pali language. The various inscriptions confirm that Nashik in that period was ruled by 3 kings i.e. Kshatrapas, Satavahanas and Abshir's. All the kings of various dynasties fully supported Buddhism though they were not Buddhist in real sense. The 10th cave has an inscription which says that, these caves are created by son-in-law of Nahpana.



The inscriptions also confirm that monks provided the labor while money came from the wealthy merchants or rulers. The upkeep and protection of structures was left to the locals. The purpose was to make them not only in charge of maintenance but also for self-contained maintenance. In inscription no.38 of Nasik it is mentioned that Bhikhus received the monthly stipend.

The inscription says *"Khetius Khet Game Bhagalthane Vhajeka pati eto, Sanghane Datawam Chivarik Sodasak Pavitakko cha mase Utukale"* The inscription talks about the donation of ownership of land. It is probably from the interest and the revenue the upkeep of everything was managed. Another inscription talks about the sixteen karspanas to a Bhikhus for clothing and medicine in rainy season.

25. https://www.pinterest.com/pin/16677461091518359/

Some historians claim that these stipends must be only for medicine as these Bhikhus were mendicants and living on alms. These Caves not only served as temples for early Buddhists but also as a teaching centers In total there are 27 inscriptions in Brahmi script but legible inscriptions are located in caves 3, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 19, 20. All these writings have features of Satavahana period. The Cave no .15 inscription mentions that last Sathvan King Sri Yajna Satkarni ruled over the western Maharashtra in the early 3rd century C.E.and he donated money for Cave no.15. The caves also had an excellent arrangement for water conservation, with skillfully chiseled water tanks, exquisitely carved into the rocks. The Cave no.20 which was built between 166-198C.E., by wife of Mahasenapati Bhavagopa during the reign of Gautamiputra Satkarni speak volume about the gift and donation of villagers for the upkeep of the Chaitya, Viharas and their water tanks. Some of the caves are intricately connected by stone-cut stepladder and steps lead to the caves from the bottom of the hill reflecting the testimony of well-organized establishment of Buddhist monk during the third century B.C.E. in India. There is an excellent ancient water management system accompanied by massive water tanks. There are tanks to store rain water from the hill slopes. These Tanks are skillfully chiseled out of huge solid rock. There are innumerable Canals and cisterns available to drain out excessive rainwater. There is tiny water tank at the entrance of each cave. There are two main water tanks which must have served as the catchment area. They are probably 20 to 30 feet deep and 9 to 10 feet wide. It is assumed by the historians that the required storage capacity in those days must have depended on many factors, including domestic water demand and its seasonal variation; availability of other (seasonal) water sources (and distance, quantity and quality); characteristics of the dry season(s) (e.g. distinctive short periods without any rain); rainfall characteristics (total rainfall and intensity); and availability of catchment area, type of catchment and roofing/surface material used. It seems that these monks must have been using the simplest method to calculate the required water volume i.e.V = (t x n x q) where V was volume of tank ,t was number of days in the dry period, n was number of people using the tank, and q was total average consumption per capita per day (including for productive use).To be on the safer

side, they must be storing near about 20% extra water as some of the cisterns are bigger than the usual ones. Though there is no mention of reliable monthly rainfall data in the Nasik gazetteers or scriptures but the tank volume indicate that tanks must have been filled at the start of the dry season to fulfill the need of the monks and merchants putting up over there. The required roof catchment must have been fulfilling expected annual water demand which was met by rainwater. All these arrangements must have been done on the following formula i.e. annual consumption Qa was n x q x 365 and required roof catchment A was Qa/( Cr x p) and where Cr was run-off coefficient and p was annual precipitation. It is assumed that they must be using roof run-off water, for collection of water though underground channels small cisterns must be connected to main tank. These cisterns must have worked as stop gap system during summer season. These cisterns even today have capacity of a few lakhs liters of water. These cisterns must have been used for drinking, cooking and bathing purposes of the monks. The channel was deliberately built in such a way to allow water to flow sluggishly for storage of water in the cisterns. . Historians are of the opinion that they must be aware of techniques of purification of water. Most of the Buddhist caves are in the midst of forest. The forest in general are infested with Nirmali (Bhui Amala), Amala trees (gooseberry), Bhadramustha Khas(Vetiver) and Anjan trees. It is implicit that the purification of the ground water must have been done by the leaves and the seeds of these trees as till today in Ayurveda such cleanings are done. Unfortunately, the water harvesting has died with the disuse of caves. Its revival seems distant. At present the Nasik town suffers from an acute shortage of water. People are using modern techniques of water supply, which is not sufficient for present population. With the Green Tube Well Revolution, the ground water tables have fallen by several hundred feet. It is difficult to recharge such aquifers. One should try to revive the old system of water conservation through rain water harvesting like Pandav Leni. It was mainly because of proper water harvesting these caves flourished from 3rd Century B.C.E. to 12th century C.E. Innumerable cisterns, water tanks, rock channels corroborate the facts.



## 4. WATER CONSERVATION AT SIGIRIA, SRI LANKA

Ancient hydraulic civilization of Sri Lanka can be traced from the time of king Dathusena 459-477 C.E, who built Yodha Ela, also known as Jayganga. The ancient irrigation engineers found out that there should be gradient of 6to 12 inches per 10 to 20 cm to carry access water in catchment area[26]. They prevented the seepage of the tank by digging a trench at suitable places horizontal to the bund and filled it with clay mostly from ant hills or puddle clay and got elephants to trample the clay into a thick mess. They used to take care of enough provision of tank to manage excess water i.e. spillway, so that excess water would continuously flow out of tank without causing any danger to the tank bund[27]. They were first to invent a device named Bisokotuwa, which was close to sluice gate. In management of tank water they adopted various strategies to utilize various strategies to utilize limited water. The Sri Lankan scripture Mahavansa date back to 4th B.C.E. corroborates the facts[28]. They followed various methods like Kekulama i.e. dry farming when less rain fall, Bethma i.e. getting rationed water ,Pangus when excessive rain by opening out let for extra water and where they share the responsibility to avoid breach,leak and excessive seepage. It was mandatory for everyone to provide the services for 40 days in a year for conservation of water. They also practice Karhana which was a water distribution device fixed across the canal made up of log with two wire shape cut. They made every attempt to conserve tank water, maintaining the tank eco system, mitigating salinity effects

26R. L. Brohier, The Story of Water Management in Sri Lanka down the Ages,Lake House Ltd ,2006,pp.50-78.

27. Henry Cave,Ceylon along the Rail Track, Colombo, 1910,p.45.

28 The Great Chronicle of Lanka:Mahabhamsa translated from Pali by Wilhelm Geiger, Ceylon Government Information Dept. Colombo, 1912.

and tank sedimentation and so on. [29] Culavamsa in Sri Lankan Pali gives a description of 163 major tanks,2,617 minor tanks,3,910 irrigation Channels,328 stone sluices and 168 sluice locks[30]. It also mentions the repairing works of these wewa i.e. tanks of more than 1,969 of breaches. [31] Sri Lankan system of natural water conservation and maximum usage of water is well displayed at Sigiria, the best conserved city center in Asia from the first millennium. Sigiria represents well maintained architectural buildings and water gardens, the fusion of symmetrical and asymmetrical elements, use of varying levels and of axial and radial planning of water exit. The Complex consists of the central rock, rising 200 meters above the surrounding plain, and the two rectangular precincts on the east (90 hectares) and the west (40 hectares), encircled by two trenches and three embankments. The water garden, moats and ramparts are based on a reverberation plan. The King Kashapa, the king of Sigiria, created this huge lake kalawewa, which preserved rain water for dry season agriculture. This is the old version of rain water harvest. The king interpreted the lake as a treasure. When another King of Sigiria named Dathusena was asked for wealth by his son he just gave him some water to his hand as his wealth. In the twelfth century, King Parakrama (1153 – 86) had said that not a single drop of water received from rain should be allowed to escape into the sea without being utilized for human benefit. The first documented construction of a reservoir could be traced from the early reservoir of 4th century B.C.E .built by Prince Anuradha in Anuradhapura, which is still in existence and known as the Basawakkulam tank of some 120 hectares[32]. The second tank to be built at Anuradhapura was the Tissa Wewa created by King Tissa in the 3rd century B.C.E. which fed the Royal Pleasure Gardens. There is a remarkable system of canals, conduits and channels linking the reservoir to the bathing ponds .The reservoir are fed from the river 37 miles away by

29Gamage, N.P.D,Guidance on use of rain water tanks for the Jaffna Peninsula. Annual Transactions, Institute of Engineers, Sri Lanka, 2006,pp.56-67.

30 https://www.revolvy.com/page/Irrigation-works-in-ancient-Sri-Lanka

31.... H.Parker, Singhalese Engineer invented the bisokotua in 3rd century B.C.E,2000.

32. Ranasinghe, R.K.W.K., Improved water conservation practices using rain water harvesting in the wet and intermediate zones of Sri Lanka. M.Eng. dissertation. University of Moratuwa, 2008, pp.35-67.

a channel that has a gradient of 1 inch/mile. The channels feeding the ponds are sinuous with settlement chambers which allow sediment to be removed before entering the ponds.



It was fortified by King Parakrama and linked the existing reservoirs to other water resources. This remarkable reservoir covers 2500ha have a bund of 12m high, which irrigates an area of 28 sq. miles. The embankment remained a world record until 1912 till the Gatun Dam was built for the Panama Canal. This legacy can be seen till today .In Esala month i.e. July/August the procession is taken out at Kandy to avoid drought period. This is a rain-making festival known as Perahera. It sis held in honor of the Buddha's Sacred Tooth Relic which Buddhists believe has the power to cause rain. There are innumerable examples of tanks still irrigating fields below their embankments by gravity distribution. The Topographical Survey of Ceylon 1904 recorded that 11,200 sq. km land is irrigated alone in Anuradhapura District and Northern Province through rain water harvesting[33]. They were called wewa (Sinhala) or kulam (Tamil). Till today Sri Lanka held the key to deal with global warming and water conservation despite being neglected under the regime of Portugal, Dutch and British[34].

## 5. DAMBULLA BUDDHIST SITE AT SRI LANKA

The caves of Dambulla, like the Mihintale caves, were occupied in very early times by Buddhist hermits. The antiquity of this place has been authenticated by the presence of pre-Christian inscriptions in Brahmi character immediately below the drip-ledge of the central

33 Arumugam, S., Water resources of Ceylon. Water Resources Board, Sri Lanka, 1969, pp.45-78.

34. Han, M.,Rain water harvesting: A new paradigm to meet MDG and sustainability, Rain Water Harvesting Workshop, IWA 4th World Water Congress and Exhibition, Morocco, 2004,pp123-145.

cave[35]. One of these inscriptions records: "Damarakita teraha lene agata anagata catu disa sagas dine. Gamani abaya rajiyahi karite" it says that the he cave of the elder Dlmamma-rakkita was given to the Community in the reign of Gamani Adhaya. The shape of the letters of inscriptions is close to Brahmi script of India which shows its connection with Indian land. Because of its antiquity, Dambulla monastery was designated as World Heritage site in 1991. The Rock on which it is constructed is more than 1.5 km in its base and 550km in height[36]. This temple complex, a sacred pilgrimage site for 22 centuries, dates back to the first century B.C.E[37]. The caves have a mixture of religious and secular painting and sculpture. There are several reclining Buddha's, including the 15m long sculpture of the dying Buddha in cave no. 1. The King Walagamba when in refuge for 14 years (Vattagamini Abhaya) made Dambulla shrine, before becoming king at Anuradapura in the 1st century B.C.E. The site has being repaired and repainted several times in the 11th, 12th and 18th centuries. The ceiling frescoes show scenes from the Buddha's life and Sinhalese history. Among all the caves, the cave no.2 is the largest and most extraordinary[38]. It has over 150 statues, illustrating the Mahayana influences on Buddhism .It has also Hindu deities such a s Vishnu and Ganesh.The cave is considered to be the best-preserved complex of rock paintings and images of the Buddha in South East Asia. There is also a mini dagoba (dome shaped shrine) and a spring which drips its water from a crack in the ceiling, into a huge metal pot which never overflows. Most possibly excess water is being controlled by an underground channel below the rock floor on which the pot is fixed. There is a large water pond built in the summit of the rock. It has been designed to harvest rain water. This conservation of water remained to rural people. Till today it is functional. With a National policy on Rain Water Harvesting and other legislation in effect, Sri Lanka stands to benefit significantly by the appropriate use of this technology.

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35Senake Bandaranayake, Neville Agnew, ed. Conservation of Ancient Sites on the Silk Road: The Dambulla Rock Temple Complex, Sri Lanka., 1997,pp. 50–56.

36.https://www.deccanherald.com/sunday-herald/finding-buddha-caves-dambulla-697564.html.

37. Nicholas Schnitter, A History of Dams: the useful pyramids, Rotterdam, 1994 pp.23-67.

38. J. B. Disanayaka,The Festival of the Sacred Tooth, Sumitha Publishers, Kalubowila, 2006pp.67-89

## 6. GOVT. AND NGO POLICIES TO CONSERVE RAIN WATER

In recent times, researchers have found that arid climates are no more conflict-prone than humid ones[39]. Most of the South and South East Asian countries have adequate ground water and good rainfall in most parts of the country. Yet, countries are facing severe water scarcity[40]. The rain water harvesting has become a very popular method of conserving water especially in the urban areas[41]. After realizing the inadequacies in the 1987 Policy, the Central Government revised and announced a New National Water Policy in April 2002[42]. Government is encouraging people in the management of water resources.[43] In an article on "Quietly chokes the mighty Godavari "by Debasish Panigrahi in Hindustan Times emphasis has been given on natural water conservation.[44] The Paani Foundation, a not-for-profit company set up by Amir Khan and Kiran Rao in early 2016, believes that the solution to our water crisis lies in decentralized watershed management and rainwater harvesting[45]. Presently, Shri Vivekananda research and Training Institute (SVRTI), under the guidance of K C B Raju is involved in constructing groundwater dams in Kutch district of Gujarat. [46] Rainwater harvesting can be undertaken through a variety of ways like capturing run-off from roof tops, local catchments, local streams and watershed management

## 7. BENEFITS OF RAINWATER HARVESTING AND SOME SUCCESS CASE STUDIES

The rainwater harvesting is immensely beneficial .This eco-friendly system will increase water availability, stop the declining

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39Jones.J. Anthony et al.(eds.) Threats to Global Water Security, Springer Science,2009, p.3.

40 Thirst in the land of malhaar - The Hindu.www.thehindu.com › Opinion › Columns

41An article on "Don't let rainwater go down the drain", by Neha Lalchandani in TImes of India Newspaper, Delhi edition, February 3, 2014, p. 2s

42. http://hydrologie.org/redbooks/a281/iahs_281_233.pdf

43. Water Policy and Action Plan for India 2020: An Alternative Prepared by G N Kathpalia Rakesh Kapoor Alternative) XWXUHV Development Research and Communications Group, New Delhi,2002, pp.1-9

44. An article on "Quietly chokes the mighty Godavari"by Debasis Panigrahi, In Hindustan Times, htspotlight supplement, April 29,2016, p.17

45. https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/article/jagh1987/46/2/46_113/_pdf

46. www.rainwaterharvesting.org/methods/modern/gwdams.htm

water table, improve the quality of groundwater through the dilution of fluoride, nitrate, and salinity and thwart soil erosion and inundating especially in urban areas.

Anna Hazare's work on watershed development in Ralegan Siddhi , Popatrao Patil of Mumbai , Rabindra Pathak at Arwal ,The Tarun Bharat Sangh by Rajendra Singh, in Rajasthan and many others, are working on preventing rainwater run-off. These are a few examples of indigenous solutions to global water problems. The village was plagued by water scarcity for irrigation as well as drinking[47]. Sitaram an elderly resident of Godia village reminisced that before the johad (crescent shaped or straight walls) rain water ran down the gully and flowed away. Now the water seeps into the ground and have water in their wells.[48] In Chennai, in 2003, an IAS officer, Santha Sheela Nair, made rainwater harvesting compulsory ,helped farmers tide over drought years.[49] Brij Mohan a dacoit turned reformer in Chambal persuaded the villagers to construct the Mauryan time older check dams in 2003.In North east Local inhabitants have perfected the art of using what they used in past with shyngiar (bamboo system) and terraced farming otherwise they have a chance of losing tropical rainforests.[50]

The Government of Sri Lanka in June 2005 accepted a National Policy on Rain Water Harvesting & Strategies. Sri Lanka has used rain water for both domestic and agricultural purposes for many centuries and the institutionalized rain water harvesting became a practice in Sri Lanka in 1995, under the World Bank funded Community Water Supply and Sanitation Project.

## 8. CONCLUSION

"Water, water, everywhere/not a drop to drink" lines by Samuel Taylor Coleridge might just turn out to be true if the existing outlook of people doesn't change. By learning lessons from past, we can find a solution at present and stop this catastrophe. In ancient

47. dlc.dlib.indiana.edu/dlc/bitstream

48. Op.Cit., Nitya Jacob, Penguin book,2008, p.160.

49. Ibid.Nitya Jacob, p.68.

50. Ibid., Nitya Jacob, pp.129-131. ldlc.dlib.indiana.edu/dlc/bitstream/handle/10535/4012/RR123.pdf?sequence=1

India it was local people's responsibility to take care of natural resources according to their regional interests but during colonial and post-colonial period villagers, farmers, local people felt that it was government owned structures. It is the need of time to have techniques aligned with our environment instead of copying the western technologies blindly. Traditional systems don't mean that they are old and not useful. [51]It is felt that, rainwater harvesting is the Mantra for the new millennium. There is no pollution, no transportation cost, less storage cost etc. The need was felt by New National Water Policy ,swhich has recognized the ancient Buddhist tradition of importance of water management as part of the ecological system, drainage basin development and rainwater harvesting.

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51In an article on Creating Water Abundance Through Conservatio and Judicious Use by Indira Khurana in Journal YOJNA,July,2016,P.13.

# -V-
# ARCHAEOLOGY AND HERITAGE CONSERVATION

# BUDDHISM IN MONSOON ASIA: DIGITAL/SPATIAL HUMANITIES AND CONSERVATION OF HERITAGE [1]

by David Blundell*

**ABSTRACT**

This article brings together studies that illustrate digital/spatial approaches for the conservation of heritage across regional economies and bridging distinctions between cultures. Crosswalks for information from multiple sources and in multiple formats of spatial humanities – a sub-discipline of the digital humanities are based on geographic information systems (GIS) and timelines – to visualize indexes for diverse cultural data and provide an effective integrating and contextualizing function for spatiotemporal attributes. Geography continues to play an important role in

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1. I offer my gratitude to Benny Liow Woon Khin, Vijaya Samarawickrama, and Tan Ho Soon for editing K. *Sri Dhammananda: Essays in honor of his Centenary,* Vol. 2, Contemporary Perspectives, published by Nalanda Buddhist Society Malaysia, 2018. This project encouraged me to continue my pursuit for utilizing advanced tools of geographic information systems (GIS) to chart the extent of *dharma* transmissions from earliest times in South and Southeast Asia. This coincides with work we are doing for Lewis Lancaster's Atlas of Maritime Buddhism as a project of the Electronic Cultural Atlas Initiative (ECAI) with Jeanette Zerenke and other ECAI Austronesia Team members. Thanks for their years of support. I am grateful to Shu-Heng Chen, Vice President, and Director of Top Projects in Digital Humanities, at National Chengchi University, Taipei, for editing *Computational Social Sciences:* Big Data in Computational Social Science and Humanities, published by Springer, 2018, and my co-authors, Ching-chih Lin and James X. Morris.

dynamic global environments of multicultural diversities ranging across very different regions that increasingly find heritage as common denominators. We are looking at anthropology as a mandate the holistic understanding of human integrity at every level and time. Therefore, we are crafting a time map meaningful to our daily lives.

As nations develop their history in the present for its interpretation of the past, we have a commonality of heritages acting as political tools for making sense in our daily life (Buckland 2004). Our models are envisioned as multi-cultural and transnational. In our globalization, peoples acknowledge one another moving in a circulation of ideas, knowledge, and goods across spatial dimensions. Merchants have traded to East Asian ports, through river systems across China and Southeast Asia (Ecom 2017), and navigated to Pacific islands, and returned with trade (Sitnikov 2011).

The research includes early historical evidence of trade networks of Austronesian navigators circulating in the dharma in the Indian Ocean, mainland and island Southeast Asia, and China. This coincides with work on Lewis Lancaster's Atlas of Maritime Buddhism as a project of the Electronic Cultural Atlas Initiative (ECAI) with Jeanette Zerenke and our other Austronesia Team member utilizing geographic information systems (GIS).

We are finding meaning and innovation to enrich what scholarly efforts have already achieved in historical mapping across time particularly interests us. At National Chengchi University, Taipei, Taiwan, in 2015, we initiated our Asia-Pacific Spatiotemporal Institute (ApSTi, http://apsti.nccu.edu.tw). Here we have created an environment for synergies to occur between researchers based on research and sharing advanced technologies in digital/spatial humanities (see Blundell and Jan 2016; Blundell, Lin, and Morris 2018).

## 1. INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL/SPATIAL HUMANITIES

What is the worth and value of mapping ancient archaeological space in modern societies? Malaysia is struggling with this issue. Pre-Islamic societies are inscribed in historical artifacts and archaeological sites (Blundell 2015, 2018 a). Yet, in our contemporary civil society, there is increasing awareness and respect to the ways people lived and their aesthetic perception in

their time. Are we slaves to modernity? What about the ancient legacies of a country?

