






Global Recovery: The Buddhist Perspective

-  Global Recovery through Buddhist Ecology
-  Global Recovery through Buddhist Education
-  Global Recovery through Engaged Buddhism
-  Global Recovery through Harmonious Co-existence
-  Global Recovery through Mental Well-being

The 7th International Buddhist Conference
on the United Nations Day of Vesak Celebrations
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GLOBAL RECOVERY: The Buddhist Perspective

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Preface

Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University (MCU), of which I have the honor of serving as its rector, has been privileged again to witness and play a crucial role in developing and hosting consecutive United Nations Day of Vesak Celebrations for many years, between 2004-2007; and the UNDV 2009 and UNDV 2010 celebrations – bringing the international Buddhist world closer than before. We are all very grateful to the Royal Thai Government for its constant support, and thank the Thai Supreme Sangha Council for its blessings, guidance and support. Additionally, the Inner Trip Reiyukai International (ITRI) of Japan has been another wonderful co-host for our auspicious gathering.

We are grateful to the United Nations for recognizing our thrice-sacred Buddhist holy-day. It has been 2553 years since the death of our Great Teacher, and we have gathered here from across the globe, from many nations, to again pay tribute to his birth, enlightenment, and death – occurring on the same day in different years.

For the celebrations this year, the International Association of Buddhist Universities (IABU), created from the collective efforts of Buddhists everywhere, plays an important role. The IABU was born from sustained collaborations between international Buddhist leaders and scholars, beginning to meet together under the auspices of the United Nations Day of Vesak (UNDV) celebrations. The IABU Secretariat now, plays a major role in our celebrations: from organizing the logistics and academic portions of the conference. The IABU now aims to improve Buddhist Studies and higher education.

As part of the UNDV Conference theme of *Global Recovery – The Buddhist Perspective*, I am pleased that the Conference Volume will additionally become published, with the financial grant from my university, in time for the 23-25 May 2010 UNDV Conference on *Global Recovery – the Buddhist Perspective*. The articles contained within, though diverse, will contribute to the growing nature of the internationalization of Buddhist Studies. Our subthemes for the conference include: Global Recovery through Harmonious Coexistence; Global Recovery through Buddhist Education; Global Recovery through Buddhist Ecology; Global Recovery through Engaged Buddhism; Global Recovery through Mental Well-being; and

additionally included are invitational workshops pertaining to IABU Administration and the Buddhist Common Text Project – a text soon delivered to hotels world-wide.

This publication could not have been possible without the persistence, hard work, and dedication of MCU's scholars and staff. I wish to thank all members of the International Council for the United Nations Day of Vesak and the Executive Council of the International Association of Buddhist Universities, and the Editorial Committee for their devotion. I am also grateful to our many donors, sponsors and volunteers to the conference.

The Most Ven. Prof. Dr. Phra Dharmakosajarn
Chairman, ICUNDV & IABU
Rector, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University

Preface

For Joint Hosting of the 7th International Conference of the United Nations Day of Vesak

This is the 7th year for us to participate in the International Conference of the United Nations Day of Vesak. We were invited by Most Venerable Prof. Dr. Phra Dharmakosajarn for the first participation. At that time we did not imagine the conference would be developed so greatly, nor did know the resolution adopted by the General Assembly at United Nations in December 1999 as follows:

Recognizing that the Day of the Full Moon in the month of May each year is the day most sacred to Buddhists, who commemorate on that day the birth of the Buddha, his attainment of enlightenment and his passing away,

Considering that international recognition at United Nations Headquarters and other United Nations offices would constitute acknowledgement of the contribution that Buddhism, one of the oldest religions in the world, has made for over two and a half millennia and continues to make to the spirituality of humanity,

Resolves that, without cost to the United Nations, appropriate arrangements shall be made for international observances of the Day of Vesak at United Nations Headquarters and other United Nations offices, in consultation with the relevant United Nations offices and with permanent missions that also wish to be consulted.

We were impressed by this resolution of UN and the leadership of Most Venerable Prof. Dr. Phra Dharmakosajarn as Chairperson of International Council of UN Day of Vesak. That made us participating in the conference every year.

This conference is a great opportunity for us Buddhists in the world including Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana to gather together and think together of the Buddha's greatness. We feel happy that we can meet many Buddhists from all over the world and Thai people who welcome us warmly always. We appreciate the strong and consistent support by the Royal Thai Government and the Thai Sangha. Thailand is the most suitable country to have such an international Buddhist conference.

Now we, Japanese Buddhists, would like to return a favor and contribute to the conference by joint hosting. We express our gratitude to you all for awarding us an honor as a co-host country.

We hope the conference to be successful for this time and to be developed more in the future. We will not grudge cooperation for it.

Thank you again and let's enjoy the conference together.

Hiroshi Matsumoto
President of Inner Trip Reiyukai International

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INTRODUCTION

Since the establishment of the International Association of Buddhist Universities (IABU) in 2007, the international academic conference has been organized as a part of the United Nations Day of Vesak Celebrations. The theme of each year conference is determined differently concerning the world situation and trend of the year. For instance, the theme of last year 2009 entitled, “Buddhist Approach to Global Crisis,” reflecting the world facing crises in environment, economics, and politics. At this event, Buddhist scholars from over the world had been invited to propose their solutions through Buddhist perspectives. Continued from last year, the theme of this year conference is its nexus. Wishing that the global crises would be recovered from last year’s, therefore, this year theme has entitled, “Global Recovery: The Buddhist Perspective” — which comprises 5 sub-themes in details as follows;

Global Recovery through Buddhist Ecology:

This theme recognizes the scarcity of resources in the environment and the changing conditions brought upon the planet by human manipulation of the eco-system. It appears as though humans have wrecked rather than helped the environment. We have not provided actual remedies for our sick and dying world. Last year we faced many challenges in our sessions, and we continue a controversial and popular environmental or ecological theme. This year we had difficulties and nearly rejected almost every submitted article in this theme, and had to work closely with some scholars to ensure that their papers included more scientific-natured data; we had to reach a compromise with some articles, and others contained below offer some refreshing insights into the strife that needs immediate attention. It was very pleasing to see numerous case studies in several of the conference papers. We hope in the future that we see greater developed case studies – when contributions are received, we hope to see additional papers on how Buddhism becomes applicable into the environment. In this sense, we can have real Buddhist Ecology. We know that just learning Dhamma does not change the conditions of the world, so many papers needed to be more engaged, scientifically – and rely less on scriptural representations – common knowledge amongst us all.

Global Recovery through Buddhist Education:

Many of our contributors are Buddhists, or are educators with knowledge of Buddhism or are, indeed Buddhist scholars – all at different stages of abilities. In this session, we aspired to improve upon our previous and ongoing educational crisis, may we call this: a crisis of ignorance? From this or any other aspect of ignorance, in a few words: we aspire towards enlightenment – the context here is the awakening into knowledge and improvements upon our wisdom. Someone once said: ‘knowing is half the battle...’ Our first author begins where we should start – apart from ourselves, with the youngest people in our society; then other papers get into other processes. Despite our altruistic intentions to improve from or recover after any crisis, Buddhist education needs to do more besides just teaching doctrinal-dogmatic points – regardless of their benefits. One of our scholars suggests a strategic plan. Many of our papers on Buddhist education again focus on general themes within Dhamma, few have aspired to update their knowledge beyond textual reasonings.

Global Recovery through Engaged Buddhism

This panel discusses principles that are as old as the dogma that we hold so dearly. We have numerous citations of the Buddha or the dhamma’s engagement into worldly principles, or its effectiveness to eliminate problematic scenarios. Four papers in our session cover Ambedkar Buddhists – clearly, a positive phenomena and proof of how engagement into Buddhism correlates to recovery from a crisis situation. From the lowest despair, these Buddhists have risen to become a powerful force in Global Buddhism. Other papers relate to various socially-engaged Buddhists in Thailand – offering great perspectives on various important-personalities. Another paper illuminates the volunteer work done by students in an educational-program; a paper expresses how Buddhism has influenced medical care; earthquake relief; an art studio; the engaged-Buddhist political philosophy of a national leader, and the political philosophy derived from textual sources. More papers discuss happiness, inner freedom; and other aspects of what some determine to be engaged Buddhism – since there is no firm consensus, our author’s contribute.

Global Recovery through Harmonious Co-existence

The civilized-world as we know it is ripe in conflicts. We can wonder if we even know what being civilized means. Have we ever taken into consideration the meaning of the word: “civil”. To be civil, one probably resides within the legal rules or customs of one’s society, and thereby is educated or tries to improve oneself

within that society. From this process of being ‘civilized’ – its members should constitute a civilization. This panel was formulated to express the various factors of Buddhist sociology. What themes were addressed by Buddhist scholars in this open call for papers? This panel could have realized that there was a global crisis last year, and those scholars returning to our fold, should have taken that knowledge and built upon it, towards recovering from, in this instance: national conflicts, political conflicts, social conflicts, spiritual conflicts, family conflicts, and other forms of social disruptions. Presented this year are articles pertaining to: right-speech; unjustly marginalized ethnic groups; harmony-melody distinctions; peaceful-opposition; and the recognition of diversity. Buddhists are often empowered to bring about the changes they wish to see in world, nation, society, family or with others. The contributions in this panel aim to assist in equalizing relationships functioning at their respective levels.

Global Recovery through Mental Well-being

This is a very tough panel to summarize, in terms of the sheer quantity or popularity of the subject. Buddhism, is often, the subject of minds, working on the mind – a favorite topic for scholars to teach. Some author’s took the term: well-being, and assumed it was referring to medical or mental health issues, and wrote pertaining to this interesting topic; however many authors should learn more about the medical neuro-sciences, because now, just echoing abhidhammic material is not enough to explain the operations of the mind, in our modern era. There is a lot of deep reading material in this session – contemplating the higher offerings will benefit Buddhist studies for years.

GLOBAL RECOVERY THROUGH BUDDHIST ECOLOGY

Ecological Consciousness in Buddhist Theism and Their Role in Recovery of Global Ecological Crisis

Dr. Anand Singh
University of Lucknow

The human race has a subtle influence on various components of the environment. Since evolution, the human beings have modified soil structure, affected geomorphic forces and changed the quality and quantity of flora and fauna. At the beginning of the 18th century about 20,000 plant species were known and presently about 400000 species are identified. All of nature's landscape has been transformed by human-induced vegetation and habitat changes. By utilizing the resources and energy from the environment and returning them in form of industrial produce and hazardous waste, humankind interferes with the dynamically balanced cycle of nature. Nature is, up to some extent, able to withhold anthropogenic disturbances. Since the industrial revolution, the general intensity of human conduct onto the environment has exceeded its potential for restoration over a vast area of earth's surface. It leads to irreversible changes in the eco-system. The resource base of a region and quality of its air, water and land represent a common heritage for all generations and its destruction and manipulation in pursuits of short term gains compromise the opportunity for the future generation. Buddha has incorporated some forms of environmental attributes in his preaching and views humanity as an integral part of nature. (Singh, 2008)

Expanding human populations resulted into expanding needs of man. With scientific progress and technological development man started utilizing natural resources at a much larger scale. This caused an increasing demand for resources particularly plant based resources. Over utilization of natural resources resulted in loss of biodiversity and ecological diversity due to deforestation and desertification. The devastating effects of deforestation include soil, water and wind erosions such as the foot hills of the Shiwaliks, once covered with dense forests, are facing an acute water scarcity and semi-desert like conditions. When the forest dies, the ecological balance [otherwise] maintained by nature breaks away and floods and droughts are the terrible repercussions. Many plants and animals, formerly of economic importance, are already extinct and there are many [more] facing the danger of extinction due to the destruction of their natural habitats and habitat transformations.

Note: The Pali texts referred in this paper are editions of Pali Text Society, London and Sacred Book of East Series edited by Max Muller and others.

Plants that [are] used by human society for its benefit in earlier-ages, included: *Rauwolfia Serpentina* (*Sarpagandha*) used as antihypertensive; *Picea Brachytyle* (*Chir*) used for extraction of decoction, used as remedy for fever; *Achrus Calamus* used in Dyspepsia and chronic diarrhea; *Rheumetid* roots used as tooth powder and paste against gum swelling; and *Cardus Nutans* (*Kanchari*) used as blood purifier - these have been lost due to human insensitivity. Many species of the *Ficus*, which have religious importance, have become extinct, such as: *Ficus Sinensis*, *Achryanthus*, *Cryptostegia*, etc.

The Buddhist monks adhere to an intimate relationship between biotic species and abiotic components of environment. They consider the destruction of natural resources as unethical and encourage sustenance of human existence through balance of eco-system. It accepts that creation of universe is due to material-immaterial unity. The *Aggañña Sūta* (*Dīgha Nikāya*, III, 80) says, materially the first beings were the self-luminous and the immaterial dimensions were earth and its attributes. Earlier the people enjoyed the produce of the earth and flew through the skies, but when greed appeared in their minds the flavorsome, fragrant substance of the earth became coarser. Because of this external environment deteriorated and the delicious edible earth surface completely disappeared. The legend cites that change is inherent in nature but man's moral decline accelerated this process. The man's necessities and pleasures have been a cause of great change in the universe, and his destructive propensity is still greater. When people take advantage of their special relationship by misappropriating nature's wealth, using it for their own end rather than sustaining it for the future, they break the covenant and are rebelling against the nature. The privilege, of ruling over the earth and animals, is not a license to kill; but, utilize it altruistically. Buddha says that 'a physical act should be undertaken only after repeated reflections. The physical act which one wishes to do might lead to harm the self, and that might lead to harm other, and would further lead to harm of both; this physical act is unskilled and it yields a feeling of anguish.' (*Majjhima Nikāya*, III, 80)

It means that anything advantageous to human beings should not be disproportionate and be disadvantageous to others. The relationship between man and nature should be based on wide range of interests: present and future, human and non-human. It should be purposeful, futuristic and everlasting. The primary needs of fresh air, water and food would be ever-present, demanding commitment from human civilization to preserve and sustain it for the future. This bond of ecological friendship could be realized through the right set of values. The values of interdependence led to the evolution of an environmental ethics as mentioned in the doctrine of *Pratityasamutpada*. (Chatterji, 1984: 133-134) The doctrine of 'dependent origination' reveals our true place in the universe and shows the values to

expound it. This doctrine has been propounded against the theory of wholesale determinism which was perplexing the society at the time of Buddha.

He discarded the *niyativāda* of Gośāla Maskariputra (Majumdar, 1951: 364) who preached extreme determinism denying all free will and all moral responsibilities. He denied all moral duties and said that everything depends on fate, environment and nature. Buddha not only stigmatized Gośāla but condemned his ideas as most pernicious. (Stcherbatsky, 1999: 364, 121) The theory of causation says that the essential conditions of human and sub-human life is fraught with misery. It propounds: '*asmin sati idam bhavati*' (this being, that appears) - meaning that under particular circumstances the result appears, with a change of condition there is a change in the result. (*ibid*: 121) At other stage it is said that there is no real production, there is only interdependence. (*ibid*: 122) It means when causation operates on a resource, an encouragement (*atīśaya-ādhanā*) produces an outgrowth and a new whole is produced. Between the two sources there is a bridge, the fact of inherence (*samvāya*) a link which again is a separate identity. Every cause of causation is not only causation of oneself but also of another self (*parata-utpādah*). (*ibid*: 122-123) It shows that our bodies are not the fundamental source of our problems and our desire is not free from its physical, spatial and temporal actions. The concepts of right and wrong are intrinsic properties of human conduct. It should be weighed with its positive consequences. Man has special capabilities consisting of self-consciousness and self-determination by which one is treated as above the physical nature. His rational spirit enthuse him to know the cause of ecological preservation. The biotic entities like forests, rivers, hills, sunshine, sunset not only fulfills the human needs but is also provides vital breath and kindles an aesthetic delight.

The pattern of eco-ethics should have universal applicability and mutual respect. These ethical statements will be evaluative and axiological in nature reflecting analysis of value preferences, behavioral norms and code of conduct in a specific spatio-temporal context. Buddha says that every movement is the product of the totality of its antecedents. The thing never produces anything alone. It is followed by a result only if it is combined by other elements known as co-factors (*samskāra*):

Nothing single comes from single

From totality every thing arises. (*ibid*: 127)

There is no destruction of one thing and no destruction of another thing, no influence of one substance on other, no anthropomorphic mutual help between the causes. It produces a constant uninterrupted infinitely graduated change by human co-operation. (*Sanyukta Nikāya*, XXII, 165) It is known as anthropomorphic



result (*puruṣkara phalam*). All these co-operating causes are convergent stream of moments and known as creeping causes (*upasarpana-pratyaya*). At their meeting point (*sahakāri-melana*) a new series starts when the soil moisture, heat and seed series of moment unite them, last moments are followed by first moment of the sprout. So Buddhist causality is many in one relation and known as ‘one result production theory’ (*eka-kārya-kārita*). (Stcherbatsky: *op.cit.*, 128-129) Buddha’s cause-effect theory indicates that eco-ethics independent of man is not possible though it is dealt with natural and scientific perspective. The un-prudent and wanton destruction of natural resources may shatter one’s self-control and provide involuntary addiction and altered state of consciousness which may upset or even destroy the eco-system.

It is not fear of perishing; but, to live and survive calmly, fuels sustained human endeavors and explorations for healthy eco-systems. The universe is accepted as seamless undivided unit. Only delusion causes it to appear fragmented into infinite number of separate pieces. The causation theory gives wisdom to discover the cause and put the universe back together again. The Buddhist ethics show that the ecological adaptation is a process of advantageous variation and progressive modification by which the human beings are adjusted to the condition of the environment to live a harmonious life. The uniqueness of Buddhist ecological ethics lies in its many outstanding qualities, all-embracing and comprehensive without being impractical or impossible to follow. It is free from the rituals, taboos and other dogmatic behavior patterns which are very often accepted as the ethical principles. Buddha had great faith in the spiritual and *karmic* potentiality of man and accepted him as the maker of his own destiny. He suggests that a man is supremely capable of going deep into the causes of his sufferings. He understands what is good for him and adjust himself without passing the responsibility on to some invincible forces for his suffering and makes effort to walk on the noble eight fold path to lead a good ethical life to end it. He makes effort to control his fickle and unsteady mind. He sees for himself with his *pañña* (wisdom) which he develops by seeing things at the experimental level. The impermanent nature of things however may be beautiful and attractive seem to be, develops non-attachment (*nirveda*) to such person and cuts down or extirpates his cravings for them and proportionally he becomes free from suffering. Buddha regarded every environmentally harmful action as questionable and ethically wrong. Our intention depends on our mental makeup. If it is polluted with lust, hatred and delusion (*lobha, moha, dosa*), it will translate itself into the external environment as a complex of physical life and material development based on exploitation of nature without moral restraint. Delusion associated with greed results in environmental problems, as for satisfying one’s appetite natural resources are mercilessly exploited and people suffer. Buddha has given warnings against it. In the *Majjhima Nikāya* the man deriving pleasure out of sense-object contact has been compared to leper who in scratching his wound and heating it over

fire derives momentary pleasure, which ultimately worsens his wound and augments his trouble all the more. While defining the creation of universe, Buddhism describes the pattern of resource use that aims at meeting human needs and preserving the environment. If it is not happening then there is deterioration in the standard of living and a consequent decline of universe. The *Aggañña Sutta* of *Dīgha Nikāya* says that the appearance of greed in the primordial being led to gradual loss of their glow and their ability to sustain joy. The moral degradation had also affected their external environment and had an adverse impact on nature. After it, the richness of earth started diminishing. Buddha has predicted an intimate link between ecology and culture. An attempt to control the ecological system externally could culminate into disaster. Buddha's messages helped to avoid such circumstances and give understanding of functional relationship between the community and its environment. This idea is systematized in his theory of five natural laws (*Pancha niyamadhamma*). According to it in the cosmos five natural laws are functional namely; natural laws (*utuniyama*) biological laws (*binaniyama*), psychological laws (*cittaniyama*), moral laws (*kammaniyama*) and casual laws (*dhammaniyama*). It means the physical environment of any region conditions the growth and development of its biological components i.e. flora and fauna. In the Buddhism the *citta* acts in four directions. These are:

- i. *Kamavacara* - It is the mind desire having good (*Kusala*), bad (*akusala*), indifferent (*kriya*) and ripe (*vipaka*) kinds, depending on the nature of our mental propensities.
- ii. *Rupavacara* - It is the status of mind having good ideas (*Kusala*), indifferent (*Kriya*) and ripe regions.
- iii. *Arupavacara* - It is the mind of trance also of three kinds as *Rupavacara*, but possessed by still higher beings residing in *nirakara* (formless) regions.
- iv. *Lokottara* - It is a mind of realization, having as its object the bliss of *Nirvana* and having two kinds depending on the path and result.

All these classes are not purely psychological. Ethical, metaphysical and spiritual evolutions are also implicated in four kinds of *citta*. These in turn influence the thought pattern of the people interacting with them. The way of thinking determines moral standards. The moral of human kind is not only the psychological makeup of the people but the biological and physical environment of area as well. The five laws demonstrate that human world and nature are joined together in a reciprocal casual relationship with change in any one necessarily bringing about change in other. The human world and its environment stands or falls with the type of moral force at work. If immorality grips society humankind and nature declines. If morality exists the quality of human life and nature improve. Buddha says that if change is universal; neither man nor any other being, animate or inanimate are being

absolved of it. Everything is framed in constant process of change. In his doctrine of impermanence (*ksanikavada*) he explains transitory nature of things and says ‘whatever exists arises from causes and conditions and in every respect impermanent’. The human kind is also a part of nature and no sharp distinction can be drawn between them and their surrounding, as everything is impermanent and subject to same natural laws. It must be seen as an important basis for proper understanding of human kind’s role in nature.

From a Buddhist point of view, the solution of the recovery of ecological crisis is three fold:

- First, Buddhist-based communities should be linked, forming a grass root movement to combat environmental destruction.
- Second, Buddhist intellectuals should learn more from the current ecological problems and try to absolve it by applying Buddhist ethics.
- Third, a more just society could be obtained on the international level by creating consciousness.

This ideal society can be achieved with the adherence of *panchasila*. It shows the Buddha’s unshakable faith in man and his act. The environment is the physical, chemical and the biotic conditions surrounding an organism. Buddhist environmental movement is not a self-contained science. It is one of a number of inter-dependent disciplines working in concord for academic, environmental, individual and social progress. The Buddhist view of ecological ethics transcends the activities affecting various aspects of human life. It adds value judgment and relevance of ethics to ecological thought as Buddha in the *dvi-cakkhu-sutta* calls a person one eyed who does not balance between abundance of virtues. It can be epitomized in the following verse from the sacred pen of his Holiness the Dalai Lama:

*Our obdurate ego centrality
Ingrained in our minds
Since beginning-less time
Contaminates, defiles and pollutes
The environment
Created by common karma
Of all sentient beings.*

Conclusion:

On basis of the teachings of the Buddha, the following five recommendations can be given to protect the ecology, with maximum utilization, for the well being of the human universe:

1. Buddhism states that *Karma* is the major factor responsible for what we are and what we will be. Man has an element of free will or personal endeavor, by practicing how one can change his own nature as well as his environment
2. The Buddhist idea of dependent origination also advocates that everything in this ecosystem is interdependent and interconnected to some other; so, everything has its own intrinsic value. However, in the industrial world nature is conceived as a material thing which has merely extrinsic value to fulfill the desire of the people. The relation between human beings and nature may be spelled out in a threefold way: human being is superior, nature is superior and human being and nature both are interdependent and interrelated. The new paradigm of development should promote economic activities and a life style based on the contempt of '*man with nature*' and not '*man against nature*'.
3. The whole ecological system is functioning in a cyclic order and the Buddhist approach is substantiated by *Deep Ecology* which does not see the world not as a collection of isolated objects, but a network of phenomena that fundamentally interconnected and interdependent. It is different from *Shallow Ecology* where human being is in the center, and all other beings are at the circumference. Buddha clearly ruled out the two extreme positions of self-indulgence and self mortification and adopted the middle path. Buddhist concedes that re-orientation in our inner life is *sine qua non* to preserve the nature. Everything is interconnected and interdependent in this ecosystem. However, due to our ignorance, we are not able to comprehend it. The misery hinges upon our happiness, while our happiness depends upon our maximum consumption. Hence to diminish our problems regarding recovery, we will have to moderate our consumption. The only way to minimize our consumption is to restrain our desire. According to Buddha the desire can not be extinguished but it may be diverted towards the welfare of humanity *vis-à-vis* self interest.
4. Buddhism relates science with spirituality. When science is based upon the self interest, it will be the cause of the destruction. But when it is built upon spirituality, it will be connected with welfare of all human beings. Science + Self-interest = Destruction, Science + *Prajna* (Spirituality) =



Welfare of human beings. In this regard three ideals of Buddha, wisdom, courage and compassion are necessary in enhancing and strengthening the human capacity which will enrich to establish harmony between man and nature. Buddha gave the wisdom to perceive the interconnectedness of all life and livings and to understand the inner forces within the human heart that derive people to engage in the ultimately self-destructive act of disrupting and undermining harmony with the natural environment. So it can be treated holistic in approach which advocates that everything is interdependent and interconnected to each other in this ecosystem. Everything has, therefore its own intrinsic value.

5. The existence of human beings depends upon biodiversity for its essential desideratum like food, air, water, medicine, fertilizers, timber, raw materials and so forth. The conservation is not only preservation but also it is regeneration of flora and fauna in its totality. Conservation = preservation + regeneration. Buddha was not only aware about preservation but also he emphasized on regeneration through his eight fold path.

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Global Concern to Climate Change: A Buddhist Response

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Our planet is under stress and our civilization is in trouble due to human induced climate and environmental changes. For several centuries, human activity has been altering the chemical composition of the global atmosphere, particularly through the emission of carbon dioxide and methane gases (jointly called green house gases) due to scientific advancements. These advancements and great discoveries in the fields of electronics, industrial developments, information technology, etc. have helped in changing the world and making it wealthier day by day. However, all these technological achievements have also brought a number of negative aspects in their wake, which have become serious issues seeking our immediate attention. Among the most prominent ones is climate change, which is threatening not only technological developments, but also affecting millions of people's living conditions worldwide, causing havoc and becoming a global issue of concern. The majority of scholars nowadays agree that our planetary climate is heating up and that there is an urgency to act to prevent further damage. Rising temperatures, melting glaciers, rising sea levels, expanding deserts, shrinking forests, disappearing plants and animals, eroding soils and falling water tables are just a few signs and have the potential to lead to an immense amount of suffering through droughts, drinking water shortages, famines, increased occurrences of storms, floods and other climate related disasters.

Climate change refers to an increase in average global temperatures. Natural events and human activities are believed to be contributing to an increase in average global temperatures. This is caused primarily by increases in "greenhouse" gases such as carbon dioxide (CO₂). The term *greenhouse* is used in conjunction with the phenomenon known as the *greenhouse effect i.e. energy* from the sun drives the earth's weather and climate, and heats the earth's surface; in turn, the earth radiates energy back into space; some atmospheric gases (water vapor, carbon dioxide, and other gases) trap some of the outgoing energy, retaining heat somewhat like the glass panels of a greenhouse; these gases are therefore known as greenhouse gases; and the greenhouse effect is the rise in temperature on Earth as certain gases in the atmosphere trap energy.

What are the impacts of climate change? For decades, greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide have been increasing in the atmosphere and the impacts are:

rapid changes in global temperature, extreme weather patterns, super-storms, ecosystem impacts, rising sea levels, increasing ocean acidification, increase in pests and disease, failing agricultural output; increase in world hunger, agriculture and livelihoods are already being affected. Unless we combine to take decisive action, climate change will ravage our planet, and with it our prosperity and security. Climate change has been caused over centuries, has consequences that will endure for all time.

Human beings are now facing threats, leading to the extinction of human species, never happening before in the history of humanity as the threat originates from human actions alone. This problem arises from the so called problem of climate change. The possible global crisis caused by the climate change has its root in human greed (*lobha*), which originates within human mind itself and it can only be solved through collective humanity. The only way to deal with this problem effectively is through the clear understanding of the teachings of the Buddha. The clear understanding of the Buddha's teachings with regular practice will definitely lead humanity to be out of this problem of climate change.

A fundamental question that Buddhism seeks to answer is regarding the root cause/s of this eco-crisis. Although modern environmentalists analyze the fact relating to various social, political, technological, and economical factors, the root cause according to Buddhism is 'craving' (*tañhā*) which again is caused from ignorance (*avijjā*). His Holiness the Dalai Lama, emphasizing the fact says; it is due to Ignorance, greed and lack of respect for the earth's living things that the destruction of nature and natural resources occurs. The *Saṅgīti Sutta* enumerates seven latent tendencies (*anusya-s*) or proclivities relating to this assertion. When one is freed from them becomes an *ārya-puggala* (noble person). By him then no harmful activities are committed. A detailed exposition of an *ārya-puggala* who is free from the latent tendencies and his constructive engagement to the society is enumerated in the discussion of *Sāmaññaphalasutta* of Dīgha Nikāya. *Kevaddhasutta* of Dīgha Nikāya enumerates it is through an education in the system of self training that such state of noble personality is obtained.

P. A. Payutto in his book "*The Pāli Canon: What a Buddhist Must Know*" commented that religion involves practice, a way of living, or useful application in life. Buddhism teaches a way of life which ultimately leads to the goal of final deliverance from suffering, can be seen as the resultant virtue, progress or growth constitutes one's life in the ability to get rid of greed, hatred, and delusion and one has to train oneself in morality, concentration and wisdom, which reflects the function of Buddhism as the teaching provider of knowledge and ethics. That means Buddhism can play a crucial role and join the responsibility in finding approaches to climate change or global warming by making a human understanding by ways to overcome obstacles on implement concrete actions. The Buddha's great

contribution to human being, His teaching ‘*harmonious world begin in the mind*’ helping all living being to break through delusion and cohesive awakening to rid suffering and attain happiness, to free from suffering by understanding the true nature of phenomenon.

Human induced climate and environmental change are two great threats to the future well being of humanity. For several centuries, human activity has been altering the chemical composition of global atmosphere, particularly through the emission of carbon dioxide and methane which are collectively called greenhouse gases. Unlike many other forms of pollution they are mainly invisible and odorless once mixed into the atmosphere. Humans are also altering the landscape, clearing forests, growing crops and raising livestock which affects the global climate. Until recently, these changes have accumulated very slowly through the activities of many previous human generations but in recent years their rate of increase in quickening. Although the worst effects on human well being from climate and ecosystem change are still in future. If we will not take care of this urgently and on a massive scale, the worst things are just to come and to which we don’t have any answer. So, all of us has to respond in time. Otherwise, the glaciers and polar ice will melt further as the world continues to warm. Climate change is fast becoming a horrible reality for the planet and its beings, despite our initial and wishful ignorance (*avijjā*) in denying its possibility and existence.

This catastrophe continues to speed up in the face of human greed as various governments throughout the world fight over their competitive race to boost economies at the cost of natural life. As religion guides human behavior towards a healthy way of life in the face of all the challenges, Buddhism offers us easy and highly effective solutions by its simple and affordable perspectives on this issue. I consider Buddhism profoundly as an ecological religion while seeking answers to stop the mindless exploitation of natural resources. The most significant aspects of Buddhism that has come to the fore in the present context in question are its valuable expression of human identification with nature. As we are aware that a healthy balance between the available resources and their wise use in the need of the time and it may be obtained only by applying the teachings of the Buddha of leading a simple, contented life and compassion towards nature and oneself, and non-violence (*ahimsā*) towards all living beings. There is a story in the *Āṅguttara Nikāya* in which a man who sheltered under a banyan tree and ate its fruit, then broke off a branch and went away. Than a spirit who was sitting on that tree saw that acts of the man, thought how amazing, how astonishing it is, that a man should be so evil as to break a branch off the tree after eating its fruit. Suppose the tree were to bear no more fruit and the tree bore no more fruit¹.

¹ David L. Gosling, *Religion and Ecology in India and Southeast Asia*, USA.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has rightly said, “Peace and survival of life on the earth as we know it are threatened by human activities which lack a commitment to humanitarian values. Destruction of nature and natural resources results from ignorance, greed, and lack of respect for the earth’s living things.”² A well known Buddhist legend regarding the evolution of the world as discussed in the *Aggañña Sutta*³ - the life span of human beings were very long because the nutrition provided by plants and vegetables was of the highest quality. The point is made, however, that man’s deteriorating morals (greed, conceit, stealing, lying, etc.) brought about changes, which were adverse to nature and living beings. These changes brought about by man accelerated and changed the direction of the changes inherent in nature. The results of which was – and still is today – adverse to mankind’s well being and happiness; and the same thing is also expressed in the *Cakkavattisihanāda Sutta*⁴ where the anticipated graver effects on mankind and nature by man’s further moral degeneration is vividly illustrated. The commentaries to the *Cakkavattisihanāda Sutta*⁵ further explain this pattern of mutual interaction in connection with regards to nature which goes like greed leads to famine, hatred leads to non-violence and delusion leads to epidemic.

