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HISTORY OF BUDDHISM IN INDIA WITH REFERENCE TO THE CULTURE IN TAMIL NADU

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ABSTRACT

Buddhism was one of the centrifugal forces of Tamil Nadu. The role of native scholars of Tamil in Buddhism is notable and invigorated by this religion at a point of time. . These studies are by and large either historical or academic criticisms of the literary merits of works of Buddhist content and orientation in Tamil. In this context, this paper attempts at studying the logic and philosophy as expounded in the Tamil Buddhist texts with special reference to *Manimekalai*, *Tolkappiyam*, *Maturai Kanci* and few other texts. This paper also explains about the introduction and importance of Buddhism in Tamil Nadu along with how it spread through the Tamil nation and in special the paper portrays the stand of Buddhism in *Cankam* age and how the Buddhist scholars broadened their process of Nativization along the Tamil nations with an emancipator dialogue as propounded by Ayothee Thassar.

Keywords; Tamil Nations, *Cankam* Age and *Tamili* or *Dravidi* , Nativization

Buddhism has been one of the centrifugal life forces of Tamil culture and Literature. The Tamil language and its literary and grammatical traditions had their veins fertilized and invigorated by this religion at a point of time, so much so that we have today several art works and ideas that bear an unerasable Buddhist imprint. Many native scholars have examined the role of Buddhism in the building up of the Tamil culture. Notable among them are Pandithar Iyothee Thass, Dr. Krishnawamy Iyengar, Mayilai S. Venkatasamy, Dr. C. Meenakshi, T.N. Ramachandran, Dr. Vasudeva Rao and Dr. S.N. Kandasamy.

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These studies are by and large either historical or academic criticisms of the literary merits of works of Buddhist content and orientation in Tamil. There also attempts at studying the logic and philosophy as expounded in the Tamil Buddhist texts, especially in the epic *Manimekalai*.

This paper analyses the two great Tamil epics *Cilappatikaram* and *Manimekalai* as the primary material for this study. The evidences culled from them have been constantly placed in a larger context of the elements of Buddhism and their literary and epigraphical representations. Buddhism in Tamil Nadu was not an isolated phenomenon but an integral part of the main stream of Buddhism. Such a study helps one to see the unique characteristics of Tamil Buddhism as much as their indebtedness to the main stream of Buddhism. As such, it has become inevitable that one should draw profusely on materials from Pali, Sanskrit, Chinese, Japanese and Tibetan Sources.

The land of the Tamils has been called *Tamilakam*, which means a land where the language Tamil is spoken. The prologue to *Tolkappiyam*, the earliest extant grammatical work in Tamil, gives brief account of the boundaries of the ancient Tamil Speaking country. According to it ‘the virtuous land in which Tamil is spoken as the mother tongue lies between the northern Venkata hill and the southern Kumari’ The Tamil epic *Cilappatikaram* also follows the same tradition and refers to the above borders of *Tamilakam*. Furthermore, the epilogue of *Cilappatikaram* specifies both the eastern and western limits of *Tamilakam* namely, the eastern and the ancient Tamil country: *Tamilakam* was region which had to north-east Venkata hill or the Tirupati hill, the southern part of the modern Andhra Pradesh, as its northern border, Kanniyakumari or Cape Comerin as the southern border, the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian sea as its eastern and western borders respectively. It is obvious that the ancient *Tamilakam* encompassed Kerala too. *Tamilakam* is actually located in the Southern part

of the Indian peninsula. This paper aims at analysing Buddhism which had flourished in this Tamil Country.

Buddhism as a Universal Religion

Buddhism founded by Gautama Buddha with the Ratnatraya, Viz Buddha, Dharma and Samgha, is a religion of humaneness and equality, advocating humanitarian approach to all problems of life. It seeks to realize the middle path in religious approach and propagates the concept of Anatman, the Four Noble truths, the Twelve linked chain of dependent origination and the Eight-Fold noble path, which are the main tenets of early Buddhism. When we think of Buddhism as a universal religion, we must have in mind the two features which are indispensable for a better understanding of Buddhism – the teaching of equality and the proclamation of the missionary.

According to Lakshmi Narasu in his *Religion of the Modern Buddhist*, The retrieval and reconstruction of Buddhism in modern India has taken two related yet distinct routes. The first was pioneered by the European orientalist and their Indian followers, from the late eighteenth century and supported by the colonial government. They went about digging up the historical Buddha. Their preoccupation was reconstruction of the original circumstances and message of the great teacher, revealed some six hundred years before Christ, in its pristine form.

What they eventually succeeded in was setting up a discourse of Buddhism as one of the major religions of the world, cast much in the same model as that of the others with a founder, a sacred language, a sacred book and a history of rise and fall. This route could be termed as the academic-historical.

The second route, through liberally availing of the findings of the first, and starting somewhat later, was led mostly by men of generally subalternized communities, scattered across the subcontinent. Caught up in

the mega colonial process, of widespread “peasantization of the economy and brahminization of society”, which did not spare the religio-cultural spheres, these men found in the Buddha and his teachings a warm refuge from their own socio-cultural degradation and economic-political deprivation as well as a vehicle for their emergence into a new and modern religio-cultural, and eventually socio-political, subjectivity. Their preoccupation has been the construction of the contemporaneously authentic in the Buddha who could address and redress their existential problems of the day. Anchoring themselves solidly on the obvious resonance of the Buddha’s core social message to that of modernity (in the sense of social rationality or egalitarianism) the colonially subalternized communities, therefore, went about the process of constructing plural forms of Buddhism with the limited cultural resources at their command. This second route could be termed as the existential-religious.

These two directions of the modern invention of the Buddhist tradition in the subcontinent, as suggested, certainly were mutually related in history; and several intermediary positions and attempts could also be identified.

Introduction of Buddhism into the Tamil Country

The introduction of Buddhism into Tamil country, According to Shu Hikosaka, can trace it to the third century B.C. when Emperor Asoka’s Dhamma Vijaya occurred. The Rock Edicts II and XIII of Asoka speak of the provinces in his own empire as well as abroad where he sent Buddhist missionaries. These two Rock Edicts are of particular value on account of the information they contain about his missions to the Tamil country and Ceylon. Rock Edict II mentions the names of the following dynasties of the Tamil country and Ceylon namely, the Chola, Pantiya Satyaputra, Keralaputra and Tamaparni. Among these names, the Chola, Pantiya and Keralaputra are well

known as the three principal dynasties of the Tamil country who ruled Cholanatu, Pantianatu and Cheranatu respectively. The last name Tamraparniis identified as Ceylon.

Spreading of Buddhism in the Tamil Country

The evidences for the early phases of the spreading of Buddhism in the Tamil country can be seen mainly from the epigraphical sources found in its ancient caves and stone-beds. A number of caves with Brahmi scripts have been found in Tamil Nadu in Madurai, Tiruchi, Tirunelveli and Chingleput districts. It is a known fact that the Brahmi script was popularised by Asoka through his Dhammavijaya. Such scripts are found in abundance in almost all parts of India as well as in some places in foreign countries. The Brahmi Scripts which have been found in south India are somewhat different from the North Indian Brahmi scripts. This South Indian Brahmi is called by the name Dravidi or Damili(Tamili). This name is seen in the Jaina works like *Samavayangasutta* and *Pannavanasutta* and also in the early Mahayana Buddhist work *Lalitavistara*.

Among the Characteristic features of South Indian Brahmi or Dravidi, the following are the most significant.

1. Of the hare consonants *ka, ca, ta, ta* and *pa*, only the initial or primary letters and found in the Tamil Alphabet, i.e., the *Varga prathamas* of the Sanskrit alphabet are found in them.
2. The soft ones of the third letters, i.e. the *Varga tritiyas* of the above consonants in the Sanskrit, are absent.
3. Of the aspirated varieties, i.e. the second and the fourth letters of these consonants, the letter *tha* is found used sparingly in two or three places while *dha* may also be taken as having been used in one place (Arittapatti A). The others are not met with.

4. *Sa* and *sa* are also not found. Only *sa* is occasionally met with.
5. No ligatures or conjunct consonants are seen
6. Among the vowels only *au* is not found; similarly, the *r* and *l* of the Sanskrit alphabet as also the *anusvaraam* and the *visarga ah* are absent.

Buddhism During the *Cankam* Age

The first three centuries of the Christian era of the Tamil country is sometimes called the *Cankam* age, because it is believed that the *Cankam* poems were composed during this period. Besides, the Tamil Academy, which is called by the popular name *Cankam* also flourished during this period. The *Cankam* literature can be treated as an authentic literary representation of the culture of the epoch. The following works are considered to comprise the *Cankam* literature: 1.*Akananuru*, 2.*Purananuru*, 3.*Narrinai*, 4.*Kuruntokai*, 5.*Ainkurunuru*, 6.*Patirrupattu*, 7.*Paripadal*, 8.*Kalittokai* and 9.*Pattupatu*. *Tolkappiyam* the grammatical treatise is also considered to have belonged to this period. The *Cankam* poems furnish us with several evidences for the reconstruction of the history of early Buddhism in the Tamil country.

There is a poem in *Purananuru*(182), which according to tradition, was composed by one Pantiya king of the name Katalul maynta Ilamperuvaluti. This poem speaks of the concept of *Intirar amiltam* (*Indra amrta*) which means the ambrosia of Indra. According to this poem, this world exists because of the honest and righteous people living in it. They are selfless and live for the sake of others. Even though the ambrosia of Lord Indra is given to them, they would not take it for themselves; they would share it with their fellow men.

S. Vaiyapuri Pillai is of the opinion that this concept of the ambrosia of Indra has entered into the *Cankam* literature either due to the influence of Buddhism or Jainism, since there is no such concept which is related to the

brahminical god Indra. Yet, we are not able to come across this concept much in Indian Buddhism in general. It may be considered one of the distinctive concepts of South Indian Buddhism.

Maturaikkanci, a *Cankam* poem composed by Mankuti Marutan, describes the life in the city of Matura from the dawn of the next day. While portraying the evening scene, the poet describes women, accompanied by their children and husbands, visiting a Buddhist *vihara* with flowers and incense to offer their vesper worship to the Buddha. From this, we are able to know clearly that there was a Buddhist *vihara* in Maturai, which was worshipped by people of Buddhist faith in that city. The same poem is composed in *Kancittinal*, a poetic theme which speaks about the transient nature of the earthly things including the humans. After giving a graphic description of the splendor and the luxurious life of Maturai, the poet exhorts the king as follows: “Oh king! Don’t develop excessive attachment towards these pompous and beautiful things as well as towards the victories which you got in battles. All these things are not permanent but ephemeral. They are just like a dream and hence impermanent and illusory”. What is significant to note here is that the theme *kanci* is somewhat alien to the spirit of the ancient Tamils, who were very materialistic in their attitude towards life. There are several reasons to presume that this theme might have entered into the literary tradition of the Tamils due to the influence of either Buddhism or Jainism.

Tolkappiyam speaks about poetic themes in its *Porulatikaram*, in *Purattinai* of which there are seven sub-divisions, viz, *Vetci*, *Karantai*, *Vanci*, *Kanci*, *Ulinai*, *Tumpai* and *Vaikai*. Among them, *Kanci* is a theme suitable for reflective poem, which dwells on the transient nature of life. If we attribute pre-Buddhist origin to *Tolkappiyam*, then there are possibilities to say that thus theme might have entered into the text of *Tolkappiyam* in a relatively later period.

Nevertheless, we may say that the poet of *Maturaikkanci* had come under the influence of Buddhism. The above concept as regards the transient

nature of life forms the basic tenet of Buddhism. According to the Mahayana Buddhist text *Gandavyaha* “every dharma is like phantom; all the living beings are like dream; all the earthly objects are like magic”. It is not known why the important Buddhist centre in Tamil Nadu is called by the name *Kanci*, which is the name of the poetic theme treating of illusion, one of the important aspects of the Buddhist religion.

Another *Cankam* poem *Netunalvatai* which is traditionally attributed to Nakkirur speaks about *pitakam*. In this, the poet uses the term *pitakam* in the sense of basket. This word *pitaka* is a Buddhist technical term which is seen both in Pali and Sanskrit forms such as *Sutta-pitaka*, *Vinaya-pitaka*, *Dhammapitaka* and *Tripitaka*. Here again it is used in the sense of box or basket. From this, we can say that the Buddhist term *pitaka* was very popular among the Tamil people during this period.

There are many *Cankam* poets whose names are related to Buddhism in some way or other. There are names such as Cattan and Cattanar, which we come across in *Akananuru*, *Purananuru*, *Narrinai* and *Kuruntokai*. This is supposed to be the Tamilized form of Sanskrit word *Sasta*, which is one of the attributes of Buddha. There is a poet of the name *Ilampotiyar*, which literally means the man of the young bodhi the sacred tree of Buddhism. The name Palakkautamanar, a poet of the *Cankam* anthology *Patiruppattu*, means the Gautama of *Palai*(theme)

But, there is a problem in accepting these names as belonging to the *Cankam* period. According to some scholars, the *Cankam* poems had been transmitting through oral tradition for a long time till they had been compiled. Probably, the compilation should have taken place either in the sixth or seventh century A.D.. There is every possibility to say that the compilers had given these names since such names never occur within the texts.

Buddhist Scholars and the Process of Nativization

As already discussed, the earliest scripts used by Buddhists people in South India are called by the name *Tamili* or *Dravidii*. These scripts are different from the so called North Indian *Brahmi* script. From this we can learn that Buddhist monks in South India, especially in the Tamil country, had engaged themselves in nativization from the very beginning. When we referred to Dhammapala, mention was made of his attempt to translate certain Buddhist works into Magadhi (Pali). At that time he might have used the same sources that were available in the South Indian languages too. We can therefore infer that certain Buddhist works had been written in South Indian languages-in Tamil, Telugu or Canarese, around the fifth century A.D. *Viracoliyam* the Buddhist grammatical work reveals unmistakably that a distinct Tamil grammatical tradition existed among the Tamil Buddhists. There is every possibility to say that Cattanar also followed and established Tamil Buddhist tradition when he composed his epic *Manimekalai*.

The impact of Sanskrit grammatical tradition can be seen in *Tolkappiyam*. According to Panamparanar's prologue to this work, the author of *Tolkappiyam* was well versed in *Aindravyakarana* of Sanskrit. According to tradition *Aindravyakarana* was composed by Indra and it is said to be anterior to Panini's Sanskrit grammar. *Tolkappiyam* itself bears testimony to the fact that its author was familiar with the Sanskrit rules on grammar. In many a place *Tolkappiyam* tries to compare and contrast Tamil grammatical categories with those of Sanskrit. This tendency is more conspicuously seen in Puttamittiranar's *Viracoliyam*. In this treatise, Puttamittiranar himself attests that he composed *Viracoliyam* drawing on both the Sanskrit and Tamil grammatical traditions. Many a Sanskrit grammatical term as well as conception is found used in this Buddhist Tamil grammatical treatise. The most significant feature of this work is that it deals with several colloquial

usages of Tamil. This feature clearly demonstrates the attitude of the Tamil Buddhist scholars towards the common people of the Tamil country. Since they had taken to propagating Buddhism through the language of the common man, they paid serious attention to the spoken Tamil. This bears witness to the deep interest shown by Buddhist people towards nativization.

The increasing tendency of using Sanskrit in Tamil Buddhism is seen after the composition of Dignaga's logical treatise. His works were actually written in the Sanskrit language. This type of fascination for Sanskrit started exerting its impact on the Tamil Buddhists too. This period also marked the emergence of the new movement of Hinduism in the Tamil country which also gradually started using Sanskrit as a medium for the expression of religious and philosophical concepts. One could say for certain that the hybrid style Sanskrit-Tamil or Pali-Tamil was developed in the earlier period by the Tamil Buddhists in their nativization of Buddhism. This tendency is strikingly seen in *Manimekalai*.

Mayilai S. Venkatakami points out that many words of North Indian origin found in Tamil have their roots in Pali and not in Sanskrit. If we compare these lexical items with those in Pali and Sanskrit, we can easily trace their original forms in Pali. For instance, Tamil words such as *attam*, *cattam*, *tanmam*, *ilakkanam*, and *vannam* are derived from the Pali words *attha*, *sabda*, *damma*, *lakkhana* and *vanna*. The Tamil words of Pali origin have come into the Tamil language with the advent of Buddhism in the Tamil country. They bear testimony to the impact exerted by Buddhism on the Tamil culture.

It is necessary to examine why Pali Buddhism witnessed the kind of development it had in the Tamil country. We have seen earlier that there existed a close relationship between the Tamil Buddhism and the Ceylonese Buddhism. Since Pali was accepted in the Ceylonese Buddhism as the second language, naturally the Tamil Buddhists, influenced as they were by the

Ceylonese Buddhism, also showed keen interest in Pali. This is considered to be one of the main factors that contributed to the proximity of the Ceylonese Buddhism to the Tamil Buddhism.

We may however add one more linguistic reason to the above mentioned factor. A casual comparison of Tamil with Pali shows many phonetic and phonemic similarities between these two languages. These similarities might have helped the Tamil people to respond to Pali Buddhism more easily than to Sanskrit Buddhism in the early stages. Again, these similarities might have enabled them to absorb and assimilate Buddhist doctrines on the one hand and to pronounce the technical terms without much of difficulty on the other. Consequently, Pali tended to serve as a better medium than Sanskrit in the propagation of Buddhism in the Tamil country.

Among the Dravidian languages, Telugu and Canarese have more or less similar scripts as well as phonemes with those of Sanskrit. In this respect, Tamil differs from these two languages. This can be regarded as one of the main reasons for the popularity of a hybrid style with native and Sanskrit lexical items in other parts of South India. For this reason the Sanskrit-Prakrit hybrid style of early Mahayana Buddhist *sutras* such as *Astasahasrika prajnaparamita* and *Gandavyuha* was popular in the Telugu and Canarese areas. Even though Pali Buddhism flourished in Nagarjunakonda, Amaravati and other Buddhist centers in the Andhra country, it had not developed as considerably as it had done at Kanci and other Buddhist centers in the Tamil country. One may give other socio-religious reasons for the development of the above kinds of linguistics oriented sects of Buddhism in South India. We cannot however deny the influence of this linguistic factor in the development of Pali Buddhism in the Tamil country.

Thus, it is be remembered with proud that Buddhism was flourishing in the states of Tamilnadu, Kerala etc. As many dilapidated Buddha *viharas* are seen even today, we can know that Buddhism was prospering in the neighboring states of Andhra

and Kamataka. Venkatasami indicates that in ancient days Buddhist works inhabited at Thirukkaazhuk-kunram of Chengalpattu district and still many places are unknown in Tamil Nadu. Before him, Pandithar Iyothee Thass has referred to Tirupathi, Mahapalipuram, Chidhambaram, Srirangam, Kancheepuram, Pudukkottai etc. as centres for Buddhists.

According to S.Venkatasamy, in Tamil Nadu innumerable Thevargal had written several works. We do not know the history of Buddha Sika Jyothi Baalar, Iraakula Therar, Poorvaasiriyar, Mahaavajjira Buddhi, Kalla Dharma Baalar and others. A text called *Kirandha Vamsam* states that besides those scholars, other twenty scholars wrote books at Kancheepuram.

It has been stated that the Buddhists authored several works which have been destroyed in the passage of time, but the Pali works written by the Tamil scholars and preserved by the Buddhists of other countries alone were not destroyed. Works such as *Neelakeri*, *Veera Sozhiyan*, *Kundalakesi* etc. were destroyed, but works like *Manimekalai* are available to-day. It is felt that works such as *Siddhaanthathagai*, *thiruppathigam*, *Vimbisaara Kathai* etc. have been destroyed due to the enmity of the followers of rival faiths. However, at the land of India and the world as well, innumerable Buddhist literature survives even today. It is to be borne in mind that a Buddhist scholar known as Lalmani Joshi who had conducted research on the Indian Buddhist culture during 7-8 century A.D mentions about many teachers of Buddhist philosophy and many of their contributions.

In Tamil Nadu the following villages in Buddhist names such as Buddha nearu, Buddankulam, Buddham thurai, Buddham sirai, Buddham Tharuvai etc. and the names of general public such as Gunavan, Buddham arivaalan, Buddham Raase singan, Buddhanadi Vizhup-paraiyar, Buddhanarattan, Buddhi Buddhan, Thirumaal Buddham, Buddhan Udhaya Prumal, Bhagavan Sathi, Bhagavan, Thanma, Piriyan, Gauthaman etc. were

prevalent. One could know the above information from the temple inscriptions in Tamil Nadu and hence the above are the evidences to hold that Tamil Nadu was a Buddhist country.

Tamil Buddhism as An Emancipatory Dialogue

Tamil Nadu had become the citadel of Buddhism even before India became the Buddhist country. Before and after the period of Asoka, when several religious institutions began to widespread, Buddhist culture anchored in Tamil Nadu. It is a matter of investigation as to how be Tamil culture prior to the period of Tamil academy (Cankam). As we could not specifically determine the period of the three imperial dynasts, we are unable to reveal their cultural heritage accurately we could discern this truth from the expositions of scholars that still Tamil's history has not been written completely and comprehensively.

The most significant of such forerunners is a group of dalit-subalterns of the Southern India, centered around one Iyothee Thassar (1845-1914), a Tamil savant, Siddha medical practitioner and socio-political activist, some fifty years before the mass diksha at Nagpur, The story of the dalit-subaltern thrust, towards an inclusive religio-cultural subjectivity, affecting also, the conceptualization and configuration of the larger polity and society at least of the Tamil culture region, has been documented and interpreted in detail elsewhere. And it is not to be repeated here. Only a few salient points of emergence, section, and as expressed in the thought, articulation and activity of Iyothee Thassar, will be highlighted.

In brief, the modern Tamil Buddhism became a reality with the formation of sakaya (and later South Indian) Buddhist Society in 1898 under the charismatic leadership of Iyothee Thassar with the support and encouragement of Colonel Olcott of the Theosophical Society. The

movement did not take much time to capture the imagination of the dalit-subaltern communities in the northern-Chinglepet, Madras, Arcot, Kolar, Bangalore and Hubli-districts of the Madras Presidency and also to spread overseas to Burma, Srilanka, Fiji, Malaysia and South Africa where the subaltern Tamils had migrated as labourers. In these far and near places, branch societies were established, viyarams constructed and new social-religious communities formed. A regular weekly journal *Tamilan* published by Iyothee Thassar from the headquarters in Madras knit the different communities together. Socio-religious and polemical tracts proliferated from the pen of the Pundit and his colleagues and were distributed in thousands. The Buddhist Press and the Gautama Press in Madras and the Siddhartha Press later in Kolar Gold Fields became the rallying point for the propagation of the new social and religious worldview and ideology. The movement, through basically a response of the dalit-subaltern communities to the colonial contradictions, sought to embrace in the typical Buddhist fashion, the entire society.

The associates of Iyothee Thassar were drawn from all castes and communities as well as different walks of life. The movement was multi-pronged in its ideological thrust; attempted a systematic and historical deconstruction of the dominant Hindu religious premises, esoteric interpretations and exclusivist cultural practices; proposed a compassionate and all-embracing alternate worldview; and sought to drastically revise and modernize the textual as well as traditional Buddhist religio-cultural practices. The substantial issues of this ideological and organizational intervention included: casteism and religionsim, re-discovery of the original and casteless Tamil/Dravidian or Buddhist identity, construction of a rational-religious philosophy and practice and a re-interpretation of the sub-continent's religio-cultural second and the third decades of the previous century. Devolution of power in subsequent years, its trajectory became refracted from the religio-cultural to socio-political; and in the forties, Tamil Buddhism largely

transformed itself into the foundation of the emergent Dravidian Nationalist Movement as well as the Ambedkarite political formations such as the Labour and Republican Parties.

Mayilai Seeni Venkataswamy in his book *Buddhism and Tamil* states that Buddhism and firm roots in the *Tamilakam* can be known from the texts like *Cilappathikaram*, *Manimekalai*, *Thevaram*, *Nalayira Pirabandam*, *Periyapuranam* and *Nilakesi*.

The argument that India was susceptible to rain as thought by a few is an idea due to ignorance. Buddhism never insists not to protect one's territory, anywhere. The principle of Buddhism is that it is the primordial duty of the ruler to project the nation. The view of Dr. Kailashnath Katju that it caused for the alien ruling of our country is to be contemplated. Internal enmity and non-unity are the reasons for the fall of India. India had lost its independence on several occasions. Indians must keep in mind the caution of Dr. Ambedhkar that we must preserve the present independence obtained by great efforts by our forefathers, till our last drop of blood. Seldom can be triumph over enmity through enmity. Buddhism emphasized it should not be done. It insisted that love will win over everything and discipline will over even love. Hence human solidarity and affinity are the essential requirements of the present day world. This is the message impinged upon by the world Buddhism.

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THE ROLE AND STATUS OF DEITIES IN TIBETAN BUDDHIST PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT

Throughout the Buddhist world, the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha are considered to be the highest refuge; while some deities are considered to be just phantom or spiritual beings. Nevertheless, in the Tibetan Buddhist context, a pantheon of deities is recognized to be a legitimate refuge. The question of why the status of the deities has become, over the long history of Buddhism in Tibet, equal to the *triratnas* is not easy to answer. In order to provide some perspective upon this issue, this paper aims to investigate the role and status of deities in Tibetan Buddhist practice. The finding suggests that the status and role of the Tibetan deities are connected to the *tulku* tradition and also to the *trikāya* system. Externally, the deities exist in two classes: the class of enlightened beings such as Buddhas and bodhisattvas and the class of non-enlightened beings. They constitute the *sambhogakāya* in the *trikāya* system. The deities of both classes are involved with their worshippers socially and spiritually as providers of wealth and security, as teachers, protectors, guardians, advisers and even as a form of refuge. Internally, the status and roles of the deities are concerned with internal spiritual attainment.

Keywords; Tibetan Buddhism, Roles and Status, Deities

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Introduction

Throughout the history of Tibetan Buddhism, many controversies have occurred according to the different interpretations of Buddha's teachings such as the two truths and the sudden versus gradual path. However, the issue of the status and the role of the deity is one of the most interesting issues in the present day debates. This critical problem has emerged because of the 14th Dalai Lama who has consistently questioned the wisdom of taking refuge in the *Dorje Shugden* deity¹ due to the sectarianism associated with this practice. He also uses his religio-political status to ask the *Dorje Shugden* deity worshipers to follow his decision.² Consequently, this causes the dissatisfaction for the *Dorje Shugden* deity worshiper communities. According to an outsider, for a Buddhist, to deny the refuge of what is not *triratna* should not be a critical problem at all.

Throughout the Buddhist world, the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha are considered to be the highest refuge; while some other deities are considered to be a just phantom or spiritual beings. Nevertheless, in the Tibetan Buddhist context, a pantheon of deities is recognized to be a legitimate refuge. The question of why the status of the deities has become, over the long history of Buddhism in Tibet, equal to the *triratnas* is not easy to answer. In order to provide some perspective upon this issue, this paper aims to investigate the

¹ Etymologically, the word "deity" derives from the Latin "*dea*", ("goddess"), and "*deus*", ("god"), and other Indo-European roots such as from the Sanskrit "*deva*", ("god"), "*devi*", ("goddess"), "*divya*", ("transcendental", "spiritual"). Related are words for "sky": the Latin "*dies*" ("day") and "*divum*" ("open sky"), and the Sanskrit "*div*," "*diu*" ("sky," "day," "shine"). Also related are "divine" and "divinity," from the Latin "*divinus*," from "*divus*."

² However, he insists that, ultimately, it is up to individuals to decide for themselves. "One of the principal reasons why His Holiness advises against this practice is because of the well-documented sectarianism associated with it" (www.dalailama.com/office "Clarifying His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Stand on Dolgyal/Shugden"); [uploaded 12th July 2015].

role and status of deities in Tibetan Buddhist practice. In so doing, the status and role of the deities will be divided according to two aspects: (1) the external status and roles and (2) the internal status and roles. The external status refers to the natural, social and spiritual status of the deities; the internal refers to the deities as they exist in the status of meditative practice.

External Status and Role:

Natural status of the Tibetan deities: In Buddhism, the external natural status and roles of the deities depends on the Buddhist cosmology. In general, the deities can be classified into the various levels such as the six realms of heaven, the *rūpabrama*-realms and *arūpabrama*-realms.³ However, in Tibetan Buddhism, the deities are divided into two categories: the supra-mundane deities (*jig rtenlas 'das pa'isrung ma*) and the worldly or mundane deities (*jig rtenpa'isrung ma*). The former refers to the deities who are manifestations of enlightened beings and Buddhas. In other words, they are the gods and goddesses who have passed beyond the six spheres of existence.⁴ The latter group refers to the deities who are still residing within the spheres inhabited by animated beings:⁵ they take an active part in the religious life of Tibet. The deities of both levels are also frequently called as the 'haughty ones'. (*dregs pa*).⁶ Although, there are a countless number of beings above the level of beings with gross physical bodies, they are

³ Nyanatiloka. "Buddhist Dictionary.", In **Manual of Buddhist Terms & Doctrine**, edited by Nyanatiloka, Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society 1952., p. 90.

⁴ Wojkowitz, Rene De Nebesky -, **Oracles and Demons of Tibet: The Cult and Iconography of the Tibetan Protective Deities**, London: Mouton & Co., Publishers, The Hague, 1956., pp. 1-2.

⁵ Kay, David. "The New Kadampa Tradition and the Continuity of Tibetan Buddhism in Transition.", **Journal of Contemporary Religion** 12:3 (1997), p. 280.

⁶ Op.cit., Wojkowitz, Rene De Nebesky, p. 1.

categorized into different classes based on their spiritual qualities. As Michael Von Brück states,

At the highest level, some of them are emanations (*sprul pa*) of the highest aspects of the Buddha: Mahakala (*Nagpochenpo*, in 75 forms), Yama (*gShinrje*), Shri Devi (*dPaldanlhamo*), Vaishravana (*rNamthossras*), etc. Some are deities (*lha*) which have a universal appearance and meaning (such as higher *dharmapalas*, Tib.:*chos skyong* or *srung ma*), some are only local ghosts. ... Those lower beings that are ambiguous have been tamed and bound by oaths—they are the lower *dharmapalas*. Generally speaking, all *dharmapalas* are classified into two different groups: those beyond *samsara* and those within *samsara*. The last group again comprises beings in very different situations concerning their level of being. In order to make contact with the human plane, they use human media who fall into trances. However, there is no generally recognized classification and even within one school or tradition there are significant differences and contradictions of interpretation and classification.⁷

It should be noted that the status of deities is sometimes uncertain because it can be reevaluated by their worshippers. For example, the *DorjeShugden* was historically a mundane deity.⁸ He resided in the lower

⁷ Brück, Michael von. **Canonicity and Divine Interference: The Tulkus and the Shugden-Controversy**. Oxford University Press 2001 Available from http://info-buddhismus.de/dorje_shugden_controversy.html, [cited 16th May 2009].

⁸ Ibid., Brück, Michael von.

realm. However, later on, his status was re-evaluated by the 5th Dalai Lama (1617-82 CE) as a Buddha.⁹

The general roles of the Tibetan deities, both gods and goddesses, are often referred by means of two key terms. The first is the consideration of gods and goddesses as the protectors of religious law (Tb. *choskyong*, Skt. *dharmapāla*, *dvārapāla*). The other way of frequent reference to them is their role as the guardians of the Buddhist doctrine. In this case the deities can sometimes be very harmful and are often recognized as non-Buddhist spirits. Some are bound by an oath and can be subdued and compelled to assume the position of protectors of the Buddha Dharma. In this position they are normally depicted in the fierce aspect with brandishing weapons, crushing the human or supernatural enemies of Buddhism under their feet.¹⁰ Some are protectors of the state; for instance, the *PeHar* deity who is a well known ancient god at mundane level (*jig rtenpa'isrung ma*) has risen to occupy a prominent position in the religious systems of all Tibetan Buddhism schools.¹¹ Some are the protectors of particular Tibetan Buddhist schools such as *PaldenLhamo* who is the protective goddess of the Gelukpa tradition.¹² Similarly, *DorjeShugden* is significant for the Gelukpa and Sakya schools. In particular, the Gelukpaschool claims that he is a powerful guardian and protector of their doctrine against any detrimental influence that comes from the older *Nyingmapa* school.¹³ The deity is often considered as teacher and advisor, an aspect that connects him with the *tulku* tradition. The 14th Dalai Lama refers to his deity adviser *Nechung*, the state Oracle, by stating as follow,

⁹ Op.cit., Kay, David., p. 281.

¹⁰ Op.cit.,Wojkowitz, Rene De Nebesky, p.1.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 2.

¹² Op.cit., Kay, David., p. 281

¹³ Op.cit., Wojkowitz, Rene De Nebesky., p.4

Even if my master says something I compare it with what *Je Tsongkhapa* said and examine it on that basis. Likewise, I do not right away believe, even if it is said by a dharma protector. I think about it and do divination, I am very careful... Some may think that I am easily believing everything that *Nechung* says ... but this is not so ... It is said that we *Gelukpas* appreciate the power of conventional reasoning. So we have to keep up with it. Hence it has to be questioned whether *Shugdenis* the reincarnation of *TulkuDrakpaGyaltsen* or not.¹⁴

In the case of being the teacher (*guru*) of the deities, the connection of the *DorjeShugden* deity to the *tulku* concept may be one of the best examples. The *DorjeShugden* is recognized as belonging to the pantheon of the *TulkuDrakpaGyaltsen* who is the reincarnation of the disciple of the 2nd Dalai Lama, *Panchen SonamDrakpain* 1478-1554. In the *trikāya* system, without doubt, he is recognized as the *Nirmanakāya* of the Buddha. This *tulku*, socially, is the teacher or even master who must still, after death, be respected as the teacher by his disciples. Moreover, the social roles of deities are discussed in terms of their service to society, as border guardians. For example, they will prevent hostile foreigners from entering the Forbidden Land or as the guardians of the holy places of pilgrimage.

Nevertheless, the spiritual status and role of the Tibetan deity can be that of a refuge. The role of the deity is complex because it also connects the concept of the *tulku* to the bodhisattva idea and the *trikāya* system. The deities, the pantheon - and the *sambhogakaya*- of the *Tulku*, is considered as one who has taken the bodhisattva vow to be reborn in the *samsaric* world

¹⁴ Op.cit., Brück, Michael von.

in order to save sentient beings.¹⁵ The *Tulku* is a Buddhist monk who is a part of the *triratana* or who is even recognized as the *Nirmanakāya* of the Buddha. Therefore, in this sense, the deities may be understood as a refuge. For the Gelukpa monk, he is considered as an emanation of *Manjushri*, the great Buddha of *Vajrayāna*. Therefore, after death, he is still considered as possessing the same status. This may lead to him being understood as a part of the *triratna* which in turn leads to him taking on the status of a refuge. Yet even with this elevated status, followers will still request mundanefavours as well as taking refuge in the deeper spiritual sense of the *triratnasaranam*. Paul Williams states that,

Basically it seems to me that what we are dealing with here is a controversy between Traditionalists and Modernisers. Like all Dharma Protectors DorjeShugden is a fierce figure who unusually however appears in the form of a Gelugpa monk. He is considered by some of his followers to be an emanation of Manjushri, although others (including I think the New Kadampa Tradition) appear to consider him to be a fully enlightened Buddha of whom Manjushri is himself an emanation. The Dalai Lama, on the other hand, considers DorjeShugden to be simply a worldly deity—a figure of great power but no intrinsic spirituality—of doubtful reliability and not a Buddha at all, or even a bodhisattva. Thus as regards the doctrinal dispute, for one side it is a matter of relying on a Buddha, albeit an apparently rather fierce Buddha; for the other if they take refuge in a worldly deity then this is to abandon taking refuge solely in the Buddha and thus to abandon the very definition

¹⁵ Ray, Reginald A. "Some Aspects of the *Tulku* Tradition in Tibet ", *The Tibet Journal* 11 No. 4, 1986, pp. 36-44.

of being a Buddhist. From such a perspective if one is not careful this could easily degenerate into a Buddhist version of demon-worship.¹⁶

The complexity of the conceptualization of the external status and roles of the Tibetan deities suggests that the comprehension of deities may be differentiated based on the interpretation of the viewers. The deities may be classified as high-level beings and even as part of the Buddhist refuge, but they may also be classified simply as minor worldly deities.

Internal Status and Role:

In its internal status, and role of the deity is as the *Sambhogakāya* or the 'Yidam'.¹⁷ *Yidams* are supra-mundane beings. They are beyond any conceptualization and they have the function of personal tutelary deities; they are nothing other than the radiation of universal Buddha consciousness or Buddha nature.¹⁸ The *Yidam* plays a significant role in meditative practice. It exists throughout all the levels of meditation, eventually leading to the highest goal of meditative practice which is achievement of the *Dharmakāya* (emptiness). However, the different schools of Tibetan Buddhism vary in how they regard the practice of the *yidam* deity. For the new *Sarma* school and particularly the *Sakya* school, one has to keep connecting to the particular *yidam* via daily mantra recitation. Meanwhile, *Tulku Ugyen Rinpoche* says that

¹⁶ Williams, Paul. *A Quick Note on Dorje Shugden* (RdoRjeShugsLdan) University of Bristol 1996 Available from http://info-buddhism.com/dorje_shugden_note_Paul_Williams.html, [cited 16th May 2009].

¹⁷ Op.cit., Brück, Michael von.

¹⁸ Ibid.

just as in the deity practice, if one realizes one Buddha, an individual can automatically realize all other Buddhas at the same time.¹⁹

Deity meditation involves three contemplative techniques which lead to realization of the three bodies of the *trikāya* system. They are; meditation on suchness, meditation on illumination and meditation on the seed syllable. The suchness meditation leads to realization of the *dharmakāya*, the illumination meditation leads to the *sambhogakāya* (endowed with all major and minor marks of the Buddha) and the meditation on the seed syllable leads to realization of the *nirmanakāya*. The deity plays an important role in all these forms. In the first, the deity is used as the object of visualization. In the meditation on illumination which is also called as the ‘magical meditation’, the practitioner experiences compassion as well as experience the deities as the body of the Buddha. In the third meditation, the seed syllable is the source of the entire *mandala* of deities.²⁰

In the nine-*yāna* practice of *Nyingma* tradition,²¹ the fourth *yāna*, *Kriyayoga-yāna* (the purification of the practitioners’ body, speech and mind) the deity acts as master and the practitioner as servant. The deity is visualized as exterior to oneself and is worshipped as such. In the fifth *yāna*, *Upayoga-yāna*, the deity is still external, but more closely on a level with the practitioner, as friend or helper. In the sixth *yāna*, *yoga-yāna*, at the level of absolute truth, all phenomena are free of conceptualization and are empty

¹⁹ Schmidt, Marcia Binder, **Dzogchen Essentials: The Path That Clarified Confusion**, Translated by Erick PemaKunsang. Boudhanath, Hong Kong RangjungYeshe Publication, 2004, p. 216.

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 158-163.