Pursuits in anthropology mandate the holistic understanding of human integrity at every level and time, therefore – we are crafting a time map meaningful to our daily lives. We are looking at historical continuity, starts and stops, across time as heritage transitions and transformations in terms of modern societies. How is this done? When visiting museums, what do you expect? Museum installations, dioramas, paintings, artifacts – yes, how is historical information viewed by the public? Is this of interest to you? We suppose as history comes into daily life it's meaningful, and does it makes sense?

This article brings in studies that illustrate different approaches to regional economies, bridging distinctions between the humanities and social science using digital solutions. Crosswalks for information from multiple sources and in multiple formats of spatial humanities – a sub-discipline of the digital humanities based on geographic information systems (GIS) and timelines – creating visual indexes for diverse cultural data and provide an effective integrating and contextualizing function for spatiotemporal attributes.

As nations develop their history in the present for its interpretation of the past, we have a commonality of heritages acting as political tools for making sense in our daily life. In recent years, regional economies have expanded based on world trends and historical networks. Yet, today we have more national barriers ranging across geographies that increasingly find heritage a common denominator.

Our models are envisioned as multi-cultural and transnational. In our globalization, peoples acknowledge one another moving in a circulation of ideas, knowledge, and goods across spatial dimensions. Merchants have traded to East Asian ports, through river systems across China and Southeast Asia, and navigated to Pacific islands, and returned with wares of their trade, stories, and geographic information.

Finding meaning and innovation to enrich what scholarly efforts have already achieved in historical mapping across time particularly interests us. In 2015, we initiated our Asia-Pacific Spatiotemporal Institute (ApSTi, http://apsti.nccu.edu.tw) at National Chengchi

University, Taipei, Taiwan (Blundell and Jan 2016). Here we have created an environment for synergies to occur between researchers serving to facilitate studies as a home for innovative geographic information systems (GIS)-based research and sharing advanced technologies in the digital/spatial humanities.

Our institute offers a range of project services to facilitate new ways of configuring data based on geospatial tools. Interfacing of spatiotemporal systems, dynamic maps of unique informational possibilities are generated. Researchers in various disciplines contribute to dialogues about techniques, challenges, and the results of digital humanities research. In short, *we are facilitating capacity-building and innovative ways of sharing information via digital methods for visualizing spatiotemporal aspects of the human experience.*

A far-reaching goal is to further standards in cartographic strategies through the utility of digitization and animation of map content giving new possibilities in the hands of local and international collaborators. This allows the uniting of the context of environmental landscapes with cultural data for making enhanced possibilities in spatial humanities with scales of data–large and small–with humanistic and scientific results. Our information across regions is based on a commonality of symbols and motifs of unconscious mutual heritage. We track sources from prehistoric linkages into the realm of early historical connections traced through nomadic legends to the present day (Sitnikov 2011; Blundell and Sitnikov 2018). Our case studies are based on applications of theory supporting holistic approaches to understand stability across diversity.

This research shows that economies are transmitters for rapidly transforming global environments of multicultural diversification to trans-regions from very different geo-cultural areas that could increasingly find common denominators utilizing best scientific practices that produce new paradigms. We view the geographic regions by understanding local changes and global impacts across time.

Here we weave a story of Southern Asia maritime Buddhism through GIS digital and spatial mapping through Southeast Asia. I am working on projects with Gauthama Prabhu for developing a

progressive paradigm of ecology and heritage that incorporates a sense of place in South India imbued with Buddhist heritage, yet politically ignored by mainstream society (Blundell and Prabhu 2018).

Using anthropology and digital/spatial humanities, there is a potential to activate grassroots by communities to re-appropriate and link back their own heritage cultivating local leadership of farsighted outreach. Our interest is based on the ancient heritage of South India and through maritime voyaging of merchants and monks of the dharma.

It is widely believed that fast development of East Asia in the late 20th century could be explained in terms of the traditional Asian cultural norms, which are supposed to be one of the main factors to ease the adaptation of struggling economies to the fast globalizing world. It was often suggested that such features of traditional philosophy of Confucianism as "the close family ties, sense of social discipline and respect for hard work" were the engine of economic growth in those countries (Aikman 1986:5).

However, the philosophy of Confucianism is not the only Asian tradition. Cultural norms of many popular beliefs have played a significant role in economic and social activities across the region for centuries. Cultural norms of many faiths also had long periods of successful influences on the processes of regional integration, social and economic development, and stagnation. *Why is it that the same beliefs, religions and traditional cultural norms sometimes could be generators, but sometimes hamper social and economic development?* What has Buddhism contributed?

We suppose that the findings in cultural anthropology and even its more specific subfields such as religion, folklore, and mythology could be an important contribution to the understanding of socio-economic exchange. It seems that periodic environmental changes and technical innovations are the main forces of transformations in social structures which in their turn determine the mechanisms and levels of cross-cultural activity—either integration or isolation.

It is important to notice here that besides the cultural diversity, such as in the Eurasia-Pacific region there is the opposite phenomenon of cultural similarity in spite of the fact that nowadays

people have different beliefs and are separated by various nation-states. Cultural similarity in what peoples share could be explained in terms of former heritage unity or regular longtime contacts among them in the past. For example, wide beliefs and diversity among the Austronesian speaking peoples could be explained by their ability to adapt easily to outside influences.

The main reason for easy adaptation to outside influences is to derive profit from integration through the exchange of goods and other worldviews. Ancient peoples' cultural traditions sustaining over space and time is interesting and useful as a task because it can help to discover mechanisms of cultural integration in the region, which took place in the past and probably could be explained nowadays in terms of inter-religious tensions across regions.

To discover such traditions and effective integration mechanisms we need address to Carl Jung's concept of *collective unconscious* (see Jacobi 1959). According to Jung, the collective unconscious is a part of the individual unconscious mind, shared by a society, and is the product of ancestral experience. It is concentrated in traditions, beliefs and moral norms. The study of mythologies, beliefs, rituals, and cults in combination with particular objects of material culture and archaeological artifacts across Eurasia-Pacific regions could help to analyze peoples and find sets of commonalities, which can help to reconstruct the ideology of initial integration phase in the region and its patterns.

Jack Goody (1996) in his *The East in the West* suggests that similarities in inheritance patterns indicate that the term 'Eurasia' is more valid than either 'Europe' or 'Asia'. We suppose that unification of these two separate concepts into an indivisible one gives opportunity to observe the phenomenon of sociocultural change and stability in its dynamic variations across continuous geographical and historical arenas of cross-cultural interactions.

Common heritage denominators are hidden under layers of different variants of popular beliefs in different cultural traditions. Many scholars believe that religious and mythological patterns could be spread in the vast territories along ancient trade routes. For example, Carla Musi (1997) studied parallels between the

Finno-Ugrian shamanism and European mediaeval magic, explains the phenomenon of cultural similarities due to ancient trade routes. She concludes that from the most distant past, Western and Eastern Europe were much closer to each other than could be imagined. Cultural elements, myths and beliefs could be spread along the 'trade routes of Baltic amber' across vast geographic distances.

This ideas of Musi supports our supposition that the stable mythological elements that have traces in mythologies all over the Eurasia-Pacific could be a product of regular cross-cultural exchange and contacts among peoples along prehistory's trade route networks, which long ago connected Eurasia by rivers and seashores, creating and supporting a sense of cultural unity from Scandinavia and British Islands in the West, ranging across to the Far East; from Kamchatka in the North to New Guinea in the South.

## 2. RESEARCH

Our current work is based on disciplines of comparative mythology and folklore combined with data of geography, ethnography, archaeology and linguistics to discover new knowledge concerning the phenomenon of cultural transformations and stability. As a data sources we use, the first known among written texts and oral narratives was collected by previous generations of ethnographers, anthropologists, and folklorists.

We look for "native logic by which various peoples make sense out of life and to understand it on its own terms" (Babbie 2010). We are collecting data relevant both from the transfer and worth of mythological symbols and objective phenomena of economic daily living. Why is this important? It is to study the interplay of ancient cultural pursuits in the archaeological record and mapped with advanced geographic information systems (GIS). The question is relevant today to better understand ancient ocean transport networks of the dharma from ports of Southern Asia to eastern shores.

The research components are based on documentation of merchants and pilgrims and their routes, ship technology, navigation, and archaeology (Ray 1994). Methodological questions were created on issues of research design and strategy as an empirical science.

In recent decades we have entered an age where digital tools are ever increasing in capacity to help us with daily life. In the academic realms of text mining, network analysis, public history, heritage studies, and mapping we are coming of age in digital humanities and related disciplines (Blundell and Hsiang 1999). Among these areas, many specialties focus on analyzing digital space through time. We call this area spatiotemporal research—mapping across time with digital computational methods providing a large array of information. This enhances our ability to observe data beyond an individual's abilities to perceive all the possible components.

The possible data stems from aerial mapping, remote sensing, photometric imagery, random sampling archaeology, statistical programming with languages such as R, and contemporary software development for innovative methods to see beyond what we can see. When conducting fieldwork, you may find there are occasions when digitizing data becomes necessary. Whether this is due to limitations such as time or access, mobility issues requiring light travel, or due to chance, such as the occasional lucky find, digitization is an excellent method to collect spatiotemporal data. This chapter outlines several varying projects and methodologies in the digital humanities incorporating integrated approaches to spatial humanities and spatiotemporal research. We invite you to participate in this field of spatiotemporal methods to enhance your research. With this chapter we hope to inform, instruct, and inspire more research in this new and exciting area (Blundell, Lin, and Morris 2018). Mapping is one of the most commonly used techniques in reviewing our "sense of being" in space (see Cosgrove 2004; see Blundell 2011, 2012).

Our time maps research contributes to important academic discourse in many ways. Time maps are utilized to trace stories by the way people move through time. These visualized spatiotemporal displays contribute to discovering knowledge, answering questions, and seeking other questions. Spatial humanities produce a cycle of questions creating layers of maps portrayed in different ways.

The question is to what extent did international religious systems, such as beliefs in the *dharma*, beginning about 2,300 years ago facilitated by Austronesian speaking Malay/Indonesian

navigators? This is to say there was a range of influence stemming from Southern Asia across the Bay of Bengal to island Southeast Asia. The region became receptive to the dharma in peninsula and island Southeast Asia. How could routes be traced?

The supposition is the dharma as a literary belief system was carried as far as writing could be traced on palm leaves, metal, and stone. In the 2nd century CE, my hypothesis is that the *dharma* moved out by sea travel onboard ships with seasoned mariners who we suppose were indigenous, now know as Austronesian speaking voyagers (Blundell 2014 a, b) and in stone relief imagery depicted at Borobudur in Java (Figure 1). Yet, there are gaps in the record. So to remedy this, we are taking stock of old knowledge, and new technologies within today's academic networks to further trace the extent of seemingly unrelated cultures intersected, and its periphery (Blundell 2016).



**Figure 1**. *Stone relief panel of voyaging outrigger ship on the Buddhist monument Borobudur, Java, Indonesia, 9th century.*

This project owes its existence to Lewis Lancaster who established the Electronic Cultural Atlas Initiative (ECAI, http://ecai.org), University of California, Berkeley, in 1997. At that time, Lewis Lancaster invited scholars of Austronesian languages and cultures to be part of this international collaborative reaffirming and furthering the United Nations Millennium Goals by the indispensable common house of the human family, "through which we will seek to realize our universal aspirations for peace,

cooperation and development. We therefore pledge our unstinting support for these common objectives and our determination to achieve them" (United Nations Millennium Goals 8th plenary meeting, September 2000).

For public museum displays, our team thought of producing modular units of the story intersecting early Buddhism with Austronesian voyaging. Theses components include visually documenting ports, ship construction, and sailing routes. Our research illustrates a range of ways to facilitate configuring social science data with geospatial tools featuring Taiwan research with GIS point locations, migration and historical trade routes, and religious sites of the region linked to enriched attribute spatial information (Blundell and Zerneke 2014).

Today's current advances in GIS computing and information infrastructures offer researchers the possibility of reconsidering the entire strategy of analysis and dissemination of information. It "enables humanities scholars to discover relationships of memory, artifact, and experience that exist in a particular place and across time" (Bodenhamer 2010 et. al.).

Documentation includes merchants and pilgrims and their routes, ship technologies, ports, and remaining artifacts. The current project, ECAI Atlas of Maritime Buddhism has a first phase goal of providing GIS mapping of archaeological sites along the coast lines of India and Sri Lanka extending to Southeast Asia and ending with the Chinese river and canal systems, coastal Korea, and Japan (Figure 2).

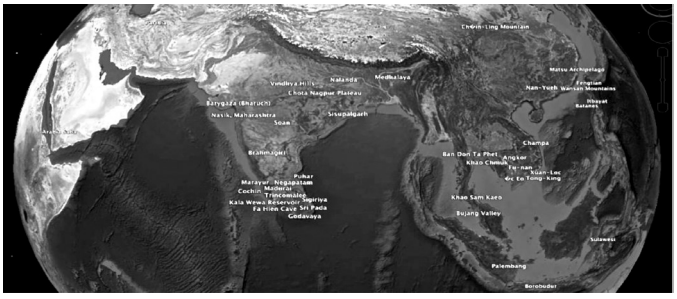



**Fig 2.** *The ECAI Atlas of Maritime Buddhism featuring sites of research in Monsoon Asia.*

Geographic information is required by a wealth of scientific research for various disciplines. Due to much progress of geospatial technologies in recent years, acquisition of high-quality spatial and temporal information has become much more efficient and cost-effective than past few decades. Remote sensing provides massive high resolution imageries about Earth surface, which can be analyzed by image processing tools to automatically derive valuable information for various applications such as climate change, land resources inventory, environmental monitoring, and urban sprawl.

We are challenged to imagine new methods for doing research and making results available to broader user communities. Can we find meaning and innovation digital humanities beyond what has been traditionally part of scholarly efforts? We examine GIS point locations tracing routes and networks imbued with historical meaning across the region linked to enriched attribute information. These are charted and visualized in maps and can be analyzed with network analysis, creating an innovative digital infrastructure for scholarly collaboration and creation of customizable visualizations.

The Atlas helps to show Buddhist related artifacts and sites clustered at seaports in India as well as a number of regions of Southeast and Eastern Asia. The network of Indian seaport merchants was a primary support for the dharma. Today these were classified as Hindu or Buddhist as they coincided at the time. The respect for Buddha was prevalent from the 2nd century CE, if not before. What form of Buddhism? At the time, the respect for Buddha was based on the individual. This is known as bhakti or to share, partake in, with your deity, such as Buddha or Siva.

The seafaring *nusantara* traders of the islands of Southeast Asia created trading centers facilitating Hindu/Buddhist propagation in Southeast Asia, which proved of the existence of Buddhism with Pala Mahayana influences from South India. This faith was brought in and practiced by these Indic merchants. The respect shown to the Buddha was a more inclusive of an overarching belief system.

Buddhism diminished in India, as it was supported by kings who were politically replaced by kings devoted to Siva, etc. by about the

10th century CE. It was seen as the raise of Hinduism. Yet, the term Hinduism did not exist. Our view in the present day is to divide and classify those beliefs as Hindu and Buddhist.

### 3. TRACING HISTORY THROUGH MAP LAYERS

Today, with our current geographic technologies we are able to trace this historical process as map layers—from prehistory to early history into the era of written inscriptions. Paul Wheatley (1961) brought this to my attention in his publications. His methods and terminologies were based on his ability to translate texts from both early Indic and Chinese writings. He mapped the historic Southeast Asia showing layers of settlement. The ancient texts of Wheatly's Golden Khersonese comment on the trade relations with the Malay Peninsula and across Southeast Asia.

Our research shares ideas about early historical Indian Ocean destinations to seats of kingdoms and trade centers where the word of the dharma and its faith developed in a healthy vigorous way, especially in particularly congenial regions of Southeast Asia. We have traced early evidence of trans-ocean sailing craft across Monsoon Asia.

An important element in this research includes the role of the Monsoon winds and the annual shift of wind direction that determined the trade calendar for ocean shipments (Figure 4). The time and distance from Africa to India or from India to Malaysia or further out across the seas to East Asia depended on seasonal wind directions.

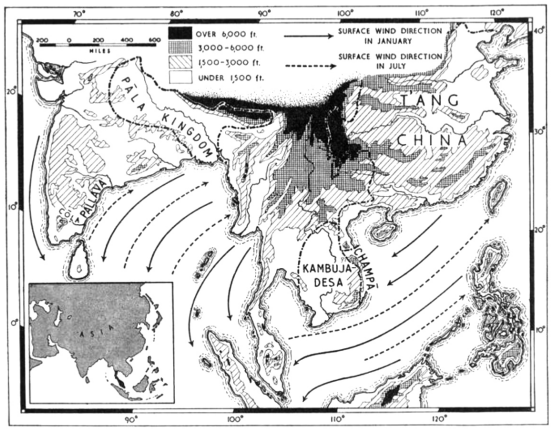



**Figure 4.** *Historical Monsoon wind seasons, Wheatley 1961, xviii.*

A corresponding resource is our ECAI map of Austronesia that overlaps with the Buddhist distribution of materials and providing a local context for ocean shipping lanes and ports. From East Asia some of the earliest cultural linkages were based on the innovation of ocean going navigation, sailing out of Taiwan about 4,500 to 3,500 years ago carried a linguistic dispersal known as the Austronesian trade languages incubating across the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, and to Micronesia initiating Malayo-Polynesian languages (Figure 5.).




**Figure 5.** *Out of Taiwan seafaring routes between 4,500 to 3,500 years ago. Map displayed at the Austronesia Exhibition of Bentara Budaya, Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia, July 20, 2016.*

## 4. HISTORCIAL ATLAS OF MONSOON ASIA

Our knowledge derives from various research fields, and integrates many different types of data and analytical styles developing new research methodologies, creating paradigm shifts and multi-vocal views in the humanities. Our aim is interdisciplinary for producing narratives from ancient evidence; thus we are recounting timelines of religious transmissions, aesthetics, and trade partnerships.

This data is collected for the Atlas, it can be a resource for museum installations that can be interactive, animated, and augmented or installed in immersive 3D display environments. The development of Apps allows for our information to be available on handheld devices.

Geographic information and timelines provide an effective integrating and contextualizing function for cultural attributes. As cross walks for information from multiple sources and in multiple formats they create visual indexes for diverse cultural data. The system is based on GIS point locations linked to enriched attribute information. We are able to chart the extent of specific traits of cultural information via maps using GIS gazetteer spreadsheets for collecting and curating datasets. Through methods in spatial humanities, history reaches new dimensions, with state of the art opportunities while gathering and analyzing data. With our advanced spatiotemporal tools, it is exciting to research multidimensional pathways of Monsoon Asia.

Our ECAI Atlas of Maritime Buddhism efforts include the development of a touring 3D immersive museum exhibit. This exhibit is in part supported by the efforts of a diverse group of ECAI affiliates and teams. A wide range of contributors are collecting and cataloging data, which can be used in various ways for different audiences.

One of the organizing themes of the atlas is Atlas modules. These modules are curated by an author, or team, to document a story, event or theme. Each is supported by multiple forms of data and visualization. Historical kingdom map overlays on Google Earth give time-enabled layers of information within a specific geographic region, time period or cultural era, trading system, person or group of people (Figure 6). This approach is supported by an infrastructure to capture and archive content and is expected to grow.

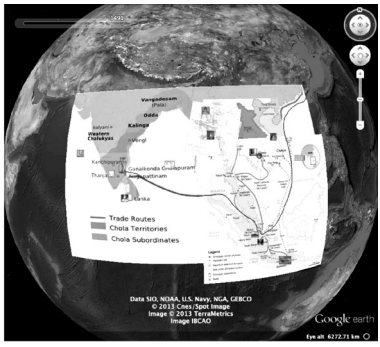



**Figure 6.** *Maps of historical kingdoms in Southern Asia, their associated trade routes, and other information are used to construct geo-registered layers by time in Google Earth.*

## 5. CONCLUSION

Origins of this research began with my thesis written from the perspective of India and Sri Lanka to explore sources and expansions of regional cultures. This work was based on translations of Indo-European, Dravidian, and Chinese early historical literature. It has increased my understanding of growth and dynamics of the ancient cities and trade routes across mainland and island Southern Asia from Neolithic cultures to early history making connections with East Asia and Pacific Ocean island cultures (see Blundell 1976, 1984, 2003, 2009, 2014 b, 2016, 2017, 2018 b).

A far-reaching goal is to further standards in cartographic strategies through the utility of digitalization and animation of map content giving new possibilities in the hands of local and international collaborators. We provide examples for developing best practice standards applied to databases giving interactive multimedia utility aspects. This allows uniting the context of environmental landscapes with cultural data for making enhanced possibilities in spatial humanities with scales of data, large and small – with humanistic and scientific results.

For comprehensive developments in spatial humanities we consult Jo Guldi's introduction of the spatial turn for eight academic disciplines, "What is the Spatial Turn?" (2016) and Richard White's essay "What is Spatial History?" (2010). Digital mapping today gives resource affordability to researchers. Availability to digital resources allows novice or advanced researchers who are not cartographers, abilities to chart information.