What the Buddha taught were practices which enable us to eliminate mental pollution permanently. Simply put, these practices have three aspects: moral precepts, meditation concentration, and wisdom. The three aspects have been compared to the legs of a tripod, which support a vessel. Remove any one of the three and the vessel collapses. Likewise, cease to follow the precepts and your practice collapses; let concentration lapse or become muddled about what is happening, and your practice becomes ineffective. Why is following the moral precepts essential to successful Buddhist practice? To answer this question, let us first take a look at the most fundamental moral guidelines taught by the buddha, the five precepts (*pañca-sikkhāpada*)⁶ or five virtues (*pañca-śīla*) which are: abstention from a) taking life (*pāṇātipātā veramaṇī sikkhāpada³ samādiyāmi*), b) from taking what is not given (*adinnādānā veramaṇī sikkhāpada³ samādiyāmi*), c) sexual misconduct (*kāmesu micchācāra veramaṇī sikkhāpada³ samādiyāmi*), d) false speech (*musāvāda veramaṇī sikkhāpada³ samādiyāmi*) and fermented drink that causes heedlessness (*surā-meraya-majja-pamādaṭṭhānā veramaṇī sikkhāpada³ samādiyāmi*). The moral precepts are designed as basic guidelines for counteracting the pollution of the ego-defenses. By following the guidelines the pollution is naturally removed and the mind cleared. Just as anti-pollution laws must be closely monitored to insure

² <http://www.ens-newswire.com/ens/apr2007/2007-04-19-01.asp>

³ *D.III.80.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, 71.

⁵ *Dhammapada A»»hakathā.III.854.*

⁶ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Five_Precepts --accessed 29 January 2009.

compliance, so too the precept-guidelines for our own mental and physical actions must be closely monitored by our own mindfulness. If we conscientiously do so, we will quickly be able to identify the sources of our turbid energies so that we can restructure and redirect them. As the inner ecological balance is restored, they will no longer function as pollution which screens and protects the illusion of self, but the transformed and redirected energies will become the vehicle for locating and eliminating the source of the pollution-the same illusion of self that it formerly screened.

The precepts are the guidelines for transformation. They show us how to restructure our energies into the original and natural patterns of attunement with the entire universe, so that our sense of alienation is dissolved. When we naturally experience and act out of the fundamental equality of our identity with all living beings, we will have restored the ecological harmony to our minds. Our mental ecosystem will function naturally and holistically, and it will generate the wisdom of clear seeing and compassion for all life. That is the basic teaching of the Buddha. According to Buddhist teachings, when we reach this stage of understanding, we see clearly that all outer pollution is merely a reflection of the pollution within our own minds. Our shared environment is the karmic result of the sum total of the thoughts and intentions that every single individual projects outwardly in his or her own actions. Again, self-image is the crux of the problem. From individual selves are generated the self-images of corporations, of political constituencies, and of nations. According to the Buddha, the world is led by mind – *cittena niyati loko*⁷ which is also similarly described in the *Dhammapada: A defiled mind generates unhappiness and suffering, a pure mind brings happiness and freedom from suffering*. Thus the three basic evils – *greed, hatred and delusion* – produce pollution both within and without.

Buddhism primarily concerns with liberation (*vimutti*) from suffering (*dukkha*). The discourses in the *Dīgha Nikāya* are of no difference to this objective. But, what make the *Dīgha Nikāya* distinct from other canonical texts are its lengthy presentation, and the historical facts that it possesses. It reveals the social, intellectual and spiritual milieu in which Buddhism was expounded by the Buddha. According to G. K. Wijesekera; “the *Dīgha Nikāya*, thus, could justifiably be called a mine of information about religious, social, economic and political conditions of India prior to and during the time of the Buddha.” It has been often doubted whether Buddhism originating in so remote past in certain social and environmental conditions be at all useful to solve the present day environmental problems which were unknown to the then society. Further, Ian Harris remarks that it is impossible to establish an environmental ethic asserting the Buddhist theory of *aniccā* and *dukkha*. Of course, this view has already been refuted by Dr. P.D. Premasiri in his

⁷ *Samyutta Nikāya*.I.39.

“*Ecological Teachings in Early Buddhism*” arguing that *dukkha* does not exist in the change itself, but in one who has the wrong attitudes towards it. The right attitude toward the natural environment is ‘understanding the nature as it is’ (*yathābhūtañānadassanaṃ*) and therefore acting positively. A close observation to the *Dīgha Nikāya* reveals that the methods that the Buddha had taken to solve the problems of that time could well be used to solve the social and environmental problems arising now. Moreover, as the teachings of the Buddha emphasize the conditioned co-production (*paṭiccasamuppāda*) of phenomena, the relationship between human and nature in this respect is not to be neglected. Thus we see numerous passages in the different texts of the *tipiṭaka* revealing the importance of the environmental protection.

One of the major concerns of the Buddha was challenging the unjust Brahmanic practices that harmed not only the society but also the environment. Mass sacrifices resulting in killing of our fellow beings causing environmental pollution is condemned in both *Kuṭadanta* and *Pāyāsi suttas* of the *Dīgha Nikāya*. In fact, much of the social teachings of the Buddha were against the Brahmanic social setting where the rigid caste system and sacrifices in names of gods and for the sake of holiness were prevalent. The caste system was not only responsible for unequal social structure but also for much of social injustices under the Brahmin hegemony. Mass sacrificing of animals, on the other hand, demanded vast disintegration of state economy while hundreds of animals were mercilessly slaughtered vastly damaging the eco-system. In the *Kuṭadantasutta* the Buddha instead of mass sacrifices of living beings presented six kinds of gradually higher sacrifices in which neither any being is slain nor any sort of environmental pollution is done. These sacrifices are said to be less difficult and less troublesome, bearing greater fruit and greater advantage. In these the Buddha emphasized that one should sacrifice the evil tendencies that often influence a person in brutal activities bringing about unhappy consequences. To the Brahmin *Kuṭadanta* who wanted to establish peace by sacrificing hundreds of animals when the country was facing anarchy the Buddha proposed for constructive peaceful means not by bloodshed or punishing the wrong doers. This decrees for internal reformation of the wrong-doers at the root level of his/her mind, and by providing his/her needs justly by the state not letting him/her adopt any illegal methods. Utilizing any force/violence against him/her may not totally eliminate the anarchy as problems always remain. Sacrifices committed today are not like those according to the Brahmanism but for foods and various medical and scientific purposes where humans use animals as they want. Moreover, people are even killing animals for fun. Therefore, various species are being destroyed disturbing the eco-system.

Buddhist principles counsel non-violence to any sentient being, not just humans, for Buddhism sees humans and other beings as fellow-sufferers in the round of rebirth. While humans are seen to be particularly worthy of respect due to their

moral and spiritual potential, these very qualities imply that we should not thoughtlessly exploit other beings, but show our relative superiority through kindness and care. Such actions are also ascribed to the gods: it is said that Sakka who gained his divine status by being the helpful Māgha, above was once fleeing with his army from the army of the *asuras*. Seeing that his chariot was about to destroy some birds' nests, he stopped the retreat which then shocked the *asuras* into stopping their pursuit.⁸ In the *Cakkavattisihanāda Sutta*, the ideal ruler is seen as establishing "guard, ward and protection" for both various groups of people in town and country, and animals and birds.⁹ Emperor Asoka's edicts relating to animal welfare include the following: The Fourteen Rock Edicts: 2 Everywhere within Beloved-of-the-Gods, King Piyadasi's domain . . . has Beloved-of-the-Gods, King Piyadasi, made provision for two types of medical treatment: medical treatment for humans and medical treatment for animals. Wherever medical herbs suitable for humans or animals are not available, I have had them imported and grown.

The Seven Pillar Edicts: 7 . . . Along roads I have had banyan trees planted so that they can give shade to animals and men, and I have had mango groves planted. At intervals of eight krosas, I have had wells dug, rest-houses built, and in various places, I have had watering-places made for the use of animals and men. . . . I have done these things for this purpose, that the people might practice the Dhamma. . . .¹⁰

The Upāsaka-śīla *Sūtra* says of the Bodhisattva: In places where there are no trees, he erects posts and builds sheds for animals. . . . Seeing animals who are in fear, he helps and shelters them and persuades hunters [to stop hunting] by providing them with material things and kind words.¹¹ If he feeds ants with a bit of noodle, he can also gain immeasurable rewards.¹² The Brahmajāla *Sūtra*'s forty-eight secondary precepts for Bodhisattvas include: Failure to Liberate Sentient Beings. A disciple of the Buddha should have a mind of compassion and cultivate the practice of liberating sentient beings. . . . If a Bodhisattva sees an animal on the verge of being killed, he must devise a way to rescue and protect it, helping it to escape suffering and death. The disciple should always teach the Bodhisattva precepts to rescue and deliver sentient beings.

Of course, one could add a rider here: but not liberate them in ways that lead others to first harm them! We should act in such a way as to take into account

⁸ S.I.224.

⁹ D.III.61.

¹⁰ Dhammika, Ven. S. *The Edicts of King Asoka*. Wheel Publication no. 386-387, Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society, 1993. Online on Access to Insight website. Available HTTP: <<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/lib/bps/wheels/wheel386.html>> (accessed 29 January 2009).

¹¹ Shih, Heng-ching Bhikkhū. *The Sutra on Upāsaka Precepts*. Berkeley, California: Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 1994, p. 133-134.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 113.

the interests of other forms of sentient life in the environment that we share with them. We might sometimes choose to override such interests in favor of our own human ones, individual or collective, but we should never simply ignore them as if they do not exist. We sometimes end up overriding the interests of other people where we have a conflict of interest with them, but we should always first seek to find ways in which both parties' interests are satisfied to a degree, and it is good to sometimes allow the interests of the other party to prevail. Social interactions often involve such balancing of interests. To always prefer one's own interests is recognized as acting selfishly. We should treat interactions with non-human beings in a similar way. We also need to become increasingly sensitive to the fact that harm to other forms of life often has knock-on effects that bring harm to humans, too. Buddhism has often taught that harm, and true benefit, of self and others are intertwined.

Regarding the importance of a good environment, and hence the value of helping to sustain or bring this about, the Theravādin *Maṅgala Sutta*, in its list of blessings, includes, "To reside in a congenial environment (*patirūpadēsavāso*)".¹³ If the local or global environment is disrupted, conditions for Buddhist practice, for calm and reflection, are disrupted. The "biosphere" is a thin envelope, a few miles thick, which encompasses the oceans, land, and lower atmosphere. Only if conditions here are right is life possible on earth, and more particular conditions are needed for a *congenial* environment. Global warming is a threat to all of this.

In the society where Buddhism emerge the environment was not treated as today. Therefore the Buddha had known necessity to speak about or instruct about the preservation of environment so specially. Therefore in Buddhism, we don't come across a direct address to each of modern issue mention above. But from the teaching of the Buddha we can understand that, the Buddha maintains a very healthy attitude towards well being and good maintains of the natural environment. To call the order of nature or natural living, Buddhism uses the term Dhamma or Dhammata. According to Buddhism everything in natural world is subjected to change. If the man lives realizing the order of function of the nature and natural environment will be preserve well. As Buddhism understands ethical way of human life and preservation of natural environment has a close relationship. We examine this idea in Buddhism, it is understood that Buddhism is very sensitive on natural environment. Therefore, we can examine the natural environment oriental ethical teachings in Buddhism.

Some among human beings live without virtue and in a way the natural environment is destroyed. The *Sāmaññaphalasutta* of *Dīgha Nikāya* says that trees are of five kinds in the botanical world as they reproduce their off-shoots.

¹³ Sn.260.

1. Mūla bījaṃ – plants reproducing from root.
2. Khandha bījaṃ – plants reproducing from stem.
3. Phalu bījaṃ – plants reproducing from junctures.
4. Agga bījaṃ – plants reproducing from seeds.

Even killing of such plants is violating the moral precept of the noble one. “...mūlabījaṃ, khandhabījaṃ, phalubījaṃ, aggabījaṃ, Bijabījameva pañcamam itivā’ti evarūpā bījagāma bhūtagāma samārambhā pativiratao hoti idampissa hoti śīlasmim.”

This teaching of the Buddha highlights two principles:

1. Buddhism deeply understands the need of environment protection. So human beings are encouraged to do it to the best of their ability.
2. Scientific knowledge nature does not encourage preserving it but moral qualities can better encourage people to protect the environment.

The reason why global concern to climate change is now so grave is because humans have the technologies to consume and reproduce in ways that, if not moderated, seem almost certain to destroy the ecological basis for human life. Therefore, the key question is what values and practices would convince people to consume and reproduce less when they have the technological ability to consume and reproduce more. The world's religions have not previously faced this situation, which explains why ecological ethics have not been in the forefront of religious thinking in any tradition. What we must do is to place the inherited values and insights of our traditions (Buddhist) in the light of the current ecological crisis to see what resources the tradition affords us and where we need to extrapolate new visions.

Buddhism to comprehend the world and the environment i.e. we must overcome our ignorance and arrive at understanding the universe and our environment and climate which is in its nature of constant change and its characteristic of impermanence and suffering. This process should initially be focused on a proper understanding of (doctrine of dependent origination) *paṭiccasamuppāda* as a basis for arriving at a proper understanding of the (doctrine of four noble truths) *catāri ārya saccāni*. As discussed earlier, Buddhism maintains that there is a close link between man and natural resources. We are dependent on animals and plants in many ways which shows that there is a delicate balance between two. We have the power to influence our nature or climate in a negative sense, as well as in a positive manner.

As many religious people view it, Buddhist reality is profoundly ecological, and Buddhism itself is an ecological religion. It powerfully expresses human

identification with nature. Buddhists believe that all things, including humans, exist by their interrelationship with all other parts of nature. To think of one's self as isolated from the rest of nature is to be unrealistic. Jose Kalapura said: "The Buddha taught that respect for life and the natural world is essential. By living simply one can be in harmony with other creatures and learn to appreciate the interconnectedness of all lives. The simplicity of life involves developing openness to our environment and relating to the world with awareness and responsive perception. It also enables us to enjoy without possessing, and mutually benefit each other without manipulation".¹⁴

Buddhist teachers and masters constantly remind us of the importance of living in tune with nature and respecting life. Buddhist precepts direct the faithful to seek a right livelihood, an essential dimension of which is concern for the life of all creatures.¹⁵ This puts emphasis on 'ahimsā' (avoiding injury to any sentient creature). This is the first of the five precepts of Buddhist life and a major principle of Jainism. In practice, Buddhists believe that it is the act of killing or hurting an animal which is harmful, but not the eating of meat that someone else has provided. Note that the Buddhist king Asoka, the Great, established hospitals for both human and animals. He insisted on kindness to animals, and forbade their killing even for food. Buddhism teaches that if we wish to save the environment, we must first analyze our lives to determine how our self-deification is destroying the world by depleting, overpopulating, and polluting the environment. The Buddhist approach to solving the global ecological crisis then includes:

1. Compassion is the basis for a balanced view of the whole world and of the environment.
2. The use of the "save and not waste" approach means that nothing in nature is spoiled or wasted. Wanton destruction upsets the vital balance of life.
3. Ecology is rebuilt through the philosophy of Sarvodaya (uplift of all), which is based on loving kindness, compassionate action, and altruistic joy.¹⁶

¹⁴ Robert A White, "Spiritual Foundations of an Ecologically Sustainable Society," *The Journal of Bahai Studies* 7.2 (1995), p. 47-74.

¹⁵ Sean McDonagh, "To Care for the Earth," Geoffrey Chapman, (1989).

¹⁶ Jose Kalapura, "Science-Religion Dialogue & Ecology: An Asian perspective."

Sulak Sivaraksa and Aubrey Meyer have suggested the following modifications of the Buddhist *Four Noble Truths* to make them relate to ecology:

1. Climate change is a reality. It is the source of flooding and drought, desertification and loss of land.
2. Climate change is caused by over-consumption of fossil fuels, loss of soil, and excessive herds of livestock. Individual over-consumption in the global North is an expression of greed and a fear of loss. Fear and greed are root causes of all suffering. Capitalism thrives on individual fear and greed.
3. The climate we have to change is the climate of greed and fear, in which consumerism and profiteering can thrive.
4. To overcome suffering, start at home, with yourself. Ask yourself: Where can I cut down my consumption? How can I repay my carbon debt to my children's children? Plant trees. Don't fly. Eat local and organic foods.¹⁷

Buddhism offers liberation from *samsāra*, the cycle of suffering, if adherents acknowledge the four noble truths, follow the noble eightfold path and embrace Buddhist precepts. Just as Buddhist principles guide practitioners down the path, society is currently creating legal principles to guide a response to climate change. Applying the Buddhist tools of deep looking, mindfulness, compassionate dialogue, and following precepts offers insights into creating effective and enduring laws for protecting our own climate that is why the Buddhist considerations urge that:

- we should not deliberately harm any living being;
- we should look after the biosphere-home that we share with other beings, by using our knowledge of unintended effects of our actions to modify our behavior;
- we should also act positively to benefit others beings, human and non-human, and enhance their supportive environment.

¹⁷ Michael Schut & Tanya Marcovna Barnett, "*The Cry of Creation*," Earth Ministry, (2003).

To sum up one may say that Buddhism appreciates and encourages friendly co-existence among human life animal life and plant life. They help each other to live their friendliness towards each other makes life of the all healthy beneficial and long existence. Buddhist teaching therefore encourages its followers to be friendly to every living thing. Buddhist Solutions to answer the eco-crisis of today could be drawn from two perspectives:

1. The Buddha's active participation against instances harmful to eco-system; such as mass-sacrifice of animals, and
2. Buddhist philosophical aspects that have practical appeal to modern ecological discourses.



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Forest Conservation and Dhamma Development

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Introduction:

For the past three years, I have attended the United Nations Day of Vesak celebrations, and as a student I have listened to the voices of many learned Venerables and Professors. Last year, the United Nations Day of Vesak Celebration's main theme was related to global crisis, and in particular, there was the sub-theme that addressed the Environmental Crisis. I have read some of the contributions and have thought deeply about these Buddhist offerings. This year our theme is recovery from the previous global crisis, so this is an advancement from our current stage of merely recognizing problems. We must now talk about recovery or actually, recover from the previous crisis condition. Inaction should turn into action and results. Again, the theme of this session is Global Recovery through Buddhist Ecology, and I would now like to address the theme. The terms: "global", "recovery", "through", "Buddhist", and "ecology", all seem very straight-forward, but do we really know what these terms mean? We shall see²:

- **Global:** (i) affecting or including whole world, (ii) considering all parts of a problem or situation together.
- **Recovery:** (i) the process of getting better after an illness, injury etc, (ii) the process of returning to a normal condition after a period of trouble or difficulty.
- **Through:** by mean of a particular method, service, person etc.
- **Buddhist:** follower of Gotama Buddha.
- **Ecology:** the way in which plants, animals and people are related to each other and to their environment, or to the scientific study of this.

Now that we can anchor ourselves around the definitions, the main issue I will discuss is the three aspects of ecology:³

1. How do living creatures affect each other?
2. What determines their distribution?
3. What determines their abundance?

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² Bullon, S. (managing editor), (2006), Longman Exams Dictionary, Person Education Limited, UK.

³ Arthur Getis, Judith Getis and Jerome D. Fellmann: Introduction to Geography, 10th Edition (New York: McGraw-Hill International Edition), p. 507

Therefore, I will discuss a Buddhist understanding of every creature and its distribution to living beneficially with a large quality of meaningful life. Herein, the discussion will focus on forestland and its contribution to dhamma development as well.

Buddhism, as a religion, centers on wisdom - with a path leading to peace and happiness. It teaches to recognize every step of ‘what is happening’, and seeks out solutions to it – problems appear dependently, and the solution is also possible to seek within themselves. Every creature has a link to each other one way or another. The link stands as basic source to discover a new ideology that all component (living or non-living) things are just ‘mixture of similar substances’ and subjected to recycle within the process of the ‘link’, Buddhistic term it is called Dependent Origination (paticcasamuppāda). The need of ‘conservation of forest’ demonstrates an initial step to balance natural environment including its creatures.

Humans are responsible for their own actions. His actions and ways of living have contributed enormous amount of environmental problems. On this planet, he is the most dangerous, powerful and yet some are the most innocent creatures. It is in his hands either to lead everything to extinction or renew. To recover problem of every creature, humanity has got to be concerned about reforestation. It is a serious need. If forest-environments are to be renewed, there would be a hope to recover the sick globe, otherwise it is likely that we will see its destruction in our lifetime, leaving a wounded environment and creating an unsuitable planet for all creatures to survive. Why does humanity crave the destruction of our planet?

Case Studies and Recognition of Problems:

In environmental management, forest degradation is recognized through different dimensions. In January 2010, I conducted research: identifying individual and social problems related to deforestation. I personally interviewed rural-area, traditionally-poor farmers of two provinces, Buriram and Surin in North-east Thailand – living on small-scale farmland. In my interviews, I learned to recognize: deforestation happens mainly due to a lack of financial reserves. Mr. Phaio Waphathai, 78 year old farmer admitted:⁴

When I sit beneath a tree I have more peaceful day. It brings a peaceful life of the day, but I do not have forestland. I have to clear forest for growing paddy, and cut down trees for more land to grow paddy.

⁴ I must thank to Mrs. Faueaboon Singkham and her family for her interpretation in my interview to poor farmers in these two provinces.

Another old lady expressed her love of village-life within her community; she loves the place, where she was born and raised. She has everything in her garden for living. She said that even if all her relatives leave for Bangkok, she will remain. She has land and trees with which she can share the times of sweetness and bitterness. She has planted and nurtured many trees around her house, especially mango trees, over the many years; and now, she is waiting for someone to come and buy the trees for money.

I not only interviewed members of the local lay community, but I did also quizzed the local clergy who follow the path of Buddha – nonviolence and peace. The clergy-community has the responsibility to exemplify virtue and ensure the continuity of all creatures, since they are all interrelated and interdependent.

From observations at Wat Thambabau, a Buddhist temple, I found what exemplifies them is the community encouragement to plant trees. Despite the good intentions to growing trees, it reminds me when I arrived to eucalyptus and teak groves. I asked the monk: “Why do you plant these trees? Are they for business, or something else?” He frankly responded: “When these trees grow, they will be useful for many purposes for the temple; and, we will not need to buy from outside.”

The case studies in these two provinces prove environmental issues arise because of industrialization, and it makes those with poor livelihoods poorer, and this affects every creature. The abbot does not know how growing eucalyptus tremendously impacts natural resources. It has been proven or discovered that eucalyptus is an invasive water-drinker.⁵ This tree is banned to grow in some countries, including my country, Bangladesh.⁶ However, there is no research being done on the impact of teak tree. For instance, I have observed in my own region how the teak forests in Rangamait Hill Tract of Bangladesh, impact and infect the soil to great proportions. Teak forests, like eucalyptus plantations, would be barren, with no undergrowth. Also, it sucks up much water, similar to eucalyptus. No undergrowth or minor trees grow in these gardens. Since only one variety tree or crop can grow, there is no enhancement of biodiversity in the ecosystem.

In November 2006, I suggested to a farmer, Mr. Pain Swe Prue Marma, 56 years old, in Rangamati Hill Tract, Bangladesh, to plant commercial trees in his forestland beside his agriculture. Thinking, he might earn much income to support his family, he rejected the suggestion and very proudly shared his contentment and management-style for the land. He said that he is not only the person who lives and uses the land, but there are his children and others who will be using it. He has

⁵ <http://www.wrm.org.uy/bulletin/147/Kenya.html>, accessed on February 5, 2010.

⁶ <http://www.bdresearchpublications.com/client/upload/1200471806/1200471806.pdf>, accessed on 05 February 2010.

responsibility to preserve it as much as he could without making it arid for the coming generations to use.

I have small land for paddy, and for vegetables, fruits, nuts, etc. If I were to cut all forestland for plantation, the land will not leave sufficient fertilizer for the next plantation. I have to do it portion by portion; and, if I were to clean and plant commercial trees, there will be no land to grow fruits and vegetables for daily income. Clearing the forestland would bring no water from the valley to supply to the farmland, and planting commercial trees will leave the farmland without water, in ruin, and leave the highlands barren.

Mr. Marma was not educated in modern educational institutions, with sciences and management courses, etc.; however, his responsible words are worthy and seem to be well considered, and ethical – more so than many so-called modern educated-elite. He has learned directly from nature. This is what a prominent Thai Buddhist-scholar monk, Buddhadasa said:

The Dhamma in the temple and the Dhamma in rice field is the very same if they are carried out as rightly-duties for genuine survival or salvation.⁷

Santi Asoke⁸ is another ‘moral-environmental movement’ in Thailand, applies very similar concepts as Buddhadasa, that: Dhamma is not learning only by traditional practices like as meditation - “every movement of the day should be meditation in the form of mindfulness (sati), consciousness and awareness of the surrounding world”.⁹ They do not do meditation as the traditional Buddhist world does. They understand: sitting meditation is waste of time. They share their new approach to modern economy, called “Bun-niyom” (merit-society) showing how global-capitalism and science degrade the world.

According to Bodhirak, ‘the belief in bun-niyom encourages people to be good, to do good and to help others, so that people will gain more merit (bun)’. This practice is seen to lead to a state of contentment where people are happy with what they have, are not attached to material riches, are generous and protect the environment. This is seen by Asokans as standing in contrast to

⁷ Koffman, J. P. & Liamsiriwattana, T. (2006), *Practical Buddhism the Legacy of Buddhadasa Bhikkhu*, Amarin Printing and Publishing, Bangkok, p. 181.

⁸ A new sect of monks leading Bodhirak, We have already seen that Santi Asoke community has been marginalized by the Thai sangha (Mackenzie, p. 156, quote), and the clergy members are known Samana (ascetic) not monks to Thai Buddhism. (see, Mackenzie, Chapter 5 ff).

⁹ Mackenzie, R. (2007), *New Buddhist Movement in Thailand Towards an Understanding of Wat Phra Dhammakaya and Santi Asoke*, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, London, p. 177.

capitalism, where people are attached to material riches, are selfish, competitive and pollute the environment.¹⁰

On 20 February 2010, there was a barbaric attack on Buddhist minority-groups by Bengali Muslim settlers and their armies in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), Bangladesh. Once, CHT was a lovely 'green-land', but this was turned into grey and black ash-land. Eight villages and two Buddhist temples were burnt down into ashes. Many people were skinned alive, and killed inhumanly. In addition, trees which provide tender leaves, beautiful flowers and fruits were cut down for sales, and burnt. This fragrant land became very stinky, and the rotten dead bodies and poisonous chemicals flew down into valleys. Also, plenty of fish in the valleys died after eating the dead bodies. This vicious and brutal attack not only brought social dilemmas upon native citizens, but to other creatures.

In January 2010, I interviewed some people around Thaphrachan area Bangkok, Thailand. The interview was mainly to identify if street vendors and the common-public have responsibilities for deforestation - what reaction is possible? A lady from Top Charoen Optical, Miss Nuch Jaree Youaon says: "Although my stomach is full, I want to eat whenever I get smell of grilled fish and meat". In addition, there is another lady, Mrs. Naparut Pimpa – she spoke about the inconveniences around the area: too crowded, has cooking smell, noisy and place is not arranged systematically, especially the street vendors and it is a kind human pollution. Mr. Pon Kanoksrothawornkul shared additional information of the area, every year in November there is a seasonal flood. It makes inconveniences for people taking the pier to cross the river. Also, there is an interesting in his words, having many people around this area is not the problem at all, in spite all of this, he can still earn his profit. He can run his business, sell Japanese cakes - the more people gather around Thaphrachan, the more he sells. The ladies' words show more interest to learn ecological problem on the affect of grilled-food: cut trees, burn charcoal, air pollution, annoying and loud sounds, and other human-induced pollutions – similar to what is described in the Kūṭaḍaṇṭa Sutta. According to Miss Youaon, grilled-food teases or creates the desire in her to spend monthly salary meaninglessly, through her wants, not for her needs. This affects the economic system, deepening or leaving more problems with the environment, either one way or another.

¹⁰ Mackenzie, R. (2007), *New Buddhist Movement in Thailand Towards an Understanding of Wat Phra Dhammakaya and Santi Asoke*, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, London, p. 149.

When trees are destroyed en-masse by hurricanes, not only will there be fewer trees in the forest to absorb greenhouse gases, but forests could eventually become emitters of carbon dioxide, warming the climate.¹¹

Also, eating meat supports animal-farms – and as such these species are not fed their natural diet – destroying alternate natural resources that could be used for human consumption; and further, and obviously: the animals are raised for flesh – similar to genocidal-killings. These animals are fed with chemical-food in order to grow bigger and quicker – sooner, to make meat for sale. Animals raised for meat is one of the world's biggest water-consumers, water-wasting institutions and water-polluters - waste from animal factories flows down into rivers, streams, channels, bays, oceans... and possibly drinking this water brings disease. Methane produced by this bio-mass creates and adds to the growing greenhouse-gas situation.

Buddhism and Bamboo:

The Buddha may be credited as the first ecologist, who embodied concern for the natural environment, and if he was not credited to be the first: he was one of them who had set a tangible message for preservation of the natural environment by establishing a kingdom of compassion. It was his career to work on for benefit of every creature. Fire-sacrifice (yāga) was one of the biggest destructive activities which required large scale amounts of beings and money to perform. Not only did it bring degradation to beings, and even natural environments as well - cutting down forestland for sacrificial ground, increased air, water, sound pollutions and created a bad atmosphere to live (Kūṭaḍaṅga Sutta¹²). In response to this, the same sutta offered new sacrificial principles: giving of bloodless things (cloth, food, shelter, and medicine), taking triple gems (tiratana) as refuge, observing fundamental social law, and purifying one's own psychological domain.

Humans exist within natural environments or those modified by their individual and collective actions. The Buddha's concerns of unworthy actions which destroy others' lives are obviously read into every precept (five precepts, eight precepts, ten precepts and monastic precepts¹³). He never missed the passing of a rule harming a life – this would be evil action. “[Whosoever] should throw out or should cause (another) to throw out excrement or urine or rubbish or the remains of

¹¹ <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/05/090501201353.htm>, accessed on February 19, 2010.

¹² Walshe, M. (1995), *The Long Discourses of the Buddha*, Wisdom Publications, Boston.

¹³ Numerically in every precept refraining killing is placed first, except in monastic code for clergy. For monks and nuns this precept is strictly admonished to observe and killing a human is a serious offence. This is categorized in the category called pārājika and if any monk or nun were to violate s/he will be immediately dismissed from Order.

food on the crops, there is an offence of expiation.”¹⁴ In addition, the Mahāvaggapāli carries his concern of offshoots and worms which only come out from soil when it is moist – wandering on tours during the rainy season destroys green grass and kills many tiny creatures. And, the monastic members are even prohibited from breaking or tearing branches or leaves of a tree. Interruption of a life is an offence.¹⁵ On the other hand tree is considered as one-facultied life,¹⁶ and it is a living home of deities and other spirits.¹⁷

It is an interesting to study how the Buddha’s concern was towards forest groves. Buddhist history carries a number of forest grove monasteries offered to the Buddhist Order (sangha). Among them the Bamboo Grove (Veluvanarama) was the first monastery offered to Buddhist Order by King Bimbisara of Maghada. He expounded many dhammas in this grove and compared with it – “greed, aversion, delusion destroy the self-same person of evil mind from whom they are born, like the fruiting of the bamboo.”¹⁸ One of another famous analogy of the Buddha is Dependent Origination and two bundle of bamboos. One bundle cannot stand along, it needs the support of another bundle. In Khaggavisana Sutta of Suttanipata the Buddha admonishes his disciple to be like a bamboo’s sprout goes ahead with confidence to establish his own action is his refuge. Furthermore in monastic code we read, clergy members are prohibited to destroy even offshoots like bamboo shoots¹⁹ and the breaking of them is an offence.

Hence, let us look at more examples of bamboo to illustrate the three aspects of ecology: how living creatures affect each other, their distribution, and abundance. Bamboo is a very versatile plant and is fast becoming recognized as one of the most eco-friendly plants in the world.²⁰ We (especially in Asia) do use bamboo for building houses for living, safety and security of our lives from various dangers – human, animal etc. Often bamboo gardens are cleared for agricultural cultivation and carried out for daily income – buying rice and curries for eating. I have seen this

¹⁴ Horner, I. B. (1957), *The Book of the Discipline* Vol. III, Luzac & Company Ltd, London, p. 259.

¹⁵ Thanissaro, J. (1993), *The Buddhist Monastic Code*, Mahamakut Press, Bangkok, p. 393 ff.

¹⁶ Thanissaro, J. (1993), *The Buddhist Monastic Code*, Mahamakut Press, Bangkok, p. 393 (Narada, 1979:88, there is a certain kind of rūpa-jivitindriya in plant life. But, rūpa-jivitindriya in men and animals is differentiated from that which exists in plants because the former is conditioned by past kamma.

¹⁷ Thanissaro, J. (1993), *The Buddhist Monastic Code*, Mahamakut Press, Bangkok, p.394.