²¹ The Dzogchen teachings are the highest of the nine *yāna*, (Tibetan *theg pa*, vehicle) of the *Nyingma* school of Tibetan Buddhism and the Tibetan *Bön* (bon) tradition. Many lamas, particularly of the *Nyingma* and *Kagyū* schools, regard them as the most profound teachings altogether.

and luminous. In this *yāna*, one visualizes oneself as the deity and all phenomena are equal. In the seventh *yāna*, *Mahāyoga-yāna* (the masculine principle), all manifestations, thoughts and appearances are accepted as the essence of mind and as the *Dharmakāya*. All phenomena are seen as the essence of the deities. However, in the eighth *yāna*, *Anuyoga-yāna* (the feminine principle), the deity visualization is not so much emphasized. In the ninth *yāna*, *Atiyoga-yāna* (nonduality of masculine and feminine principles), all entities are the same and are pure in the *Dharmakāya*.²²

The *KriyāTantra* of the *Mādhyamika* involves the generation of self into a deity and leads to realization of the *Sambhogakāya*. The two realities, the Self Reality (*ātma-tattva*) and the God Reality (*devatā-tattva*) of the practitioner will generate the six gods or deities. They are Reality God (*tattva-devatā*), the sound God (*śabda-devatā*), the Letter God (*akṣara-devatā*), the Form God (*rūpa-devatā*), the Seal God (*mudrā-devatā*) and the Sign-God (*nimitta-devatā*). Thereby the practitioner becomes a manifestly complete Buddha.²³ *Mingyur Rinpoche* also says that, to be really effective, *yidam* practice must be based upon a significant understanding of emptiness. *Yidam* practice supports the practitioner in achieving the qualities, *kāyas* and wisdom of the Buddhahood; it also leads to attainment of the *dharmakāya* of all Buddhas. Deity practice is a way to acknowledge and remind one of the natures of deity.²⁴ *Mingyur Rinpoche* says that this is how *Yidam* practice and *Guru yoga*

can actually bestow blessings which bring about, not only the ordinary states of spiritual attainment but also the sublime attainment of enlightenment itself. But if you practice a deity meditation without applying the guru yoga principle, then you

²² Ray, Reginald A, *Indestructible Truth: The Living Spirituality of Tibetan Buddhism*, Boston & London: Shambhala Publication, 2001., pp. 120-127.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 29-35.

²⁴ *Op.cit.*, Schmidt, Marcia Binder, pp. 139-141.

merely gain the ordinary benefits of longevity, health, and prosperity. The ultimate attainment of enlightenment through *yidam* practice is gained only by realizing that the *yidam*, the guru and one's own mind are in essence indivisible.²⁵

In conclusion, to answer the question of why the status of the deities can be equal to the *triratnas* because the status and role of the Tibetan deities are connected to the *tulku* tradition and also to the *trikāya* system. Externally, the deities exist in two classes: the class of enlightened beings such as Buddhas and bodhisattvas and the class of non-enlightened beings. They constitute the *sambhogakāya* in the *trikāya* system. The deities of both classes are involved with their worshippers socially and spiritually as providers of wealth and security, as teachers, protectors, guardians, advisers and even as a kind of refuge. Internally, the status and roles of the deities are concerned with internal spiritual attainment. They play a significant role in the practice of meditation and in the achievement of the *dharmakāya*. In other words, at the beginning of meditation, they are the objects of visualization outside the body. Thereafter, when meditators become one with them, they are the internal *sambhogakāya* endowed with all the marks of the Buddha. At this level they constitute a far deeper level of refuge and significantly they lead to the realization of the *dharmakāya* or emptiness.

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BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVES ON INTERFAITH RELATIONS

Ven. Piseth Sek*

ABSTRACT

Religions should not be the tool to divide people, but should be used to bring unity. In this sense, there should be an urgent call for every follower of different beliefs to come and discuss together to avoid misunderstanding among religions. This is when people, regardless of religions, work to promote interreligious relations and mutual understandings. As we like to put it, we are working to encourage interfaith relations. In the case of interfaith relations, Buddhism should be one of the tools to bring the people of different faiths closer. Buddha has been a great role model of interreligious work. So are some understanding Buddhists today. If we want to unite people from different faiths, Buddhism should have its place in the interfaith work.

Keywords; Interfaith relations, Metta

Introduction

The term “Interfaith” has been widely used among religious scholars who work to promote interreligious understanding. However, some basic religious followers, especially those in the remote parts of some countries, such as Cambodia and Thailand, are not very familiar with this word—let alone the concepts of the word. I myself—then was a four-years student—heard and understood the word and its concepts very shortly before I joined the writing competition on “Interfaith relations and Higher Education”. So I find it useful to define the term “Interfaith Relations” Tess Kelley defined “interfaith”

* USA

shortly as “Inter” means between or among and “faith” is a complete trust, commonly used in religious context¹

Interfaith relation is the interaction or communication among or across different religions or beliefs. It is when people from different religions or beliefs come to work together without religious bias, regardless of religious backgrounds and beliefs in order to find more peace for all people as a whole. Interfaith relations occur when people from Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, and many other faiths can live and work together without conflicts based on religious bias. Interfaith work is about a lot of things: peace and justice, community and friendship, conversation and action.²

The goal of interfaith work, according to Kelly, is to create common experiences and to understand the individuality of perspectives on those experiences in light of beliefs. Kelly believes that every [religious] perspective is welcome to the conversation.

In the absence of conversations and mutual understandings, conflicts can happen among and between religions and beliefs. Thus, interfaith relation is very important for the peace and harmony in today world. Buddhism also share a great deal of perspectives on the religious harmony and interfaith relations.

In this short article, I will seek to explain some basic perspectives from the Buddha’s teachings related to interfaith work, and how Buddhist people should act toward other non-Buddhists.

Buddha and other Religions

There were about 62 different religions in India in the time of Buddha³. But the Buddha was not against any single religion. He did not provoke hatreds toward those with different beliefs than his. Instead, he felt so compassionate toward all

¹ Illinois Wesleyan University, 2013-2014, p6.

² Illinois Wesleyan, p1.

³ Dr. K. Sri Dhammananda, 1994, p4.

people - his disciples and the followers of other religions equally alike. He treated them as fellow human being, not his opposition. He treated them as brothers and sisters, relatives and friends, not enemies. His loving kindness is not only for his followers, but for all human beings.

On many different occasions, the Buddha was asked what religion was the good religion. Instead of saying his religion was the best, he gave some remarkable points which could be the clues showing that Buddha himself was not against other religions. In fact, he was so open-minded to other faiths.

One day, on his deathbed, very shortly before he passed away, a young man, named Sappadda, approached him. After finding his seat and asking how the Buddha was, Sappadda started the important conversation with the Buddha. The young man asked the Buddha that “O Lord, many people, particularly some famous religious teachers, said they are also the enlightened ones, and their religions were superior to those of others. Is that true?”

The Buddha did not make the problem worse. He told the man to forget that. He then said “Sappadda, where the eightfold paths are taught—no matter what the religious labels are—there should be the path to liberation and salvation.” What the Buddha wanted to say here is that the truth is not secular. It does not belong to any particular religion. We can see from here that the Buddha was so tolerant to others who hold different beliefs. This young man, in fact, was not a Buddhist, but the Buddha talked to him so gently. The Buddha did not discriminate against this young man just because of the fact that he was from other religion. Instead, he welcomed him so warmly, and the lord talked to him just he talked to his disciples.

The Buddha had worked very hard to promote religious understanding and interfaith relations. He encouraged his followers to have compassion towards all beings, regardless of their religions or sects. He himself was a great example.

Once the Buddha was challenged by a disciple of Nigantha Nataputta, whose name was Upali.⁴ After some time of hard talks, Upala agreed that the Buddha's view was right, and his teacher's was wrong. He then decided to become a disciple of the Buddha. However, instead of accepting him immediately, the Buddha asked him three times for reconsidering his decisions. Upali said he had decided correctly. Then the Buddha accepted him as one of his disciple. The Buddha did not tell him to forget his old religious teacher, but the Lord sincerely requested him to respect and support that teacher as he used to.

Here, the Buddha valued other religious teachers so much that he did not ban his followers from respecting other teachers. In addition, in Mangala Sutta, he advised his disciples to respect and worship those people who are worthy of respects and worships, regardless of religions.

In many different places and occasions, he was asked to shared his views on the other religions. He, as always, did not claim that his teaching alone was correct, but he tried to find the good parts of others, too. This is to show Buddha was the one supporting interreligious work and conversations.

Buddhists and interfaith perspectives

The good Buddhists who truly follow the Buddha's teachings does not act against the followers of other religions. They do not see other religionist as a threat or enemies, but friends. Only those Buddhist who claim they are followers of the Buddha, but fail to study and practice what the Buddha taught may act against or inflict religious conflicts against non-Buddhists. However, there are only few of them. In general, good Buddhists exercise their loving-kindness to all regardless of religions.

⁴ Rahula, 1959, p4.

King Asoka, the great Buddhist Emperor of India in the third century, honored and supported all other religions in his empire (Rahula,1959, p4). He believed and declared his edicts caved on rock that “One should not honor only one’s own religions and condemn the religions of others, but one should honor others’ religions for this or that reason”⁵

We can see here that the King was very open-minded toward all religions. He advised people not to look down on the religions of others. In addition, he told us to honor others’ religions because they are also good people. Good people are to be respected no matter what religions they believe in. We cannot say that only Buddhists are good and the followers of other religions are not. There are good people in all nations and religions.

King Asoka believed that doing so, one helps one’s own religion to grow and renders service to the religions of others too (Rahula, 1959, p4). His belief is exactly correct and true. When people from different beliefs respect each other and do good to each other, they are respecting and practicing their own religions because all religions tell the followers to do good to all being, regardless of beliefs. This is very necessary for the followers of the Buddha. They are supposed to have Metta to all being. Metta means Universal Loves. So good Buddhists loves the followers of other religions as their relatives.

King Asoka can be a very good example of Buddhists who work to promote interfaith relations. He, as a Buddhist king, did not force his people to believe in Buddhism. Instead, he encouraged them to practice what they believe.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama is another example. He has done many great deals of interfaith work. He has participated in many interreligious dialogues and done many talks in the aims of promoting interfaith relations.

We Buddhists believe that regions should be used to support and help people, and not to create conflicts. Religions should be used to separate us from

⁵ Rahula, p4.

others fellow human being. Dr.S.N. Goenka, in one of his great talks, in the Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and spiritual leaders, mentioned that “religion is religion only when it unites. Religion is no more religion when it divides.” “Religion is not for dividing people; it is for uniting people.”

Buddhism as a religion play very important roles to unite people if we truly follow the footsteps of the Buddha. The Universal Loves or Compassionate Love (Metta) as taught by the Buddha is key to uniting all people in terms of insight peace and mutual understanding. “Equality, brotherhood, tolerance, understanding, respect for others’ views, respect for others’ religions, all have their roots in Compassionate Love”⁶

Metta—if correctly learnt and practiced—is one of the best parts of Buddha’s teaching that leads to interreligious understandings and interfaith work. Buddhists are supposed to live by Metta and tolerance so that they open-minded when it comes to interfaith relations.

Buddhists should not claim to be religious people only when they pray and perform religious services or ceremonies. If any Buddhists fail to exercise Metta toward themselves and others, including non-Buddhists, and use violence instead, they are not true Buddhist people. “Buddha tried to open our minds to understand things perfectly without developing fanatical religious beliefs and discrimination”⁷

There is no need to convert other people to Buddhism. The Buddha himself never encouraged his disciples to convert people to his teachings. He just advised them show what is right and what is wrong. Moreover, the Buddha and his followers “do not condemn the followers of other religionists as sinners who are doomed to spend an eternity in hell”⁸

⁶ Dr. K. Sri Dhammananda, 1994, p20.

⁷ Dr. K. Sri Dhammananda, 1994, p15.

⁸ Dr. K. Sri Dhammananda, 1994, p26.

According to Dr. K. Sri Dhammananda (1994), there are good individuals in every religion and faith. So no one should say that good people exist only in his or her religion. With this in mind, good Buddhists should never act against people of different faiths, but they should respect and worship those worthy of respects—inside of outside of Buddhism alike. “Although we may not agree with certain religious points of view they hold,” Dr. K Sri Dhammananda continued, “if they are sincere in their efforts to serve humanity and uplift it, we must respect them for it.”

Conclusion

If properly understood and practiced, Buddhism can be one of the best religions working for interfaith relations. Many great Buddhists, now and then, worked and had been working to bring people together as brothers and sisters, neighbors and relatives. There no single true buddhist who understands the teaching of the Buddha as its reality acts against other faiths. If there is one, he or she is acting against the teachings of Buddhism. He or she is not a true disciple of the Buddha because he or she acts against Buddha’s wishes.

Religions, particularly Buddhism, should not be used to separate people, no matter what the reasons are. So long as ones declare themselves Buddhists they should never ever discriminate against the followers of other religions because there is no single part of the teachings of the Buddha means to divide people based on races or beliefs, but his Dharma is for uniting all people. Buddha himself worded so hard to unite people in the time of divisions. He allowed the people from walks of life to enjoy his teaching. He advised his followers to respect people in other religions if those people honestly work for the benefits of human beings. In his word, they are truly worthy of our respects and worship.

It is highly recommended that every Buddhist learn more about Buddhism and those who already have should put they have learned into practice. There should be more unity among the different schools of Buddhism. Buddhism is not about Mahayana or Theravada; it is about unity. We might have different ceremonies, rites and rituals, because we have different cultures and traditions, but the teaching of the Buddha stays unchanged for us. Its aim is to help us live in the world led by Metta and tolerance. If we truly respect the Buddha, we should also fulfil his wish by respecting other people in other religions. Hatred should not have its place in Buddhism. Love only should prevail.

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EXPANDING BUDDHISM IN NEW ZEALAND

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ABSTRACT

New Zealand is a multi-ethnic country, which has many different national origins. The most of New Zealanders are Europeans and Maoris. Other major ethnic groups are Asian and Pacific people. English is the predominant language in New Zealand, spoken by 98 percent of the population. Under half of the population are Christians and non-religious. Buddhism is New Zealand's third largest religion standing at 1.5% of the population of New Zealand. Buddhism originates in Asia and was introduced to New Zealand by immigrants from East Asia. There are many Buddhist temples, Associations (cooperating with Buddhist communities) and centres in New Zealand for New Zealand Buddhists to practice their religion. The largest one is FoGuang Shan Temple in Auckland. The International Buddhist Centre is the major one in Christchurch's Riccarton Road opened in 2007. The Buddhist followers try to make Buddhist programs in New Zealand in two main purposes:

1) To protect the Buddhism and educate Buddhist people: Buddhist programs are made in each community to teach the Buddhist people and their children to know the Buddhism and get more Buddhist knowledge. Buddhist monks play an important role to make regularly educational programmes in their temple or centres on the weekend or Buddhist holidays to give the good service to the Buddhists. The Buddhists in New Zealand are from the Buddhist country in Asia, so they always make Buddhist programs by connecting to their own traditions.

2) To expand the Buddhism in new country: According to value of the Buddha's teachings and Vipassana Meditation, the people from non-

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Buddhist countries in the west knew the real Buddhism and converted themselves to the Buddhists. They cooperated directly to the Buddhist centres in Buddhist countries to open new Buddhist centres to practise Vipassana Meditation. They open the Buddhist centres to give a chance to people in New Zealand to the real value of the Buddhism.

According to the freedom of religions and faiths in New Zealand, the Buddhist followers protect and expand the Buddhism in four ways:

1) Uniting people in communities: They gather together on the weekend or traditional ceremony. All ceremonies of Buddhist communities are held to meet each other, protect their own tradition and practise the Buddhist tradition as their own native.

2) Opening the associations, temples and centres: Buddhists always use them to meet, teach the Buddha's teachings, practise the meditation and celebrate their own traditional ceremonies.

3) Inviting the Buddhist monks or Buddhist specialists from their own countries to work in Associations, temples or Centres.

4) Opening the special centre to practise directly the Vipassana Meditation: This centre is controlled by the Group of Vipassana Practitioners. They have been working for the special mission. They are good at English and Vipassana practising. The centre is opened to welcome all people with different natives, religions and faiths to practise Vipassana Meditation, which taught by the Buddha.

As conclusion, The Buddhism in New Zealand is practised in two forms. They are traditional form and global form. These forms of practising the Buddhism have not influence strongly to New Zealand's citizens yet.

Introduction

Buddhists follow the teachings of the Buddha, who lived in the Indian sub-continent between four and six centuries BC. Through meditation, ethical livelihood and other practices, Buddhists aim to end the cycle of suffering and rebirth and achieve Nibbana, a perfectly peaceful state of mind.

1. History of Buddhism in New Zealand

Buddhism is one of the major religions in the world. It began around 2,500 years ago in India when Siddhattha discovered how to bring happiness into the world. He was born around 566 BC, in the small kingdom of Kapilavatthu. Buddhism is not learning about strange beliefs from faraway lands. It is about looking at and thinking about our own lives. It shows us how to understand ourselves and how to cope with our daily problems.

The first Buddhists in New Zealand were Chinese diggers in the Otago goldfields in the 1860s. Their numbers were small, and the 1926 census, the first to include Buddhism, recorded only 169. In the 1970s travel to Asian countries and visits by Buddhist teachers sparked an interest in the religious traditions of Asia, and significant numbers of New Zealanders adopted Buddhist practices and teachings.

Since the 1980s Asian migrants and refugees have established their varied forms of Buddhism in New Zealand. In the 2010s more than 50 groups, mostly in the Auckland region, offered different Buddhist traditions at temples, centres, monasteries and retreat centres. Many migrant communities brought priests or religious specialists from their own countries and their temples and centres have acted as focal points for a particular ethnic community, offering language and religious instruction.

In 2008 the Sixth Global Conference on Buddhism brought leading teachers and scholars to Auckland under the auspices of the New Zealand

Buddhist Foundation. The Buddhist Council of New Zealand, established in 2007, comprised 15 Buddhist organisations engaging with local and national government over issues of concern to Buddhist communities. These included trying to make it easier for Buddhist priests and teachers from overseas to live and work in New Zealand.

2. General Overview of the Buddha's Teachings

The Buddha's teachings are the powerful and potential principles to solve all problems, which happened on us. After enlightening, the Buddha realized the cause of suffering and how to remove it. He had gained the most supreme wisdom and understood things as they truly are. Whenever the Buddha went, he won the hearts of the people because he dealt with their true feelings. He advised them not to accept his words on blind faith, but to decide for themselves whether his teachings are right or wrong, then follow them. He encouraged everyone to have compassion for each other and develop their own virtue. On the Buddha's lifetime, he taught his basic teachings to human beings to attain liberation from suffering for oneself alone and how to attain full enlightenment. These supreme methods are called Dhammas. During his enlightenment, The Buddha spread the Dhammas, his teachings, with the great potential and powerful, is called the basic teachings.

The Buddha's basic teachings, which he taught by the supreme methods, refer to the major Dhammas as followings:

2.1 Three universal truths: Aniccalakkhana: nothing is lost in the universe, Dukkhalakkhana: everything changes, Anattalakkhana: the law of cause and effect.

2.2 The four noble truths: 1. Dukkha: sufferings, 2. Samudaya: the cause of suffering, 3. Nirodha: the end of Suffering, 4. Magga: The path to end suffering.

2.3 The noble eight paths: 1. Right View 2. Right Thought 3. Right Speech 4. Right Concentration 5. Right Livelihood 6. Right Effort 7. Right Mindfulness 8. Right Conduct.

2.4 The law of dependent origination or the chain of causation

(Paticca-samuppada): The series, which is usually described as a chain of 12 links (*nidanas*, “causes”), consists of: (1) ignorance (*Avijja*), specifically ignorance of the Four Noble Truths, of the nature of humanity, of transmigration, and of Nibbana. (2) Faulty thought-constructions of reality (*Sankhara*) (3) knowledge (*vinnana*). (4) Name and form, the principle of individual identity (*Nama-Rupa*) and the sensory perception of an object. (5) The six domains (*Ayatana*), the five senses and their objects and the mind as the coordinating organ of sense impressions. (6) Contact (*Phassa*) (7) sensation (*Vedana*), which this sensation is agreeable. (8) Thirst (*Tanha*) (9) grasping (*Upadana*), as of sexual partners. (10) The process of becoming (*Bhava*). (11) Birth (*Jati*) of the individual (12) Old age and death (*Jaramarana*).

2.5 Vipassana Meditation:

Vipassana means ‘seeing things as they really are’. It is one of India’s most ancient techniques of meditation, which was taught more than 2500 years ago by the Buddha. The Buddha taught People to practise Vipassana to reduce stress, calms the mind and increases inner peace. People found that during the practice of meditation the body has what they call the relaxation response, which gives the body deep rest that is deeper than the rest from sleep. They also found that through regular meditation that deep rest builds up in the body over time, and it is that deepening reservoir of rest that reduces stress and results in the many benefits of meditation. It can lower blood pressure, cholesterol and the risk of heart disease and stroke, can help relieve stress, depression, insomnia, sleeplessness, anxiety and worry, and can increase productivity, learning, happiness, wellbeing and inner peace. They meditated regularly because it still helped them better manage and balance our lives. If you invite too much stress into your life you will be stressed out even if you meditate. When you behave badly towards others that also creates stress in your life, indeed. So

meditate regularly, but remember that to have a happy, balanced life you must also be honest, do a good job at whatever you do, and treat others the way you want them to treat you.

Methods of Expanding the Buddhism in New Zealand

Now the practising the Buddha's teachings are running well in New Zealand. There are many different types of practising Buddhism in the world and New Zealand under many different names by many different groups, countries or schools. Today, there are two main schools of Buddhism, Theravada and Mahayana. According to the Theravada-tradition, Buddhist practices leads to insight in the Four Noble Truths, which can only be reached by practising the Noble Eightfold Path. According to Theravada tradition enlightenment or Nibbana can only be attained by discerning all Vipassana insight levels when the Eightfold Noble Path is followed ardently. This is a developmental process where various Vipassana insights are discerned and the final enlightenment may come suddenly as proposed by other schools. Theravada is practiced mainly in southern Asian countries such as Sri Lanka, Thailand, Myanmar (Burma), Lao and Cambodia. Mahayana stresses following the Buddha's example of going out into the world and doing good. Mahayana means 'Great Vehicle'. The goal in Mahayana Buddhism is to follow the Bodhisattva Path. A Bodhisattva is one who enlightens oneself as well as others. In Mahayana Buddhism, there are many Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. It mainly spread to northern Asian countries like China, Tibet, Korea, Vietnam and Japan. The most important Buddha's teaching is: "Do no evil, do only good and the last purifying our heart." Recently, both Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism have been introduced into the West include New Zealand.

1. Theravada Buddhism

The Buddhism of Myanmar (Burma), Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Sri Lanka is known as Theravada Buddhism (meaning ‘path of the elders’). In 2003 the Auckland Khmer (Cambodian) Buddhist Association opened a temple and centre in Takanini, and others later opened in Māngere, Wellington and Hamilton. Theravada Buddhist members of the Thai community opened temples in Wellington, Auckland and Christchurch. The first Sri Lankan Buddhist temple opened in ōtāhuhu, Auckland, in 1999. It was joined by the DhammaGavesi Meditation Centre in Tawa, serving more than 500 families in the Wellington area. Bodhinyanarama monastery in Stokes Valley, near Wellington, was established in the mid-1980s and taught Buddhism in a monastic setting. Its affiliated centres were the Auckland Buddhist Vihara in Mt Wellington, Auckland, and the Vimutti Buddhist Monastery, founded in 1980 in Bombay, South Auckland.

2. Mahayana Buddhism

The Buddhism of East Asia is known as Mahayana (‘the great path’). The Vietnamese Buddhist Association has its own distinctive pagoda temple, GiacNhien, in ōtāhuhu, Auckland. The largest Buddhist temple in New Zealand, FoGuang Shan in East Tāmaki Heights, Auckland, opened in 2007. It was built in a Chinese style and promoted ‘humanistic Buddhism’. There was also a FoGuang Shan centre in Christchurch and the Buddha’s Light Association for younger members. Another major Auckland Chinese Buddhist temple was the Tsi Ming Temple in Greenlane.

2.1. Teaching Zen

Sensei AmalaWrightson is an Auckland-born Zen priest and teacher of a branch of Japanese Zen Buddhism. She and her husband began Zen practice after attending a workshop in Sweden in 1982. She later trained as a teacher in the US and founded the Auckland Zen Centre in 2003.

The Foundation for the Preservation of Mahayana Buddhism (FPMT) is an international organisation with more than 100 centres around the world. In New Zealand FPMT has run the Amitabha Hospice in Avondale, Auckland, since 1995. It also runs the Mahamudra Centre, a retreat centre started in the 1980s near Colville, Coromandel; the Dorje Chang Institute for Wisdom Culture in Avondale, Auckland; and the Chandrakirti meditation centre in Nelson.

2.2. Zen Buddhism

The Auckland Zen Centre was established by AmalaWrightson in 2003 to teach the Japanese Zen Buddhism tradition. It was later joined by a number of other Zen centres and the Korean Buddhist community.

2.3. Tibetan Buddhism

A third Buddhist strand is the traditions of Tibet. The best-known Tibetan Buddhist is the Dalai Lama, the Nobel peace laureate who has visited New Zealand on several occasions and addressed capacity crowds in Auckland and Wellington. The first teachers of Tibetan Buddhism came to New Zealand in the 1970s and by the 2010s a number of centres promoted particular Tibetan teachings and traditions.

The Dhargyey Buddhist Centre began in Dunedin in 1984 and later opened centres in Whāngārei and Christchurch. These offered teaching and practices following the Tibetan traditions of the Dalai Lama's Gelug School, as did the TrashiGomang Centre in Māngere, Auckland.

Diamond Way Buddhism is part of an international network of meditation centres following the Karma Kagyu traditions of Tibetan Buddhism. The Auckland group was established in 2008. There are also centres in Wellington, Golden Bay, Rangiora and Christchurch. The Compassion Buddhist Centre in Christchurch is part of the New Kadampa Tradition, as is the Bodh Gaya Centre in Wellington. The Shambhala Buddhist Meditation Centre in Auckland is part of an international organisation teaching Tibetan Buddhist meditation.

2.4. Other types of Buddhism

The Triratna Buddhist Community (formerly the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order) offered a ‘non-sectarian style of Buddhism’ at centres including the Auckland Buddhist Centre in Grey Lynn, Auckland; the Wellington Buddhist Centre; and Sundarshanaloka (Land of the Beautiful Vision), a retreat centre near Thames on the Coromandel Peninsula.

SokaGakkai International (SGI) is part of an international Buddhist organisation originating in Japan. The New Zealand group was founded in 1975, and in 2016 had around 1,500 members.

How to Protect and Expand the Buddhism in New Zealand

1. How to Protect the Buddhism in Buddhist Communities

The laity is very important in Buddhism, for they are the supporting members of the Buddhist community. They unite the people around their communities as a group or ask for permitting to make associations. Then, they build the temples and monasteries and give offerings of food, robes, bedding, and medicine to the monks and nuns. This enables the Sangha to carry on the Buddha's work. In this way the Sangha and laity benefit each other and together keep the Dharma alive.

A day in a temple begins early for monks and nuns. Long before daybreak, they attend morning ceremony and chant praises to the Buddha. The ceremonies lift one's spirit and bring about harmony. Although the Sangha lead simple lives, they have many responsibilities to fulfill. Everyone works diligently and is content with his or her duties.

During the day, some monks and nuns go about teaching in schools or speaking the Buddha's teachings. Others may revise and translate Buddhist Sutras and books, make Buddha images, take care of the temple and gardens, prepare for ceremonies, give advice to laypeople, and care for the elders and

those who are sick. The day ends with a final evening ceremony. In the daily life of work and religious practice, the monks and nuns conduct themselves properly and are highly respected. By leading a pure, simple life, they gain extraordinary insight into the nature of things. Although their life is hard and rigorous, the results are worth it. It also keeps them healthy and energetic. The laity, who lives in the temple or visits, follows the same schedule as the Sangha and works along with them.

In Buddhism, it is also important to support the poor and needy. Giving to support religious people, however, is considered a very meritorious deed. The Buddha not only encouraged giving to Buddhists, but to any spiritual person who is sincere.

The Buddha taught his disciples to be tolerant of other religions. For example, when one lights a candle from the flame of another candle, the flame of the first candle does not lose its light. Instead, the two lights glow more brightly together. It is the same with the great religions of the world. Whether one is a member of the Sangha or a lay person, the ideal is to practice Buddhism for the sake of all.

2. How to expand the Buddhism in New Zealand

The early 20th century, many Europeans had travelled to the East to study Buddhism. Some of them became monks and inspired Buddhism in the West. In the 19th century, Chinese and Japanese immigrants brought many different traditions of Buddhism to New Zealand too. Today, there are numerous Buddhist centres spread across New Zealand. There are two main ways of expanding Buddhism in New Zealand:

2.1 Traditional way: this way refers to the activities of Buddhist followers in each community. They build the temples or centres in their communities to practise their traditions and Buddhism. They just invite the Buddhist monks from their native countries to live and work.

2.2 Global way: Some Buddhist centres in New Zealand have given to the all people with different natives, religions and faiths to learn the buddha's teachings or practise the Vipassana Meditation. At the Centre the Buddhists can:

- Explore a new way of looking at the world that is in accord with the ways things actually are.
- Learn practices and lifestyles to help buddhists develop and maintain a more positive and clearer mind.
- Enjoy the supportive and understanding friendship of like-minded people.

The Future of Buddhism in New Zealand

New Zealand is not the Buddhist country, but we believe and have confident of the Buddhism growth in the future. The value of the Buddha's teachings and the activities of all different Buddhist followers in New Zealand are the powerful elements of Buddhism growth. It is the same speed of growth in all developed countries in the world. In July 2010 a copy of the Dhammapada, a collection of traditional Buddhist teachings, was given to the New Zealand Parliament. The book was presented by Buddhist monks and nuns including Ajahn Tiradhammo, abbot of Bodhinyanarama monastery in Stokes Valley, Tibetan monk Geshe Wangchen and Bhante Jinalankara, abbot at Tawa's Dhamma Gavesi Meditation Centre. The teachings were translated into English by Ajahn Munindo, a Buddhist abbot born in Te Awamutu. Practising Buddhist Parliamentarians included Labour MP Darien Fenton. Now there are some New Zealander practiced the Vipassana Meditation and learned the buddha's teachings. Some of them converted to Buddhism and are responsible for all events in the Buddhist centres. Those centres link to the Buddhist centres in the world. There are regular classes for newcomers to Buddhism and meditation, as well as a programme of other classes, events,

retreats, festivals and study seminars for those with more experience. This is a main example of the potential Buddhism growth. The Buddhists from over the world have to unite as the strong group without caring about the different groups, countries or schools. They should make the world Buddhist conference every year by inviting all Buddhist followers with different schools and Buddhist specialists from over the world to join it. Then, they should set the Buddhist conference in their own local. The Buddhism growth is not the real purpose of the Buddhist followers, but the peaceful life and happiness, which got from the Buddha's teachings, are. In New Zealand, the effective works will happen after linking the Buddhist works to the communities, universities, socials and the world. All Buddhist followers from the different schools, different centers, different monasteries and different communities should unite as one group in New Zealand. Then, they link their activities to the public to understand the value of the Buddhism. To reach to goal of Buddhism, which mean the goal of peaceful life and happiness, it focuses on the understanding the Buddha's teachings and practicing the Vipassana Meditation.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL TRENDS IN BUDDHISM

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ABSTRACT

In this paper a study has been made to bring to light the philosophical truths found in Buddhism, an atheistic religion in the world. Originally, the Buddha was a social reformer and an ethical teacher. He refused to answer to the metaphysical queries, but preserved silence to all intellectual inquiries, since they would never serve the purpose in alleviating the afflictions of mankind. His primary concern was to remove the sufferings of mankind and his ultimate concern was to make man absolutely free from any kind of painful existence, which experience is known as the state of nirvana. Buddha was considered as the first analytic thinker in the philosophical circle since he analysed the cause for suffering carefully and systematically without any conscious philosophical activity. In the absence of an absolute being called God and a permanent substance called soul the Buddha was successful in establishing a religion without metaphysical speculations. However, in his approach in analysing the cause for suffering through twelve links, he gave room for certain unique philosophical ideologies such as the theory of momentariness (ksanikavada), theory of no soul (nairatmyavada), law of karma, the famous middle path etc.

All his preaching have been edited and codified as Pitaka works. After his departure from this mortal coil as an immortal and enlightened person, his profound wisdom withstood the test of time and the socio-political climates. Especially his final utterance viz. 'be a light unto yourself and work

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out your salvation diligently’ provoked the thinking of the wisdom seekers and opened the floodgates of rational skills among his followers. That statement was interpreted in a two-fold way particularly the term ‘your’ was interpreted as ‘my-self alone’ and the entire ‘humanity’. Based on this division emerged two broader philosophical sections known as Mahayana and Hinayana. Under these two sections four major philosophical schools were developed, two to each section, known as Madhyamika, Yogacara, Sautrantika and Vaibhasika. Though each school vary in their philosophical standpoint and criticise the other schools from logical perspective before establishing their Truths, each school relied firmly on the original teachings of the Master as the real source materials, of course with a manifold interpretations. Thus the true teachings of the Master resulted in multifarious truths both implicitly and explicitly.

The net result of these doctrinal expositions of scholars resulted in the organisation of several conferences dealing with clinching arguments, worthwhile debates and powerful discussions and Buddhism as a religious philosophy. Buddha was made as a God of worship who would grant solace to the earthly tormented souls, five different subjective qualities known as the skandhas were substituted for the soul, several monasteries were constructed all over the globe to preserve, promote, protect and patronize the ideals and practices of Buddhism. In the academic world also this school of thought was included in the curriculum to infuse the vision and mission of Buddhism.

Keywords; Noble truths, Enlightenment, Nirvana, Suffering, Middle path, Hinayana, Mahayana, Philosophical Schools, Monasteries, Compassion, Wisdom

Introduction

It is a universal truth that Gautama the Buddha, the ‘Enlightened Person’ did not build any system of thought with mere speculative reasoning especially to elucidate the barren metaphysical matters. His profound

silence to all metaphysical or rather supra-mental discussions shows his unique and exceptional wisdom in seeking remedies to all human melodies. Instead of indulging in unwanted argumentation on matters not related to human existence and for the redemption of mankind, the Buddha insisted not only upon his followers, ardent admirers, but also the laity to resort to the ways and means of alleviating human agonies in this planet. He wanted to eliminate superstitions, useless discussions and irresponsible human style of living. He brought forth rational religion with humanistic touch, practical ethics with noble truths and simple principles of life with higher goals. However, his messages to mankind are not without any philosophical overtones. All his preaching, discourses, advices, instructions, discussions etc. contain implicit philosophical claims, since philosophy extensively deals with the perennial problems of life in the realms of social, political, moral, religious and metaphysical. In Indian Philosophy Buddhism has been classified under the heterodox system (nastikadarsana), not for denying the existence of a Supreme Reality namely God, but for rejecting the authority of the Vedas since they gave utmost importance to ritualism, along with Carvaka and Jainism.

Primarily the Buddha was an ethical teacher and a social reformer rather than a philosopher. Indian philosophy, on the whole, is seriously concerned with logic and epistemology, metaphysics, ethics and religion. However the main focus of Buddhism is ethics and religion, in unique terms. For, it has been characterised as soulless ethics and Godless religion. To understand this stand point , we have to analyse the concept of momentariness—kshanikavada—which is an offshoot of the second noble truth viz. there is a cause for suffering leading to the theory of dependent origination—pratityasamudpada. Each aspect of human existence ranging from biological to psychological, birth, death, past, present and future lives etc. is based on each one of the twelve chains and the firm conclusion is

‘nothing is permanent and everything is momentary’. This fundamental presupposition forms the basis for the philosophical trends of early Buddhism that there is no permanent and abiding soul (Atman) subsisting in the psycho-physical organism of a human. Similarly there is no existence for a Supreme Being called God as a ‘person’. The rationale behind such postulation is substantiated from the sermons of the Master:

“Philosophy purifies none, peace alone does.”

“Surely do I know much more than what I have told you? And wherefore, my disciples, have I not told you that? Because, my disciples, it brings you no profit, it does not conduce to progress in holiness, because it does not lead to the turning from the earthly, to the subjection of all desire, to the cessation of the transitory, to peace, to knowledge, to illumination, to Nirvana.”

“Two things only, my disciples, do I teach—misery and the cessation of misery. Human existence is full of misery and pain. If, instead, we bother about barren metaphysical speculations, we behave like that foolish man whose heart is pierced by a poisonous arrow and who, instead of taking it out whiles away his time on idle speculation about the origin, the size, the entice metal, the maker and the shooter of the arrow.”¹

From the above citations, we can imbibe the truth that the Buddha flourished at a time when superficial and superfluous conceptions of human life were predominantly prevalent. According to the historical accounts, prior to the Buddhist era, the Vedic period witnessed excessive ritualism, continued sacrifices which were affordable exclusively by the affluent people; hierarchy in human livelihood based on the professions leading to social stratification as lower, higher and the highest paved the way for caste menace in the Indian sub-continent. Exorbitant superstitious beliefs prevented people from rationalising natural events which attitude culminated in the worship of many

¹ Quoted by Sharma, Chandra Dhar, A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy, p.70

deities and their adoration culminated in social and religious diversifications. The priest class was kept in high esteem as the most dominant class and the ill treatment to the lower strata of the masses added to the agony of common men. In the religious arena, besides rituals and sacrifices, the chanting of holy syllables (mantras) was in terse language whose connotations were difficult to be comprehended by ordinary citizens and they also could not repeat the same. In the philosophical scenario a number of pathways such as action, devotion, yoga, wisdom, etc. were treated as mutually exclusive terms and were suggested as the means for salvation. Each school of thought advocated its specific path and simultaneously denigrating and degrading other means for liberation which intellectually confused the truth seekers to put into successful practice.

At a stage when every section of the society was dissatisfied with the prevailing conditions of life and lived without any right objective in life, the Enlightened Buddha emerged on the stage with the principle of simple living with high thinking leading to extensive humanism and systematic religious disciplines. Any man who is engulfed in sorrows the queries on the nature of the self, the characteristic features of God, nature of the phenomenal world seem to be a mere folly or at best wastage of time. The Buddha pertinently put forth ten questions which have been called “Avyaktani” in Pali literature which are as follows:

1. Is the world eternal?
2. Is it non-eternal?
3. Is it finite?
4. Is it infinite?
5. Is the body and the self the same?
6. Is the self, different from the body?
7. Does the Tathagatha take birth again after death?

- 8 Does he not take birth after death?
- 9 Is there rebirth and also no rebirth?
- 10 Are the rebirth and no rebirth both false?²

As the responses to these questions from the philosophical perspective would not yield any undivided solution, and from the practical standpoint the answers would be futile, the Buddha was reluctant to respond and has not discussed them. However, the discourse, preaching etc. of the Buddha are not without philosophical implications. The doctrine of no-self (anatta), theory of impermanence (kshanika), no-god theory, the law of karma and re-birth are some of the philosophical ideas envisaged by him. Since the Buddha's teachings were of oral transmission, we have to rely upon the compilations, interpretations, commentaries, amplifications, etc. made by his disciples much later. Long after the demise of the Master, The Hinayana literature in Pali (the Tripitakas) was compiled. "Some Buddhists who felt that it did not present the real teachings of the master and contained many horrible misinterpretations of Buddha's teachings, called themselves Mahayanis, dubbing the others as Hinayanis and had a separate literature in Sanskrit."³

The main focus of the Buddha was to prepare the people to lead a spiritual life originating in consciousness of miseries, while the consummation was the discovery of eliminating suffering. In this task he stood as the pioneer in offering certain practical solution for freedom from suffering. Also he was criticised for advocating pessimism since he commences his ideology with the darker side of life. However this critical remark did not withstand since he did not stop merely with the presentation of his thesis, but also offers the synthesis, besides anti-thesis, for the alleviation of human afflictions. Though the doctrine of the Buddha commences with pessimism, it passes through the robust type of optimism and culminates in eternal pragmatism. It is due to

² Quoted by Sharma, Ram Nath, **Essentials of Indian Philosophy**, p.121

³ Sharma, Chandra Dhar, *Opp.cit.* p.77

the pragmatic significance of his messages he discovered the truths of life through the famous Four Noble Truths and the Eight-fold path. To quote him “It is by such a discussion that one can get some gain, it is these that detachment, destruction of passion, the end of miseries, mental peace, knowledge, wisdom and nirvana may be possible.”⁴ The essence of the eight-fold path can be condensed in the following three highly practicable codes:

- a) Real Knowledge (prajna) and
- b) Undisturbed concentration (samadhi)
- c) Good conduct (sheela)

It is to be noted here that each one of the doctrine is inter linked. For instance, good conduct is seldom possible without perfect knowledge which is higher than intellectual knowledge. Similarly spiritual knowledge is to culminate in right conduct. Thus the Buddha treats both sheela and prajna as complimentary and not contradictory which is really in accordance with the tradition of Indian Philosophy. On the other hand prajna assists the aspirant in annihilating sexual tendencies and ignorant temperaments before awakening deep rooted concentration, i.e. samadhi. Perfection of concentration can be achieved provided the aspirant adheres seriously to the first seven laws in the realm of eight-fold path. Subsequently, pursuing the path of concentration systematically leads to the evolution of true knowledge and right conduct. Meditation on physical defects or bad feeling, resorting to friendliness towards every one, showing sympathy towards the miserable ones and keeping aloofness towards the wicked ones are the essential requirements of attaining nirvana or the highest state of tranquillity. All the above four qualities are called ‘Brahma Vihara’. As non-violence has the pre-requisite of both sympathy and friendliness, the Buddha considers non-violence as the significant virtue.