Now historiography has fresh and innovative tools (Robertson 2012), and not about literary text mining. GIS provides history "the most exciting developments in both digital and spatial humanities" (Gregory and Geddes 2014) with advances in computing and information infrastructures offering researchers possibilities of reconsidering the entire strategy of analysis and dissemination of information. It features 'deep mapping' acknowledging multiple meanings in a place that "enables humanities scholars to discover relationships of memory, artifact, and experience that exist in a particular place and across time" (Bodenhamer et. al. 2010).

Why is this important? We connect with a continuum of religious transmissions across Monsoon Asia. This article highlights our research for the development of a digtial Atlas based modules featuring martime Indo-Pacific and Indic dharma influences with a focus on historical Buddhist outreach.

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# A STUDY OF BUDDHIST ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDS OF EARLY MEDIEVAL BENGAL CAN SHED LIGHT TO BUILD A SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY IN CONTEMPORARY BANGLADESH

by Mokammal H. Bhuiyan*

**ABSTRACT**

In the early medieval period Bengal was ruled by the Pala dynasty (8th-12th centuries CE) in the north and the Khadga, the Deva, the Chandra dynasties in the central and southeast, they all were Buddhist and proclaimed as the *paramasugata* i.e. devout Buddhist. Buddhism survived and flourished in Bengal for more than three centuries under the patronage of the Buddhist kings, while it was almost wiped out in other parts of India. During the Buddhist rule this country became a sustainable and peaceful one which is supported by the findings of the studies of archeological records like inscriptions, sculptural art, terracotta plaques etc. discovered in various Buddhist sites. From inscriptional studies, it has seen that some kings of Pala and Chandra dynasties extended their helping hands towards Brahmanism beside Buddhism. Most of them appointed Brahmin ministers and gave land for the Brahmanical institutes sometimes for Buddhist establishments also. That's why

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we can see numerous Brahmanical sculptures have been discovered from all over Bangladesh (in early medieval period West Bengal, a province of India and present day Bangladesh were an integral part of Bengal) dated to the Buddhist period. The walls of the central shrines of the monasteries like Somapura, Salban, Ananda, Bhoja were embellished with terracotta plaques depicted Buddhist and Brahmanical deities, scenes from Ramayana, Krishna legends, various movements of human beings, semi divine and semi human beings, flora and fauna etc. And in case of Somapura Vihara, 63 stone sculptures have found, except one all are Brahmanical deities. In the Buddhist monasteries the presence of Brahmanical deities and portrayal of the figures of the Brahmanical heroes side by side of Buddhist subjects is the strongest indication of a pluralistic society that sustained in those days. During their rule, it can be said that a strong religious harmony and sustainability prevailed in Bengal. From the data of the study of the archaeological records of the Buddhist rulers can show how in a society of present day Bangladesh various religious groups can live together without having any tension. In my paper I will discuss in detail how a study of Buddhist archaeological records of early medieval Bengal can shed light to build a sustainable society in contemporary Bangladesh.

Archaeological records are the mirror of the past of a nation. Study of the records like inscriptions, coin, sculptures, and terracotta can show how our past society was and can show the path for today. Many inscriptions of Buddhist kings have been found from various parts of Bangladesh which have valuable information on the past society and culture.

Some scholars assumed that Buddhism exists in Bengal since 3rd century BCE and they present the Brahmi inscription (fig. 1) discovered in Mahastangarh, Bogra district, Bangladesh in favor of their logic. This inscription refers to an establishment of a sect of Buddhism named Shadvargiya located probably in Pundranagara (Sircar, 2010, p. 184) modern Mahasthangarh in Bagura district, Bangladesh. Another evidence in support of the early entry of Buddhism in north Bengal (Rajshahi division, Bangladesh along with some parts of West Bengal, India) can be provided here, a Chinese pilgrim named Yijing (I-tsing) who travelled Indian

subcontinent during 671-95 CE left some account on the presence of a 'Temple of China' in Varendra i.e. north Bengal. It was located near Mrigasthapana monastery which was built for some Chinese pilgrims by a Maharaja named Shrigupta about five hundred years prior to the pilgrims time i.e. in the 2nd century CE (Sircar, 2010, p. 184). Faxian (Fa-hien) another Chinese traveler visit Bengal in the beginning of 5th century CE and reported that Buddhism is a flourishing religion and about the same time the Gunaighar copperplate inscription (Zakaria, 1997, p. 208) of 507 CE speaks of a number of Buddhist monasteries in Samatata i.e. Cumilla district of Bangladesh.

The account of a famous Chinese pilgrim Xuanzang (Hiuen Tsang), who visited Samatata (greater Cumilla and Noakhali district) in 638 CE, inform us about his visit to the the Buddhist sites. He saw more than 30 Buddhist monasteries and 2000 monks in the country (Niyogi, 1980, p.11). He mentioned about a stupa and a samgaram situated in a close proximity. In the monastery there was an 8 feet dark-blue jade image of Buddha. It should be mentioned here that he also paid visit to Pundravardhana. During the reign of Khadga King Rajabhata (700-715 CE) Sheng Chi paid a visit to Samatata probably Mainamati area and saw an image of Avalokiteshvara at the front when the king used to take out processions in honor of Buddha. Yijing visited Mainamati after many years of Xuan Zang and saw the influence of Buddism in the area was increasing due to the continuous patronage received from the rulers of the area. Modern Chittagong division of Bangladesh in early medieval time was known as Harikela was visited by Wu-hing and he stayed there for one year before he left for Mahabodhi monastery (Bhattacharya, 2000, p. 2). Another Chinese monk Tan-wong also visited Harikela and found much favor with the king of the country (Bhattacharya, 2000, p. 2).

Somapura was a great center of learning for the Buddhist in the early medieval Indian subcontinent, its name and fame spread to the Buddhist world and therefore Chinese pilgrims paid visit to this university. To decorate the cruciform central shrine wall of this monastery, 63 stone relief were used and of these except one all are belong to Brahmanical faith, for example I can mention

here of Brahma, Vasudeva, Balarama (fig. 2), Shiva, Agni, Indra (fig. 3), Kubera, Ganga, and various portrayal of Krishna's life events. The only figure of Buddhist deity found in Somapura is of Padmapani. It may be mentioned here that from Nalanda, many Brahmanical images had discovered. It is rather interesting that the Somapura Mahavihara, the world famous Buddhist vihara had many Brahmanical deities to decorate central temple. In this regard I can mention here that during early medieval period Brahmnical epic like Ramayana and Mahabharata were very popular across the north India. Pala King Madanapala gifted a whole village to a Brahmin as he recited the stories of Mahabharata for the queen Pattamahadevi Citromatika (Sircar, 2009, p. 95).

Brahmin began to get patronization from the Gupta period since 5th century CE onwards from the king, it was normal for the Guptas as they believe in Brahmanical religion, but the patronization continued through Buddhist Chandra and Pala up to the advent of Brahmin Sena and Varman dynasties in the mid of 11th century CE. Pala kings appointed Brahmin prime minister as a hereditary basis from a family called Garga (Majumdar and Basak, 1943, pp. 273-274). According to Badal Pillar inscriptions Brahmins minister exercised great power during Buddhist Palas. The inscription stated that the minister Darbhapani kept the king waiting at his door (Sircar, 1983, p. 87) may be an exaggeration, but it leaves no doubt that he exercised great authority in the state affairs. From Xuanzang it is known that the population of Brahmanical religion become almost double omparing to the Buddhist community during early medieval period (Chakrabarti, 2016, p. 8). Aryamanjushrimulakalpa gives interesting information about a sect of Brahmins known as Tirthika were spared all over Bengal by the reign of Gopala (Roy, 1993, p. 231). In Indian Museum copperplate Inscription of Dharmapala recorded that subordinate ruler Bhadranaga petitioned to the king to donate several land plots to Buddhist sanghas in the village of Antaravanika in Pundravardhana-bhukti (North Bengal) belonging to the three facilities established by him and his consort Sanhayika, which include a perfume chamber i.e. gandhakuti (may be a chamber to install Buddha image) and a small monastery at Somapura Mahavihara (Furui, 2011, pp. 146, 147, 150). It is already stated that during early medieval period

north, southeast and central Bengal were ruled by Buddhist Pala, Deva, Chandra dynasties respectively and they donated land to the religious institutes as well as to the persons. King Shri Chandra grants land to the Brahmins in the name of Buddha. Another king of Chandras Kalyan Chandra's benevolent work was compared with the Brahmin heroes (16). I can mention here that king Shri Chandra's Paschimbhag copperplate contains information about the establishment of a colony in Shrihattamandala (Sylhet district, Bangladesh) where six thousand Brahmins got land to live (Sircar, 1973, p. 35).

Mythology of Krishna was much popular among the people of Bengal regardless of religious affiliation. His life events like killing of Dhenuka or Keshin, wrestling with Chanura and Mushtika, killing of Agashura, uprooting of the twin Arjuna trees, Pralambasura incident, Vasudeva carrying infant Krishna etc. have found in the Somapura Mahavihara. A newly discovered small cruciform temple in the courtyard of Salban Vihara can give information about social harmony of early medieval Bangldesh. The temple wall is embellished with 61 terracotta plaques and among these 21 plaques are displaying the life events of Krishna (fig. 4). This temple is dated to the 10-11 centuries CE and this period attributed to the Chandra period.The Chandra kings proclaimed themselves as *paramasaugata* i.e. devout Buddhist, but they had a non-communal attitude to the subject. They donated land to the Brahmins and Brahmins institutes, but not to the Buddhists or Buddhists institutes ( Pal, 2014, p. 191).

In Bangladesh the very first written archeological record is a stone inscription (engraved in 3rd-2nd century CE) discovered in Mahasthangarh, Bogra district as mentioned earlier which was issued by a Mauryan emperor to give order to the local administration to support lay people from the treasury during famine (Tinti, 1996, p. 35-36). Later, archaeologist find charters of Gupta kings within the period between 432/33 and 543 CE in north Bengal. The donors were mostly local people—often important state officials, representative from the merchant community and representative from the non-agriculturist community. Sometimes even have community patronage and villagers were interested in

settling Brahmins, group of Brahmins or supporting Buddhist establishments (Pal, 2014, p. 186). It is seen in the Gunaighar copperplate from Cumilla district that Vainyagupta granted land for both Buddhist and Brahmanical institutes. In Faridpur district, Bangladesh from c. 530 to 600 CE a group of local rulers grant lands to the Brahmins (Pal, 2014, p. 187).

The Palas in the north had created a strong dynasty and during their time they had given 17 copperplates to various individual and groups. The Palas claimed themselves as *paramasaugata* and prayed Buddha at the beginning of their charters. In most of the Pala inscriptions the following invocatory verses are to be found at the very beginning (Ray, 1968, cited in Hussain, 1985, p. 64 ): "Victory of Shriman Dashabala Lokanataha who with his heart expanded by the jewel of compassion held maitri to be dearer than others, who washed away the mud of ignorance by the pure water of the stream of knowledge of the perfect enlightment, (and) who had obtained eternal peace by having defeated the attacks made by the Kamaka foe i.e. Mara." The first verse of the Khalimpur grant of Dharmapala runs thus (Kielhorn, 1896, cited in Hussain 1985, p. 64): " May the ten powers of Vajrasana who has firmly attained, as to fortune to compassion, conquer the regions where many hosts of the Evil one are seen, protect you." In three copperplates issued by Shri Chandra the first verse invokes the Buddha in the following words: "May that Lord Jina (i.e. Buddha) who is unique receptacle of mercy, be venerated; and triumphant also be dharma the unique lamp of the world- in consequence of the whose worship the entire noble minded Sangha of monks transcends the series of continuous existence (samsara)." Their copperplates bear dharmachakra as a dynastic symbol or seal (fig. 5). It consists of a representation of a wheel flanked on either side by two deer. This representation suggests the preaching of the first sermon of Buddha in the deer park of Saranath, India. However, although the Palas were officially Buddhist, but they were very catholic in their views, they donated mostly to the individual or groups of Brahmins not to the Buddhist institutes by their own wish.

The early Pala rulers like Gopala I, Dhamapala (c. 775-812 CE) and Devaplala (c. 812-850 CE) are known in Tibetan tradition

as great sponsors of Buddhism and known to be the builder of Nalanda, Somapura and Vikramashila etc. monasteries, but none of their charters (fig. 6) record a royal donation to any Buddhist institutes by the king himself. All the land grants to the Buddhist monasteries were made by their subordinate rulers as mentioned above. The famous Nalanda copperplate informs us that Devapala donated villages to the Nalanda Mahavihara at the request of the king Balaputradeva of Java and Sumatra (Pal, 2014, p. 191; Sircar, 1983, p. 71). In fact the data give hints about the non-communal attitude of the Pala ruler.

During this great dynasty some rulers showed much sympathy to the Brahmanical religion. Surapala I (c. 850-858 CE) donated two villages to bear the expenditure in maintaining an enshrined Shiva linga (phallic emblem of Shiva) in request of his mother named Mahata and also donated two other villages for the council of Shaivacharya as mentioned in the copperplate inscriptions of Surapala I (Sircar, 2009, p. 90). They were so liberal that sometimes donated lands for both Buddhist and Brahmanical temples as recorded in the Malda District Museum copper-plate of Mahendrapala (c. 850-865+ CE) where it is inscribed that *paramasaugata* Devapala built two temples of outstanding beauty during his rule, one for the Buddha and the other for the consort of Shiva i.e. Parvati. In the Bhagalpur copper-plate (Bihar, India), Narayanapala (c.865+-917 CE) claims himself as the follower of Buddha like his predecessors, but records establishing a Shiva image and granting a village to the deity, an association of Pashupatacaryas (teachers of a Shiva sect) to perform their rituals and Pashupata monks to meet their needs (Sircar, 1983, p. 80).

Meanwhile it is known that Palas were very kind to the Brahmnical religion although in each copperplate they affixed their royal emblem dharmacakra and claimed themselves as *paramasaugata*. The Siyan stone slab inscription of Nayapala (c. 1027-1043 CE) discovered in Birbhum district, West Bengal records an image of the emaciated goddess Carca (Camunda) was established by the *paramasaugata* Mahendrapala. This stone inscription gives a list of pious works by the king as follows: Shiva temples, Shaiva Mathas, a golden Trishula, a golden Linga cover, a golden finial for a Shiva

temple, a bejeweled golden Shiva, a silver image of Sadashiva, golden images of Candika and Ganesha, a silver Candra, a silver Surya, a golden lotus engraved with images of the Navagrahas (nine planetary deities), Bhairava temples (one surrounded by the Caushatti Yogini i.e. sixty-four mothers in Nayapala's capital), Shakta temples (including a complex of nine shrines for the nine Durgas), Vishnu temple, Pancaratrika Matha, Lakshmi temple, Sun temple; a few other temples and one monastery, a hospital (arogyashala), and gifts to Brahmins. But no Buddhist temple, monastery, or image is mentioned (Sircar, 2009, pp. 110-128).

Shiva got most attraction to some Pala kings rather than other Brahmanical deities. Only in a few cases Vaishnava, Shakta and Ganapatyas were being patronized, but in those cases only their images were installed by kings. However, a monastery conferred on the Saiddhantika Guru Indrashiva by *paramasaugata* Mahipala I (c. 977-1027) (Sanderson, 2010, p. 4). His son and successor *paramasaugata* Vigrahapala III (c. 1043-1070) as per Amgachi copper-plate inscription was 'devoted to Shiva's worship'. Poet Sandhyakaranandin described how Madanapala (*paramasaugata*) a devotee of Shiva succeed in war through the favor of Brahmanical deity Candi (Sanderson, 2010, p. 4).

Although, Palas, Deva and Chnadras were renowned Buddhist of Bengal but they had a very liberal view to other religions and liberal in their social behavior as well. Inter religious marry was a common matter for the Palas they married daughters of Brahmanic royal dynasties. Kantideva, an 11th century king of southeast Bengal had his parents from two different religions—mother from a Brahmin family and father from a Buddhist family.

In fact communal harmony and respect for other religions was a common phenomenon or features during early medieval Bengal. In this connection, references already made that being Buddist the Pala and the Chandra kings donated land to Brahmins or established Brahmanical temples or installed Brahmanical images. And in the case of Khadga (c. 615-760 CE) being Brahmin they had done the same—donated land to the Buddhist Viaharas beside Brahmin institutes. For example, I can mention here, Ashrafpur Copperplate of Devakhadga (c. 760-775 CE)—the charter begins (fig. 7) with an

adoration to Buddha and records the grant of several plots of land by the king in favor of the Buddhist monastery built by the monk Sanghamitra, for the long life of prince Rajarajabhatta (c. 700-715 CE). And this prince when become a king brought a procession in honor of Buddha learnt from Chinese monk traveler Sheng-chi's account (Bhuiyan, 2018, p. 266). Although no inscription has yet found of this king, but gold and silver coins have discovered. The bull royal seal of the Khadga dynasty can be seen in these coins. However, later Balabhatta (c. 715-730 CE) came to the power and gifted land for Buddha, Dharma, Sangha and for navakarmas (new or old repairing works) (Gupta, 1979, p. 144) is known from his inscription discovered from Salban Viahrara, Mainamati. As a Shiava or Brhmin king's charter it bear emblem of a recumbent bull (see, fig. 7). In this regard it would be worth to mention here that King Balabhatta's mother queen Prabhavati Devi installed an image of Sarvani (Parvati, wife of Brahmanical god Shiva) which was gilded by her (Zakaria, 1997, p. 214). It had an inscription at its pedestal. It may be mentioned here that all the five monarchs of the Khadga dynasty had deep regards for Buddha although they were follower of Shiva.

In between Khadga and Chandra dynasties the early Deva were ruling in Samatata and they were the true follower of Buddhism, they didn't give a single piece of land to Brahmins or to Brahmanical or Jain institutes. Four copper-plates of this dynasty were discovered from Mainamati area of Cumilla district and all land grant were done in favor of Buddhist institutes. The second largest Buddhist monastery of Mainamati area called Salban Vihara was established by Bhavadeva (c. 815-840 CE.), the 2nd king of this dynasty. Here to be worth to mention that excavations at the site Salban have exposed a large Buddhist establishment and wealth of material objects datable from the 7th to 12th centuries CE (Rashid, 1997, p. 32). Arranged in four wings round a central shrine, this 167.6m square vihara contains a total of 115 cells (fig. 8).

Chandra dynasty was one of the strongest dynasties who created a wider power base incorporating central, eastern and southeastern part of Bengal and their inscription bears the *dharmachakara* sign. They altogether issued 12 charters of land gift, but they all donated

land to the Brahmins and their institutes but none was for the Buddhist institute although they claimed to be a devout follower of Buddha. Paschimbhag chater of Shrichandra (c. 925-975 CE) would be interesting to discuss here. In this land gift the king gave a large block of land in Shrihattamandala (Sylhet district, Bangladesh) and it was made in favor of the gods Brahman, Agni, Yogeshvara, Jaimani and Mahakal as well as of 6000 Brahmanas. The details of the distribution of the land speak of the following persons attached to the two groups of four maths (monasteries)—8 teachers of the four Vedas viz. Rik, Yajus, Saman, Atharvan, students, florists, barbers, oilmen, and washer-men, Mahattara-Brahmins, superintendants, scribes, astrologers or accountants, physicians etc. (Sircar, 1973, pp. 34-36). Ladahachandra and Govindachandra gave land grants to Brahmanical deity Vishnu and Shiva respectively.

Communal harmony during the Buddhist rulers was so established that sometimes it is not clear who was Buddhist and who was Brahmin. In Ladahachandra's Mainamati plate's he is being declared as a devout worshipper of the Sugata (Buddha) but at the same time his charter goes as 'Om. Adoration to Lord Vasudeva (Visnu-Krishna).' Not only that his father king Kalyanchandra and mother queen Kalyanadevi had been compared with Brahmanical deities Vishnu and Lakshmi respectively (Sircar, 1973, pp. 45-46). This Buddhist king even paid visit to Varanasi (a place of Brhmanical pilgrimage), the abode o Shiva and his consort Parvati and took baths in the Ganges river and offered tarpana to his ancestors and gifts of gold to many Brahmins (Sircar, 1973, p. 46).

Two pieces of inscribed tortoise shells were found from a tank at Vasupada in the village of Vajrayogini in Vikrampur, Munshiganj district. Interesting picture of socio-culture of 11th century has reflected on this shells of that time. On one it is written as "Peace. For the welfare of the good Buddhist." And from the second shell both Vasudeva (Vishnu) and Buddha were invoked at the same time (Bhattasali, 1939-40, pp. 7-8). These can be taken as an example of a pluralistic society prevailed at that time when Buddhist Chandra dynasty was ruling southeast and central Bengal.

It is however among the later dynasties of southeast Bengal one king of later Deva dynasty Harikeladeva (c. 1204-1230 CE) is

important to mention here, during his time his chief cavalry officer Shri Dhadi-eba donated land to a small monastery for Buddhist goddess Durgottara (Zakaria, 1997, p. 228) a form of Tara was constructed in Pattikera—an area in modern Cumilla district. It is known that Dhadi-eba was a follower of Sahajia cult of a later form of Mahayana Buddhism.