¹⁸ <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/kn/iti/iti.3.050-099.than.html#bamboo50>, accessed on March 15, 2010.

¹⁹ (i) From bulbs, rhizomes [e.g. potatoes, tulips] (ii) From cutting or stakes [e.g. willows, rose bushes] (iii) From joints [e.g. sugar cane, bamboo] (iv) From runners [e.g. strawberries, couch grass] (v) From seeds [e.g. corn, beans]. See Thanissaro, J. (1993), *The Buddhist Monastic Code*, Mahamakut Press, Bangkok, p.394.

²⁰ <http://ezinearticles.com/?The-Powerful-Impact-of-Bamboo-on-Our-Environment&id=3916860>, accessed on March 21, 2010.

amongst my people in Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh. Bamboo shoots are often taken as food as well. “You can wear it, you can eat it, and you can build with it. Bamboo may increasingly replace plastics and wood products - what a marvelous gift from nature!”²¹ Science and technology has developed to discover and prove, experimentally, the truth of nature. They experimented and found such plants like bamboo contribute enormously, and residual benefits are distributed amongst other creatures, existing effectively with each other:

...A critical element in the balance of oxygen / carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Bamboo is the fastest growing canopy for the greening of degraded areas and generates more oxygen than an equivalent stand of trees. It lowers light intensity and protects against ultraviolet rays and is an atmospheric and soil purifier.²²

Bamboo flooring is everywhere now, saving thousands of trees every year. Bamboo is a perfect symbol of our new awareness of our environment. There are endless more ideas of uses for this fantastic plant.²³ In China, bamboo leaves and roots are used as medicine to treat many diseases, such as: kidney disease, venereal disease and cancer. And, the ancient Indian medical hospital, Āyurveda teaches bamboo for treating asthma and cough.²⁴ Bamboo is not only popular because of scientific discovery of its usefulness; it has been used since 2nd century B.C. in record books to record herbal medicines, history and so on. Today... making your life greener, one bite at a time – the www.ecobite.com website, for instance, gives a list of 78 bamboo products.

Let me share my personal experience, and how bamboo contributes to lives, affectively, amongst living creatures. I am from Rangamati Hill Tract, Bangladesh. I used to live on top of a mountain, where our Murali temple was built. Mountain life is not as easy as the life experienced by flatland-dwellers. During the raining season, we have to face various environmental problems, especially landslides. We just cannot build concrete walls around the temple to prevent landslides and retain the soil. How do we prevent environmental problems and how do we use bamboo? What we do, to prevent landslides and soil erosion is: our master, Nanavamsa, plants bamboo around the temple instead of building wall. Indeed, this helps to prevent soil erosion and landslides – *the roots and soil become intertwined, making the mountain into a singular solid entity. Moisture is absorbed or stays with the organic matter, which is necessary for further bamboo growth. A wall acts like a reservoir, holding*

²¹ <http://www.greenlivingtips.com/articles/191/1/Uses-of-Bamboo.html>, accessed on March 21, 2010.

²² <http://kauai.net/bambooweb/whybamboo.html>, accessed on March 23, 2010.

²³ <http://ecobites.com/eco-news-articles/organic-gardening/773-bamboo-a-useful-plant>, accessed March 21, 2010.

²⁴ <http://kauai.net/bambooweb/whybamboo.html>, accessed on March 24, 2010.

back water, until something breaks and washes everything downhill – forcefully, away!

Bamboo is not only used to preventing landslide, it is useful in many ways. We build halls for religious activities and others, and repair kutis (monk residences). In a house, how is bamboo used? Commonly, in a house more than 80% of it is bamboo. Also, there are some houses built only with bamboos – floor, pillars, roof and the walls, only the base-floor is ground. Broken bamboos which cannot be used for building and repair house are used as firewood to cook food. Bamboo firewood can fire easily than the wood. The ashes are also good fertilization and pesticide for vegetables and fruit-trees. Also, bamboo skin is also commonly used with it to make a fine powder to stop bleeding, if someone has a cut.

In April 1992, the news reported that there was a strong earthquake in Limon, Costa Rica. It broke down and destroyed high buildings leaving only the bamboo houses standing. Bamboo is flexible and lightweight - bamboo enabled structures to "dance" in the earthquake.²⁵

In Zimbabwe Mr. Oliver Waziweyi’s “invention” of planting bamboo solved the complex problem that his community faced. “As simple as Mr. Waziweyi’s invention was, it was an important invention that help his community to farm their land -- effectively, too. People who used to go hungry can now feed themselves and their family.”²⁶

Eating bamboo shoots, indeed, degrades - leaving no bamboo for future use and thus there becomes an imbalance in the ecosystem. We often look only to our own benefit, and with no thought of beings, like bees, who can collect pollen or suck nectar from flowers without harming its beauty and fragrance – preventing other species from their necessary-functions is another unseen-initial step to degradation.

Obviously, as seen everywhere, trees are not valued as important part of our lives. This worried the Buddha: sooner or later in future the world will face great destruction, if humans don’t become aware and purify their action and ways of living.

When we travel on foot or get stressed we usually look a cool place to relax and calm down our stress. But, what if there is nobody or nowhere that offers shadow or shelter, free of charge, in a time of warm-periods, except trees? Depending on this account, the post-canonical text, the Petakopadesa states: If one was to sleep or sit under shade of a tree, he must not break the branches of that tree; if he does so, he is an evil friend. To the wise, dhamma is everywhere and available for anyone to learn and get great benefits from, like, for instance: the Buddha and Sir Isaac Newton.

²⁵ <http://www.bamboorevolution.com/sustainability/renewability.htm>, accessed on March 23, 22010.

²⁶ http://www.hydroponicsearch.com/Explore_the_Science_of_Hydroponics/Hydroponics_cultivation_methods/Bamboo_hydroponics_garden_technique/, accessed on March 23, 2010.

The Buddha achieved supreme wisdom sitting beneath a tree with fully aware of himself and surroundings. He was not like you and me, did not leave the tree immediately or *after a few moments*. He spent seven weeks in vicinity of the tree. The whole first week after enlightenment was spent paying gratitude and respect, by gazing motionless at the Bodhi-tree - for its settling and nurturing power, during his struggle for enlightenment.²⁷ This hallmark occurrence sets a great example for the world.

In the history of the human race there has been none such like him who returned gratitude to a tree with great honor. Sir Isaac Newton discovered the law of gravity under an apple tree, and he did not return in gratitude, for its teaching, as in the case of the Buddha. Hence, the Buddha's attitude became a priceless message to the world – demonstrating that even a tree can be helpful for highest achievement and greatest peace. Today, we still find descendents of this same tree, which are revered by contemporary and successive disciples of the Buddha.

The clergy-community is identified as following in the Buddha's footsteps. A couple of decades ago, in Thailand a group of Buddhist monks gained fame through their recognition of the value of trees: noticing future dilemmas with natural resources and human living-conditions – they have come out and utilized the Buddhist ritual of ordination - to preserve forestland. "Their best known ritual is the tree ordination, through which monks consecrate community forests and emphasize the interconnections between people and nature".²⁸ These ecological monks ordained trees and taught as a message of the Buddha to preserve forestland to balance climate. Proper climates bring healthy life. Take for instance the understanding of this connection from a great Cambodian master, Maha Ghosananda:

The trees are like our mother and father, they feed us, nourish us, and provide us with everything; the fruit, leaves, the branches, the trunk. They give us food and satisfy many of our needs. So we spread the Dharma (truth) of protecting ourselves and protecting our environment, which is the Dharma of the Buddha. When we accept that we are part of a great human family—that every being has the nature of Buddha—then we will sit, talk, make peace.²⁹

²⁷ Burlingame, E. W. (1999), *Buddhist Legends*, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, New Delhi, p. 5.

²⁸ Darlington, Susan M. (2007), *Contemporary Buddhism An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 8, No.2, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, ISSN 1463-9947, p. 170, ff.

²⁹ <http://www.arcworld.org/faiths.asp?pageID=66>, accessed on February 21, 2010.

It is believed that science and technology have gigantic responsibilities either to preserve or make species extinct the world. In fact this is not to be true. Thanks to science and technology and communication networks to know what happens in another part of the world – many people are more socially aware of what is really happening – a knowledge-society is developing. Tremendous responsibilities are growing within humanity. Science and technology are inventions of humanity – and, strictly to Buddhist understanding – I feel this is recognized as kamma (action). Action will decide either to recover ‘global warming’ or let it continues and increase – destroying everyone and everything.

Development of Dhamma:

Trees can speak. They perpetually give Dhamma talks – about our duty, the law of Nature, Peace, and mankind’s craziness – but man just never hears them. Bhikkhu Buddhadasa³⁰ stated, that the Buddha, in Buddhism is never recognized as the divine messenger nor did he claim to be such a being. He never appeared into this world to reveal secrets or receive revelations on behalf of any ‘God’ or Mahābrahma. He was a human, but extraordinary when compared to others, in terms of his profound wisdom. Further, he was perfected in acts of the body, verbal action and absolutely-pure in mental thoughts. This purity enabled him to live a peaceful and harmonious life, surviving on what the forest served to him:

I am purified in bodily conduct. I resort to remote jungle-thicket resting places in the forest as one of the noble ones with bodily conduct purified.’ Seeing in myself this purity of bodily conduct, I found great solace in dwelling in the forest...³¹

This citation from Pali Canon reminds me to recall a lecture of our Ajarn, Dr. Dion Peoples on Acariya Mun’s spiritual biography. Acariya Mun (1870 – 1949) was one of Thai forest tradition’s meditative-dwelling monks. He many years of his life in forests with wild creatures and utilized the Buddha’s teaching to learn from forests. It was not only a home or place to meditate and achieve high stage of knowledge, but it was hospital as well. “He sent them to look in the forest for certain medicinal plants that he had previously found beneficial.”³²

He found that living in forest is a great pleasure – with his peaceful mind. There was no single person to disturb him – and everything in the forest where he lived was helpful to his progress. The forest was his teacher for truly understanding

³⁰ Koffman, J. P. & Liamsiriwattana, T. (2006), Practical Buddhism the Legacy of Buddhadasa Bhikkhu, Amarin Printing and Publishing, Bangkok, p. 27.

³¹ Bodhi, Bhikkhu, (1995), The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, p. 103.

³² Acariya Maha Boowa Nanasampanno, (2005), Venerable Acariya Mun Bhuridatta Thera a Spiritual Biography, Silpa Siam Packaging & Printing Co., Ltd, Bangkok, p.27

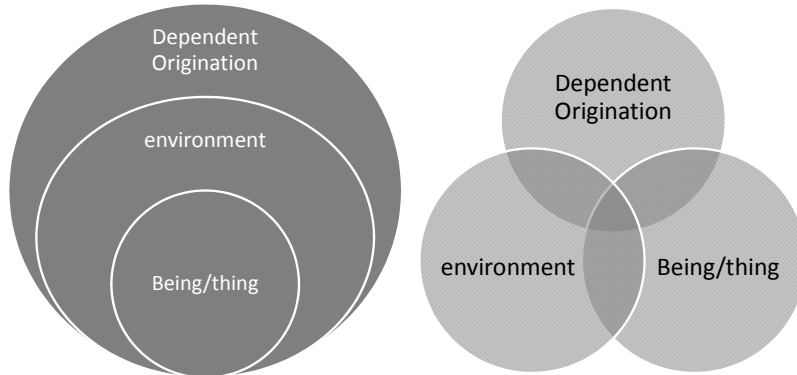
the Buddha's teaching of the links of 'Dependent Origination (paticcasamuppāda)'. It teaches him that all conditional and created things are interconnected and interdependent in the process of Dependent Origination. Also, conditional things, like himself, have to recycle again and again in the links of the samsaric-process; therefore, forests and humans are conditionally-created.

How everything exists dependently? Let us take example of this 'Conference Hall'. It is true, this conference hall is just combination of four great elements (mahābhūta) – solidity, liquidity, temperature and motion.³³ In simplicity and comprehensively, it is built with concrete, cement, sand, water, steel, and so on. And, to maintain and use it 'eternally', it should be taken care of. Similarly, this is what science also understands: there is nothing apart from electron, neutron and proton. Moreover, Buddhism says the four great elements are only found in material things, not in the psyche.

When it is built up by these (four Buddhist elements or three scientific substances), it has to depend on others for its existence. This is the Link (*nidāna: defined as 'source'*³⁴) or Dependent Origination's teaching. Conditionally-created beings, such as: humans, animals and bamboo need to take external or internal energy (food) nutriment and care-given for its continuity. Lifeless things, like: books, pens, computers, etc., need to be taken care too, otherwise they will decay, sooner. Beings and things are built up combinations of the afore-mentioned substances. Therefore, they should be taken into consideration that they are nothing than a family, existing in the process of Dependent Origination, living under the same law.

³³ Mehm Tin Mon, (1995), The Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma, Shwe Zin Kyauk Press, Yangon, p. 224-228 & 380 -[see: Visuddhimagga XI 27-126, Dhatuvibhanga Sutta (M 140), Mahahatthipadopama Sutta, (M 28)]

³⁴ Bhikkhu Nanamoli: The Guide – Nettippakaranam (London: Pali Text Society, 1977), p. 297 – although we are taught that the traditional meaning is "link", rather than "source"; I thank my professor, Dr. Dion Peoples for showing me this definition, for consideration, even if it appears distant from traditional readings.



The nature has the best examples to illustrate the dhamma which the Buddha discovered - characteristics to examine pragmatically, and to experiment in nature itself. All component things are decorations of smallest substances (Buddhism - solidity, liquidity, temperature and motion or science -electron, neutron and proton), and appear and build up in different forms differently. Natural forests are charming with decorations of multiple colorful flowers and leaves. Flowers and leaves are in color of green, red, yellow, white, etc., and they give fragrance and beautiful scenery. Fragrant flowers and tender leaves cool down a stressed mind – thus, the saying: “Stop and smell the flowers”! Not only providing serenity, tree-flowers also provide oxygen, and later, various tasty-fruits filled with vitamins. A living creature needs oxygen to breathe in order to keep a healthy life; whereas in contrast – plants need carbon oxide for growth and germinate new cells. Further: trees, plants and animals feed themselves inside forests and decay when the conditional substances function no more; therefore they change and readily take on another form with similar fresh elements.

In order to draw a clear picture of Dependent Origination, once again let me take a simple example of a bamboo shoot, with tender leaves. The shoot grows up into a stalk, and produces tender leaves. The shoot grows day by day until it reaches seasonal maturity, and when old, the leaves fade and turn yellow. Turning yellow signals dysfunction of elements and falls down to the ground. “You are now like a withered leaf; the messengers of death are near to you”.³⁵ No one can escape from

³⁵ Sri Dhammananda, K. (2005), *The Dhammapada*, The Penang Buddhist Association, Penang, p. 455.

the changing and dysfunction of elements. Changing and dysfunction bring unhappiness and then there is impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and ‘it is not mine’.

Similarly, we, humans consider ourselves to be the strongest and most powerful beings, but cannot escape from this law of recycling – *everyone was once the tiniest of babies, unable to walk, unable to communicate, unable to do anything for themselves*. Likely, you were conceived in mother’s womb, and after developing within, you were born in due time, and grew up, after a period of immobility. At some point while growing up, conceit eventually comes evidently because of the ‘*development*’ of ignorance or pride: ‘I am the strongest and most powerful person’, but you are born: “like ripe fruits whose downfall, whose danger is falling, so for mortals, once born, the constant danger is death.”³⁶ In the Darukkhandha Sutta of the Samyutta Nikāya, moreover, the Buddha illustrates the samsaric world with a log floating in a ocean.³⁷ We are born to be reborn in this circle of rebirth, again and again, if we are not wise enough to judge our actions. This is what everyone has to understand and live with. We must exchange our thinking and action; we can understand to judge our thinking and action - and then: the sense of self responsibility emerges. Therefore, to have good awareness of oneself and other, the Buddha admonishes his disciples to go to forest-grove wherein, there is no disturbance. It is unlike our society; it is always helpful, and free from human habitual-bondages.³⁸

City life is often driven by immoral thoughts, and learning reality is hard if one is not aware of one’s own thinking and action with the surrounding environment. Sir Isaac Newton sitting beneath an apple tree discovers the law of gravity after a falling apple drops on him from above - a clear understanding emerged in him. The Buddha and his disciples achieved highest wisdom in their fully awareness of themselves. That is why, the Buddha never considered himself superior to his discovery, which he discovered during his perfect awareness under the Bodhi-tree: “Let me then honor, respect, and dwell in dependence on this very dhamma to which I have fully awakened.”³⁹ He also advised anyone who wants to see and experiment who ‘Buddha’ is, to follow the dhamma that he has taught (Noble Eightfold Path) –

³⁶ <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/kn/snp/snp.3.08.than.html#fruits>, accessed on February 13, 2010.

³⁷ <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn35/sn35.200.than.html#streamsimites>, accessed on February 13, 2010.

³⁸ Bodhi, Bhikkhu, (1995), *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha*, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, p.145: “Here a bhikkhu, gone to the forest or to the root of a tree or to an empty hut, sits down; having folded his legs crosswise, set his body erect, and established mindfulness in front of him, ever mindful he breathes in, mindful he breathes out.”

³⁹ Bodhi, Bhikkhu, (2000), *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha Vol. I*, Wisdom Publications, Boston, p. 234.

“truly seeing dhamma, one sees me; seeing me one sees dhamma”⁴⁰, and what he has taught and explained will be teacher upon his demise.⁴¹

The dhamma what he has discovered is not new, and not a message of divinity. It exists for all time, forever and everywhere - “I saw the ancient path, the ancient road travelled by the Perfectly Enlightened Ones of the past. And what is that ancient path, that ancient road? It is just this Noble Eightfold Path.”⁴² This Noble Eightfold Path – right understanding, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration are practicable anytime and anywhere. It teaches not only spirituality, but welfare and happiness of worldly life as well. This teaching is applicable in any social aspects - in order to bring peace and harmony among many working minds and bodies.

Hence, let us take ‘right livelihood’ as example to clearly show how this Noble Eightfold Path becomes the truthful teaching and leads to recovering from global warming. Many discourses describe that it is a harmless, nonviolence living, helping society to bring peace and happiness. In other words, it is called righteous living. The principle of right livelihood teaches - not to destroy a life, not to take what is given by owner, not to harass sexually others’, and not to speak falsely - which brings conflict and problems; this is called righteous-living. The initial understanding of what is right livelihood, is: having knowledge of truly judging the trice-evil doors: thinking, speech and action. Rightly and meaningfully judgment on one’s own thinking, speech and action makes a unified family and society, with examples for others to learn and follow. Moreover, it explains when there is right understanding, automatically formed is right thought, right speech and so on.⁴³ They link to one another. Therefore, these are called noble principles for peace.

His Majesty the King, Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand has developed royal projects for well-being of his subjects. These aim to solve various problems in the country that people face. Last year in October 2009, I got a chance to go on an educational tour to Huai Sai Royal Development Centre, in Phetchaburi Province. The tour made me astonished to learn: rocky land is possible to recover and plant trees on it! It is said that once this rocky land was fertile forest with different kinds of creatures. The local people could have income to eat, but this eventually became arid and barren land due to cutting down trees, clearing forestland to cultivate only a single crop (pineapples). Over-growing pineapple, and cutting down trees, turned this green land into bare-land, wherein no hope of regain. His Majesty the King, in

⁴⁰ <http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn22/sn22.087x.wlsh.html>, accessed on January 29, 2010.

⁴¹ Walshe, M. (1995), *The Long Discourses of the Buddha*, Wisdom Publications, Boston, p. 270.

⁴² Bodhi, Bhikkhu, (2000), *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha Vol. I*, Wisdom Publications, Boston, p. 603.

⁴³ <http://www.accesstoinight.org/ptf/dhamma/sacca/sacca4/index.html>, accessed on February 6, 2010.

his visit to this site says: “If we leave this area alone, it will become a desert,”⁴⁴ he discovered planting vetiver-grass could only help to regain the rocky land as previous. It was done and soon developed into a forest.

It is believed His Majesty the King was inspired by Mahājanaka Jātaka (#539),⁴⁵ during the Asian Financial Crisis, when his country faced serious economic-dilemmas. He read this Jataka directly from Pali Canon and rewrote it in a way that his people can comprehend and utilize it in their daily lives for peace and harmony of the country. The moral principle that the Jataka demonstrates is not to harm others, but exchange importance of people not only looking themselves and also the environment as well. Challenge, forbearance and confidence are the keys to success any situation. Prince Mahājanaka swam in an ocean, did not know where he was floating. However, he had only one solid determination that was to reach a shore. His challenge, forbearance and confidence encouraged to swimming in such large ocean – not seeing where the shore is, and it brought successful and even became a king.

Another moral principle which inspired His Majesty the King, Bhumibol Adulyadej is that King Mahājanaka, in his city, was observing and relaxing in the Royal Park – and learnt the cause of future destruction of the world – humans would become greedy and slaves to own desire. When he entered into the Royal Park, he saw two mango trees: a tree bearing fruits and the other without - but both grew well. In his return he saw them differently: the tree bearing mangoes had broken branches and was rooted out, while the tree which was barren remained as before. He came to understand how possessions bring only sorrow.⁴⁶

This is what Mahatma Gandhi says: nature provides only for human’s need, but not human’s want. Because of ‘want’, in Phetchaburi, former fertile land changed into rocky land. The Cakkavattisīhanāda Sutta of the Majjhima Nikāya carries more detail description about what the future world would be, if humanity is not aware of his livelihood.⁴⁷ In the time of Buddha, the world was not as it is today, with much pollution. Ok, it might be quite abstract to understand the time of Buddha, in the 5th century BCE; so, let us think simply about our own time: think of your area from the time when you were young. The place where I was born used to have plenty of water in the valleys and streams for drinking and cultivation. There were plenty of huge trees, people were scared to enter into forests. Wild animals, like tigers – could still be found around my area where I used to live; but, when I went back, after six years, in 2006: there was no water for cultivation. Enormous trees were cut down and

⁴⁴ http://www.thaiwaysmagazine.com/king/huai_sai.html, accessed on March 25, 2010.

⁴⁵ Cowell, E.B. edited, (1990), *The Jataka*, Vol. VI, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi, pp. 19-37.

⁴⁶ <http://www.buddha-images.com/mahajanaka-jataka.asp>, accessed on January 29, 2010

⁴⁷ Walshe, M. (1995), *The Long Discourses of the Buddha*, Wisdom Publications, Boston.

forests were cleared out – because, there was no owner to prohibit deforestation. Water in the valleys dried up, no water flowed down into streams to supply to farmland. Villagers are now faced with many dilemmas – and, they are cheated from being victims of their own desires.

This is what we read in Cakkavattisīhanāda Sutta, as time passed many kinds of problems appeared, turning a heavenly life into a hellish realm - teaching every individual to be responsible for her/his own actions. Life spans were very short, shorter than today. People were heated by own actions in every aspect of life. Some concept existed then - they could recollect who they were and how they are in the present. The change of their ways of living and action led to recover and turn as previously. Further:

Monks, be islands unto yourselves, be a refuge unto yourselves with no other refuge. Let the Dhamma be your island, let the Dhamma be your refuge with no other refuge.⁴⁸

The Jātaka Tale and Cakkavattisīhanāda Sutta try to show the capacity of humanity. We can either turn the world into ashes or recover the wounded world. To cure the wounded world – everyone needs to be responsible for their own actions, and get into living righteously - with contentment. Discontentment will not serve to recover nor to preserve from its wounded state – it is only through being contented and being righteous in action.

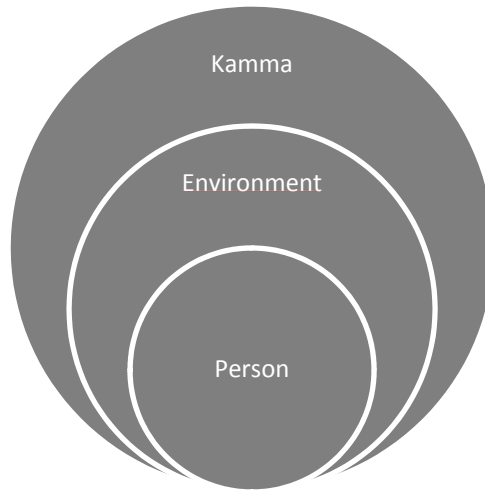
*Intentional-Action*⁴⁹ (*kamma*) is one of the important issues to study in environmental studies. Studies of action from an environmental aspect and its result can be divided into two categories: Individual Action and Common Social Action. In Buddhism, intentional action is still considered or called action. Intention (*cetana*) is chief of all actions – no intention, there is no activity of act of cause and effect. There is the famous statement: “Beings are owners of kamma, heir to kamma, born of kamma, related through kamma, and have kamma as their arbitrator. Kamma is what creates distinctions among beings in terms of coarseness & refinement.”⁵⁰

Individual Action means: whatever he has done - he deserves the results, himself. Wherein, Common Social Action means wholesome or unwholesome act will have collective results. Therefore, action is understood as one of major factors which bring problems amongst ecosystems collectively, as a result.

⁴⁸ Walshe, M. (1995), *The Long Discourses of the Buddha*, Wisdom Publications, Boston , p. 359.

⁴⁹ According to my professor, Dr. Dion Peoples - as he points me to a passage in: Gombrich, R. (2009), *What the Buddha Thought* (London: Equinox Publishing Ltd) - contextually speaking, Gombrich makes use of the term intentions, the volition to act, as the meaning of kamma: since in Buddhism, deeds can be considered done through body, speech and mind – this is surely more inclusive, retreating to the root of the situation – harmful thoughts.

⁵⁰ <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.135.than.html>, accessed on January 26, 2010



As we read story of Cakkavattisihanāda Sutta and from the examples within Phetchaburi Province, Thailand - incidents suggest that problems emerges when there is no righteous action. In other words, it is called: moral living – observe at least the fundamental five moral principles.⁵¹ If we cannot act in a way to recover or at least preserve every creature – human, animal, plant etc.; then *all species* will face degradation. Humans are small, but our actions are bigger than we are. Human action (intention) determines global recovery. Therefore, we should transform our intentions into action:

Punna, there are four kinds of action proclaimed by me after realizing them for myself with direct knowledge. What are the four? There is *dismal* action with *dismal* results; there is *beneficial* action with *beneficial* results; there is *dismal-and-beneficial* action with *dismal-and-beneficial* results; and there is action that is neither *dismal* nor *beneficial* with neither-*dismal-nor-beneficial* results, action that leads to the destruction of action.⁵²

To illustrate Individual Action and Common Social Action, herein, it would be clear to draw simple examples of a farmer who plant various plants: mango, palm, bamboo, water-elm etc., and a woodcutter. A farmer plants trees in his land, and is considered: a helpful man. He plants trees for pleasure. It is his interest and habit. His living is beneficial and meaningful to every creature. He does not harm or pain

⁵¹ (i) Not to interrupt a life, (ii) Not to take what is given by owner, (iii) Not to harass sexually another, (iv) Not to tell wrong speech and (v) *consumption of only beneficial substances*.

⁵² Bodhi, Bhikkhu, (1995), *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha*, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, p. 495; I take notice of the suggestion of my professor, Dr. Dion Peoples, for making a purposeful transformation of the terms: ‘dark’ into dismal; and ‘bright’ into beneficial – to contextualize the quotation for our purposes pertaining to ecology, here. I agree: contextually speaking there is no misrepresentation of the Buddha’s words.

anyone for his pleasure. His planting trees produce more transpiration and evaporation for rain, and even it reduces acid rain as well. It helps world citizens to live healthy lives - engaging in occupations with peaceful environments and lovely societies. Anyone who has got a chance to go through one's garden is indeed lucky! The garden can be enjoyable: tender green leaves, beautiful fragrant flowers, *and visually appeasing* – such a lovely garden! It offers wonderful moments of feelings – sweet air in every breathing-in and breathing-out missing the world lovely nature. Entering into the garden may produce moments for reducing or cooling down from: worry, stress, frustration, etc., teaching us that nature is *freely-sociable* for us, but humans are not. This kind of worthy action is called Good Individual Action and Good Common Social Action as well.

On the other hand, a woodcutter is unlike the former. He cuts down trees greedily and is motivated by profit. His action (cutting) of trees brings disaster: conflict among businesses, no water to grow crops, hotter than the day before, desertification, and finally making world citizens to live with dismal-tragedies. This kind of unbeneficial action is understood: Bad Individual Action and Bad Common Social Action. It is because: the woodcutter's greed-profit pleases him only for a few days. Then the greed again arouses him to cut trees, and finally he has to become a slave to own greed. Like a virus: his wants do not cease. His life is filled by evil thoughts and these eventually overwhelm his destiny.

Thich Nhat Hanh shares his understanding of action: “What we all take with us and all we leave behind are the fruits of our thought, speech and action during our lifetime. That is our karma, our continuation.”⁵³ Also, H.H. the Dalai Lama points out how far an action contributes to world peace, “we must develop a sense of universal responsibility not only in the geographical sense, but also in respect to the different issues that confront our planet.”⁵⁴ Therefore, our ways of thinking have to be re-envisioned in a way that can recover the world. With a thorough and careful examination of problems, as the Buddha sat under a huge banyan tree and discovered a practical solution to his problem and others; and whereas, Sir Isaac Newton also sat under an apple tree and discovered the law of gravity – these great men were profoundly influenced by nature through contemplative-concentration. These two great persons had offered their insights, and now it is our term to cure the wounded world by reforesting.

⁵³Nhat Hanh, Thich, (2008), *The world We Have A Buddhist Approach to Peace and Ecology*, Parallax Press, p. 62.

⁵⁴ Batchelor, M. & Brown, K. editors (1994), *Buddhism and Ecology*, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi, p.112



Conclusion:

Let me conclude by summarizing some contributed key words in this paper, and its offerings to recovering 'global warming'. First, there is: identifying a problem, and the cause of it as a system to cure by taking the individual responsibility to recover. Second, it offers a Buddhistic way of living with forest groves, and replanting trees, especially bamboo in order to enhance a healthy and wealthy life - curing a wounded world. Finally, it teaches the principles of nonviolence, compassion, and right livelihood with care and honesty - as fundamental medicines to heal problems and bring peace. Furthermore, living an ethical way of life is the only alternative to recover the natural environment, and to understand true nature.

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The Middle Path to a Greener Future

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The environmental crisis

This short paper discusses Buddhism and the global environmental crisis, including ecological damage.² Should Buddhists care about these issues? Few readers of this essay live on the front line of the environmental crisis, confronting the stark and immense problems it causes. It might be tempting never to think of affected people (and animals), but then might we not create the cause for others one day to be indifferent to us? Similarly, if we start to imagine the life of a slum dweller in a low-lying, flood-prone area or the insecurity of a debt-burdened farmer hoping for rain, then this issue becomes more real, and more pressing.

Many interlinked forms of evidence tell us about the environmental crisis. Here I focus on climate change and the loss of ecosystem integrity. Not discussed are air pollution, the rising price of oil³ and the likelihood that shortage of phosphate fertilizer will continue to drive up global food prices. Some of these issues are recently discussed elsewhere by the writer.⁴

Climate change

Climate change is principally caused by the burning of fossil fuel (oil, coal and gas) and deforestation. It has many manifestations, and this can make the issue seem very confusing to non-specialists. Evidence of climate change includes melting of the polar ice caps, including by increasingly sophisticated and

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² Butler CD. The Global Environmental Crisis and Sustainability of Civilization: Time for the Buddhist World to Awaken. In: Peoples, Dion (editor). *Buddhist Approach to Environmental Crisis*. Bangkok, Thailand: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University; 2009. p. 216-25. & Akuppa. *Touching the Earth*. Birmingham: Windhorse Publications; 2002.

³ Hall CAS, John W. Day J. Revisiting the limits to growth after peak oil. *American Scientist*. 2009; 97: 230-7.

⁴ Butler CD. Food security in the Asia-Pacific: climate change, phosphorus, ozone and other environmental challenges. *Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. 2009; 18(4): 590-7

precise satellite measures.⁵ This decline in ice cover is consistent with the basic science and predictions of climate change science, which dates from the nineteenth century when it was first realized that certain trace gases in the atmosphere, such as water vapor, carbon dioxide and methane, acted like a blanket to trap some of the sun's heat in the atmosphere.