⁴ Quoted by Sharma, Ram Nath, Opp.cit., p.122

The conception of nirvana cannot be construed as the end of life based on its etymological connotation viz. ‘extinguished’. It simply means the extinction of the fires of passions, avarice, jealousy, anger, doubt, etc. Also a few impurities emerging in the mind like sexual, ignorant and affective tendencies are vanquished. Nirvana does not imply abstention from action but from the attachment, repulsion and efforts conjoined to action. To put it more precisely that in the state of nirvana the body exists, but the craving through the body is destroyed. “Having once attained spiritual consciousness permanently, there is no longer any necessity for persisting in a state of concentration and there is no longer any fear of limitation due to actions. Actually according to Buddha, attachment, repulsion etc. when present, cause the action to become a limitation. In its absence there are no impressions created and no limitations like rebirth. As in the case of seeds, the plants grow only when the seed is fresh and not fried when sown, so in the case of actions. Actions performed without attachment do not cause any restrictions. In nirvana the individual’s ego is destroyed because its substratum, pain and longing etc. have been completely eliminated. Nirvana is in every conceivable aspect, a state of unrestricted calm. A free person has perfect insight, perfect impassion, pure peace, perfect control, calm mind, calm word and calm actions.”⁵

The thought contents in Buddhism are not mere speculation for the sake of enriching one’s knowledge. Rather, right knowledge is rightfully valued by the Buddhists not as an aim in itself, but as a means to attain deliverance from miseries. As a result of reducing Buddhist teaching to a coherent system, scholars have gone astray which resulted in great difficulties in understanding the concept of nirvana. They construed the idea of nirvana as a negative entity since they had been misled by many utterances in the scriptures. A

⁵ Ibid. p.125

proper understanding of nirvana will make us conclude that it is not a metaphysical concept but a soteriological Absolute since it offers comforts and solace in final redemption especially to those who want to obtain deliverance from the world. Reasoning can seldom be of any use in comprehending the concept of nirvana, but it is subjected to experience. The experience of nirvana is purely subjective and hence it is ineffable, i.e. cannot be communicated to others. For, no language can adequately describe the merging of the individual into the Absolute. However, the Buddhists could not refrain from expressing the nature of the Absolute in positive terms like every mystic. This attitude of the Buddhists had paved the way for many interpretations, sometimes wrong ones which are contrary to the non-communicable nature. These kinds of positive explanations of nirvana cannot vouchsafe that it is an ontological reality or even a kind of paradise.

“In order to understand such terms as “highest bliss”, “the other shore”, “the refuge”, “the goal”, which terms with many others have been used to indicate nirvana, one has to realise the problem which the mystic has to face when desiring to speak of the Absolute. His experience is of such an overwhelming intensity that he feels himself completely transformed by it. In comparison everything else dwindles to nothing. He cannot but remember continually this supreme moment. How great is his desire to tell others of the felicity which he has felt! He knows that no words are capable of describing the ineffable content of his experience, for language is bound to the earth, to human existence. Therefore the mystic makes use of an indirect way of expression. He cannot say what the Absolute is, but he can say what it is not. Its most essential characteristic is its fundamental difference from all things mundane. In this world everybody is subject to death: Nirvana, however, is said to be immortal place (amatapadam or amatampadam, Dhammapada 21, Udanavarga IV.1, etc.). From birth to death life is suffering (dukkha) ; Nirvana

on the contrary is supreme bliss (paramamsukham, Majj. Nik. I. 508, Dhammapada 203-204, Udanavarga XXVI, 6-7), free from birth and becoming (ajata, abhuta Ud.80, Itiv.37). Empirical life offers no shelter, no refuge; Nirvana is called the island (dipa, Samy.Nik. IV, 372), the shelter (lena, ibid.), the protection (tana, ibid.), the refuge (sarana, ibid.), and the goal (parayana, Samy. Nik.IV. 373). Life is impurity; Nirvana is purity (suddhi, Samy.Nik.IV, 372). Many other terms are used in connection with Nirvana, but none of these words contains a description or definition of Nirvana. They only point to the other shore (para, Samy. Nik.IV . 369). If we subject these terms to a careful examination, we see that they convey either an antithesis to the conditions of samsara or a negation of these. For instance, bliss is the antithesis of suffering. In human life or even in a heavenly paradise no bliss exists, because in these states no everlasting bliss is possible and according to the Buddhists everything that has an end is suffering. On earth the immortal and the unborn are unthinkable because here below one perceives the universality of birth and death. Bliss, immortality and the unborn are words that do not correspond to real things which a human being can know or see. The mystic who has experienced the state of Nirvana makes use of these words exactly for this reason. However inadequate they may be, they are the only means which language can offer him to express that which essentially cannot be put into words because words are only capable of denoting the realities of empirical life.”⁶

The last utterance of the Buddha before he left the mortal coil and attained immortality, viz. “all the constituents of being are transitory; work out your salvation with diligence.” (Mahaparinirvana Sutra VI. 1) formed the basis for the division of Buddhism as two major sects known as the Mahayana and Hinayana. The Buddha would not have thought that his final statement

⁶ Jong, J.W. Dew, “The Absolute in Buddhist Thought”, **Essays in Philosophy**, PP.57-58

would have resulted in the emergence of philosophical schools with multifarious concepts and doctrines. However, both the sects did not deviate from the original teachings of the Master, but their interpretations yielded to many philosophical schools. Thus the later Buddhism vouch safe the veracity that Buddhism is not merely a religion but contains plenty of philosophical doctrines as well. Particularly the term ‘your’ in his final statement gave room for two-fold connotation i.e., ‘myself alone’ (Hinayana) and ‘the entire human race (Mahayana). The fundamental difference between these two major sects is seriously concerned with the idea of liberation. According to the former (Theravada), liberation is negative and egoistic—cessation of my suffering alone. Allegorically, it is a small country boat which can accommodate only one person. On the other hand Mahayana reinforces the idea of salvation as positive and altruistic i.e. not negation of sorrows but a positive state of blissful existence. In Indian Philosophy, except the Carvaka, all the schools advocate that liberation implies the absence of pain culminating into a state of bliss—ananda.

Under these two sects,

1. The Mahayana promoted two schools known as
 - a. Madhyamika—Shunyavada—nihilism
 - b. Yogacara—Vjnanavada—subjective idealism
1. *aMadhyamika or sunyavada:*

This school envisages that reality is to be understood in terms of the Middle path thereby avoiding the extremes of existence and non-existence, affirmation and negation and eternalism and nihilism. Though the literal meaning of the term ‘sunya’ is ‘void’ or negative abyss, it significantly connotes ‘indescribable’ since reality is neither existent nor non-existent. As it transcends all intellectual comprehensions, it is designated as the Absolute, and is indescribable and is devoid of plurality. Jaina philosophy reality is

considered as relatively indescribable (syadavaktavyam) – relatively it exists, does not exist, both exists and does not exist, but indescribable.

Nagarjuna, the eminent philosopher of this school, had promulgated two kinds of truths, namely, empirical truth (samvritisatya) which is based on ignorance, attachment, doubt etc. which becomes transient and perishable; the other is the transcendental truth (paramarthasatya) which is absolute and is to be experienced leading to nirvana. According to him, those who do not know the distinction between these truths cannot understand the subtle secrets of Buddha's teachings. In the Upanishads also two kinds of truths are advocated such as vyavaharika (waking state) and paramarthika (transcendental or pure existence) which have been developed by Sankara with another term pratibhasika (dream or illusory experience contradicted by actual experience in the waking state. Nagajuna establishes that from the transcendental stand point the doctrine of dependent origination is itself nirvana. Without the application of deduction or induction it has been stated that there is neither negation nor origination, nor annihilation, nor eternity, nor sunya and all the multiplicity dwindles into nirvana. As cause and effect are relative, but only having empirical validity, motion and perception become impossible. No substance can exist and hence no qualities.

The views expressed by Nagarjuna to substantiate the philosophy of Madhyamika system are the exact replica of Sankara's philosophy who has been characterised as the 'prachannabauddha'—Buddha in disguise. The only distinction is that Sankara admits the Nirguna Brahman as the only reality which is none other than Atman. Sunyavada has been called by Sankara as nihilism (Vainasika) since it is contrary to all proofs. But according to Nagarjuna, 'sunya' is relative and hence there is no eternal positive absolute or absolute nihilism. Thus Madhyamika Buddhism strictly adheres to the Middle path. For, Nagarjuna attempts to prove the non-existence of

everything from the transcendental point of view and so reality is neither eternal nor non-eternal. But from the

1. *bYogacara School---Vijnanavada.*

According to this school of thought under Madhyamika Buddhism, all things exist only in consciousness and the aspirants can know this truth only through several yogic practices before attaining Buddhahood. Here we can notice the transition from metaphysical analysis of reality to psychological realization. The unique conception of this school is 'alayavijnana' which means the citta (the intuitive mind) which pervades all living beings. This trend reinforces the view that both the external and internal worlds are the manifestations of the alaya. It insists that through spiritual experience the aspirant will transcend dualism of subject and object and has to identify with consciousness. Reality is Dharmakaya—the perfect pure consciousness. Name, form and formless attributes are nothing but the mere transformation of pure consciousness. Hence external things become non-existent since vijnana is the only reality. Vijnana has two kinds of consciousness viz. personal consciousness (pravrttivijnana) and absolute consciousness (alayavijnana). The followers of this system do not accept the empirical self as ultimately real as pure consciousness or universal consciousness is the only reality. It is self-enlightened.

Some scholars equate Vijnanavada with subjective idealism of Berkeley, but others deny this contention and hold that this philosophical school subscribes to absolute idealism. Strictly speaking there is hardly much difference between alayavijnana and the self as developed in the Upanisads. Only the empirical world is momentary and the Reality is neither momentary nor eternal. But from the empirical standpoint it is eternal, immortal and permanent. The world is the manifestation of the alayavijnana. The major dictum of this school is that whatever is eternal is bliss and whatever is

momentary is misery. As vijnana or consciousness alone is eternal and imperishable, it is blissful.

2. Hinayana has developed two schools known as:

- a. Sautrantika—representative realism—bahyanumeyavada
- b. Vaibhasika—direct realism—bhahyapratyaksyavada

2. aSautrantika School—Bahyanumeyavada

Under Hinayana division, the philosophical sect that maintains that reality of the external world is known through inference is Sautrantika. This school is based on the SuttaPitaka scriptures. The scholars belonging to this school deny the theories of non- existence of external objects and all knowledge is in the consciousness. According to this school of thought, there is no identity between the object and its knowledge since both exist simultaneously. For instance, while perceiving a book, we experience the existence of the book outside of us and the presence of its knowledge in us. If there is no distinction between the book and the perceiver, one would say, 'I am the book' which is absurd and awkward hence the object is different from knowledge. Again, there is no direct perception of the objects, but only the knowledge of their appearance. Only through inferential knowledge we are able to distinguish among the objects of perception.

This school denies the idea of causality, time etc. and believe in the self-evident nature of knowledge. To them the world has no existence before origination and after destruction and hence it is not eternal. Nirvana is a state of absence of defilements or klesas and the destruction of kasayas (impurities). Actually nirvana means 'to be extinguished like the lamp. All the dharmas or subtle elements are totally annihilated. As a result, the aspirant attains the stage in which there is no klesa in the attainment of any new dharma. This school of thought is known as representative or indirect realism—bahynumeyavada.

2.bVaibhasika School—Direct Realism

Another Hinayana school is Vaibhasika School which accepts the reality of both consciousness and matter which constitute the dharmas. All perceptible things are real and hence there is no eternal soul which is imperceptible. All the objects in the world are constituted of atomic compounds. Again, all perceptible objects are the conglomeration of imperceptible atoms. According to this school, if all the external things are known through inference as explained by the Sautrantika School, then nothing can be known by perception and the epistemological device – perception will be a misnomer. Further, to maintain that all the external things are inferred to obtain knowledge is self-contradictory. In the absence of perception there can be no relation of concomitance between the major premise and the minor premise without which inference becomes seldom possible. The existence of objects is accepted and they are conceived only through perception.

As the sense organs are material they try to know their respective objects actually without contacting them. In such knowledge no external link between the sense organs and the objects is perceived. Due to certain defects in the sense organs, there may be difference in the knowledge attained through them, By coming into contact with the external world, a kind of samskara occurs in the sense organs, By these samskara the chitta is enlightened and there is the manifestation of consciousness in it. Then arise in the chitta, different types of knowledge. According to this School of thought, a pramana has been defined as the way of getting knowledge directly. Both perception- pratyaksa – and inference- anumana are considered as right knowledge (samyagajana) and through these two all the human values (purusarthas) are attained.

The world subtly consists of skandha (change), ayatana (substratum of knowledge) and dhatu (subtle elements). The so called soul—jiva is made up of five skandhas which are as follows:

1. Rupa—physical body of the jiva.
2. Vedana—feelings of pleasure, pain, etc.
3. Sanjna—various types of knowledge.
4. Samskara—tendencies born out of the previous birth.
5. Vijnana—consciousness

Ayatana are twelve in number including the sense organs, mind and their six objects.

The Buddhist thinkers do not admit the soul since it is not perceived by the senses nor is it the object of any senses.

Dhatu—subtle elements existing independently, twelve ayatanas and six types of consciousness.

Nirvana is the final attainment made possible to an arhata through the path of truth. It is one, independent, eternal and substratum of knowledge. Neither distinction nor division is allowed in it. It is both uncaused and the nature of existence—bhavarupa.

Conclusion

Buddhism has been characteristically defined as ‘Nirvana Buddhism’ since the ultimate attainment is nirvana through mystic experience. The idea of silence insisted by the madhyamikas is an indication to realise the ineffable nature of mystic experience and their seemingly nihilistic reasoning are only meant of clear the way for their mystic experience.

The Yogacara School, with its emphasis on consciousness alone as the only reality, offers promptly to the process of purification of the inner being which is an

essential requirement for the progression of mystic experience. This idea can be testified by citing from the Buddhist texts the following:

“To abstain from all evil, to do good, and to purify one’s mind, is the teaching of Buddhism”⁷

The rest of the entire teachings of Buddhism, whether the early Buddhists teachings or the latter philosophical investigations by the scholarly monks of Buddhism centre round this phenomenal doctrine of the experience of nirvana through the way of ‘vision’ and the way of ‘meditation’ . However all the commentators are really indebted to their Master, the noble Buddha for initiating philosophical speculations through his hectic contemplations and relevant revelations? What are all the metaphysical views seriously viewed by the Buddha were gradually introduced with logical justification, epistemological explanation, ethical ratification, religious affiliation and social concern. The Buddha himself was revered, venerated and even adored as God incarnated Person and was offered prayers, rituals and respectful worships. Five elements-- objective and subjective-- known as the skandhas such as rupa, vedana, sanjna, samskara and vijnana have been substituted for the human soul (jiva). This approach resulted in the establishment of a glorified religious system of thought throughout the world paving the way for academic discussions, debates and spreading the messages of the master in a manifold way. Several social, cultural, religious and educational institutions emerged to patronise, promote, preserve and protect the ideals and praxis of Buddhist tradition. Monasteries also grew to train the monks to make this religious philosophy as a living faith. Even kingdoms embraced Buddhism and gave royal patronage to Buddhism.

⁷ Dhammapada 183, Udanavarga XXVIII, I, DighaNik. II, 49, Mahavastu III, 420

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WHAT KIND OF RELIGION DO WE NEED FOR THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

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ABSTRACT

In this paper an attempt has been made to highlight the ‘Present Crisis of Faith’ with a few worthwhile suggestions to overcome such irreligious phenomena. ‘Religion has been defined as “the manifestation of divinity already in man”. However the devotees give prominence to external adoration, rituals, ceremonies, festivals, etc. than giving moving deeper into their own inner being and experience the Supreme Reality in a personified form with all kinds of perfection and attain eternal enlightenment. This kind of peripheral practice forced a few social reformists with revolutionary zeal and religious bent of mind to expound a new kind of religion like Jainism, Buddhism etc. without establishing a powerful God but giving ample scope for becoming Godhead so as to be revered by one and all, by insisting upon humanism so that mankind may be elevated to the heights of perfection. However, the theistic religions also flourish in the midst of several shortcomings, defects and inconsistencies between theory and practice, since the followers could not resist their devotional instinct towards a Powerful Supreme Being.

Under these circumstances this paper is intended to analyze the genuine and significant features of religion, confronting issues like ritualism, fundamentalism, problem of evil, etc. Both theistic and atheistic religions emphasize upon the need for

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promoting virtuous qualities which become the prelude for religious propensities. The practice of yoga and its subtle aspects also serve as the subsisting factor for religious perfection and spiritual illumination.

Some religious leaders with global perspective put forth the idea of Universal Religion, the adherence to which will resolve all human uncertainties causing through sectarian religions. The impossibilities of such a principle have been pointed out here. The modern religions have become the centers for commerce and trade by pushing aside the elements of devotion and religious communion. The role of the mystics in all religious traditions who have done yeomen service to mankind through their revelations of rapturous experiences with the divine has been pointed out as the best remedies for all religious maladies.

The contemporary world which has deeper involvement in materialism as the summum bonum of life must contemplate seriously to escape the tyranny of terrorism and extremism which use materialism as the fundamental tool. Only through a kind of religion which provides much scope for mystical experience without eliminating the religious sentiments truths of the mysteries of life would be elucidated. To achieve this ambitious goal the aspirant must withdraw from the luring worldly attractions and gradually promote internalization leading to the realization of reality, thereby experiencing it than experimenting on it. Some noble traits such as fellow feeling, social solidarity, profound God-man relationship, intellectual conviction and above all human consideration are essentially required for a sustainable religious order.

Keywords; Supremereality, enlightenment, humanism, extremism, fundamentalism, ritualism, dogmatism, mysticism, theism, atheism, universalism, moral perfection, immortality and evil, etc.

Introduction

All over the world, undoubtedly religion plays a vital role. The word 'religion' simply means 'union with god' leading to human emancipation. We have a few religions in the world, which have extensively exemplified human enlightenment without resorting to God's grace, but exclusively with human moral and spiritual endeavors. The theistic religions depend on the descent of God's grace for every religious activity and experience. God's visible manifestation alone is the only active force for redemption. A few atheistic religions like Jainism and Buddhism did not postulate a powerful and gracious God but presume that a man who sincerely and seriously adheres to virtuous qualities and promote humanism at all levels would be elevated to the level of Godhead.

However, we come across so many worshipping centers such as Temples, Mosques, Churches, Monasteries, *Gurudwaras* etc., which have emerged to cater to the needs of human devotional urges towards worldly prosperity. The Holy Scriptures containing the spontaneous outpourings of the highly evolved saints, sermons of eminent sages, revelations of revered ascetics, codification of glorified sayings etc., have been considered as the resourceful manuals to guide the people in all religious propensities. However, in the words of Radhakrishnan

Not merely religious Scriptures but codes of customs and laws of society, all these are supposed to have come from the Gods. Every people, Jew and Gentiles, Greek and Barbarian, attribute the first institution of their laws to the Gods. We know now that they all originated in the discordant passions and the groping reason of human beings. Religious scriptures are no exception. They are the conventions and devices which seers of insight found it necessary to lie down to enable men to live and live more abundantly. The Scriptures are products of history and some of their parts are forgeries, or at least not as old as they were supposed to be... Every revealed Scripture

seems to contain in it a large mass of elements which scientific criticism and historical knowledge require all to discard and there is no reason why we should accept it at all. Truth is greater than any revelation.¹

Contemporary Scenario

Now-a-days the Scriptures are misinterpreted and whimsical meanings have been attributed to several esoteric statements resulting in confusing and conflicting accounts of the revealed texts. Illiteracy, superstitious and blind observances etc., add fuel to the fire causing religious feuds, chaos and confusion. The prevalence of mythological events, legendary narrations, *puranic* stories etc., is not only non-realistic but also unscientific. They give importance to the outer story aspects than realizing the meaningful messages in them. Though the devotees adore their Scriptures as divine revelation, they could not adhere to all the prescriptions and instructions as well as injunctions, mentioned in them. Probably, the improper understanding and reluctance to practice appropriately might be the reason for Radhakrishnan to maintain such a view.

The present day world is confronted with racial discrimination, social de-stability, political upheavals, linguistic fanaticism, moral degradation and religious fundamentalism. The whole world has become our next-door neighbor, thanks to the scientific advancement and technological development. We are living in an era of rationality than merely reposing faith and beliefs in supernatural phenomena. People begin to interrogate the dogmas and doctrines of religions purely on a scientific basis to avoid irrational claims and ignorant followings. Every religious practice, whether rituals or worship, must have a convincing explanation. In the religious realm, a saint talks to God, while the philosopher of religions speaks *about* God with

¹ S. Radhakrishnan, *An Idealist View of Life*, pp. 21-30.

logical precision and the theologian also talks about God with reverence. “It is for the philosophy of religion to find out whether the conventions of the religious seers fit in with the tested laws and principles of the universe.”² If there is pure philosophical argumentation without ample scope for realization, then there would be dogmatism and dry intellectualism; if we have mere religious practices without sufficient rational explanations, then they would culminate in superstitions and blind observances. Hence there must be a synchronization of both theory and practice. All the revelatory texts are to be testified by reason so that an aspirant can engage in experiencing the Supreme Being without chaos and confusion, but with conviction and clarity. What is expected of a religious devotee is ‘Intellectual Faith’.

Personality Attitude

Generally family heritage makes man generally follow a particular religion, that is, usually birth determines the religious attitude of a majority of people except a few converts. We are labeled as Hindus or Christians or Buddhists not merely because of practice, but mainly because we are born as Hindus or Christians or Buddhists and our ancestors as well as our parents bore those labels. Besides, the illiterates and the ignorant too engage in religious ceremonies and celebrations without knowing their significance. Hence naturally illogical and irrational adaptations to religious sentiments and doctrines have been developed. For none can deviate from or argue against the well ordained traditional beliefs and praxis. This kind of temperament in religious adherence has made thinkers like Marx and Freud call religion as the ‘opium of man’ and ‘illusion’ respectively. However, rational approach to religious phenomena can seldom be ignored mainly to avoid superstitions and temperamental observances. Radhakrishnan is of the opinion that

² Bhagavad Gita IV, 7, 8, Cf., Ibid., p. 318.

Reasoning in religions is only a rearrangement of our prejudices... The assumption of religion that God, the author of the universe, is the benevolent father of us all is an open invitation to explain away the difficulties and discomforts of life as delusions of the mind. The tendency of religion to mistake desires for facts, to take the world to be what we should take it to be, to reserve a certain part of life as falling outside the scope of ordinary knowledge is the direct opposite of empirical science.³

Even after several mystic experiences, the highly reverential revelations, the mystery about the existence of God, His nature and characteristics features whether monistic or pluralistic, impersonal absolute or personal deity, how does the God or Gods execute the divine propensities on this earth etc., still remain. Hence some thinkers have addressed the divinity as mysterious, but tremendously fascinating. The spiritual vision of man has been obscured due to the vast involvement of metaphysical speculations which make the intellectuals to rationalize the scriptural messages than realizing the truth contents in them. Hence the Buddha was reluctant to respond to metaphysical issues and preserved silence, for any attempt to answer to the speculative problems will lead to mere logical clarity than carrying impressive conviction in the process of realization. His intention of establishing a religious formula without promoting a God or without the acceptance of an independent soul was successful that we could notice the large number of followers embracing as well as embarking upon Buddhism all over the globe.

Problem of Evil

Another confronting issue is the problem of evil which has been unresolved for centuries together. If God is merciful and benevolent, sufferings caused by evil should not be there. But evil persists. Then logically

³ Ibid., p. 13.

it follows that God is neither merciful nor benevolent. The famous dilemmatic argument of Epicurus is stated thus:

If God is willing to prevent evil, but is not capable of doing so, then He is impotent. If God is capable, but not willing, then He is malevolent. If He is both capable and willing, then how can evil there be?

Thinkers belonging to various religious traditions have attempted to escape from the dilemma in various ways. Evil, when viewed rightly is good; viewed in a total perspective, whatever exists is good. Partially sin and pain are viewed as evil. Some Indian thinkers view evil as an illusion which does not affect the soul. Regarding the origin of evil, some religions attribute the sin committed by the first human beings continues to be evil. Other religions hold that God has created both good and evil and through several realized souls He has imparted the wisdom to adhere to virtuous deeds and avoid vicious ones and lead the life with steadfast devotion by remaining the same person in both prosperity and adversity. There is no correct consensus among the religions till today regarding the problem of evil. It still remains a problem both academically and adventurously.

It is God who will annihilate the onslaught of evil according to the *Bhagavad Gita*.

When righteousness is weak and faints and unrighteousness exults in pride, then my spirit arises on earth for the salvation of those who are good, for the destruction of evil men, for the fulfillment of the kingdom of righteousness, I come to this world in the ages that pass.⁴

Here the contention of the Lord that He would take birth periodically is questioned by other religious faiths that are opposing incarnation of God. The term *avatar*(*incarnation*) has two significant meanings. One is the descent of God on earth and once the mission is fulfilled He will disappear. Another meaning is that God is born, lives and dies

⁴ Bhagavad Gita IV, 7, 8, Cf., Ibid., p. 318.

and acts as a role model and to convey the message universally –‘how man ought to live as a genuine human.’ He is characterized as an embodiment of virtue and the eliminator of evil. But according to *SaviaSiddhanta*, the Southern School of *Saivism*, birth is caused by *karmas* and God is the appropriator of *karmas*. For, the doer cannot have accessibility to the fruits of his deeds, nor the fruits will automatically reach the doer. It is Lord Siva who unites the fruits with the doer in accordance to the merit or demerit of the deeds. He only manifests His non-material forms taken out of His sportive will to satisfy the spiritual quest of His ardent admirers and seldom does He take birth, live and die on the earth. He is only the moral governor and the bestower of His benevolence for the redemption of His intimate devotees. How can God take birth by subjecting Himself into the network of *karma* leading to the transmigratory existence? Ask the *Siddhantins*.

Substitutes for Religion

A few substitutes have been attributed to replace religion leading to a life of harmony and peaceful co-existence. They are naturalistic atheism, agnosticism, skepticism, humanism, pragmatism, modernism, authoritarianism etc. Of these, naturalistic atheism holds that since man is essentially part of nature, nature will provide him with more exciting and superior power. As the constituent part of the universe, not merely as the spectator, man is attuned with science, art etc., and by himself develops the method of living and hence no religion is essentially required. Agnosticism holds the view that we do not know how to explain the religious phenomena and hence divinity is a mere mystery, and man realizes his ideal that he is ignorant of the phenomenon called religion. Skepticism implies lack of conviction. It promotes a sense of loneliness. Skepticism becomes a method and highlights the dogma and tries to establish the foundations of belief. Ultimately

skepticism will culminate into the growth of spirituality. Humanism, as a positive attitude becomes a protest against naturalism and religion as well. The world as a whole is to be humanized which means made perfect. Pragmatism upholds the humanistic and relative merit of every truth. Absolute truth is a myth. The ethical values and spiritual results determine the value of religion than its objective truth. Modernism is a trend that reconciles religious traditions with the new requirements that have emerged in the process of development. Authoritarianism is understood in terms of despotism, anarchy, history, tradition etc. Religion is dependent on past tradition and grows out of it, though it is purely an individual's personal affair. Undoubtedly authoritarianism implies a kind of skepticism. However, these substitutes for religion did not bring forth the required solace but they individually and collectively have widened the chasm between the human and the divine.⁵

Now-a-days religious fundamentalism causes terror and panic. People not only quarrel in the name of religion, but let loose violence, and murder etc. Instead of religion promoting peace and harmony, it has become imperative to save religion itself from peril. Even though religion plays a vital role in the life of people (individually and collectively), what type of religion will really reflect the true religious spirit leading to harmony and peaceful co-existence? It is also very difficult to trace out a genuine religion devoid of superstitions, social bindings, political compulsions, economic conditions and historical accidents. The phenomenon of religious pluralism has to be analyzed, argued and perfectly portrayed.

Contemplation of Universal Religion

These shortcomings, lacuna and defects of individual religions prompted a few scholars to contemplate and materialize a universal religion, which would satisfy all the religious requirements in the world. Though

⁵ S. Radhakrishnan, *An Idealist View of Life*, pp. 40-65.

scholars mooted out this proposal and wrote seriously in several journals and spoke at various forums this proposal did not materialize and could not be materialized too. For, we live in the midst of multi-cultural, multi-racial and multi-linguistic settings. Since the existing religions are based on firm faith and staunch belief on their fundamental texts and seriously adhered to by the ardent devotees, it would be a tough task to make them believe in others' Holy Scriptures and sacraments and practice one God and one religion. The best way out is to educate them and inculcate the quality of forbearance through parables and high philosophical truths. In the contemporary era, the Gods have been multiplied, but godliness did not improve. Similarly, devotees are increased, while devotion is not strengthened. The devotees give topmost priority to external worship and outward appearance. Only the strengthened souls can awake from the ignorant slumber, truly convert from empirical phenomena to genuine spiritual path, get themselves illumined and achieve a direct communion with the Almighty leading to an inseparable union and intimate rapport with the personal God. A weakened soul can seldom imagine such a long and hectic journey of the soul to achieve rapturous experience. For, such souls while taking active role in peripheral things and even in religious moorings, they engage with ego-centralism thereby accumulating *karmas* and wander in the whirlpool of materialistic manifestations, thus are undergoing the tyranny of trans migratory existence.

Requirements of Religion at Present

Religion in the present day world must be a living stream and not a stagnant pool. Though in the initial stage it may have several restrictions, systems, conditions, regulations etc., but the mere study and intellectual analysis of the scriptural texts and the practice of routine rituals will make the aspirant just a devotee. To make him an exact devotee the religion must pave the way for inward

journey through *yogic* practices culminating in divine effulgence with perfect knowledge and genuine wisdom of the religious system leading to enlightenment and the enjoyment of the perennial bliss of the Supreme God.

Meditation is the way to self-discovery. By it we turn our mind homeward and establish contact with the creative center. To know the truth we have to deepen ourselves and not merely widen the surface. Silence and quite are necessary for the profound alteration of our being and they are not easy in our age. Discipline and restraint will help us to put our consciousness into relation with the Supreme. What is called *tapas* is a persistent endeavor to dwell in the divine and develop a transfigured life. It is the gathering up of all dispersed energies, the intellectual powers, the heart's emotions, the vital desires, nay the very- physical being itself, and concentrating them all on the Supreme goal. The rapidly of the process deepens on the intensity of the aspiration, the zeal of the mind for God.⁶

In the present day world the worshipping centers have become commercial complexes as if devotion has a cash value. Only the affluent people and those who are in power are given prominence inside the sanctified place forgetting the dictum that before God all are equal; only the quantum of devotion is that counts than the pomposity and prerogative mentality. Now-a-days a religion is required which will promote spiritual poise, universality, tolerance, self-realization and mystic experience.

The mystics emphasize being more than doing. While their lives escape triviality, pettiness and intolerance, it is possible that they may exaggerate a negative self-feeling and non-aggressiveness. They are more inclined to surrender their rights than fight for them, but their gentleness is born of courage and strength and not fear and cowardice. But in the heart of asceticism there is a flame of spiritual joy which is of the very essence of

⁶ Ibid., p. 89.

religion. Withdrawal is not the whole of the religious tradition; there is also participation and enjoyment. The *IshaUpanisad* asks us to enjoy by renouncing. It is a deep and dis-interested acceptance of the world and a joyful recognition that no part of it may be reused. We renounce the world in order to return to it with the knowledge of its oneness to sustain us.⁷

So an ideal religion, which is the need of the hour, must insist on the devotees to retire from the world and keep themselves aloof not idly but in contemplation and meditation on the oneness of reality. The rituals and other outward practices are meant for spiritual training of the aspirant in order to discipline his entire being as to enable him to have a vital contact with the spiritual environment. This type of exercise alone will land in true and pure experience of God *that alone* becomes the testimony of God's existence. Ample scope must be provided for total experience of the divine in the depth of one's being. In the words of Swami Vivekananda,

... Religion is to be realized now. And for you to become religious means that you will start without any religion, work your way up and realize things, see things for yourself; and when you have done that, then, and then alone, you have religion. Before that you are no better than atheists, or worse, because the atheist is sincere, he stands up and says, 'I do not know about those things,' while those others do not know but go about the world saying, 'we are very religious people.'⁸

This passage of the Swami opens many vistas of knowing about religion in the contemporary age. A devotee must go beyond the so-called religious enterprises and realization of the ultimate truth must take place in him. Thus he becomes more religious than merely adhering to the dogmas of the religion to which he has committed himself. We come across more

⁷ Ibid., pp. 89-90.

⁸ Swami Pavitrnananda, *Modern Man in Search of Religion*, p. i.

pretenders of religions than people with adequate religious experience. That is religion should not be a mere concept but a reality, which has to show the right path leading to redemption and not sentimentalism.

The modern man believes and engages himself in the practices of organized religion. In an organized religion, the authorities like the scriptures and the group of followers determine the modes of worship. Strictly speaking, the devotee worships the God, not of his own choice, but the group or the authority that claims to speak in His Name. Since religion is based on firm belief in the existence of God, staunch faith in God's presence everywhere, people have to love God with good hope that He will grant salvation through His grace that will lead to social harmony. Mathew Arnold claims that 'religion is morality tinged with emotion' and all the religious Scriptures invariably insist on the strict adherence to the ethical codes before entering into a religion or while practicing a religion. Nowadays, we could see unethical elements penetrate into religious order thereby endangering the very fabric of the religious system. Purity of heart and soul is the essential pre-requisite of a religious man. It is a universal truth that immorality will seldom lead to immortality. Hence any religion that should be followed by thousands of people should not only feel proud about the prevalence of moral codes, but also emphasize the sincere adherence and serious execution of moral values in the religious realms.

Conclusion

The contemporary scenario is mainly based on intellectual conviction and rational analysis of every phenomenon. Religion in the contemporary age must be based on intellectual faith, subjecting itself to all intellectual scrutiny and substantiating all rational claims. Only when the devotees are free from doubts, confusions, conflicts, contradictions, authoritarianism, etc., they can engage in the perfect practice of religion,

serious performance of worship and prayer and systematic involvement in the study and understanding of the scriptural texts. Since religion is based on a metaphysical concept called God, ample scope must be provided for the existence of God through the interpretation of experience. The view of Radhakrishnan is worth quoting here:

Purely speculative theology which cuts itself off from religious tradition and experience and works from premises which are held to be universally valid cannot serve as an adequate philosophy of religion. The proofs of God's existence from premises of general character yield not the God of religion but a supreme first cause or being who can be construed into the object of religious experience only if we start with the latter. A category of thought with no basis in fact is not an experienced certainty. No stable conviction can be built on mere dialectic. Speculative theology can conceive of God as a possibility it is religion that affirms God as a fact.⁹

It is pretty clear that religion is not a mere form of knowledge, but it is rooted in the mystic experience and enjoyment, which is authentically ascertained by the mystics.

For the redemption of human race in the twenty first century and in the centuries to come, it would be appropriate to recommend a religion, which does not merely promote consciousness of value, but endeavors to discover the ideal possibilities of human life and unifies all values through a quest for emancipation from the compulsions of vain and petty moods. As suffering and painful situations confront human race at all levels and at all times, religious enterprises and experiences must offer guarantee that man no longer would undergo the torture of dreaded experience at the empirical phase. Even if a devotee is prone to suffer due to various reasons, he must

⁹ S. Radhakrishnan, *An Idealist View of Life*, p. 68.

face it courageously with a positive zeal that it is God who is the real cause of suffering who, in turn, will extend His grace leading to abundant joy.

Another requirement of religion is fellow feeling, social solidarity and human harmony. This trend is not absent in all the religious preaching. They uniformly declare that God is the very embodiment of love and religion must patronize this binding force not only with God-man relationship, but must be extended to inter-personal relationship. The more a person engages in religious experience, the more he must become egoless, sublime, serene, quietitude, calm and tranquil. When these characteristics predominate, naturally he loves God as the dweller of all spaces and the spectator of all times. Since every soul is potentially divine he loves every living creature. This love of God in every organism is extended to all the manifested things of nature resulting in the preservation of natural sources and not destroying them for personal benefits. The transcendent God is made immanent and the later is understood when one develops unity of consciousness through divine experience. For divinity in us is the source of perfection of our Nature. The cries on ecological endangering can be avoided if religious people perform the outward rituals and inward adoration with overwhelming inspiration without pride or prejudice.

Thus the religion in the contemporary age must be free from superstitions, vanity etc. But the most inspiring aspiration should be 'divinize humanity and humanize divinity', that is, God-consciousness must prevail in all the flora and fauna of the earth by perpetuating pure love. A true devotee must pray for obtaining God's grace than earthly prosperity and through His Grace obtain wisdom and with this enlightenment the newly born or twice-born soul must come back with full vigour and serve the society through pure devotion and dedication. The religion that mankind requires now is to elevate man to the level of godhead through practices and experiences besides virtuous living, and the prevailing religions must equip themselves in these trends.

GOD'S GRACE=LOVE=WISDOM=ENLIGHTENMENT=ENJOYMENT OF BLISS=GODHEAD

**ROLE OF GEOSPATIAL TECHNOLOGY IN ANALYSIS AND MAPPING
OF SOME IMPORTANT BUDDHIST SITES IN INDIA AND ITS
CULTURAL GEOGRAPHICAL SIGNIFICANCE IN THAILAND**

Professor. V C Jha*

ABSTRACT

Geography of Buddhism which sprung from the intense ritualistic practices of Hinduism, brought in its fold an opportunity for regional development to all places that it spread. South-East Asia in general and the Thailand in particular saw a marked change in its Culture and the travel of Buddhist monks to spread the religion brought knowledge about the geographical surroundings.

The intermingling of Cultures was the immediate impact and soon the simplicity of this religion attracted the interest of all segments of society who were encompassed soon its fold. The location of monasteries in remote, undisturbed locations, ordaining of monks from common people led to mobilization of people to these sites. Sites which were popular flourished, yet lesser known sites faded. Now the geospatial techniques i.e. Remote Sensing, GIS,GPS in modern times have helped to unearth or locate these lesser known sites along with the popular one's and has led to preparation of a unique Buddhist

Map with interlinking all the sites as a Buddhism Sites Circuit Map facilitating travel for both religion as well as Cultural Mission which has left a message of hope, peace and honesty.

In this paper, an attempt has been made to analyze and map some of the important Indian Buddhist Sites using Remote Sensing, GIS and GPS.