Terracotta art is a medium of expression which may can reflect societal condition of a country. In early medieval period central temple of the monasteries like Somapura, Salban, Ananda and Bhoja were beautified with sculpted terracotta plaques of various subjects. Brhmanical gods Shiva, Visnu, Brahma, Surya and Ganesha were depicted in some plaques of Somapura Vihara (Dixit, 1991, p.59). A ten armed multi headed Shiva is presented in one plaque. In the hands he holds various weapons. Probably here Pancanana (five-faced) Shiva is presented although artist could able to show three faces only. In another plaque Shiva is seen as a naked ascetic with the distinctive third eye and as holding trishula. One clad image of Shiva shows him as standing with a spear in his left hand and a garland of skulls over the shoulders, this is a manifestation of Bhairava murti of the god as seen in his gaping mouth and spear. Mukhalinga is also presented in one plaque and in two plaques Shiva-linga is portrayed. Visnu the protector of Brahmanical trinity is presented in one plaque as seated on a lotus cushion. The usual attributes of the god namely, conch in the lower left hand an apparently a short club in the upper left hand are shown. Ganesha is presented in several images and among these a dancing Ganesha is a good piece of plastic art (fig. 9). In another plaque Surya is represented as sitting with his usual emblem lotus. But it is interesting to note that in Mainamati Buddhist establishments Brahmanical deities are extremely rare. Only a few examples of terracotta art with Brahmanical figural representation are found in a small temple discovered in the courtyard of Salban Vihara. Here about 21 terracotta plaques representing Krishna legends as mentioned before.

Sustainability of a society also depend on gender equality. In the society of early medieval Bengal women took part in monastic activities which is learnt from the Chienese monk travelers like

Yijing and Sheng-chi who visited Bengal during 7th century CE. Yijing stayed in a vihara called Po-lo-ho (Varaha?) in Tamralipti present day Tamluk in West Bengal and saw resident nuns and monks. Whenever the nuns went out they went in pairs, but to a laymans' house they went at least in a group of four. Sheng-chi visited Cumilla Noakhali districts of Bangladesh and speaks of 4000 monks and nuns in the capital city. Devikot Vihara was located in West Bengal and in this monastery a nun called Mekhala was resided (Hussain, 1985, p. 74). In a pluralistic society all sections of a society play their role. Even in the succession lists of gurus (spiritual teacher) and disciples, two Bengali women names are found. One was Bhagavati Lakshmi or Lakshminkara who was a great authority in Vajrayana and Tantra, and wrote a number of works. Another woman Sahajayogini Cinta was a disciple of siddha Darikapada who was a Bengali as well. However, Cinta wrote Vyaktabhavanugatatattva siddhi that was translated in Tibeatan language (Bhattacharyya, 1932, p. 79).

However in early medieval period when the Brahmanical and Buddhist philosophers were busy in refuting one another's views, the life of the ordinary man was marked by absolute toleration. It will be relevant to mention here about the Kailan inscription of the Barahmnical king Shridharanarata (c. 665-675 CE) found in Cumilla district where a minister called Jayantha, approached his master for the grant of a piece of land which he was inclined to dedicate to the Bhagavat Tathagata or Ratna-trya (the Buddhist Trinity of the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha) for the worship of the Buddha, and writing of Buddhsit religious texts and the provision of food, clothing and other needs for the Aryasangha (Buddhist monks), as well as to number of learned Brahmins for performance of their *panca-mahayajna* (the five daily sacrifices to be performed by a Brahmin viz. *adhyapana, tarpana, homa, bali and atithi-pujana*). Important is to note here that Jayanatha's religious identity is not mentioned in the inscriptions. If go back to little earlier than to the aforesaid inscription similar scenario would have found—the Paharpur inscriptions dated 479 CE records that Brahmin Nathasharman and his wife Rami favored a Jain monastery in north Bengal. Here it is seen that religious identity didn't stand for communal attitude to other religion rather they had a peaceful co-

existence. So it can be assumed that during early medieval period Bangladesh or Bengal had religious harmony and all were being living peacefully.

Buddhism care about social harmony and cohesion which is seen in the value placed on the four 'foundations of social unity' as found in the *Sigalovada Sutta* (Harvey, 2000, p. 109) where one is 'helpful action' i.e. tatharthacarya and this action to help other in person or in community regardless of religion is reflected in our discussion on the basis of archaeological records of early medieval Bengal. In Buddhist ethics everyone is a friend means everyone should be treated as friend (Rajavaramuni, 1990, cited in Harvey, 2000, p. 110) and if this teaching can be followed today like the Buddhist did in the Bangladesh past society then a sustainable society can be build where people of different religions can live together in a peaceful condition.

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# BUDDHIST LEADERSHIP FOR CONSERVATION OF BUDDHIST SITES AND HERITAGE IN RURAL INDIA

by Elora Tribedy*

**ABSTRACT**

Present paper wishes to highlight the scope of conservation of Buddhist sites and cultural landscape in India under Buddhist leadership. Apart from majorities of Buddhist monuments, the rural environs of India encompass landscape where different Buddhist actions had taken place in past. Attention has often elapsed on issues of conservation of tangible and intangible of Buddhist heritage in such rural surrounding and society due to natural and man-made hindrances.

The Buddhist philosophy awakens us to thrive for wellness and happiness of many. Based on field-work of past years, the speaker will draw attention to many Buddhist sites and hillocks in rural environs and on how to proceed to rewire the connection between individual, society and Buddhist heritage. Obtaining Buddhist remains for state or central museums or protecting the boundary of a Buddhist site is not enough. The human and social aspect involving the symbiotic relationship between the local populations at a past Buddhist location or region, the archaeologists or explorers working on the region and the Buddhist members (monastics and laity) will

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be highlighted in this paper. How such synergy and participation will exhilarate reconstruction of Indian Buddhist landscape and will reignite the philosophical importance of Buddhist religion is another theme that will be discussed in present paper. The talk will see alternatives in the conservation of Buddhist heritage under Buddhist leadership rather than following Colonial approach which has dissected Buddhist heritage from the non-urban population to serve the benefits to a select population of urban society.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In present times, one of the main global trends is the protection of the living religious heritage and connecting the sacred with the praxis (Karlström 2005: 338-355). The Buddhist philosophy while promoting a thrive for wellness and happiness of many, in a way calls for attention towards the past as well as present dimensions of Buddhist heritage sites and people associated with it. Recognizing the relevance for the past and present Buddhist heritage, especially in Asia, can be considered as one of the most commendable global attitude today (McKercher and Du Cros: 2002). Proposals and projects, exploring new dimensions and signifying the preservation of past Buddhist heritage in the globe as well as in Asia can be marked as imminent to the recommendation, especially under Buddhist leadership. Present paper wishes to highlight the scope of conservation of Buddhist sites and cultural landscape in rural and semi-rural environs of India under Buddhist leadership with such background.

Buddhism is one of the major religious trends of ancient and contemporary India with a current percentage of 14.4 Buddhists presently living in India. The various sites of Buddhist heritage all over the country hardly represent a complete picture of the past Buddhist sacred landscape in India or in other words, it's magnitudes. Among the many states, which appeared as a stronghold of Buddhism in the ancient period and medieval, the eastern part of India along the Bay of Bengal appears historically and archaeologically most promising. It saw the emergence, coexistence, and sustenance of various sects within Buddhism (Fig.1). The Buddhist sacred geography the eastern part of India with major rural areas is constituted of both

the past and present relationships between the products of human behaviors (Buddhist monuments, sculptures and ritual objects) and agencies (the human and natural) affecting the ever-changing landscape. Apart from majorities of Buddhist monuments, the rural environs of India encompass landscape where different Buddhist actions had taken place in the past. Attention has often elapsed on issues of conservation of tangible and intangible of Buddhist heritage in such rural surrounding and society due to natural and man-made hindrances.

## 2. MULTIPLICITY IN THE NATURE OF BUDDHIST HERITAGE IN RURAL INDIA AND ISSUES OF CONSERVATION

In the process of conservation of Buddhist religious heritage, the major focus till now has been an exploration of Buddhist structures and monuments and demarcation of monuments as Buddhist sites. Colonial expertise, as well as Indian archaeological agencies in the past two centuries, have located many of the texturally mentioned Buddhist locations situated in the urban, semi-urban or rural areas. Such monuments have gained the primary focus of conservation and pilgrimage in the Indian context. However, from the point of archaeology, there are many more Buddhist sites in rural India. The monuments cannot be treated as the specific and sole category for the Buddhist sites in need of conservation. There are different types of locations which can be taken within the category of Buddhist heritage in rural India. A broader understanding has to be developed that the past Buddhist Heritage is inclusive of tangible and intangible aspects of both sites and objects of historical and archaeological importance (Wijesuriya and Lee 2017: 1-10). A large number of lesser-known Buddhist locations and objects of Buddhist importance in the rural and semi-rural context of India has suffered from neglect caused by inadequate understanding of the nature of the Buddhist heritage in the rural setting as well as policy-making by various government and non-government heritage-conservation agencies.



*Fig.1. Different Types of Sites and Locations within the broad category of Buddhist religious Heritage in Rural India*

One of the major themes of the First ICCROM-CHA International Forum on Conservation in 2017 (Wijesuriya and Lee 2017: 1-10) was to proceed for an understanding of the Asian Buddhist Heritage and the prospect of conservation and management and long term care. It addressed the question of Buddhist monuments and the sites beyond the specific category of monuments and monumental spaces. Indirectly, it also signified the intangible significance of the tangible religious objects and their management and how it can be differentiated from the tangible objects of religious heritage.

Present Paper wishes to draw attention to the archaeological and Buddhist sculptural heritage in Bihar and other eastern Indian states and their conservation. The Buddhist sculptural wealth of eastern India is substantial (Huntington 1984). Several sculptures and architectural remains constituted the historical and early part of the medieval period's landscape of the eastern part of India. The changing and alteration process was an essential part of the past Buddhist landscape in India in the historical and the early medieval period. In the period from 12th centuries A.D. till present days a lot of Buddhist remains have been relocated, re-contextualized and re-identified by new religious groups. Over the years, in absence of the monastically organized Buddhism in the medieval and pre-modern period in India, many Buddhist sculptures have been transformed

into the worshipping idols in spite of their Buddhist identity to contemporary temples or shrines, majorly under worship.

The absence of monastic Buddhism in the medieval and pre-modern period in India, past Buddhist remains have been used in making new sacred places with a process of 'heritization' along with social complexities and questions of the power play. Buddhist sculptures belonging to Buddhist monastic contexts from historical and medieval period were transported from many great Buddhist centers of the middle and later phase of Buddhism in India to many places within the 10-15 km range. Such sculptures, if not collected by the museum authorities, are in many cases relocated in small Hindu shrines, near sacred trees or sometimes in elaborate Hindu temples. Such secondary contexts again had undergone various formation processes including inverse contextualization and heritiziation. The second type of re-contextualization can be cited in case of those sites where small shrines and temples house transported Buddhist sculptures of historical and me, recovered from rivers. Throwing dilapidated sculptures into rivers was a custom, as it might have been an act of animosity when Buddhism lost its religious popularity. The vast stretch of the country-side of India is filled with enigmatic stories involving past Buddhist remains, traditions and their present condition.

## 3. RE-CONTEXTUALIZATION AND REDEFINED WORSHIP AND BUDDHIST HERITAGE

These cases are evidence of the active participation of agency in the formation of the religious landscape by the use of past Buddhist remains (sculptures, sculptural fragments, architectural fragments, ritual objects, and votive shrines). At many times, replacing the memory of Buddhist past, the temporal transformation has helped in the conversion of these Buddhist remains and in the creation of new religious spaces, rituals, temples as well as at times an alternate religious identity. Surviving a lengthy period and undergoing different socio-political currents, these Buddhist remains have become an inseparable part of the religious lives of many in modern day in rural India.

Two examples from several cases of re-contextualization, heritization and redefined worship of Buddhist objects in rural India

can give us insight into the process of acclimatization of Buddhist religious traditions within the medieval and modern ritual-scape in rural India.

The site of Kespa ( N 25° 2'12" and E 84° 51'20") (Fig.2) in the Tekari block of Gaya district and site of Mahishi (N 25° 50'54" N and 86° 28' 22" E) (Fig.3) in Saharsa district in the Indian state of Bihar have preserved Tārā sculptures, belonging to the early pala art- phase under active worship. In case of the Kespa specimen, the palaeography hints to 9th-10th-century date whereas the Mahishi specimen in art historical category can be placed in 10th -11th century A.D. In both cases, the modern temple of goddess Ugra-Tārā have enshrined the sculptures and these are under present-day worship. In both of the sites, Brahmanical and Buddhist sculptures and sculptural remains collected from associated mound have been collected and placed in the temple complex. The life-size image of Buddhist goddess Tārā follows sadhanamala oriented iconography and contains the Pratityasamutpadasutra inscribed on the stelae. Mention must also be made of the multiple armed Avalokiteśvara images placed in a smaller shrine. This Buddhist image is popularly venerated as the Ugra- Tārā mātā and the temple has become famous as pitha or sacred place. Local oral tradition connects it with the legend of the great goddess Sati, whose left eye is said to fall here and this origin myth has served the purpose of the popularity of the space as a 'tantra-pitha'. Information collected reveal during the festival time of Navaratri in honor of the goddess, a great many animal sacrifices take place here, and scantly information also reports some esoteric yogic activities during Navaratri time. A great many myths have evolved surrounding this Buddhist icon and place, a careful examination of such myths and legends display the influence of the medieval Saivite movement.

The temple of Ugra-Tārā at Mahishi having wide popularity in whole Mithila is built upon an elevated portion of land which is a habitation-deposit, exhibiting a good frequency of early medieval potsherds. The temple of Ugra Tārā, affiliated with the patronage of the local queen or Mahishi, houses a Tārā sculpture belonging to artistically to the later phase of Pala genre and shows stylistic affinity with specimens of Bengal. The image now clothed in

modern garments, features left hand holding a long lotus stalk while standing in the tribangha posture; the seated miniature figure of Akṣobhya in her tiara confirms the image's affinity to the Buddhist creed and the art of the early medieval period. The local myths pertain to the worship of the goddess from very early time. The temple had acres of land, granted at an earlier period, most of which are now occupied by locals.



*Fig.2. Dumped deposit and sculptural distribution at Kespa village, Bihar*

Different layers of religious attitude and sentimentality can be noted regarding such cases of relocation, re-contextualization and redefined worship centering past Buddhist remains. There are chances of contestation as Heritage making is very much mixed with identities, land claims and political contestations. However, proper negotiation can ensure sustainability, co-existence and peaceful heritage development as ethically and in reality Buddhism promotes peace, welfare and security. Such approach can be used to uplift the issue of both urban and rural participation in the conservation of Buddhist heritage in rural India. The conservation and preservation policies should be attentive towards both the preservation of Buddhist history and religious heritage as well as the multiplicity of religious practices and identities centring past Buddhist remains in rural India.



**Fig.3.** *The Present Temple of Ugra-Tara in Mahishi, the collected sculptural fragments,and Sculpture of Buddhist Deity Tara under worship in illage Mahishi, Bihar*

## 4. BUDDHIST SCULPTURES AND ISSUES OF CONSERVATION IN RURAL INDIA

Coming to the question of Buddhist sculptures (datable from 5th century A.D. to 12th century A.D.) in rural and semi-rural India and their urgency to be conserved with appropriate context, the present author wishes to explore a number of exiting problematic issues and possible resolution. The major promising institution of safeguarding Buddhist sculptures are the museums. Majority of Buddhist sculptures and sculptural remains have been transferred to the museums, controlled by the central or the state authorities in post-independence phase in India. The museums in the eastern India states are majorly authorized by central and state government institutions. The museum collections have come from many protected monuments as well as from the landscape with a scattering of antiquarian remains. In past, the agreed or forceful collection of sculptures has served the purpose of many of the Indian central museums as well as serving the south-Asian gallery of oversees Museums. On the other hand, the remaining sculptures had been re-contextualized from ancient or medieval sites to a locality. At many times, such Buddhist sculptures which are under non-Buddhist worship, are forcefully collected from the local temples or village shrines with or without ongoing religious activities. Such attempts were highlighted by the ready assumption

that the local people are unable to take care of any sculpture or sculptural remains within their jurisdiction (Sen 2002: 346-362).

It was seen that Buddhist sculptures which are in living shrines or are under current worship in shrines are protected from stealth and theft in the majority of cases. Such sculptures of Buddhist deities existing in the present religious landscape have developed a more syncretic bond with the local population. Apart from the historical value, these antiquarian remains of past Buddhism have emotional values for the cohabiting populations. In the case of the urban-oriented imagined paradigm of heritage and dominated paradigm of preservation and conservation, the values and significance of such Buddhist sculptures are indifferent and general. The assigned value of any and one uprooted sculpture has been assigned by a specific colonial oriented approach towards artifacts of cultural heritage, that all and any remain belong to the museums. Such ideas and mentality were based on assumptions of colonial agencies that e 'unconsciousness' (and 'unawareness') of 'uneducated', 'illiterate' and 'ignorant' mass is not well oriented and well known to care for their own heritage or incapable to take necessary measures for protecting heritage. Such justification also serves for the agencies of the oversees museums to obtain and reserve sculptures and antiquities from the rural landscape of India through the auction. During the course of the doctoral research, the presenter found that over 90 percent of the 'signature' specimens of the sculptures of Buddhist goddess Tara from eastern Indian states are now kept in several museums abroad, and majorly are not in public view. At many times, such sculptures are kept in reserved without the option of public view and their provenances have been lost or misplaced due to the inter-continental transportation. Such re-contextualization result in two bigger losses, academic as well as for heritage. Present researcher urges for revision of such approach and practices regarding Buddhist sculptural remains as part of the cultural and religious heritage.

The transportation of Buddhist sculptures almost by snatching to central or state museums as an option should be revised. It is required to spread more awareness regarding the sculptural remains, to instruct on the value and information regarding different possibilities to protect and conserve heritage in collaboration with

the local population. The central and state museum authorities can assign programmes and activities to include and promote sculpture and heritage collection of the non-urban landscape. It will be significant to preserve the cultural heritage and remains in their proper context or nearby context. The concept of 'site-museum' and 'heritage village' can be promoted to preserve aspects of cultural heritage as well as sculptural remains. It was seen that at many locations, site museums (Fig. 4, 5) in comparison to the central or state museums work more efficiently in preserving the heritage and involving local populations.

Endeavours such as site museums will increasingly engage different groups of local populations and may increase opportunities for employment. It also becomes an ethical point for the field archaeologists to engage more in public archaeology to promote and generate awareness about heritage and protection of cultural past while educating and instructing communities about the habitat and its archaeological and historical significance. Community and Public archaeology are the means which can procure an end to the theft of sculptures for money in rural India. Moreover, it can open new ways which will surely be economically and historically beneficial for a local population in semi-rural to rural India. The necessary patience and devotion for the upliftment of Buddhist religious and cultural heritage for India are worth a venture for a new generation of field researchers.



**Fig.4.** *Site Museum in the Remote Location of Itkhori which is an early medieval Buddhist monastery in the Present Indian state of Jharkhand*



Fig.5. *Site Museum at the Remote Location of Khiching, Odisha Function Importance and Agency in Conservation of Buddhist Heritage in Rural India*

All these cases show that in the context of India the functional importance of space and objects and traditions carry meaningful expressions for the past Buddhism. Even for the future conservation, such past Buddhist reconstruction is to be vividly signified.

There should be more clarifications or illuminations regarding what should be considered, preserved and in which manner in regard of Buddhist heritage. A classification is needed for different categories of Buddhist heritage sites, be it a living temple or objects of worship. It is necessary to ask the question who should be involved in the process of defining what are essentially the parameters for considering something as a Buddhist heritage, as such parameters for considering something as a monument to be conserved as Buddhist heritage and something which can stay within the boundary of Buddhist sites and not conservation as Buddhist heritage may vary according to the 'Human agency' into politically influenced categories. The deciding agencies for the protection of Buddhist Religious Heritage need to look into an inter-communal interest in the case conservation and protection of a space. In many cases, such space is re-occupied for religious interest by contemporary non-Buddhist communities. Hurting the religious susceptibilities of people living around and along with the Buddhist remains (in need of protection and conservation) by

demarcating the Buddhist monuments separately and exclusively and then overpowering the present-day religious practices in order to protect the past Buddhist religious practices in a space where Buddhism is not one of the major living religious is socially, politically and ethically problematic and should be approached cautiously. As one of the secular most practiced religion, Buddhism and any agency in charge of the conservation of Buddhist heritage should not go against and communal practice and traditional right and try to carefully uplift the vested interest of Buddhist values within the community for a feeling of greater peace and an shared understanding to fight violence.

In another way, it is also important to explore who can afford to be more practically involved in the conservation of the Buddhist monuments, sites, and sacred spaces. The gap between the heritage conservators and the community who are enriching these remains are to be more elaborately seen. Removal of objects of worships such as architectural fragments and sculpture for better protection from sites to far reaching museums are to be questioned. Such efforts as colonial legacy has other complications and in context of conservation of Buddhist religious heritage, it can be questioned on an ethical level.

For example, in last few years at several Buddhist locations of non-urban setting, the government agencies along with the department of archaeology of different universities are engaged in protection and conservation of a number of Buddhist sites, monastic sites and sculptural find-spots. However, without noting the contextual significance of the Buddhist sculptures for the macro and micro religious landscape, those were relocated first in a storehouse and later into a museum. In this process the archaeological context of the sculpture is lost as well as the heritage value of such remains is totally uprooted from the people living in close vicinity. Such mindless preservation and capture of objects of heritage value while segregating it from only a selective group of people by archaeological and heritage institution are totally misguided.