Without this “greenhouse” effect, the average global temperature would be about 30 degrees C lower, or a very uncomfortable minus 15 degrees C.⁶ Another convincing form of scientific evidence is the extensively documented changes in the timing of spring and the behavior of birds, insects and the budding of plants.⁷

Why does climate change matter? The average global temperature is predicted to rise by at least 2-4 degrees C by 2100. It could rise by as much as 7 degrees C.⁸ You might think even this rise would be trivial, because the temperature difference between day and night or a cold and warm season is usually more than 7 degrees C. But climate change science predicts this change to occur in the *average* temperature. For one thing, this makes the chance of longer and hotter heat waves far more likely. Heat waves not only reduce economic productivity but also can be harmful - even lethal - to health, especially for people with chronic illnesses and for the poor, who cannot afford air conditioning. In some cases, the poor do not even have an effective right to access adequate water when working in very hot conditions.⁹

Climate change is already changing the distribution of rainfall, with emerging evidence that heavier rainfall events are increasing.¹⁰ Recent examples include the deluge brought by the slow moving typhoon Morakot in August 2009 that struck southern Taiwan, killing people, destroying bridges and flattening crops.¹¹ About 2.5 meters of rain fell in just two days, the highest rainfall in at least five

⁵ Allison I, Bindoff NL, Bindschadler RA, Cox PM, Noblet Nd, England MH, et al. The Copenhagen Diagnosis. Updating the World on the Latest Climate Science. Sydney, Australia,: The University of New South Wales Climate Change Research Centre (CCRC); 2009

⁶ Weart SR. The Discovery of Global Warming. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; 2003

⁷ Körner C, Basler D. Phenology Under Global Warming. *Science*. 2010; 327: 1461-2

⁸ Allison I, Bindoff NL, Bindschadler RA, Cox PM, Noblet Nd, England MH, et al. The Copenhagen Diagnosis. Updating the World on the Latest Climate Science. Sydney, Australia,: The University of New South Wales Climate Change Research Centre (CCRC); 2009

⁹ Hajat S, O'Connor M, Kosatsky T. Health effects of hot weather: from awareness of risk factors to effective health protection. *The Lancet*. 2010. & Kjellstrom T. Climate change, direct heat exposure, health and well-being in low and middle-income countries. *Global Health Action*. 2009; 2: <http://www.globalhealthaction.net/index.php/gha/article/viewArticle/1958/2183>

¹⁰ Allison I, Bindoff NL, Bindschadler RA, Cox PM, Noblet Nd, England MH, et al. The Copenhagen Diagnosis. Updating the World on the Latest Climate Science. Sydney, Australia,: The University of New South Wales Climate Change Research Centre (CCRC); 2009

¹¹ Pan CJ, Reddy KK, Lai HC, Yang SS. Role of mixed precipitating cloud systems on the typhoon rainfall. *Annals of Geophysics*. 2010; 28: 11-6

decades. Less than two months later two severe typhoons, Ketsarna and Parma, struck within eight days of each other, flooding a large part of the northern Philippines and displacing over 400,000 people.¹² In a few short weeks, a severe drought in the south-central Indian states of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh was broken by extremely heavy rains, judged as the greatest in a century. At least one million people became temporarily homeless.¹³ While none of these events can definitely be attributed to climate change, they are consistent with predictions made about climate change. This overall pattern is highly unlikely to be random.

Climate change is also likely to harm food security in a world in which hunger and other forms of malnutrition are already increasing.¹⁴ Finally, climate change is predicted to substantially increase sea level, by at least one meter by 2100.¹⁵ The mechanism for rising sea level is twofold: as the oceans war they expand; secondly the melting ice from Greenland and Antarctica, will releasing large quantities of water into the seas. This water will be fresh, and in the Northern hemisphere this may impair the flow of the Gulf Stream, which warms northern Europe.

Sea level rise will be especially problematic for large coastal cities including Bangkok, Ho Chi Minh City and Cairo where, in some cases, sea level rise is already worsened by subsidence, including due to reduce silt deposition due to dams.¹⁶ Sea level rise also threatens to reduce coastal soil fertility (including by salinization and flooding) and thus harm crop yields and livelihoods.¹⁷ It will likely drive large scale migration, causing displaced people to experience unpleasant and extremely limited lives, confined within refugee camps that are little better than prisons.¹⁸

In summary, climate change is a very serious global issue requiring immediate and concerted global action. Even though most Buddhists live in comparatively poor countries whose contribution to climate change is comparatively

¹² Parry J. Typhoon hits the Philippines, killing more than 280 people. *BMJ*. 2009; 339: b4105

¹³ Anonymous. No respite from Andhra floods, Karnataka seeks rehab help. 2009 [cited; Available from: http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/enviornment/no-respite-from-andhra-floods-karnataka-seeks-rehab-help-roundup_100256953.html]

¹⁴ Butler CD. Food security in the Asia-Pacific: climate change, phosphorus, ozone and other environmental challenges. *Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. 2009;18(4): 590-7 & Butler CD. Food security in the Asia-Pacific: Malthus, limits and environmental challenges *Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. 2009; 18(4): 577-84

¹⁵ Allison I, Bindoff NL, Bindschadler RA, Cox PM, Noblet Nd, England MH, et al. The Copenhagen Diagnosis. Updating the World on the Latest Climate Science. Sydney, Australia,: The University of New South Wales Climate Change Research Centre (CCRC); 2009

¹⁶ Bohannon J. The Nile Delta's Sinking Future. *Science*. 2010; 327: 1444-7

¹⁷ Inman M. Hot, flat, crowded—and preparing for the worst. *Science*. 2009;326: 662-3

¹⁸ Butler CD, Harley DO. Primary, secondary and tertiary effects of the eco-climate crisis: the medical response. *Postgraduate Medical Journal*. (in press)

modest, Buddhists can make many important contributions to slowing the pace of climate change.

Such actions include to reduce the waste of energy use, and to invest in renewable power. Where available, public transport is almost always less harmful to the environment than are private cars. Bicycles are good for fitness, air quality and the environment. However they can be dangerous and unpleasant to use in cities that are crowded with cars. Policy makers however, can slowly over time change the nature of cities to make them more attractive for bicycles and public transport. Enormous energy is also used in the construction of infrastructure, especially if involving concrete. It is therefore important that such infrastructure is genuinely useful and is also constructed without cheating, so that it remains durable for many years, and can withstand all but the most severe earthquake (if in an earthquake prone area). Of course, maintaining building standards is another form of honesty, a virtue praised by Buddhists and other people of faith. Yet, around the world, there are numerous cases of infrastructure where people have cheated. This waste has an environmental cost as well as being a direct threat to safety.

A mainly vegetarian diet is also less harmful to the climate, especially if meat grown in intensive “landless” farms is avoided. Food from such farms is also generally grown in ways that are very cruel to species, such as chickens, pigs and cattle.

Ecosystem Integrity

There is also a slowly growing understanding of the immense scale of human domination of formerly wild landscapes.¹⁹ All over the world, forests are being replaced by cropland and plantations, such as palm oil, including in large parts of Southeast Asia.²⁰ The resultant tragic loss of species includes some that are highly intelligent and sensitive, like orangutans and other primates.²¹ Other exotic species are harmed and threatened by widespread beliefs in the value of traditional medicines. The number of charismatic large wild animals, such as tigers, snow leopards and pandas is now so low that they can be counted in thousands, or even hundreds.

¹⁹ Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. *Living Beyond Our Means. Natural Assets and Human Well-being*. Washington: Island Press; 2005

²⁰ Danielsen F, Beukema H, Burgess ND, Parish F, Brühl CA, Donald PF, et al. *Biofuel Plantations on Forested Lands: Double Jeopardy for Biodiversity and Climate*. *Conservation Biology*. 2008

²¹ Ceballos G, García A, Ehrlich PR. *The Sixth Extinction Crisis. Loss of Animal Populations and Species*. *Journal of Cosmology*. 2010;7 & International Union for Conservation of Nature. *Primates in Peril: The World's 25 Most Endangered Primates, 2008–2010* 2010

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered (CITES) has partially restricted trade in some endangered species, but was never designed to protect against such other threats as the inexorable loss of habitat underway, especially in Africa and part of Asia. The recently concluded meeting of CITES (March, 2010) has failed to restrict trade in the bluefin tuna, a seriously endangered marine species.²² This is largely because of the financial and political power of Japan, a country with a substantially Buddhist population. Japanese citizens consume four-fifths of the world's bluefin tuna and provide a steady market for poorer countries with big fishing industries like Tunisia. Due to the lobbying of Japan and its financially dependent allies, a blocking vote of one third of the 175 members of CITES agreed, effectively, to place trade before conservation, thus corrupting the intent of this convention.

The global population is increasingly over-fishing its oceans, while simultaneously climate change is making those oceans more acidic, thereby reducing the resilience of future fish stocks.²³ Coral reefs are declining globally, a process predicted to quicken because of warmer temperatures and increased ocean acidification.²⁴

These losses of fellow species signify more than the expansion of the human “footprint”. What will it be like for our descendants to inhabit a world in which there are almost no wild natural spaces? No doubt humans can adapt, but it seems likely to impose a heavy spiritual and psychological cost.²⁵

In addition, the loss of “keystone” species will alter the productivity of some systems, such as coral reefs, harming the livelihoods of people dependent on them, like tourist workers and fisherfolk. The widespread conversion of mangroves, often to grow prawns, may also affect humans adversely, since the mangroves act as a buffer against tsunamis, storm surges and cyclones.²⁶ Widespread mixing of species around the world is occurring, including of pathogens (disease-causing agents).²⁷ While much of this traffic and trade in species is beneficial, for example

²² Editorial. The Fishing Lobby Wins Again New York Times. 2010 March 20; Sect. A16

²³ Smith MD, Roheim CA, Crowder LB, Halpern BS, Turnipseed M, Anderson JL, et al. Sustainability and global seafood. *Science*. 2010; 327: 784-6

²⁴ Schuttenberg H, Hoegh-Guldberg O. A World with Corals: What Will It Take? [letter]. *Science*. 2007; 318:* & McNeil BI, Matear RJ. Southern Ocean acidification: A tipping point at 450-ppm atmospheric CO₂. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science (USA)*. 2008; 105: 18860-4

²⁵ Wilson EO. *The Creation: An Appeal to Save Life on Earth*. New York: W.W. Norton; 2006

²⁶ Primavera JH. Mangroves, fishponds, and the quest for sustainability. *Science*. 2005; 310: 57-9 & Srinivasan UT, Carey SP, Hallstein E, Higgins PAT, Kerr AC, Koteen LE, et al. The debt of nations and the distribution of ecological impacts from human activities. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. 2008; 105: 1768-73

²⁷ Anderson PK, Cunningham AA, Patel NG, Morales FJ, Epstein PR, Daszak P. Emerging infectious diseases of plants: pathogen pollution, climate change and agrotechnology drivers. *TRENDS in Ecology and Evolution*. 2004; 19(10): 536-44

by allowing potatoes from South America to be grown in Africa, some is harmful, such as the spread of Chikungunya and other viruses across an increasing area of the Indian Ocean and parts of Asia.²⁸

Population

Climate change and ecological disruption are primarily driven by human need, greed and selfishness. If the world had limitless resources, our collective avarice and destruction would be harmful but less important than our current situation suggests. In fact, many of the world's resources will be seriously depleted if current trends of consumption continue.²⁹ Some of these resources are already growing scarce, such as mature forests in Thailand and oil from the North Sea off the coast of Britain. Wetlands are limited, as are beautiful beaches, forests and many other species.

Oil is growing more scarce and difficult to recover, as are reserves of natural gas and even coal. The size of the human population, now soaring towards seven billion souls, cannot be ignored as a factor in our evolving crisis.³⁰ Buddhism, unlike Catholicism, has no specific prohibition on contraception. Buddhists can contribute to lifting the taboo on this sensitive topic. A middle way is consistent with small families, especially in today's crowded world. While some countries equate population size with political power, many large countries are desperately poor; high population growth is likely to deepen their poverty and to increase their vulnerability, including to climate change.³¹

Conclusion

We are now in the midst an unfolding eco-social crisis. There is a race between solutions and problems at the global scale.³² Links between scarcity of natural resources and the ancient human responses of resentment, conflict, terrorism and ill-governance threaten the lives of our descendants and perhaps even of

²⁸ Charrel RN, Lamballerie Xd, Raoult D. Chikungunya Outbreaks — The Globalization of Vectorborne Diseases. *New England Journal of Medicine*. 2006; 356(8): 769-71

²⁹ Hall CAS, John W. Day J. Revisiting the limits to growth after peak oil. *American Scientist*. 2009; 97:230-7

³⁰ Butler CD. Human carrying capacity and human health. *Public Library of Science Medicine*. 2004; 1(3): 192-4

³¹ Bryant L, Carver L, Butler CD, Anage A. Climate change and family planning: least developed countries define the agenda. *Bulletin of the World Health Organisation*. 2009; 87:852-7

³² Butler CD. Environmental change, injustice and sustainability. *Journal of Bioethical Inquiry*. 2008; 5(1): 11-9

ourselves as a species. Yet such human values as co-operation, sharing and peacefulness hint that solutions are still possible.³³

Buddhists have much to contribute, including restrained consumption: a middle path which rejects the waste of resources in displays of wealth designed to gain ephemeral status. Buddhists can instead focus on friendship, good relationships, and meditation. Metta can be extended to the protection of other species, and indeed of whole ecosystems.³⁴ Buddhists can also become more engaged with efforts to slow climate change and improve ecosystem resilience. New electronic forms of communication are slowly allowing a wider dissemination of information and activism.

Buddhists can improve their understanding of science. Science can then be used as a tool for right livelihood, including the benefit other humans, future humans and other species. Science should not be automatically rejected as “anti-religious” or “anti-Buddhist” any more than should a road or a railway. A path has value, so does science. At the same time there is much that science can learn from Buddhism and other faiths. Many scientists still work for the benefit of the military, rather than peace. Many scientists work to destroy rather than conserve. Buddhists who judge scientists by its failing are not being sufficiently critical or discerning. My hope is that, in the world to come, science and religion, including Buddhism, can co-evolve to drive a more humane and sustainable future for us all.

³³ Walker B, Barrett S, Polasky S, Galaz V, Folke C, Engström G, et al. Looming global-scale failures and missing institutions. *Science*. 2009;325:1345-6

³⁴ Akuppa. *Touching the Earth*. Birmingham: Windhorse Publications; 2002 & Badiner AH, editor. *Dharma Gaia. A Harvest of Essays in Buddhism and Ecology*. Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press; 1990

The (An) Aesthetics Of Nature: A Buddhist Ecology For Businesses

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Introduction

This interdisciplinary study synthesizes the literature on engaged Buddhism and aesthetics to develop an innovative theoretical and practical perspective on Buddhist ecology, reflecting on how businesses can drive the global recovery of ecology. The paper includes an exploration of the relationship between art, aesthetics, work (Carr and Hancock, 2002) and ecological recovery. Art can aid aesthetic appreciation of the environment. It can induce critical reflection, help organizations see anew that which is familiar, and enable reflexivity towards the taken-for-granted – providing important insights in the field of organization studies (Carr, 2007). Art is a form of knowledge (Carr, 2003) so it can enhance knowing and deepen consciousness. Aesthetics can be contrasted with anaesthetics (Dale and Burrell, 2002) and art can awaken organizations to the beauty of the natural world and to their negative environmental impacts. Art educates, aids moral development, focuses the mind, sparks wonder – and unifies people (Tolstoi, 1960). From unconsciousness to mindful awareness, art can help ground organizations in the reality of the natural world. Conclusions are drawn as to how organizations can be helped to become more aware of and sensitive towards their environment, and inspired to develop more sustainable products and services. Such an impact on organizational behavior is highly relevant to the conference sub-theme of global recovery, as it is businesses that have caused most climate change and it is they who can make the greatest impact on reversing environmental damage. The goal is conversion of the minds and hearts of organizational members so that they develop a commitment to sustainable business.

Mind

Aesthetics is not an objective entity that exists independently without human perception. Beauty is in the mind of the beholder and cannot be perceived without the perceiving mind (Nietzsche, 1998). Ecological disturbance, degradation and

destruction, while subject to diverse human interpretations, does exist objectively and independently from the mind. However, the cause and continuation of planetary damage can be traced back to the mind, as it is a direct result of mindless destruction of the environment in the name of materialism and greed. The ecological crisis is a crisis of the mind (Orr, 1994). Ecological sustainability requires a fundamental change in consciousness – and mindfulness disposes people to ecologically sustainable frames of mind (Brinkerhoff and Jacob, 1999):

"Transcending what deep ecologists see as environmental tinkering in the form of limited, disconnected laws and policies ('shallow' ecologies), this change in consciousness centers on healing humankind's alienation from nature in terms of a dualistic subject/object split that permits violence directed towards the earth, justified by the drive for material accumulation." (Brinkerhoff and Jacob, 1999, p.527).

The key contribution of Buddhist ecology to global recovery is that of fostering sustainability in the minds and actions of managers, through developing mindful awareness of the beauty of the natural world. Indeed, there is a relationship between mindfulness and environmentally responsible behavior (Brown and Kasser, 2005; Jacob et al., 2009; Brinkerhoff and Jacob, 1999; Jacob and Brinkerhoff, 1997, 1999) and mindfulness is associated with less consumerism (Brown et al., 2004; Rosenberg, 2004; Burch, 2000). In meditation, the dualistic, subject/object split of western science and materialism recedes and is replaced by a sense of unity with the natural environment, moving from anthropocentrism to ecocentrism (Brinkerhoff and Jacob, 1999). Meditation brings into being an identification with the environment, engendering not only an unwillingness to destroy ecology to satisfy artificially created wants but also a willingness to meet basic needs through renewable sources (Brinkerhoff and Jacob, 1999).

(An)aesthetics

The definition of aesthetic in this paper is the sensuous perception and appreciation of the beautiful in nature and art (Oxford English Dictionary, 2010). It can be further defined as "the philosophy of art and beauty", although it is an ambiguous, complex and contested concept, not only because art and beauty are similarly so, but also because it has a "complicated, heterogeneous, conflicted and disordered genealogy" (Shusterman, 2006, p.237). Aesthetics can be contrasted with anaesthetics, which is "the means by which the sensory faculties are blunted" (Strati, 1999, p.81).

Aesthetics cannot be simply equated with art but is concerned with sensory perceptions, judgment, affect, and feeling (Strati, 2000). The world and existence are

only justified as an aesthetic phenomenon (Nietzsche 1967), and the highest act of reason, encompassing all ideas, is an aesthetic one (Hegel, 1995). Logic and ethics rest on aesthetics (Schiller, 1967) and the lives of everyone could be conceived of as a work of art (Foucault, 1984). Aesthetic knowledge in organizations can be found in symbols, work, and pleasing customers (Ewenstein and Whyte, 2007).

The aim is to move from anaesthesia – a state of unconsciousness to the beauty of the natural world and our environmental impacts – to an aesthetic appreciation of the environment, leading to ecological skillfulness. Aesthetics suggests a state of conscious wakefulness, coupled with an ability to perceive, appreciate and enjoy beauty in the real world. Its opposite, anaesthetics, connotes an unconscious mind that is numbed and deadened with sleep. The latter state has been a direct cause of environmental destruction – we do not destroy that which we appreciate, value and enjoy. Another manifestation of anaesthetics is the reaction to the current situation; that of denial (‘climate change is not happening’) and depression (‘this is a vast problem, which I cannot affect’). Therefore, the key ecological concern is the awakening of the mind to the beauty of the world. Buddhism is essentially concerned with awakening and this can be its unique contribution to the ecological crisis.

Aesthetics enables new insights, awareness and an ability to see in a new way (Taylor and Hansen, 2005). It does not offer scientific solutions but enables a commitment to achieving them. Aesthetics provides a language for understanding and expressing what scientific language is unable to grasp and explain, activating our capabilities to perceive (Strati, 2005). The aesthetic imagination can be defined as “a ‘felt change of consciousness’, where ‘consciousness’ embraces all my awareness of my surroundings” (Barfield, 1928, p.48).

Aesthetics is “a way of knowing, of knowing both the world we live in and the way we know this world” (Dean et al., 1997, p.420). It can be considered as “a form of *knowledge: sensory* knowledge”, the absence of which leads to disenchantment (Gagliardi, 1996, p.566). Specifically, it is “a form of knowledge about organizational life” (Strati, 1995, p.85) and “a driving force of organizing” (Strati, 1999, p.42).

Aesthetics and the Natural Environment

Natural science and environmental ethics have dominated our orientation to nature, whilst environmental aesthetics has been relatively neglected, although this is changing (Heyd, 2007). There is a close relationship between aesthetics and the natural environment. The direct childhood experience of nature, while individuals are developing their aesthetic and ethical capacities, is the primary influencing factor

on commitment to environmentalism in adult life (Palmer, 1998). Carlson and Berleant (2004) edited a range of essays on the aesthetics of natural environments. Muir combined aesthetic appreciation with nature preservation (Philippon, 2004). Heyd (2007) advocates encountering nature to build an environmental culture, making direct links between aesthetics, nature appreciation and environmentalism - with examples of Japan's wandering poets and artists' involvement in environmental projects. For example, he argues that Bashō provides an example of how "the encounter with nature can be generative of new aesthetic perceptions, rendered through his poems" (Heyd, 2007, p.77). Bashō's poetry was an outcome of insight and was simultaneously "deep and light. That is, for Bashō poetry was to reach the very being of things, but the occasions that open the way to things were to be found in the common everyday" Heyd (2007, p.95). Artists serve to mediate our aesthetic appreciation of nature; for example, Cezanne enables our aesthetic engagement with Mont Ste. Victoire (on visiting the mountain, the author found that he viewed it through the lens of Cezanne's paintings of the mountain).

Heyd (2007) places importance on the direct aesthetic experience of nature in motivating environmentalism, particularly in the context of changing workplace culture. Similarly, Weston (1994) and Weston and Cheney (1999) privilege the shift in perceptual orientation in achieving environmental change. Again, Gottlieb (2006) argues that the main task of religious environmentalism is changing hearts and minds, which results in a new alignment and commitment of interests.

Non-dualism

Aesthetics maintains unity in difference (Siegel, 1946) and it is through symbols that "the fragmentary is made whole, unitariness is restored" (Strati, 1998, p.1387). Aesthetics is an embodied form of organizational knowledge, coming from practitioners who understand "the look, feel, smell, taste and sound of things in organizational life" (Ewenstein and Whyte, 2007, p.689). Beyond rational understanding, aesthetics "calls for a deeper appreciation of how and what we perceive through our five senses" (Marotto, Roos, and Victor, 2007, p.410).

The Art of Management

There is artful work (Richards, 1995), leadership is an art (DePree, 1987) and management is an art (Brady, 1986) – a performing art (Vaill, 1989). Executive management "is a matter of art rather than science, and is aesthetic rather than logical" (Barnard, 1938, p.235). Aesthetics is a key feature of many occupations (Styhre, 2008). Ewenstein and Whyte (2007, p.705) argue that "aesthetic knowledge plays an important part in organizational practice not only as the symbolic context

for work, but as an integral part of the work that people do.” Organization and work are an aesthetic; form and design are fundamental to all art and organizations; and “behavior in organizations can best be described as a system of shared meanings and processes of sense making guided by an artistic grammar and the art of stories, rituals, and metaphors” (Frederickson, 2000, p.50). Aesthetics is the ultimate justification for business activity; “managers must value what society values, and society values aesthetics”, for example when making purchases (Dobson, 2007, p.45). Furthermore it will “become more important to understanding organizations and their behavior as issues concerning the environment....become higher priority items for decision-makers” (Dean et al., 1997, p.419).

There are three ways in which aesthetics imbues organization: aesthetics of organization (symbols and artifacts), aesthetics in organization (behaviors) and aesthetics as organization (exploring the aesthetic aspect of organizational life) (Witz, Warhurst and Nickson, 2003).

Language

There is a hermeneutical problem of interpreting what nature is saying (Philippon, 2004). Language is doubly problematic “it affects our ability not only to *know* nature but also to *represent* it” argues Philippon (2004, p.14), who explores the epistemological question of how writers know and represent nature and the ontological status of nature.

Poetry

Windle (1994) presents an anthology of the poetry of business life from before the industrial revolution to contemporary corporations. In the context of mindfulness and meditation, poetry is a particularly valuable form of aesthetics. It emerges at the edge of what can be explicated in words (Hiley, 2006). The force and meaning of poetry comes from its quality of silences. Silence “has an ontological power from which each poem arises and into which it passes; and a poem changes the quality of the silence as it moves through it, it is cleansed by the silence” (Saunders, 2006, p.507).

The aesthetic qualities of poetry can help to understand deep emotions in organizations (Rippin, 2006) and can “generate different awareness and insights, which are valuable to management practice” (Grisoni and Kirk, 2006, p.520). Hiley (2006, p.561) reveals “links between managers developing their reflective practice and the emergence of poetic expression in their writing.” Leaders can use poetry to inspire others (Grisham, 2006) and scholars can use the insights that can be

gained from poems to expand their understanding of organizations (Islam and Zyphur, 2006).

Conclusions

Art can be seen as objectively good – “a dangerous conflation of ethics and aesthetics” (Warren and Rehn, 2006, p.82). In fact, it can be far from ethical. For example, “through consumerism, we become acculturated into an aesthetic mode of being-in-the-world, living through our senses and seeking new experiences at an ever increasing rate” (Gilmore and Warren, 2007, p.114). Furthermore, aesthetic experience is culturally constructed so experience of nature and poems in one culture will differ from another (Barfield, 1928).

Nevertheless, art can aid aesthetic appreciation of the environment and awaken organizations to the beauty of the natural world and to their negative environmental impacts. From unconsciousness to mindful awareness, art can help ground organizations in the reality of the natural world. Art and aesthetics can help organizations to become more aware of and sensitive towards their environment, and inspired to develop more sustainable products and services. Businesses have caused most climate change and it is they who can make the greatest impact on reversing environmental damage. The goal is conversion of the minds and hearts of organizational members so that they develop a commitment to operate sustainably.

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Vegetarianism Changes the World - An Idea to create “The United Nation Day of Vesak” as “The Global Vegetarian Day”

Ven. Minghai

Part I:

Buddhism boasts a long history of over 2,000 years since its arrival in China. As early as 1,500 years ago, during the Northern and Southern Dynasties period, Chinese Mahayana Buddhists began to promote vegetarianism, which evolved into an important characteristic of Chinese Mahayana Buddhism, observed especially strictly by bhikkhus and bhikkunis. As a matter of fact, the dietetic practice of not eating sentient beings' flesh was advocated firstly by Xiaoyan, a Buddhist emperor, who composed “An Essay Concerning Abandoning Intoxicant Drinks and Meats”, promulgated this decree around the whole kingdom with the help of his authority. From then on, the precept of vegetarianism was observed by bhikkhus and bhikkunis, and gradually, even imitated by a lot of devout Buddhist lay followers for their entire lives. The promotion of Buddhist-vegetarianism and the ideas of kind-heartedness and human-heartedness of Confucianism were also merged, and this nurtured a cultural custom of vegetarianism and the protection of sentient beings' lives in China, and became an important content of the ethical-practice of Chinese society.

According to Xiaoyan's article¹, the major reason of his appealing to bhikkhus and bhikkunis for vegetarianism, is that eating sentient beings' flesh deviates from the doctrine of compassion and piety in Buddhism, and his theoretic foundation is “chapter of four forms” of “Mahāpari-nirvāna-sūtra”, which was already translated into Chinese at that time. In fact, apart from “Mahāpari-nirvāna-sūtra”, the suggestion of vegetarianism can be also found in many Mahayana Buddhist scriptures, such as “The Brahma Net Sutra”, “Lanka-Vatara-Sutra”, and the “Shurangama Sutra”. In “The Brahma Net Sutra”, Shakyamuni says: “Do not eat sentient beings' flesh, or you will lose the Buddha-wisdom of universal compassion and be exiled by other followers. (P.1005, No.1484, T) In “Lanka-Vatara-Sutra”, Tathagata claims that “there are numerous necessities in abandoning eating meats.” (P.513, No.670, T) and enumerates fifteen reasons for it. So vegetarianism has a deep origination in Chinese Mahayana Buddhism, rich evidences in Buddhist scriptures and popularity with the masses. The ideal geographical background also

¹ Editor's Comment: no citation of source.

makes this practice possible with convenient conditions. The climate of most Chinese areas is provided with the characteristics of Temperate and Subtropical zones, so China enjoys developed agriculture which produces rich varieties of vegetables and fruits, thereby it can afford the people fine vegetal drinks and foods. In the doctrines of Theravāda, Tathagata allows bhikkhus to have triple-clean meats. However, it was only the result of mendicant lives of bhikkhus, which served as an initial skillful means of Tathagata. In fact, his original intention is the renunciation of eating sentient beings' flesh. So what Tathagata says in "Lanka-Vatara-Sutra" is true: "I sometimes prohibit the people to eat five kinds of meats, or ten kinds, however, this time in this sutra, (I tell you,) people should not eat all kinds of meats at any time, and all the skillful teachings before should be given up."(P.514, No.670, T)

In Tantrism, vegetarianism is also written in concrete terms for the practice of Buddhists. However, owing to the severe geographical conditions in Tibet, the rare air and bitter coldness, one can hardly find enough vegetables and fruits to replace meats. So many Tibetan practitioners eat the flesh of animals that are subjected to a natural death. Despite this, there still have been a large number of highly achieved lamas who stuck to the practice of vegetarianism in the history of Tibetan Buddhism.

All in all, whether Chinese Mahayana Buddhism, Tibetan Tantrism, or Southern Buddhism - these three traditions are against killing and eating sentient beings' flesh. So it is appropriate to take vegetarianism as a common promotion of Buddhism.

Part II

Although the prescript of not eating the flesh of sentient beings is only one point of Shakyamuni's many good teachings, just this point shows its universal value increasingly in the present age. This value finds its expression in two aspects: one is the humanistic concern, and the other is the environmental protection.

Shakyamuni asked his disciples to practice vegetarianism primarily out of compassion originating from the respect for sentient beings. Along the stream of time, having neither beginning nor end, although lives may be presented in various forms, they evolved with a mutual connection and dependence with the history of the universe. From a broader perspective, human and animal belong to a big family in which they might share the same environment. Like any other animal, humans can hardly live independently and have absolute control over the lives of other sentient beings. This is the key law-of-life in Buddhist philosophy which tells us: lives originate from causes and conditions, they're dependent and coexistent. Vegetarianism is just a sort of fulfillment of this law in our daily life. Although it is

a mere dietetic habit, vegetarianism is endowed with the power which can turn the ideas of lives, such as “hurting others to benefit oneself” and “fighting to the bitter end”, into those of “harmonious co-existence” and “loving the others just as love oneself.” On the one hand, many vegetarians are usually more gentle and just in dealing with people, tolerating others and protecting sentient beings’ lives. On the other hand, vegetarianism can obviously not only bring benefit to one’s health, but cultivate his or her state of mind and even change their ways of solving international issues or easing personal relationships. In a word, while confronted with various tensions, it is more challenging and creative to adopt the modes of harmony and the win-win policy in a comparison with fight and war. Its potential can also be borrowed as a dominant way to settle the international issues.

While vegetarianism embodies the philosophical ideal of life-equality and harmonious co-existence, it indicates a narrow human-centered attitude to slaughter animals for their meat. Nowadays, this attitude and the corresponding behavior of humans lead to the deterioration of bio-diversity, to global warming and abnormal weather patterns. To cater to limitless cravings, man excessively consumes natural resources and will reap the bitter fruits planted by themselves. Meanwhile, vegetarianism is demonstrating its great value in protecting ecosystem and saving the earth.

In our modern society, meats are mainly produced by industrialized and centralized livestock industry. In 2006, “The Huge Shadow of Animal Husbandry: environmental issues and our choices”, a report of United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization², illustrates the connections between animal husbandry in charge of providing meat and the deterioration of ecosystem: the total volume in livestock industry greenhouse-gas discharge occupies 18% of the damage in comparison with the other five major departments of greenhouse-gas emissions; this is 80% of the entire agricultural departments, 9% of the global carbon dioxide discharges; 65% of nitrogen dioxide discharges and 35~40% of methane discharges. This tendency in the development of livestock industry not only results in the greenhouse effect, but reduces the areas of forests - contributing to the climatic adjustment, which intensifies global warming. 30% of land area is encroached by livestock industry and 33% of farmland is misused for fodder planting. The development of livestock industry also exacerbate the conditions of global water resources. To produce one kilogram of beef, 5,000~10,000 liter of water will be consumed. However, today 1 billion people do not have a source of pure water. By 2025, it is estimated that 1.8 billion people will live with water shortages. The afore-mentioned environmental pressures from livestock industry show the great

² Editor’s Comment: no citation of source.

need for animal food, which will be aggravated with the population explosion, and rise 2% per year.

Hence, we learn the importance of vegetarianism in this day and age. A Report issued by German Eco-economical Research Institute³ points that the volume of Greenhouse Gas Emissions can be reduced to 1/7 of its original through the practice of vegetarianism and it can also realize energy-saving, food supply and reduction of the disappearance of 80% global rainforest, 70% of water resources can be saved as well. What's more important is that we can be delivered from moral dilemma by way of vegetarianism. Because nowadays, 50% of cereals and 75% of beans are consumed by livestock, meanwhile 0.85 billion people are being subjected to starvation and 0.97 billion people are suffering problems of obesity. In fact, the food consumed by livestock can meet the needs of 2 billion people. So not only can vegetarianism can be adopted to save eco-crisis, but alleviate moral dilemma, caused by unjust distribution of resources.