* India

Impetus of these Sites have been noted in the regional development of South-East Asia in terms of Population, Religion, Tourism, Landuse, Transport and Peace and Self Reliance.

It is an established fact that Buddhism has a profound influence on the cultural and religious outlook of the people of India and Southeast Asia. If we look into the possible reasons for this cultural and religious similarity, all the roads will converge to a common point, which is Buddhism. Therefore, it is quite obvious that Buddhism and its related aspect could be the only theme that could fulfill the present goal and it is indeed the right choice to select Buddhism as the central theme of the proposed atlas.

The participating countries other than India and Thailand are Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, and Vietnam and Indonesia.

Background Information:

India is rightly known as the land of rich cultural heritage. The great civilizations like Harappa and Mohanjadaro are the striking evidences to prove its astounding richness that are comparable with the Mesopotamian and Egyptian civilizations. The most remarkable aspect of Indian civilization and culture is the message of compassion and tolerance to all living beings. Many great Indian sages, irrespective of religion or sect, realized the great values of compassion and tolerance, invariably engaged in teaching and spreading the message amongst the people. The age old traditional wisdom that developed over time and being handed over for generations are perhaps the richest documents ever preserved in the cultural archives of the world.

Buddhism is one of the 'oldest and simple to follow' philosophies of life which is being presented to the world by the great Gautama Buddha (563BC to 483BC). This philosophy later took the shape of a religion. The philosophy and teachings of Buddha influenced many nations far and wide.

Originates in India, it spreads to the countries of Southeast Asia, Central Asia and even reached the Mediterranean. Many nations in the South East Asia and Central Asia accepted and patronage Buddhism for its simplicity. They progressed themselves through the path of peace and self-reliance. The adoration of Buddhism helped them immensely in their efforts to build their nation. Buddhism that was born in India and find its way to many parts of the world, however, faced many ideological challenges in the same soil for several reasons. But there is little doubt that Buddhism has a profound effect on the socio-cultural outlook of the people and their attitude towards others.

This project is aimed to compile all the relevant information on Buddhism to present it in the form of an atlas. The very essence of Buddhism, that is '*peace and self-reliance*', will be dealt in a wider perspective and may be given more emphasis on the regional cultural connectivity that prevails amongst the people of India and the ASEAN nations. The period between 500BC and AD14 century will be given more attention for the preparation of the present commemorative atlas.

The primary objectives of the project are

- To identify all the Buddhist sites in India and in the participating nations with the help of high resolution satellite data and to establish the connectivity of regional culture between these nations.
- To explore all the possible routes along which Buddhism spreads from India to other parts of the world.
- To bring out the origin of various schisms of Buddhism in a chronological order.
- To bring out the royal patronages received by Buddhism and the circumstances under which the different royal patronage was received and flourished.
- To explore the possible ways that help spreading of art and paintings of Buddhist period.

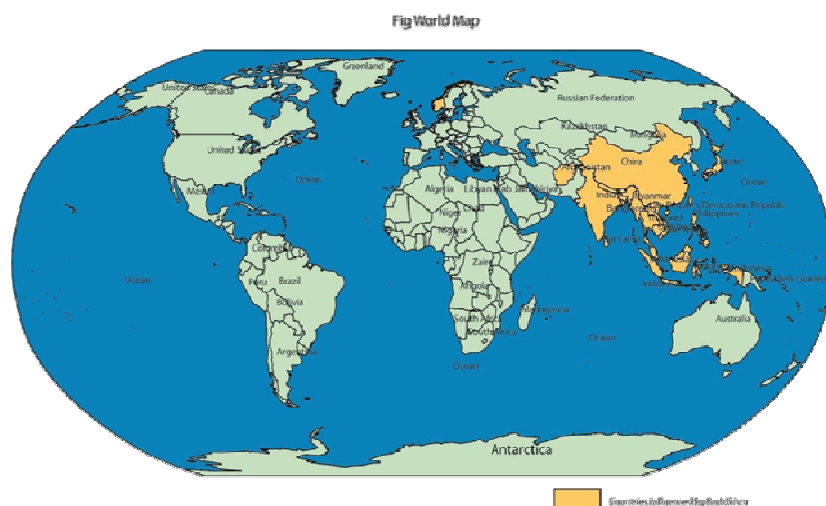
- To explore the cultural and religious similarities and dissimilarities amongst the people of Southeast Asian nations in a geographical perspective and to evaluate its impact on the general cultural aspects and religious beliefs amongst the people at large.

- To find out the impact of Buddhism and the historical developments that followed this religion and the new outlook that influenced the people in shaping and improving the quality of life in the ASEAN region.

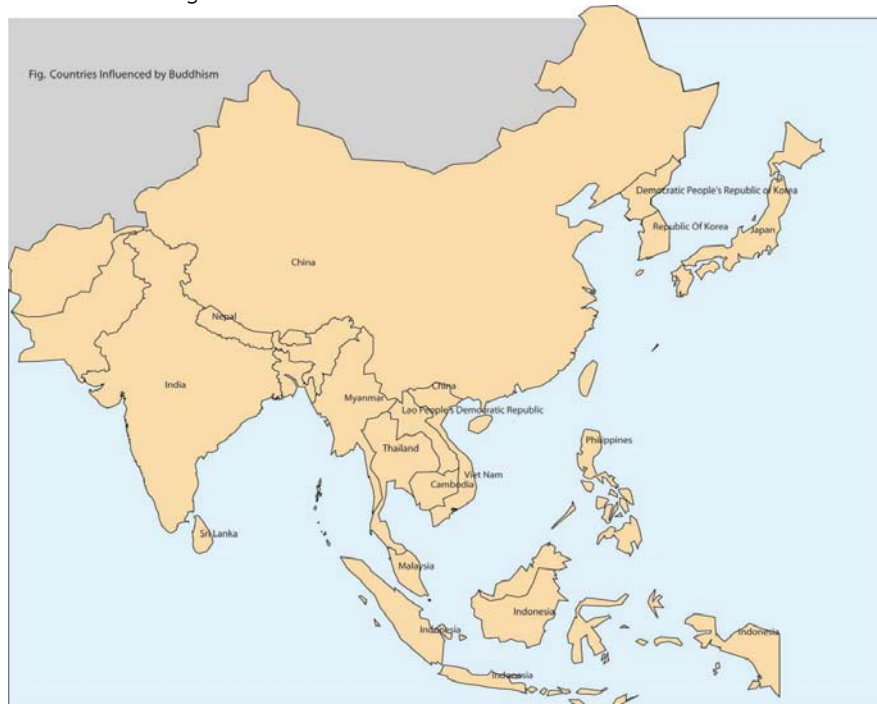
To achieve the said broad objectives a systematic approach has been formulated as discussed below:-

- Since the very concept of the project is preparation of an atlas, as end product, the first and foremost requisite is to fix a suitable dimension of the atlas. Keeping many criteria in mind it has decided to fix the size of the atlas to be 29cm x 37cm.

All the map plates pertaining to the atlas are thus to be fitted in this page size in befitting scales. It is proposed that the atlas will be opened with a world map to have a glimpse on the spread of Buddhism in the world.



To bring the world map on to a page size of 29cm x 37cm a scale of 1: 95,000,000 seems to be a befitting one. This plate supported with a brief write-up on the origin of Buddhism will be followed by a map of all the participating countries which had a geographic extent spanning between the south 10⁰ latitude and north 40⁰ latitude and east longitudes between 60⁰ and



This plate will be brought to a scale of 1: 25M (approx) so as to accommodate perfectly in the fixed page size. On the pre-page of this plate a brief account on the spread of Buddhism in these countries during different periods will be portrayed.

As supporting information to the reader it is intended to add few common plates in the succeeding pages. These plates include:

1. Administrative
2. Physical
3. Climate
4. Population
5. Communication network

These maps also bear the same scale and are also supported by brief descriptions. Administrative set-up of all the participating countries gives firsthand information about the geographical span and the general administrative policies being adopted in each country.

The physical map is to be treated as vital information as it helps us to deduce conclusion about the possible routes followed by the monks and nuns to spread Buddhism in far off places.

The present day communication is so well developed that one need not look back for any comparison. Obviously, the conditions during the olden days were far different as compared to today's scenario and moving from one place to another do not guarantee a safe return. The challenges faced by the brave disciples of Buddha were extremely adventurous and amazing. Therefore it is quite reasonable to add a plate to show the ancient communication routes including the silk route that connects the continents of Asia, parts of Africa and Europe to highlight the routes followed by Buddhists' to spread the holy message among people.

Followed by the above common plates, the growth and spread of Buddhism in different countries will be depicted separately. Cartographical depiction of this information will be shown in different scales and projections and blow-ups of the area of interest that are befitting the predefined atlas page size. This plate will be followed by the Buddhist locations of India, with all necessary input.

The actual theme of the atlas will be starting from here onwards. The initial pages will depict the origin of Buddhism. The following paragraph is a brief narration of the Buddhist related aspects that are likely to depict in the proposed atlas.

Being aware of the controversy or differing opinions raised on the issues of Buddha's birth place, and several related aspects of Buddhism, we

would like to adopt the policy to abide with the general consents to interpret the data. Accordingly we follow the most common belief that is prevalent about the birth of Buddha that He was born to Suddhodhana and Mahamaya of Sakya dynasty at Kapilavastu near Lumbini in 563BC. However, he left all the royal pursuits to find the destiny of man and this event is called Mahabhiskramana or the Great Renunciation. In 528 BC, Buddha, after getting enlightened at Bodhgaya, delivered his first sermon at Saranath, near Varanasi. The concrete message of Buddha that he preached at Saranath can be expressed as the Middle Way. This was attended by his five disciples Kondanna, Vappa, Bhaddiya, Mahanama and Assaji, who then actively engaged themselves in spreading the philosophy of the great truth of life that was revealed to Buddha through enlightenment. Out of the first five disciples Kondanna was said to have achieved the first four stages of transcendent spiritual attainment. This was a turning point in the history of Buddhism as it paved the way for the origin of Sangha and the Triratna or the Holy Triple Gem. Atlas will hold few plates depicting the geographic region of influence where Buddhism spread during this time. After the Parinirvana of Buddha, Buddhism faced several challenges and experiments. The Buddhists assembled four times in different time places where they exchanged heated arguments regarding the philosophical values and meanings and ended in different schisms. Notwithstanding to these schisms, the great emperors of India embraced Buddhism, give royal patronage to it and helped immensely to the growth and spread of Buddhism. These events in the history of Buddhism are considered very inevitable and so it is proposed to append separate plates depicting the above described events to enrich information so as to make the atlas more fruitful.

These plates arranged chronologically may be entitled as follows;

BC 563

Birth of Siddhartha

Four Great Sights

The Great Renunciation

The Enlightenment

Dharmachakrapravarthana (Turning the wheel of sacred law) or the first sermon at Saranath.

Travel Paths of Buddha

Role of Disciples in spreading Buddhism

The Parinirvana

First Great Council was held under the patronage of king Ajatashatru, few days after the cremation of Buddha. The disparaging remarks made by some monks after the Parinirvana forced Mahakasyapa to hold the council to ensure that Dhamma and Vinaya must not get devalued. Evidences suggest that the Council was held in a hall erected outside Saptaparni Cave in Rajgir, where Ananda, Buddha's principle disciple recited the Sutta-pitaka (collection of sermons and doctrines) and others recited Vinaya-pitaka (rules of the order).

The Second Great council held at Vaishali.

Heated debates on the Buddha's original teachings and ended in schisms

Sthaviravadins (Teravadi- Pali) and Mahasanghikas

The Third Great Council held at Pataliputra

This was during the reign of emperor Asoka (304–232 BCE)

Sthaviravadins established as the orthodox doctrine

The Fourth Great Council held at Kashmir during the time of Kanishka (AD 78-103)

Hinayana

Mahayana & Bodhisattva and

Vajrayana

Tantric (Avalokiteswara and Tara)

Lamaism

Zen

Royal Patronages and Growth and Spread of Buddhism
Spread of Buddhism in India
Pre Ashoka period Post Ashoka period

Spread of Buddhism in Northern and Western, and Eastern India

Spread of Buddhism in South India

Spread of Buddhism to other countries

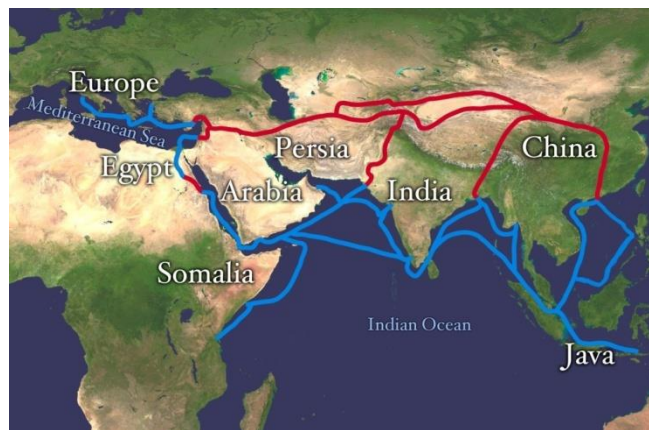


Fig. The routes along which Buddhism spread

Role of Kanishka in spreading Buddhism

Development of other sects in Buddhism

Hinayana

Mahayana & Bodhisattva

Vajrayana

Zen

Tantric (Avalokiteswara and Tara)

Lamaism

Art and Culture (Gandhara, Madhura and Pali)



Sculptures bronze and stones

Paintings

Plates in Brief :

1. World Map showing countries where Buddhism has spread
2. Map of Asian countries where Buddhism spread
3. Map of India and the participating Asean countries
4. Administrative map of all participating countries
5. Physical map
6. Climate map
7. Population
8. Communication map
9. Ancient trade routes connecting the continents
10. Buddhist Monuments in India
11. Buddhist Monuments in different parts of India (in blown ups)
12. Buddhist Monuments in different parts of India (in blown ups)
13. Buddhist Monuments in different parts of India (in blown ups)
14. Buddhist Monuments in different parts of India (in blown ups)
15. Origin of Buddhism 563BC
16. The Great Councils
17. Origin of different sects
18. Spread of Buddhism to other countries
19. Royal Patronages(Ashoka, Kanishka and others)
20. Buddhist Monuments in Vietnam
21. Buddhist Monuments Vietnam(in blown ups, if necessary)
22. Development of various sects
23. Patronages (in different periods)
24. Art and Culture
25. Origin of Buddhism in Indonesia
26. Buddhist routes to Indonesia
27. Buddhist Monuments in Indonesia

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28. Buddhist Monuments Indonesia(in blown ups, if necessary)
 29. Development of various sects
 30. Patronages (in different periods)
 31. Art and Culture
 32. Regional Cultural connectivity

EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT IN ASEAN COMMUNITY: A CASE STUDY OF EDUCATION IN SINGAPORE

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Dr. Lampong Klomkul^{***}

ABSTRACT

This research article studies on educational management in ASEAN community. The purpose of this research is to synthesize the state of educational management in past and present in ASEAN community focuses on a case study of education in Singapore. Qualitative research was used for research design which consisted of documentary study and in-depth interview educators in Singapore. Data were analyzed using content analysis with a triangulation method. Results indicated that educational management in Singapore is focused on education and provision for long life learning and it is a national priority. It aims to help students to discover their own talents, to make the best of these talents and realize their full potential, and to develop a passion for learning. Singaporean students will be trained to achieve 21st century competencies by the encouragement of schools and parents, and they will be practiced to be a confident person, a self-directed learner, an active contributor, and a concerned citizen. Conducting educational research is simultaneously encouraged to contribute proactively to schools in the Singapore system, particularly in building school capacities that includes

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developing new pedagogies, implementing experiential learning modes, and conducting practitioner inquiry. Enhancing student learning experiences in school system will be set for the final goal of research result.

Keywords; Educational Management, ASEAN Community, Education in Singapore

Introduction

The preparation of the readiness into ASEAN community is very important for every organization. They need to prepare for the change that will occur in order to be part of ASEAN community. Educational organization is also needed to prepare for the readiness as well. Modern education and information technology are needed for helping to enhance level of education into international standard especially 7 occupations that will have freely movement between countries within ASEAN community. These seven occupations are doctor, dentist, nurse, engineer, architect, explorers, and accountant. Therefore, the preparation of basic education to students is very important to train their learning skills for the quality of their future occupations. The learning activity that will meet the target of students' achievement should be designed in variety and diversity and should cover 5 learning aspects which are 1) cognitive domain 2) affective domain 3) psychomotor domain 4) process skills, and 5) integration. These aspects or skills of learning activities are usually used in general and worldwide (Khaemane, T., 2007; Editorial department of Wittayajarn Journal, 2011).

Many organizations in each country have prepared for the readiness of entering ASEAN community in 2015 especially the organization that related to educational management. Some countries have issued planning approach and educational development was set for the strategy in order to develop education for produce qualify labors for team working of countries in ASEAN community. Brunei is one of the countries that having encouragement of

students in vocational education to have an efficiency and matches with seven occupations. Philippines is also awakened to study and research in action by using good role of model to be the pattern of doing learning activities as well as Indonesia. Moreover, planning of educational management for the readiness of entering ASEAN community is also happen in Singapore, Cambodia, Malaysia, and Thai (Department of Technical Education, 2008; Ministry of Education, 2012; The World Bank, 2014; Florido, A.M., 2014; Ministry of Education, 2014).

In this paper will focus on educational management in Singapore, which is one of the countries in ASEAN community that having further development of education system and go beyond other ASEAN countries. The main purpose in this paper is to synthesize the state of educational management in past and present in ASEAN community in a case study of education in Singapore. Qualitative research was used for research design which consisted of documentary study and in-depth interview educators in Singapore.

Related Literature on ASEAN and ASEAN Education

From related literature about ASEAN, three pillars of ASEAN are reviewed and the third pillar is related to Educational Management. Detail and information of all three pillars were found as below (Department of strategy and evaluation Bangkok, 2013).

The first pillar is ASEAN Political – Security Community (APSC) which based on peace and security of ASEAN countries are the aims to set up ASEAN Political – Security community. Every country helps each other to solve conflicts by peaceful way. Moreover, cooperation in political and security will bring achievement to ASEAN Countries as follows: 1) to encourage peaceful and security, 2) to build on cooperation to against terrorist, war criminal and prostitution, 3) to reduce confliction between ASEAN

countries and focuses on human rights, 4) to prepare protection for the danger of disaster or natural disaster, 5) to promote political development, and 6) to make closed relationship with another country in ASEAN.

The second pillar is ASEAN Economic Community which based on ASEAN vision that ASEAN would be a single market and production base .To those plans should be successful by the year 2015 which consisted of 5 points such as: 1) ASEAN will be a single market, 2) ASEAN must be higher community in economic, 3) ASEAN will be esquire economy, 4) ASEAN can adapt in world economy, 5) to building AEC, all ASEAN members will be received the usefulness in four aspects which consisted of (1) to be a single market and production base, 573. 9 million people can approach the market, (2) to be Free trade area will increase opportunity to investment, labor among community, (3) development of higher labor, and (4) to help each other in which economic development will reduce the problems of poverty in ASEAN community.

The third pillar is the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community which aims to contribute ASEAN Community to hold up living standard of people who living in this region including building sharing society among ASEAN members in order to 1) ensure awareness and understanding in diversity among people in ASEAN member, 2) develop familiarity and confidence building of ASEAN, 3) develop the unity in region, and 4) build the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community by enhancing every country to make sharing usefulness.

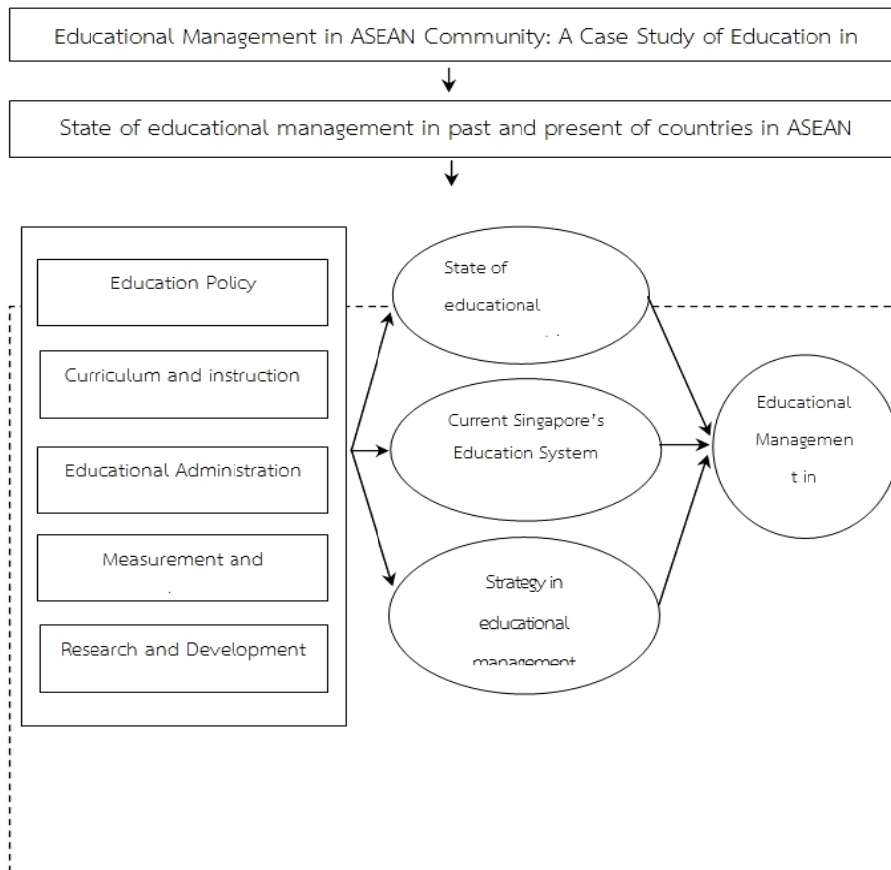
These three pillars will be the main target for all countries in ASEAN community to join in with each other in order to support each other of developing the South East Asia region to live together with harmony, peace, unity and prosperity.

According to the third pillar, Education is related to the development of ASEAN countries. For this reason, each country needs to prepare the best education for their people. Considering from Editorial

department of Wittayajarn Journal (2011), it has presented article called “Enhancing Education using Technology into World Level” for the preparation to enter the ASEAN community which will cause the change and movement of labor and investment. Therefore, educational organization needs to prepare for the readiness as well. Modern education and information technology are needed for enhancing level of education into international standard especially in seven occupations that will have freely movement between countries within ASEAN community. These seven occupations are doctor, dentist, nurse, engineer, architect, explorers, and accountant. Therefore, the preparation of basic education to students is very important to train their learning skills for the quality of their future occupations. In addition, the study of educational management of ASEAN countries found that each country has given education for the first priority of country development and have developed continually. People in all countries should at least graduate in basic education even though the opportunity of learning is not equal to another country. However, each country has tried to provide the opportunity to people to have equal education which depends on the state of society, economy, politics and culture of each country (Ministry of Education, 2006)

Conceptual Framework

From the study of related research and literature review about the state of educational management in ASEAN community and in a case study of education in Singapore, the connection between each variable has been shown as below figure.



Results

Three aspects of the study are shown as the research result on educational management in ASEAN community in a case study of education in Singapore which consisted of 1) State of Education in Singapore, 2) Current Singapore's Educational Management, and 3) Strategy in Educational Management that being shown in the following aspects.

State of Education in Singapore

Educational policy in Singapore, it used to set up the Singapore Institute of Adult Learning and now it has shaping to be the research organization and educational research implementation. It has the timeframe of change into many periods, the importance for the critical point in

educational system in Singapore. Firstly, in 1985, it was the time of memory; it means that the students have to memorize the knowledge from the teacher. Secondly, in 1990, it used to be the time of critical knowledge. Thirdly, in 2003, it used to be the time of research for developing the knowledge. Fourthly, in 2010, it used to be the period of transformative educational system in Singapore. It will be trained the student for 21st century skill by asking the most important question that “what is the best skill for the future students?”

In the above question, the policy maker is reminded about the national identity by building the national identity into the national curriculum. The part of the government budget, the government provided the budget by support the affordable student and give scholarships for student who has the capacity to study in the foreign countries. The national policy maker has to force the Singapore national believe in to the educational system like the best motto at that time as “the best people is the elitism to lead the country”. In order to build up the curriculum to support the social mobility, the educational policy has been changed for two critical points such as, in 1990, it is concentrated in the thinking school, and it used to change from “Teach Less, Learn More” to be the student center learning approach in 2004. In 1984, the knowledge of religious school had expanded because in that time Singapore had the moral crises, and it changed from the religious school to the civic school in 1990. Lastly, the vast transformation from the religious state to the secular state occurred in 1992¹.

Current Singapore’s Educational Management Education System

The Ministry of Education (MOE) aims to help our students to discover their own talents, to make the best of these talents and realize their

¹ Interview, Huang, D. 13th May, 2016: Ng, Pak Tee, 2017.

full potential, and to develop a passion for learning that lasts through life (Ministry of Education, Singapore, 2017).

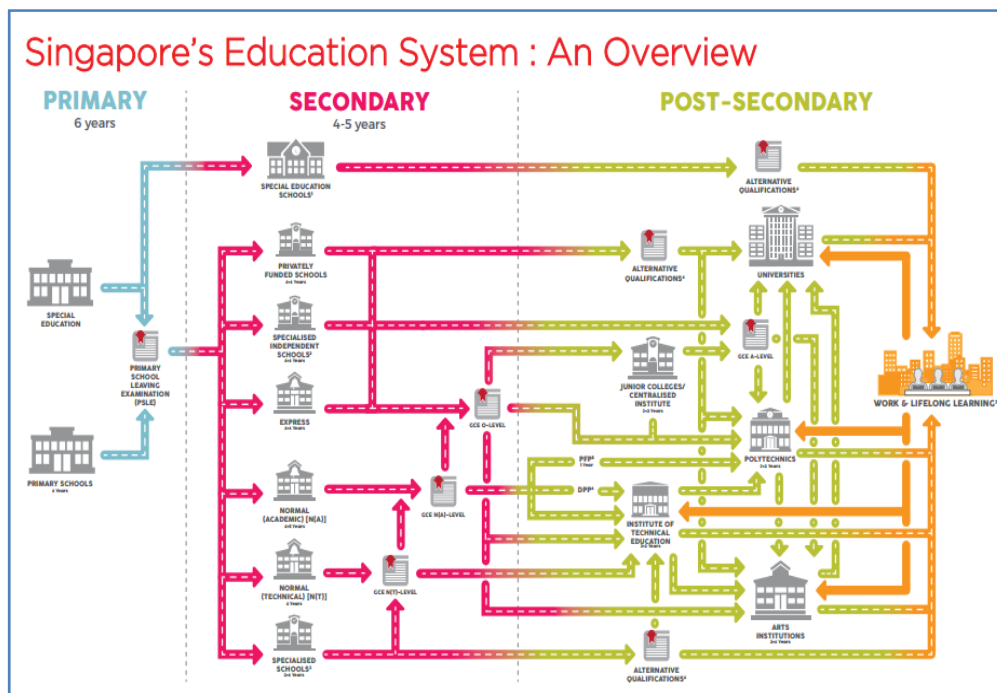


Figure 2 The Singapore Education Landscape

Source: <https://www.moe.gov.sg/education/education-system>

From figure 1 showed that students taking the mainstream curriculum in Pathlight School will sit for the PSLE, and may also sit for the N- or O-Level exams. Specialized schools offer customized programmes for students who are inclined towards hands-on and practical learning. Some also offer N(T)-Level exams. These schools are Northlight School, Assumption Pathway School, Crest Secondary School and Spectra Secondary School. Specialized Independent Schools offer specialized education catering to students with talents and strong interests in specific fields, such as the arts, sports, mathematics and science, and applied learning. These schools are the School of the Arts, Singapore Sports School, National University of Singapore (NUS) High School of Mathematics and Science, and the School of Science

and Technology. Eligible students of the Singapore Sports School can progress directly to Republic Polytechnic. Eligible students of the School of the Arts can pursue a diploma programme at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts via special admissions after their fourth year of study. Alternative Qualifications refer to qualifications not traditionally offered at mainstream schools in Singapore.

The Polytechnic Foundation Programme (PFP) is a diploma-specific foundation programme conducted by the polytechnics over two academic semesters for students who have completed Secondary 4N(A). Students who successfully complete the PFP may progress directly into the first year of their respective polytechnic diploma courses. The Direct-Entry-Scheme to Polytechnic Programme (DPP) is a through-train pathway to polytechnics for students who have completed Secondary 4N(A). DPP students who successfully complete a two-year programme at ITE and attain the required qualifying Grade Point Average (GPA) scores are guaranteed a place in a polytechnic diploma course mapped to their course. Adults and working professionals are encouraged to upskill and reskill through quality learning options in lifelong learning provided by our Institutes of Higher Learning as well as Singapore Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) training providers accredited by the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA).

Singapore has a strong education system and students aim high and achieve very good results. This is recognized around the world. Singapore has good schools, with capable school leaders and teachers, and facilities that are amongst the best in the world. The system tries to build on these strengths for preparing the next generation of Singaporeans for the future. This is a future that brings tremendous opportunity, especially in Asia, but it will also bring many changes that cannot predict today. The task of schools and tertiary institutions is to give the young the opportunity to develop the

skills, character and values that will enable them to continue to do well and to take Singapore forward in the future.

In recent years, the moving towards an education system is more flexible and diverse and aims to provide students with greater choice to meet their different interests and ways of learning. They will be able to choose what and how they learn will encourage them to take greater ownership of their learning. Broad-based education to ensure their all-round or holistic development in and out of the classroom has also been giving to students. These approaches in education will allow education providers to take care the young with the different skills that they need for the future. The system also provides every child find his own talents, and grow and emerge from school confident of his abilities. Students will be encouraged to follow their passions, and promote a diversity of talents among them in academic fields, sports and the arts.

Huang, D. (2016) has additional provided information about education system as follow: it has the basic education from pre-school which means from early childhood that includes the kindergarten school (nursery 1 and 2) and then primary school. In primary school, it should be more academic and low social activity. Ministry of Education has its duty to unify the curriculum such as compulsory school. It will be more social disparity, social challenges and changes, and it is the shadow of education in Singapore. The school has their duty to translate the national agenda and support the future agenda in the country. The agenda from the government has to be the national development such as the safety policy, the transparency, and the manufacture for Singapore. It has to develop the school strategies such as preparing the student for the future job or career opportunity. The school has to set up the environment for studying such as the creative society, the innovation for student and society.

Curriculum and Instruction

In term of teaching and learning, Singaporean students will be encouraged to ask questions and look for answers, willing to think in new ways, solve new problems and create new opportunities for the future. The curriculum has the possibilities to challenges with social issues such as social emotions and slow learner. The assessment tasks focus on the quality of student understanding and are likely to encourage teachers to design instructional tasks. These can provide rich opportunities to learn and encourage high-quality knowledge work and deeper learning. In addition, students are also being trained equally important to build up a set of sound values, so they have the strength of character and resilience to deal with life's inevitable setbacks without being improperly discouraged. As the result, they have the willingness to work hard to achieve their dreams.

Educational Research in Singapore

On the aspect of educational research, National Institute of Education (NIE) used to be the teacher training to be the leadership school and train the person to be the school principal. In 2000, The Nanyang Technological University has autonomous by itself and the NIE used to be the part of that University. It is the practice in the best line by providing the research and service study. In 2008, Singapore has supported educators to conduct research in educational section. In 2013, NIE is the organization that has trained the skilling and translation of educational system in Singapore and set up the importance question concerning the research likes "How does it work in diversity school type?" It has a research ability to conduct and implement the educational system into the community. In the future, the year 2018, NIE will focus in the impact of the research and set the model of research and implement it into the school such as the school practice. It will

be the time of transformative NIE itself, will be the time to extension and implementation the research project and NIE is the institute that supported by the government of Singapore and National Research Fund of this country. In terms of ASEAN, it will be focus on national discourse, national policy, and national economy².

The Office of Education Research (OER) housed within NIE takes charge of education research in Singapore. Educational Research at NIE is guided by the Research and Development Framework, a policy-driven, evidence-based framework that guides academic and research staff to improve the quality of teaching and learning in Singapore schools and to build on NIE's standing as a leading international research institution in order to enhance partnerships with key stakeholders including MOE, MOE Academies, clusters and schools, to grow teaching and research impact³.

Strategy in Educational Management

Strategy in educational management, Singapore has the education system that provides for lifelong learning and it is a national priority. Structure and system that is relevant and responsive to the ever-changing economic and social landscape is also focus for the development of educational management. Ministry of Education (MOE) also has constant plans and reviews of educational policies aiming to prepare young Singaporeans for the knowledge-based economy and sustain Singapore's world competitiveness standing. It is important to strengthen national identity, values, and social cohesion in order to sustain Singapore's multi-racial and multi-cultural society. In addition, to help our students succeed in a fast-changing world; MOE has identified competencies that have become increasingly important in

² Interview, Huang, D. 13th May, 2016.

³ Interview, Low Ee Ling, 15th May, 2016.

the 21st Century. These competencies, represented in the following framework, underpin the holistic education that our schools provide to better prepare our students for the future. It is predicted that schools and parents need to work hand-in-hand to help students develop these 21st century competencies as shown in below figure.

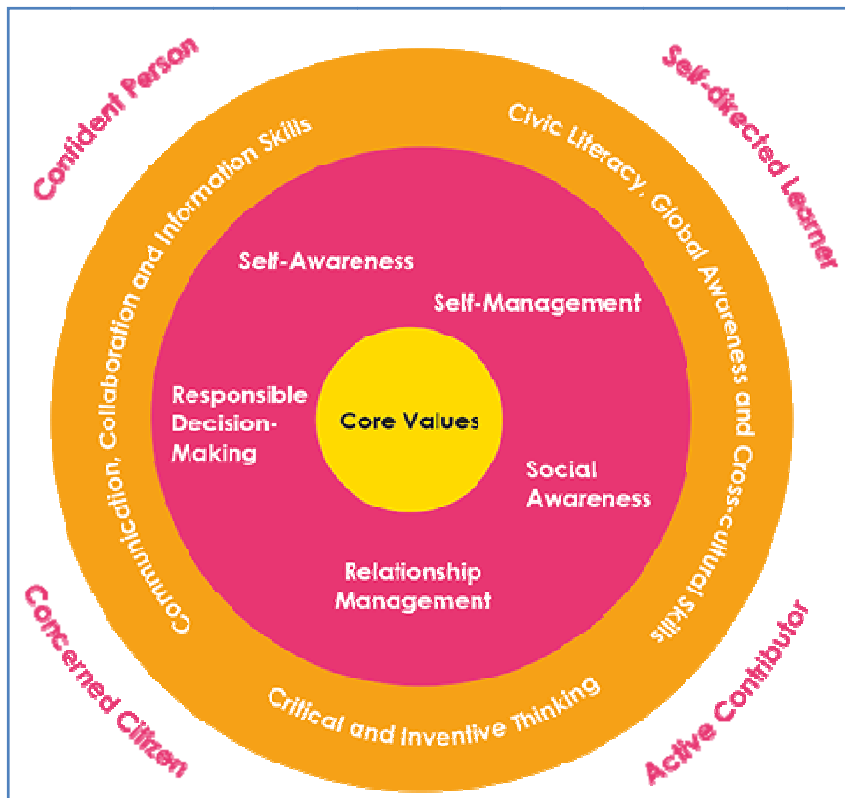


Figure 3 Framework for 21st Century Competencies and Student Outcomes

Source: <https://www.moe.gov.sg/education/education-system/21st-century-competencies>

Conclusion and Future Works

Educational management in Singapore is focused on education and provision for long life learning and it is a national priority. It aims to help students to discover their own talents, to make the best of these talents and

realize their full potential, and to develop a passion for learning that lasts through life. Singaporean students will be trained to achieve 21st century competencies by the encouragement of schools and parents, and they will be practiced to be a confident person, a self-directed learner, an active contributor, and a concerned citizen. At the same time, National Institute of Education (NIE) researchers are encouraged to contribute proactively to schools in the Singapore system, particularly in building school capacities around areas that include developing new pedagogies, implementing experiential learning modes, and conducting practitioner inquiry. The end goal of partnerships is to enhance student learning experiences in school system.

For future works, this research project will develop framework of trends in educational management for the unity of countries in ASEAN community, and to propose trends and set strategy of educational management for peace of countries in ASEAN community.

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THE TWO TRUTHS IN BUDDHIST THOUGHT

Dr. Niraj Ruangsarn and others*

ABSTRACT

This research paper aims at examining the relation of the two truth conceptions in Theravada Buddhism and four tenet systems recognized by the Geluk Order of Tibetan Buddhism as authentic formulations of Buddha teaching namely: *Vaibhāṣika* (or *Sarvāstivāda*), *Suātrāntika*, *Cittamātra* (or *Yogācāra*) and *Madhyamika*. The investigation suggests that in Theravada Pāli canon, there is only one truth which can be discerned by the wisdom of mental development (Pāli: *bhāvanāmayapaññā*, wisdom resulting from mental development). When the terms direct and indirect teachings are referred to the conventional and ultimate phenomena, one truth becomes two. The clear distinction of the double truths appears in Pāli commentaries, possibly composed with the correspondence to the Abhidhamma texts. In the four tenet systems, the notion of two truths becomes more complicated when they are discussed in the sense of learning phenomenon entities. The true phenomena can separate different essential natures or share the same essential nature depending on the philosophical analysis of the viewers. The concepts of two truths therefore remain controversial. However, the benefits of this study may simplify the understanding of the world phenomena based on the various Buddhist tenet systems.

Keywords; Two truths, Buddhist thought

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Overview

All Hinayana and Mahayana tenet systems assert the two truths (*bden-pa gnyis*). Regardless of how the tenet systems define and delineate them, the two truths always constitute a dichotomy (*dnegos-'gal*). All knowable phenomena must be members of the set of either one or the other true phenomena, with nothing knowable that belongs to either both or neither of the sets. Consequently, understanding the two truths constitutes understanding all knowable phenomena (Berzin, 2006, p. Online; Harris, 1991).¹

Based on the Tibetan Buddhist, history depicts that the understanding of the double truths was as categories of all the objects in the universe or as the modes of objective reality. As the result of this, the debates of two truths were moved far away from the discussion of the status of the scripture and statement. Now, the debate has been seen as the categories of objective phenomena. This causes the debate of the two truths as the debates about which scriptures or statements needed interpretation (Buescher, 2005, pp. 7-8). So, the varieties of the two truths' interpretation have been philosophically written according to the different Buddhist schools. Each system of Buddhist philosophy has its own way of explanation of what exactly these two truths are and how they relate to one another

¹ Berzin Archives is a German non-profit society in the public domain. Dr. Alexander Berzin, born in 1944 in Paterson, New Jersey, received his B.A. degree in 1965 from the Department of Oriental Studies, Rutgers University in conjunction with Princeton University; and his M.A. in 1967 and Ph.D. in 1972 from the Departments of Far Eastern Languages (Chinese) and Sanskrit and Indian Studies, Harvard University. From 1969 to 1998, he resided primarily in Dharamsala, India, initially as a Fulbright Scholar, studying and practicing with masters from all four Tibetan Buddhist traditions.

(Newland, 1999, p. 8). According to this, the interpretations of the two truths have been controversial. In order to obtain better comprehension, this paper aims to examine the relation of the two truth conceptions in Theravadic Buddhism and four tenet systems recognized by the Geluk Order of Tibetan Buddhism as authentic formulations of Buddha teaching: namely, *Vaibhāṣika* (or *Sarvāstivāda*), *Suātrāntika*, *Cittamātra* (or *Yogācāra*) and *Madhyamika* (Newland, 1999, p. 11). By doing so, this research paper will discuss the conception of the two truths in Theravada Buddhism at the beginning and thereafter the conception of two truths in the four tenet system will be comparatively discussed. An analytical result of two truths' investigation will be finally shown as the conclusion.