Broader schemes have to be developed in consideration of Buddhist Religious Heritage in rural India inclusive of tangible and intangible aspects, both sites and objects. Understanding has to achieved regarding the significance of conducting an entire

cultural mapping of Buddhist sites of India which will give bigger opportunities of pilgrimage and inclusion of both major and minor Buddhist monuments and archaeological locations of Buddhist interest (Queen and King:1996).

## 5. BUDDHIST REMNANTS IN INDIA AND THE GLOBAL MARKET OF 'HERITAGE'

In South-Asian countries, in the post-colonial times, trends and deviations and variations have been ground to produce a 'Heritage' industry to promote tourism and mobilization of resources (Harrison and Hughes 2010; Henderson 2009: 87-106). As a result, there is an intervening distance and growing disparity between the non-urban-public perception of the Heritage and the urban institutional notion of Heritage. The aspiration regarding the Buddhist heritage can be noted in regard to bridge this gap between the non-urban and urban population associated with Buddhist remains.

Maintaining the group and authority in charge of the resource persons who are not only adept in Buddhism or Buddhist spiritual awakening but for academics like history and archaeology can be very much fruitful in this regard. The aim should be to involve more people in action. Interaction between the archaeologists, monks, school-teachers, students, community leaders pilgrims will forward a people led approach towards conservation of Buddhist heritage in rural India. The inclusive approach for the rural community to understand and promote own culture and manifestation will uplift the situation of 'Buddhist Leadership' for conservation of Buddhist Sites and Heritage in Rural India. Consideration in regard to the diffusion of different Buddhist traditions from historical times, inclusive of local myths and oral tradition can be useful in reoriented approach towards conservation.

It can be noted that even in the post-colonial times, colonial structures, forms and practices have influenced the contemporary Heritage and museums conservation practices. Such orientations carry limitations in scope and mobilization of the population for a particular monument or remains of heritage over a landscape. Often the Buddhist monuments in India are in rural setting and these carry different meaning altogether for the rural population in the surrounding

space. To achieve more efficient ways to conserve Buddhist heritage and antiquarian remains in a landscape, it is necessary to address and accommodate the rural and non-institutional version of local heritage and find more efficient ways to engage and mobilize different population groups for the conservation of Heritage.

Negative effects of conservations of Buddhist religious heritage and the modification of Buddhist art –architectural remains in the process are to be more critically examined. Looking into a broad scale, this resurgence of Buddhist Past and reinventing and marketing the glorified vision of Buddhist past contains many risks such as biases in promotion selective Buddhist sites, conservation transforming the physical attributes of a site by demolishing parts and replacing with new structural forms and construction of new temporary structures on sites.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The Buddhist religious and cultural heritage and the shared past should be free from political policy-making and affiliation. The conservation and preservation of Buddhist heritage in rural India should be both attentive towards incorporating a multiplicity of religious identities, heterogeneity of past history, a plurality of traditions and customs and most significantly, such concern should be equally inclusive to all kind of human population. Religious brackets are always considered as a hard and fast criterion by academia. It must have been much easier for the devotees or laity to visit and participate in different religious trends. Most importantly, building up a negotiable zone between Buddhist leaders in charge of conservation and preservation with the local communal and religious authority at several re-occupied places of previous Buddhist activities.

There are chances of contestation as 'Heritage Making' (Harrison and Hughes 2010: 234-69) is very much mixed with identities, land claims and political contestations. However proper negotiation can ensure sustainability, co-existence and peaceful heritage development as from ethical and in reality Buddhism promotes peace, welfare and security.

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# PAST AND PRESENT GANDHARA: CONTINUATION AND SUSTAINABILITY OF SACRED RELICS

by Fawad Khan*

**ABSTRACT**

Gandhara is the ancient name for the present Peshawar valley, situated in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan. It has been the cradle of diverse cultures, especially the Buddhist civilization. Though Buddhism was earlier introduced in this region by the Great Mauriyan King Ashoka during 3rd century B.C however it reached to its zenith during the reign of Kushana King Kanishka (125-147 A.D). It was by the time of Kanishka that the Buddhist sculpting art generally known as Gandhara art was introduced and elegant panels, friezes and individual images were represented in stone, stucco and metal. The artists carved different panels with representation ranges from the religious phenomena to the social, domestic, economic and political activities. The day to day activities are carved in a manner showing them adept in the art and devoted to their work. With the passage of time these activities and objects were still practiced for centuries with minor modifications and alterations. Gandhara came in to sway of foreign powers from time to time leaving their impacts and imprints on the local culture e.g food, dresses, household objects, jewelry, furniture, sports and architecture etc. The continuation and sustainability of these past

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activities is still clearly visible. Although they lost their original form yet a glimpse of the past can easily be noted and seen in them.

The paper is an effort to identify all such traditions that passed from the Buddhist relics and are still practiced by the locals of present Peshawar valley.

## INTRODUCTION

The term Gandhara was reported for the first time in the Rigveda, for a region located on the Northwest Frontier of India (Khan: 1998:57). It is the combination of two Sanskrit words "Gand" meaning fragrance and "Hara" meaning land. Thus, the term literally signifies the land of fragrance. The region of Gandhara is variously discussed as a lush green and flowery area. Geographically, Gandhara is a mountainous region located below the meeting point of the Hindu Kush and Himalayan mountain ranges (Zwalf: 1996:14). The celebrated Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang, who traveled in India in 629-647 A.D., mentioned that the kingdom of Gandhara was about 1000 li from east to west and 800 li from north to south. On the east, it bordered on the River Sin (Sindh, another name for the Indus River). The country was rich in cereals and produced a variety of flowers and fruits; it also abounded in sugarcane, from the juice of which they prepared 'the solid sugar.' The capital of Gandhara was Purushapura, now Peshawar, which was 40li in circuit in those times (Beal: 2003:150). Presently the area encompassed the areas located on the west bank of the Indus River and included the Peshawar Valley as well as present day Swat, Buner and Bajaur of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, Pakistan.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Although Gandhara has been historically known since the Achaemenian Empire and more specifically during the reign of Cyrus the Great (558-28 BCE), it wasn>t until the pilgrimage of Hiuen Tsang in the 7th century CE, at the tail end of the Gandhara civilization. Darius I added Gandhara to the Achaemenid Empire around 556 BCE but his occupation of it did not last long. The Persian dominancy over Gandhara continued till the middle of the fourth century B.C. and at last overthrown by the Greek conqueror Alexander the Great of Macedonia in 327 B.C. Alexander

the Great is said to have moved from Bajaur to the present-day Dir and Swat valley where a bloody war was waged against the warlike nation of Assakinians and after conquering the cities of Ora and Baziara. After the death of Alexander in 323 B.C, Soon the rebellions broke down against the Greek dormancy all over in India, including Gandhara. In this critical situation, Chandragupta Maurya, a former military officer, who was exiled from the Nanda Empire of Magadha, appeared on the scene and with the help of some tribal forces of Taxila, snatched the royal throne of Magadha and brought and laid the foundation of the Mauryan Empire, and soon occupied Gandhara (Smith 1921: 62 & 1904: 112). Chandragupta Maurya was succeeded by his descendants Bindusara and Ashoka successively. The later king embraced Buddhism in 261 B.C (Dain 1992: 103). He also took measures for the propagation of Buddhism and sent missionaries to various parts of his empire and even to foreign countries for its promulgation. The decline of the Mauryan Empire paved the way for another wave of foreign invaders from the side of Bactria and Afghanistan, where the descendants of Alexander the great had founded a strong empire. Demetrius invaded Punjab in 190 B.C and established his suzerainty over Gandhara (Bopearachchi 1995:27). The successor of Demetrius, known as Indo-Greeks, kept the possession of Gandhara until they were ousted by another alien nation, commonly termed as the Indo-Scythians about 90 B.C. (Bopearachchi, 1995:44-45). The Indo-Scythians were over powered by the Indo-Parthians under the leadership of king Gondophares, whose name also appears in the Takht-i-Bhai inscription of 20 A.D. and followed by a line of successors (Mahajan 1983:333). The Kushans, Yu-Chi tribe from China, established themselves in Gandhara after overpowered the Indo-Parthians in the first century A.D. The early king of the Kushan spend most of their time in the consolidation of power while their successors enjoyed peace and tranquility. Among the great Kushan kings, the name of Kanishka is remembered for his religious tolerance and this fact is clear from the large number of his coins bearing the portrait of Indian, Greeks and Persian gods and goddesses. He was also responsible for the development of Buddhist art and architecture in Gandhara since many important Buddhist centers of Gandhara are attributed to his time. Kanishka

was succeeded by his son Huvishka, and a line of latter Kushan kings such as Kanishka II, Vasudeva I, Kanishka III and Soter Megas II, Kanishka III and Vasudeva II (Nasim Khan 2010: 23, Mahajan 1983: 354). Besides Kanishka, his successors Huvishka and Vasudeva were also great patrons of Buddhism in Gandhara and several Buddhist establishments. With passage of time, the great Kushan Empire gradually declined and a part of Gandhara passed into the hands of the mighty Sasanian ruling dynasty of Persia while anarchy prevailed in the rest of the area resulting the emergence of small petty states. The discovery of coins from different parts of Gandhara have led the numismatists and archaeologists to believe that apart from the Sasanians, Gandhara was also ruling by the Kidarites and later Kushans, Alkhon, and Nizak etc from the middle of the third century A.D. to the first half of the fifth century A.D. (Dani 1992: 139-142, (Nasim Khan 2008).

The above mentioned ruling dynasty of Gandhara was followed by the penetration of the White Huns in the middle of the fifth century A.D., Turk Shahi dynasty in the first half of the seventh century A.D. and later on by the Hindu Shahis (823-999 A.D) when finally it fell in to the hands of Muslims rulers of Afghanistan, Mehmud of Ghazna in a series of bloody wars from 999 to 1026, who also brought Gandhara under the banner of Islam (Rahman 1979: 167).

## GANDHARA ART

The art of Gandhara was almost exclusively religious devoted to the faith of Buddhism. The Buddhist stupas built in large numbers in the Peshawar basin, Swat and Taxila attest to the passionate Buddhist faith of the time. The erected stupas were enshrined profusely with the relief panels of Buddha images and scenes from his life story. In addition, votive stupas and shrines were constructed by the donors around the main stupa. These votive stupas and shrines were similarly embellished with different images and illustrations from the life of Buddha, as well as Bodhisattvas, atlants, garland bearers, and other motifs (Ali & Qazi 2008: 11). The sculptures were by no mean limited in material. The majority of sculptures were produced in Schist stone, but stucco, terracotta and bronze sculptures were also sculpted commonly. It was during the time of Kushans that

the Buddhist art developed in form of Mahayana Buddhism and the Gandharan artists produced anthropomorphic representation of Buddha and Bodhisattvas. The art appeared in 1st century A. D, flourished until 5th Century and lingered on till 7th Century. The purpose of Gandhara art was the propagation of Buddhism through the images carved, enshrined in Stupas and monasteries. The focus of the art was Buddha's life stories, previous birth stories (Jatakas), individual images and the future buddhas. The local devoted artists took advantages of contacts, motifs and technologies from Greek, Romans and Persians and developed such a unique art which gave Buddha an eternal life.

The life stories of Buddha depicted in Gandhara art are an authentic document of Mahayana text composed during the time of Kushan rule. The sculptors of Gandhara translated the Mahayana text into details in stone, stucco, terracotta and bronze, thus making it more romantic and providing a base for the expansion of Buddhism towards the far east.

## CONTINUATION OF ANCIENT TRADITIONS

### *Sports and Games*

### **Bull Racing (*Kisan Mela*)**

Importance of bulls has been revealed since the pre-historic times from its depictions both as a domesticated and sacred animal. In Gandharan sculptures the bulls are carved both in panels and individually indicating its importance in the past societies. Bulls were also included in various cultural activities as well, and one of them, which survived till present, is bull racing. Narrating with the Gandharan Sculptures the pedestal depiction of First meditation of Siddhartha in the collection of Peshawar Museum is so far one of the best examples of the past and present cultural activity of Bull racing (Pls.1 & 2). Presently there are two types of bull racing run in practice known as *Kisan Mela*. In the first type many bulls take part and show their fastness in an open area while running in an open field leading towards a marked spot within given time (Pl.3). In the second type of competition the bull runs around the Persian wheel. Every bull runs for eight minutes turning the wheel of Arhat well. The bull which runs more than the others stands first,

and the owner of that bull is considered the winner of the event (Muhammad & Petrochenkova 2012: 212).

**Archery (*Mukha*)**

The archery competition appears in the Buddhist texts and Gandharan sculptures at the occasion of tournament for winning the hand of Princess Yashodhra (Beal 1875: 38). Accordingly, the contest was participated by five hundred Sakya princes including Siddhartha and his cousins. It has been recorded that in the event Prince Siddhartha took the bow of his grandfather Sinhahanu, in his left hand and arrow in the right. The fixing the arrow he drew back the string of the bow to his breast and shot the arrow at the iron drums fixed as a target (Pl.4). His arrow penetrated all the targets and disappeared in far distance (Beal 1875: 88-89). However, in the Gandharan Buddhist reliefs we see that the target is fixed in shape of a circular board at a tree and being shooting by the prince (Zwalf 1996: Pls 164-67). In the reverence of competition, presently, *Mukha* is a traditional sport similar to archery, but instead of the arrows with pointed tips, the players shoot arrows with small round plates on the tip trying to hit the target (Muhammad Petrochenkova 2012: 215-16). Though replaced now by modern weapons, *Mukha* still retain its place in cultural activities and tournaments are arranged with great enthusiasm (Yousafzai 2009: 40). *Mukha* competition is generally arranged between different villages usually held in an open area (Pl.5).

**Wresting (*Kabaddi*)**

Kabaddi is a traditional sport widely popular all over the Peshawar valley. It is a contest of physical strength between the players of two teams with the style varying from region to region (Yousafzai 2009: 37-8). The history of *Kabaddi* goes almost two thousand years back and can be traced again in the Gandharan Sculptures. It has been mentioned in various Buddhist texts and Gandharan sculptures that Prince Siddhartha was trained during school and especially for the bridal contest, he participated in different power shows among which wrestling was also included (Pl.6). Due to its cultural significance the show is highly celebrated in different regions of Peshawar valley and teams from different

areas takes part and grapple against each other. Every team comes with a crowd of supporters, who come to see the game and to cheer and support their wrestlers (Pl.7).

**Architecture**

The Buddhist art of Gandhara show the imitation of buildings ranging from the primitive huts to highly embellished palaces, city gates and sacred shrines etc with the representation of Indo-Corinthian and Persepolitan columns and capitals. The huts are shown in *Jataka* tales, particularly the Syama *Jataka* (Pl.8), and meeting of Buddha with Brahman (Pl.9) while the gateways of the cities are identified as Kapilavastu, Rajagriha, Sravasti, Kusinagara, of which none is situated in Gandhara. However, as Gandhara art revolves around the story of Gautama, and that he was a native of Kapilavastu and also visited many cities for the propagation of his doctrines, therefore the depiction of such places in connection to his biography is not a matter of astonishments. Few examples of the relief panels showing the frontal portions or façade of cites are the scenes of the distribution of the relics of Buddha into eight portions (Pl.10), the Urn of relics carried to Kushinagr (Pl. 11), and the wall of an unknown city with bastions (Pl. 12). Apart from cities, several Gandharan sculptures illustrate domical buildings (Pl.13), of sacred and secular natures. Among the sacred edifices, mention may be made of stupa shrines (Pl.14), relic shrines (Pls. 15).

The traditions of Gandhara architecture still survive in different areas of the Peshawar and Swat valley. For instance, the primitive thatched huts can be found in the banks of Rivers Indus, Kabul and Swat built for serving fish and other sea food to the guests and customers (Pl. 16). Similarly, the original Buddhist shrine with domical ceiling still survives in structural form in the Swat valley such as the Balo kaly Gumbat in the Barikot tehsil (Pl.17). While monumental city gates were imitated in the Mughal caravan Sarai of Ghorkhuttri, Peshawar and elsewhere, while the bastions of the famous Bala Hisar fort (Pl. 18) still serves as a defensive architecture against any unpleasant situations. Moreover, the single and double domes architecture was adopted by the Muslims in the construction of mosques and mausoleums the specimens of which can be seen in the Mahabat Khan mosque, tomb of Shaikh Imam al

Din (Pl. 19), Qutbuddin and nawad Saeed Khan, all located in city of Peshawar.

## TEXTILES

The panels of Gandhara art are beautifully adorned with different types of bed sheets, pillows, mattresses and draperies made of thick textile material like wool and cotton and embellished them with tussles and embroidery with the representation of floral and geometric motives. Sometimes the cushion or mattress stuffed with different materials like cotton, wool, rice husk, stray chaff, down feather, cotton tree wool (*sumbal)* rags (*gudar*) is covered with the bed cover or placed over the hanging bed sheets. In this regards, a unique panels from Butkara 1 (Pl. 20) shows a princely figure resting on a mattress couch with two female attendants. The lathe carved legs of the bed are also visible. This typical bed, known as *Charpai,* covered with a soft mattress (*tolai*) is still in use in the Indian subcontinent especially places associated with Gandhara civilization. Another rectangular panel (Pl.21), which show the departure of prince Siddhartha from the royal palace, illustrates Princess Yashodhara sleeping over a mattress. The mattress is laid on flat bed over an embellished bed sheet. The pillow is similar in fashion with those still in use in the guest rooms (*hujra*) of the Pashtun society of Peshawar valley.

### Jewelry

Human fascination for self-adornment is shrouded deep in antiquity. In ancient times people wore jewelry made of shells and bones. The discovery of gold, silver and semi-precious stones added a sparkling hue to these adornments. In Indian subcontinent the significance of jewelry is more than just ornamental. Jewelry is the foremost part of female attire, which expresses social status. The ancient people of Gandhara had great appeal to the use of jewelry which is evident from the depictions of both male and female statues. These were adorned with items like ear rings, bangles, torques and anklets. In the present Peshawar valley, Pushtoon women are not stranger to such practices and have their unique status in clothing and jewelry. They have used ornaments made of any material available to them. Beside the ceremonies they also

use silver and beaded jewelry in daily routine life. The importance is more indicated by the local songs with traditional music where the women always ask their lovers to bring them jewelries. In the continuation of old traditions torques, ear pendants, bracelets and anklets are the most noteworthy which continues in present society almost with the same of little changes in the decorations.

**Musical Instruments**

Since the dawn of civilizations, music in one form or other has been known to people as a mode of entertainment and rejoicing. It has played a vital role in man's recreation throughout the ages. Similarly, the Pushtoon community is fond of music and tunes played are melodious, spirited and full of life. Songs are sung in Hujras usually, accompanied by musical instruments. The musical instruments used by the Pushtoons comprised of Rubab, Sitar, Tablas, flute and tambourine all of which are traced in the Gandharan Sculptures.

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Pl.1: Bull racing or ploughing competition on the pedestal of meditating Siddhartha (Peshawar Museum)



Pl.2: Close view of pedestal of Pl.1



Pl.3: A view of bull racing (Kisan Mela) in Peshawar Valley)



Pl. 4: The Archery Contest of Siddhartha (After Khan. Z. 2014)



Pl. 5: Mukha (The Archery competition) in the Peshawar Valley




Pl.6 Siddhartha's wrestling competition (Peshawar Museum)



Pl.7: Kabddi or local wrestling competition in Peshawar Valley



Pl.8: Syama Jataka in Peshawar Museum (After Ingolt 1957).



Pl.9: Meeting of Buddha with Brahman from Peshawar Museum (After Ingolt 1957).



Pl.10: The distribution of relics into eight portions. Lahore Museum (After Ingolt 1957)



Pl.11: Urn carried to Kushinagar. Lahore Museum (After Ingolt 1957)



Pl.12: Wall of a city with bastions. Lahore Museum (After Ingolt 1957)



Pl.13: Domical structure of secular building. Gai Collection, Peshawar (After Ingolt)



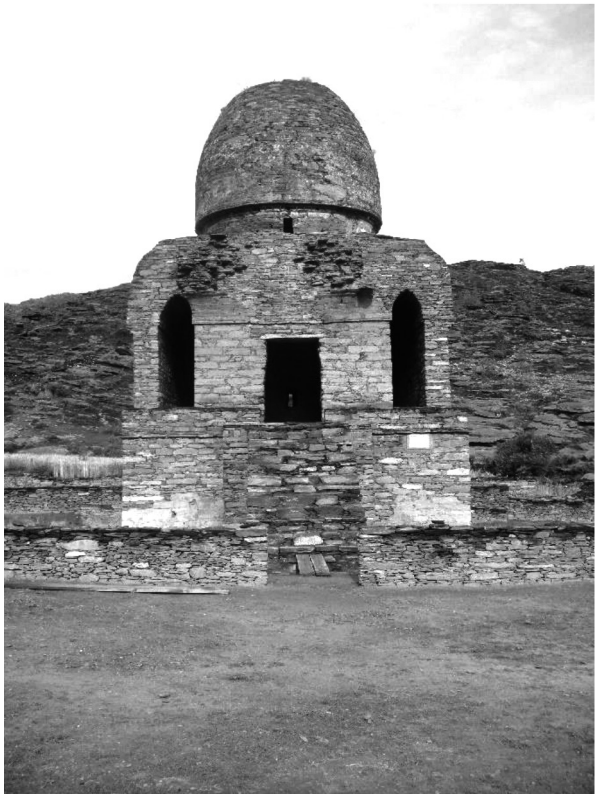
Pl.14: Stupa Shrine from Butkara I (After Faccenna and Tadei 1962, Pl.