Part III

Based on the mentioned considerations, I suggest that the International Council of United Nations Day of Vesak may confirm “the Day of Vesak” (the first full-moon day of May) as “the Global Vegetarian Day” and firstly call on all Buddhists to practice vegetarianism on this day and even influence the world to recognize and accept it, whose significances will be expounded in the following part.

1. Although vegetarianism does not belong to Buddhists alone, when it is initiated by Buddhists: those who care about the earth and lives will respond to this action and influence the rest of the world to reduce the consumption of meats for the subsiding of eco-crisis. “A Day of Vegetarianism” is not difficult to practice, and it joins and expresses the overwhelming aspiration of people who want to protect the ecosystem, and synthesizes the efforts to influence the world - to form a new living habit, reducing emissions of carbon dioxide. According to scientists' statistics, if one does not have meat for a day, 7 kilograms of carbon dioxide can be reduced, which equals to the volume of carbon dioxide reduced half a month by a tall tree at the age of 20. Hence, even when all the world practices “A Day of Vegetarianism”, only one day, their contribution to the environmental protection is considerable. It may be beyond our imagination to consider the role played by “the Global Vegetarian Day” in transforming people's dietetic habits and their attitudes toward life. As a matter of fact, a few European countries have started the promotion of healthy food for the sake of environmental protection. In May, 2009, Ghent announced that every Thursday is “Vegetarian Day”, in Belgium. So, it is a wise

³ Editor's Comment: no citation of source.

choice that Buddhists advocate “the Global Vegetarian Day”, all over the world – following global tidal currents and guide common practice.

2. Vegetarianism is promoted by Buddhists through “A Day of Vegetarianism”, who found a most suitable expression in demonstrating the universal value of Buddhist ethics that is beyond the scope of religion and culture. In a world where various religious sects co-exist, Buddhists, joining efforts with other religions groups, should explore the deeper wisdom of this universal value in their scriptures and ethics and find its unique response toward challenges and crises facing human beings. In Buddhist scriptures, not only supra-mundane values can be found in life enlightenment and abandoning suffering for the sake of happiness, but the mundane values are included in giving up the evil deeds in pursuit of goodness and living enjoyably in every moment (*drishtha dharma sukha viharin*). As a Buddhist, one should unite the two aspects and realize the supra-mundane value in the mundane value. Without the amelioration of the present world, the mundane value can hardly be realized. Focusing on the issue of environmental protection confronting the whole world, the frame of “Day of Vegetarianism” not only shows our Buddhists’ practices but the consciousness of participation as human beings.

3. After confirmation of “the Global Vegetarian Day”, “The Day of Vesak” will not only be exclusive to Buddhists as a day of religions commemoration, but become a universal value and an important day, which relates to all people in the world. The value of it, in turn, is being enhanced and enriched. Through vegetarianism, one’s spiritual world will experience a series of awakening, living modes will be improved and environmental protection can be realized.

4. The promotion of “The Global Vegetarian Day” can not only change the world, but also: impressions - of Buddhism among Buddhists and non-Buddhists. Belief propels wisdom, while wisdom activates performance. Nowadays, Buddhists should concentrate upon the secular world, and shoulder more responsibilities within it. Apart from the wisdom brought by meditation of Buddhism, we need the power of action and encouragement of participation. Buddhism is not only prayer-ritual or sitting-meditation, but also an active Buddhism. In the plane of the globalization, we should also construct the Engaged Buddhism.

So I welcome the opportunity of suggesting to the International Council of United Nations Day of Vesak that: “the Day of Vesak” can be confirmed as “The Global Vegetarian Day” and raise the global awareness of vegetarianism. “The Global Vegetarian Day” should have a graphic-symbol [logo] and concise slogan. I believe that it will be the best gift of all the Buddhist contributions to the world and the best offering we present to our great tutor Shakyamuni.

Abbreviations

T = The Tripitaka in Chinese

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Buddhist Environmental Protection and Global Economic Recovery

Shi Xianda

Introduction:

When the hope for a quick global economic recovery is drawing nearer to reality, it is also a time for us to re-examine the cause of this cycle of global economic recession, the nature of current economic recovery, and how we can have a steady economic development in the future that is free from the recurrent of next cycle of global recession.

The present world is not only troubled by the cycle of economic recession. The environmental deterioration and climate change are also threatening the human existence as a whole. Apparently, those economic stimulus packages targeted at increasing consumers' spending also means massive increase of greenhouse gases emission, rapid depletion of natural resources and environmental deterioration. The global effort to make the economic recovery possible may find itself grounded at an even worse end: the collapse of ecological system of the planet. If we continue to pursue only immediate economic benefits, it will aggravate already severely deteriorated environmental condition which has triggered many disastrous natural calamities around the globe.

Buddhist teachings on environmental conservation and economic development can help us to develop an insight into the cause and effect of the global economic recession and the environmental deterioration. The theory of the Middle Path can guide us in making right decisions to cope with economic recession. Buddhist karma theory teaches us that everyone is responsible for his own actions and is accountable for protecting the environment. The Buddhist way of life may be the right answer to our healthy and harmonious human existence. This article is an attempt, from a Buddhist perspective, to mainly discuss:

- A) The causes of global economic recession and environment deterioration...
- B) What kind of global economic recovery we are expecting for in the future...
- C) How to avoid another cycle of economic recession in the future...
- D) How to save the environment from further destruction...
- E) How Buddhist environmental protection can help the economic recovery...
- F) What Buddhist teachings can contribute to the environmental protection...

Part I: Cause of Economic Recession

In many Buddhist sutras¹, the importance of Right-Livelihood is repeatedly stressed, for Right-Livelihood means the steady and rightful income that is fundamental to maintain a decent life. In the *Mahāmaṅgala-sutta*², a secured job is said as one of the most auspicious things in life. According to the *Kūṭadanta-sutta*³, in order to maintain the social and economical stability, the ruler of the country should provide his subjects with all necessary provisions, so that farmers could cultivate crops in their fields, herdsmen could have grain and fodder to feed their livestock, merchants could have capital to trade, and government servants could have proper living wages. These indicate that neither a happy personal life nor a harmonious society is possible when lacking a stable economic support. Therefore, Buddhism gives economic a very important place. The economic situation has a direct impact on people's lives, and we have just witnessed the deterioration of life quality caused by a recent global economic recession. As a result of reduction in personal income and increase in unemployment, people from all over the world face the growing pressures of life.

From Buddhist perspective, it is evident that the recent global economic recession and the environment crisis evolved from the same root, i.e.: human greed, which is hard to contain, and is the driving impulse behind all the costly advertisements sponsored by manufacturers, all the unscrupulous means of seducement by salespersons, and the helpless impulse felt by buyers' when they purchase.

In a certain phrase of economic development, the policy to stimulate consumption can be very effective to the economic growth, just as much as it is still being widely used as one of the primary drives for economic recovery. The measure of stimulating consumption is directed to nothing but stimulating the human desire of possessing more materials. It is reasonable to attribute the current economic development to one source, which is all but about arousing and manipulating human greed. Tempting commercial advertisements, industrialized mass production, and various kinds of installment plans offered by financial institutions, all form a complete set to facilitate consumers feasting their greed in one single day with their lifetime savings including those yet to be earned in the future.

Such an economic pattern is doomed from the outset to meet crises and pullbacks. Overspending and excessive consumption are odd features of the current consumption-based economy. They turn consumers into the prisoners of their own

¹ T1, p469b; T1, p836a; T2, p23b.

² Sn, II, 4.

³ DN, I, 5, p135.

greed, and make them the slavery of the financial institutions to whom the consumers have to work for a whole lifetime to pay off the loans. For some debtors, even a whole lifetime is not enough. Worse still, a considerable amount of loans are granted to people who have never willed of paying back, since they never have the ability in doing so. Eventually, the huge backlogs of bad loans cause the entire financial system to collapse, triggering global financial crises, which subsequently results in global economic recession.

Overspending and excessive consumption beyond repaying capability not only have caused financial crisis and economic recession, the commercial and manufacturing industries sustained by such a consumption pattern have further aggravated the environmental crisis and resource shortage. We are being driven to the last ditch by our uncontained greed within. Greed unveiled itself as a common threat to the survival of all human beings time and again.

Part II: Relationship between Environmental Protection & Economic Recovery

In order to achieve rapid economic recovery, many countries had to resort to stimulus packages to boost investment growth, consumer spending and exports. They all pin the hope of economic recovery on domestic and foreign consumption. These measures do serve the purpose in a short term. In the long run, however, since the world economies have experienced numerous cycles of recession and recovery, and such stimulus policies have been repetitively used to cope with recessions worldwide, it is very certain that the present recovery will not be the end of the cycle. As long as the current economic pattern continues to exist and there is not a better economic mode emerged in the foreseeable future to replace the current one, the coming back of next economic recession will only be a matter of time. Therefore, these economy stimulation measures are far from being a perfect solution to the problem of periodic economic recession. Moreover, they are only palliatives without addressing the root cause, and they can make little difference to alter the course of future economic development or to avoid the next cycle of economic recession. Because, if the spending capacity of the entire world reaches its limit, the consumption-based stimulus package will only bleed white the already overdrawn consumption ability. And indeed, the consumer's spending capacity has its limit.

A bigger potential threat is that, when the resource shortage and environmental deterioration are already very serious, consumption-oriented stimulus package will directly result in aggravating the rapid depletion of various resources and severe energy shortage further, which will concurrently cause more serious environmental pollution and more extreme climate changes. It seems that as every country in the world is making every endeavor to revive the economy, the whole world is silenced on or deliberately avoiding the issue of environmental deterioration

and greenhouse gas emission. However, that is the issue we cannot avoid so long as we are living on this planet. If the economic recovery is at the cost of more severe environmental deterioration and extreme climate change, then we are only walking away from the economic crisis to get into a much more severe crisis of human survival. It is like drinking poison to quench thirst, which quenches temporary thirst at the price of human survival. Human beings are facing a dilemma between going ahead with economic stimulus policies and devoting all the resources to protect our environment that is already in crisis.

When the global economy is now recovering from the recent recession, it is a time we must reexamine the current economic mode and make a plan for the future economic development. Before we forget the impact of economic recession on our life, we must ask ourselves: what type of economic recovery do we really want? How can we avoid the coming back of cyclic economic recession? Can we safeguard our environment while we strive for the economic recovery?

The purpose of economic recovery does not lie in the recovery itself, but aims at improving human living quality. And the improvement of living quality does not mean some economic figures; rather it is embodied in a safe and secure life in a peaceful society. To that effect, a secure eco-environment for the human existence is the precondition. If economic development is at the cost of human living environment, economic development itself will be of no meaning. Therefore, any solution to economic crisis must take into account its effects on environment. Economic interests should not override the base line of human survival. Any economic measure once undermining human survival, is immoral, and sure to be condemned and spurned by all mankind. Inasmuch as economic recovery is for the purpose of improving living quality, there is no conflict with environmental protection in that respect.

In practice, however, some measures taken by some countries do worsen the environment. It is ignorant to overlook the fact that economic recovery needs strong public support and other objective conditions. If economic recovery is at the price of further environment destruction, it will soon encounter bottleneck. For instance, if people become aware of the fact that they are going to be deprived of living environment due to some economic stimulus measures, they may give a cold shoulder to all idea of saving economy. If this happens, all economic measures will be futile. Insofar as the economy recovery is concerned, environmental safety and resource security are equally important sustentations. Any economic policy that causes further damage to the environment will in turn impede the progress of economic recovery. Because, if environment is severely deteriorated and resources are seriously insufficient, the energy, resource, consumption atmosphere and other necessary conditions to sustain economic growth will be greatly restricted. The recovery in lack of objective conditions will have all odds loaded against it.

Besides, if the living environment is on the blink of collapse, even if we have the economy successfully recovered from the recession, the mankind ultimately will have to pay a huge price – the price we and our future generations can hardly afford – to save the damaged environment. Such economic recovery may not worth the candle.

Therefore, as mentioned before, any economic stimulus policies must first take into account its impact on environment. A secure environmental condition is the biggest capital for economic recovery. Without environmental protection, there will be no economic recovery in the real sense, and nor healthy and sustainable development.

Buddhism always believes in the middle way. The middle way, in today's terms, means harmony. Any extreme measure may produce just opposite results. In the light of Buddhist middle way doctrine, economic recovery measures should not go into any extreme. The middle way economic recovery measures have to be the ones that will aid environmental protection, and drive the economic growth in the way of being harmony with nature. Only such a revival measure will accomplish its intended purpose. It is a challenge for the world leaders to find a balance between economic recovery and environmental protection. This is also a test of courage, resolve and wisdom of the entire human race.

Part III: Buddhist Environmental Protection Begins In The Mind

Buddhism aims at eliminating human sufferings and bringing peace and prosperity to all mankind. It is a religion that in its core has a deep sense of responsibility in protecting environment. Today, Buddhist environmental protection helps not only protecting environment, but also safeguarding a healthy economic recovery and sustainable development.

In Buddhist sutras, there are innumerable instructions in relation to environmental protection and avoiding recurrence of financial crisis. For instance, there is the Upāsaka precept, consisting of five Vinaya rules, in which, to restrain from killing is to counteract unscrupulous killings of wild animals, which is for the prevention of accelerated extinction of wild animals and for the protection of the integrity of planet's ecosystem. The second precept, to restrain from taking what is not given, means not to occupy property not belonging to us. It helps safeguarding healthy economic recovery, by avoiding accumulation of bad debts in bank loans that cause financial crises from time to time. The following are just few examples to explain the ways by which Buddhism can help to solve global environment crisis and economic revival.

1. Subduing Greed

In Chinese *Mahā-parinirvāṇa-sūtra*⁴, it is said that if one indulges his greed, there will be five appalling consequences: “Firstly, his wealth decreases every day, secondly, he is unable to comprehend the true meaning of the Dharma, thirdly, he commands no respect from people, and he is remorseful when he is dying, fourthly, his ill fame spreads far and wide, fifthly, he falls to three miserable realms, such as: hell, etc., after death”. In other words, one who is greedy will not have his wealth increased; greed will only cause his wealth to decrease. The recent financial crisis is a perfect collaboration to what is said in the sutra. As mentioned above, human greed is the root source that leads to the collapse of financial system, economic downturn, as well as environmental deterioration. Therefore, subduing greed is an utmost important step for environmental protection and economic recovery. That is to say, a true economic recovery must start from subduing human greed. Economic recovery is firm and healthy only if greed within us is subdued or eradicated, unnecessary and unaffordable overspending is controlled, and financial crisis arising from bad debts is avoided from reemergence. So does the environmental protection. Only if human greed is subdued and eradicated from within, and we stop squandering energy and resource, environmental pressure can be alleviated. Therefore, both environmental protection and economic recovery must begin in the mind and in the heart. This also explains the fact that Buddhism is, by nature, a religion with a deep concern about environmental protection.

Buddhism has all along advocated that the crux of liberation from suffering is to eradicate greed rooted in our mind. If we do not lessen or control our greed, and if we six billion people keep the consumption pattern at the current speed and volume, not only will our environment continue to deteriorate, and even if we were given a chance to start afresh, even if we were given a brand new Earth, we would still ruin it in the same way to the extent that mankind can no longer survive on it. Greed is hard to be fed up even with the entire world. It is only by being contented and having few wants that we can really solve our common problem of environmental crises.

In comparison with one hundred years ago, the material wealth in today’s society is profuse, and yet we only feel indigent and discontented. That is because, inasmuch as material wealth increases, our greed increases more. People often mistakenly equate happiness in life with material wealth. But, happiness actually means that one is free from and no longer enslaved by greed. Happiness cannot be obtained by trying to satisfy his greed, because greed never finds fulfillment. When people get some money, they will wish to have more money; when they have an apartment, they will wish to have a bigger more luxurious house; when they have

⁴ T1, p162b.

a car, they will wish for a limousine; and if possible at all, they will want a private jet or private ocean-liner; when they have a mountain, they will wish to have more territories, then the whole Earth, and at last, the entire universe. In fact, no matter how much material wealth we possess, we will never be satisfied. More importantly, even if we possessed the whole world, it would not really bring us happiness. A person chasing after material comforts always feels that happiness is within grips and yet ever elusive. After all, external wealth does not equal to internal happiness.

However, Buddhism does not categorically deny the importance of material life. In many Buddhist sutras, the Buddha often praises people with meritorious actions, and the rich material wealth brought about by such actions. The possession of material necessities is important for human life. This point has been positively evinced in Buddhist teachings. However dependence on material comfort should be moderate. Especially at a time of severe environmental deterioration, we should understand our needs, and know what is necessary and what can be desisted from. We hope that consumers will have a sense of responsibility to do their part to protect the living environment. If we can tame our own consumption impulse, as a result industrialized large-scale production can be controlled reasonably, various pollutions on Earth will decrease, and the environmental pressure will be alleviated. Therefore to temperate greed is to lessen pressure on the environment, and doing this is to resolve the environmental crisis. To those industrial and commercial institutions that are concerned only with quick and instant returns, some new legislation may be needed to prevent them from doing more damage to environment without scruples. As a matter of fact, a responsible enterprise is more likely to gain customers' acceptance. It is important that enterprises set up the corporate images in conformity with the business morals and take the social responsibility of environmental protection.

2. Equanimity

Along with the explosive growth of world population in recent decades, the boundary of human activity has expanded rapidly into space, deep oceans, and lands that man had never reached before. Human beings have invaded many traditional territories where various species of animals used to live for generations, and have deprived them of the surviving space. Also, human beings enjoy a rich material comfort at the huge price of wiping out large quantities of wild species. Because industrial wastewater and agricultural pesticides are discharged into rivers, they cause the death of large amounts of freshwater fish, which also deprives other fish in the ecological chain necessary to their survival. Because wetlands are occupied, the quantity of wild bird species is greatly deduced; and, because of the emission of greenhouse gases and human expansion – huge disasters are brought

to other species. Consequently, the extinction of numerous species that sets off a domino effect in the whole ecological chain is also as huge of a disaster to the survival of human beings. We must understand that we are only sharing the ecological environment on Earth with other species and we depend on each other for existence. Man's happiness cannot be found upon sacrificing the lives of other living beings, otherwise ultimately we would not be able to save our skin.

Man must and is absolutely capable to live harmoniously with other species on Earth. From the time of the first rains retreat after the Buddha attained enlightenment, for more than 2500 years, the Buddhist cleric community (Saṅgha) have kept up with the practice of observing the rains retreat. During the rainy season, the grounds are teeming with life – insects and seedlings all compete to be nourished by the fertile earth. In order not to hurt these life forms, Buddhist monastics voluntarily restrict their activities within a small area for the three months of rainy season. We take the initiative to step back and give these living beings the space and time that they need to grow, to freely and safely roam the earth. In so doing, we show our respect for the living space of these living beings and their equal right of living on Earth. This kind of respect is the basis for the establishment of a harmonious relationship between man and nature. Perhaps this practice itself cannot be transplanted wholesale into today's consumerist society, however the spirit behind this practice should be given a long hard look, especially when we are looking to resolve our environmental crises – the value of this spirit behind rains retreats should be revisited, and promoted and implemented in different ways in different levels of society.

We should learn from the practice of the rains retreat how to protect wild animals and to inculcate the attitude of co-existing harmoniously with nature - for the sake of wild animals on the verge of extinction, and for the sake of other living beings, we should give back voluntarily the space and time they need for their survival. We should act to conserve the wetlands and forests from illegal intrusion and commercialized denudation, to oppose unscrupulous slaughter of endangered species such as whales, and other wild animals. Even the economic recovery is no excuse for destroying the ecological environment. To spare room for the survival of other species is to spare room for our own survival, and room for the sustainable development of economy.

3. Compassion

Buddhism is a religion of compassion. Compassion has always been a Buddhist ethical principle. Compassion means that we cherish not only our own life, but also the lives of other sentient beings. All Buddhists, be they laymen or laywomen who have taken refuge in the Triple Gem, or monks and nuns, must

observe the training rule of abstention from harming the lives of living beings. Advocating compassion and getting more people to learn and follow the Buddhist training rule of non-killing has far-reaching bearing on the resolution for the extinction crisis of endangered species.

People often turn a blind eye to the fact that every kind of animal and plant are indispensable parts of ecological conditions for human survival. They also turn a blind eye to the fact that the meat that people eat on the table everyday daily, is also taken from bodies of sentient beings. Human eating habits are one of the main root sources causing the current environment crisis. Today, except for a minority of vegetarians, most people in the world eat meat every meal and every day. Although most meat-source is from an animal farm, many meals originate from the wild. Because humans covet a few minutes of delicacy, a large number of wild animals continue to suffer from the misfortune of being killed. An example, on point, is the shocking pictures of Japan's slaughtering of whales and dolphins which dyed the sea red. Imagine: every day, 60 billion people feeding on the meat of animals – what a terrifying scene it is! This to the animals on the earth is an absolute calamity – a calamity from human eating habits. Some animals are directly eaten by human beings, but still more are starved to death because their food-sources are seized by human beings. When species-diversity declines day by day, as one of the species on one planet, the crisis of human survival is impending.

According to Buddhism, to be compassionate to other sentient beings is as good as being compassionate to ourselves. If these 60 billion people could change their meat-eating habits – even if it is only for those few months in a year when the animals breed – then this would have a decisive impact for the protection of wild animals and salvaging of endangered species. To reduce the meat consumption and to encourage people starting on a vegetarian lifestyle, these will contribute immensely to the protection of the integrity of ecological chain and keeping ourselves out of meat-eating-related health problems.

4. Heedfulness and Perseverance

People often think in a selfish way: in this whole wide world, what is a little consumption on my part, what is a little indulgence by just this one 'me', how would this contribute to any serious harm on the Earth and its environment? For the environmental crisis to reach today's scale, individual contribution is not all that negligible. Damage is cumulative, a little indulgence by one individual multiplied by six billion – roughly the total population on Earth – equals to the reality of environmental crisis we face today.

The key to the resolution of environmental crises lies in the human rationality that distinguishes needs from wants and the willingness to possess only what one needs and not what he wants. It needs active participation of each and every one of us; and each individual has a responsibility in this. And it is simple if only people change their daily habits. For instance, if the world can go to sleep just one hour earlier in the night, although each one person saves only a little electricity a day, but 365 days a year, with six billion population on the planet, the cumulative saving of electricity will be an astronomical figure, which means sparing several coal mines and oil fields, averting a lot of environmental damages, and giving more room for the future generations. Therefore, even only a little everyone can save; it is invaluable and can contribute to make a great miracle in the environmental protection. A life of frugality is not only a virtue, but also a survival instinct. Without such an instinct, the extinction of our species may not be too far away.

The attitude towards environmental protection also shows the attitude we live our life. And that attitude is embodied in every living detail. The most important thing in the environment protection is to start doing it ourselves. For example, in winter, we can put on more warm clothes than turning on the heater; cut down on the use of air-conditioning in summer time; turn off lights that are not necessary; cut down on the use of private vehicles and commute using public transport; and to go green when building houses by using energy-saving designs and material etc.

Because the environmental protection cannot prevail overnight, it requires our effort and perseverance. We have to make it a life habit, and keep doing it from generation to generation, so that our future generations can live a safe environment.

Part IV: Conclusion

As mentioned above, a secure environmental condition is the biggest capital for economic recovery. If any stimulus policy causes further destruction to the environment, a possible environmental crisis will in turn undermine healthy economic recovery, or at worst, cause the entire economy to collapse. Therefore, any endeavor for economic recovery must take into account its impact on the environment protection. Only then can economy recover from the recession.

It is very important that we display our courage and resourcefulness in correcting the erroneous part of the current economic structure. If we were to avoid the recurrence of financial crisis and economic recession, the economic growth must find its better sustainability away from excessive consumption. And it is better off for environmental conservation as well. Hence, a healthy economic recovery and environmental protection can happen only when man brings greed under control.



The Buddhist teaching has a great significance in remedying the global environmental crisis, as well as tackling root cause of global economic recession. According to *the Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa-sūtra*⁵, “if a Bodhisattva who wishes to accomplish the purity of land, should abide in a pure mind; as his mind becomes pure, so does his land.” Likewise, to purify our mind is foremost in purifying and protecting our world. The environmental protection has to begin in the mind. If we can subdue our greed, develop a mental attitude of equanimity and compassion towards other sentient beings, and be heedful and perseverant in conserving our environment, the resolution of the human survival crisis arising from environmental deterioration is still within our reach.

Abbreviations

DN	<i>Dīgha Nikāya</i>
Sn	<i>Suttanipāta</i>
T	<i>Taishī Shinshyū Daizokiyī</i>

⁵ T14, p538c.

Integrated Comprehension of Dharma Teaching Through Direct Field Activities: Integration of Education for Dhamma and the Environment

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Background Information:

As an environmental educator, the writer finds during his activities, that the environment itself and the ecology are the best media to let people further understands Buddha's teachings. On field, people (particularly students) would learn the interdependency, attachment, on Kamma's cause and effect, which they'll discover during the activities.

They will also experience on firsthand how *metta* will be implemented upon activities such as habitat recovery, re-forestation, fostering, conserving and cleaning of the waters (from the springs down to the seas). It is the real implementation of "Sabbe Satta Bavantu Sukhitata". It is the methodology which is important, not just a mere biology, ecology or environmental science to make people understand on the Dhamma.

It is important that people, particularly the young students to deeply learn about the conditions of the environment, which is at present at an alarmingly critical situation: with various threats of global warming, acid rain, drought, flood, typhoons, landslides (erosion), tsunamis and many other kinds of geological disasters. These create or interlink to further problems and disasters: hunger, diseases, poverty, and violence - all leading towards bad conditions. These happen all around the globe. Serious actions should be taken to overcome all these, if humans want to stop all these sufferings.

Integration of Dharma teachings with ecology – environment field activity will make young students comprehend the need to implement necessary actions: *sabbe satta bavantu sukhitata*. It is important to take care of every basic elements of the environment: the abiotic factors (air, water, soil and energy), and the biotic factors (living organisms: plants, animals and humans) – all intermixed in a very complex, versatile and complicated relationship (interactions) to create life on earth,

all depend on each other; when one suffers then all the other components will also eventually be affected to a various degree of devastation.

THE MAIN PRINCIPLES:

The ecology:

Life on earth depends on two fundamental processes: matter cycling and the one-way flow of high-quality energy from the sun, which penetrates through matter and living things on or near the earth's surface, and into space as low-quality heat. The basic principles of ecology are about the interdependency of the organic/biotic factors with the inorganic/abiotic matters. The organic elements are, of course: plants & animals (this includes humans); while the inorganic material consists of: soil/earth (including: stone, sand, mud and other minerals); water (fresh and salt water); air (oxygen, CO₂, Nitrogen and other substances); and energy (sun light, fire, electricity). The interrelations of these elements are complex, and ideally should be in balance *keseimbangan*, so that the living organism could live in a good state. Should there be any unbalanced situation, of whatever degree, to either elements - it creates problems: pollution and erosions – landslides or floods.

The relations of all factors are in the form of cycles; some important cycles are:

- water cycle: water from water bodies (lake, river, sea), vapor, clouds, rain, springs into river
- oxygen-carbon cycle: oxygen – animals and human – carbon-dioxide – plants - oxygen
- nitrogen cycle: nitrogen (by process of sun light) – plants – animals – decomposition – nitrogen
- other cycles: phosphorous, sulfur, organic substances cycles; food chain, producers – consumers pyramid, decomposition

All forms of life depend the existence on the multitude of materials that are composed of:

- solid lithosphere: soil ,sand, stone and minerals, the upper surface or crust of the earth
- the gaseous atmosphere: the air above the earth surface
- the hydrosphere, water, ice, snow, on all earth' s surface
- the biosphere: parts of the three above in which living organisms can be found..The biosphere contains all water, mineral, oxygen, nitrogen, phosphorous and other nutrients that living organisms need.

All living things - human life and other forms of life also depend on the **culture-sphere**; as human with its' intellect: the use of human ingenuity and knowledge are able to extract, produce, and manage the use of matter, energy, and biological resources to enhance human survival and life quality. A major input of ecology into the culture-sphere is that all forms of life on earth are directly or indirectly interconnected. In order to prolong human survival and life quality, we must not blindly destroy other plants and animal life – human must learn to work with and not against nature.

*“The goal of ecology is to find out how
everything in the biosphere is related.”*

- G.Tyler Miller – 1982

Environmental ethics:

Some basic beliefs of some people in industrialized countries hold toward nature can be expressed in eight basic attitudes:

- Humans are the source of all value (anthropocentric). We are apart from and above nature.
- Nature exists only for our use. Our role is to conquer and exploit nature so it can be used to further human goals.
- Our primary purpose is to produce and consume material goods. Material wealth is the best measure of success.
- Matter and energy resources are unlimited because of human ingenuity in making them available.
- Production and consumption of goods must rise endlessly because we have the right to an ever increasing material standard of living.
- We need not to adapt ourselves to the natural environment because we can remake it to suit our own needs by means of science and technology.
- a major function of the state is to help individuals and corporations to exploit the environment to increase wealth and power. The most important nation-state is the one that can command and use the largest fraction of the world's resources.
- the ideal person is the self-made individualist who does his or her own thing and hurts no one.

Although we may not accept these statements, most of us individually, corporately, and politically do as if we did. (Miller pp. 591)

Mahatma Gandhi stated that the earth provides enough for humans' need but not for humans' greed. But humans act contrarily as if it means for their survival, for their self-preservation, which only point to their self-centeredness, where individuals concentrate primarily on satisfying their present “wants” (a now-oriented society) instead of their own present and future needs and the needs of future generations, as well as of other forms of life on earth.

Most of the philosophy – belief stated above are abominably self-centered (anthropocentric), which believes that people are in charge of – not merely a part – of nature. These attitudes are ruling almost all over the world, also in the countries with Eastern beliefs and ethics. Many modern scholars and experts now believe that the answer might lay on eastern philosophy; for example Buddhism, Zen, Taoism and Hinduism (Miller pp. 592).

Definitions and Practices of Environmental Education:

Environmental education is perceived as and manifested as educational programs designed to increase public awareness to the environmental issues and problems, and to provide individuals or groups of individuals with an understanding of environmental issues and the skills to enable them to take roles and participates in environmental problem solving. Main goals of environmental education (Tbilisi, 1977), are:

- to foster clear awareness of, and concern about economic, social and ecological interdependence in urban and rural areas
- to provide every person with opportunities to acquire the knowledge, values, attitudes, commitment and skills needed to protect and improve the environment
- to create new patterns of behavior of individuals, groups and society as a whole towards the environment

In practice, environmental education integrates multi cognitive aspects like the affective and psychomotoric skills of the individuals, so that they can build empathy, understanding, knowledge – towards how to solve the problems. A good environmental education practice should be able to integrate these aspects using the available environment as the media and to motivate people to do actions

DHAMMA TEACHINGS:

“Sabbe satta bavantu sukhitatta”

May all beings be in happiness

It is one of the main important Dhamma teachings, which reflects Buddhist ethics on human conduct to other creatures. This will lead into other Dhamma guidance: showing and implementation of *Metta* (love and care for other beings), *Karuna* also on *Kamma*. The guidelines mentioned in the Dhammapada are basic ethical injunctions proposed by most world religions, but in the Buddha's teaching they are freed from theistic moorings and grounded upon two directly veritable foundations concern for one's integrity and happiness and welfare for other beings.

Life is not an isolated process commence with birth and ending in death. Each single lifespan is part of a series of lives having no discoverable beginning in time and continuing on as long as the desire for existence stands intact. Rebirth can take place in various realms of human beings and animals, on higher level we meet heavenly worlds of greater happiness, beauty and power and on lower level we find infernal worlds of extreme sufferings. *Kamma* is the cause of rebirth. *Kamma* determines the sphere into which rebirth take place, wholesome actions bringing rebirth in higher forms, unwholesome actions rebirth in lower forms.

It is clear that in the Buddhist's teaching, all forms of living beings are interrelated, particularly as they are the same individuals of being in different forms. Therefore, care and love for other beings and creatures is basic and important in Buddhist ethic and moral.

Planning and the Implementation of Integrated Environmental – Dhamma Education Methodology:

The basic principle of Integrated Environmental – Dhamma education program is based on the Noble Eightfold Path, which is arranged into three groups of training as mentioned in the Dhammapada. They are: moral–ethic discipline, concentration, and wisdom. By training in morality-ethics, the coarse form of mental defilements are kept under control

On the environmental-education side, people are taken into scientific-ecological understanding of the relations among all matters; whether living or non living matters, as they are dependent to each other. It will bring people to have empathy, and will have to take concrete steps which are based on one's personal perception of moral, ethics and the life's philosophy.

Facilitator(s) should have enough knowledge of both Dhamma teachings and some environmental science of various aspects: chemistry, physics, biology, sociology, culture, economy, health and others, at least have basic knowledge. It would be much better if the (candidate/prospective) facilitator has passed some training of trainers (TOT) of this methodology. The implementation of this program

is important to prepare the activity in detail in the form of “*term of reference*” - TOR. It contains details of the plans, with itemized-points mentioned below:

Topics/Themes:

It is important to start the planning of an Environmental-Dhamma education program by determining the topic or the main theme as the basis for detailing the activities. The topic will lead to the objectives or targets to reach. Also, there are other details: the methodologies, media, equipments and facilities.