The two truths in Theravada Buddhism

In general, there are at least three important facts of the two truths in Theravada Buddhism. It needs discussion. First, there is only truth in Theravada Buddhism, which relates to the concepts of four noble truths. According to Harris (1991, p. 84), the Pāli text of the first turning (or Theravada Buddhism) indicates the notion that the truth is unitary as the Sutta Nipāta says:

There is one truth without a second. People, being confused on this point claim there to be many truths. (Sn: 884)

Although one truth mostly refers to the supra-mundane truth (*ariya-sacca*) or the four noble truths in Theravada, Harris (1991, p. 85) relates the one truth to the concept of *yathābhūta* (as it is) theory. He quotes the passage where the Buddha's teaching can be related to the 'as it is' theory as follow,

When in fact there is next world, the belief occurs to me that there is no next world that would be a false belief...when in fact there is a next world; the belief occurs

to me that there is a next world that would be a true belief
(*sammāditthi*). (M.i. 402-3)

Harris states (1991, p. 85) that the below passage is clearly related to ‘as it is’ notion. He opines,

The statements that do not accord with the way things truly are must be false. While if they conform to the *yathābhūta* theory, these statements must be true. He (Buddha) further says that if something is said to be *yathābhūtam* it must be true for it corresponds with reality (*bhūta*).

However, to quote the statement of the notion of the right view (*sammāditthi*) is a member of the noble eightfold path (*ariyaatthangikamagga*) of the four noble truths and translate it in the way that supports his perspective may confuse the readers. Hence, to understand the connection of one truth to ‘as it is’ notion, one would say that the statement of one truth, which corresponds to the four noble truths, is the true statement because of it corresponds with reality. In addition, one truth also corresponds to the ‘as it is’ theory in the sense that the four noble truths have already existed as it is. Even if Buddha has come to recover the truth or not, it has already existed as it is. In addition, the ability to understand the truth as it is depends on one’s wisdom (*paññā*). The lowest understanding comes from wisdom of thinking (*cintāmayapaññā*) and also the wisdom of learning (*sutamaya-paññā*) such as logic and philosophy. The highest understanding of the truth discerns from the wisdom of mental development (*bhāvanāmayapaññā*) (Nyanatiloka, 2002, p. 122). When practitioners obtain the wisdom through mental development such as ‘the knowledge of the truths as they are’ (*sacca-ñāna*) (Payutto, 2004, p. 86), they can fully

understand the four noble truths; in other word; they discerns the noble truths (*Ariyasacca-dassana*) (Payutto, 2004, p. 227).

In the next aspect, because of the popularity of two truths in later tenet systems, there is only one truth in earliest Buddhist doctrine. By the comparative study, some scholars say that the ‘two truths’ doctrine in early Buddhism was used in pedagogical purposes. In so doing, some (McCagney, 1997, p. 82) refer to the passage in Anguttara Sutta where the Buddha states that,

There are these two who misrepresent the *Tathāgata*. Which who? He who represents a *Sutta* of indirect meaning as a *Sutta* of direct meaning and he who represents a *Sutta* of direct meaning as a *Sutta* of indirect meaning. (A.i.60)

As the result of this, they point out that the ‘direct meaning’ refers to ultimate point of view; while, the ‘indirect meaning’ refers to the conventional view point. It is to be noted that this passage concerns the concepts of the two truths in the way of saying (*kathā*), speaking (*vāda*) and teaching (*desanā*) of the truths. It actually does not confirm to what the truths are. To support this point, with the philological analysis, Karunadasa (2009, p. 2) relates the theory of two truths to the four kinds of knowledge in the Sangīti-sutta of the Dīghanikāya where the Sutta mentions four knowledge: (a) the direct knowledge of the doctrine (*dhamme ñāna*), (b) the inductive knowledge of the doctrine (*anvaye ñāna*), (c) knowledge of analysis (*paricchede ñāna*), and (d) the knowledge of (linguistic) convention (*summuti-ñāna*). The close parallelism between the latter pair of knowledge referred here and the Theravada theory of the two truths as *summuti* and *paramattha* is fairly obvious. He says (2009, p. 2):

For *paramattha* is based on the analysis (*pariccheda*) of what is amenable to analysis. In the point of fact, what is

called *paramattha* (ultimate, absolute) is the result of *pariccheda* (analysis). So knowledge if analysis (*parrichede-ñāna*) could be understood to mean the ability to resolve what appears as substantial and compact into its elementary constituents. This exactly is what the *dhamma* theory is. On the other hand, *sammuti-ñāna*, which is the knowledge of linguistic conventions, could be understood to mean the ability to know that what appears as substantial and compact, yet analyzable, is not something ultimately real and therefore that it is apart of consensual reality (*sammuti*).

However, the philological analysis becomes complicated by the fact that Buddhists used a variety of terms referring to the different kinds of knowledge, such as *jñāna*, *prajñā*, *abhijñāna*, *vijñāna*, *vidyā*, *satya*, *dharma*, *dr̥ṣṭi*, *vikalpa*, *saṃkalpa*, *parikalpika*, *paratantra* and *pariniṣpanna-lakṣaṇa* (Streng, 1971, p. 263). This suggests that there is a need of the philological analysis in particular how these terms were used in the contexts of the early Pāli texts that may relate the notion of the truths.

Third, the concept of two truths becomes clear in the Pāli commentaries which possibly be written based on the self doctrine in Abhidharma. The three Pāli commentaries (AA, DA, and SA) differentiate the two truths into the two kinds of speech (*kathā*): conventional speech (*sammuti-kathā*) and ultimate speech (*paramattha-kathā*). The conventional speech refers to living being such as beings, gods and Brahman. The ultimate speech refers to impermanence, suffering, egolessness, the aggregates of the empiric individuality, the sphere and elements of sense perception and mind-cognition, bases of mindfulness, right effort etc. The Buddha preached conventionally or ultimately depending on the capacity of the pupils as well as the suitability of the occasion (Karunadasa, 2009, p. 77). This commentarial

interpretation has a close relation to the doctrines of person (*puggala*) which was previously mentioned in Abhidharma such as the doctrine of aggregates (*khandha*), sense bases (*āyatana*) and element (*dhātu*) of cognition.² According to this similarity, some scholars argue that the Pāli commentarial literature possibly draws on the Abhidharma in its attempt to make the distinction of the terms (Harris, 1991, p. 86).

Two truths in the four tenet systems

The notion of double truth becomes more complicated when they are brought to discuss in the sense of phenomenon entities. The conventional truth is a true fact about a phenomenon that veils or conceals a deeper true fact about the same phenomenon. It is also called as superficial, relative, apparent, or surface truth or worldly convention.³ The ultimate truth is a true fact about a phenomenon that is veiled or concealed by a more superficial true fact about the same phenomenon. Some translators render this term as deepest truth (Berzin, 2006, p. Online). Although the general meaning of the terms seems to be acceptable for all four tenet systems, the explanation of ‘what two truths are’ and ‘how they are connected’ are different. Berzin contrasts the major differences of the terms in Mahayana and Hinayāna that:

In the Hinayana systems of Vaibhashika⁴ and Sautrantika, the two truths are two sets of true phenomena. In technical terms, the two types of true phenomena have different

² See the *Samyuttanikāya* (=S), PTS Vol. III, p.52.

³ It is to be noted here that the term ‘*sammuti*’ in *pāli* is derived from the root ‘*man*’, to think, and when prefixed with ‘*sam*’, it means consent, convention and general agreement. On the other hand, the term ‘*samvṛti*’ is derived from the root ‘*vr*’, to cover, and when prefixed with ‘*sam*’, it means covering or concealment.

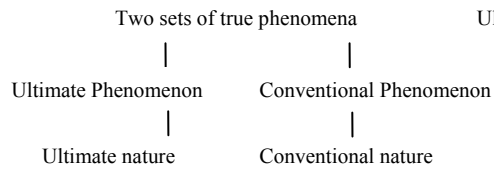
⁴ *Samghabhadra* (sixth century C.E.), a *Vaibhāṣika* writer and critic of *Vasubandhu’s Abhidharmakośa*, explains the connection of the double truths and Buddha’s teaching (Buescher, 2005, p. 60) that:

essential natures (*ngo-bo tha-dad*): they are essentially two different types of things.

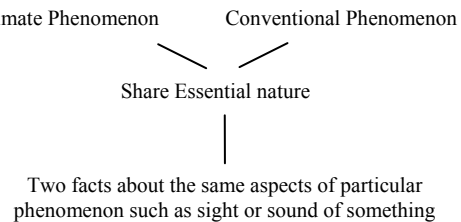
In the Mahayana systems of Chittamatra and Madhyamaka, the two truths share the same essential nature (*ngo-bo gcig*). They are two true facts about the same aspect of a particular phenomenon: such as about the sight of something or about the sound of something. (Berzin, 2006)

He explains that these main distinctions of both traditional presentations of the two truths that “whether or not the two truths share the same essential nature, an essential nature (*ngo-bo*) is the basic type of phenomenon that something is, such as something being a sight, a sound, or a way of being aware of something”. (Berzin, 2006)

***Hinayāna* Tenet system**



***Mahāyāna* Tenet system**



Main difference between the *Hinayāna* and *Mahāyāna* presentation of the two truths according to Berzin

In order to profoundly explain the different interpretations of the two truths in four tenet systems, Berzin exemplifies how each tenet system views on one item such as a hand that in Hinayana tenet systems, on one hand, when one examines a hand with a mind valid (valid cognition: *tshad-ma*) for cognizing of conventional true phenomena, one recognizes one type of phenomena. On the other hand, one examines for the cognition of ultimate true phenomena by the mind valid, one cognizes another type of

phenomena. In *Vaibhāṣika* system, in brief, s/he ontologically cognizes either a material hand (conventional part) or the smallest particles (ultimate part) that it was made of or in other word s/he cognizes the smallest composition of a hand. In the *Sautrāntika* system, one recognizes epistemologically either the category ‘hand’ or the material hand. The material obscures the particles, and the category obscures the material hand.

In *Mahāyāna* tenet system, when one examines a hand for the cognition of the conventional true phenomena by the mind valid, s/he cognizes what a hand appears to be and how it appears as it exist. When s/he examines for the cognition of the ultimate true phenomena by the mind valid, s/he cognizes how the hand actually exists. In *Chittamātra* and *Madhyamaka* system, s/he cognizes either a hand or its voidness (emptiness) of existing in an impossible way. Generally speaking, they view the emptiness as the inherent nature of the hand and the two truths of the hand as one entity. Newland also explains that the Great Vehicle tenet systems teach that the subtle and profound emptiness realized on the Bodhisattva path is an ultimate truth (Newland, 1999, p. 38). It is the negative phenomenon: in other words, it is the mere absence of a certain type of self in phenomena. However, various *Mahāyāna* tenet systems disagree about the kind of existence that emptiness negates. For instance, *Chittamātra* (mind only) argues that emptiness is the absence of a difference of entity between an object and the mind recognizing it. The Middle Way Consequence system (Newland, 1999, pp. 10-11)⁵ says that the emptiness is the absence of inherent existence. Anyhow, the *Mahāyāna* tenet systems agree that the subtle emptiness is an ultimate truth and a quality present in all phenomena.

⁵ In the Middle Way schools, there are subdivisions of such as the Middle Way Autonomy and Middle Way Consequence branches of the Middle Way School, the Followers of Scripture and the Followers of Reasoning within the *Sūtra* school etc.

This means everything that exists is devoid of whatever type of existence emptiness negates. Also, the conventional truths include all phenomena other than emptiness. All of these phenomena are necessarily empty but they are empty because they lack a certain type of existence. Then he makes a conclusion as follow.

Since conventional truths have the quality of being empty, and since emptiness is an ultimate truth, it follows that ultimate truths and conventional truths are distinct, mutually exclusive phenomena that exist inseparably, right together as a single entity. (Newland, 1999, p. 39)

In conclusion, according to above investigation as suggested in Theravada Pāli canon, there is only one truth which can be discerned by the wisdom of mental development. When the terms direct and indirect teachings are referred to the conventional and ultimate phenomena, one truth becomes two. The clear distinction of the double truths appears in Pāli commentaries possibly composed with the correspondence to the *Abhidharma* texts. In four tenet systems, the notion of two truths becomes more complicated when they are discussed in the sense of knowing of phenomenon entities. The true phenomena can separate different essential natures or share same essential nature depending on the philosophical analysis of the viewers. Therefore, the concepts of two truths are still controversial. However, the benefits of this study may simplify the understanding of the world phenomena based on the various Buddhist tenet systems. The Dalai Lama suggests that to understand Buddhism one should begin with understanding of the two truths (Newland, 1999, p. 7), similarly Nagārjuna suggests the same direction in the chapter 24 of the *Madhyamakakārikā* that,

The doctrine of the Buddhas is taught with reference to two truths- conventional (*lokasaṃvṛtisatya*) and ultimate (*paramārthasatya*). Those who do not understand the difference between these two truths do not understand the profound essence (*tattva*) of the

doctrine of the Buddha. Without dependence on everyday practice (*vyavahāra*) the ultimate is not taught. Without resorting to the ultimate, *nirvāṇa* is not attained. If emptiness is coherent then all is coherent. If the emptiness is not coherent then likewise all is not coherent (Williams, 1989, p. 69).

However, the suggestion of the Dalai Lama is not complete yet because his suggestion does not refer to which tenet system one should start to learn and believe. He has not given solution to the possibility of tenet systems reliability, its role as a tool in learning truths. Further he has not pointed to the importance of tool in learning the two truths. Do we really learn the two truths by only philosophy?

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TWO PERSPECTIVES OF BUDDHIST ECONOMICS

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ABSTRACT

This paper has an attempt to bring out perspectives of Buddhist economics as interpreted from Buddhist texts by modern Buddhist scholars. Buddhist Economics got a stimulus from E.F. Schumacher, who disillusioned with Western development models. He sees Right Livelihood in the Eight-fold Path, in other words, the Buddhist way of life, as a necessary step of a Buddhist economics. There are, according to Buddhist scholars, two levels of Buddhist economics, viz., Macro-Economics and Micro-Economics. The former, according to Buddhist scholars, is the Buddha's advices, existing in various discourses from Buddhist texts, given to the king and the administrative officers to provide adequate livelihood to citizen of state. The latter is the four prerequisites (*caturpaccyas*), the Buddha prescribes to his followers to observe, and the teachings related to appropriate living Buddha advised to the individuals in society to follow. In short, Buddhist Economics is the Middle path economics that does not harm oneself or others. From a Buddhist perspective, economic principles are related to the three interconnected aspects of human existence: human beings, society and the natural environment. Economic activity must take place in such a way that it doesn't harm oneself (by causing a decline in the quality of life) and does not harm others.

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Keywords; Buddhist Economics, Macro-Economics, Micro-Economics, Livelihood (*SammāAjiva*)

Introduction

Economics is the fundamental principle of existence and subsistence of human beings. If there is no proper management of economy, it is hard for a man to secure a happy and prosperous life. Economics, thus, plays a vital role in maintaining a social equilibrium. Recently, Buddhist scholars have sought to define and articulate the Buddhist economics from the Buddha's teaching. Apparently, Buddhist Economics got a stimulus from E.F. Schumacher, who disillusioned with Western development models. Schumacher looks to the Buddhist teaching of Right Livelihood in the Eight-fold Path, in other words, the Buddhist way of life, as a necessary step of a Buddhist economics. For him, the goals of economics should be health, beauty, permanence and productivity: a simple society of simple technology.¹

Apichai Puntasen² articulates that Buddhist Economics means the application of the Buddha's teachings to economics leading to the understanding of the real nature of human beings and the relationships between human beings and nature. For him, Buddhist Economics is the subject of the science of economics as it is understood by one who knows an awakened one or an enlightened one without any limitation to the person's religious beliefs.

¹ See E.F. Schumacher, **Small is Beautiful: A Study of Economics as if people Mattered**, (London: Vintage Books, 1993) pp.38-46.

² ApichaiPuntasen, **Buddhist Economics: Evolution, Theories and Its Application to Various Economic Subjects**, (Bangkok: Amarin Press, 2004), pp.7-8

P.A. Payutto³ has articulated that idea of Buddhist Economics is not so much a self-contained science, but one of a number of interdependent disciplines working in concert toward the common goal of social, individual and environmental well-being. Further, he adds, Economic values in Buddhism are concerned with quality of life, not only in terms of material comfort, but also in terms of mental wellbeing and ultimately liberation of the mind from negative latent tendencies.

Thus Buddhist Economics aims at synthesizing the traditional Buddhism with modernization. The neglect of ethical side of the religion may lead to cultural disintegration. Buddhist scholars have regarded the middle way as neither extreme capitalism nor Marxist economics⁴

Two Perspectives of Buddhist Economics

According to Buddhist scholar, the Buddha's teaching is relevant to modern economics, viz., *Macro-Economics* and *Micro-Economics*.⁵ The former, according to Buddhist scholars, is the Buddha's advices, existing in various discourses from Buddhist texts, given to the king and the administrative officers to provide adequate livelihood to citizen of state. The latter is the four prerequisites (*caturpaccyas*), the Buddha prescribes to his followers to observe, and the teachings related to appropriate living Buddha advised to the individuals in society to follow. In the following section we shall discuss these two kinds of Buddhist economics.

³ Buddhist Economics: **A Middle Way for the market place, Chapter One translated by Dhammavijaya and Bruce Evans**, compiled by Bruce Evans and Jourdan Arenson, online-book, [Accessed: 06/08/2016].

⁴ J.K. Sharma, **Economics Ethics in Buddhism: Implication for World culture: Papers at the International conference on Contribution of Buddhism**, [Mumbai: Somaiya Publication, 2006].

⁵ Phadet Dattajeevo, <http://www.urbandharma.org/udharma5/buddhisteco.html>. [Accessed:06/08/2016].

1. Buddhist Macro-Economics

The interpretation of Buddhist text from the modern Buddhist scholars' point of view is that Buddhist Macroeconomics is put forwards through the discourse the Buddha advised to the heads of states, for example, in *CakkavattiSutta* of *DighaNikāya*.⁶ This sutta clearly states the relationship between economics and politics, according to which, the Buddha has stated the principle to be observed by world monarch. All universal monarchs' duties may be included under five categories; they are:

(i) *Dhammādhipeyya*: holding *Dhamma* to be the supreme principle; the ruler adheres to truth, righteousness, goodness, reason, principle and rightful rules and regulations as standards.

(ii) *Dahmmikāraḅhā*: providing righteous protection; he provides fair protection to all groups of people in the land.

(iii) *Māadhammakāra*; prohibiting unrighteous actions; he arranges preventive and remedial measures against exploitation, oppression, corruption, or unrest in the country; he encourages the people to establish themselves firmly in honesty and virtue and also establishes a system that excludes bad people and promotes good ones.

(iv) *Dhanānuppadāna*: distributing resources to the poor, he ensures that there are no poverty-stricken people in the land by arranging that all people have a chance to make an honest living.

(v) *Paripucchā*: not failing to seek counsel; he seeks advancement in wisdom and virtue by having advisors who are learned and virtuous, who are morally upright and not heedless or self-indulgent, and who can help him to cultivate his wisdom and wholesome qualities.⁷

⁶ D.III. 58-77

⁷ P.A.Payutto, *Buddhist Economics: A Middle Way for the Market Place*, Dham mavijaya and Bruce Evans (tr.), (Bangkok: Buddhadhamma Foundation, 1998), pp. 29-30.

Out of the five duties of a universal monarch as stated above, the fourth one has the direct concern with economics, according to which, the universal monarch has to distribute his property to his subjects, inspiring them to lead righteous life and making them abide by law and order. When a monarch fails to perform his duty in a state, there would be a lot of trouble such as poverty, ill health, unemployment, immoral lifestyle etc. The citizen would undergo untold sufferings. However, the king who performs his duties well in accordance with the duties of universal monarch but fails to improve the economic depression finds that in his states; the rich gets richer; but the poor suffers increasingly. The poor even resort to rebellion and protest, thereby becoming a hindrance to the stability of the state. Moreover, poverty is the main cause of many evil deeds such as adultery, cheating, stealing, killing, and so forth. Above all, where the economic condition of states is very poor and low, there the citizens tend to neglect morality and commit wrong deeds.(D. III. 65-66).

Moreover, the discourse Buddhist scholars much discuss the teaching of the Buddha about economics *isKūṭadantaSutta*⁸ which emphasizes that the economics is considered as the substratum of the state. Unless the economy in the state was properly taken care of, the causes for the ruin of the state may gradually increase in such a way that the king finds it difficult to subdue and gets rid of the problem. Hence, it was the duty of the ruler to pay due attention to the economic condition. Therefore, in the *KūṭadantaSutta*, it is mentioned that a king has to perform his duties regularly and assure the best administration and justice. He has to review the economic condition of his people and see that no citizen in his kingdom suffers from poverty. When there are no thieves, no robbers in the state, because the economic condition is good, then these citizens attend regularly to their own occupation and create no hindrance and troubles to the kingdom.

⁸ D. I. 127-149; 65-66

Thus, It would be said that there cannot be good government without good economic background. The salient feature of Buddhist macroeconomics is that the governor of state should adopt either the righteousness-based economic system or the righteousness based political system; on the other hand, the citizen of the state should abide by law and order of the state and follow right livelihood.

2. Buddhist Micro-Economics

As stated above, the Buddhist micro-economics could be seen through two dimensions of the Buddhist doctrines. One is the codes for the monastic Order (*Sangha*) that the Buddha prescribed for the lifestyle of monk and nun in their life, second is the way to live appropriately for the individuals in society, the Buddha give advices to the people in many occasion. From now on, we shall discuss these two kinds of Buddhist micro-economics--The monastic order way of living and the individual way of living.

2.1 the Monastic Order Way of Living

The Buddha lays down the *Vinaya* or monastic codes for the monastic Order (*Sangha*) for the Buddhist monks and Buddhist nuns for the sake of their happy lives throughout. There are four requisites in monastic codes--food, clothing, shelter and medicine. In essence, all of the teachings concerning the four requisites are nothing but the teachings on economics.⁹ According to the Buddhist monastic tradition, having obtained the four requisites for livelihood from the support of laypersons, the monks have to reflect them wisely before using them. In other words, the monks should utilize the requisites for the sake of living only. They have utilized them not for maintaining a beautiful physique, not for the enjoyment or entertainment of life.¹⁰

Buddhist monks are always advised by the Buddha to reflect wisely

⁹ P.A.Payutto, 29-30

¹⁰ M.I.10; A.II.27

before utilizing the four requisites viz. the robe, food, lodging and medicine whatsoever obtained, whether they are good or bad. It is rightly said that the Buddha is the religious leader who is the advocate of the austerity and introduced it into the disciplines of the Order. Further, the economic concept of Buddhism is introduced on the line of the concept of moderation (*mattaññuta*). The moderation is not only the principle to be observed by the monks, but laypersons as well.

Therefore, livelihood of the monk is set to be the model for the laypersons; they can have only few types of equipment that they can carry with them, as the Buddha states: “The monk is content with sufficient robes to protect the body and sufficient alms food for his body’s needs. Wherever he may go, he takes just these with him, just as a bird on the wing, wherever it may fly, flies only with the load of its wings.^{11,}”

To summarize, the Buddhist economics as depicted in the code of conduct of the monastic order, especially to that of four requisites of living, viz. robe, food, shelter, and medicine. The livelihood of the Buddhist monks depends solely on layperson’s support, and therefore, their livelihood should set a model and inspire respect and reverence by the laypersons. In this connection, there is a statement in the *Dhammapada*: “One should not despise what one has received, nor envy the gains of others. The monk who envies the gains of others does not attain to meditative absorption^{12,}” and: “A monk who does not despise what he has received, even though it be little, who is pure in livelihood and unremitting in effort, him even the gods praise.^{13,}”

¹¹ A. II. 209

¹² Dhp.: 365

¹³ Ibid. 366

2.2 The Individual Way of Living

1. Principle Conducive to Benefits in the Present (*Diitthadhammikatttha-sanvattanikadhamma*)

In the *AṅguttaraNikāya*. In this discourse, the Buddha explains in detail the ‘Principle conducive to benefits in the present’ (*diitthadhammikatttha-sanvattanikadhamma*). These principles are mentioned as (i) Endowment of industry (*Utthāna-sampadā*), (ii) Endowment of protection (*Ārakkha-sampadā*), (iii) Association with good friend (*Kalyāṇamittatā*), and (iv) Balanced life-style (*Samajīvitā*).¹⁴

a.) Endowment of Industry (*Utthāna-Sampadā*)

The first principle states that a man should be energetic, industrious apply oneself to one’s duties, and be responsible to one’s work in order to earn the righteous livelihood through righteous action, righteous speech and righteous thought. A man trains himself in such a way that he acquires skills and true knowledge to manage and perform his work as the Buddha had mentioned this point in the *Dhammapada*: “Ever grows the glory of him who is energetic, mindful and pure in conduct, discerning and self-controlled, righteous and heedful.”¹⁵

b) Endowment of Protection (*Ārakkha-Sampadā*)

This principle prescribed that a man has to protect or keep the properties or wealth that has already been earned through his righteous works and his own labour. He should not waste his wealth and lose it by carelessness, as it is said in the *AṅguttaraNikaya*: “Now how can I arrange so that rajahs may not get this wealth out of me, nor thieves filch it, nor fire consume it, nor water carry it off, nor ill-disposed heirs make off with it?”¹⁶

¹⁴ A.IV.280-288

¹⁵ Dhp.: 24

¹⁶ A.I. IV. 281

The Buddha further stated the principle leading to the prosperity and longevity of family, which is called '*Kula-cira~~tt~~thi-dhamma*' (causes for a family's prosperity and longevity). According to this principle, those householders who manage to attain prosperity and assure stability and longevity to their own families should adopt the four supportive means as the guidelines. These are described as, (i) seeking for what is lost, (ii) repairing what is worn out (iii) moderation in spending, and (iv) putting in authority a virtuous woman and man.¹⁷

It is evident from the above passage that the householders, who are regarded as noble disciples, have to avoid the following six causes of ruin (*apāyamukha*).

- (i) To be addicted to drink and drugs.
- (ii) To be always revelling in nightlife.
- (iii) To be bent on entertainment.
- (iv) To be addicted to gambling.
- (v) To be kept in bad company.
- (vi) To be chronically lazy in doing work.¹⁸

Specially, those householders who are the head of family have to be aware of these dangers, and make sure that the economy of their family is stable and maintained properly. For, the stability of family leads to the stability of society whereas squandering of wealth or property leads to the downfall of the society through lack of morality, low rate of education and depression of economy.

c) Association with Good Friends (*Kalyāṇamittatā*)

This principle emphasizes that one who wants to attain prosperity, has to associate oneself with the good friend or company of high moral standard. One should make friendship with a person who is a well-wisher,

¹⁷ Ibid 255

¹⁸ D.III.182

who is faithful, virtuous, righteous, full of charity and full of wisdom etc., one should emulate whatever good deeds done by the wise. On the contrary, one should not associate with and emulate a person who is unfaithful, wicked, and dim-witted and who is called ‘*bāla*’ (foolish man, childish).

d) Balanced life-style (*Samajīvitā*)

The term ‘*Samajīvita*’ literally means to live in accordance with one’s own means. This principle prescribes that one should know how to keep track of income and expenditure, and how to live without either deprivation or extravagance and how to save the income for a rainy day.¹⁹

It is noteworthy that this is the principle of living within the means of avoiding extravagance and over-indulgence, of losing hard-earned money on gambling and other related anti-social activities, and of becoming or slave to greed and jealousy, and is applicable to society and people of all times. Blindly imitating the rich and the powerful and squandering of wealth on avoidable luxuries lead to economic imbalance and social injustice. When the earning or income is not enough for luxury spending, people take recourse to debt; the problem of debt may expand to the level of destroying the very life of man. A balanced life-style(*samajīvitā*) as the principle of economics is indispensable for every householder.

2. The Means to Use Wealth (*Bhogādiya*)

In the *AṅguttaraNikāya*, the Buddha explained that the wealth that has been already acquired through one’s own labour has to be utilized for the benefits of oneself and others. According to this discourse, the noble disciples who have already acquired the wealth through the righteous means have to utilize their wealth in five ways as shown below:

(i) He makes himself, his parents, wife, children, slaves and work folks happy, glad, and sustains that great happiness.

¹⁹ A.IV. 281

(ii) He makes friends and companions happy and glad and keeps them.

(iii) He uses the wealth to safeguard his well-being and to make protection from dangers such as fire, water, robbers and so on.

(iv) He makes the five oblations or sacrifices; that is, offer oblation in five ways, namely: (i) supporting relatives (*ñāti-bali*), (ii) receiving guests (*atithi-bali*), (iii) making merit or offering in dedication to one who had passed away (*pubbapeta-bali*), (iv) supporting the government through taxes and so on (*rāja-bali*), and (v) making offering to the deities; that is, contributions made in accordance with his faith (*devatā-bali*).

(v) He holds in high esteem the monks and priests who are righteous and honorable; who bring happiness, leading heavenward for all and who abstain from pride and indolence (A.III.: 45).

From the above passage, it is suggested that the householders should show their broader mind to the members of one's own family and then extend it to the members of the society. Giving the first hand treatment to one's own family members should not be misinterpreted as the narrow mind, but it is a fact that one should treat family members first and then extend the help to members in the society or the nation. Having used the wealth in such a way, even though his wealth has been exhausted, he can be satisfied that his wealth has been rightfully used for beneficial purposes, thus he is free of remorse.

3. The Four Kinds of Householder's Happiness (*Kāmaḥogī-Sukha*)

As far as the happiness of the householder is concerned, there will be four kinds of happiness which are to be expected by the householders (*Kāmaḥogī-sukha*), as being the result of meritorious actions done by them. The Buddha enumerates these kinds of happiness in the *AṅguttaraNikāya*. These are described in series as follows:

a) Happiness of Ownership (*Atthi-Sukha*)

The first kind of happiness is the pride, satisfaction and security of

having wealth; a householder possesses wealth obtained through his own diligent labour, acquired through the strength of his own arms and the sweat of his own brow, rightly acquired, rightly gained

b) Happiness of Enjoyment (*Bhoga-Sukha*)

The second kind of happiness is the pride and satisfaction of the householder who uses the wealth obtained rightly to hold up himself, his family, and others who are related to him and uses it for meritorious deeds. A householder consumes, invests in business and derives benefit from the wealth that has been obtained by his own diligent labour. Thus, the householder experiences pleasure and experiences happiness.

c) Happiness of Freedom from Debt (*Anaṅga-Sukha*)

The third kind of happiness is the pride and satisfaction of the householder who has freed himself from the debt; he is not indebted to anyone. In fact, debt is considered as causing of suffering to a householder as the Buddha says, ‘the debt is the suffering in the world’. Really speaking, a householder who released himself from being the debtor is the happiest householder. He experiences pleasure and happiness, reflecting that, ‘I owe no debts, be they great or small, to anyone at all’.

d) Happiness of Blamelessness (*Anavajja-Sukha*)

The fourth kind of happiness is the pride and satisfaction of the householder who has conducted himself honestly, faultlessly and blamelessly in respect to action, speech, and thought. A householder who is regarded as the noble disciple stands for blameless actions, blameless speech, and blameless thoughts²⁰

According to the Buddhist doctrine, the wealth and fame, for those householders who have realized the real values of life, seem to be impermanent things and virtues such as right action, right thought, right view,

²⁰ A. II. 69.

right concentration, right speech, and right livelihood have pivotal significance. Conclusively speaking, neither wealth nor fame is regarded as high value by the Buddha.²¹

It should be noted here that the four kinds of happiness stated by the Buddha remain to be universal truths even in the present time. For example, in the first kind of happiness, it is impossible for an ordinary man to obtain happiness without wealth as far as the livelihood of common person is concerned. As the fundamental needs of human beings are food, robe, residence and medicine and all of these needs may be obtained through the power of the wealth, the wealth is of prime importance for livelihood of a common householder. However, a man who has the wealth that has been obtained through wrong courses such as stealing, robbing, corruption and so on, even though the amount of the wealth derived from the wrong means may be more, would find it difficult to secure happiness through his wealth. We can easily find good examples of this instance from our society. For instance, in spite of possessing large amounts of wealth, men are not able to find the solution to the problem of property distribution and resort to commit suicide in order to avoid the problems. We may conclude here that, according to Buddhism, though the wealth is not the final answer to justify the real happiness in life of human beings, yet wealth is necessary for subsistence. It can be pointed out that happiness, for all common householders, is chiefly from the wealth, and THAT wealth must be obtained through his own diligent labour, acquired through the strength of his own arms and the sweat of his own brow rightly by good action, good speech and good thought only.

²¹ M.III:262; S.I:34, 55

Conclusion

In the end of this section, the Right Livelihood (*SammāĀjīva*), the one factor on the Noble Eight-fold Path, also should be mentioned as the Buddha's teaching with regard to economic thought. E. F. Schumacher declares: "The Right Livelihood is one of the requirements of the Buddha's Noble Eight-fold path. It is clear, therefore, that there must be such a thing as Buddhist economics." There is no doubt that the right livelihood involves directly with other virtues such as right action, right speech, and right thought. For right livelihood, the Buddha declares that Buddhist laypersons should avoid the wrong trades such as trading in weapons, trading in human being, in meat, in intoxicants, and in poisons. Moreover, the Buddha cared for the welfare and benefit of everyone in society and his doctrine is meant for social improvement.

To sum up, Buddhist Economics is the Middle path economics that does not harm oneself or others. From a Buddhist perspective, economic principles are related to the three interconnected aspects of human existence: human beings, society and the natural environment. Economic activity must take place in such a way that it doesn't harm oneself (by causing a decline in the quality of life) and does not harm others (by causing problems in society or imbalance in the environment).

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THE BUDDHA-CARIYA : THE GREAT CONDUCT FOR THE WORLD PEACE

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this article paper is to study the roles and duties of the Buddha in various capacities, which reflects the Buddhist view of living. It focuses and analyses those acts which the Buddha has conducted for the well beings of the world, for the benefit of His relatives and conducts that benefit the title of the Buddha himself, the light of the world, who removed the veil ignorance. In includes the Buddhist ethical perspective of the *Buddha-cariyas* as found mention in the *Theravada Tipitaka* scripture, the *Atthagathas* (commentaries) and other Buddhist scriptures. The study of the *Buddha-cariya* reveals how the birth of Buddha into this world is not merely accidental but is a result of a disciplined life and tireless effort on the part of potential Buddha. Consequently, the *Buddha-cariya* is the best practice for leading human being to achieve the world peace and to attain the final higher peace, i.e. *Nibbana*.

Keywords; The Buddha, Conducts, World Peace

Introduction

Buddhism is a religion of loving kindness, humanity and equality.¹ As a well-known Non-theistic religion, Buddhism emphasized on human effort,

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¹ P.V.Bapat, **2005 Years of Buddhism**, (New Delhi: Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of Indian, 1997), p.1.

and has no faith in divined power but believed in the ability of the human beings. It gives stress on the essence of human effort to stop the cycle of birth and death. Therefore, in order to attain the highest destination, the Buddha has drawn a systematic path and suggested his disciples to follow the path, which completely educated and help them in reaching their ultimate goal. As the Buddha saying :-“*The Tathagata, the Perfect One, appears in the world for the gain of the many, for the welfare of the many, out of compassion for the world, of the good, for the gain, for the welfare of gods and men.*”² Evidently all of His life, the Buddha has been many places to teach the enlightenment which has been following the first saying of the Buddha at the Deer park “*Go ye forth, O Bhikkhus, on your journey, for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many out of compassion for the world, for the good, the benefit, the bliss Gods and men*”,³ at the time of sending out the first group of sixty disciples to propagate the doctrine in the second year of his preaching, is an explanation of how and why Buddhism has survived for so long and succeed in converting a large part of mankind to its cause.⁴

Therefore, the purpose of this article is to investigate the *Cariya* of the Buddha in *Theravada* Buddhism which focused on the well-being and great conducts for the world peace.

An approach to the Peace

The world “peace” is of very ancient origin. It is derived from the Latin word “pax,” which literally means a peace, a contract, an agreement to end the war or any dispute and conflict between two people, two nations or two antagonistic groups of people.⁵ As generally understood in the West, the notion of

² Mahavagga.I.,68-83.

³ Vinaya Pitaka.1.10.

⁴ PhraRajavaramuni (P.A.Payutto), **Thai Buddhism in the Buddhist World**, (Bangkok: Mahachula Buddhist University Press, 2005),p.28.

⁵ B.Khemananda, **The Buddhist Concepts of Peace**, (Calcutta: Razon Print, 1996), p.1.

peace refers to absence of strife among groups, whether they are regarded as classes, communities, races or nations. It is not customary in the idiom of the West to speak of peace as between individuals within the same group.⁶ However the concept of peace has both negatives and positive meanings.

1. Buddhist View on Peace

Buddhism has used the term “Santi” which etymologically means “peace”. Peace is here translated from the word Santi. So, in the Buddhism, Santi (peace) and Sukha (happiness) are synonymous. In absence of peace, no people can be happy and those who are unhappy cannot live in peace.⁷

And Buddhist concept of peace pays emphasis on individual aspect of peace and its social consequences are held to follow the center of the individuals’ own psychology. It denotes essentially the absence of conflict in the individual psychology and in the fundamental sense refers to the absolute state of mental quietude expressed by the term *Nibbana*, as the Buddha says in the *Dhammapada* that; “*There is no fire like passion. There is no evil like hatred. There is no suffering like the constituents of existence. There is no happiness higher than peace.*”⁸ This kind of peace is the characteristic of *Nibbana*. One of the oldest texts, the *Sutta Nipata*, refers to internal peace as resulting from the elimination of ideological and other conflicts of the minds.⁹

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ PhraRajavaramuni (P.A. Payutto), **Freedom Individual and Social**, (Bangkok: Watnayavesakavanna, 1987), p.13.

⁸ **Dhammapada**. Verse No.202.

⁹ O.H.De.A. Wijesekara, **Buddhist and Vedic Studies**, (Delhi: MotilalBanarsidass, 1994), p.94.

2.Prominent of the World Peace

What is the world Peace? When we need in the name of world peace is not different from harmonious relations with others. It may be called brotherhood, neighborhood, friendship, relationship, etc., but it's most important essence is happiness among people. Of religions in the world today, each has its sphere of influence. Each religions leader commands many people to live in particular. For the sake of peace, the religious leaders had better; therefore, make people among themselves before trying to propagate peace among the common people. According to the Buddhist teaching, the Buddha has always asked His disciplined for propagating the Buddhist teachings to all people as stated in the Dhammapada that "*No blaming, not hurting, restraint according to the Patimokkha, knowing moderation in food, solitary dwelling, pursuing meditation, this is teaching of the Buddhas.*"¹⁰ From this stanza, the Buddhist always emphasizes and practice in addition to propagating the Buddhist teaching to the people over the world and living with them peacefully. If every organization determined for world peace, and recognizes these principles to proceed towards its goal, we would able to stay with each other harmoniously and peacefully in a dissimilar and pluralistic society.

The *Buddha-cariya* as depicted in Pali Texts

The *Buddha-cariya* is a recorded from the practices of Buddha trough his life. He has the best of intentions of the good, the benefit, and the bliss of gods and men, which we can divided into three main groups as part of our case studies to understand and develop our lives:-

¹⁰ Dhammapada. Verse No.185.