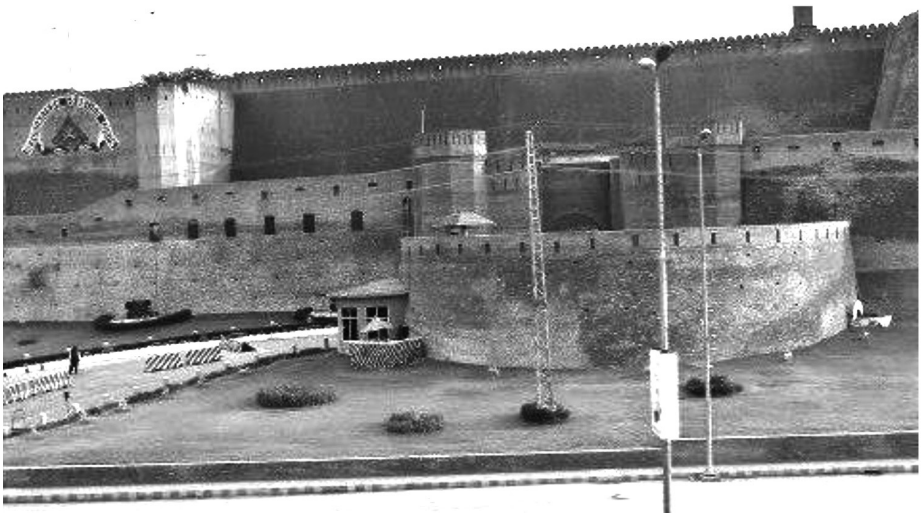
Pl.15: Adoration of domical shrine probably containing relics (After Khan. Z. 2015, Pl. 9)



Pl.16: Staw made hut in Peshawar Valley



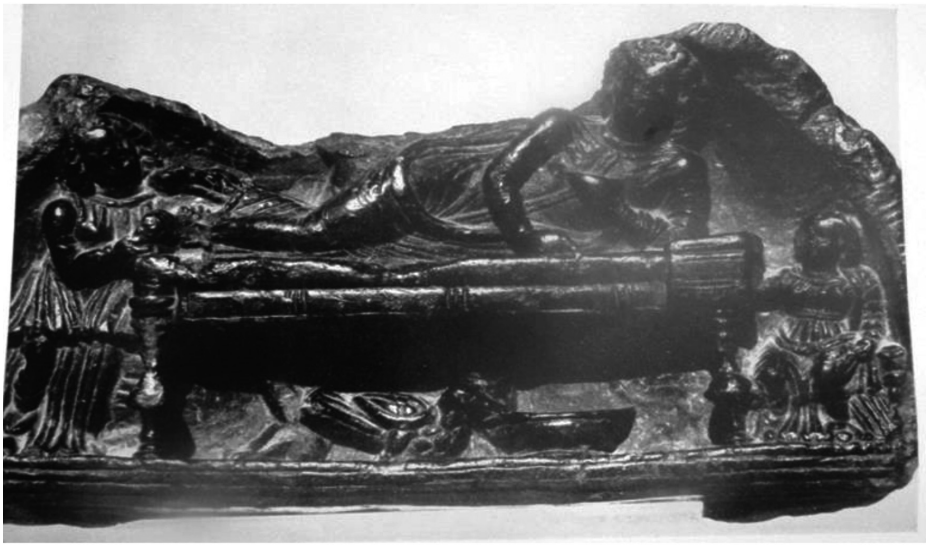
Pl.17: Balo Kaly Gumabat in Barikot, Swat valley (Photo by the Author)



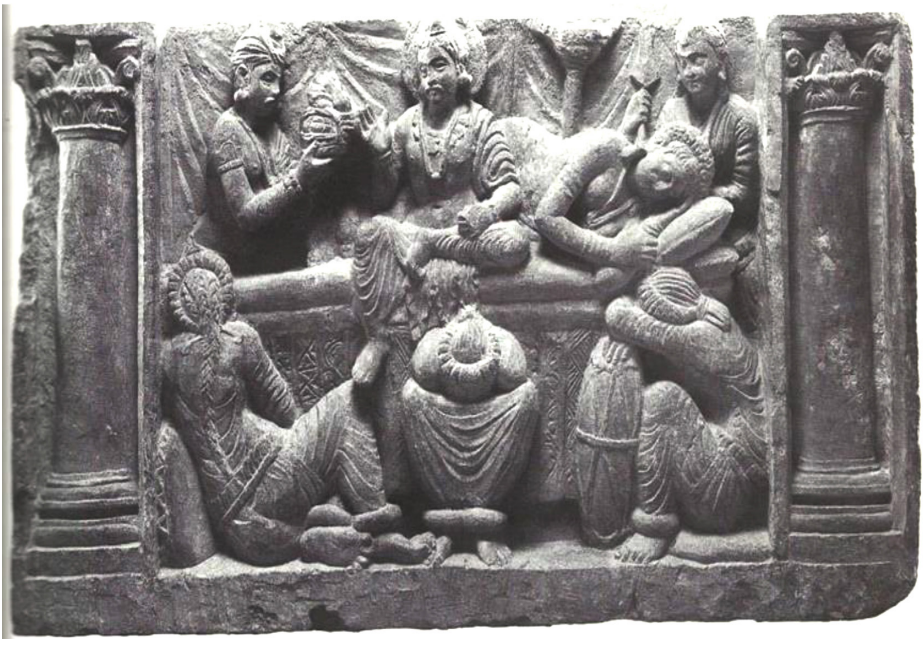
Pl.18 : Frontal View of Bala Hisar fort, Peshawar showing bastions



Pl. 19: Tomb of Shaikh Imam al Din at Palosai, Piran, Peshawar



Pl.20: A Princely figure resting on couch. (After Faccenna and Taddei 1964, Pl. CDLVI)



Pl.21: The scene of leaving the palace life by Bodhisattva Siddhartha. After Zwalf 1996

# RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE BUDDHIST HERITAGE OF GANDHARA: EXPLORATION, EXCAVATION AND CONSERVATION OF BUDDHIST SITES IN THE KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA PROVENCE OF PAKISTAN

by Numan Anwar *

ABSTRACT

The present research aims to share the recent developments (since 2013 onwards) carried out in the Buddhist establishments of Gandhara by the Provincial Directorate of Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in collaboration with National and International organizations. In the past few years, major developments have taken place in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in terms of the exploration of new Buddhist sites and monuments in various areas, particularly in District Buner, and Khyber Agency which brought to light hundreds of sites not previously enlisted in the Archaeological survey reports. Similarly, excavations at the Buddhist sites of Baja, Aziz Dheri, Bhamala and Takht-i-Bhai were conducted and a good number of sculptures were discovered. Moreover, a mega project for the digitization of the Buddhist monuments and sculptures

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both on sites and on display in various museums of the Province, was initiated. A detail report of these development would be presented in order to share the data with scholars and researchers interested in the Buddhist Heritage of Gandhara Pakistan.

The Sanskrit word Gandhara corresponds to an area, land or territory of smell, odour, scent and fragrance (Ingolt 1957: 13). It is the ancient name of the modern Peshawar valley, situated in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province of Pakistan Young 2010: 32, Rahman 2009: 143-46). The name Gandhara has been mentioned many ancient literature such as the Rigveda of the Indo-Aryans (Ca. 1500-1200 B.C),Upanishads etc. as a fertile land with plenty of water and high green mountains and suitable for the habitation of human beings. Since that time human habitation in Gandhara has left a very rich cultural profile covering the history of many primitive cultures, and urban city states with its forgotten record of religions, educational center, artistic activities, invasions, devastation and reconstruction etc.

As for as the cultural heritage of Gandhara is concerned, the area is known to the world for its archaeological sites and monuments, most of which are dated to the Buddhist period (3rd century B.C to 7th century A.D), located in Peshawar valley and its surrounding regions such as Mardan, Charsadda, Swabi, Malakand, Swat, Buner and Dir districts. These sacred monuments have attracted the sight of antiquarians and scholars since the first half of the 19th century f the current era. However, no measures were carried out for its preservation until the Archaeological Survey of India excavated some selected Buddhist establishments in the Peshawar valley and collected thousands of sculptures and other antiquities, most of which are now in the Peshawar Museum. Similarly, the Pakistani Department of Archaeology have also protected many Gandharan monuments, however, majority of the Buddhist sites remained unexplored till the inception of the Provincial Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Peshawar.

## 1. CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE DIRECTORATE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND MUSEUMS, PESHAWAR

The Directorate of Archaeology & Museums (hereafter DoAM), Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (formerly

N.W.F.P) Peshawar, came into being in 1992, as an independent provincial Department with the sole responsibility of excavation, conservation and rehabilitation of the archaeological heritage of the Province. Though most of the protected sites and monuments remained under the administrative control of Federal Department of Archaeology, yet some fresh Gandharan sites were either explored by the officers of the DoAM in various parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, particularly in district Swabi where the Buddhist site of Aziz Dheri, Baja, and the settlement site of Hund were excavated and a good number of valuable antiquities discovered during these operations. Apart from the exploration and excavation of Buddhist sites, the DoAM, have also established new Museums in the districts of Peshawar, Mardan, Charsadda, D.I. Khan, Swabi and Chitral for the display and preservation of antiquities found during the scientific archaeological diggings. In the recent years (2013 onwards), the DoAM has made tremendous contributions in the exploration, excavation and conservation of the Buddhist establishments located in various parts of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. A brief account of these contributions is given below.

## 2. EXCAVATION AND CONSERVATION OF THE BUDDHIST SITE OF AZIZ DHERI

The Buddhist site of Aziz Dehri, is situated in District Swabi of the Province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. It was the first Buddhist site explored by the DoAM soon after its establishment in 1993. At the same year, excavation was conducted at one of the portions of the site which revealed the remains of a main stupa and monastic quarters (see Pl.1). In the subsequent years excavations were resumed here from time to time with the collaboration of the Department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar (see Nasim khan 2008, 2010). However, the most important discovery took place at the site in 2013, when a team of Archaeologists from the DoAM, led by Mr. Arshad Mughal, found a complete medium size stupa decorated with stucco plaster and sculptures (see Mughal 2016). The stupa has a square base, measuring about 2x2 meters, with a height of about one meter, and constructed of stone slabs and blocks over a stone slabs paved floor (Pl.2). The base is superimposed by a square plinth of 1.5x1.5m with a height of about

50 cm, constructed also of solid stone blocks with a thick coat of lime plaster. On either side of the square base, there is a seated figures of Buddha fashioned in stucco.

One of the figures of Buddha which is in a good state of preservation is shown in Dhyāna pose, wearing a shawl which covers both his shoulders, and halo around the head. Facial detail, uṣṇīṣa, left knee and arm are slightly damaged and worn away, however, traces of red paint are visible at chest and shoulders. The four corner of the plinth are provided with seated figures of Buddha and Bodhisattvas, while the drum portion is richly decorated with several different scenes from the life of the Buddha such as the Dipamkara jataka, Preparation of the seat for the first sermon of Buddha, Mahaparinirvana (death scene) and adoration of stupa etc (Pl.3). Apart from the discovery of the stupa, the excavation have revealed a large number of stone and stucco sculptures, coins of many ruling dynasties of Gandhara, seals and sealing, metallic objects, and pottery. All these recovered objects are now housed in the Hund Museum Swabi.

Side by side with excavation, conservation of all the exposed structure of Aziz Dheri site, such as the main stupa, votive stupas, monastery and secular buildings were conserved in order to protect them from disintegration and decay and to save them for the future generations.

### 3. EXCAVATION AT THE BUDDHIST SITE OF SAMPUR DHERI, SWABI

The Buddhist site of Sampur Dheri, is situated in the village of Baja, about 10km east of the main Swabi Bazar, in the district of Swabi. It was once a very large Buddhist establishment containing a huge stupa and monastery, surrounded by a fortification walls. However, after its abandonment, the all the buildings have been collapsed and in the result the local population turned the site into a agricultural fields. Unauthorized digging at the site was noticed several years ago, however, scientific excavation at the site took place when it was reported to the DoAM, that the owner of the site is busy in bulldozing the mound in search of antiquities. In order to stop such unlawful activities and to save the precious Buddhist

antiquities, the DoAM started a salvage excavation in 2011 which revealed the remains of a massive stupa (Pl. 4), from the center of which a coin hoard of the great Kushan period also discovered (see Khan. Z 2011).

With the passage of time, the land acquisition issue of the site settled and the excavation was resumed in 2013, which also revealed the foundations of the monastery built in a series of small rooms and rectangular halls and verandahs around a square courtyard (Pl.5). The monastery was constructed from large blocks of stone without mortar or any binding materials. There was also water tank for storing the rain water and some small shrines probably for the veneration of some sacred objects. The monastery area was largely disturbed by the antique seekers and bulldozing activities, yet the excavation carried out by the DoAM have revealed a good number of coins, terracotta utensils, shell bangles, and bronze tubs etc. A detail report of the excavation is not published.

## 4. FRESH EXCAVATIONS AT THE BUDDHIST SITE OF BHAMALA

The Buddhist site of Bhamala is located on the right bank of Khanpur River in the Taxila valley. It was first excavated by Sir John Marshall, the Director of the Archaeological Survey of India in 1930 in which the remains of a cruciform stupa, votive stupas and monastery were revealed along with Buddhist sculptures made of stone and molded stucco. After that time, no further excavation was carried out till 2012-13, when a team of Archaeologists from the Hazara University Mansehra and DoAM, Peshawar started fresh research on the site with a view to expose the hidden structural remains left in untouched by previous excavators as well as to find a clue to the chronology of this important establishment. The excavation exposed few structural remains, of which the most important is the cell of dying Buddha or chamber of mahaparinirvana of Buddha, and a good number of antiquities ranging from coins, beads to stucco and terracotta figures and stone sculptures (see Samad et al 2017).

In 2014-15, excavation at the Bhamala was resumed in order to completely expose the unexcavated structures on the one hand and to carry out conservation activities at the site. The archaeological

activities which continued at the site for few months was very fruitful since it revealed many small shrines accommodating seated Buddha images in various postures. Moreover, for the first time a large podium of the mahaparinirvana Buddha was exposed. Although the body of the Buddha is unfortunately deteriorated since it was made of stucco, yet the remaining portions of feet are providing convincing evidences that this was the first and largest image of dying Buddha ever made in Gandhara. Thus the whole area of the podium was conserved and sheltered (Pl.6) from sun light and heavy rains (see Samad et al 2017).

## 5. EXPLORATION OF BUDDHIST SITES IN KHYBER AGENCY

Khyber Agency (presently Khyber Tribal District), of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is also very fertile in terms of archaeological sites, particularly Buddhist monuments, however, since the independence of Pakistan, no archaeological activities took place as the area was not under the imposition of the antiquities act of Pakistan. In 2015-16, the DoAM with the support of the then political administration carried out the first archaeological exploration campaign under the leadership of the present author. During the survey almost 114 new sites and monuments belonging to different period history of Gandhara were documented of which the site of Changai, Shagai Lala China, Shodanai (Pl. 7), Gudar (Pl.8), Zhaga Ghar, Ali Baba at Warsak water reservoir, and Ali Masjid etc (Mehmood et al. 2017).

## 6. PRESERVATION OF BUDDHIST MONUMENTS IN SWAT VALLEY

Since 2011, the DoAM has been focusing on the excavation and conservation activities in the Swat valley (ancient Udyana). In this regards, the site of Barikot, Amlukdara and Balo Kale Gumbat are excavated in collaboration with the Italian Archaeological Mission to Pakistan (Olivieri 2014). Furthermore, acquisition of land where the ancient sites and monuments are located is another highly appreciated measure taken by the Provincial Government. In this connection several archaeological sites have been protected in the first step, particularly, in the Malakand, Chitral, Dir and Swat district while in the second phase, the Land Acquisition Act of 1884, has been imposed on the land of the most important sites and monuments such as the stūpa of Amlukdara, Balo kale Gumbat,

Shniasha, Barikot, Abasahib China, Jorjory stupa, Dangram stupa and Ghaligy and Jahanabad rock carved statues of Buddha.

The recent developments made in the Buddhist heritage by the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums have raised the standard of confidence among the general communities and due to such positive measures, thousands of tourists from different countries of the world have visited the archaeological sites of ancient Gandhara. The conservation and restoration of the scattered and dilapidated Buddhist sites is one of the objectives of the DoAM and we hope that in the near futures these sacred edifices will be protected for the coming generations.

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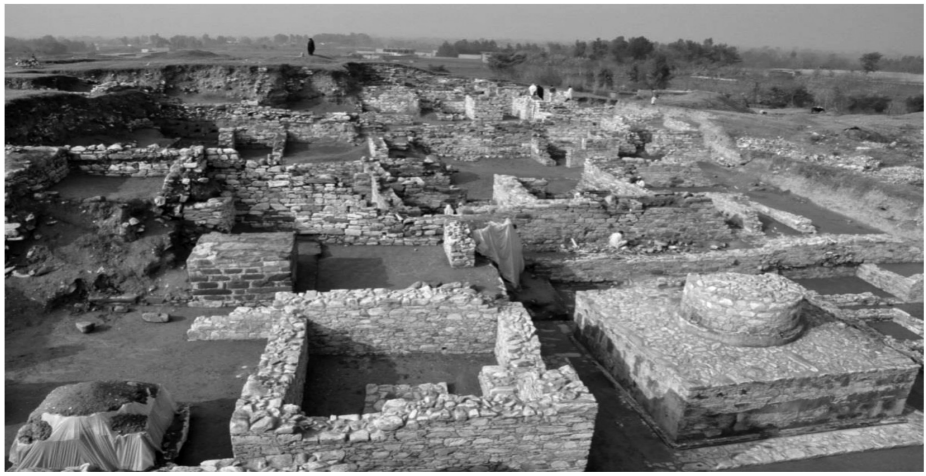
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Pl. 1: General view of the exposed structures in the Buddhist site of Aziz Dheri.



*Pl. 1: General view of the exposed structures in the Buddhist site of Aziz Dheri.*



*Pl.2: The stupa discovered in 2013 season excavation (After Mughal 2016)*



*Pl. 3: Details of the stupa decoration (After Mughal 2016)*



*Pl.4: The Main stupa of Sampur Dheri, Baja, after excavation*



*Pl. 5: The Monastery of of Sampur Dheri, Baja, after excavation*



*Pl. 6: Shelter provided to the mahaparinirvana chamber at Bhamala, Taxila*



*Pl.7: The Buddhist site of Gudar Village, Khyber Agency*



*Pl.8: The Buddhist site of Shodanay Village, Khyber Agency*

# CROSS-CULTURAL SHIFT IN ICONOGRAPHY OF BUDDHA ALONG THE SILK ROAD: ALTERATIONS AND INDIGENIZATION

by Sushma Trivedi*

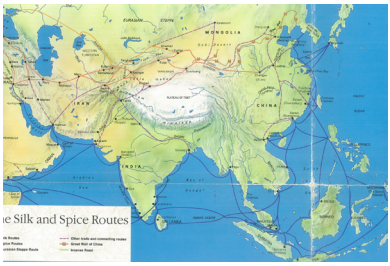
**ABSTRACT**

The Silk route, the largest ever and longest surviving network of roads was the main commercial artery of Eurasia. This 6000 mills long route started at Sian in eastern china and terminated at Antioch on the Mediterranean Sea. It was opened by Chinese envoy Chan Ch'ein in 2ND c. B.C. and was Christined as 'Sidenstraussen' by the German explorer Baron Ferdinand von Richtofen. But silk was not the only valuable commodity to have been exchanged along the route, even more valuable were the languages, scripts, religious faiths and art styles, the most valuable being Buddhism, the religion of peity and compassion. This cultural exchange along the route initiated a process of cross-polination of cultures.

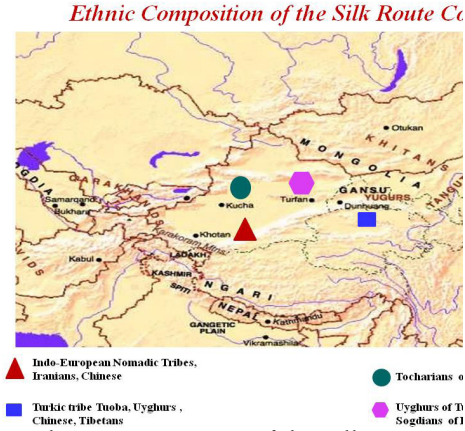
Buddha's physiognomy and anatomical details are based upon thirty two Mahapurush and eighty anuvyanjan lakshanas enumerated in Mahayan texts. Thus buddhist iconographic tradition proposes a rigid frame work for anthropomorhic representation of Shakyamuni. Yet from time to time and place to place the standards of execution kept shifting. Local art traditions were instrumental in bringing about this change but this factor has generally not received attention as it is simply believed that Graeco-Buddhist art of Gandhara overwhelmed all of central Asia and to some extent China.