Aims/Targets/Objectives:

There should be a clear parameter on what the program will reach. It is the final result that particularly will affect the target group, and any better changes they might have. It could be in the form of better understanding on ecological-ethical and moral aspects on Buddhist- Dhamma teachings on environmental problems, up to clear, tangible actions to improve environment’s and life's quality.

Target groups:

This is the group of people to whom the program is addressed. We should know in detail about them from the perspective of the program. Important points that we should take into consideration are: age group, education background, former understanding and knowledge on the topics (related Dhamma teachings), person’s character (active or passive, dynamic, sportive etc.).

If the facilitator knows the target group, it will be easier to design the program; plan a suitable one, fit needed methodologies and others: facilities, equipments, media, safety factors in the fields. If needed, we as the program facilitator should meet a few times with the prospective target group. We should talk to them, and even better if we can design the program together with them, at least some of them as their representative. By knowing the target group more personally, the chance of success of the program will be bigger.

Methodology process:

Before starting anything, it is suggested that the facilitator(s) review the detailed methodology process. It should show the link of the processes from the very start to the end as a smooth flow, passing each step as a continuing activity. The participants should enjoy and could follow them without any confusion, and move along forward. Therefore a good detail plan is much in need.

Facilities and media, equipments:

As the leader of the program, the facilitator should prepare the needs to support the good running and success of the activity. It is related to the theme and topics. Proper, good equipments, facilities and media should be ready and in hand when needed. All of these needs are dependable on the program design, and the quantity depends on how many participants are participating.

The media and facilities are including whether a meeting – gathering room is needed, the audio visual, multimedia, or just simple media such as pictures, posters, pamphlets. While the equipment needed also depend on the methodologies used: binoculars, magnifier, or more sophisticated items: telescope, photography camera, video and audio visual multimedia. For simple experiments, there are simple chemical tests to identify pollutant-substances: such as nitrates, nitrites, phosphates, sulfates, sulfites and heavy-metals, and other substances. Basic personal items for writing, (paper and writing-utensil) should be in hand.

Preparation, Introduction, Pre-Analyzing

At the preparation stage, facilitator should check everything which is needed for the activity, the order of actions, and also objects needed. It is better if there is a checklist, so that we can find right away if everything is ready.

The program starts with an introduction on the aims, activities that will be done, and also about the background. Everyone should be clear on what to expect, as far as the results are concerned, after doing the whole activity, both from the organizers and the participants. It will be also used to evaluate whether the program reached the goals or not.

There should be enough basic information on the topic, the context both of the Dhamma teachings and the ecology knowledge. It is needed as there should be clear and mutual understanding and perception on the terms and definitions. It will avoid misunderstanding and confusions.

It will be useful to implement a kind of pre-program analysis of the participants, particularly if the facilitator does not know well the participants/target group. From this activity, the facilitator could adjust the depth of the issue, the right method to use, and how to handle the group appropriately. There are some models of this activity: questions and answers, illustrating the participants' knowledge by drawing, writing texts or comments, role play and other forms.

Field activities:

Field activities are the major and interesting part of the whole program; particularly for young students and adults alike. Still it depends on the communication skills and knowledge of the facilitator who handle it. The success of the program depends on the smooth running of this main activity. It will be effective if the field activity is done with small groups; ideally about seven to ten people. It is expected that each individual participant could participate singly; if that's the case, the result will influence every one - and guarantee good success.

Some methods to be used during the field activity should be simple, easy and entertaining at the same time, and not very rigid, scientifically. This program is not scientific research, the main aim is *to touch* the heart and mind, to change the perception or misunderstanding on how to see things all-around and create better a better attitude and conduct - based on Dhamma ethics. The methods are:

Observation:

The simplest and easy activity should be focused on the items needing to be observed. The activity is based on focusing on the item(s) and to see them in detail, analyzing on the details and make some recording. For young children it is a good practice for the psychomotoric exercise. It is also to train the cognitive aspects, and their affects on the observed item. Elderly people will also enjoy this activity.

Comparative Study:

This activity is actually the combination of two or more observations. After doing the observations, the participants are asked to compare the results, then do some analysis and recording. It will train further one's cognitive, affective and psychomotoric skills.

Simple Experiments:

An interesting activity, this is the favorite for the youngsters to do. The participants will be asked to do some further steps by adding some substances, mixing, crushing and other activities using the psychomotoric skills. Afterwards, there should be some analysis and conclusions on what happens and future chances occurring.

Combination:

It is a mix with other activities. It is particularly designed for older participants, as its nature is more dynamic and creative. Some are mixed with sport activity (tree climbing, to observe the canopy of the top of trees), art activities such as photography and other skills such as mathematics, economy, socio-cultural and politics. This activity is more suitable for older groups such as older secondary school students and young university students.

Combined with more serious topics such as the economy, socio-political aspects, this program relates to contemporary global problem-issues. Issues of nature exploitation, health and sanitation and other deeper discussions would direct people with higher understanding on Dhamma teachings on global justice, fair treatments of the strong-wealthy people and nations towards the plights of the other side. It is an opportunity for deepening and practicing true Dhamma ethics and moral conducts widely, along with other tangibles.

Analyzing:

There should be one particular session where participants could sit and do the analysis on the data they obtain during field activities. It is an important part of the program - from this event we can know if the program meets its goals or not. From the analysis done by participants, the facilitator(s) will realize whether there is a change to a better understanding on the environment problems and their attitudes on Dhamma ethics or not. During the analyzing stage, it should be directed that the view is from both Dhamma and ecological aspects.

Summarizing:

Participants should summarize what and how the environment condition is of the field-site that was observed. Also they should view it on how they are from the Dhamma ethics and moral guidance. These steps should be done by the participants, although the facilitator(s) could assist and give some advice or directions if necessary.

Action plan:

This is the final step to resume if the program reaches the goals/aims as expected. The success can be seen from how the participants are planning for their next plan to solve the environmental problems that they have analyzed. It should be

also clear whether they have absorbed and were inspired by Dhamma guidelines pertaining to ethics and moral responsibility - towards other beings or not.

Case Study Example #1:

1. “Water for life” - September 2006, Purwodadi – East Java, Indonesia; 2 days & 1 night program: target group - 35 Secondary-school students, ages 13-15 years old. Aims: to study water pollution, the cause and the problems, and the attitudes and perception of the group.

Methodology, facilities, media and equipments:

Using the observation and experiments methods, students are directed to do their activities by themselves under guidance from the facilitators. Observation were done while walking along the stream, and observations of water quality at various spots from upstream to downstream, passing agricultural farms, rice fields, villages and some light industry compounds. They should also observe if the stream water is used for households and human needs. To know the basic pollutants, some simple test kits is used, also some simple physics tests: temperature, clarity, smell – while tasting is certainly should be avoided and prohibited.

While observing the stream, they have to watch living creatures as well, around and in the water: how dependent are they on the stream? Simple equipment is used: magnifying glass, sieve, a net. In fact the clearer and the better quality of the water, there will be more living creatures, *the micro benthos*, *plankton* and various larger water animals: *crustacea* (shrimp species), *mollusca* (mollusks) and fish.

Experiments are done by testing the water-quality accurately by doing some simple chemical tests. There were also experiments on how water is polluted, directly and indirectly, by nature and humans. Then they learned how the pollution affects humans and the welfare of other living beings. Some water treatment samples and water-conservation measures were also practiced.

Analysis and summary:

The participants found it is unethical to pollute the water, as it will kill many living beings in the water, and indirectly also to human and other creatures whose lives certainly need water. Somehow, it is human *kamma*, for us to use and create waste water. Therefore, human should ethically try their best when using water. We should do it with awareness and do some treatment so that there would be less polluted substances.

Action-plan:

With better understanding on the ecological problems facing the stream's water and also Dhamma teachings on ethics and moral conduct, the students participants planned to do further actions with the water:

- respect the life of various creatures, particularly whose life depend on the water
- save the use of water, not to waste it
- polluted waste water should be put in special treatment-area
- try to do some simple water treatment to reduce pollutants in the water before throwing away
- try to protect the welfare of all creatures in the water

Case Study Example #2:

“The Wonderful Life Supporting Banjan Tree” - October 2007, Trawas – East Java, Indonesia: 1 day program. Target group: families - 35 persons, various ages and backgrounds. Aims: to study the ecology of a Banjan tree (*Ficus* sp.) and how rich the various lives are existing on the tree. Also to learn the interactions, interdependence of the various creatures to the tree. How *metta*, *karuna* and *mudita* could be implemented, related to *sabbe satta bavantu sukhitatta*.

Methodology, facilities, media and equipments:

The methodology used at this program was observation. At a certain stop on a nature trail path, participants stopped and watched a Banjan tree. From some distance the group used binoculars; some also took photographs of it. Getting closer, more detailed observations were done from the bottom part, which is the roots above the soil to the trunk, branches to the top canopy of the tree. They used magnifying glass. Participants carefully observed other living things, if they could find any, in and on the tree. Then, they wrote the findings on their notes.

The participants found various living and remnants of living creatures, particularly those that could be seen with naked eyes. They were from the animal world: gastropodes, insects, worms, small reptiles, birds and small mammals; also, there were various living-plants: various lichens, ferns, orchids and also parasite plants. Using larger magnifiers, they also found microscopic creatures.

Analysis and summary:

The participants made a list of all the living and remnants of creatures, then analyzed the interconnection of all the creatures discovered. Also they

discussed: why and how the creatures lived on the tree. From the Dhamma teaching guidelines, the participants discussed the implementation of *metta*, *karuna*, *mudita*. They also were concerned with the existence of the tree, if the tree should be cut for various reasons, too many living creatures would be suffering. On the other hand, if more trees and plants were planted, it would be additional habitat and food for their life.

Actions plan:

The participants planned to save the tree and promote the conservation of it. They also would take care more to other living things, to express *metta*, *karuna* and *mudita*. They also planted trees on critical lands, deserted and open areas to make more shelter for various animals.

SUMMARY and CONCLUSION:

Implementation of Integrated Environment – Dhamma Education Program particularly for laypeople – young and old, is an appropriate methodology, for showing basic Dhamma teachings on *metta*, *karuna* and *mudita* while directly also raising environmental awareness at both of local to global level. It takes people to *think globally and act locally*.

It shows how to implement direct ethical and moral conduct through Dhamma teachings within real daily life. It will also help to solve some environmental-field problems. This methodology will be suitable for *Dhammadutas* to spread Dhamma through easy, entertaining, and appropriate and effective measures. By doing some light practical exercises such as: observation or comparative studies through small experiments or combined with serious topics; economy, politics, health or art – this will be an effective tool for action to be further picked up on by *Dhammaduta* candidates, for setting people upon the Noble Eight Paths, and also for solving or making environmental improvements within the field-area. It is expected that this practical methodology should be accepted as one of the tools in spreading Dhamma messages.

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A Story of Leaves - Deforestation and the Challenge: the Buddhist Perspective

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The Leaves

Leaves are a miracle which control the energy stream inside the biosphere life on the earth surface. Leaves give many chances to many species to breathe and proliferate to continue their species existence. The key is the calorie inside the food chain. The calorie that flows from one food chain to another, starts from a leaf-stem, which, at the extended meaning refers to: an organ, the net, or an individual-cell's chlorophyll. No other substantial can directly take solar power; and then bring this energy into the food chain's system except leaf.

Inside the leaf's cell there is an amazing mechanism: when the sun light shines, just within a few millionths of a second, the sun's photon energy moves its position, changes its form, becoming chemical energy inside a number of molecules catalyst. They force open the water's molecules efficiency, produce oxygen (O₂) then release it to the air and the free hydrogen atom is ready to endure the next reaction.²

At the same time, the leaf's stomata open the seal to make sure that the carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the air comes in the exact number of a series reaction. Inside that leaf cells, the catalyst and the free hydrogen side by side each other. The chemistry reaction passes off again but now without the solar energy.

With an incredible speed, this second reaction (it is called dark photosynthesis) produces the first level's organic compound, C-H-O, with three or four carbons which become the more stable base organics ingredient: such as sugar or fat.

That is the way of leaves do their jobs from dawn until the sunset. The result is plenty of organic materials, more than the need of the food-chain itself.

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² Gatra (special ed.). *Mandat Bali: Selamatkan Bumi* (Bali Mandate: Save the earth), 2007, op. cit. 10.

The decomposition process by the various microbes does not make the whole organic material's waste finished. In fact, the layer of organics in the soil has been formed, there can emerge peat moss, and other organic deposits, under the right conditions. All of them keep the chemical energy received from the sun light.

The Earth

The planet earth also walks onward since its evolution after being created by the Big Bang as a gas-tank six billion years ago. The earth, then became cooler and solid. The first leaf was born at 2.4 billion years ago in a form of single cell with chlorophyll. The earth evolves along with the geology evolution of the earth itself. Indeed, according to the scientist, there's a first generation of forest on the earth around 350 million years ago.

The earth's evolution, colored by multiple geologic phenomenons, deformed the earth layer. The earth's plates shift up and down. In many places, forest and thickets are buried by the stones. After millions of years, below the surface, when the temperatures reach 82°C, organic ingredients below 2500 meters deep change into oil. At 5000 meters below the surface with the heat almost 154°C, the organic ingredients change form into gas.³ When developed, oil and gas are inclined to flow from its created-initial place and often becomes trapped inside the broken fragments of the earth's layers. There are many organic materials which struggle in the earth surface. They also experience their own processes, and are molded or fossilized, much material becomes coal.

Archeological evident point that the Rome's soldiers who conquer England had burned coal since the second and third century. The invention of the steam machine at the first Industry revolution increased the consumption and burning of coal. Fossil oil was first produced as a commodity in Titusville, Pennsylvania, United States, in 1859 by Edwin L. Drake.⁴ In only a short time, it has become the calorie that moves civilization. Lately, the fossil-fuels inhaled from the stomach of the earth have become the most valued energy resource.

The Problems

In, only about, 150 years, 920-billion barrels of fossil-fuels have been pumped out from the stomach of earth – and consumed by humanity. It has been enough to make the earth's atmosphere get worst because of the carbon dioxide

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

(CO₂) residue accumulating from the burning process to induce global warming, without mentioning the residue from the burning of coal and gas. Since the 19th century, Svante Arrhenius⁵, a Sweden scientist, warned the world's industry to exercise restraint in the consumption of fossil fuels. Over the past 20 years, the global communities have tried to find a way to seriously reduce carbon emissions. Moreover, only within the last 10 years, have real steps of mitigation been accomplished.

A variety of schemes are being worked on by many countries to oppose increases of carbon dioxide (CO₂) concentrations and emissions, and other gasses that induce and add to the effects of global warming. Over-usage makes carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other gasses pile up in the air and cause global warming. There's a tendency now for first-world countries to use fossil fuels much more efficient, lately; but, this is not enough to diminish the amounts of the ever-increasing carbon dioxide (CO₂) concentration and other gasses which cause global warming effects. One of the agenda items, in the United Nations Conference of the Climate Change in Bali, was to use tropical forests as carbon dioxide storehouses.

In the old scheme, the original management of the usage of forests is reputed not sufficient enough; whereas, with the incident of its leaves, the forest areas as well as the seas, convince us that it will give contributions in the mitigation against the global warming, *if managed properly to allow for the increase in forest-growth*.

Forests become the spotlight and also our hopes; but the question is: can forest leaves save humanity from climate change symptoms? Are leaves in the forest able to absorb all of the carbon dioxide (CO₂) gasses which split out from millions of factories chimney, hundred millions of cars and motor bikes muffler, thousand of power plants which use the fossil fuel, and other carbon emission resources?

In a piece of paper, obviously the forest will unable to handle that hard job. Waiting for a new miracle that the forest will adapt with the new environment which full of carbon dioxide (CO₂), and with the hope that the forest will increase its ability to absorb those gasses, are something that won't come. According to Chantal D. Reid's research⁶, for over 4 years: 15 species of plants show that the increase of carbon dioxide (CO₂) level in the air influences the stomata's frequency to open and close. The leaves can't suddenly swallow more carbon dioxide (CO₂) just only because there are much gasses available in the air.

The miracle of leaves maybe just only preparing the calories for the living in this earth, but the evolution process of leaves has not had sufficient time to change the atmosphere composition drastically over the last 150 years. Excessive emissions

⁵ Op. cit, p.11.

⁶ Ibid.

are not the responsibility of leaves in the forest or plankton in the sea; how can we give the mitigation business to the forest and the seas if among ourselves we don't reduce pollution *and replace what we take*? The mitigation should come from our willingness to control our selves. This paper offers an approach to the problem through Buddhist teachings centered on interconnectedness, non-violence, and conditionality - all contributing to both a practice and understanding that augments and honors ecological paradigms.

The Forest and the Buddhist Teaching

Things only exist in a relationship and connection with other things. In fact so much so that the boundaries between things are only useful conventions, provisionally true, but by no means absolute. The Buddhist scholar Donald Swearer writes:⁷

“Many Buddhist practitioners have found in one of the central ideas of Buddhism – the principle of interdependence – an ecological vision that integrates all aspects of the ecosphere—particular individuals and general species—in terms of the principle of mutual co-dependence. Within this cosmological model individual entities are by their very nature relational, thereby undermining the autonomous self over against the “other” be it human, animal, or vegetable.”

Nature and its life is a unity and interconnected to each other. One action will influence the whole system directly or indirectly and has an important meaning to other lives. The concept of interconnectedness is not easy to understand. This concept in Buddhism is called *paṭiccasamuppāda*. Capra⁸ has written to determine, that: *paṭiccasamuppāda* is the interconnectedness of all of life's process. EEIU (Eco-Ethic International Union)⁹ has the same concept with *paṭiccasamuppāda* that there is an interaction between humans and their environment. There is no life including human's that can live life, alone. This is because humans are a part of the ecosystem. Ecosystem components consist of living components and nonliving components that are interconnected to each other in complicated ways.

⁷ <http://www.ecodharma.com/our-influence-ideas/Buddhism-ecology>

⁸ Capra, Fritjof. *Jaring-Jaring Kehidupan: Visi Baru Epistemologi dan Kehidupan* (Web of Life: The New Vision of Epistemology and Life). Yogyakarta: Fajar Pustaka Baru. 2002, p. 434.

⁹ <http://www.eubios.info/EJ115/EJ51.html>.

The fact that the forest's entire world is a very important carbon-absorption area is difficult to be denied. Jarko Koskela¹⁰ and friend's paper, from the University of Helsinki, Finland report that from the 120-billion tons of carbon equivalent that been absorbed by all vegetation in this world, 80% happens in the forest. Agriculture lands absorb only 9% and tropical forest 20%. The rest is the boreal forest which is located at the high altitude.

The boreal forest absorbent capacity is almost 26%. Even the extension absorbent rate of leaves in this boreal forest is low, but totally the absorbent capacity is higher than the tropical forest because the region is large. Mean while the forest in the temperate altitude contribute the 7%.

Forest not just only absorb the carbon—in the form of CO₂, but at the same time it is also gives a lot of carbon emission through the respiration process. Carbon deposits happen if the absorbent rate of CO₂ is more than its respiration. It is marked with the increase of biomass in that forest area. Some experts said that from each of the Bering weight unit (its water content is zero) of the organic material—starting from the peak of leaf, branch, stalk, root, until at the *offal* of the forest floor—half of it is carbon.

If individual-vegetation dies, it releases carbon back to the atmosphere. Its ability to absorb carbon dioxide (CO₂) through photosynthesis totally stops. What happen next is: various microbes decompose that organic material, and return it to its base material. Felling of trees in the forest is called the release process of carbon's return to the atmosphere. In his paper, Jarko Koskela¹¹ declared 10-20 million hectares per year of deforestation rate had released 1.6-2.2 million tons of carbon to atmosphere. That number is huge, considering that overall carbon emission which is caused by fossil fuel (oil, gas, and coal) consumption average “only” 5.5 billion tons—equal with 19 billion tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂).

Human activities convert a lot of forests. Forest that functions as the carbon dioxide absorbers are converted to field-plantations, housing, and industries. The impacts of these problems are beyond the ecological impact; they also have economical impact. Damaging the ecology affects the economy and makes for bad politics.

The heat-index in the atmosphere raises when the carbon dioxide (CO₂) is absorbed back by the entire potential of the earth. But in fact, it can't be happen now because the earth's nature gets deficit-experience: the amount of carbon dioxide that is released into the atmosphere is much more than the amount that it can reabsorb.

¹⁰ Putut Trihusodo. *Hutan Tropis Bukan Barang Gratis* (Tropical Forest is not for Free), 2007, op.cit. p.76.

¹¹ Ibid.

The heat absorbent gasses become more and more stacked in the atmosphere causing the bad effect now known as global warming.

Tropical forest becomes the earth's mainstay in carbon absorption because of its potential for absorbing the carbonic acid gasses faster and in a much greater amount. The plenitude of sun light and water throughout the year is a big potency for the photosynthesis process, and also its biodiversity, providing various trees with the ability to grow up quickly.

Forest trees—at its top formation, can absorb carbon as much as they can release it into the atmosphere through the respiration of all the living being in the forest, also from the decomposition of the entire dead organ under the forest's stand itself. No more carbon deposit and that is a balance in itself. The balance will exist only if the atmosphere condition is not being disturbed. In the condition that the carbon dioxide (CO₂) increases sharply, the forests' ability to absorb it becomes greater, and the increase of air temperature will stimulate the increment rate of photosynthesis.

Thereby, a pillar of hope for the forest is still relevant. The main object is reforestation for the damage tropical forest. The number currently is 209 million hectares (28%) from the 747 million hectares of tropical forest in the world. If reforestation and the proper cultivation of the whole tropical forest can be done, according Koskela,¹² the carbon potential that can be stored is about 2 billion tons, equal with 7.2 billion tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂). This does not include nor is it compared with 19 billion tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the fossil fuel uses. However, if forest-reclamation is followed by several efforts to reduce the other damaging sectors, carbon concentration in the atmosphere will decrease significantly.

The decision to suggest that tropical forests become carbon warehouse seems to be the rational choice for several countries, including Indonesia. So, the REDD (Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Degradation) scheme is in progress, in order to use the carbon dioxide warehouse as: “warehouse rental-fee” - to be paid by first-world countries. It is not free. This decision can prevent bad situations on the earth since the carbon emissions also exist from the forest itself.

Imagine the conversion of prime tropical forests into agriculture fields. This means: the release of 204 tons of carbon to the air. If the conversion is from a secondary forest, the emission is about 100 tons. That number becomes serious if the forest area that is being converted is a millions hectares. But forests are only one sector. If the first-world countries are not serious about reducing their emission, there's no meaning to the reforestation and keeping an everlasting forest.

¹² Ibid.

We know that mankind has failed to take into account the intimate connections within the ecosystem, between himself and the world, arrogantly charging in with new found technological powers, destabilizing intricate systems of ecological organization - the complexity of which we are only just beginning to realize. We know that subtle strands of influence link our shopping habits and the economies of the developing world; that the chemicals we use in our homes and industries have a pervasive effect throughout the oceans and the skies; that our relative affluence and luxury are inextricably bound up with the poverty and toil of others. If we are to exist in a way which no longer perpetuates the damage done so far, and begin to heal some of the ecological and social wounds we have created, we must appreciate more and more our own interconnectedness and the intimate relations which exist between things in the world around us.¹³

All Buddhist teachings and practice come under the heading of Dharma, which means Truth and the path to Truth. The word Dharma also means “phenomena,” and in this way we can consider everything to be within the sphere of the teachings. All outer and inner phenomena, the mind and its surrounding environment, are understood to be inseparable and interdependent.¹⁴ Life and everything inside the universe is interconnected like a spider web; it is unknown when it starts and ends. McMahan says:

... Everything depends on everything else, altering the balance of the web of life can be—and has been—catastrophic. Thus the concept entails strong ecological imperatives. The many Buddhists and Buddhist-inspired groups engaged in environmental activism routinely cite interdependence or interconnectedness as the conceptual, rationale for the link between the dharma and environmentalism.¹⁵

So does human-beings and the environment; they need each other. Humans need the environment to live in and the environment needs humans to endure.

Phytoplankton in the sea has the same play role as the forest for the gas reduction. Its reduction ability can reach 50 billion metric tons per year. It can be increased by giving such nutrient that contains magnesium. Phytoplankton has a very tiny size, for the kind of *Diatom* or *Dinoflagellate*, its size is only 20 micrometer (1 micrometer = one per billion meter). In fact, for the kind of *Cocolithophorid*,

¹³ <http://www.ecodharma.com/our-influence-ideas/Buddhist-ecology>.

¹⁴ <http://www.arcworld.org/faiths.asp?pageID=66>

¹⁵ McMahan, David L. *The Making of Buddhist Modernism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008, pp. 151-152.

its size is only one per ten of Diatom which is not more than 2 micrometer.¹⁶ Even though its size is very tiny, don't under-estimate its ability. Phytoplankton also has chlorophyll and ability to reduce carbon. This Phytoplankton is just like the invisible wildwood in the sea.

The sea also gives a huge contribution to the worlds climate change. Covering 73% of the large earth's surface, all of the sea-area has big potency to reduce the world's carbon emission, which is lately become a haunting danger for the global warming.

It is not only the forest that can absorb carbon dioxide (CO₂), the sea is also an ecosystem absorbing carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the phytoplankton that lives within. The carbon cycle taking place in the sea is primarily important; some biologist said that only 10% of the carbon cycle is take place in the land, and the rest of it is in the sea.

The increase of the greenhouse gas volume make the earth's temperature rise and this causes global climate change. The rise of the use of fossil energy-resources for transportation, industries, and into households since the industrial revolution in 1850 – we can see how the production processes increase the greenhouse gas volume: carbon dioxide measurements have increased sharply.

The IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change)¹⁷ new report shows that in 2100, the world climate will change drastically if there's no effort to reduce the greenhouse emissions. Carbon dioxide measured in the atmosphere will rise from 350 to 550 ppmv. The earth's temperature will increase 2-4.5°C.

The effect is the increase of the sea level from 14 cm to 43 cm, together with the dropping of the sea pH from 8.2 to become 7.8 [*more acidic*]. The increase of the earth-temperature affects the ecosystem-functions directly. Social politics will change also since the submergence of small islands will trigger changes outside the country's borders.

The sea and the forest have the same potency to reduce carbon. Within one year the land plants can reclaim 52 billion metric tons of inorganic carbon, phytoplankton ability can claim 45 billion to 50 billion metric tons. In fact, in some aspects, sea plants have advantages.¹⁸

On the land, generally the larger plants reduce the most carbon gas, it is to the contrary, in the sea. Even though invisible, the sea full of plants - from this dimension factor: sea plant-life is deeper that land plants are high, because

¹⁶ Hatim Ilwan. *Belantara Laut Pelahap Karbon* (The Sea Forest Which Absorb the Carbon), 2007, op.cit., p. 78.

¹⁷ Op. cit., p. 79.

¹⁸ Ibid.

phytoplankton still live hundreds of meters below the sea surface. The phytoplankton mobile-existence varies also, depending on the season. At the effectiveness factor: land plants need years to produce or mature; on the other hand, phytoplankton only need two or three days to produce - but unfortunately, not many people are concerned about sea conservation.

The Buddhist Perspective:

In order to protect the environment we must protect ourselves. We protect ourselves by opposing selfishness with generosity, ignorance with wisdom, and hatred with loving kindness. Selflessness, mindfulness, compassion, and wisdom are the essence of Buddhism. We train in Buddhist meditation which enables us to be aware of the effects of our actions, including those destructive to our environment. Mindfulness and clear comprehension are at the heart of Buddhist meditation. Peace is realized when we are mindful of each and every step.¹⁹ The Thai monk, Buddhadasa Bhikkhu said, “The entire cosmos is a cooperative. The sun, the moon, and the stars live together as a cooperative. The same is true for humans and animals, trees, and the earth. When we realize that the world is a mutual, interdependent, cooperative enterprise... then we can build a noble environment. If our lives are not based on this truth, then we shall perish.”²⁰

While compassion may follow from an understanding of all life-forms as mutually interdependent, a mere cognitive recognition of interdependence is not enough for an ecological ethic.²¹ We should emphasize the need for training and practice in terms of the threefold path of ethics, meditation and wisdom in order to give rise to a just and sustainable world. We have realized that in order to be a force for social transformation the traditional Buddhist emphasis on individual moral and spiritual transformation must be augmented to address more directly the structures of oppression, exploitation, and environmental degradation. We recognized that the traits of greed, hatred and ignorance, which Buddhism identifies as the root cause of suffering in the individual, also need to be challenged where they are found embodied in systemic and institutionalized forms.

We have to realize that nature is also a part of us, so it is our job to recover nature in order to make all things balanced. We also have to remember that nature can be a teacher for us, as a spiritual force, and nature as a way of life.

¹⁹<http://www.arcworld.org/faiths.asp?pageID=66>

²⁰ <http://www.ecodharma.com/our-influence-ideas/Buddhist-ecology>.

²¹ Ibid.



Buddha taught that respect for life and the natural world is essential. By living simply one can be in harmony with other creatures and learn to appreciate the interconnectedness of all that lives.²² This simplicity of life involves developing openness to our environment and relating to the world with awareness and responsive perception. It enables us to enjoy without possessing, and mutually benefit each other without manipulation.

The Buddha taught that the balance of nature is achieved by the functions of the forest.²³ Survival of the forest is vital to the survival of natural harmony, balance, morality, and environment. Buddhist teachers and masters have constantly reminded us of the importance of living in tune with nature, to respect all life, to make time for meditation practice, to live simply and use nature as a spiritual force. Buddha stressed the four boundless qualities: loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy (delight in the well-being of others), and equanimity (impartiality).

When we try to conquer greed and desire we can start to have inner peace and be at peace with those around us. The teaching of the Buddha, the reflections on Dharma, relate to life as it actually is. Namely to be mindful—receptive, open, sensitive, and not fixed to any one thing, but able to fix on things according to what is needed in that time and at that place. May all beings be peaceful!

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

GLOBAL RECOVERY THROUGH BUDDHIST EDUCATION

Buddhism and Early Childhood Education: Enhancing the Child’s Moral Development from Prenatal Stage to Preschool Ages

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PART A: Buddhism and Early Childhood Education:

Learning is a crucial process for personal growth and human development which requires long-life time. Education is one institution to provide both formal and informal learning. Quality and efficient education not only provides knowledge and skills to the learners, but also teaches moral, ethics and builds quality humans. Education needs to begin since early childhood, and there needs to be the continuing learning in both home and school.

The developmental psychologists accept that early childhood is the important time for personality development. This article focuses on creating moral environment and motivating moral learning from prenatal stage to early years of life (before birth – 6 years). Sigmund Freud, the pioneer in psychoanalysis, emphasizes that the time from birth to 6 years of life is the time to build foundation of personality. Thus, early childhood education plays an important role to create quality learning and personality.

Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory (1979) states that there are many factors affecting the child or individual. These factors are family, school, childcare, community, media, friends, religion, politics, cultural ideology, socio-cultural factors, etc. (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). This article specifically presents the roles of parents, teachers and Buddhism that create environment to enhance the child’s personal growth and moral development.

Parents and child caretakers are the first targets of love and learning for the newborn. Education can be in formal or informal structure. Parents’ and child caretakers’ interaction with the child can stimulate learning. The child first learns from his/her parents and caretakers. When the child grows up, the school environment will expand the child’s social life. Teachers at school will play significant role for the child’s learning outside home. Both parents and teachers can include religion as a part of learning process and living.

Buddhism teaches people to be good, and can also influence good thoughts and good acts throughout one's lifetime. Buddhist practices and living with Buddhist philosophy can shape one's personality with morals and ethics. As Dorbrin (2002) states: morality involves understanding, feeling, being sensitive and making decisions (Dorbrin, 2002). Thus, morality implies to the self-knowing, understanding others and taking responsibility for choices and actions. If parents and teachers want to teach moral and ethics to children, children need to be stimulated to understand themselves first; then, be considerate to others and commit to good actions with self-discipline and self-control which is congruent with Buddhist practices and philosophy. Buddhism emphasizes self-responsibility to live morally, live fully and live meaningfully in life with consciousness, self-awareness, inner peace and inner happiness.

Buddhism can be applied to one's life to create quality humans since prenatal stage. Buddhist teaching can be included in education since early childhood. This article introduces methods for parents and teachers to apply Buddhism to early childhood education by dividing the stages of life as (1.) before pregnancy, (2.) pregnancy stage, (3.) infant and toddler stage (birth – 2 years) and (4.) preschool ages (2 – 6 years). Early childhood education in this article includes all learning that is provided by parents and teachers in both at homes and schools to stimulate learning with morals and ethics.

(1.) Before Pregnancy

The preparation for the child's moral learning can be done before the mother gets pregnant. Before pregnancy, a woman who wants to create good quality and moral offspring is suggested to maintain healthy body, healthy mind and healthy spirit. Buddhism encourages good practices, living with awareness, living with inner peace and living fully in each moment. The goodness in the present time can create good karma which will bring good effects to one's life.