1.The Conduct for the well-beings of the world

According, we also come to know that objectives of the Buddha's teaching can be divided into 3 levels which are; the first level *Ditthadhammikattha*, i.e. the temporal objective or present benefit, the second level: *Samparayikattha*, i.e. the spiritual objective or further benefit, the final level: *Paramattha*, i.e. the highest objective or greatest benefit.¹¹

2.The Conduct for the benefit of His relative

The processes of socialization according to the Buddhist teaching processes indentify the primary institution of socialization as the family, kin-group or community and the peer-group. Secondary socialization starts when one joins a trade or profession, a community-religion or spiritual in character, such as the Order of Buddhist monk. The functions of Buddha towards all this kind of social realties can be divided into two main groups.

The relationship between the Buddha and His important relatives: The positions held by the Buddha's close relative were not chance happenings. They were positions that each of them had aspired many aeons ago. They were position of honour towards which each of them had worked tirelessly over many life cycles. As is not possible to include all of the them, a selection was made based on their contribution to the preservation of the *Dhamma* such as; the Buddha returned to His city after being invited by His father, at the end of his visit, His father King *Suddhodana* attained *Sakadagami*, and finally reached arahatship in stages and there are so many His relatives from *Sakyan* and *Koliya* family followed Him to joined the Order which included *Ananda*, *Nanda*, *Mahapajapati*, His son, *Rahula*, as well as His former wife *Yasodhara*, all of them attained arahatship at the end of their life.

The important events of the Buddha is conduct for the benefit of His relatives:There are three important events which concern with the *Buddha-cariya*.

¹¹ Niddesa.26.

The Buddha had conducted so for the benefits, happiness, and harmony of all His relatives, they are thus:-

(1). The Buddha returns to *Kapilavattu* to preach to His father and relatives: the time of His return to *Kapilavattu* to preach his Father and relatives, we come to know that after attaining the Enlightenment, the Buddha hadn't decided to return immediately to *Kapilavattu*, where his town is. This is because of the following four reasons.

Firstly:the Buddha has to conduct the function of the Buddhahood. On the full-moon day of *Asalaha-puja*, the Buddha went to preached on the first sermon known as *DhammacakkappavattanaSutta*, after listening to the first sermon *Kondañña* attained *Sotapanna* and was ordained to become the first disciple and the witness of the Enlightenment of the Buddha. The *PañcavaggiyaBhikkhus* thus became the first five members of the *Sangha* (Buddhist Monastic Order) founded by the Buddha.

Secondly: The Buddha wanted to establish Buddhism in *Rajagaha*, the *Rajadhani* of Magadha, where *Bimbisara* and *Ajatasattu* had at least two-storey high palace during the days of Buddha, *Rajagaha* was inhabited by may rich and influential *Khattiyas*, *Brahamana* and *Gahapatis* Famous physicians like *Jivaka* and *Akasagotta* lived there. *Rajagaha* was important, primarily for being the capital of the rising Magadha monarchy.

Thirdly: when the Buddha first visited *Rajagaha*, after his Enlightenment, he stayed at the *Lattivanuyyana*. The day after his arrival, he accepted the king's invitation to palace where he was offered food. The Buddha delivered discourse related to the basic principles of Buddhism, the Four Noble Truth; the *Anicca*, and *Anatta* for the five *Khandas*. On hearing these sermons, the king stage of sanctification. The king also presented his pleased garden the *Veluvana* was the first *Arama* accepted by the Buddha, following which a rule was passed allowing monks to accept

such an *Arama*. The Buddha at once went to stay there and it was during this stay that *Sariputta* and *Moggallana* joined the Order.

Lastly, the Buddha knew that it would be hard for His father king *Suddhodana*, and his relatives to accept His attainment of *Buddhahood*. So he waited for the right time returning to *Kapilavatthu* along with His disciples.

(2) The Buddha intervenes and stops the war between his relatives¹¹: In this case, the Buddha has resolved the conflicts through the Buddhist peaceful means for the benefit and happiness of all His relatives.

The Buddha protects the *Sakyan* clan and the capital from being destroyed by *Vidudhabha*:¹² After having studied this event, we know that the Buddha had tried to protect the *Sakyan* clan and the capital. But after trying thrice in His march against the *Vidudhabha*, the Buddha stepped away because He knew that the fate on the *Sakyans* could not be averted. It was a result of their sin in the previous existence when they had thrown poison into the river.

The Beneficial Conduct as functions of the Buddha

The *Buddhattha-cariya*: also mentions the beneficial conduct of the Buddha as function which related to the relationship between the Buddha and his disciples. From a study of relationship between the Buddha and all His disciples we can divide it into three groups thus:

(1) Relationship between the Buddha and the Order of monks: for this status, the Buddha had laid down the *Sangha* rules which we can divide into two parts are;

Part One: General rules:

1.1 The Buddha had allowed the cloth offerings of three garments viz. *Sanghati*, *Uttarasangha* and *Antaravasaka*.¹³

¹¹ *SuttaNipata Attakatha*.I.358; cp. J.V.412; DhA.III.254 ff.

¹² *Dhammapada*.V.47, pp.180-182.

¹³ *Mahavagga*.VIII.1.36.

1.2 Allowed the cooking & stories of foods or anything falling while being presented to be picked up by *Bhikkhu* and be eaten, and allowed *Bhikkhuto* reheat for his own food that has already been cooked by another.¹⁴

1.3 Allowed the lodgings, the monks were also allowed to have as their seats or beds benches built against the walls, bedsteads with short removable legs, armchairs, sofas, cushioned chairs, carpets, pillows, bolsters stuffed with wood. Cotton grass etc.¹⁵

1.4 Allowed acceptance of the medicines and laid down rules regarding, invitations when extended to a *Sangha* as body, or to a group of individual, or to an individual.¹⁶

1.5 Rules concerning the Buddhist lent in order to avoid the inconvenience of traveling in the rains and avoid the chances of injuring sprouts and insects, it was enjoined that the *Bhikkhus* should stay at one place during the three months of the rainy season.¹⁷

1.6 Allowed Alms Bowls which either of clay or iron.¹⁸

1.7 Declaring the *Etadagga-bhikkhu* (the monk par excellence) in the *Bhikkhu-Sangha* for announced some special qualifications of *Bhikkhu*.¹⁹

Part two: Rules for Community Transactions:

(1) The Buddha had laid down the *Sangha-kamma*²⁰: this defines as a duty-issues, this definition refers to the four types of statement that can constitute a formal Community transaction (*Sangha-kamma*), the manner in which the Community meets and issues a statement that involves taking an action as a group.

¹⁴ Mahavagga.VIII.3.1.

¹⁵ Mahavagga.VI.22.1.

¹⁶ Mahavagga.1.3.

¹⁷ Mahavagga .III.1.3.

¹⁸ Mahavagga .I.70.1.

¹⁹ Anguttara Nikaya.I.23-6.

²⁰ Cullavagga.IV.14.2.

(2) To lay down the *Sima*²¹: defining territories the territory of the meeting must be clearly defined. A Valid territory may either be one that has been correctly authorized by a Community transaction or one defined by natural or political boundaries.

(3) The rules for admission: this resulted in a corpus of laws. It seems that a completed body of *Vinayarules* in the legendary setting came into existence before any sectarian movement arose in the *Sangha*. The becoming a Buddhist monk could initially be accomplished without much ceremony; ‘going forth’ or *Pabbajja* from the household life into homelessness and ‘ordination’ or *Upasampada*.²²

(4) Laying down the *Patimokkha*; the Buddha had laid down so many rules which helped him dominate the *Sangha* in a very usefully and peacefully manner.

(5) Laying down the *Uposatha* ceremony: the Buddha had laid down precautionary measures called *Uposatha* and *Pavarana*. They may be called ritualistic ceremonies. As a rule, Buddhism is normally against rituals and ceremonies and stresses only individual effort and internal purity. There is no community prayer or anything else of the life.

(6) Laying down the *Pavarana*: at the close of *Vassa-vasa* there were the *Pavarana*. “Etymologically *Pavarna* is of the same word meaning “breaking off the observance of a vow, normally merriments and feaste being a very common constituents of the *Pavarana* of the Buddhist Order”.

(7) Allowing the *Kathina-civara*: when a group of monks came from *Saketato* visit the Buddha in *Savatthi*, the Buddha saw that the robes of monks were dirty, stained, spoiled and threadbare, because they had traveled from *Saketa* on muddy roads and sometime in the rain. Seeing that they needed new robes he decided to allow this disciple to accept a robe or a piece of cloth at the end of the Rainy Season Retreat (*Kathina*)

²¹ Mahavagga.II.6.1.

²² Vinaya Pitaka.I.56.

(8) Laying down the Community Officials: to manage materials gains, the Canon allows each Community to appoint officials dealing with: Robe-cloth (robe-cloth receiver, robe-cloth, keeper, storehouse guardian, robe-cloth distributor, cloth (rains-bathing cloth) bestowed, Food (meal designator, conjei distributor, fruit distributor, non-stable food distributor); Lodgings (lodging bestower (*Senasana-gahapaka*), lodging assignor (*Senasana-pannapaka*); and in case of miscellaneous items (bowl bestower, dispenser of minor items).

(9) Laying down the Disciplinary Transactions: there are also cases where a *Bhikkhu* has wronged a lay person, or lay person has wronged a *Bhikkhu*, to the point where the Community must take action to prevent further damage. To deal with cases such as these, the Buddha authorized the Community to impose disciplinary measures on wrong-doers above and beyond the standard system of penalties.

(2) Relationship between the Buddha and the Order of Nuns:

The Buddha has tried to strike a balance in bringing equality between the Order of monks and the Order of Nuns; we study thus from the relationship between the Buddha and the Order of Nuns: as follows;

(2.1.) Establishing the Order of the Nuns: the Buddha regarded women as feeble by nature and therefore cautioned men while keep their company and also placed women under more strict discipline. But he did not consider them inferior or vulnerable. There were fully qualified to tread the path of morality and spirituality. Therefore they were freely admitted to the Order and many of them attained Arahantship. *Khema* and *Patacara* were such ladies. *Visakha*, *Mallika*, *Sumana*, *Subbhaddha* and *Suppriya* are other illustrious women had an honorable place in the Order.

(2.2.) Organization of the Order of *Bhikkhuni*: the Buddha has organized the Order of nuns on parallel with that of the monks: Like the monks, they possessed a complete Code of Discipline (*Patimokkha*), their acts

of law (*Vinaya-kamma, Sangha-kamma*) were the same, and they also has two Ordinations, the Minor (*Pubbajja*) and the Major (*Upasampada*). Ten years after her Major Ordination, a nun was also called an “Elder” (Their). Nuns organized their communal life independently, according to their own Code of Discipline, but with the help and on the advice from monks. Monks had the right to advise nuns but not to control them.²³

(2.3) Laying down the rules of the *Bhikkhuni* Order: the Buddha had laid down rules governing relations between *Bhikkhus* and *Bhikkhuni* fall into two categories: those governing formal relations between two communities, and those governing relations between individual *Bhikkhus* and *Bhikkhunis*.

(2.4) Laying down the special Obligations to *Bhikkhuni*: the Buddha had laid down the rules the pre-conditioned for becoming a *Bhikkhuni*. These rules were compulsory and never to be transgressed. The imposition of these eight restrictions called “*Gurudhamma*”²⁴ prior to ordination as a Buddhist nun, subordinate to monks in all respects.

(2.5) To declared the *Etadagga-bhikkhuni*:²⁵ (the nun par excellence) in the *Bhikkhuni-sangha*: she was the first religious teacher to give women equal and unfettered opportunities in the field of spiritual development also gave due credit to their abilities and capabilities. For example; *MahapajapatiGotami Theri* was the chief of those who has experience, etc.

(2.6) Laying down rules regarding the building of *Bhikkhuni* monastery: After the event of *UpalavannaTheri*²⁶ was taken place, the Buddha next sent for King *Pasenadi* of *Kosala* and told him about the dangers

²³ Mahan Wijayaratna, *Buddhist Monastic Life*, (USA: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp.161-162.

²⁴ *Vinaya Pitaka*.II.253-255.

²⁵ *Anguttara Nikaya*.I.23-6.

²⁶ *Dhammapada*.Verse. No.69, pp.204-205

that *Bhikkhunis* living in forest had to face from irresponsible persons obsessed with sex. The king then promised to build monasteries for *Bhikkhunis* only in town or close to the town.

(3) Relationship between the Buddha and Lay Disciples: For this very purpose the Buddha has thought of a way for the disciples who are not yet firm in these noble qualities; however, it was recommended that at last moral restraint in terms of body and speech should first be developed by observing a specific code of five precepts (*Pañca-Sila*). The Five precepts, in fact, have a kind of resonance in other religions (with some variation). They have also been given recognition in the term of legal as they appear to be the basis principles for social harmony and the world peace.

Summary

Buddhism is a religion of loving kindness, humanity and equality. As a well-known religion, and emphasizes on human effort, and has no faith in divine power that is why; it is called a non-theistic religion which believes in the ability of the human beings. Therefore, the Buddha did not preach or teach with the purpose of converting people in order to simply increase the number of His *Sangha* community, but to emphasize on awakening of the intrinsic values in an individual. So, when the persons have practiced and developed themselves following the *Buddha-cariya* (Buddha's conduct), they receive the three qualities of a person; are 1) the good knowledge and good quality and good thinking to solve many problems, 2) the good manner and social behaviors and 3) happiness and peace for whole life, which are essential for humanity.

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IDENTITY OF BUDDHIST JURISPRUDENCE

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ABSTRACT

This paper aimed to study an issue of the knowledge of the history, philosophy, and nature of Buddhist law as depicted in early Buddhist texts which were related to the *Patimokkha* in *Vinaya Pitaka*. The *Vinaya* Laws are similar in certain respects to other ecclesiastical law, but it differs fundamentally in its structure, jurisprudence and application from the latter. The laws of *Vinaya* are more distinct and better codified than any other the contemporary law-codes. The Buddhist *Vinaya* is based on celibacy, moral precepts and doctrinal ideals. The Buddha not only codified the ascetic principles but also improved them in changing its aim, scope and nature. So, the identity of Buddhist jurisprudence can be divided into eight vital characteristics, which are as follows:- 1) *Sammuti* (convention), 2) contribution of *Brahmacariya* (Celibacy), 3) the influence of the institution of *Yatis* (a pious ascetic), 4) *Uposatha* in Order Literature, 5) public opinion, 6) Suggestion of *Bhikkhu*, 7) *Atikkamo* (transgression) and *Itihasa* (tradition). It would be worthy to note here that the core of the Buddhist jurisprudence is *Parivasa* (Probation of Offender) which is the Buddhist solution to reform and rehabilitate the criminal leading him to the attainment of final blessing i.e. *Nibbana*.

Keywords; Early Buddhism, *Vinaya*, *Patimokkha*, Jurisprudence

Introduction

Human being is a social animal and likes to stay together in a community. The fundamental nature of Human being is the most precious existences, but it is weaken by nature, and is prone error to commit the crime

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because of the unwholesome roots which arise from immoral consciousness. When a criminal offence has been arisen, the society of human being needs to have regulation for controlling and preserving harmony which nothing other than jurisprudence. Jurisprudence is the science of Law and the method adopted by society for controlling and punishing the criminal offender in the society. For the first time in human historical event, the nothing was conceived by none other than the Buddha. The *Vinayapitaka* is the earliest Buddhist canon that is concerned with the Buddhist jurisprudence. Our main focus will be on the identity of jurisprudence in early Buddhist tradition. It will be very helpful and beneficial for us to know and prevent the human society from the criminal problem.

What is Jurisprudence?

The word 'Jurisprudence' in English term is based on the Latin word 'jurisprudential':juris is the genitive form of jus means 'law', and prudential means 'prudence' The word was first attested in English in 1628, at a time when the word prudence had now been obsolete meaning of "knowledge of or skill in a matter". The word may have come via the French origin jurisprudence, which was attested earlier. Jurisprudence already had this meaning in Ancient Rome even if at its origins the discipline was a (periti) in the jus of mosmaiorum (traditional law), a body of oral laws and customs verbally transmitted "by father to son". In the same line of thought, according to India Vedic society, the law or Dharma, as followed by Hindus was interpreted by using "Manu Smrti"- a set of poems which denied sin and the remedies. It was said to be written between 200 BC – 200 AD. In fact, it was not codes of law but norms related to social obligations and ritual requirements of the era. So, jurisprudence is the knowledge of things divine

and human, the science of the justice and the injustice, and is constructed as the science of knowledge of law or the scientific study of law.

An Approach to the Buddhist Jurisprudence

In Buddhist Monastic Discipline, there are two kinds of offences; *Loka-vajja* (Commonly Accepted Offences) and *Pannatti-vajja* (Designated Offences). The former are the offences punishable by the law of a country. They have their bearings in this present lives as well as in the lives to come. The latter on the other hand, deals with the infringement of the rules of discipline governing the community of monks. Although these offences are not of retributive effect, they are considered necessary for the training of monks. Some of the Commonly Accepted Offences are also found in the Designated Offences of the monastic rules.¹

In this connection, we trace the equivalence of the word ‘Jurisprudence’ in Pali term as ‘*Nitisattha*’,² which literally means ‘the study and theory of law’. scholars of jurisprudence, or legal theorists including legal philosophers and social theorists of law, hope to obtain a deeper understanding of the nature of law, of legal system and of legal institutions’,³ and R.C. Childers has also translated it as ‘the science of statecraft, art of governing.’⁴

On the other hand, the Buddhist jurisprudence is the knowledge of Buddhist Law. It is the fountainhead of modern jurisprudence. It is a fact that

¹ PetegamaGnanarama, **An Approach to Buddhist Social Philosophy**, (Singapore: Ti-Sarana Buddhist Association, 1996), pp.112-113.

² A.P. MahatheraBuddhadatta, **English-Pali Dictionary**,(Delhi: MotilalBanarsidass Publishers Private Limited, Reprinted, 1997), p.293.

³ Wikipedia. **Jurisprudence**. Sources: <http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jurisprudence>. [12 7 2012].

⁴ Robert Caesar Childers, **Dictionary of the Pali Languages**,(New Delhi: Asian educational Services, 1993,) p. 292.

human jurisprudence takes birth from the Buddhist jurisprudence. It is very relevant to note that the Buddhist jurisprudence is based on the democratic ideals, republican thoughts, compassion, friendliness, equanimity and pragmatic realism.⁵

3.1. Punishment in Buddhist Jurisprudence: We can define the term ‘Punishment’ in Pali, such as ‘*DandaandNiggaha*’, which stand for ‘atonement, blame, censure, coercion, cruelty, degradation, punishment, penalty, violence, restraint, subduing, rebuke, and reproach’. The term *Danda* in the sense of punishment and specifically in the sense of punishment for crimes committed is often found in the *Nikaya*.

3.2. History of Buddhist Jurisprudence: It dated back to the sixth century BCE. As a matter of fact, the framing of laws in the form of rules and regulations were started during the lifetime of the Buddha. It was necessitated following the formation of the Buddhist *Sangha*. The first Buddhist *Sangha* sprang into existence with sixty-one *Bhikkhus* after the *DhammacakkappavattanaSutta*⁶ at the Migadaya in Isipatana. The Buddhist Order was established by the Buddha on the bed-rock of jurisprudence and democratic ideals. The most important organ and tool of democracy is the “Voting Right” which was introduced in the Buddhist *Sangha*. It was technically known as the “*Ubbahika*” in the Buddhist Tradition. All these facts vouch for the ideals of jurisprudence in Buddhism from the beginning itself.⁷

3.3. Philosophy of Buddhist Jurisprudence: The Philosophy behind the Buddhist jurisprudence is based on consciousness. The consciousness is the hub of every action. Gotama Buddha exhorts: “*Monks, I say that intention*

⁵ Ram Nandan Singh, **Buddhism: From Genesis to Decline**, (Delhi: New Bharatiya Book Corporation, 2007), p.137.

⁶ **Vinaya Pitaka**.I.10 f.

⁷ Ram Nandan Singh, **Op.Cit.**, p.138.

is the *Kamma*.”⁸ The consciousness is again related to ethics. The right consciousness leads to right actions and wrong consciousness paves the way for wrong actions. The Buddha further states in the *Dhammapada* as under: “Avoidance of all evil, gathering of merit, purifying one’s own mind- this is the teaching of the Buddhas.”⁹ Buddhist jurisprudence is also based on the *Brahmavihara*. The *Brahmavihara* is the important teachings of Buddha. It is regarded as the sublime ideas. It is four-fold, viz, *Metta* : Friendliness; *Karuna*: Compassion; *Mudita* : Happiness; and *Upekkha* : Equanimity.¹⁰

Patimokkha: Buddhist Disciplinary Code

According to the *Mahavagga*, *Patimokkha* means “the beginning, the head (or entrance-*Mukha*), the foremost (*Pamukkha*) or skill qualities.”¹¹ It is the collection of various rules and regulations contained in the *Vinaya*, beginning with the four *Parajikas* ending with the seventy-five *Sekhiyadhammas*. These monastic rules are solemnly read twice a month in every monastery, and individual monks are invited to make confessions if they had broken any of the rules read out. *Patimokkha* may be described as the criminal code of the monks.¹²

The rules of discipline first were laid down by the Buddha in the *Vinaya* are called *Mulapannatti*(the root of regulation). Those which were added on later are known as *Sikkhapadas* (the rule of discipline). The monastic disciplines, according to the Pali Canon, were initially formulated by

⁸ *Anguttara Nikaya*.III.415 : “*Cetanaham, bhikkhave, kammamvadami*”

⁹ *Dhammapada*. Verse No. 183: “*Sabbapapassaakaranam, kusalassupasam pada, sacittapariyodapanam, etambuddhanasasanam*”: K.T.S. Sarao, (tr.), *The Dhamma pada: A translator’s Guide*, (New Delhi: MushiramManoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 2009), p.227.

¹⁰ Ram NandanSingh, *Op.Cit.*, p.141.

¹¹ *Mahavagga*. II. 3.4.

¹² Robert Caesar Childers, *Op.Cit.*, p.363.

the Buddha based on the following ten reasons:- “For the good establishment of the Sangha, for the comfort of the Sangha, for the riddance of obstinate men, for the happy abiding of well-behaved Bhikkhus, for guarding against troubles (Asava) in this present life, for guarding against trouble which may be arise in a future life, for pleasing those not yet pleased, for the increase of those who are pleased, for the establishment of the true Dhamma, and for the benefit of Vinaya.”¹³

The act of transgressing these rules of discipline and thereby incurring a penalty is called *Apatti*(Reaching, committing). There are 227 rules for *Bhikkhu*, which is further divided into eight categories depending on the degree of transgression committed, namely:- (1) *Parajika*: 4 rules; (2) *Sanghadisesa*: 13 rules; (3) *Aniyata*: 2 rules; (4) *Nissaggiya-pacittiya*: 30 rules; (5) *Pacittiya*: 92 rules; (6) *Patidesaniya*: 4 rules; (7) *Sekhiya*: 75 rules; and (8) *Adhikaranasamatha* : 7 rules.

Therefore, the *Patimokkha* in particular and the *Vinaya* texts in general are the fountain-head of the Buddhist jurisprudence and compatible with the present existing laws. The application of the Buddhist jurisprudence to modern world in the spheres of social, political, philosophical and religious is fruitful and desirable.¹⁴

Types of Punishment in Buddhist Jurisprudence

The types of punishment in early Buddhism can be divided into three main types as follows;

1. *Niggahakamma*: The Buddhist discipline mentions additional punitive measures to be adopted in respect of certain behaviors of the *Sangha*. They are:- (1)*Tajjanियakamma*: Act of censure; (2) *Nissayakamma*: Act

¹³ *Vinaya Pitaka*.III.20;*Anguttara Nikaya*.V.70.

¹⁴ Ram Nandan Singh, *Op.Cit.*, p.137.

of subordination; (3) *Pabbajaniyakamma*: Act of banishment; (4) *Patisaraniyakamma*: Act of reconciliation; (5) *Ukkhepaniyakamma*: Act of suspension; (6) *Pakasaniyakamma*: Act of proclamation of excommunication; and (7) *Brahmadanda*: Act of suspending communication.

2. *Vutthanavidhi*: the method for getting out of *Sanghadisesa* offense. They are: (1) *Parivasa*: Probation; (2) *Manatta*: Penance; (3) *Abbhana*: Calling back, Rehabilitation; and (4) *Patikassana*: The act of going back to the beginning of the *Apatti* (Offences).

3. Miscellaneous method of Buddhist Punishments: - (1) *Pattanikkujanakamma*: Overturning the Bowl; (2) *Nasanakamma*: Revocation of the privilege of *Samanera* (Novice); (3) *Dandakamma*: Punishment imposed on *Samanera* (Novice); and (4) *Panama*: Dismissal.

Specific Characteristics of Buddhist Jurisprudence

The Buddhist Law is based on the Noble Eightfold Path (the Middle Path) and how every Buddhists, is welcomed to practice this Path in order to free themselves from the problem of suffering and the cycle of rebirth, i.e. *Nibbana*.¹⁵ Thus, the nature of Buddhist Law can be divided into eight vital characteristics. The details of which are as follow:-

1. *Sammuti* (Convention); (Skt:*Sammati*). The grip of convention or custom upon the law is always firm. The laws based directly on custom, known as customary laws, and they are supposed to grow slowly out of public opinion, and are considered as valid as laws promulgated by legislators or formulated by professionally trained judges, their sanctification comes from long usages. The Buddha did not believe in the *Vedas* and *Smritis* of Hindu Tradition. So, the Custom or *Acara* was all the most important in the formation of the *Vinaya* laws, and that is one of the reasons why

¹⁵ Nandasena Ratnapala, *Crime and Punishment in the Buddhist Tradition*, (New Delhi: Mattal Publications, 1993), p.37.

public censure and recommendations had so much effect on the origin and evolution of these laws.

2. Contribution of *Brahmacariya* (Celibacy); (Skt.:*Brahmacarya*). Out of the innumerable rules, which are drawn upon the code for the *Brahmacariya*, only a few important ones will be discussed here. According to the early years of the Order, a *Bhikkhu* was not allowed to wear any footwear following the custom of the pupil, but later on the use was sanctioned under some bindings.

3. The influence of the institution of *Yatis* (a pious ascetic): The regulations laid down by the Buddha, bearing upon the contemporaneous monastic practices are equally important, and to be met with in every nook and corner of the *Vinaya*. The *Mahavagga* tells us that the Buddha converted 1,000 *Jatilas* and 250 followers of Sanjaya to be the Buddhist. So, the second and third of the four *Nissayas* are chiefly based on customs observed by the *Paribbajakas*.

4. *Uposathain* Older Literature: The ascetics, as the *Mahavagga* reports, used to hold assemblies on the fourteen and fifteenth of each lunar month. So, on the suggestion of king Bimbisara,¹⁶ the Buddha also laid down the rule that the *Uposatha* meeting must be held once a month. Henceforth, the *Uposathameetings* became the main source of vitality on the Buddhist *Sangha*. It is to be born in mind that *Uposathameetings* were quite different in their nature and structure from the meetings of the *Titthiyas* or ascetics.

5. Public Opinion: The wagging together of the public is another source of the majority of the *Vinaya*-rules. In all countries and at all times, the public tongue is always an efficacious reformer; so was it in the time of the Buddha. The *Sangha* being solely depends on the people for ration and clothing. The Buddha and his disciples were always ready to consider reasonable complaints and suggestions of the public. The examples of public suggestions are, King Bimbisara, who suggested the *Uposatha* meeting;

¹⁶ *Vinaya Pitaka*.I.101; (See *Mahavagga*.1.3)

Vassavasa had been criticized by the people at Rajagha; *VisakhaMigaramata* suggested the *Bhikkhuni* from bathing in the same place with courtesans, and provided the bathing suits for them, and for the *Bhikkhus* with rainy-season-ropes; as well as the Sanction of accepting land for the sake of the *Sangha* was due to *Anathapindika*'s offering the *Jetavanamahavihara* to the Buddha, and so on.

6. Suggestion of *Bhikkhu*: Many rules again are an outcome of the suggestions of the *Bhikkhus* and *Bhikkunis*. For example, it was through the suggestion of *Ananda* that admission to the *Sangha* was granted to women. Because of *Gotami*'s request to the Buddha to allow bathing for women that most of the rules about bathing in the *BhikkhuniPacittiya* came to be made, etc.

7. *Atikkamo*: Transgression¹⁷ (Skt.:*Atikram*). The *Vinaya* laws came to be declared on account of the lapses on the part of the inmates of *Sangha*. The long list of the *Patimokkha* for the *Bhikkhus* and *Bhikkunis* are nothing but a record of the various occasions of lapses and under various circumstances. All such rules are negative in character. One of the reasons for this characteristic is that rules were not declared by the Buddha by predicament of the offences but after the actual result of the misdeeds. The most important rule like observing strict celibacy in the *Sangha* was declared, after *Sudinnahad* violated chastity through ignorance. The rest of the three *Parajikas* and the thirteen *Sanghadisesa* are all of the same nature. There are indeed very few laws, which came into being for their own sake, without any outward suggestion or lapse. The eight *Garudhammas* for the women can be included in the same way.

8. *Itihasa*: Tradition. The *Pacittiya* No.37,¹⁸ forbade the *Bhikkhu* taking meals at odd hours since they used to dine anytime. This habit was due to the custom because of the carelessness on the part of the *Bhikkhus*. And the Buddha has also to make rules in compliance with the requirement

¹⁷ Summary of *Adikammika* (A Beginner of Transgressions) in *Bhikkhu* and *Bhikkhuni Patimokkhas*.

¹⁸ *Vinaya Pitaka*.IV.85-86.

of the state. Soldiers and convicts were not allowed to enter the *Sangha*. Elephants being of great use to the state, the monks were forbidden to eat their flesh; the violation of the rule caused a *Dukkata*.¹⁹

Having studied the theory of Punishment in the Buddhist jurisprudence as found in the Buddhist Canonical literature with special reference to the jurisprudence in early Buddhism, It can be stated that Buddhist law as evident in the early literature also accepted the weakness of human being. Buddhism believes that human beings do lack adequate understanding of right and wrong. Yet at the same time, Buddhism believes in rehabilitation of convicts, whom the community is supposed to welcome back for a fresh start following their sentence.

Thus, malefactors must feel remorse, confess sorrow, repair the damage, and reform themselves; the offended on the other hand are obligated to forgive crimes and help sinner improve their destiny.²⁰

Conclusion

Buddhism accepts that human by nature is full of weakness and is prone to make mistake, as evidences in the numerous rules of the *Patimokkha*. Being aware of this, the main objectives of *Patimokkha* are designed for controlling and punishing those shameless people as well as intended for the living comfort and welfare of well-behaved monk and so on.

Thus, the identity of Buddhist law depended on two important foundations, namely:

- (1). The Buddhist philosophy of the Noble Eightfold Path.

¹⁹ Durga N. Bhagvat, *Early Buddhist Jurisprudence (Theravada Vinaya-Laws)*, (Delhi: Cosmo Publications, 1939), pp.48-62.

²⁰ David Levison (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Crime and Punishment*, Vol. I, (USA: Sage Publication, 1947), p.135.

(2).The Sociological needs and demands necessitated by the differences between the community of monks and laypersons and such other socio-cultural demands made from time to time. The moral aspect of the law rested on the first foundation while the legal and other socio-cultural aspects could be traced to the sociological needs and demands.²¹

So, after having discussed the identity of the Buddhist jurisprudence as mentioned in early Buddhist scriptures, we can find that there are eight vital identities of the Buddhist jurisprudence are; 1) convention, 2) contribution to celibacy, 3) the influence of the institution of a pious ascetic, 4) *Uposatha* in older literature, 5) public opinion, 6) suggestion of monks, 7) transgression and 8) tradition.

It can be pertinence to say that the Buddhist stand is intended to prevent people from committing these crimes through training and educating of mankind to have the *Sammaditthi* (right view) with the help of social institutions. It would be worthy to note here that the Buddhist perspective and remedy to crime are not of recourse to the retributive or retaliatory courses but the bases on *Metta* (loving kindness) and *Karuna* (compassion). The heart of the Buddhist jurisprudence is *Parivasa* (Probation of Offender) which is the Buddhist solution to reform and rehabilitate the criminal leading him to the attainment of final blessing i.e. *Nibbana* which is of a higher tranquility, as the Buddha has said aptly in the *Dhammapada* that: “*There is no happiness higher than tranquility*”.²²

²¹ Nandasena Ratnapala, *Op.Cit.*, pp.43-44.

²² *Dhammapada* Verse No.202. “*Natthisantiparamsukham*”: K.T.S. Sarao, (tr.), *Op.Cit.*, p.249.

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**AN APPLICATION OF THE FOUR BUDDHIST PRINCIPLES OF
DEVELOPMENT (BHĀVANĀ) IN BALANCING LIFE FOR THE ELDERLY
PERSONS IN MODERN SOCIETY.**

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ABSTRACT

The purposes of the research were; (1) to study the concepts related to the elderly persons as appeared in Buddhist scripture and modern science (2) to apply the Four Principles of Development for the elderly persons in the modern society and (3) to present the activity patterns for self-development of the elderly persons in accordance with the Buddhist guideline. The research methodology is qualitative research and searching from the data sources, that is, Tipitaka, the texts, documents, academic articles, comparative analysis by use descriptive method.

The results of the research are found that in the teachings of Buddhism, to live with the real qualitative and happy life is important. Buddhism teaches both the physical and mental practice in the same time with efficiency in compliance with the principle of Middle Way that summarized to the Four Principles of Development to develop the physical, moral and mental behavior and to develop the knowledge and understanding perfectly, that is, the elderly persons can apply for creating the balance in their lives by having the activity patterns namely happiness, funny, bright and peace.

Key words: Application, the Four Buddhist Principles of Development, Elderly persons, balancing of life.

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Introduction

From the performance of the population's policy and laying out the family planning of Thailand that faces the successfulness including the progression in developing the country in together with the aspect of economy, society and the progress of education, physician, public health and modern technology, they play an important role to encourage Thai people to have more knowledge and skill to protect and take care of their health and to make Thai people have good health and prolong their lives. From the successfulness as mentioned it results in the state and the rate of birth tending to reduce and the change of population's structure, that is, the populations are in the higher aging tending to increase. While the populations are in the childish ages and working ages tending to reduce approximately in the year of 2573 B.E. the elderly populations will increase in the level of 25% or approximately 17.76 million people¹ or in the average, one of four Thais will exist and the rate of the elderly population increase rapidly. This point every segment must realize of and prepare the various aspects to gather the resources and various co-sciences to be ready for receiving the change in the aspect of economy, health, society and encouragement of good qualification of life. To protect the elderly persons and provide the fringe benefits for them are able to reach the basic services for living including the construction of the social insurance in order to establish the stability for all the elderly persons.

When individuals reach the aging period of life, they will have the physical, mental, emotional, intelligent change and society and environment

¹ The Office of Encouragement and Protection of the Elderly persons (STS), **Integrative plan in the year of 2556-2559 B.E.** (Bangkok: The Office of encouragement and protection of the Aging), P,1.

will be much difference from the past period of life and rapidly.² It can be seen that elderly persons' problems do not only depend on the increasing totality but also depend on the persons' quality of life, namely to provide the medical services and public health in order to receive the elderly persons' problems together with providing the basic services of society, prevention and health treatment, continuous education and earning stability for occurrence in family and community for enhancing the elderly persons' quality of life. From Thipawan Suthanon's research, the results of research are found that the elderly persons experience the problems in 4 aspects, that (1) the physical problem (2) the mental problem (3) the social and co-living problem (4) the economical and earnings problem. For the elderly persons, the samples, experience various diseases found in general elderly persons.³ It can be seen that the elderly persons experience a lot of problems and they have to adapt themselves for facing those problems. If they adapt themselves in the wrong way, it will not result in the benefits for themselves and society. So those are importance of the elderly persons do not depend on the long stay, the totality of the elderly population more or less, the rate of increasing or reducing population. It depends on the elderly persons' quality of life. So the things that should be considered are that How do they live? How do they have the way of life? And how do they develop themselves? So they will live happily and equivalence occurs in their lives in the present time.

² Udompon Chanpaiboo, **Sociology related to the elderly persons**. (Bangkok: Ramkamhaeng University), p. 13-17.

³ Thipawan Suthanon. An application of BuddhaDhamma for lives with happiness of the elderly persons, **Thesis of curriculum of Master of Arts (Buddhism)** (the Graduate School: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, 2556), p. Abstract.

The research's objectives

1. To study the concepts related to the elderly persons as appeared in Buddhist scripture and modern science
2. To apply the Four Principles of Development for the elderly persons in the modern society and
3. To present the activity patterns for self-development of the elderly persons in accordance with the Buddhist guideline

The four Buddhist Principles of Development as appeared in Buddhist scriptures

The word “Bhāvanā” in the former time translated into “Progress” “Bhāvanā” if it is translated in compliance with the alphabets can be translated into “make to be or make to have”. Anything that does not have should be created together with increasing and strength or anything else. On the other hand, we translate it as “Training”, the word “Training” comes to be close to the meaning of Sikkhā. So the word “Sikkhā” and “Bhāvanā” comes to be close of each other. Some time it is used instead of each other. This is the connection with the main principle in Buddhist practice. The Lord Buddha said in His teaching in order to use for the individuals’ qualification. He is used the words “is Bhāvitakāyo” (Bodily Development) “Bhāvitasilo” (Moral Development) Bhāvitacitto (mental development) .and “Bhāvitapaññāyo” (intelligent development). The word “Bhāvana” when we use It as the adjective can be used into Bhāvita. is Bhāvitakāya means one who has the bodily development or already-trained, Bhāvitasila: one who has the moral development, Bhāvitacitta: one who has the mental development and “Bhāvitapaññāya”: one who has an intelligent development. If it a noun, it can be divided into 4 categories as follows:

- 1, Kāyabhāvanā : person is Bhāvitakāyo: the doer is the bodily development.

2. Silabhāvanā : person is Bhāvitasilo. The doer is the mental development
3. Cittabhāvanā : person is Bhāvitacitto The doer is the mental development.
4. Paññāyābhāvanā : person is Bhāvitapaññāyo. The doer is the intelligent development.⁴

The four Buddhist Principles of Development are the valuable quality of people. Buddhism gives the importance to self-development and raise up the developed persons as the highest person⁵, suitable for worshipping⁶ and to praise as such that results from the worth of the Four mental cultures that are the results of self-training⁷

An application of the Four Buddhist Principles of Development in order to make life-equality for the elderly persons

The principle of Buddhism emphasizes the creation of health or the state of happiness as a whole with the four systems of life, that is, body, society, mind, and wisdom by focusing on the development from the inner nature, namely to develop the mind for wisdom that impact on the life that associates with the outside nature both physically and socially.⁸

4.1 In developing the body or *Kāyabhāvanā* and association with the physical environments or materials can be practiced as to train the behaviors for application of senses of faculties such as seeing, hearing and eating with mindfulness together with self-development continuously to

⁴ Phra Dhammapidok, (P.A. Payutto). **Buddhadhamma and life development**, (Bangkok: Dhammasapa, 2540), 51.

⁵ Khu.dh. (Thai) 25/321/114.

⁶ Ang. Catukka (Thai) 21/36/59.

⁷ Khu.Dh. (Thai) 25/106/63.

⁸ Phramaha Tavee mahapanyo, **Analysis of Ayusahadham 5, the principles of long life 5 features in the scripture of Thareavada Buddhism**, Research (Buddhist Research Institute: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya, 2556), p. Abstract.

make wisdom progress, good and valuable life. With consumption with usefulness of nutrition, enough for bodily requirement, it will support the body to be strong and good health in accordance with ages, to use the dressings, accommodations, technology as economic and the most usefulness. The dwellings will be stable, clean, and safety. The food and necessities can be easily bought, To have an opportunity to meet and talk with the others can be done and the activities can be performed with the learned persons such as Buddhist monks, physicians, persons with virtue etc.