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It is well apparent that the indigenous art styles played an important role and exerted themselves in creation of Buddhist art. The figure of Shakyamuni Buddha assumes local racial features because of which he is more acceptable to the local people. This flexibility of Buddhist art contributed towards it's popularity and made it a universal religion. It is also surmised that the role of Pre Buddhist art of Gandhara in popularity of Buddhist art has been unduly magnified.




*The Silk and Spice Routes, Belitha Press, UNESCO*




*Ethnic Composition of the Silk Route Colonies*

The silk route probably the largest ever network of roads was the main commercial artery of Eurasia in ancient times. It not only connected the two continents of Asia and Europe but also linked many great empires of their times such as the Roman, Persian, Kushān and the Chinese empires. The whole silk route starting at Changan in China, upto Antioch on the Mediterranean sea was 7,000 miles long almost one quarter of the length of equator (Hedin, 1994: 228). It was also the longest surviving trade route as it gained prominence in around 1st C.A.D. and commercial activities along the route, with minor upheavals continued till 13th c. A.D. The route was opened by Chang Chien, the Chinese envoy of the Han emperor, who is known as the 'Father of the silk route' and it was christened as 'Sidenstraussen' or silk route by the German explorer Baron Ferdinand Von Richtofen in the in the late nineteenth century. It was thought that silk was the most valuable commodity to have been traded through this route but there were

more valuable things such as cultural trends, art styles, religious faiths, scripts and languages that traversed and were exchanged along the route. The most valuable being Buddhism, the religion of piety and compassion. The traders and travellers embarking upon such a long and perilous journey always carried an additional baggage of their culture which they dispersed on the way and filled it back with the elements of other cultures and brought it back to their own place.

This cultural exchange along the route initiated a process of cross-pollination of cultures resulting in spectacular examples of hybrid cultures and art. This makes it a unique phenomenon in the history of mankind. The silk route added a glorious epoch of peaceful co-existence, cooperation, mutual appreciation and fusion of cultures in world civilization.

The Central Asian and Chinese sections of the silk-route were under the spell of Buddhism. Presently a part of Central Asia is under Russian republics and the rest is Sinkiang Uighur autonomous region in China, formerly known as Chinese Turkestan. This region had a chequred political history. It remained under political control of Greeks, Persians, Chinese and were frequently raided by the nomadic tribes of steppes. These political circumstances also contributed towards the cultural plurality of the region.

By the end of the first century AD, Buddhism had already made a headway into Central Asia and China via West Asia. The rise of Mahayan and beginning of the anthropomorphic representation of Buddha in first century AD gave a definite impetus to its spread into foreign lands. Now they had an object of worship, accessible to all unlike texts, which makes possible a communion between the deity and the devotee.

The silk route, coming from the west bifurcated at Kashgar to avoid Taklamakan, one of the deadliest desserts, into northern and the southern branches, skirting the dessert. These routes were dotted with oases states and trade colonies. Beside Bactria, Kucha and Turfan on the northern branch and Yarkand, Khotan and Miran on the southern branch were the strongholds of Buddhism. These states had a very unusual composition of population. There

were settlers belonging to various races and ethnicity as well as nomadic tribes. These multicultural, multiethnic states developed into heterogeneous societies, which were very open and receptive towards outside influences. Thus they provided a congenial climate and fertile ground for cultural syncretism, particularly fruitful in the realm of art.

Buddhism, for a larger span of silk-route's life, remained the dominant religion in the colonies and oases states. By far the greatest number of manuscripts, monuments and art relics recovered from the silk route region belong to Buddhism. Art has always been an integral part of Buddhist religious paraphernalia. Since the time of Buddha monks use to decorate their dwellings with paintings (*Cullavagga*, VI 3.2) and Buddhist monuments decorated with relief and sculptures were being erected since the 3rd C.B.C. in different parts of India. The anthropomorphic representation of Buddha enthused the adherents with a new sprit and art of Buddhism attained a new level of efflorescence. Buddhists posses probably the most developed and well defined iconographic tradition of the orient and the iconography of Shākyamuni Buddha among its foreign adherents make an interesting study. Though with the rise of esoteric Buddhism around 3rd C.A.D., the number of divinities in Buddhist pantheon rose to about 300, Shākyamuni still remained the most celebrated figure among the Buddhists of Central Asia and China.

Buddha's physiognomy and anatomical details are based upon thirty two *Mahāpurush* and eighty *anuvyanjan lakshanas* enumerated in Mahayāna texts (*Lalitvistar*, VII, 42-43, p. 206-8). These signs were identified by sage Asit at the time of the birth of Gautama. Buddhist canonical texts are replete with references to the appearance of Buddha each and every part of Buddha's body is laden with symbolism reiterating his supreme attainment. In this way Buddhist iconography provides a rigid framework for human representation of Buddha.



*Seated Buddha, 5th c. A.D., Sarnath, Archaeological Museum, Sarnath*



*Standing Buddha, 5th c. A.D., National Museum, New Delhi*

## CLASSICAL DEPICTION OF BUDDHA

Yet from time to time and from place to place, style of execution, focus of artist and prevalent influence kept shifting and changing. Political conditions, local perceptions and nature of patronage were the determinants of such changes.

The highlights of this process of adaptations and modifications were the role played by the local art traditions and the extent of incorporation of elements of local culture. It was important because these factors worked towards the elimination of foreignness of the religion and may also be treated as a yardstick to measure the level of understanding of the indigenous people. These factors have generally not received due attention as it is simply believed that all of Central Asia and to some extent China were overwhelmed by the Greco-Buddhist art of Gandhāra. Buddhist art in silk-route states was not received in an artistic vacuum but all the recipient

cultures had their own art traditions, highly sophisticated ones in case of Bactria and China. They were intentionally blended with the Buddhist art to enhance its acceptability among the masses.

India was connected to the silk route network through many subsidiary roads from West, North and eastern part of India. Bactria was the point of origin for the western routes to India and the most favoured route passed through Bamiyan and Gandhāra region passing through Pushkaravati (Mod. Charsadda) and Purushpur (Mod. Peshawar) and further reached Taxila. Gandhāra corresponds to modern northern Pakistan and eastern Afghanistan. From Indian side it was the first prominent site on the silk route related to Buddhism and played a key role in its dissemination into central Asia. This part of Asia came under Indo-Greek rule in 2nd c. B.C., then was acquired by Indo-Scythians and later was a part of the Kushāna empire of Kanishaka. In the 1st c. A.D. Gandhāra region gave Buddhist art a new meaning and a new direction. No single region has been so prolific and so vivid in production of Buddhist art as Gandhāra. The distinct style of art very soon gained preponderance over other contemporary schools of Buddhist art. Gandhāra was even credited with the origin of Buddha image but recent discoveries in China and reexamination of Buddhist text in this context had reopened the debate as the issue (Huntington, 1985: 23-57).

Gandhāran art is generally considered as an offshoot of Greek art, based on Hellenic inspiration and modeled after it. This view is strengthened by the earliest representation of Buddha on Kushāna Coins, Bimran reliquary and Kanishka's relic casket as these rulers were of foreign stock and Kushānas had earlier ruled at Bactria, a Hellenised state. It was believed that Indian, tradition had no concept of 'Man God' prior to Gandhāra figures and Gandhāran Buddha is a direct derivation from the sculpture of Greek God Apollo (Foucher, 1917). The earliest Gandhāra art is found to be rooted in Hellenistic art (Bacchofer, L. 1941: 223-50). Even Roman (Soper, 1951: 301-19) and Iranian influences (Tanabe, K. 1984: 1-27) have been claimed over the origin of Gandhar Buddha.



*Buddha, Gandhar, 2-4th c. A.D., Central Museum, Lahore*



*Head of Buddha, 4th c. A.D., Gandhar, Victoria and Albert Museum, London*

A halo around the head, Chisseled face, heavy drapery with elaborately modeled folds and wavy hair were the stereoscopic features of Gandhāra Buddha and almost all of them have been traced to Hellenic art. Halo is considered a Greek borrowing as there was no such precedence in Indian art. If Mathura Buddhas are accepted as predated to Gandhāra Buddha then the issue is already settled because the earliest Mathura figures have large halos with scalloped borders (Sharman, 1984; Fig. 79). The concept of Buddha's refulgent body is gleaned through the Buddhist Mahayan texts. It is repeatedly mentioned that he was surrounded by the aura of divine light (Lalitvistar, 7.43) and his body is luminescent with the radiation of the four *Apramanas-Karuna, Mudita, Maitra* and *Upeksha* (ibid, 5.97). An aura round Buddha's body was already there and this might have been followed by sculptors like other details about his iconography.



*Gandhar Buddha , Tokyo National Museum*

Buddha's drapery in Gandhār figures is another contentions issue. It is compared with himation or toga worn by the upper classes in Greeko-Roman world. It is actually believed that Buddha is wearing himation which Buddhists might have adopted at the time when Greek fashions where prevalent in this area (Marshal, 1960: 42). It must be remembered that Buddhists possessed one of the most highly organized monastic order with a strict code of conduct for monks which absolutely left no scope for such deviation. Buddha himself prescribed three clothes–*trichivar* for the monks which included an *antarvāska, uttarāsang* and *Sanghāti* (Mahavagga, VIII, 13.4-5). *Uttarāsanga* round the waist and *sanghāti* upon the shoulders is clearly visible in Gandhāra figures as in Mathura figures. As far as the deep patterned folds of drapery are concerned, they have probably no paralleled in Indian art. This might have originated in Gandhāra itself because with passing of time rendering of drapery becomes finer and finer.

There was a fundamental conceptual difference between the

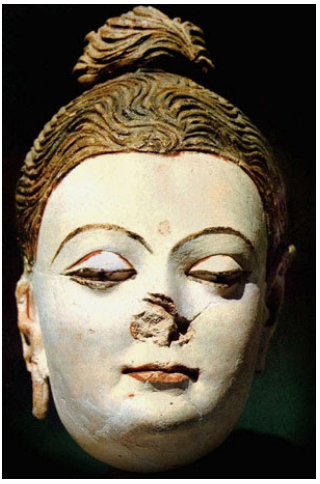
Greek art and the Indian Buddhist art. Greeks attempted to present the divine figures in completely anthropomorphized form and spirit. Whereas for Indian Buddhist tradition figural representation was the personification of a doctrine, of the transcendental knowledge and of the highest attainment. For them it was less important to make God appear like man but to preserve the ideal of the *Yogi* and of *Mahapurush*, the supreme being. Hellenic culture was a victory of humanism over idealism (Hobbs & Duncan, 1992: 73) which is reflected in their art. On the contrary Buddha stood symbolizing the triumph of incorporeity over earthliness. In Indian tradition figural representation of Shākyamuni Buddha is highly symbolic. Hence, the early Buddha figure of Katrā may seem reflecting 'archaic naturalism' to the western eyes (Zimmer, 1955: 545) but to the Indian mind it was a manifestation of the most exalted ideal.

In a very short time stark realism of Hellenic influence bowed down in front of Buddhist spirituality. A style which laid greater emphasis upon the outer beauty then the inner reflection and could not have survived long in the Buddhist context. Gandhār Buddha underwent a transformation and adapted to the ideals of the faith.

In the earliest Gandhāra figures (Ingholt, 1957, No. 66) Buddha is shown with wide open eyes, an unusual shape of *ushnish* that looks more like a top knot of hair than a protuberance overhead. There is no sign of divinity in his expression or appearance, except for the halo around the head. Gradually Gandhāra sculptures attuned themselves to the symbolic value of Buddha's persona and the ideals it conveyed. In mature Gandhar art Shākyamuni is represented in solemn and graceful attitude with half closed downcast eyes which impart him an otherworldly look (Ingholt 1957, No. 106). Buddha is featured as both standing and seated by sculptors of Gandhāra. Standing figures are always in *ubhayānsik* Sanghāti; covering both the shoulder and hands are mostly in *Ahaya mudrā*. While some of the seated figures are in *ekānsika sanghāti*, obviously an influence from Mathurā, and display *Dhyān, Dharmahakrapravartan* and *Bhumisparsha* hand gestures.

Bactria was the first central Asian outpost for the travellers coming from West and South. Expanding on the both sides of Oxus river, it stood at the confluence of roads and cultures culminating

from all four directions. Bactria itself witnessed rule of diverse races and civilizations. From 6th c. B.C. to 4th c. B.C. Bactria was under Achaemenid rule, in early 4th c. B.C. Alexander conquered this region. By the middle of the 3rd c. B.C. an independent Greeko-Bactrian kingdom was established and later it came under Kushan rule. By this time Bactria was deeply immersed in Greek culture. The architecture and sculpture of Bactria in pre-Kushāna age reveals that the Bactrian school of art already consisted of strong Hellenic elements. In the famous Airtam Freeze of musicians, dated to early first century A.D., Greek style of drapery and hair-setting is already there.



*Buddha Head, Fayaz Tepe (Bactria), Termez, Archaeological Museum*

A Buddhist complex has been excavated at Fāyaz-tepe. Murals on the walls and clay and alabaster sculptures have been fond. One such sculpture is the head of Buddha (Bongard-Levin & Urigasin, 1984: 213). With wavy hair and high *ushnish,* it is reminiscent of Gandhār style but heaviness of face betrays local influence and is closer to secular figures of Airtam freeze. Abzhina-tape is another important Buddhist site presently in Tadzik republic. A post-Kushān site, it has yielded magnificent paintings and sculpture of Shākyamuni Buddha. These Buddhas are a combination of local art tradition and the Central Asian style being followed at other places of the region.

Oases state of Kucha on the northern silk route was a stronghold of Buddhism since very early times. It is commercially viable

position attracted settlers of Indian, Persian and Chinese origin. Kuchena monks played an important role in spread of Buddhism and its art into the other parts of Central Asia and China. Kumarjeev, the famous Kuchean monk, who was brought to China in 385 A.D., is credited with translation of many Buddhist texts into Chinese. Even more important role was played by Kucha in the evolution of Central Asia Buddhist art style that developed at Kizil.

Kizil, the complex of 236 rock cut caves in located near Kizil township, presently in Baichen county, Xinjiang, China. The art treasure of Kizil caves, first discovered by German archaeologist Grunwedel and Alfred Vo Le Coq has evoked much interest because of its unique stylistic features, rich repertoire in variety of media, and its influence upon other Buddhist sites of Central Asia and China. Initially the earliest date for Kizil art was fixed at 500 A.D. With the revised dates of Dun-Huang and its relationship with Kizil and the carbon dating of Kizil material has pushed back this date to 300 A.D.

Kizil



*8-Kizil, 3-8th c. A.D., Museum of Indian Art, Berlin*

Kizil, Kucha



*Kizil, Kucha*

The largest number of art objects at Kizil are devoted to Shākyamuni Buddha in form of wall painting, painted wood panels, stucco and wood carved sculptures. A large number of small pieces were probably dedicator objects and indicated that worship of Shākyamuni reached almost to the status of cult worship. On other side the walls are painted with over life size Buddha figures.

Kizil Shākyamuni figures may be classified into two categories – painted and the sculpted figures. Conspicuously, when compared the paintings and the sculptures have so varied features that they appear to be products of two different schools of art. The sculptures show a pronounced Gandhāra influence in drapery, posture, hair styling and to some extent in the facial features. Whereas the painted ones may be typecasted as Kizilians as they show strong local elements in physiognomy and style.

The sculptures of Shākyamuni figures both standing and seated have elongated face, broader at forehead and narrower at chin, they have arched eyebrows, heavy eyelids and a small mouth which some times gives them a childlike appearance. The painted Buddhas have invariably round face, a bit squarish chin, open almond shaped eyes with a downright gaze, mostly with a serene look. Sometimes a smiling countenance is given by a slight upward turn of the lips. The painted standing Budhdas mostly appear in *tribhanga* pose. This rhythmic posture gives them a slight profile view instead of usual frontal stance. This pose is probably new for Central Asia, some paintings of Ajanta show Buddha in this pose but usually this pose is associated with Bodhisattvas.

Kizilian artists, though well versed in iconography, show a little ignorance in depiction of *hastmudras*. Generally in standing figures either both hands are hanging down, in some left hand is brought close to chest, may be holding the drapery end. A perfect *vitarka* mudra with right hand is a rarity. Seated figures are mostly in *dhyanmudra*. Here also the artists show their naivety about Indian tradition by placing left hand over right hand instead of otherwise. In *dhyanmudra* this pose of hands is made to receive divine knowledge attained through Samadhi, since right hand is considered pure, it is always placed over the left hand.

Kizilian particularism is expressed in aura and mandorla. Buddha's head is covered with a round aura and oval or elongated mandorla overlapping the aura round the head. The body mandorla was conceived at Bamiyan and was developed at Kizil. From Kizil onwards it became almost an inseparable feature of central and east Asian art. The robe of Buddhas is also rendered in a typical manner. Artists seem to be following the Gandhāra technique of drapery

folds and the Mathura style of transparent drapery, simultaneously. The body contours, especially the slim waistline and legs are clearly visible from beneath the drapery. Seated sculptures are mostly draped in *ubhayanshik sanghāti* and painted standing figures are in *ekānasik sanghāti*.

Turfan is another significant junction on the northern silk route. Presently it is a part of Xinjiang Uighur autonomous region of China. Turfan was dominated by Uighuras at the time of creation of Buddhist art from 8th to 12th c. A.D. Uighurs were enthusiastic followers of Buddhism and under their patronage at Bezeklik 77 thousand Buddha caves were dug. These caves were decorated with murals and sculptures. Artistically Bezeklik paintings present a very interesting combination of styles that may be termed as 'reworked central Asian style'. Bezeklik was close to Dun-Huang in China, which received Central Asian Buddhist art, fused it with Chinese style and rebounded it to Turfan. Persian influence is also prominently visible in Buddhist figures but image of Shākyamuni remained immune to Persian influence. Bezeklik Shākyamuni also reveals some Gupta style influence, passed on through T'ang art in Dun-huang.

***Bezeklik, Turfan***



*9-Bezeklik, Museum of Ethnology, Berlin*

Shākyamuni is always the central figure in murals of Bezeklik. The face rendering of these Buddhas is very different from Kizilian Buddhas. They have slightly mongoloid face, indicating a process

which began at Bezeklik and was completed in T'ang art of Dun-huang. Face of Buddha bears moustaches, his each feet is planted on two separate lotus flowers. There are certain deviations in depiction of Buddha. He is also shown wearing sandals though according to *Vinaya* texts Buddha probably never wore footwear as a monk. A jewel is placed at the base of the *ushnish.* Richly decorated aura and mandorla are significant features of Bezeklik art.

Khotan on the Southern arm of silk route occupied a very strategic position as it was almost at the midway between Gandhār and Dun-huang. Khotan's commercial importance is reflected through its cosmopolitan nature. Its closer proximity to Gandhār made it one of the earliest recipient of Buddhist art. Fahian visited the kingdom of Khotan and has left a vivid account of popularity of religion there. All of Khotan is replete with Buddhist relics but Rawāk and Dandan-Uiliq are the two most significant sites.

***Khotan***



*Khotan, Buddha with auspicious symbols, 8th c. A.D., Central Asian Antiquities Museum, New Delhi*

The largest stupa of central Asia has been excavated at Rawāk. The most important finds at Rawāk have been the stucco, images and small relieve figures of Shākyamuni Buddha (Stain, 1912: 231 pg. 76). All the Khotanese Buddha have round prominent *ushnish,* typical of Khotan and the string drapery is covering both the shoulder, still showing body contours from beneath the draper fold, a central Asian

feature. Face of Khotanese Buddhas are round, fleshy with heavy eyelids and downcast eyes (Stein, 1901, p. XIV) and figures have clearly Chinese influenced faces. One of the small relieve Buddha in *Dhyanasana* from Rawāk is distinguished by its finely modeled body shape, very closely resembling Mathurā Buddha (ibid, fig. 13). Dandan-uiliq figures of Buddha dated to 7th-8th c. A.D. visibly show the dominance of local elements in physical details. Earlier it was believed that Khotan art was a replica of Gandhāra art but from Buddha figures it is clear that multiple influence were at work.

The northern and the southern branches of the silk route converged at the edge of Takalāmakan dessert at Dun-huang. The place was inhibited by strong Buddhist community is indicated by more than four hundred highly adorned caves bearing paintings and sculptures. Creative activities at Dun-huang were carried out between 4th to 13th c. A.D. under the successive rule of Wei, Sui and T'ang dynasty and represented their respective styles. When Buddhism entered China, it already had a highly sophisticated and elegant art tradition, especially of paintings. Dun-huang sculptures and paintings are large in size as compared to Central Asian sculptures. Wei period sculptress of Shākyamuni are more realistic, slender and elongated. Buddha faces bear expression of benevolence and have a smiling countenance. This smile has been termed as archaic smile (Lee, 1964: 141). Drapery is a combination of Gupta wet technique and Gandhāra symmetrical folds. One of the Wei Buddhas, seated in dhyānasana is considered one of the finest examples of Dun huang art (Vincent, pl. 20, Cave 259). The paintings of Northern Wei at Dun-huang, represent the process of hybridization of Chinese and Central Asia painting techniques and styles. The earliest results are not very appreciable in aesthetic sense. Buddha figures are largely disproportionate with large hands, skinny face and elongated bodies (Gray, 1959, p. 8, Cave 251; pl. 9, Cave 251).