A woman can pray, meditate and perform regular moral practices to attract good soul to be fertilized. Praying can provide the guideline for life direction. When a woman prays, she makes the focus on the areas of life which she wants to concentrate. The woman can pray for the child who has high quality of human being. Her praying will help her focus and prepare to have the good child.

Meditation is another practice for concentration. If the woman wants to enhance goodness and fight with the badness in her soul, meditation can help her concentrate on the good and positive side. Meditation also enhances the focus on life direction that the woman wants. Adequate meditation will help the woman maintain inner-peace, inner-happiness, the sense of solitude, relaxation, healthy mind and

healthy spirit which contribute to healthy body. Meditation will promote the woman's sense of inner security when confronting with challenges in daily life.

Moral practices can be done in many ways. The woman can begin with think good, say good and do good. She can participate in moral activities or some moral tasks which she finds the sense of meaning. Sharing, kindness, empathy and positive regards for others are also moral practices that the woman can perform with her existence. In order to enhance the well-being of the mind and spirit, the woman needs to recognize and appreciate the meaning and fulfillment from her moral practices and perform them sincerely and willingly.

Before becoming the parents, both the man and the woman should explore their strengths, weaknesses, habits and personality. As children can model their parents, the parents can do their self-exploration and decide about the personal qualities that they want to maintain or improve. The moral practices and the active learning can also be the preferable habits to transfer to the child. The well-planned preparation before pregnancy affects the spiritual outcomes that parents want to have the quality child and want to provide good environment for them.

(2.) Pregnancy Stage

When a woman gets pregnant, the physical, psychological and spiritual well-being of the mother will directly affect the unborn child. It is very important that pregnant woman needs to maintain regular good thoughts and practices. The woman's habits and personality to cope and deal with life situation can influence the woman's mental and spiritual health.

The pregnant woman can pray, read moral books, think positively, meditate, live with morality, read good stories, talk to the unborn and teach the unborn to be good. The unborn can sense and receive positive effects from these moral practices. Mother can provide moral environment by listening to the pray, going to temples, participating in Buddhist activities, joining meaningful projects and being with good people.

Punya Nuntabikkhu, Thai respectable monk, recommended 5 ways to attract goodness to one's life and maintain the sense of happiness: first, thinking good; second, saying good; third, doing good; fourth, making relationship with good people; and fifth, being in the place where there is goodness. He urges people to practice goodness in each moment. The person is recommended to think, say and act positively and morally without hurting oneself and others. His teaching implies that the person needs to make choices and choose good practices, good people and good places with conscious mind, self-discipline and self-control for conscious living with goodness.

Pregnant woman needs to practice living with goodness in order to transfer good influences to the unborn. The mind and the spirit of the mother are important to create and stimulate moral learning.

(3.) Infant and Toddler Stage (Birth – 2 Years)

Infancy is the time to build “emotional bonds to other human beings, nonverbal communication and language expression, motor exploration of the physical environment and systematic approaches to learning about people, places and things” (McDevitt & Ormrod, 2004). The child care that is responsive to the nature of infants and toddlers is crucial for their physical, mental, spiritual and moral growth. As McDevitt & Ormrod (2004) emphasize that the environment should be designed for infants’ physical, social and emotional development.

Infants and toddlers need consistency and continuity. Erik Erikson proposes psychosocial theory which explains the psychosocial tasks and development from birth till death. During the first year of life, it is the crucial time to develop the infants’ sense of trust and attachment. The caretakers have the important role to fulfill infants’ basic needs with responsive consideration, consistency and continuity, so the infants can successfully create the sense of trust and attachment toward their caretakers (Thompson et al, 1998; Sternberg & Williams, 2002). The sense of trust and healthy attachment build the strong foundation for personality.

In addition, in order to promote the infants’ sense of trust and attachment, McDevitt & Ormrod (2004) recommend caretakers to enhance “attachment security” by “consistently responding to infants’ needs, regularly expressing affection and permitting infants to influence the pace and direction of their mutual interactions.”

After birth, the infants’ senses and cognition are developing and need stimulation. Parents and caretakers need to respond to the infants’ needs and curiosity. McDevitt & Ormrod (2004) add that it is also very important to understand that “each baby is unique and develops at his or her own rate. The quality of care needs to be emphasized.”

Additionally, the quality of caretakers and children relationship is the most important factor to form “attachment security.” Caretakers need to be “sensitive, responsive” and protect the child in order to develop secure attachment (Chisholm, 1996; NICHD Early Child Care Research Network, 1997).

Parents and child relationship can be enhanced with loving activities and interaction. Parents can sing, pray, teach, talk, touch, hold, massage and interact with the baby with consistency, continuity, kindness, tenderness, sincerity, positive regards and loving. Parents can send good energies from their good souls during

touching, cooking, feeding and interacting with the baby. The infants will sense good energies from parents.

Infants develop sensory motor. They explore and learn about other people and objects. Around 1 year old, children can play by pretending to do some routine activities (Rubin, Fein and Vanderberg, 1983). They also “express playful interactions with others” (Brewer, 2004). Toddlers develop more abilities. They can stand, talk, play and run, etc. Play is the learning tool for toddlers and children. Parents should educate themselves about child development and respond to the child’s unique personality, needs and abilities in their ages.

Parents can provide various activities for toddlers which include both indoor and outdoor ones. Physical activities enhance toddlers’ fine and gross motor development. Healthy body affects healthy mind, good moods and healthy spirits. At these ages, toddlers improve their language ability. Parents can teach morality for what is good or bad, what is allowed or prohibited by employing both verbal and nonverbal languages to toddlers.

Parents themselves need to be the good role models for their toddlers and stimulate the toddlers to learn by doing. There are many moral activities to be performed as a family. Parents can allow toddlers the opportunities to be with good people in all ages which will enhance the positive interaction and feelings in social life. Good grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins, neighbors and other children can enhance interpersonal relationship. Parents supervise toddlers for manners and good practices. Parents can stimulate the child’s expression of sharing, empathy and forgiving.

Kindness, caring and loving are also moral qualities. Toddlers do not just only interact with people, but can also interact with pets, animals and nature. Taking care of pets releases the toddlers’ sense of kindness, caring, loving, sharing, empathy, consideration and affection. The pets need to be taken cared in moral ways. Parents need to be the good role model to appreciate and value pets, trees and nature. Fieldtrips to nature and teaching from parents can raise respect to other life in this world. In addition, parents can take toddlers to “kindness area” or “no-killing area” which is usually in Thai Buddhist temples. Many animals are fed in these areas. Examples of these animals are fish, cows, birds, turtles, ducks, etc. Many children love to feed fishes, turtles, etc. Parents can praise and reward for toddlers’ good acts.

In addition, fieldtrip to Buddhist temples is strongly encouraged, so toddlers will be familiar with Buddhist practices. Parents teach toddlers to meditate, stimulate toddlers to pray in front of Buddha statues, teach toddlers for good acts, encourage toddlers to put the coins in donation boxes, help toddlers give the food to the monks, let toddlers meet the monks, allow toddlers to interact with the monks, let the toddlers walk around the temple, take toddlers to join Buddhist activities, etc.

(4.) Preschool ages (2 – 6 Years)

Preschool ages are the time that many children experience formal education at school. Early childhood education plays an important role to build children's personality, enhance their personal growth and prepare them for formal higher education. It is expected that early childhood education will create "social change and improvement" (Gordon & Browne, 2004). Fromberg (2002) adds that ethical teaching needs to recognize and respect each child's uniqueness in learning (Fromberg, 2002). In early childhood education, teachers play crucial roles for preschoolers' moral development. Teachers themselves need to be kind, loving and practicing good acts. They are also the role models for children at school. Parents, caretakers and teachers need to coordinate with one another to provide the continuing moral learning for the child in both at home and school.

In order to promote young children's moral and spiritual development, the adults need to believe that young children have potentials for spiritual growth. Froebel (1887) expresses that children have "an innate spiritual capacity. Education was meant to build on living core of the child's intrinsic spiritual capacity." Rudolf Steiner (1926) agrees that "children of all levels of development were capable of spiritual experience." This notion is supported by Maria Montessori who believes that "if education recognizes the intrinsic value of the child's personality and provides an environment suited to spiritual growth, we have the revelation of an entirely new child whose astonishing characteristics can eventually contribute to the betterment of the world" (Montessori in Wolf, 1989).

Psychology tries to understand human's behaviors. The human's moral development is explored. Piaget's Theory of Moral Development explains that children, who are younger than 7, are egocentric. The sense of morality is based on the rules imposed by others (Sternberg & Williams, 2002). Lawrence Kohlberg (1963, 1983, 1984) is another person who investigates human's moral development and proposes Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development. He is interested in morality as reasoning for choices. Kohlberg presents 5 stages of moral development. Young children are in level 1 and stage 1 of Kohlberg's Moral Theory which explains that "punishment and obedience are an individual's main concerns. Rules are obeyed because of the threat of punishment for infractions" (Kohlberg; 1963, 1983, 1984). These moral theories imply that young children understand morality in the simple level. They learn what is good or bad from what is told, what results in rewards and what results in punishment. Thus, teachers and parents themselves need to live morally and reward young children for good actions.

Attachment security is another quality that needs to continue throughout one's lifetime. Attachment security creates the sense of self-appreciation, self-worth and inner security as one feels that one is loved, cared, valued and appreciated.

McDevitt & Ormrod (2004) suggest caretakers' roles for continually develop attachment security in later development by "cultivating strong relationships with young children, acknowledging and encouraging multiple attachments with brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, grandparents, neighbors, etc., encouraging sympathetic dispositions in children, encouraging parents to watch their children's play, modeling affectionate thoughtful care giving for family members, helping parents understand how infants and children think and feel and promoting social bonds in all ages" (McDevitt & Ormrod, 2004). Young children's attachment security will help children feel secure, have positive feelings to the ones they love and the ones they feel attached, create good and secure mood and feel good about themselves and life.

Young children need to be taught and stimulated according to their nature and uniqueness. Early childhood is the time that young children express "creativity, fantasy, imagination and drama" (McDevitt & Ormrod, 2004). Preschoolers can "run, skip and dance." Their language development has increased. Preschoolers develop more social skills and express their emotions, affection and trust (McDevitt & Ormsrod, 2004). Preschool children emphasize "the process rather than the product of play." Most of preschoolers' play is about exploration and practice (Brewer, 2004). Children express their joy and interests when they engage in active learning (Mehta, 1995). This is supported by Kerr and Payne (1994) who state that learning by practicing and doing is more effective than watching (Kerr and Payne, 1994) Teachers need to motivate "children's natural energy, curiosity, spontaneity and desires to try on new roles" (McDevitt & Ormrod, 2004). Teachers need to provide various activities for children to choose from their interests, to do and to play. Teachers include moral teaching while doing activities, and praise or give rewards for their moral acts.

The curriculum at school can include morning praying, afternoon praying and meditation to help children be familiar with Buddhist good teaching and good practices. In each day, teachers and children can preserve the time to send good energies to the world together. The monks can be invited to do good activities at school with children. Teachers need to give children opportunities to do moral activities, such as making merit, praying, doing charity and volunteering for public benefits. Children can help decorate the classroom's boards and school environment with pictures of Buddha, temples, nature and good acts. The library and each classroom need to have Buddhist children's books, DVDs, music and songs. Children are taught to sing moral songs and help making moral art work, stories, books and songs.

School environment should be serene, peaceful and surrounded by nature. Teachers teach children to respect, appreciate, love and protect nature which stimulate moral acts and feelings toward all livings. Praises and rewards are important tools to enhance young children' moral practices. Teachers can assign

children to record good activities they do each day. Teachers give rewards for children's good acts.

Fieldtrips to temples and good places are still encouraged. Children can participate in kindness areas or no-killing areas in the temple. Most children enjoy feeding fishes in kindness area. Teachers teach children to be kind for animals and other life.

In order to teach children to continue moral living and spiritual growth throughout one's lifetime, inner motivation is one crucial ingredient to create the drives to live morally. Sternberg & Williams (2002) explain the important concept of motivation. "Motivation is an internal state that arouses, directs and maintains behavior." "Intrinsic motivation" refers to "an internal desire to do something." "Extrinsic motivation" refers to "motivation that comes from outside the individual, for example, from gaining the approval of others, meeting publicly stated goals and performing behaviors valued by the group." Extrinsic motivators have the tendency to motivate young children while intrinsic motivators motivate older children better. However, it still depends on individual differences. Extrinsic motivators can create changes in a short-term while intrinsic motivators create changes in longer term. In order to build intrinsic motivation, teachers need to be the role model. Teachers need to show their enjoyment and energy to learn. It is also recommended that teachers should enhance children's competency and freedom to make decisions and find solutions (Sternberg & Williams, 2002).

Additionally, children as young as 3-4 years old can understand and explain other emotions through facial expression (Camras, 1977). This implies that young children have the ability to understand and empathize others. Children's good thoughts, good emotions and empathy need to be encouraged. According to the concepts of Altruism, Altruism is the consideration towards others' well-being without selfishness (Batson, 1998). Empathy-Altruism Theory suggests that people will become altruistic if they have empathy (Batson, 1998; Batson, Sager, Garst and Kang, 1997).

Teachers can stimulate children's sense of empathy, consideration, sharing, giving, kindness and caring by various activities. The story time can be effective since children usually enjoy story-telling. Teachers can choose moral story that is fun, loving and exciting, but stimulate empathy and kindness towards characters. Teachers can stimulate children to think, feel and find other solutions for the empathetic characters in the story. Teachers can give examples of other animals around children's life. For example, teachers point out that there are some ants in the water and let the children use the leaves to help those ants out of the water.

Moreover, Richhart (2002) suggests the methods to develop children's good thinking. He recommends that, first, children need to have opportunities for thinking which will enhance children's choices, direction, ideas, independence and autonomy. Second, children should experience brainstorming as routines since it promotes socialization, group work and open and flexible thoughts.

Teachers not only provide individual activities to children, but also need to provide group activities for children. Group work will help children interact and adjust to others. Group work can increase problem solving, brainstorming, socialization, flexibility, empathy, understanding, sharing, giving, kindness and forgiving. Teachers allow children to think and decide for themselves. Children can choose friends and activities which will increase the sense of autonomy, confidence and self-knowing.

Parents should participate in school activities, visit and meet children at school. Both parents and teachers continue to create and stimulate active moral learning environment both at home and school. They need to be good role models of having faith and practice good acts according to Buddhist teaching. Education will be most beneficial when the person can live morally, fully, happily, meaningfully and actively. Learning can be acquired at home, school and all life situations throughout one's lifetime. The positive feelings, inner peace and inner happiness from moral living are emphasized, so children will learn to appreciate and find deep positive meanings and feelings from within which will enhance life-long practice of morality.

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The Role We Play as Buddhist Educators for Global Recovery

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Who are we?

This article tries to express the academic trends that have circulated amongst the Buddhist scholars participating in the United Nations Day of Vesak Celebrations, over the past few years; further, the article tries to express the need to improve Buddhist education and the results of the study should express this concern. We could of course, ask ourselves: “What is education?” Then we could unravel the term, and engage into a hermeneutical exposition. We could suggest that throughout the non-Western world, something like the following: “...the Westernizers made serious inroads into their virtual monopoly over formal education.”¹ We can wonder what has really become of a Buddhist education, and if the concepts of education are just indoctrination into Eurocentric-systems of thought – our minds are being manipulated to serve their interests. Schools, universities, libraries, websites – these have all been set up, but who are the controlling-masters of this “service” – this fixing of the free minds? Who are these minds, free or controlled, that respond to, or have contributed knowledge as being socially-engaged with Buddhism?

Author-Topic Profile Chart: Who are we?						
Criteria	2006/2549	2007/2550	2008/2551	2009/2552	2010/2553	Ave.
Theravada	17	15	41	39	31	28.6
Mahayana	8	21	27	30	24	22
Vajrayana	1	2	6	1	5	3
PhD	21	25	52	52	34	36.8
Venerable	5	8	7	2	10	6.4
Non-PhD	-	5	15	16	16	10.4
Male	21	33	59	56	44	42.6
Female	5	5	15	14	16	11
TOTALS	26	38	74	70	60	53.6
COMMENT: The annual numbers are approximations; the averages were calculated.						

¹ L. Carl Brown: Religion and State – The Muslim Approach to Politics (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), p. 100; Also read or skimmed-over for this paper was: Majid Khadduri: The Islamic Conception of Justice (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984); Émile Durkheim (Carol Cosman, translator): The Elementary Forms of Religious Life (Oxford: Oxford University Press, reissued in 2008) – but nothing cited.

While I know that some of these numbers are inaccurate, I never personally inquired into the true identity of the scholar. Further, the education-status of someone is only as accurate as the information people provided or that we recognize. Therefore, I believe that the inaccurate numbers do provide a shade of truth or give a good idea of who has been answering our call for papers. Please consume the data, respectfully – a generalization may be safer to replicate. Let it be known: we could work on getting more Vajrayana Buddhists and women into our program - to equalize the representations of global Buddhists. What have we done?

Themes Explored with the United Nations Day of Vesak Celebrations	
2005 UNDV	Buddhist Organization; Buddhist Education; Propagation of Buddhism; Protecting Buddhism; Buddhism and Social Welfare
2006 UNDV	Perspectives on Buddhist Strategy for World Peace and Sustainable Development: Perspectives on Buddhist Strategy for World Peace; Perspectives on Buddhist Strategy for Buddhist Education; Perspectives on Buddhist Strategy for Dissemination of Buddhism; Perspectives on Buddhist Strategy for Protection of Buddhist Culture; Perspectives on Buddhist Strategy for Sustainable Development; Perspectives on Buddhist Strategy for Buddhist Collaboration
2007 UNDV	Buddhism and Good Governance: Dissemination of Buddhism through Modern Technology; Preservation and Promotion of Buddhist Arts; Buddhist Meditation and Human Development; The University Symposium; Buddhist Electronic Library
2008 UNDV	Buddhist Contribution to building a Just, Democratic and Civil Society; War, Conflict and Healing: A Buddhist Perspective; Buddhist Contribution to Social Justice; Engaged Buddhism and Development; Care for Our Environment: Buddhist Response to Climate Change; Family Problems and the Buddhist Response; Symposium on Buddhist Education: Continuity and Progress; Symposium on Buddhism in the Digital Age
2008 IABU	Buddhist Ethics and Economy; Buddhist Ethics and Education; Buddhist Ethics and Literature; Buddhist Ethics and Mind Culture; Buddhist Ethics and Politics; Buddhist Ethics and Science; Buddhist Ethics and Social Development; Buddhist Ethics and Youth Today
2009 UNDV	Buddhist Approach to Global Crisis: Buddhist Approach to Economic Crisis; Buddhist Approach to Environmental Crisis; Buddhist Approach to Political Conflict and Peaceful Development
2010 UNDV	Global Recovery – The Buddhist Perspective: Global Recovery through Buddhist Ecology; Global Recovery through Buddhist Education; Global Recovery through Engaged Buddhism; Global Recovery through Harmonious Coexistence; Global Recovery through Mental Well-being

Many of our topics are non-Buddhist in nature, but are being paired with Buddhism – to see how Buddhism may respond or how Buddhism does respond. With our redundant topics: this allows scholars to continually develop themselves in within their specializations. We might exhaust our body of knowledge on these topics; whereas there are certain issues that appear to be avoided. If we expand our knowledge-base through diverse themes, this allows our audiences to possess greater wisdom. We should push scholars into other realms, for generating new ideas.

Now, it would seem that our annually contributing scholars would use or build upon the previous year's knowledge, but many of these authors contribute perspectives that we have already seen – if we reject them, we have no conference. Some articles seem like articles written for the non-specialist or beginners. These contributions are not scholarly works, but really are the written words of a sermon; there is really no deeper thought involved around what ever was put to the paper at the last instant before the proposed deadline date.² These wise sermons are admirable-efforts, but it does not advance knowledge amongst us scholars who already know these simple measures, nor does this preaching reach our expectations. It may be best to focus on the technicalities of the topic being paired with Buddhism, and only make token-references to Buddhism, in order to increase our knowledge-base. Jacques Derrida asks and responds:

“What is the ‘Writing Lesson’? Lesson in a double sense. The title effectively preserves both senses. Writing lesson since it is a question of the learning of writing. The [tribal] chief learns writing from the anthropologist, at first without comprehension, he mimics writing before he understands its function as language; or rather he understands its profoundly enslaving function before understanding its function, here accessory, of communication, signification, of the tradition of a signified. But the writing lesson is also a lesson learned from writing; instruction that the anthropologist believes he can induce from the incident in the course of a long meditation, when, fighting against insomnia, he reflects on the origin, function, and meaning of writing. Having taught the gesture of writing to a [tribal] chief who learned without comprehension, the anthropologist understands what he has taught and induces the lesson of writing.”³ “...It is in fact tempting to read it as a parable in which each element, each semanteme, refers to a recognized function of writing: hierarchization, the economic function of mediation and of capitalization, participation in a quasi-religious secret; all this, verified in any phenomenon of writing, is here assembled, concentrated, organized in the structure of an exemplary event or a very brief consequence of fact and gestures. All the organic complexity of writing is here collected within the simple focus of a parable.”⁴ “...the appearance of writing is instantaneous. It is not prepared for. Such a leap would prove that the possibility of writing does not inhabit speech, but

² See for instance what Jacques Derrida has written in his: *Of Grammatology* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, corrected edition 1997), pp. 120-121

³ Jacques Derrida: *Of Grammatology* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, corrected edition 1997), pp. 121-122

⁴ Jacques Derrida: *Of Grammatology* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, corrected edition 1997), p. 126

outside of speech.”⁵ “...If my hypothesis is correct, the primary function of writing as a means of communication is to facilitate the enslavement of other human beings.”⁶

I should comment on the words of Derrida: Buddhists are writing because they are being tasked to write by a religious university association, which serves as the catalyst for creativity because the scholar is a servant of the religion and aligned to these universities. Knowing our condition of bondage, we should now know of the oppressive conditions – of which, we must fight or write against. King Mongkut or Rama IV of Thailand, for example learned to write from western-missionaries. He realized the power of this activity and its benefit to protect Buddhism from Christianity, and had a printing press sent to Sri Lanka to assist them in their noble cause against inhumane or forced conversions. Writing in Buddhism, although limited to the literate, high monastic and royal classes, served to sustain the legitimized authorities, under the social-philosophical guiding principles of Buddhism. Yet, even this introduction of writing was necessary at the royal level to shield the societies from being digested by colonialists. Paul Ricoeur has another function of writing:

“One can: work on a corpus already constituted, finished and closed, and in that sense, dead; establish inventories of elements and units; place these elements or units in relations of opposition, preferably binary opposition; and establish an algebra or combinatory system of these elements and opposed pairs. The aspect of language which lends itself to this inventory I will designate a language; the inventories and combinations which this language yields I will term taxonomies; and the model which governs the investigation, I will call semiotics. ...Language is an object for an empirical science; empirical is taken here in the modern sense; it designated not solely the role and primacy of observation, but also the subordination of inductive operations to deduction and the calculus. ...what we are to consider are only the relative, negative, opposite values of signs with respects to each other. The collection of signs must be maintained as a closed system in order to submit it to analysis.”⁷

⁵ Jacques Derrida: *Of Grammatology* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, corrected edition 1997), pp. 126-127

⁶ Jacques Derrida: *Of Grammatology* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, corrected edition 1997), p. 130 – I believe he is referencing the thesis issued by Claude Lévi-Strauss – Derrida, of course saying that to mention this is pointless, because these are already known facts. Writing used to be relegated to the elite and kept from lower classes.

⁷ Paul Ricoeur: *The Conflict of Interpretations* (London: Continuum, 2004), p. 77, 79, 80

Ricoeur, though, notices different structures of languages, in terms of the models a language produces: literature, science, poetry, etc. There are these different structuralized formats in which expressions are articulated – by changing genres, the function of the text has changed.⁸ Derrida quotes someone extensively, but I remove the ellipses, as if the writing was his own – pertaining to the limitations of writings:

“...throwing aside, therefore, all those scientific books and contemplating the first and simple operations of the human soul, O Man, behold your history, such as I have thought to read it, not in books written by your fellow creatures, who are liars; but, in nature which never lies. The misuse of books is the death of learning, so many books lead us to neglect the book of the world; we should not read, but rather look. I get rid of the chief cause of their sorrows, namely their books. Reading is the curse of childhood; the child who reads ceases to think. So, I closed all my books. I looked for truth in books, but found in them nothing but lies and error.”⁹

I think it is very clear that writing has a purpose, and if we Buddhists are going to continue to write, we must write with our tactical purposes – if we are aware of our own intentions. We must do more than dream and repeat lines of Dhamma. This is a degradation of our abilities and language. It renders the writer as expressionless, and we are left to our own thinking-devices – although liberating, there is the possibility that the author is either hiding knowledge or lacks knowledge external to his own borrowed list. We have begun to exclude articles that merely repeat lists of Dhammas. These lists are relied on heavily, but only linked together by a few words of explanation, to be followed by yet another list – and some scholars are very interested in proving things by their lists, that they often forget to provide an academic conclusion. Above, from Derrida, I’ve shown a purpose of writing, as it functions as a tool of propaganda. Further, we can point to notable senior scholars who have been guilty of short-changing our Buddhist readers and just love to come to Bangkok for a vacation. Although we are taught to respect and honor our elders, for these ‘wise’ contributions from senior-scholars – we wish we could have gotten relevant answers. As a rule: all scholars must responsible for what they have submitted.

I’ve become like the good-spiritual friend who helps the scholar. Often, submissions are poor, in terms of grammar. I know for certain that my English is not perfect – even as a native speaker; but, I have lived more than 50% of my life outside of my country. Further, my English sufferings when I read poor papers all day for

⁸ Paul Ricoeur: *The Conflict of Interpretations* (London: Continuum, 2004), p. 83-84

⁹ Jacques Derrida: *Of Grammatology* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, corrected edition 1997), p. 133-34

hours on end. Having lived in many nations, and been friends with people of different cultural groups – I try to listen as best as I can, to determine the genuine essence of the intended message. I interpret what they convey, employing abhiññās. While this is usually done in conversation, I have also employed this tactic while editing papers. See the hypothetical sentence from a hypothetical scholar, who might have written the following: “*Had the Buddha great disciples many.*” I might, instead suggest: “The Buddha had many great disciples.” Maybe the original author literally-translated his statement directly into English and thought his sixteen technical-pages submitted was great; however, I see sixteen pages of incoherent sentences. What is the frustrated-editor to make of such presentations? In the future, should I decline to edit and only reformat? See the depictions, below:

Version	Hypothetical Sentence Possibilities:
Author:	“Had the Buddha great disciples many.”
Variant #1:	“The Buddha had many great disciples.”
Variant #1:	“The Great Buddha had many disciples.”
Another Alternative:	“Did the Buddha have a lot of great disciples?”

I often have to determine what these senior and respected venerables or professors are implying. This is dangerous work, and work that is possibly offensive to the author who may be reading the “corrected/edited” version for the first time, here at the conference - and suggests publically that the edited conference volume has nothing to do with the original version in the ‘native’ language. Often, we are left to my abhiññā: supranormal powers - my ability to determine the functioning thoughts in another person, oceans away! This involves technique and interpretation. It should be clear, that a well-written paper in English should be contributed to our conference – this is for the best, for the benefit of everyone. Poorly written papers can be manipulated by the editor: for the better, we all hope.

Please take a look at your article in this volume or others, and see how I have contributed to Buddhism and Buddhist Studies, locally in Thailand, and globally for all of our contributors – often with little received appreciation. It should be known that while I am paid to do my best, for the improvement of Buddhism – this is, in a sense, my contribution as a professional, socially-engaged Buddhist. Sometimes, because of the shear-volume of grammatical errors in the conference papers, I do not have time to fully engage into every article, including providing a detailed summary – as articulate as I would like to fashion for our readers. On top of this, I usually provide my own academic article, and the introductory material for the conference text. Furthermore, interested students needing language training can attend courses at

Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University's recently established Language Institute and associated Wiz Park library, to assist in the improvement of languages for anyone desiring such an endeavor for themselves. With such advances as this, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University may be aspiring to transform itself into one of the leading international Buddhist institutions in the world, if it is not already.

Interpretations of Dhamma:

I know there are several perspectives or allowances to describe similar phenomena or Dhammas. Often, I've surrendered myself to allow the author to state what they wish to convey; but I've often faced two problems. One problem arose in this current volume, for instance [no citation to protect the author]: someone mentioned that the Buddha sanctioned military service for a specified reason. Yet, when I read of a perspective like that, I ponder if the person has a complete vision or knowledge of the perspectives found elsewhere in the Tipitaka.

I have read, not committed to memory, almost every book in the Tipitaka several times, over many years, and most of the lesser assortment of commentaries; but I have recollected, for instance: a disagreement between what an author states and what is mentioned in the Yodhajiva Sutta, within the Samyutta-Nikaya, where the discourse states: *a soldier intent on killing, and when killed, does not attain to the heavenly realms, but is destined for a low realm, as an animal or in hell, in the next rebirth*. The soldier's lowly, conditioned mind and livelihood involves killing, and it is the very first rule in all levels of Buddhism to refrain from killing – how, then, is the life of the soldier sanctioned, as it is not conducive towards attaining spirituality. Why then, should someone remain as a soldier?

This utilization of a Buddhist text demonstrates that it is not conducive to be a soldier, and such a conflicted person, and perhaps someone else like Angulimala, should cease killing or engaging in the life of a soldier. Add, now, the famous, Kesaputta or Kalama Sutta, from the Anguttara Nikaya – which enables one to scrutinize what someone mentions. However, few young men are interested in spiritual matters. Testosterone turns a young man into an aggressive-being. Military recruiters prey upon these young men – and with the aid of cinema-media (as a propaganda-machine), this persuades them to become nationalistic or adherents to any other ideological-system – supporting the charged-agenda of impure political-minds. These naïve minds - these gullible individuals, are thus trained in the ways of the wayward [distant from spiritual matters] doctrines. These young men are not yet wise enough to seek wisdom for themselves – they have not matured. Why would the Buddha reject ordaining someone belonging to then to government service... this, is an important question, which deserves more space. Any justification for any form of continuing militarisms is yet another example of political-trickery and the

rationalization for further violence. Therefore, when a writer speaks, it should be wisely, with the background of the Tipitaka – not just selecting an odd verse to support a weak position. For ecology, stating that the Buddha sat by a tree – proves nothing.

Another problem faced, almost annually, is the usage of the Saṅgīti Sutta. The Saṅgīti Sutta is a discourse that originates from a crisis situation: the death of the Jain leader and the schism that occurred following Mahavira's absence. To recover from this situation, Sariputta issues a complete volume of Buddhist teachings which are to be committed to memory and recollected often – a Buddhist textbook. Today, it is beyond amusing to see scholars access the discourse for citations, as if referencing an index proves a point! We need to be more advanced as Buddhists, and begin to engage as our Great Teacher would have us perform. We could be better engaged Buddhist if we transform these memorized teachings into social-actualizations. Again, the Saṅgīti Sutta is our text to be committed to memory – as clearly stated within the discourse. We are not certain if there is a Buddhist school which employs the discourse into its curriculum, but chances are it is minimal or zero - globally. Buddhist Scholars and Students are not doing as the Headmaster instructed.

Difficult Perspectives:

It appears as if we are failing in Buddhist Studies. Monastic students must think that just because they are ordained, that this qualifies as being magically superior in wisdom vis-à-vis their course lecturer. I've been lecturing at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University for a few years now, and frankly, my international students are not reading the assigned material. *You can't pass if you don't read.* My courses actually require a fair amount of reading, to compliment my planned-lectures, yet the reading is not being done collectively, beyond the rare bilingual student [native language and English]. I know many of my students are talented in many aspects, and might know several languages, but they are not performing as required by a university, which has expectations beyond being of the common caliber – complaints are footnoted.¹⁰

¹⁰ Here are the major issues, as understood: For monastic students English is their 4th language: Tribal mother-language, National language, Pali-Language, and then English. Language barrier causes problems – students cannot undertake required readings. No access to large databases of academic articles, like JSTORs, for instance. Some professors assign too much reading – tests are based on lectures and readings. Some professors don't know much about their subject and recite the same material every week. Lecturer/professor salaries are too low - cannot afford to maintain standards and upgrade knowledge as required. Researchers are not being paid for their research work – why research for nothing? Students are not utilizing the benefits of the university properly – like office hours for

Educating in a Buddhist Perspective:

If I could change the system: beginning in the first semester of the university setting, the students must read and examine the Saṅgīti Sutta. Although this was my endeavor for my PhD dissertation, I must proclaim that this endeavor must be performed by students beyond the basic level. University students are no longer considered basic students. Point #1: Buddhists must become more familiar with the Saṅgīti Sutta.

Next, lecturers, or rather as part of the training leading upwards to become a lecturer, maybe at the later stages of a BA Program students should become intimate with the Nettippakaraṇaṃ. This is Point #2. What is the value of this text? The Buddhist scriptures have already been studied by the student and learned. How does the learner-becoming-teacher, learn to teach and express oneself, as a Buddhist commentator could express oneself? The answers are in the Nettippakaraṇaṃ.