4.2 The moral development or *Sīlabhāvanā* is associated with the social environment. It can be practiced by using five or 8 precepts as the foundation to train the behaviors in the right way and suitable for the family, community, and society in accordance with the principle, rules, regulation and law whether the types of the precepts should be observed or not, they must undertake the precepts by saying in order to pay attention to receive that type of precept for practicing until it becomes to be habitual and the way of his life and the activities, hobbies and honest occupation should be done by abstaining from the dishonest occupation such as cheating and deceiving etc. not to persecute and create the trouble for themselves, society and environment, and not to destroy the value and the quality of life including the ability to be self-reliant and to rely on others less.

4.3 In training the mental culture, mental development and mental training to be strong, stable and progressive with the diversity of virtues. The elderly persons are able to control their minds with the Tranquil and Insight meditation in order to make mind good quality, that is, to have the sublime state of mind, polite, gentle, honesty, gratefulness, shame of evil, afraid of evil, the mind with good health, that is, the mind consists of the strength, stability, effort, mindfulness, industry and good health consists of peace,

fresh, cheerfulness, joyfulness, optimism, and to reinforce to learn the new things in training with meditation.

4.4 In training the wisdom, intelligent development is to create the knowledge, understanding, and the intuition of the truths. The elderly persons can practice in according to the Noble Eightfold Parts by practicing the Four Foundations of Mindfulness to develop the good quality of mind and good health of mind. When the mind that is finally developed will give up all desires, they contemplate to realize of the Three Characteristics of Existences, to penetrate the and to see the life consisting of 5 Aggregates, that is, impermanence, unhappiness and no-self not clinging to them and to realize of the Four Noble Truths, to penetrate the worldly conditions, not to be infatuated in the property and life. When facing the disappointment and separation, they can make peace easily and live with happiness.⁹

In conclusion, to create the equivalence of life for the elderly persons in the way of Buddhism has the principle of Dhamma that can be applied for life of the elderly persons, that is, physical development, mental development and wisdom development that are the concepts or the practical principles connective to good way of life and the right way according the normal law that is able to deliver the benefits that are the highest goals of life.

The model of activity in accordance with the four Buddhist Principles of Development for the elderly persons practicing to make the equality of life

The four Buddhist Principles of Development are the principles of life-administration in the right way and self-development by selecting the

⁹ Udom Chanpaiboon, The application of the Threefold Learning for equality of life for the elderly persons, **Ramkamhaen Journal**, the version of Anthropology, years of 35, Version 1, (Sociology and Anthropology, the Faculty of Humanities, Ramakamhaeng University,), N/A.

activities to enhance the physical, moral, mental and wisdom development suitable for them including the groups organizing the activities or associating with the clubs that manage the activities to be wholesome and the right practice as follows:

5.1 The management of activities in accordance with *Kāyabhāvanā* : comfortable happiness

The elderly persons' ability to look after the physical health is to make the body to be strong, active and energy and to be able to respond the physical requirement in accordance with condition as appeared. The economics and necessary factors are sufficient without perils and dangers and to have environment that enhance the health, not to addict the drugs.¹⁰ The exercises that are admired to practice can be classified into various methods as follows:

1. The physical exercises
2. The muscle exercise
3. To train the endure in general is the most necessary training for the Elderly persons
4. The sport playing
5. In using the physical energy in daily life and hobbies

5.2 The management activities in accordance with *Sīlabhāvanā* : Funny happiness and aging gracefully.

The elderly persons' ability in selecting the joyful way of life, enjoyment by performing the activities results in the happy emotion with the purity of mind, active and the good quality of life. These activities can reduce

¹⁰ The Office of the Mental Health, **Department of Mental Health**, the Handbook of 5 dimensions of happiness for the aging (Bangkok: Beyond Company Publishing Ltd. 2555) p. 13.

the sorrowfulness, seriousness and anxiousness. The satisfaction in life, self-content, self-confidence, self-virtue, self-respect, self-encouragement, sympathy for others, benevolent, and participation in assisting others in society will occur. The models in managing the funny activities for the aging can be divided in various types as follows:

1. The moral preservation is done for the right behaviors
2. The systems for performance of occupation
3. To manage the regulation in using the four factors in order to live with Sufficiency
4. To accumulate the merits must be done in order to make the life progress and easy to search for the property in the future by making merit.
5. The suitable relationship with family and society

5.3 The management of mental culture (*Cittabhāvanā*): Bright happiness

To manage the activities of Bright happiness in the groups of aging will emphasize the encouragement and maintain the brain declination in various aspects such as the ability of aging in memory, the reasonable thought, communication for planning, and problems solution, ability in thinking as a whole (Dependent Origination) including ability in management of various things efficiently in the groups of the elderly persons such as to retard the brain declination, efficiently and they must train the perception about various situations in the present and observe various things around themselves or from the pictures, to train the memory, reading, writing and the methods to exercise the brain etc. the important point is that the period of training will impact the retard of the brain declination. The models for management of activity in the elderly persons can be divided as follows:

1. Chanting and saluting are to increase the faith, merit, to heal the diseases for themselves by recitation and saluting before going to bed as usual.

2. Having mindfulness and heedlessness are to practice the daily activities and to perform various activities will not be wrong and not to cause the accident by living with mindfulness and without heedlessness in every aspect.

3. The purposes of the mental development are to make the mind peace, and stability. The greed, hatred and delusion will be reduced and the loving-kindness and compassion will increase.

4. The purposes of healing the mental health are to make good mental Health, not to be serious, worry and sorrow and to make the physical health in good condition by relaxation not to be worried about anything, when they feel serious they should find out the way of relaxation such as playing with the pets, physical exercises and to listen to music etc. it may protect the worry and depression.

5.4 The management of the aspect of *paññabhāvanā* : peace and happiness

The mental peace is one of factors of components in the aspect of the emotional clever that assists to carry on their life of the elderly persons happily by dividing the physical peace and mental happiness. The model of activities in developing the behavior of the elderly persons should comply with the physical and mental change and to encourage the elderly persons to live with suitability consisting of components as follows:

1. To prepare the readiness before entering the old age in order to live in the old age with the efficiency and to have happiness with the readiness for the elderly persons in various aspects, that is, in the aspect of health, they should take care of it with carefulness in order to make the aging have good health, while in the aspect of mentality, they should preserve the precepts and practice meditation and develop the wisdom in order to make the elderly persons good quality.

2. The purposes of self-adjustment are to have relationship with others appropriately by adjusting their roles in the right way to avoid the glumness, complaint, boredom, the assistance from the off spring and others whenever it is necessary, to try to help and to participate in the activities with the family and the community and to create the good relationship among the others.

3. The purposes of the recreational activity are to do not feel lonely, confusion, active and enjoyment with the hobbies, interesting activities or special attitude to move the body, flexible exercises and to use meditation and wisdom for consideration.

4. The purposes of learning continuously are to develop the wisdom and the right understanding by leaning the new things and enjoyment feeling, with attention and endure.

5. To create the benefits for the society is to make feeling that the Elderly persons are useful and worthy for society and to have meaning by doing the activity services for the other persons.

In conclusion, the elderly persons can apply the principles of the Four Mental Cultures for the 4 models if activities, that is, joyfulness:: the activity is to know how to select the appropriate factors for usage to develop themselves to be happy and dignified aging and the activity for knowing how to abstain from doing an evil, that is, bright happiness, the activity for knowing how to develop the behaviors agreeable with the physical and mental change, to know how to control the mental behaviors and the mind is developed with appropriation and the activity for knowing how to think, consider, and analysis and think in the right way and realize of his own nature and carry out their lives with the sufficiency and to have the right way of life in the high level, that is, to reach the ultimate reality of life.

Conclusion

The balancing life of the elderly persons should be created, while in Buddhism, there are a lot of principles of Dhamma that should be applied for the elderly persons' life, that is, the physical, mental and wisdom development. All these are the guideline of thought and practice connective to the good way of life and the right way in the natural law that can result in the good benefits as the purpose of life such as to associate with the physical or material environment. These can be practiced as follows: With training the behaviors by using the sense-faculties such as seeing, hearing and eating with mindfulness together with self-development continuously. The association with social environment can be practiced by applying 5 or 8 precepts for the fundamental training in the appropriate way with family, community and society according to the rules, regulation and law. In mental training to make it strong, stable and progressive with all virtues, the elderly persons can control the mind by practicing the Tranquil and Insight Meditation in order to have good quality of mind. In creation of knowledge, concepts, understanding and intuition of the truth, the elderly persons can train themselves in both the mundane and super mundane wisdom etc.

The elder persons can apply the principles of the four Buddhist Principles of Development for the models of activities in four happiness that, happiness: the activity knowing how to select the appropriate factors in self-development, funny happiness and bright aging. The activity knowing how to abstain from the evil, that is, bright happiness, the activity knowing how to develop the behaviors connective to the physical and mental change and to know how to control the mental behaviors, namely, the mental appropriate development, that is the peace-happiness and the activity knowing how to think, consider, analysis and to have the right conception and realize of self-nature, to live efficiently and to carry on their lives in the right way in the higher level, that is to say, to reach the ultimate reality of life.

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THE MODEL AND PROCESS TO CREATE STRENGTH OF VILLAGES –
MONASTERIES – SCHOOLS ON THE PROBLEMS – ADDICTIVE
DRUG TACKLING ACCORDING TO BUDDHISM
IN THE NORTH EASTERN REGION

Asst. Prof. Dr. Jaras Leeka and others*

ABSTRACT

The purpose of research titled ‘The model and process to create strength of villages – monasteries – schools on the problems – Addictive Drug tackling according to Buddhism in the Northeastern Region’ is to study the form and process to create the strength on destroying the addictive drug problem following the Buddhist principles of villages, temples and schools in the Northeastern Region as being qualitative research by descriptive analysis on the inductive principles.

The result was found that;

The forms and process of The model and process to create strength of villages – monasteries – schools on the problems – Addictive Drug tackling according to Buddhism in the Northeastern Region must be done with survey and observation on the life-living and environment of community on their main occupations in order to have basic data for seeking the addictive drug problems and for classifying the persons who had behaviors concern with it. The researcher had appointed the people in village for joining the way to protect that problem and find the defensive measure to accept the drug

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addicted families by announcing as being the community's promise in order to use this measure and treaty protecting the community with strength and fairness of addictive drug by four noble truths as being the process of solving that problem as follow; 1. Dukkha- to identify problem (case), 2.Samudhaya-origins of suffering (causes), and 3.Nirodha – solving problems (clear) and Magga- take action to solve problems (crack).

Keywords; process, creating strength, destroying the addictive drug problems, Buddhism, the Northeastern region.

The research's importance and problems

Addictive drug problems in the present society are violent and wasteful to the economic and social stability in Thailand and are the modern social dangers coming to destroy the peace and happiness of family in society. They are the dangerous problems to physical and mental health impacted to society and economics reducing the nation's growth. The mentioned importance is all institutes' duty in order to create immunity to society and nation including the forms and process for making strength of villages, temples and schools to destroy the addictive drug problem following the Buddhist ways.

For the form and process to make strength of villages, temples and schools to destroy the addictive drug problems following the Buddhist ways concern with the strategy of country development under the national plan of economic and social development vol.no.11 (B.E.2555-2559)¹, and concern with the fifth strategy; to create the link among neighbor countries for the economic and social stability by giving the importance related with participation of international society's

¹ The national plan of economic and social development volume no.11 between B.E. 2555-2559. www.geeratutor.com/index.php?mo=14&newsid=413456. [searched on January 20th, B.E.2560].

danger protection from terrorism, crime and addictive drug and concern with the policy and strategy of national research volume no.8 (B.E.2555-2559)², And concern with the strategy of research no.1 ; to create potential and ability to develop society by promoting the knowledge base for stability in country to make the social strength and related with strategy of research no.7 ; to destroy the addictive drug problems, security in life and asset, and problems of influential persons by promoting the strength and creating the immunity of regions and society. The development of link on addictive drug management, problem solving, having participation, and promoting the co-operation, the strength, and human resource development in society.

The result of research will create the forms and process to make strength of villages, temples and schools in order to destroy the addictive drug problem following the Buddhist ways in three provinces; KhonKaen province, Mahasarakarm province, and Roi-Et province, which is related with the research plan of link development of the addictive drug management, forms of protection and solving problems of addictive drug following the Buddhist ways.

The researchers, therefore, have seen the importance of solving problems of addictive drug in the present society as being violent and wasteful to the economic and social stability in Thailand and as being the modern social dangers coming to destroy the peace and happiness of family in society. The researchers have been interested in the forms and process to create strength of villages, temples and schools to destroy the addictive drug problem following the Buddhist ways in Northeast of Thailand in order to be the center of information in

² Policy and Strategy on National Research volume 8 between B.E. 2555-2559. www1.nrct.go.th > Contents > Policy and Strategy on National Research .[searched on January 20th , B.E.2560].

community, institute of family, schools and religion, which are the important human development of country in the future.

Research's objectives

2.1 To study the forms and process of creating strength on solving problems of addictive drug following the Buddhist ways at villages, temples, and schools in Northeast of Thailand.

2.2 To synthesize the forms and process of creating strength on solving problems of addictive drug following the Buddhist ways at villages, temples, and schools in Northeast of Thailand.

2.3 To create the forms and process of creating strength on solving problems of addictive drug following the Buddhist ways at villages, temples, and schools in Northeast of Thailand.

Research's questions

3.1 How should the forms and process of creating strength on solving problems of addictive drug following the Buddhist ways at villages, temples, and schools in Northeast of Thailand be?

3.2 How should the teachings of Buddhism integrated to synthesize the forms and process of creating strength on solving problems of addictive drug following the Buddhist ways in Northeast of Thailand be?

3.3 How should the forms of integrated teachings of Buddhism on solving problems of addictive drug following the Buddhist ways in Northeast of Thailand be?

Research's limits

4.1 Limit of contents

The research is a qualitative research. The researcher aimed at the forms and process to create strength of villages, temples and schools to

destroy the addictive drug problem following the Buddhist ways with these objectives as follow; 1. To study the forms and process of creating strength on solving problems of addictive drug following the Buddhist ways at villages, temples, and schools in Northeast of Thailand, 2. To synthesize the forms and process of creating strength on solving problems of addictive drug following the Buddhist ways at villages, temples, and schools in Northeast of Thailand, and 3. To create the forms and process of creating strength on solving problems of addictive drug following the Buddhist ways at villages, temples, and schools in Northeast of Thailand.

4.2 Limits of Research's area

On this research, the researcher had provided three provinces; 1. KhonKaen province, 2. Mahasarakarmprovince, and 3. Roi-Et province.

4.3 Limits of sampling of persons given information

The sampling of persons given information on the research used specific selection as follow; 10 Officials of Local Administration, 10 Leaders of community, 10 Buddhist monks, 10 governors, 10 policemen, 5 officials of Public Health, 5 Officials of Addiction Treatment Center in KhonKaen province, 5 officials in Office of the Narcotics Control Board in KhonKaen province and 10 Administrators of schools are 75 persons in total.

Expected Benefits are

6.1 To get the forms and process of creating strength on solving problems of addictive drug following the Buddhist ways at villages, temples, and schools in Northeast of Thailand.

6.2 To synthesize the forms and process of creating strength on solving problems of addictive drug following the integrated Buddhist ways in Northeast of Thailand.

6.3 To get the forms on solving problems of addictive drug following the Buddhist ways in Northeast of Thailand.

Result of Research

The forms and process of creating strength on solving problems of addictive drug following the Buddhist ways of villages, temples, and schools in the Northeast of Thailand, It was found that The forms and process of creating strength on solving problems of addictive drug following the Buddhist ways of villages, temples, and schools in KhonKaen province is to examine life-living and environment in community including the people's main occupations in order to have basic information to find the addictive drug problem and to classify their behaviors related with addictive drug by appointing for meeting in community in order to find the ways of addictive drug protection and acceptance of persons addicted drug, officials in Office of the Narcotics Control Board in KhonKaen province had provided nine steps for creating strength on protecting and solving the addictive drug problems in community as follow; The first step is to find the status of community. The second step is to meet the leaders or natural leaders. The third step is to announce the agenda of village or community. The fourth step is to campaign as public.

Of relation. The fifth step is to classify persons related with addictive drug. The sixth step is to act on the ways of solving the addictive drug problems. The seventh step is to accept householders. The eighth step is to use the social strategy. The ninth step is to maintain the strong status of community and to create the protection and solving problems of addictive drug following the integrated Buddhist ways; they should follow the principles of Four Noble Truths for solving the addictive drug problems as follow; the first step is Suffering (Duddha) as being case. The second step is Cause of Suffering (Samudhaya) as being cause. The third step is Cessation of Suffering (Nirodha) as being clear. And the fourth step is Path leading to Cessation of Suffering (Magga) as being Crack, which related with

RungthipKlaharn EtAl's³ research paper (B.E.2556) titled 'Process of Protecting and Solving Addictive Drug Problem following the Buddhadhamma in Moo Ban Pa Pai, Tambon Mae Pong, AmphorDoi-saket, Chaing Mai province. The result of research was found that the principle of Four Noble Truths could be applied to find the problems and solve them by focusing on three main benefits; On the Present Benefit (Dhithadhammigathaprayochna) means focusing on the appropriate life-living of people in community in order to know how to seek and earn money rightly. On the Next Benefit (Samparayigathaprayochan) means focusing on the appropriate practice under moral rules, belief on the good or bad action and more benefit-to have life-living peacefully with the great wisdom an mindfulness on suffering caused greed, angry and delusion. The most important thing as key action for protecting and solving the addictive drug problem of Moo Ban Pa Pai, Tambon Mae Pong, AmphorDoi-saket, Chaing Mai province successfully because of all persons in community following the principle of Triple Education; to maintain morality, to improve concentration and to develop wisdom.

Suggestions for next research

1. It should be researched as qualitative research about co-operation between the government section and private section in order to create strength for solving problems of addictive drug following the Buddhist ways.
2. It should be researched as quantitative research about creating of strength for solving problems of addictive drug following the Buddhist Ethics by community's participation.

³ Rungthip Klaharn EtAl, Process of Protecting and Solving Addictive Drug Problem following The Buddhadhamma in Moo Ban Pa Pai, Tambon Mae Pong, AmphorDoi-saket, ChaingMai province. (B.E.2556)

3. It should be researched as mixed method research of both qualitative research and quantitative research about creating strength on solving problems of addictive drug following the Buddhist ethics by community's participation.

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THE CONSERVATIVE PROCESSES OF PALM LEAF (BAILAN)
SCRIPTURES WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF PEOPLE
IN KHONKEAN PROVINCE.

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ABSTRACT

The Research entitled “*The Conservative Processes of Bailan Scriptures (Scriptures on Palm Leaf) with the Participation of People in Khonkean Province*” is of qualitative type of study. The research has three main objectives. They are: 1) To study the processes of conserving Bailan Scriptures in Khonkean Province; 2) To study the forms of the participation of people in Khonkean Province in conserving of Bailan scriptures; and 3) To study the conservation of Bailan scriptures with the participation of people in Khonkean Province. The data-analysis of this type of research has been made with the inductive methodology

The Results of research are as follows:

1. The processes of the conservation of Bailans criptures in Khonkean Province

The conservation of Bailan scriptures in khon Kean province has fixed steps, that is, survey Bailan scriptures scattered in various places, collecting and dividing them into several sections for proving convenient searching, for instance, religion and philosophy, folk literatures, history and chronicle, and so on. However, the conserving of Bailan scriptures has no, in the first phase, fixed format. But, at present, after surveying, collecting and grouping

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them in several sections, there are many types of keeping Bailan scriptures through modern tools, for example, transmitting them from original copies to microfilms, and keeping on websites and other electronic Medias. In addition, the spreading of Bailan scriptures has been made through various ways, for instance, through giving sermon by monks on the occasion of making traditional merit, academic exhibition, conducting research, and integrating them with learning and teaching, including the spreading of knowledge from Bailan scriptures in the forms of multimedia, i.e., radio, television and website, etc.

2. The Forms of the participation of people in Khonkean province in conserving of Bailan scriptures

The result of research is found that forms of participation of people in Khonkean province in conserving of Bailan scriptures have been made through cultivating awareness for the conservation of Bailan scriptures, for example, through giving correct knowledge and letting people be aware of the value of Bailan scriptures as the sources of all areas of knowledge passed down to them right now from their own ancestors. For the promotion of conserving of Bailan scriptures, it should be made with the collaboration of three important pillars of society, that is, temple, village and government office (school). Of those, there should be promotion of conserving Bailan scriptures through learning and teaching with short courses emphasized in writing and reading dhamma-script, through showcase in the learning places, and there should be academic seminars participated by monks, folk-wise persons and scholars as well. And more importantly, there should be the promotion of conserving Bailan scriptures by publishing knowledge obtained by seminar as the new set of knowledge in order to spread Bailan scriptures in various online-medias. In addition, there should be activity praising several persons and associations being able to read and write dhamma-script correctly.

3. The conservation of Bailan scriptures with the participation of people in Khon Kean Province

The conservation of Bailan scriptures should have been supported budget from many organizations both government and private sector, including monks who are as the main coordinators with many organizations for fund-aid aiming at organizing activities in conserving Bailan scripture by letting all section of society to take part in supporting of fund and setting plan for conserving of Bailan scriptures, and there should have been personnel who take charge on this matter in order to make good effect to the project as well. Besides, there should have continuously been system of assessment in order to improve and develop the conservation of Bailan scriptures, and in addition to apply this result of the research for the conserving of Bailan scriptures in the future.

Keywords; Conservative Processes, Bailan Scriptures, Participation

Background and the Problems of Research

At present, there are few people who are able to read and write ancient Isan script (ancient northeastern script), particularly the young generation in Isan region. If we let this situation go without any solution it is probably that the invaluable things recorded in Bailan scriptures from our ancestors would be lost, and it is also regrettable for us to lose the invaluable scriptures which had been built by our ancestors for a long time. In this research, the researchers have entered to survey Bailan scriptures in two sources of Khonkaen Province, that is, i) Devpuranaram temple, Nong-Bua-Dimee village, Taphra sub-district, Maung district, Khonkaen Province; and

ii) Mahachulalongkorn Rajvidyalaya University, Khonkaen campus. The former is the place where there are many Bailan Scriptures have been conserved without making known to the public, the latter is the academic institution that provides course on the ancient scripture study as the selective subject, for which student who wish to study lectured by assistant Professor Dr. Phramaha Doa Siam Vajirapanno, and PhraKalya Sophakul. If These Bailan scriptures could have been read and written by people in the region, we would have seen many valuable ones recorded in Bailan scriptures. So it is a great task for all of us to build the process for conserving Bailan scriptures with the participation of people in Khonkaen province in recovering of ancient Isan script to be as a pride of the advancement of our ancestors to the next generation in our country.

From the reason mentioned above, the researchers as ones who have been in academic institution are interested in doing research with regard to the conservative processes of Bailan scriptures with the participation of people in Khonkaen province in order to promote the conservation of Bailan scriptures, on which the teachings of the Buddha, folk Isan literatures, history and chronicles, including traditional herbal pharmacopoeia, Isan proverbs (Phayā) short stories, etc., have been recorded. All of these are the valuable ones that denote the identity of Isan region. It is the cultural heritage for the study and research in the next generation.

Objectives of Research

1. To study the processes of the conservation of Bailan Scriptures in Khonkaen Province
2. To study the forms of the participation of people in Khonkaen Province for the conservation of Bailan scriptures

3. To study the conservation of Bailan scriptures with the participation of people in Khonkean Province.

Question of the Research

1. What is the process of conserving Bailan scriptures in Khonokaen Province?
2. How do people in Khonokaen Province participate in building the conservative processes of Bailan Scriptures?
3. How do people in Khonokaen Province participated for the conservation of Bailan scriptures?

Scope of the Research

1. Research Methodology

This research is of qualitative type of study. The researchers intend to study the Conservative Processes of Bailan Scriptures with the Participation of People in Khonkean Province with three main objectives. They are: 1) To study the processes of conserving Bailan Scriptures in Khonkean Province; 2) To study the forms of the participation of people in Khonkean Province for the conservation of Bailan scriptures; and 3) To study the conservation of Bailan scriptures with the participation of people in Khonkean Province.

2. Sources of Data Collection

This research has two sources of data-collection: i) Devpuranaram temple, Nong-Bua Dimee village, Taphra sub-district, Maung district, Khonkaen Province, and ii) MahachulalongkornRajvidyalaya University, Khonkaen campus.

3. Population and Samples

The samples of data-collection in this research have been chosen from populations in two sources as mentioned above with the specified

selection, that is, Monks, folk wise- men who have knowledge in Bailan scriptures, the leaders of communities, the officers of local administrative organization (Tambon Administrative Organization), and people who have knowledge in Bailan scriptures are totally 40 persons. The Samples of this research consist of ten monks, five folk wise-men, five the leaders of communities, five officers of local administrative organizations, and fifteen people who have knowledge in Bailan scriptures

The Expected Benefit of Research

1. Having known conservative processes of Bailan scriptures in Khonkaen province
2. Having obtained the forms of the participative conservation of Bailan scriptures of people in Khonkaen province
3. Having known method and step of conserving Bailan Scriptures with the participation of people in Khonkaen province
4. Having known problems and hurdles in conserving of Bailan Scriptures with the participation of people in Khonkaen province
5. The result of this research would be the information for ones who wish to study regarding the conservative processes of Bailan Scriptures in the future

The Result of Research

The results of research were as follows:

1. The conservative processes of Bailan Scriptures in Khonkaen Province:

1.1 Surveying collecting and grouping of Bailan Scriptures in Khonkaen province.

In this aspect, the result of research is found that there are surveying and examining Bailan Scriptures scattered in various places, for example, in temples, in Mordham's houses (The house of local doctor in Isan region) and

folk wise-men's houses. The scriptures occupies by Mordham and folk wise-men are reserved and believed as the sacred scripture kept for black magic ceremony, and also as the herbal pharmacopoeia that could not be made known to the public, whereas Bailan Scriptures reserved in temples have been surveyed by ones who are expert in Bailan Scriptures, they have divided Bailan Scriptures and grouped them into many sections and sub sections for providing convenient searching, following the contents appeared or scribed in Bailan Scriptures in each bunch. Bailan Scriptures have been grouped in three sections: i) Religion and Philosophy, consists in Mantra-chanting ceremony, various results of making merits, ethics, Isan proverbs (Phaya), medical knowledge, astrological knowledge, etc., ii) literatures, consists in the chronicles of folk tales short stories proverbs, etc., iii) Histories, consists in chronicles: chronicle of folk village, of folk city, of folk Buddha's statue, of Buddha's Relics, and of sermons, and of codes of ancient law, and so on.

2. Forms of conserving Bailan Scriptures in Khonkaen Province.

In this aspect, the result of research is found that previously, there is no, in Khonkaen Province fixed step of conserving Bailan Scriptures, however there are actually two traditions of keeping Bailan scriptures, that is, one is keeping Bailan scriptures by binding them in bunches, and two is keeping Bailan scriptures by strictly splicing woods in two sides aiming at keeping Bailan scriptures smooth and unfolded, then covering them with cotton garment or silk, which would be consist of various patterns on the garment covered each bunch of Bailan scriptures, dependent upon ideology or belief of each locality; the last step of conserving is to keep Bailan scriptures in *Sim* (Uposatha in formal Pali for Sanghakamma activities) or *HorTrai* (Trititika-Room) or in the room of the Buddha's statue or on the shelf of the Buddha's statue; someone

like to keep Bailan scriptures on the head of bed they sleep because of the ideology or belief that Bailan scripture is the sacred one.

For the present day, after surveying, collecting and grouping them in several sections, there are many types of keeping Bailan scriptures with the modern tools, for example, transmitting them from original copies to microfilms, and keeping on websites, and other electronic Medias. In addition, the spreading of Bailan scriptures has been made through various ways, for instance, through giving sermon by monks on the occasion of making traditional merit, academic exhibition, conducting research, and integrating them with learning and teaching, including the spreading of knowledge from Bailan scripture in the forms of multimedia, i.e., radio, television and website, etc.

3. Spreading of Bailan Scriptures in Khonkaen Province.

In this aspect, it is found that the spread of knowledge particularly the teachings of the Buddha, philosophy of folk literatures and histories, etc., is a very good action as the traditional belief of the people in Isan region that one who scribes one dhamma script would get result of it as those who built one Buddha's statue. In addition, people in Isan region have firm belief that the scribing or recording of Bailan Scriptures is to give Buddhism alive. In addition, there is an ideology that one who scribes or who presents scriptures would get result of it, they would be born as the wise persons in the next life, and would attain the state of *nibbana* in the final birth. At present, there are various types of spreading Bailan scriptures, for example, giving sermon on the traditional merit making of monks, academic showcase, study and research, and integrating Bilan scriptures with learning and teaching. Besides, there is spreading of Bailan Scriptures in the forms of multi-media, and several kinds of online Medias, for example, radio, TV., websites, and so on.

4. Forms of the participation people in Khonkaen Province in conserving of Bailan Scriptures:

4.1 The cultivation of awareness in conserving of Bailan Scriptures.

In this aspect, the research is found that there should be cultivation of awareness in conserving of Bailan Scriptures through giving correct knowledge and letting people be aware of the value of Bailan scriptures as the sources of all areas of knowledge passed down to them right now from their own ancestors. At present, there is misunderstanding among people in the region that Bailan Scriptures are the sacred ones thereby they burn them and bring their ashes to be as one component of the building of the Buddha,' small image (used as amulet, etc. This misunderstanding has caused the loss of Bailan scriptures in Isan region especially in Khonkaen province.

4.2 The promotion of conserving Bailan Scriptures.

In this aspect, the result of research is found that the promotion of conserving Bailan Scriptures should be made with the collaboration of three important pillars of society, that is, temple, village and government office (school). These three pillars of society should pay more attention and be aware of the value of Bailan scriptures as the sources that recorded the various kinds of religious teachings and literatures. On this matter, there should be promotion of conserving Bailan scriptures through learning and teaching with the short course emphasized in writing and reading dhamma-script, through showcase in the learning places, and there should be academic seminars participated by monks, folk-wise persons and scholars as well. And more importantly, there should be promotion of conserving Bailan scriptures by the publishing knowledge obtained by seminar as the new set of

knowledge in order to spread Bailan scriptures in various ways, for example guidebooks textbooks, etc. In addition, there should be learning Centre for community as the source for information in Khonkaen province.

4.3 The Activities for Conserving of Bailan Scriptures.

In this aspect, the result of research is found that there should be activities concerning conservation of Bailan scriptures continuously organized starting from letting monks and laypersons in the communities know the value of Bailan scriptures and be proud of them as the valuable ones passed down to them from their ancestors, and then choosing ones who wish to study with reading writing and composing of verses. The activities of learning and teaching of conserving Bailan scriptures could be made through modern technology or with the participation of the worthy persons, scholars, and folk wise men, and also there should be association establishment for spreading Bailan scriptures in various online-medias. In addition, there should be activity praising several persons and associations being able to read and write dhamma-script correctly.

5. The Conservation of Bailan scriptures with the participation of people in Khonkaen Province:

5.1 Fund-Aid for conservation of Bailan Scripture.

In this aspect, the result of research is found that The conservation of Bailan scriptures should have been supported budget from many organizations both government and private sector, including monks who are as the main coordinator with many organizations for fund-aid, aiming at organizing activities in conserving of Bailan scripture by letting all section of society to take part in supporting of fund. On this aspect, monks and local

administrative organization, particularly, sub-district administrative organization and the leaders of the communities in all levels as the organizations being very close to community and know them well more than others. All of the parties mentioned above should set plan of budget in supporting of conservation of Bailan scriptures in three kinds: i) Budget for survey; ii) Budget for maintaining; and iii) Budget for seminar and work-study

5.2 Plan and personnel for conservation of Bailan Scriptures

In this aspect, the result of research is found that monks, government and sub-district administrative organization should join hand together in planning and providing of annual budget for supporting of Bailan scriptures-conserving in three phases of planning : i) short planning—surveying, collecting and grouping Bailan scriptures in many sections, building forms of keeping and make them to be known in the public through various medias; ii) Middle Planning—cultivating awareness in conserving of Bailan scriptures, promoting and organizing activities in supporting of Bailan scriptures-conserving; iii) Long Planning—planning and providing budget and personnel for pursuing and evaluating conservation of Bailan scriptures with participation of people in Khonkaen Province in order to make good effect to the project.

5.3 Evaluation of the conservation of Bailan scriptures.

In this aspect, the result of research is found that there should be teamwork and committee constituted to always evaluate all stages of Bailan Scriptures-conservation in order to bring problems and hurdles of projects to analyze and find weak point and strength point, and lastly to bring recommendation from the above process to improve and apply for the next project of Bailan scriptures conserving.

Discussion on the Results of Research

From the data-analysis of qualitative research on the topic “*The Conservative Processes of Bailan Scriptures with the Participation of People in Khonkaen Province*” the research has found some points that are interested to discuss as follows:

1. The conservative processes of Bailan Scriptures in Khonkaen Province

The result of research is found that the conservation of Bailan scriptures in Khon Kean province has fixed steps, that is to say, survey Bailan scriptures scattered in various places, then collecting them, and grouping them into several sections, for instance, religion and philosophy, folk literatures, history and chronicle, and so on, or grouping them following the sizes of Bailans, for example, short-books—the collections of Isan literatures recorded in Bailan Scriptures in short style, for example, pharmacopoeia, hand-binding words, traditional spirit chanting (kam sutra Kwan), etc., bunch-book—the collections of long Isan literatures, for example, Sang Sin Chai Tao Kam Ka Dam, etc., and fragmented-books—the collections of short words, for example, rough-word, greeting-word, chatting, and so on. There are actually two kinds of keeping Bailan scriptures, one, keeping them following the tradition of each region, for example, covering with cotton garment or silk, then keeping them in Sim (in formal Pali for *Sanghakamma* activities) or HorTrai (*Trititika-Room*) or in the room of *Upasatha* the Buddha’s statue or on shelf the Buddha’s statue, etc., two is keeping Bailan scriptures with the modern tools, for example, transmitting them from original copies to microfilms, and keeping on www., and other electronic medias. This research is similar to study of Somchai Nilnithi on the topic “*View from Bailan*

Scripture: Ideology and the way of life."¹ The result of this study was found that there are various divisions of contents and stories scribed in Bailan, for example, sub-commentary, Buddhist literature, ancient literature, translated literature chronicle, verse, science, ancient nature, and Isan proverb (Phaya), folk story of Buddhism, ancient law, ethics, history, astrology, verses, herbal knowledge, creed and ceremony, black magic and miscellaneous division etc.

2. Forms of the participation people in Khonkaen Province in conserving of Bailan Scriptures:

From the result of research that the participation of people in Khonkaen should be made through cultivating awareness in conserving of Bailan scriptures, the promotion of conserving of Bailan scriptures should be made with the collaboration of three important pillars of society, that is, temple, village and government office (school) , and there should be promotion of conserving Bailan scriptures by the publishing knowledge obtained by seminar as the new set of knowledge in order to spread Bailan scriptures in various online-medias, it is similar to study of Khaimuk Utayavari on the topic "*The Problems of conservation of the original copy of learning sources of history and local culture.*"² The of this research is found that the problems of the conservation of community is correlate to the overlooking of the importance of local information due to lacking of knowing and understanding of their own knowledge, thus causing them weak in knowing the correct knowledge of their own

¹ Somchai Nilnithi, **View from Bailan Scripture: Ideology and the way of life, Academic Document 18th ed., The Project of Bailan Scriptures in Northeastern Region**, (Mahasarakam University, 2012), p. 163

² Khaimuk Utayavari, **The Problems of conservation of the original copy of learning sources of history and local culture**, Department of History and Art, Humanity and Social Science Faculty, (SongkhaNakarini University, 2009).

community. So the local organization taking charge in conserving of local information would become the sources that deal with the problems of cultural and historical knowledge of communities, instead of communities themselves. So the concerned organization of this kind should set up clear policy and plan in conserving of local information. And also, the organization should develop the system of database, for example, buying new model of software for dealing with system of database, thereby being able to expedite the database-system on this matter.

3. The conservation of Bailan scriptures with the participation of people in Khon Kean Province

From the result of research that the conservation of Bailan scriptures should have been supported budget from many organizations both government and private sector, including monks who are the main coordinator with many organizations for fund-aid aiming at organizing activities in conserving of Bailan scripture, and that there should have continuously been system of assessment in order to improve and develop the conservation of Bailan scriptures, it is similar to the study of *Boukhai Peingphrachandra* on the topic “*The Recovery of Bailan Scriptures in the New Imagine-Age of Lao Republic.*”³ The research is found that the recovery of Bailan scriptures in Law society both before and after the new imagine age is the politics of culture. It is said that Bailan scriptures are brought into Lao society as the knowledge heritage, memory of the past, historical sensibility, or Lao Identity in pre-modern past. They are brought to be as the identity of the nation of new age of Law, that is to say, the recovery of Bailan Scripture is the

³ BoukhaiPeingphrachandra, *The Recovery of Bailan Scriptures in the New Imagine-Age of Lao Republic*, **Ph.D. Thesis in Thai Study**, (Graduate school, Sarakam University, 2008), abstract.

mechanism of power and make it legitimating of state in dealing with the culture and custom in the way of life of folk men and women under the condition and context of society changed over time. On this matter, it is brought to promotion of the recovery and conservation of national culture. Bailan Scripture and old traditions have been enshrined as “the Cultural Heritage” or as the important part of building of National Identity of Lao Republic. Lao’s government has set up policy and plan in conservation of Bailan scriptures on the state Project resulting in making local people having their own identity. Local people have awareness and pride in their own local culture as the National Heritage and Culture.

Recommendation from the result of Research

1. Recommendation on Policy

There are three recommendations on policy from the qualitative research on the topic “*The Conservative Processes of Bailan Scriptures with the Participation of People in Khonkaen Province.*” They are as follows:

1.1 The conservative processes of Bailan Scriptures in Khonkaen Province. There should be survey and grouping Bailan scriptures for providing convenient searching through setting up systematic format of keeping them and making known to the public.

1.2 Forms of the participation people in Khonkaen Province in conserving of Bailan Scriptures. There should be cultivation of awareness in conserving of Bailan scriptures through activity-organizing for promotion in various modern ways

1.3 The conservation of Bailan scriptures with the participation of people in Khon Kean Province. All parties should support budget and set planning of budget and personnel for assessment the result of Bailan Scriptures conserving

2. Recommendation on the application of the result of Research

There are three recommendations for application from the qualitative research on the topic “The Conservative Processes of Bailan Scriptures with the Participation of People in Khonkaen Province.” They are as follows:

2.1 Monks and people in all sections of community should participate in conserving of Bailan Scriptures in Khonkaen Province

2.2 Monks, communities, and government’s offices in Khonkaen Province should take part in creating forms and processes of Bailan Scriptures conserving

2.3 All people in Khonkaen Province should participate in conserving of Bailan Scriptures as the slogan and identity of communities in Khonkaen Province

3. Recommendation for next research

3.1 There should be doing qualitative t research regarding the collaboration between government and private sector for conservation of Bailan Scriptures with the participation of Community in Isan region

3.2 There should be doing mixed method research both quantitative and qualitative research regarding the conservation of Bailan Scriptures with the participation of Community in Isan region

3.3 There should be doing quantitative research regarding the conservation of Bailan Scriptures with the participation of Community in Isan region

References

1. English

(1) Book :

Somchai Nilnithi. **View from Bailan Scripture: Ideology and the way of life.** Academic Document 18th ed. The Project of Bailan Scriptures in Northeastern Region. Mahasarakam University, 2012.