*Buddha with his Alms Bowl, Silk Banner, 7-10th c. A.D., Dun Huang, China*



*Dunhuang, Cave No. 45, China*

From the later years of Wei dynasty the Dun-huang art started appearing in completely new form. It is taken to be the impact of the art of Southern dynasties, still a fresh wave of Gupta influence is also apparent in shapes and expressions. This style reached its full bloom during the rule of Sui dynasty. The characteristic features of this style were rounded and fuller bodies, plump face, heavier clothing and expression of tranquility and peace. There is a marked change in the hand poses and in delineation of aura and mandorala. Oval, conical and leaf-like mandorlas are replaced by round disc like shape as seen in Gupta sculptures of Sārnath. In one of the paintings Shākyamuni is seated on a low stool in *pralambhpāda* āsana, both legs pending (Gray 1959, pl. 29, Cave 205).

T'ang style of Buddhist art is known as an International Style on two accounts, firstly it intermingled central Asian style, Persian

decorative motives and Gutpa art elements. Secondly, it created its own sphere of influence as it was imported to Korea, Japan and south east Asia. T'ang art presents a completely Siniozed version of Buddha. Sculptures continue to be fleshy and plump, body proportions are more realistic. A very significant feature is related to the hair-setting of Buddha. In T'ang sculptures instead of wavy or plain hair, Gupta style curls are found. Buddha's face has mongloid structure and features.

In one of the silk banners at Dun-huang Buddha is seen in standing pose, slit eyes, but arched, eyebrows and a dot symbolizing *urn*. The right hand is holding a bowl while left hand is making *vitarka mudra*. In Indian tradition this pose is always shown with right hand. Buddha is wearing *ubhayānsik sanghāti*, exposing upper part of chest. Buddha's each feet is planted on or separate lotus. This supposedly is a result of confusion regarding the *Vishwapadma* or double lotus. In Indian iconography *Vishwapadma* has two sets of petals, one turned upwards and the other set turned downwards. Both the feet of the divinity are planted in the center of the lotus.

It is well apparent that the indigenous art styles played an important role and exerted themselves in creation of Buddhist art. The figure of Shākyamuni Buddha assumes local racial features because of which he is more acceptable to the local people. This flexibility of Buddhist art contributed towards its popularity and made it a universal religion. It is also surmised that the role of Graeco Buddhist art of Gandhara in popularity of Buddhist art has been unduly magnified.

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# THE EARLY MONASTIC ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM AND THE LIVES OF THE BHIKKUS IN SRI LANKA. (STUDY BASED ON MIHINDU SLAB INSCRIPTIONS IN MIHINTALAYA)

**by Sumedha Viraj Sripathi Ukwatta***

There are about four thousands inscriptions found in Sri Lanka but only thousand and forty eight inscriptions have been read and reported. All these inscriptions can be categorized into four types. They are:

01. Cave inscriptions

02. Rock inscriptions

03. Pillar inscriptions

04. Slab inscriptions

05. Other inscriptions

By the term cave inscriptions have been denoted those records which are contemporaneous with the fashioning and dedication of the cave of the Sangha, and as a rule give the names of the personages who undertook and carried out this meritorious task. Inscriptions engraved on the walls or roof of a cave. They are very

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short. Wessagiriya, Mihintale, ritigala cave inscriptions are example for cave inscriptions in Sri Lanka. Rock inscriptions are engraved on the surface of rocks. Some of the Rocks are well prepared surfaced and some of them are not. They carried out the name of the donor and receiver, donated lands, the name of the minister or king during the particular period and date. Thonigala, Dambulla and Sithulpawwa are examples for the Rock inscriptions. Pillar inscriptions are especially prepared and erected and engraved on a side or all the four sides. The slab inscriptions are engraved on especially prepared granite slabs. Some of them are with a page border and some of them are without a page border. These are carried out many details like names of king and ministers, donations, rules and regulations and observances and avoidances, government regulations etc. The inscriptions on the stony steps, Van gal and gal oru (stony boat), golden plates, copper plates et cetera are known as other inscriptions.

Robert Knox who lived in the middle of 17 century says, Turner is the fore most among who tries to read the inscription of Ceylon. He obtained the Brahmic alphabet and did a comparative study of inscriptions in Sri Lanka and showed the similarities between Brahmi script and the Sri Lankan inscriptions. But the first man who read the inscriptions in Sri Lanka was G. Goldschmidt. He was the senior officer of archeology to Sri Lanka appointed by the British Governor Sir Gregory in 1874. He has found 83 inscriptions and read them and reported for the first time. After him, Edward Muller has read about 200 inscriptions and compared the names on them with the Mahavansa (The great chronical of Sri Lanka). H. C. P. Bell the first commissioner of archeology to Sri Lanka appointed by Sir A. H. Gorden, the Governor of Sri Lanka in 1890 has found and read 900 inscriptions in Sri Lanka within twelve years and published. He stared "Epigraphia Zeylanica"[1] (The journal of Sri Lankan historical inscriptions). Senarath Paranavitane, the commissioner of archeology in 1939 has done a great job by discovering, reading and publishing the inscriptions in Sri Lanka. He is the one who read and published Sigiri Graffiti for the first time in Sri Lanka.

1. Paranavitana S., Inscriptions of Ceylon, Vol.1, Preface.

Mihintalaya or Mihintala (mihiňdu + thala) also known as Cētiyagiri or Sāgiri is the center of Sri Lankan Buddhism where the Arahath Mihindu arrived and established Buddhism in 3rd century BC after the Third Buddhist Council held under the patronage of King Ashoka in India[2] . The king Devanampiyatissa was ruling the country during this period. The king and the citizens became Buddhist after listening to the preaching which was conducted by Arahath Mahinda. After this event the Sri Lankans considered and honored Arahath Mahinda as the Second Buddha ("Anubudu" in Sinhala). Mahavansa (The great chronical of Sri Lanka) recorded Sixty eight caves have been arranged by King Devanampiyatissa and donated for the Buddhist Bhikkus in Mihintala. There are about 85 inscriptions discovered which were engraved in Brahmi script in this site.

Out of these inscriptions, Mihindu slab inscription is the most important one as it reveals more details about the administration system of early Buddhist temples in Sri Lanka, and the behavior system of early Buddhist monks in Sri Lanka. This type of slab inscriptions can be found in deferent monasteries in Sri Lanka. But out of them, Mihinatalaya slab inscription is more important as it is the Centre of Theravada Buddhism.



*(The Mihindu Twin Slab Inscriptions)*

2. Mahavansa, Chapter 13, BCC.

To the left of the conference hall (Sannipatha Salawa), two stone slabs with letters written on a polished surface are known as the Mihintala Slab Inscriptions. These two stones slabs are measuring 2.13 meters high and 1.21 meters wide. There are 58 lines on the surface of the each slab. The letters and the language are ancient Sinhalese, which evolved Brahmi had been used in the latter part of the tenth Century A.D. Inscribed and established by the King Mihindu IV (956-972 A.D.), it contains details on the rules and regulations governing the internal administration of the Mihintale (Chetiyagiri) monastery rules, regulations, customs and traditions to be followed by the priests, staff of the monastery and wages paid to them and property owned and taxes paid to the monastery. Therefore, it is considered and important document. As in most of other rock and slab inscriptions in ancient period, here also mentioned about the greatness of the king, religious faith and his services in t 1-7 lines of the inscription "A". The first inscription (A) gives an impression of the rules and regulations of the monastery complex at Mihintale and the daily routine of the monks and the administration system of the temple. The second inscription (B) gives detail account of the lay employees of the monastery and how they were paid by granting lands, gold or with food items. The way controlling the income obtained through the taxes are also mentioned clearly.



**7-12 lines of the inscription.**

According to the slab inscription "A", it says as thus. 'These rules and regulations have been instituted after having summoned a vast assembly of the great community of the monks residing at the Sāgiriya and the Abhayagiriya monasteries. The monks residing at this monastery shall rise at the time of early morning and practice four protective meditations. And after cleaning the teeth, shall wear the robes go down to the alms-hall attached to the inner monastery. After reciting the Metta Paritta at the Et Vehera, shall collect foods. The monks who are unable to go to the alms-hall due to illness shall, when recommended by the physician be granted shares of food and raiment.'

According to these regulations, it reveals that the monks who resided in this monastery woke up early in the morning and practiced "four protective meditations": recollection of the Buddha, the meditation on lovingkindness, contemplation of the nature of the body, and mindfulness of death. These four meditations are called "protective meditations" because each offers protection from a particular unwholesome disposition (lack of confidents, anger, sensual desires and laziness) and reinforces a corresponding wholesome quality essential to the path. The monks should wear robes in the way mention in the disciplinary rules of Vinaya Pitaka. Every day in the morning they recited Metta Sutta which is very popular in Sri Lanka even today. The monks who resided in this temple received food in the temple. The food is prepared within the temple and there were special well paid chef and a staff to prepare food for the resident monks.

**13-14 lines of the inscriptions**

'The monks who reside in this monastery and recite the Vinaya Pitaka shall be given five shares of food and raiment. To the monks who recite the Sutta Pitaka seven shares of food and raiment and the monks who recite the Abhidhamma Pitaka twelve shares of food and raiment.'

The Sri Lankan monks carried out the Teravada Tipitaka in memory until it written them down on Ola Leaves during the reign of the king Valagamba (29–17AD) The monks who recited

and carried out all the three pitakas were in the Mihinatalaya monastery and they were well reputed and honored. They were treated separately. And it seems that the monks who recited the Abhidhamma Pitaka were treated higher as they were treated with twelve shares of food and raiment than the other monks who recited Sutta and Vinaya. It shows the importance of the Abhidhamma Pitaka and its higher regard. And also, the early Sri Lankans have understood the importance of the abhidhammic teachings and considered it as the foremost among the Tipitaka.

**15-16 lines of the Inscription**

'The requisites, which were determined and assigned to monks by the lay patrons, shall be given without causing any omission thereof. That those who make their presence and permanently reside here shall enjoy the benefits of villagers and land belonging to all the āvasas situated within this monastery'. According to this regulation, the protection of offerings which were assigned to the Sangha by the lay people, have been concerned by the king. And he made rules to protect them and provide the Four Requisites of Bhikkus (robes, food, āvasa, medicines) without any trouble.

**16-17 lines of the Inscription**

'Other than the monks issuing orders jointly when reprimanding the employees, the issuing the orders to and reprimanding the employees shall not be done by singularly by individuals.' This shows how the employees are respected here within the temple and the administration respected the duties of employees and also it reveals the reasonable justice system of early period in Sri Lanka.

**18-20 lines of the Inscription**

'The monks residing in this monastery shall by no means enjoy the benefits of the fields, orchards etc. in any place attached to the inner monastery. They shall not allow their relatives to commit any high-handed acts in any place attached to the inner monastery. The monks who infringe these customs shall not live in this monastery.' This reveals how the misusing of the property attached to the temple is avoided and how the king made rules to protect them for the long last of the Sāsana in Sri Lanka. Some relatives of bhikkus are

committing high-handed acts in some places and create problems in the society and among the Sangha. This may cause for the disunity of the bhikkus and the bad reputation. And it may be a challenge for the long last of the Sāsana. The early kings have paid their attention on this regard and enacted rules to avoid rising such a bad situation within the Sāsana in Sri Lanka.

**20-24 lines of the Inscription**

'The monk who looks after the fraternity, the warden of the monastery, the chief administrator, the revenue officer, the almoner, the clerk of the monastery, the registrar of the caskets and the purser of the caskets: all these persons shall asses the work along with the monks of the two fraternities at the Abhayagiriya monastery who have come to the assists them and attend to the matters concerning the income and the expenditure etc. of the monastery.' This reveals how the administration runs smoothly in transparent way in the early monastery administration system in Lanka. The important work is done by a special committee not by an individual person especially about accounts. As I have found, we can consider this as an auditing system. If so, the auditing system in the world is first recorded in this inscription in Sri Lanka. The auditing is started in Britain in the late nineteenth century(3). But in Sri Lanka it has been continuing from 10th century AD in the monasteries administration system in Sri Lanka. The auditors from Abhayagiriya Monastery visited Mihintalaya to audit the accounts of the monastery.

**24-25 lines of the Inscription**

'If there are any relatives of the monks in this monastery who had been employed in the temple they shall not be retained in service, the employees, who are to be sent away, shall do so after the recovery of whatever has been registered in their names.' According to this regulation, any of the monk's relatives cannot be benefited by the monastery. And also it is very clear that the early Sri Lankan monastery administration maintains a register, where everything is recorded.

3. Matthews Derek, A History of Auditing, Routledge, USA, 2006

**25-37 lines of the Inscription**

'Caskets with locks shall be deposited in the Relic-house, after having sealed them in the presence of the officials of the Relic-house with the seal of the officials of the office. Apart from the case of any one of the officials of the monastery going to attend to some service appertaining to the monastery in another place there shall always be not less than three persons in attendance from among those employed at the place where the alms is kept, the place where raw rice is issued and at the place where the forenoon gruel and other food are prepared. Whatsoever clothe that belongs to the Relic-house of the inner monastery shall neither be lent out nor they be sold. The officials shall not engage the men who are being employed for service at the monastery for their own services, nor shall such men be engaged for service at other place. The Relic-house, the image house of the auspicious colossal stone image of the Buddha, house of the great Bodhi-tree, Nayinda shrine, the house of the goddess Mininā̄l, the Katu maha Sēya, the Kiribanda Pvu Dāgaba and the Dāgabas on the upper and the lower rocks attached to the inner monastery: all the offerings made at all the aforementioned places and hundred kalandas of gold as well as ten yahalas of paddy collected from the inner monastery-all these shall be utilized annually for the repairs to all edifices, such as the Dāgabas of this monastery.'

This reveals the complexity of the administration and official duties. All the works have been done in an official manner. And the officials had to act according to this constitution. Different types of duties are entrusted in different officials and men. The officers have no rights to change the workers job description. Employees are protected from changes in their job description that can be construed as retaliation by an employer in response to a worker exercising an employment right. These are accepted by the modern employees' acts worldwide. It is very clear that the works in the monastery carried out in accordance with the accepted way. And this reveals very importantly the employees' rights were concerned and introduced by the Sri Lankan kings and being practising from ancient time before the modern employees' rights are introduced to the world.

**37-42 lines of the Inscription**

'The persons who supply the incense and flowers shall appropriate for the monastery the confiscated houses, petty fines, grain taxes and wages paid in lieu of the turns of the service, which are derived from the two villages, Guta and Karanda, which are attached to the Relic-house and the Image-house. One third of the produce of trees and the plants belonging Kiriband-Pavu and its monastic land, the irrigable land adjoining the reservoir named Manu, the two irrigable lands in the upper side and the lower side of the Lahiniya-Pvu and its monastic land, the land around the lake named Pahana and the land around the pond at Porodena: the income derived from all these places shall be appropriate by the monastery. The ground rent shall be levied in a fitting manner by the monastery from the tenants who live in the monastic lands, but it shall not be levied from the servants and the officials of the monastery.' This reveals how the administration covers up the expenses and maintains the income and expenses. The kings and the lay devotees have donated the income of some lands, paddy fields and many of their properties to cover the different expenses.

**42-43 lines of the Inscription**

'If those who have put on yellow robes commit acts, such as buying and selling, killing living beings etc. which are inconsistence with the dress they have put on, they shall not be permitted to live around the rock.' According to this rule the king very much concerns about the virtuous lives of the bhikkus in the monastery. The bhikkus are not allowed to violate the vinaya rules which were enacted by the Buddha. And we can think that the Bhikkus in the monastery behave according to the vinaya and they avoid all the inappropriate practices. The kings always hope the long last of the monastery and the Sāsana.

"Vinayō nāma sāsanassa āyu"

According to this saying, Vinaya is life of the Sāsana. The violation of the Vinaya rules affects the life span of the Buddha Sāsana. This has been considered by the king. The rulers in the country must protect the Sāsana in Sri Lanka. They are crowned for this task. If a king failed to protect the Sāsana, he would never be considered as

the king of the country and the people will drive such a king away and crown another prince. In Sri Lanka, in the 10th Century, King Mahinda IV (956-972 AD.) in an inscription proclaimed that "none but the Bodhisattvas would become kings of Sri Lanka".

"Sirilakhi nobōhosathu no raj vaṃhai"(4)

Thus it was believed that kings of Sri Lanka were Bodhisattvas. According to this ancient rule, which was enacted by the ancestors, there is no chance of crowning in Sri Lanka to a prince who is not a Bodhisatta. This reveals that the rulers in Sri Lanka bound to protect the Buddha Sāsana in the country and their important duty is to provide protection and looks in to the needs of the Bhikkus in the country.

**43-51 lines of the Inscription**

'The officials shall not other than on behalf of the monastery accept miner toll dues. The villages and the land appertaining to this monastery should permanently be settled in tenure, but they shall not be given on lease. Other than what is given as maintenance land to the officials and the servants of the monastery, they shall not enjoy the benefits of the land given as mortgage, leases, fields orchards etc. situated in places belonging to the inner monastery. The officials who have gone to the monastery on business shall not accept any means of subsistence from the people of the district other than the impost of the raw rice given by the farmers in accordance with the former custom. They shall also not accept presents from tenants nor shall the officials take domesticated oxen from them and have their own land cultivated. The fields which are held by the farmers in hereditary succession shall not be taken away unless it is proved that they are unable to maintain them. They shall not enter gardens and cut down trees, and shall not commit any illegal acts.'

This reveals how the king avoids the bribery or corruption of the officials. The king established a legal framework to protect the villagers from unnecessary burdens which may occur due to the officials. If an official commits such an illegal act, punishments will be followed. It is noted down in this inscription clearly in the next lines.

4. The Mihindu iv Slab Inscription No: 2, in Jetawanarama Monastery in Sri Lanka

**51-53 lines of the Inscription**

'Should there be any offence committed by the tenants, it shall be assessed and a fine shall be determined in accordance with the custom of the village, and the culprits shall be made to perform work in a reservoir undertaking a marked portion of work, sixteen cubits in circumference and one cubit in depth in lieu of the fine that determined. If this work had not been performed the fine which was determined shall be levied.

**53-58 lines of the Inscription**

Whatever is spent daily on the maintenance of the main refectory, on employees and on the renovation works shall be entered in the register and a statement of accounts shall be made with the concurrence of the office staff, and those who ought to be signed them shall place their signatures there and then those sheets of accounts shall be placed in casket and locked. Every month, the account sheets shall be made public and a full statement of accounts shall be prepared from them. From the twelve statements of accounts during the year, a balance shall be compiled at the end of each year, which shall be read out in the midst of the community of monks and be thus finally disposed of. The houses of the officials who infringe these regulations shall be confiscated and they shall be dismissed from the service.'

This is the last section of inscription "A" and it reveals how the accounts of the monastery have been handled. It is amazing the way they handled the accounts thousands of years ago. After careful consideration, the budget is published, so that everyone can go through it. This way of handling the accounts is much more similar to the modern banks' way of handling the accounts. In my opinion, this inscription seems to be a source of modern banking system in the country. However the account branch of the monastery has done a great job in handling the accounts of the temple in an accepted way.

In the inscription "B", it brings the detail account of how to pay and the amount that should be paid for the officials, servants, and workers in the monastery. According to the inscription, the Chief Executive Officer, The bursar, chief clerk, clerk of caskets, keeper of

caskets, the almoner, warden of property, the master of festivals, land surveying officials, the supplier of alms-bowls, the supply officer of royal householders, officer in charge of meditation hall, the chief canal officer, eleven canal officers, robe makers, two pursers, chief carpenter, painters, senior female attendant, the lady administrator of refectory, the director of the female servants, Supply officer of the monastery, twelve chefs, head servants, servants who procure fire wood, senior official of the pavilion, eleven officials attached to the pavilion, five potters, women who supplies water strainers, Physician, guardians of sheds, astrologer, purser of Relic-house, registrar of caskets, men who supply incense and flowers, men who supply oil, two persons who place white flowers in Relic-house, growers of blue water lilies, administrators of district who guard the Relic-house, men who supply incense and flowers to the main shrine room of the Buddha, doctrinal intellectuals who deliver religious discourses, doctrinal intellectuals who are teachers, other six doctrinal intellectuals, keepers of water vases, purser of the office, office clerks, chief master artisan, two master artisans, two wood cutters, two master lapidaries, two blacksmiths, lime-burners, six carts men, chief land allotment officer, twelve land allotment officers, guardians of Dāgabas, sweepers, cleaners, men who perform duties at the Relic-house, image-house and the refectory and two laundry-men are assigned duties in the monastery.

All these officials, suppliers, servants and workers are paid with land, raw rice and food. And some of them are paid with gold. To cover up these expenses, the kings donated the collection of taxes of some villages and lakes. Beside them, the kings some devotees donated paddy field and cultivated lands to the monastery in case of cover up the expenses of the monastery.

## CONCLUSION

These historical evidences prove that how the ancient administration system of Buddhist monasteries in Sri Lanka was. According to the slab inscriptions of Mihindu iv, the administration system of ancient Mihintalaya Monastery is well reputed and well established. As a cradle of Teravāda Buddhism, Mihintalaya Monastery was an idle example for the administration system of

Buddhist monasteries in Sri Lanka. The kings of the country were very much concerns of the well-being of the Buddhist monks. The ultimate goal of Sri Lankan Buddhist monks and the kings was, to preserve the Buddha's teachings for the future world. As a result of this great task, the Tipitaka were preserved from generation to generation in memory by the Sri Lankan Bhikkus for a long time and they were written down in Sri Lanka for the first time during the king Valagamba and handed them over to the world.

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# BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

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