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(2) Thesis/Dissertations/Research report :

BoukhaiPeingphrachandra. The Recovery of Bailan Scriptures in the New Imagine-Age of Lao Republic. **Ph.D. Thesis in Thai Study.** Graduate school. Sarakam University, 2008

REMAINING INNOVATIVE IN THE PRISTINE FORM: THE RELEVANCE OF THE THAI FOREST TRADITION TO THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

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ABSTRACT

Northeast Thailand (Isan) was the home of many great meditation masters whose lineage remains influential even at the present time. The austerity in the practice of meditative mindfulness that accompanied the strict adherence to vinaya or monastic disciplinary codes had made many monks of the forest tradition accomplished meditation masters, whose profound teachings are today widely disseminated across the globe. The collected teachings of such highly venerated monks as AjahnMun, Ajahn Sao, AjahnThet, AjahnChah, and others form a corpus of reflective guidelines for the cultivation of mental well-being that is not only conducive to individual moral growth but also for communal spiritual health and mental well-being along the path set forth by the Buddha more than two millennia ago. In today's excessively consumption-oriented ambience that has had many pernicious and adverse effects on the overall mental well-being of people from every stratum of society, the teachings of the forest tradition monks become highly relevant to set the wheel of human progress acquire a balanced momentum. The relevance of the teachings arise from both their profundity and practical applicability, since underneath the teachings lay accumulated knowledge of each of the meditation masters, gathered over years of experiential quest to lead the mind to acquire that level of mindful

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understanding which is absolutely free from defilements and egoistic clinging. Buddhist and non-Buddhist alike can gain from the teachings because the underlying messages embodied in them are free from sectarianism. The universality in the praxis can be applied at any time and situation by any interested person, irrespective of religious and cultural background. In this paper we bring forth the universal garb of the teachings by first focusing on the different levels at which the forest tradition monks' practice benefits the mind, then highlight the contemplative thinking of the monks vis-à-vis Derridean deconstruction and finally conclude by reflecting on the lessons to be learnt from the forest tradition to solve various problems.

Introduction

The Northeast of Thailand has begotten many great meditation masters whose strict adherence to monastic disciplinary codes and practice of *vipassanā* or insight meditation bereft of ritualistic excesses has helped preserve Buddhism in its pure and pristine form. In the recent past, Buddhism as a social institution has undergone tremendous changes as Thai society began to adapt itself to the process of modernization under the swaying influence of both capitalism and consumerism. As Buddhists, most Thais today confine themselves to ritualistic worshipping and acts of merit-making more than any reflective practice of dhamma in day to day life. Across the country great emphasis has been laid on the structural expansion of Buddhadhamma, starting from the construction of huge Buddha images, meditation halls, elaborately decorated temples and convenient monastic dwellings.

The message of selfless renunciation, which forms the core essence of Right Thought (*sammāsankappa*), an essential factor leading to wisdom as incorporated in the Noble Eightfold Path (*ariya-atthangika-magga*), is at times completely lost from the scene. It is against this backdrop one needs to take a look

at the way of life and practice of the *thudanga*¹ tradition of Northeast Thailand that has begotten such great meditation masters as Luangpoo Mun, Luangpoo Sao, Luangpoo Thet, Luangpho Chah, Luangpoo Khao and others². These monks who underwent rigorous self-training through the practice of insight meditation and close scrutiny of the mind with reflective and rationalistic understanding of the Buddha's teachings of the Four Noble Truths (*ariyasacca*) and the three characteristics of existence (*tilakkhana*) – impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*) and non-substantiality (*anattā*), have come to epitomize the true Buddhist way of living which is marked by such characteristics as non-clinging, egolessness, mindfulness, equanimity, compassion and contentment. The praxis of mental well-being that has been developed and nurtured under the aegis of the forest tradition monks have set up the solid foundation for holistic well-being of the individual and the community in relation to the social and natural environment. The universality in the praxis can be applied at any time and situation by any interested person irrespective of religious and cultural background. Buddhist and non-Buddhist alike can gain from the teachings because the underlying messages embodied in them are free from sectarianism. The universal garb of the teachings can be understood from the praxis of mental well-being developed by these monks, the different levels at which their practice benefitted the mind, and their contemplative thinking which is a step ahead of Derridean deconstruction that can be beneficially put into practice for solving various problems at the global level.

¹ The tradition of forest monks who voluntarily choose to follow a more austere way of life dates back to the Buddha. Besides Thailand, this tradition still exists in Laos and Myanmar.

² In Thailand, laypeople address a senior monk with such honorifics as *luangpoo* (venerable grandfather), *luangpho* (venerable father), or *ajahn* (variously spelt as *ajarn*, *ajan*, *achaan* and meaning respected teacher).

Development of mental well-being

The main focus of the forest tradition monks has been to strike a balance in their practice by developing mindfulness in every action – verbal, physical and mental – through the practice of *vipassanā* or insight meditation that consists of contemplating the *upādānakkhandha*, the groups of grasping, which manifest at the moment of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching and thinking. As faithful disciples of the Buddha, they have demonstrated that the benefits of the practice of insight meditation are tremendous. But before one can enjoy the fruits one needs to make the appropriate and systematic effort. Upon reflective consideration and realization of the Four Noble Truths – the truth of suffering, the truth of the cause of suffering, the truth of the cessation of suffering and the truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering, the mind needs to focus on the three-fold training (*tisikkhā*) – morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*) – as laid out in the framework of the Noble Eightfold Path. The forest meditation monks have not only taught the Noble Eightfold Path but most importantly have *lived* this

Path themselves and so their teachings have powerful influence on their disciples and people who take interest in their teachings. These monks are very strict in their adherence to monastic codes or *vinaya* and along with it the practice of insight meditation brought discipline in their lives and practice, rendering morality a practiced reality in life, well encased within the parameters of a mind solidly grounded on the foundation of mindfulness and non-attachment.

Right speech (*sammāvācā*), right livelihood (*sammājīva*) and right action (*sammākammanta*) are the ethical codes of the Noble Eightfold Path on the foundational base of which right effort (*sammāvāyāma*), right concentration (*sammāsamādhi*), right mindfulness (*sammāsati*), right understanding (*sammāditthi*) and right thought (*sammāsañkappa*) are to be

developed. The Noble Eightfold Path³ is a practical way that benefits everyone who treads the path. But it is a difficult way of life for people who are parasitically attached to worldly pleasures and are reluctant, indifferent or lethargic to fight back defilements that arise naturally and continually in the untrained human mind. There is no short cut to the Path, it has to be treaded upon by oneself. Others can teach us about it, help us memorize all the eight factors, but to gain benefit from the Path oneself and to demonstrate this benefit to others one has to tread the Path oneself. This is what the forest tradition monks have done by themselves; they have systematically practiced and lived the Path and so they have become enlightened renunciants whose expositions of the Dhamma have reached the hearts of many across cultures, countries and linguistic barriers.

Initially, these monks had always preferred to lead a wandering life, practicing meditation in outdoor settings – in tiger and cobra-infested forests, mountain caves and forsaken cremation grounds – before settling down and establishing monasteries, especially to make themselves available to the lay community which sought their abiding teachings. The ascetic way of life and rigorous outdoor meditation practice made them true renunciants by enabling them to detach from all physical comforts and surviving on mere minimal requirements. From the voluntary cultivation of severing ties with material possessions and all physical comforts, they developed the mental prowess to face every difficulty, be it physical or mental, in a detached, yet courageous manner. And most importantly, the rigorous outdoor meditation practice had provided the fertile ground for the realization and reflective internalization of the three characteristics of existence – impermanence

³ For a very clear exposition of the Noble Eightfold Path see Rahula, Walpole. (1990). *What the Buddha Taught* Bangkok: Haw Trai Foundation, and Payutto, P.A. (1995). *Buddhadhamma*, Albany: State University of New York Press.

(*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*) and non-substantiality (*anattā*) and the Law of Dependent Origination (*patīccasamuppāda*)⁴ that clearly depicts the cycle of birth and rebirth starting from ignorance (*avijjā*). When monasteries grew around them, these monks implemented strict discipline to continue their way of practice themselves and to inspire their disciples to cultivate morality, mindfulness and wisdom through the practice of insight meditation in the same manner. Out of their dedicated effort a praxis of mental well-being took shape the framework of which can be broadly discussed under the following levels.

At the ethico-spiritual level

The mind is free from defilements – The forest tradition monks’ lives centered around the routine practice of cultivation of mindfulness through insight meditation and ethical reflection which paved the path for cleansing the mind from all sorts of evil thoughts and unwholesome mental formations. The rigorous training insisted on recognizing the arising of defilements – greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*), delusion (*moha*) – and discarding these defilements through the practice of mindfulness. As Luangpho Chah says, “The only way to reach an end in the practice of virtue is by making the mind pure.”⁵

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 Law of Kamma i.e. resultant good or bad

⁴ The twelve elements of dependent origination are: ignorance (*avijjā*) → mental formation (*saṅkhāra*) → consciousness (*viññāna*) → mind-and-body (*nāma-rūpa*) → six sense-bases (*salāyatana*) → contact (*phassa*) → sensation (*vedanā*) → craving (*tanhā*) → clinging (*upādāna*) → becoming (*bhava*) → birth (*jāti*) → decay-and-death (*jarā-marana*).

⁵ All the sayings of LuangphoChah quoted in this paper are taken from the book *A Still Forest Pool – The Insight Meditation of AchaanChah* compiled and edited by Jack Kornfield and Paul Breiter, published by The Theosophical Publishing House, Illinois (1985).

effects consequent on good or bad deeds. In other words, a wholesome action (*kusalakamma*) begets good results and an evil or unwholesome action (*akusalakamma*) inevitably leads to bad results. As the Buddha said, “As you sow, so shall you reap.”

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 jealousy, vindictiveness and revenge 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.

At the psychological level

The mind is enriched by the flow of positive emotions – The spiritual or moral maturity benefits the mind immensely at the psychological level as when in the absence of defilements the mind is enriched by various positive emotions such as contentment, love, fellow feeling, and self-reflexivity. 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 others, 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 infusion of inspirational 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. As Luangpho Chah has pointed out, “The point of all practice is to lead to freedom, to become one who knows the light all the time.”

At the contemplative level

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 *sañkhāra*, this state of equanimity is equated with mental balance (*tatramajjhataṭṭā*) 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 apprehension of the fleeting nature of all things and the truth of *anattā* or non-substantiality i.e. all phenomena are not the self, and that there is no real essence, soul, or self, the ego can be transcended for good. 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 achieved 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 construction 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 any such binaries.

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 – spiritual, emotional, intellectual, aesthetic 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. LuangphoChah has pointed out, “This is the path of right practice, the path leading out of birth and becoming. On this path, there is neither pleasure nor pain, neither good nor evil”.

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, suffering and selflessness, it gets infused with certain sublime states of mind such as loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity. The mind's realization of the true nature of everything, including the human self in all its physical and mental compositional 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 the renunciant monks of the forest tradition, 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. As LuangphoChah succinctly expresses, “Give up clinging to love and hate, just rest with things as they are. Do not try to become anything. Do not make yourself into anything. Do not be a meditator.

Do not become enlightened. When you sit, let it be. When you walk, let it be. Grasp at nothing. Resist nothing.”

Deconstruction and binary oppositions

Contemporary western philosophy, especially Derridean deconstruction sees the influence of the traditional binary oppositions such as true–false, original–derivative, unified–diverse as infecting all areas of life and thought, including the evolution of western philosophy from the time of Plato to Heidegger. So the French philosopher, Jacques Derrida (1930-2004) upholds the idea that the task of the thinker is to twist free of these oppositions, and of the forms of intellectual and cultural life which they structure. Derrida draws our attention to the important issue that the individual terms of the ‘binaries’ do not really have the same ‘status’. There exists an imbalance in the structure of the pairing in which one of the terms inevitably dominates the other (e.g. presence/absence, light/dark, man/woman etc.) So the first necessary action is to reverse the binary as a sign of justification. By doing so one is actually raising philosophical objections as well as uncovering socially oppressive operations of one of the terms of the binary. But mere reversal is not enough. Derrida points out that reversing the binary is but the *first step* that deconstruction has to undertake. The *second*, and even more radical step is to make the binary redundant by “thinking it through”. The second step will help prepare the ground for analyzing the conditions of possibility for that binary so as to get it displaced. If there is no displacement but mere reversal then there exist the perils of repeating the original imbalance – earlier structure with a negative notation. It merely puts a mark of negation onto something that was valued earlier. Such a naïve kind of reversal is to the previous order of domination what negative theology is to theology as Aniket Jaware puts it humorously “the worshippers of the Devil make the Devil into

their God...and thus end up with a God after all”⁶. What needs to be done is to *neutralize* the binary, not merely negate or reverse it. To this extent, deconstruction as a method of philosophizing and ‘reading’ of any text is extremely bold and radical since it helps to generate momentum and critical questioning of dualistic hierarchies.

From the Buddhist perspective, however, Derridean dismantling of dualistic hierarchies is radical at the ‘political’ level, but is a metaphysical *cul-de-sac* since it cannot detach itself from the act of parasitical engagement with the play and teasing apart of binary oppositions. If we pay careful attention to the forest tradition monks’ (especially Luangpho Chah’s) play of paradoxes in their dhamma talks, we will observe that there is always an objective distancing from the process of giving rise to an ‘Ego’ that rejoices in the unraveling of the paradoxes, quite unlike in Derrida and the gamut of texts generated under his powerful influence by academically-oriented philosophers and literary critics, who do not hesitate to be pretentiously opaque and whose deconstructive engagement of any text helps project the ‘super-ego’ to the fore front. In one of his dhamma talks Luangpho Chah says, “You must go beyond all words, all symbols, all plans for your practice. Then you can see for yourself the truth arising right there. If you don’t turn inward, you will never know reality.” This turning inward has nothing to do with aggrandizement of the individual ego, but rather its objectivization through the realization of its workings within the natural paradigmatic truth of existence – *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anattā*. The venerable ajahn has reiterated the message of emptying the mind in most of his dhamma talks – “When you practice, observe yourself. Then gradually knowledge and vision will arise of themselves. If you sit in meditation and want it to be this way or that, you

⁶ Jaware, Aniket. (2001). *Simplifications*. New Delhi: Orient Longman Lt, p. 435.

had better stop right there. Do not bring ideals or expectations to your practice. Take your studies, your opinions, and store them away.” What Robert Magliola in his book *Derrida on the Mend* says about Derridean practice vis-à-vis Madhyamika philosophy very well applies here too – while the Derridean alternately celebrates and anguishes, hopes and waxes nostalgic, the Nagarjunist (in our case the ascetic and practice-oriented forest tradition monk) is aware and serene, and has the security which comes with liberation; while the Derridean performs the logocentric and differential self-consciously and piecemeal, the Nagarjunist (in our case LuangphoChah particularly) performs them by grace which is spontaneous but ‘at will’, a kind of off/self that moves freely between the objectivism of ego and pure devoidness.⁷

Buddhism and deconstruction

Buddhism in its core essence is a conscious and rigorous deconstructive practice that places the whole of our being and existence both in the physical/material and mental/spiritual sphere under erasure. This is possible because Buddhism is an atheistic religion and views life as impermanent, suffering, and non-self.

The following entities are not opposing conditions or dualistic hierarchies, but desired progression to higher levels of truth and spiritual understanding.

worldly life → renunciation
faith → rationalization
rationalization → non-attachment
self → non-self

Ideally, worldly life should progress towards selfless renunciation (or monastic life), faith or devotion should deepen with a rational understanding and not directed to orthodoxy or blind adherence and rationalization should

⁷ Magliola, Robert. (1984). *Derrida on the Mend*. Purdue University Press, p.126.

progress to non-attachment/non-clinging even to one's own faith⁸ since there is no self (*attā*) that is absolute or ever-lasting. Buddhism looks at all things in terms of integrated factors. There is no real self or essence in all things and so the Cartesian dictum *cogito ergo sum* (I think, therefore I am) that has influenced and directed western thinking down the centuries has a reverse call in Buddhism – I think, therefore I am NOT.

Looked at from the contemporary deconstructive perspective, the Buddha appears to be a mega-deconstructionist. In the *Kalama Sutra*, the Buddha said, “...do not be laid by reports, or tradition, or hearsay. Be not led by the authority of religious texts, nor by mere logic or inference, nor by considering appearances, nor by the delight in speculative opinions, nor by seeming possibilities, nor by the idea: ‘this is our teacher’. But, O Kalamas, when you know for yourselves that certain things are unwholesome (*akusala*), and wrong, and bad, then give them up...And when you know for yourselves that certain things are wholesome (*kusala*) and good, then accept them and follow them.’⁹

From this saying it is very clear that the Buddha urged his lay followers to use reason and not mere faith on any authority – religious text, teacher, tradition etc while trying to follow his teachings. Buddha's stance is deconstructive in so far as it does not place absolute power/authority on the text, tradition and teacher and renders the action of faith a democratic garb by making it depend on the free will of the believer and his or her rationalization of the process. The Buddha went even further. He told the bhikkhus that a disciple should examine even the *Tathāgata*(Buddha) himself,

⁸ The Buddha cited the famous simile of the *raft* while teaching his followers not to cling even to his teachings. The teaching is compared to a raft for crossing over, and not for getting hold of and carrying on one's back.

⁹ Anguttara-nikaya, PTS edition.

so that he (the disciple) might be fully convinced of the true value of the teacher whom he followed.¹⁰ The dialectics of deconstruction also underlay Buddha's rejection of the hierarchical caste system that had a powerful grip on traditional Hindu society, his *re*-interpretation of the term *brahman*, the Vedic tradition of worshipping the six directions, etc.

The forest tradition vis-à-vis Derridean deconstruction

The forest tradition monks as followers of the Buddha themselves worked very much within the framework of a form of deconstruction that we may as well name as empirical deconstruction. These monks who emphasized on the *thudang* practice geared their deconstructive endeavours to none other than the dawning of an inner peaceful state upon the transcendence of their ego, conventional truths, mental-formations and attachment to such mental states. They developed and adhered to a life's philosophy that was based on a rigorous deconstructive mode of practice that gave rise to a practical discourse of annihilation of the ego and the resultant understanding of any state of 'being' (both mental and physical) as it-is-in-itself. This mode of practice can thus be categorized as empirical deconstruction or deconstruction-in-praxis. Such a way of practice does not valorize the 'written' text, but renders the practice a moment-to-moment phenomenal and empirical garb without at the same time erecting a 'mega-narrative' of the self-at-practice. This is possible because critically reflective Buddhist deconstruction creates the fertile ground for a form of self-introspective practice/scrutiny that goes hand in hand with moral practice and non-attachment to the self and the practice practiced.

The deconstructive similes and metaphors that LuangphoChah uses are thought provoking. In all his dhamma talks there are some extremely

¹⁰ Vimamsaka-sutta, no.47 of Majjhima-nikaya (PTS edition).

pithy statements/sentences that are located at strategic points. One such example is: “Regardless of time and place, the whole practice of Dhamma comes to *completion* at the place where there is *nothing*. It’s the place of surrender, of emptiness, of laying down the burden. This is the finish. It’s not like the person who says, “Why is the flag fluttering in the wind? I say it’s because of the wind.” Another person says because of the flag. The other retorts that it’s because of the wind. There’s no end to this! All these things are merely *conventions*, we establish them ourselves. If you know these things with wisdom then you’ll know impermanence, suffering and not-self. This is the outlook which leads to enlightenment.” What distinguishes LuangphoChah’s deconstruction from Derrida’s deconstruction as centered upon word game is an unwillingness to indulge in prolix and convoluted wordplay. For LuangphoChah, lexical and conceptual deconstructions are merely a means of breaking through conceptuality and attachment leading to a transformed state of consciousness. The essential difference between Derridean philosophy and LuangphoChah’s philosophy is that the deconstructive tool through which LuangphoChah seeks to dispose of all self/ego arising positions helps lead to enlightenment beyond language and conceptuality. LuangphoChah’s deconstructive endeavours are geared to none other than the dawning of an inner peaceful state upon the transcendence of language, conventional truths, conceptual thinking, mental-formations and attachment to such mental states. It has arisen from practical lessons learnt from the practice of renunciation and insight meditation, quite unlike Derrida whose way of philosophizing is based on theoretical exposition of the philosophical and socio-cultural road map of the European civilization and the Jewish experience as the “other”.

Derrida in his text *The Gift of Death* states that: “I cannot respond to the call, the request, the obligation, or even the love of another, without

sacrificing the other other, the other other”¹¹. That is why for Derrida it seems that the Buddhist desire to have attachment to nobody and equal compassion for everybody is an unattainable ideal. He does, in fact suggest that a universal community that excludes no one is a contradiction in terms. According to him, this is because: “I am responsible to anyone (that is to say, to any other) only by failing in my responsibility to all the others, to the ethical or political generality. And I can never justify this sacrifice; I must always hold my peace about it...What binds me to this one, remains finally unjustifiable”. Derrida hence implies that responsibility to any particular individual is only possible by being irresponsible to the “other others”, that is, to the other people and possibilities that haunt any and every existence. Such deconstructive way of arguing appears glib when placed against the Buddhist emphasis on taking into account ‘*cetana*’ or intention that guides any willed action.

It is understandable that Derrida’s standard arguments or counter-arguments have arisen in the context of a Judo-Christian outlook that functions within the matrix of a discourse that takes the self (whether divine or human) as a centre, quite contrary to the Buddhist concept of non-substantiality/non-self or *anattā*. The radicality of Derrida’s deconstructive practice appears to be limited when it is placed vis-à-vis the concept of Buddhist non-substantiality. The above quotes from Derrida also reflect the western mode of philosophizing that is based upon the edifice of structured argumentation guided by mere logical progression. But looked at from the Buddhist perspective, the *Derrideanaporis* of equating non-attachment to non-compassion (for Derrida, Buddhist desire to have attachment to nobody and equal compassion for everybody is an unattainable ideal) appears to be

¹¹ Derrida, Jacques. (1992). *The Gift of Death*. Trans. David Wills, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

rather naïve and simplistic since it implies that compassion is rooted in attachment or compassion cannot arise without attachment.

Compassion and Anattā

Compassion is only one of the four qualities comprising the sublime states of mind (*brahmavihāra*) that Buddhism upholds, namely, loving-kindness (*mettā*), compassion (*karunā*), empathetic joy (*muditā*) and equanimity (*upekkhā*)¹². Every religion emphasizes to a great extent the first two of the sublime states and to a certain level the third factor too, but most religions are silent on the last factor. A careful consideration of all these four qualities clearly reveals the fact that Buddhism is a way of life more than a religion, since it has great psychological implications embedded in its teachings more than faith-oriented injunctions. If the four sublime states are taken into consideration, one can see that each of the states are related in an ascending scale or linear progression, the first leading to the second, but at the same time are interconnected very much in a cyclical manner as far as each quality affects and sustains the other. For instance, if one aims at cultivating these four states, then one may as well begin with loving-kindness and gradually proceed with the remaining three states. At the same time, if one succeeds in cultivating, say the first two states, but fails at the next two, it would nullify the entire effort since it is finally empathetic joy and equanimity that render the practice of the preceding two states of loving-kindness and compassion distinct sustainability. At a higher level of reflection, one can also see the contingency of these sublime states to the understanding of three characteristics of existence namely impermanence, suffering and non-substantiality. Just as impermanence and suffering bear

¹² For a clear exposition of the four divine qualities see Payutto, P. A. (1995). *Buddhadhamma*. Albany: State University of New York Press, pp. 236-238.

contingence to the cultivation of loving-kindness, compassion and empathetic joy, a reflection on *anattā* contingently gives rise to the maintenance of equanimity. The interconnectedness of each of these factors/states can easily be glossed over if we attempt to interpret after the fashion of Derridean deconstruction: “I cannot respond to the call, the request, the obligation, or even the love of another, without sacrificing the other other, the other other”. Derrida’s glib generalization falls trapped in the chasm of binary opposition of I and Other because it fails to understand non-substantiality or *anattā* that Buddhism so clearly explicates and is put into practice by all faithful followers of the Buddha including the monks from the forest tradition.

Anattā the universal moral paradigm is the heart or zenith of Buddha’s teachings. The Buddha claimed that the three characteristics that permeate the entire realm of existence would persist irrespective of the fact that whether a *Tathāgatha* (an enlightened being) would exist or not. Recognizing the truth of the three characteristics does not give rise to a pessimistic world view, but rather leads to a neutral approach to life and the world around us focusing on seeing a thing as-it-is-in-itself. Of all the three characteristics, *anicca* and *dukkha* are much easier to understand, since certain elements in life and nature clearly manifest both the characteristics. For instance, *anicca* or non-permanence can be understood and explained by drawing our attention to the constant changes that encompass life and nature. Similarly, suffering can be observed in day to day life from experiences that are inevitably negative such as disease, sickness, old age, death, failure, mental depression, etc. *Anattā*, on the other hand, cannot be easily referred to or explained with the help of external factors. As the most venerable Mahasi Sayadaw has rightly pointed out, “Even those who have professedly embraced Buddhism find it difficult to accept that there is no self, no living entity, only a continuous process of corporeality and

mentality”¹³. While *anicca* and *dukkha* in a way can assist in the realization of *anattā*, nevertheless, it requires constant meditative and mindful reflection to understand, internalize and finally put into practice the truth of *anattā*. Doubtless, it is the most difficult and the highest truth the Buddha has taught humankind – the failure to realize which has made history repeat itself with chains of brutality from ‘holy crusades’ to ‘holocaust’, racism to jingoism!

While accepting the universality of *anattā* it is essential to recognize that no other religion upholds the truth of *anattā*. Almost all theistic religions in the world teach moral values and alongside it the devotion towards an almighty power, variously named as God, Allah, Bhagwan, etc. The concept of God is beautiful and has its utilitarian values in so far as it unites the followers of a particular religion and helps guide them along the moral path. But since God is an absolute authority, it is logically contradictory to the truth of *anattā*. God, the Supreme Being who is unanimously regarded by his followers as omnipotent, omnipresent, constant (i.e. non changeable) cannot be subsumed under the essential characteristic of non-self or non-substantiality. Buddhism, as an atheistic religion however can view the entire realm of existence very objectively and so *anattā* has formed an integral part of its teachings. The usefulness of understanding *anattā* is varied. In fact, although it is not so easy to gauge the unfathomable truth of *anattā* (without the practice of *vipassanā* meditation), one cannot overlook its benefits in counteracting the evils of crime, corruption, racism and warfare, all of which are rooted in a self or *attā* oriented approach to life. In today’s complex and confused (at least in the ethical sense) world of science and technology, the realization of *anattā* alone can help to counteract the trend of excessive

¹³ Mahasi Sayadaw. (1996). The Great Discourse on Not Self (AnattālakkhanaSutta). Bangkok: Buddhadhamma Foundation.

fetishization of all sense objects that has given rise to both mental and environmental pollution.

Anattā put into practice through the deconstructionist praxis of ‘Letting Go’

Every forest tradition monk insists on following the Middle Way that emphasizes on not taking interest in either pleasure or pain and laying each of them down. If one is genuinely interested in Dhamma, one must learn to just give up, just let go and not get 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 impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and selflessness run through both pleasant and unpleasant conditioned states alike. Therefore, clinging to pleasant states brings suffering as much as aversion to unpleasant states does. LuangphoChah puts it graphically, “When through desire, the heart grasps what is pleasant, it is just grasping the tail of the snake. It only takes a little while longer for the head of the snake to come around and bite you”.

The forest tradition monks have insisted on doing everything with a mind that lets go, that does not expect any praise or reward. This is because letting go is a highly self-reflective mental exercise that leads to peace, tranquility, and harmony with oneself and one’s surrounding. No doubt it is the most difficult formula, but when put into practice it leads to true freedom. In the words of LuangphoChah, “If you let go a little, you will have a little peace. If you let go a lot, you will have a lot of peace. If you let go completely, you will know complete peace and freedom. Your struggles with the world will have come to an end. If you see states rising and falling in the mind and do not cling to the process, letting go of both happiness and suffering, mental rebirths become shorter and shorter. Letting go, you can

even fall into hell states without too much disturbance, because you know the impermanence of them. Through right practice, you allow your old *kamma* to wear itself out. Knowing how things arise and pass away, you can just be aware and let them run their course”.

The forest tradition monks are exemplary models of individuals who constantly strove for that innate wisdom the attainment of which led 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. According to LuangphoChah, real meditation has to do with attitude and awareness in any activity, not just with seeking silence in a forest cottage. “In the end, we must learn to let go every desire, even the desire for enlightenment. Only then can we be free”.

Lessons from the forest tradition for global recovery

The amount of moral degradation in the world today has become unmeasurable. With the progress in science and technology life has become very comfortable, but at the same time extremely confused and complicated. As pristine religious and socio-cultural values are being abruptly replaced by a new set of values that places the cult of adoring the individual ego and its material success at the forefront, dishonest means of behavioral pattern get camouflaged under the veil of exterior smartness. It is today hard to find people who follow the five precepts – abstinence from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying and intoxicants – with unfaltering steadiness. People have become very cunning and masquerading in the art of swindling, embezzlement, forgery, fornication all of which have arisen from two main factors namely, mishandling of the ego and surrendering to endless desires.

Mishandling of the ego – by nature’s rule the human self as a conditioned state is subjected to the traits of impermanence, suffering and non-substantiality. But the inability to understand the five aggregates of existence or life

(*pañca-khandha*) – matter (*rūpakkhandha*), sensation (*vedanākkhandha*), perception (*saññākkhandha*), mental formations (*samkhāra-khandha*) and consciousness (*viññāna-khandha*) – has caused the perpetual nurturing of the concept of ‘Self’ or ‘Soul’ or ‘Ego’. The workings of the untrained ego are like deadly cancer cells that spread very fast. When left unabated the ego strives for fulfilling all its desires leading to moral conundrums.

Endless desires (*tanhā*) – According to the Law of Dependent Origination, the life process begins because of the desire of becoming, so desire is natural. But Buddhism teaches us to see the dangers of this natural element, especially when it proliferates and takes a self-destructive turn. In today’s consumer-oriented culture, mass production and consumption of endless consumer products have triggered a nonstop combustion of desires which is as pernicious as an atomic blast when its obnoxious effect on the physical, mental and natural environment is taken into consideration. Every society is under the grip of craving (*tanhā*), an obnoxious element that enslaves the untrained human mind leaving behind trails of sorrow, dissatisfaction, and conflict. All forms of desire or craving such as craving for bodily forms (*rūpa-tanhā*), craving for sound (*sadda-tanhā*), craving for smell (*gandha-tanhā*), craving for taste (*rasa-tanhā*), craving for physical contact (*phoṭṭhabba-tanhā*), and craving for mental stimuli (*dhamma-tanhā*) have escalated in our technologically advanced world today. As a result, every society is not only witnessing an increase in crimes and corruption but also an overall dilapidation of basic moral values.

From our comfort-oriented lives today, the lifestyle of the forest tradition monks may appear rather difficult, crude, irrelevant, utopian, ideal and non-appealing. Yet, in order to deal with the various problems that have arisen in the world due to the perilous mishandling of the ego and the rekindling and fueling of endless desires, we cannot afford to deny the

inspirational, thought-provoking and abiding teachings of the great meditation masters from the forest tradition. Certain very useful messages from their thinking and practice can be emulated for the cultivation of a holistic approach to life and living.

The message of selfless renunciation of the forest tradition monks is a reminder to us in scaling down excessive infatuation with material possessions and unbridled human greed – trends set in by the neo-capitalist market policies and consumerism. Today’s consumerist culture is characterized by the trend of material indulgence more than the practice of moderation. And so although life has become comfortable, it has not resulted in an increase of true happiness and genuine satisfaction. Most people are discontent, prone to extravagance, obsessed with consumption and heedless to the benefits of cultivation of contentment. In this context, it is worth taking a look at the lifestyle of the forest tradition monks whose selfless renunciation has given rise to moderation in living and cultivation of contentment leading to lasting happiness. The cultivation of contentment is indispensable for the maintenance of optimum moral growth and ethical standards in any society. Cultivation of true contentment leads to a clean separation of the two contradictory tendencies namely, desires for true quality of life and temptations to fulfil artificial desires, and prepares the ground for the establishment of the former. As the scholar-monk, PA Payutto puts it, “Contentment understood correctly means cutting off the artificial desire for sense-pleasure but actively encouraging and supporting the desire for quality of life. In Buddhism, contentment is always paired with effort. The purpose of contentment is seen to be to save the time and energy lost in ministering to selfish desires, and using it to create and nurture true well-being”¹⁴.

¹⁴ Payutto, P.A. (1994). *Buddhist Economics*. Bangkok: The National Identity Board, p. 33.

The message of non-clinging of the forest tradition monks is a panacea for the world steeped in the quagmire of growing discontentment. The forest tradition monks have clearly demonstrated that when the mind does not grasp and is not caught up in the endless circles of desires and attachment, it leads to clarity of vision. The clear vision that can arise from non-attachment is badly lacking in our lives today. The different types of clinging that Buddhism identifies, such as: clinging to passions of the body, taste, smell, sound, sight, and other types of contact (*kāmapādāna*), clinging to views, such as opinions, doctrines and various theories (*ditthupādāna*), clinging to mere rules and rituals as the only true way (*sīlabbatupādāna*), and clinging to a self and mistakenly creating a self to cling to (*attavādupādāna*) have proliferated at a rapid scale, making people's lives centered upon extremely hedonistic and myopic concerns. As a result, no matter how high and sophisticated living standards have come to be, life still remains dull at the conceptual level.

The lesson of the forest tradition monks' deconstruction of the ego is useful to end linguistic bickerings, racial prejudices and religious disputes that have bred uncanny hatred, jealousy, vain pride, suspicion, contempt, subjugation and misuse of power among different groups of people. To sustain the reality of hybridity and multiculturalism that are characteristic traits of today's world of globalization, the deconstruction of the individual ego is indispensable. The experiences of colonialism and the two world wars have shown that vain pride in one's racial and cultural origins gives rise to hatred and contemptuous disregard for other cultures and people outside one's own community leading to untold miseries and pain and disruption of unity and harmonious co-existence. When the principle of deconstruction of the ego is put into real practice, it helps to replace parochialism and jingoistic tendencies with loving-kindness and compassion towards others and fosters a

more receptive world view which is based on tolerance, impartiality, fairness and egalitarianism. With a kind and compassionate mental disposition one can learn to accept and celebrate differences among groups of people from diverse racial and cultural backgrounds. While teaching his ordained disciples from different countries and diverse religious backgrounds LuangphoChah emphasized, “For harmony with the group, we must give up pride and self-importance and attachment to fleeting pleasure. If you do not give up your likes and dislikes, you are not really making an effort.”

The forest tradition monks’ practice of compassion is an inspiring example. Attempts should be made to cultivate such a positive value for the happy and harmonious co-existence of all and for successful implementation of eco-friendly projects that can positively affect the flourishing of not the human race alone but also animals and plants. Such attempts can restore a balance in the eco-system which has long suffered from ravages of human greed and selfish motives. Unmindful plundering of nature has led to massive deforestation and extinction of wide range of animal species. When trees are fell and animals are poached, greedy minds look at nature as a domain that can be conquered and plundered endlessly. Churning short-term benefits from natural resources human beings fail to see themselves as an integral part of the eco-system. But with the cultivation of a compassionate outlook, one comes to recognize and value interdependence of lives on earth. Thus a tree along the road side is not seen as a log of wood that can be chopped off at one’s will, but is considered a home to birds, insects, worms and a shady shelter for a weary traveler. Compassion to all living being leads to non-confrontation and harmony – harmony with oneself and with one’s fellow beings and surrounding. Therefore, the cultivation of this great quality leads to eco-friendly consciousness and preservation of forests and nature as is witnessed in the case of each of the forest monasteries founded by the

thudanga monks where resident monks live in harmony and contemplative quietude in the midst of nature.

At the mundane or physical level, our reflective understanding of the forest monks' internalization of non-substantiality or *anattā* is indispensable to protect the world from rising terrorist activities and highly sophisticated future warfare that might wipe out the entire human civilization from the surface of the earth. At the supra mundane level, reflective understanding of *anattā* in day to day life leads to blissful contemplation and makes life worth-living. As Luangpho Chah says, "Our lives are like the breath, like the growing and falling leaves. When we can really understand about falling leaves, we can sweep the paths every day and have great happiness in our lives on this changing earth".

The forest tradition monks are role models for us in regards to their unwavering moral standpoint. If such a moral standpoint is not cultivated, it would be rather difficult to train our 'monkey' minds (equipped with ever more sophisticated technology) and to reduce crimes, corruptions, exploitations and misuse of power. The wheel of human progress can acquire a balanced momentum only when moral values are established on a firm footing. The defilements – greed, hatred and delusion – are at the root of all suffering and selfishness. The forest tradition monks have taught their numerous followers to learn to overcome, conquer and go beyond these defilements. LuangphoChah says, "The defilements are like a tiger. We should imprison the tiger in a good strong cage made of mindfulness, energy, patience, and endurance. Then we can let it starve to death by not feeding its habitual desires."

The type of mindfulness that the forest tradition monks have attained is required for our fight with ourselves, to distill our hearts from 'bad

faith’ and sterilize our minds from unwholesome desires so that we are not slavishly caught up in the nexus of me and mine, I and the other. Through the cultivation of mindfulness a holistic world view can be developed. As has been pointed out by Luangpho Chah, “When you pick mushrooms to eat, you do not do so blindly; you have to know which kind is which. So too with our practice – we must know the dangers, the snake’s bite of defilements, in order to free ourselves from them. Everyone has defilements in his practice. We must work with them, struggling when they arise. This is not something to think about but to do. Much patience is necessary. Gradually we have to change our habitual ways of thinking and feeling. We must see how we suffer when we think in terms of *me* and *mine*. Then we can let go.”

Conclusion

The forest tradition monks possessed great mastery in using the ascetic discipline to teach their ordained disciples and lay followers to confront and work directly with their own problems of greed, judgment, hatred and ignorance. Their direct and simple teachings always turn their followers back to their own minds, the source and the root of all trouble. Their teachings emphasized that understanding the *tilakkhana* and putting this understanding into practice leads to understanding everything in life and nature as-it-is-in-itself. This understanding is not inaction and passive acceptance as some people might hastily conclude. Enlightenment does not mean deaf and blind. On the other hand, enlightened understanding leads to empirical deconstruction of the self and self at work. All the forest tradition monks emphasized on seeing through the process of thought construction so as to recognize from one’s own experiential reality the fact that when the mind is stirred from the normal state of tranquility, it leads away from right practice to one of the extremes of indulgence or aversion, thereby creating more illusion, more thought construction. A true understanding of the nature

of the mind helps people to free it from conventional reality and so the mind is not enslaved by codes, customs, traditions, conventions, linguistics choices, personal likes and dislikes. Once this state can be achieved all binary opposition get automatically collapsed at the same time leading to no more creation of ‘mega-narratives’.

The dhamma of the forest tradition is down-to-earth, but yet difficult to realize and understand when the mind is ceaselessly caught up in the quagmire of defilements and heedlessness to defilements. It requires moment-to-moment self-scrutiny and mindful practice of ‘letting go’. In this form of empirical-deconstruction which involves conscientious and mindful teasing apart of all binary oppositions and releasing from their bindings, there is no room for *aporia* or conflictual and conceptual hiatus. The forest tradition monks, even though not philosophers in the conventional sense of the term, nevertheless, incessantly worked within the matrix of a mode of practice that can be categorized as a practical-form-of-deconstruction. Such a mode of practice does not valorize the ‘written’ text alone as academically-oriented philosophers are likely to do, but renders the practice a moment-to-moment phenomenal and empirical garb through the rigorous practice of both insight meditation and asceticism in tandem. It can be concluded that the ‘deconstructive’ tool through which the monks from the forest tradition had sought to dispose of all self/ego arising positions helped lead to a state of knowledge or wisdom (*paññā*) the cutting edge of which provide axiomatic guidelines to solving numerous problems encompassing such diverse states and situations as psychological, environmental, and economic.

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