Some scholars suggest the Nettippakaraṇaṃ is the structure for a form of Buddhist hermeneutics. What is the aim, then, of this structure? “Hermeneutics has an aim that precedes and surpasses any science, an aim testified to by ‘the universal linguality of behavior relative to the world’; but the universality of the aim is the counterpart to the narrowness of the initial experience in which it is rooted. The fact that the localized nature of the initial experience is emphasized, as well as the claim to universality, is therefore not irrelevant to the debate...”¹¹ Science might be the pursuit towards gaining data, but how is that material interpreted once available? This makes the literary aspect greater in terms of the capability of language. Yes, there is suffering in the world, but if it is examined and language is applied to the concepts we comprehend that a lot of the suffering is minute and takes on meaningless characteristics. Is our personal experience unique or shared amongst others. These limited acquaintances with experience are kin to ignorance – we can build upon our experiences and knowledge towards the improvement of our wisdom. The following in this paragraph is taken from my very own lecture slides, and I conclude the paragraph with the reference for the text:

“The Guide seeks to control words as a functional text - through two types of ideas: extending to describe something further; and exercise the ideas further – preserving the language and keeping the concept intact. In other words the Nettippakaraṇaṃ just rewords concepts in the discourses – through phrasing

lecturers. Students don’t like the set-program style, as it provides little academic freedom. Students have too many classes in the day and in a semester: cannot learn anything in great detail. Students learn a lot from a lecturer’s Facebook posts – apart from classroom material. Students think the professor is bad for the low marks received – students lack self-responsibility.

¹¹ Paul Ricoeur: From Text to Action (London: Continuum, 2008), p. 265

and meanings. “So the re-wording of an intellectually known idea without due precautions in regard to this aspect may make a communication different from what was intended, and it can even mislead the would-be commentator or translator, himself by undermining in his mind the ideas that were intellectually clear to him.” [Nettippakaraṇaṃ, p. ix] It is a guide for commentators [Nettippakaraṇaṃ, p. xliii].¹²

The Nettippakaraṇaṃ knows more than just the texts – and it is because of this wisdom that the pursuit to commentate on them becomes actualized and completed. Further, the Nettippakaraṇaṃ, states that the Dhamma is threaded together through phrasing and meaning, as the Anguttara-Nikaya suggests – but in other words: the letter (literal) and meaning (expressions or illustrations). There are Phrasing Terms, consisting of the following ways of educating someone on the concept, through: the letter, term, phrase, linguistic, demonstration, or mood. There are also Meaning Terms, consisting of the following ways of educating someone on the concept through: explaining, displaying, divulging, analyzing, exhibiting, or describing. The two methods can both be employed and the sub-items can be engaged into as a line of successive inquiry. Further, the Nettippakaraṇaṃ functions as a commentary – but draws no conclusions; through the following principles: it explains, coordinates, develops, adapts, and brings up to date the ideas presented in the texts; it justifies and defends against criticism and attacks; and it makes material more readily available.¹³ Lastly, the Nettippakaraṇaṃ issues sixteen modes of conveying, or should I state, commentating on something. In bold is the term used in the text, and the text’s definition, followed by the Pali-term – followed by my own suggestion or relevance for this article. Buddhists scholars should improve their abilities, through:

¹² Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli: The Guide - Nettippakaraṇaṃ (London: Pali Text Society, 1977) – pages are cited in the above paragraph. The slide is taken from my course on Research and Literature in Thai Buddhism. The first day of class, I lecture on the Nettippakaraṇaṃ, to provide the students with information to help them learn to analyze a text. Furthermore, I have taken on a Buddhist hermeneutical examination on the word: “progress”, published in: The Document of the 2nd International Buddhist Research Institute Research Seminar – Buddhism: Truthful Knowledge and Quality of Life. Buddhist Research Institute, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, 8-10 January 2010. See - Dion Peoples: Progress through Buddhist Intelligence: An Analysis of Selections from the Tipitaka, pp. 8-14

¹³ While I am referencing my own lecture slide, derived from my own research, I have revised the wording in this paragraph to fit this article, and of course some of the phrases have their references in Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli’s Introduction.



1. **Teaching:** a doctrinal, instructive method-teaching from the Pītakas – *desanā*: Pick a contextualized teaching as the anchor of your discourse.
2. **Investigation:** how the text was chosen to be inquired into – *vicaya*: Why did you pick this teaching over other teachings? This is an inquiry also of the background circumstances, or shaping the environment around the subject.
3. **Construing:** a demonstration as interpreted or established in connection in groups with other texts – *yutti*: Do other texts share this same position or how is the concept expresses in relation to other texts? Again how is the term used or generated within the context of other texts?
4. **Footing:** is the concept definable or with reference to specific fundamentals from the text - *padaṭṭhāna*: A term does not arise by itself, so something needs to be latched onto – or, as a boat has an anchor; or a staircase has many steps, there is a top and bottom... Use a dictionary to define your key-words, some people continue to write away from their paper's own theme – like a paper being contributed to a science panel ends up being a philosophical-inquiry. Know what you are talking about and stay within that realm.
5. **Characteristic:** determining implications by characteristic mark, class or class-member - *lakkhāṇa*: Does this keyword fall within a subset of some other criteria; if so, what now is the implication of this term?
6. **Fourfold array:** linguistic-grammaticalness, purport or speaker's intention, source-circumstance of the statement, sequence-coherence – *catubyūha*: As editor for the UNDV Publications, this is where most violations of 'author-instruction' occur. Messages are failing to be properly received, because the intention cannot be adequately expressed clearly. Often, I've had to re-interpret what the notable scholars are trying to convey – to them, perhaps with 95% satisfaction.
7. **Conversion:** can the word contrast itself, when the original intention is no longer conveyed, and the contrasting element becomes the dominant feature? This would imply a cyclical method, a demonstration of relationships, a stretching or manipulation when paired with opposites – *āvatta*: Is there criteria that exist at another end of the conceptual-spectrum – how does the concept reach the further concept, and becomes the other?
8. **Analysis:** demonstrate its general validity or classification from certain planes – *vibhatti*: I think the implication is clear, from the definition above – this element here may allow or some philosophical exposition to get to the truth of the

circumstance – like dividing a perception. This is also the word that the Buddha describes as being the type of system that he utilizes (*vibhajjavādi*¹⁴).

9. **Reversal:** demonstration with opposites or transformational states in the text – *parivattana*: Through this, the ‘other’ is clearly illuminated as not being the subject-of-inquiry. Someone often writes about happiness, but the whole article is about suffering, and the end of suffering... and there may be nothing written about happiness. Perhaps the title should just be about suffering, in this hypothetical situation. Wrong Views are reversed by Right Views.¹⁵
10. **Synonyms:** the method of using synonyms- *vevacana*: sometimes a synonym has a slightly different implication, and it is indeed beneficial to explore the implications of using alternate words. How many translations or synonymographic representations of the Dhammapada do we really need?
11. **Description:** the appropriate understanding or determining signification – *paññatti*: - through known meanings or even metaphors
12. **Ways of entry:** what/how many ideas in words and phrases used to inwardly penetrate - *otaraṇa*: the concept described to enter into these threshold-positions – is there a pattern?
13. **Clearing up:** the questions must be answered correctly or satisfactory – *sodhana*: any uncertainties should be worked out or corrected
14. **Terms of expression:** phrases illuminating how the term is used; - *adhiṭṭhāna*: a determined method - as birth, aging, sickness, death describes ‘suffering’
15. **Requisites:** specifying the cause/condition – *parikkhāra*: what is brought along with this term; what is the objective of the term
16. **Coordination:** along with footing, synonym and the implied attribution by keeping-in-being or abandoned the result is coordination – *samāropana*: this may act as a summarization of the endeavor.

¹⁴ Anguttara-Nikāya, Book of Tens, iv (94) Vajjiyamāhita – pp. 130-132 (AN. V 190) – or: F.L. Woodward: The Book of Gradual Sayings – Anguttara-Nikāya, Volume V (London: Pāli Text Society, 1972), pp. 130-132 - “...the Exalted One blames not all ascetic ways, nor does he downright upbraid and reproach every ascetic who lives the hard life. The Exalted One, sirs, blames the blameworthy, praises the praiseworthy. In so doing, the Exalted One is a particularizer; that Exalted One is not one who makes sweeping assertions herein.” Two Pali terms are given as the important terms: Vibhajja-vādo & Ekaṅsa-vādo

¹⁵ The Nettippakaraṇaṃ refers us to the Majjhima-Nikāya’s Mahācattārīsaka Sutta. As I scan over the contents, I see the parallels of ‘wrong-view’, with the articles that are received as an editor – consider the context: “What is wrong view? There is nothing given, nothing offered, nothing sacrificed; no fruit or result of good and bad actions... no good and virtuous ...who have realized for themselves by direct knowledge and declare this world and the other world...” – some papers offer nothing in terms of new perspectives – I’ve seen much of this in five years, and am forced to reject papers.

What we have is an extensive network of connected concepts for interpreting a reading. I illustrate the intricate conveyed-network, as expressed within the Nettippakaraṇaṃ. The sixteen criteria aim at providing the potential teacher with the tools necessary to become a better teacher, beyond the more traditional interpretive apparatus'. Let me present a condensed, convenient chart on the combinations of hermeneutical tools I discovered throughout the Tipitaka – and provide for Buddhists in an illustration pertaining to the Nettippakaraṇaṃ.

Scientific Method ↓	Different Available Buddhist Hermeneutical Tools				
	Sāriputta's Anguttara-Nikāya Method	Abhidhamma Method	Jataka Method	Ananda's Bahitika Sutta Method	Vibhanga's Paṭisambhidāvibhaṅga
<i>Observe</i>	<i>Meanings</i>	<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Understanding</i>	<i>Investigate</i>	<i>Consequence, Meaning</i>
<i>Theory</i>	<i>Conditions</i>	<i>Function</i>	<i>Comprehending</i>	<i>Criteria of Body, Speech and Mind</i>	<i>Origin, Law</i>
			<i>Justify, Interpret</i>		
<i>Test</i>	<i>Definitions</i>	<i>Manifestation</i>	<i>Demonstration</i>	<i>Evaluation</i>	<i>Philology, Language</i>
<i>Result</i>	<i>Intellect</i>	<i>Proximate Cause</i>			<i>Intelligence, Knowledge</i>
Result: multiple methods of analysis!					

Now, we can see how simple the discourses explain the improvement of the intellect, and how the Abhidhamma is not far from the discourse-system - for allowing us, to understand something, for enabling us to improve our intellect. The following diagram, however, is mind-numbing, if seen for the first time. In the center of the diagram, we see a central teaching as the first step, then around the teaching, we deconstruct and reconstruct our teaching – and the connecting lattices further illuminate the associations within the methodological-structure. I present for the first time, perhaps in Buddhist history, the complicated web for the threading together dhammic-wisdom, according to the explanations provided in the Nettippakaraṇaṃ:



The above diagram depicts the relationships between the different *modes of conveying* – according to the *Nettippakaraṇaṃ*

Further, we see some modes are not connected with each other, apart from just looking at the teaching in a different manner. There are other methods for illuminating texts, more simply. I employ the advice and my adaptations from Dr. Justin McDaniel’s recent text, *Gathering Leaves and Lifting Words*, represented here from my lecture-slides:

To understand the history and teachings of Buddhism in Southeast Asia one must start with how Buddhists teach Buddhists to be Buddhists [recall the *Nettippakaraṇaṃ* is a text for the commentator to use for making better commentaries – because he already knows the Buddhist texts], and it is only

through understanding this method and the texts that reveal it, that one can begin to do so – this is through narratives, rituals, and grammatical texts:

- **Nissaya:** is a supporting-resource written for sermon preparations and guides to understand source texts. Narrative *nissaya* were for the monastic students with specific triggers to general topics – leaning heavily on source texts, only a few phrases are recalled allowing for creative interpretations.
- **Nāmasadda:** more literal word for word translations from short textual passages, and are reserved for private monastic lessons, to learn about the function and origin of the syllables – and analyzed against the textual demonstration, perhaps like a glossary.
- **Vohara:** idiomatic or common oratory (speech)... or mechanical techniques – lifting words skillfully and perhaps melodically or to give some cadence or pattern to the work – creatively, for the oral presentation, suited to the level of the audience. Audiences are mainly serious students sitting in public sermons and cite long passages with longer explanations taken from commentaries or other sources.¹⁶

The sixteen modes of conveying a teaching and the trinity of sermon-styles are useful for expressing oneself as a Buddhist teacher. These are Buddhist methods for educating. I've undertaken this pains-taken and currently unfunded research-work previously for the Buddhist Research Institute of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University – the work is proven in that document; when approved for funding, it may be allowable to publish this research more widely.

An offering of teaching devices:

For several years, I have examined the teachings of Theravada Buddhism for academic purposes and as editor of 300 articles for the 2006-2010 United Nations Day of Vesak Celebrations – therefore, I feel I have keen and critical insights into the Theravada Buddhist Tipitaka. I compiled the below discourses in the chart – to correspond with one sutta per week in, for instance MCU's academic semester, to serve as potential Buddhist Textbook for Theravada Buddhist Studies Students. These selections will serve to provide students with the tools to develop critical analytical skills. Please take a look at the discourses that I engaged into, for the benefit of my students, most beneficial for gaining a more critical-mind:

¹⁶ Material pertaining to this section is derived from Dr. Justin Thomas McDaniel: *Gathering Leaves & Lifting Words – Histories of Buddhist Monastic Education in Laos and Thailand* (Seattle: University of Washington Press: 2008) – various pages.

Dr. Dion Peoples' Buddhist Research Institute Project: An Analysis of Selections from the Suttanta-Piṭaka – currently unpublished.		
Location	Name	Reason for Selection
Chapter I - Introduction:		
1.	Dhamma Excerpts	AN: Kesaputta Sutta : For how to interpret messages
		SN: Yodhajiva Sutta : A special message for military people
		Vibhanga's Paṭisambhidāvibhaṅga : Essay on Analytical Insight/Discrimination
Chapter II - ADHISILA-SIKKHA: Training in Higher Morality		
2.	MN 69	Gulissāni Sutta Forest monk dwelling in a Sangha
3.	MN15	Anumāna Sutta Towards understanding one's faults and being admonishable
4.	DN09	Poṭṭhapāda Sutta Excerpt pertaining to Suttantic Discipline
5.	DN33	Saṅgīti Sutta Excerpts pertaining to social-regulations
6.	MN122	Mahāsuññata Sutta Voidness & not delighting in society & undoing of a monk
7.	Vinaya	Patimokkha Chart
Chapter III - ADHICITTA-SIKKHA: Training in Higher Mentality		
8.	MN27	Cūlahatthipadopama Sutta Discipline of the Tathāgata, and meditations, etc...
9.	MN20	Vitakkasaṅghāna Sutta Wholesome/unwholesome thoughts
10.	MN28	Mahāhatthipadopama Sutta Four Noble Truths and the Four Elements
11.	MN43	Mahāvedalla Sutta Right view, consciousness, faculties, deliverance of mind
12.	DN26	Cakkavatti-Sīhanāda Sutta Decline of Society
13.	DN09	Poṭṭhapāda Sutta Excerpt pertaining to States of Consciousness – provides abhidhammic material
14.	DN33	Saṅgīti Sutta Excerpts pertaining to meditations
Chapter IV - ADHIPANNA-SIKKHA: Training in Higher Wisdom		
15.	MN95	Cankī Sutta : Seeking the Truth/striving
16.	DN34	Dasuttara Sutta Valuable arrangements of dhammas
17.	DN33	Saṅgīti Sutta Excerpts pertaining to Dhammas
18.	MN90	Kaṇṇakatthala Sutta Not Omniscient and conversation pertaining to deities
Chapter V – Analytical Conclusion		
19.	The Guide	An article demonstrating the needfulness of the lessons gained from the text along with external-to-Buddhism Philosophy. The concluding chapter contains an abridged version of the Bahudhātuka Sutta , from the Majjhima-Nikaya (MN115).

Each week, I would examine a new discourse, and in my still-unfunded research work, I've hungrily designed many charts for every discourse, explaining the key points in each. In the next successive pages, I illustrate several of the charts I have designed, to inspire Buddhist Educators to be more illustrative for the minds of our new generations of students.



I designed this chart from the Mahāsuññāta Sutta:

Do not seek a Teacher for:

- Discourses
- Stanzas
- Expositions

Seek a Teacher for:

- Effacement
- Complete Disenchantment
- Cessation
- Direct Knowledge
- Nibbana
- On Contentment
- Aloofness From Society
- Virtue
- Wisdom
- Knowledge And Vision Of Deliverance
- The Mind's Release
- Dispassion
- Peace
- Enlightenment
- Talk On Wanting Little
- Seclusion
- Arousing Energy
- Concentration
- Deliverance

For those Reasons:

- A disciple should seek the Teacher's company even if he is told to go away.

I designed this chart from the Cūlahatthipadopama Sutta:

Footprints of the Tathagata

Marks of the Buddha

Jhana Attainments:

- *Abandoned Hindrances
- *Concentrative Thought
- *Equanimity
- *Pleasant Abiding

Abhinna:

- *Past Lives
- *Divine Eye
- *Noble Truths
- *Final Knowledge

Higher Ordination

Social and Moral Virtue

Concentrative Sensual Restraint

Four Footprints of the Recluse Gotama - Conversions of:

Learned Nobles

Learned Brahmins

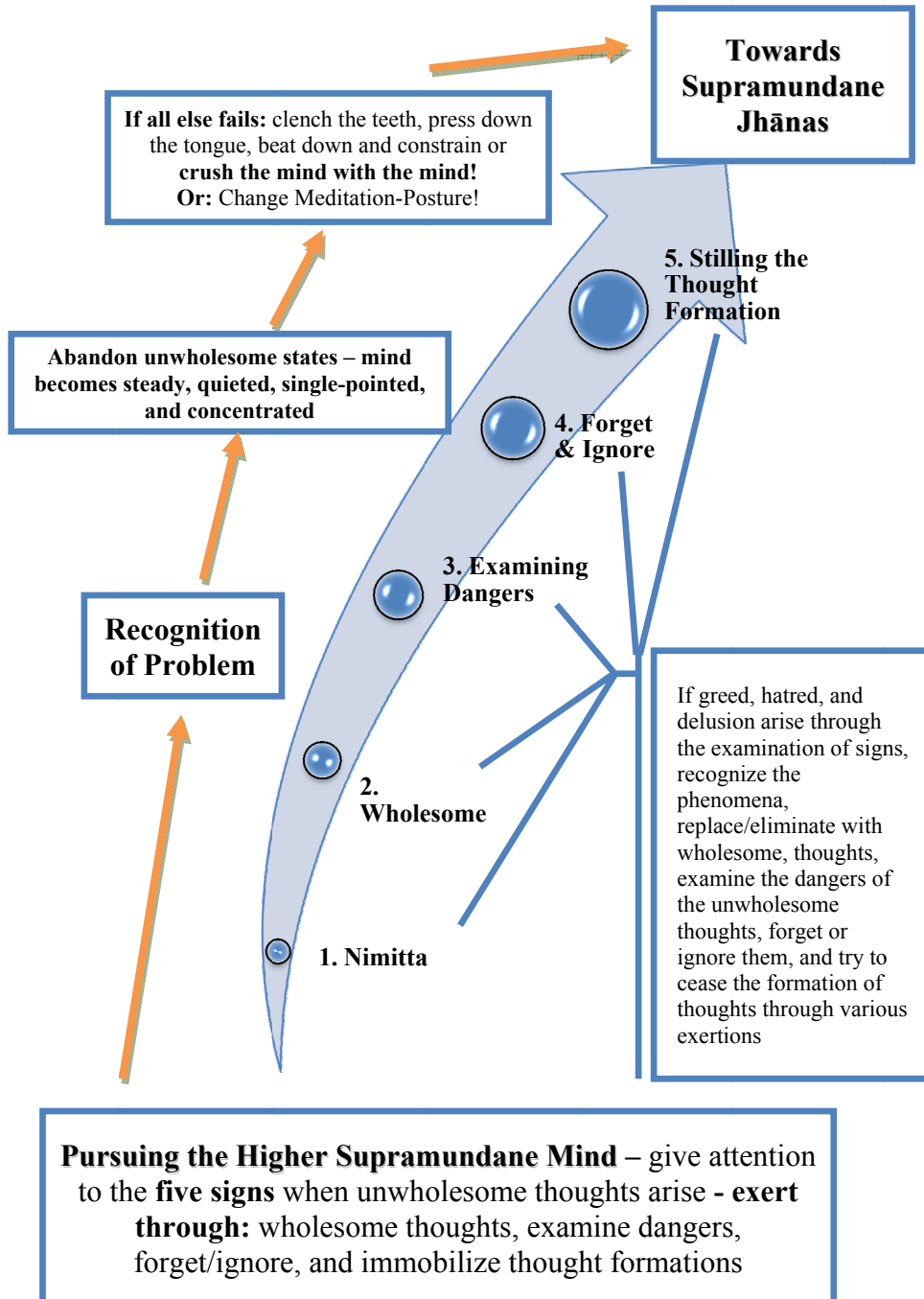
Learned House-holders

Learned Recluses

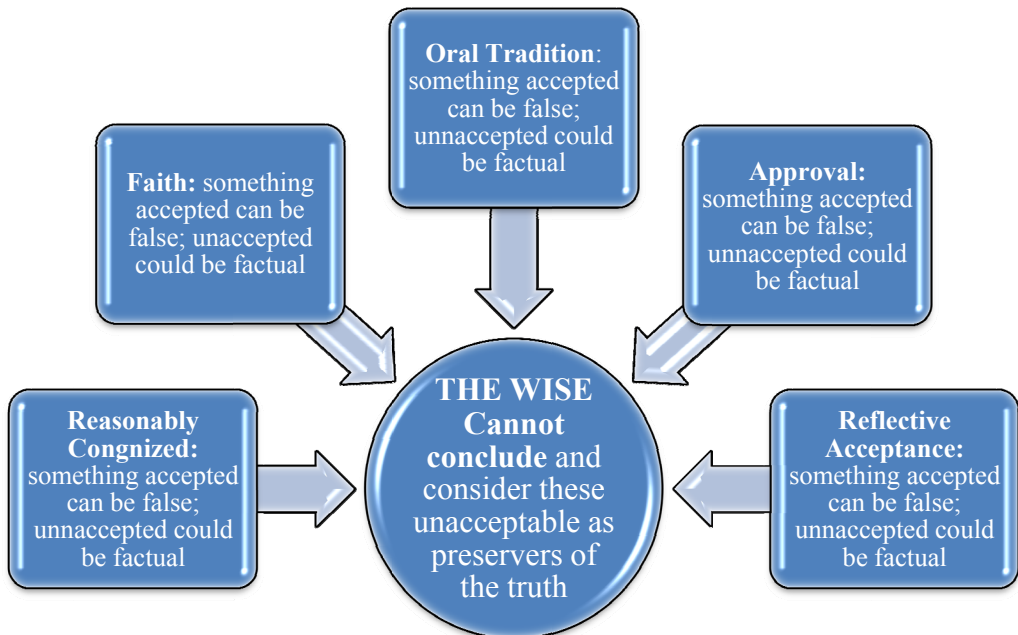
I designed this chart from the ninety-fifth discourse in the collection of middle-length discourses, which I call, as the Buddha tells Kapathika - "Towards the Truth":



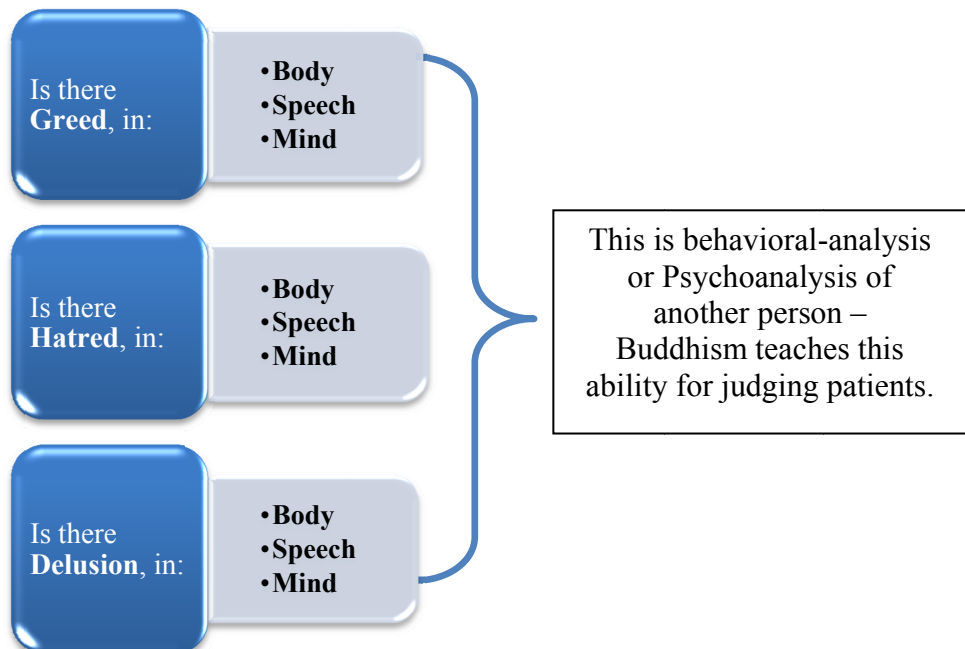
I designed this from the Vitakkasanthana Sutta:



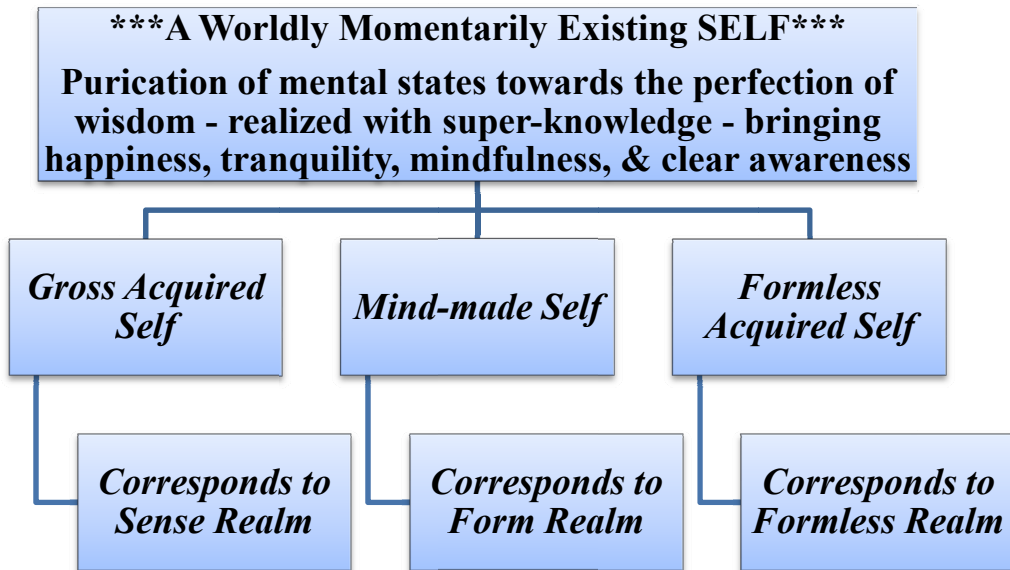
I designed this chart from the Cankī Sutta:



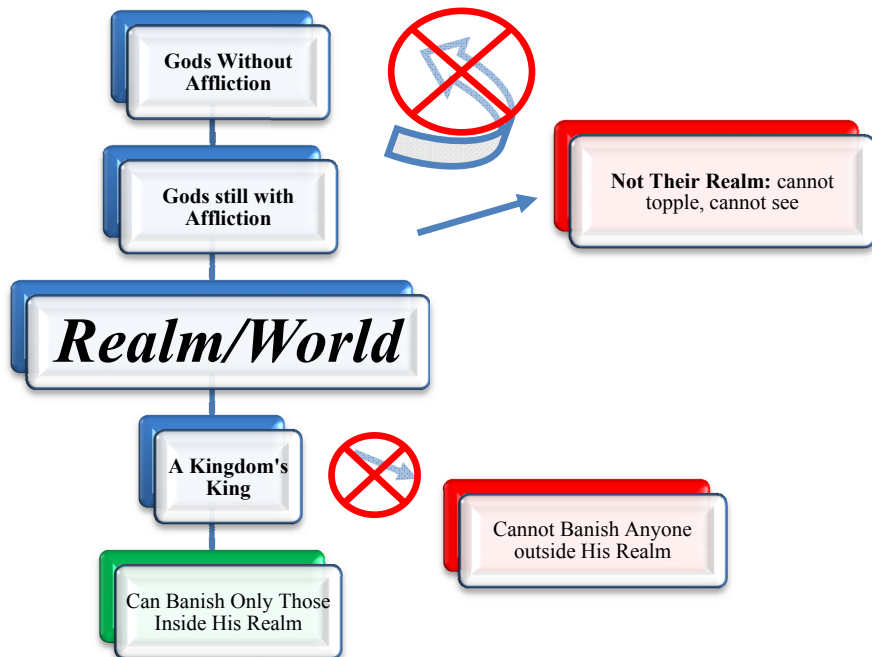
...and further, from the same discourse:



I designed this chart, from the Pothapada Sutta – Buddhism has a “Self”:



And, finally, I designed this chart, from the Kannakatthala Sutta:



Finally, originally published in the UNDV 2007 text on Buddhist Contributions to Good Governance, I have since revised the following mediation chart:

Contriving a Meditative System from the Saṅgīti Sutta		
<p style="text-align: center;">1. Preparation –or– Assisting Knowledge - <i>These are preliminary stages prior to undertaking meditation training... and first preparatory meditation lesson</i></p>	<p>four efforts (4:10): (a) of restraint – does not grasp wholes or details via the senses – so that evil, unwholesome states do not flood in one (b) abandoning – lust, hatred, and cruelty that has arisen, dispels it, destroys it, and makes it disappear (c) development – of the enlightenment factor of mindfulness, based on solitude, detachment, extinction, leading to the maturity of surrender (d) preservation – keeping firmly in the mind a favorable object of concentration which has arisen such as a skeleton or corpse in various stages of decay</p>	<p>great efforts (4:2, these lead to 4:26) – rousing the will, making an effort, stirring up energy, exerts the mind, and strives to prevent: the arising of the unarisen evil unwholesome mental states, to overcome the evil unwholesome mental states that have arisen, to produce unarisen wholesome mental states, and to maintain wholesome mental states that have arisen – not letting them fade away, to bring them to greater growth, to the full perfection of development – these lead to energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom – respectfully.</p>
	factors of enlightenment (7:2): mindfulness, investigation of phenomena, energy, delight, tranquility, concentration, equanimity	
<p style="text-align: center;">2. Powers of Reflection & Mindfulness (2:21-22)</p>	<p>Foundations of mindfulness, contemplating (4:1): the body as body, feelings as feelings, mind as mind, mind-objects as mind-objects – being ardent, clearly aware and mindful – putting away hankering and fretting for the world</p>	<p>stages of mastery (8:10): perceiving (and not perceiving) forms internally – one sees external forms - limited (and unlimited) and beautiful and ugly, not perceiving, not perceiving forms internally - one perceives forms that are blue, yellow, red and white – one is aware that one knows and sees them</p>
	subjects of recollection (6:19): the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Sangha, morality, renunciation, the devas	
<p style="text-align: center;">3. Senses (6:11-13)</p>	Three types of sense investigations: when seeing a sight-object with the eye, on hearing with the ear, smelling with the nose, tasting with the tongue, touching with the body, knowing a mind-object with the mind – one investigates a corresponding object productive of either pleasure, unpleasurable, or indifference	
<p style="text-align: center;">4. Kasina (2:24/10:2)</p>	ten objects for the attainment of absorption (<i>appana</i>)– perceiving: the Earth Kasina, Water Kasina, Fire Kasina, Wind Kasina, Blue Kasina, Yellow Kasina, Red Kasina, White Kasina, Space Kasina, and Consciousness Kasina – above, below, on all sides undivided and unbounded	
<p style="text-align: center;">5. (3:50-51) Concentrations:</p>	with thinking and pondering, with pondering without thinking, with neither; Other types of concentrations: on emptiness, the signless, desireless	
<p style="text-align: center;">6. Calm (2:23):</p>	the sign of calm and the prolonging of the sign	
<p style="text-align: center;">7. Insight (2:23) (as kinds of wisdom):</p>	based on thought, on learning/hearing, on mental development/meditation (3:43)	
<p style="text-align: center;">8. Powers of Concentration & Mental Development (2:21-22)</p>	<p>Requisites of concentration (7:3): right view, thought, speech, action, livelihood, effort, mindfulness.</p>	<p>Concentrative meditation, or Samādhi-bhavana, when developed and expanded leads (4:5) to (a) happiness here and now being led by the four jhānas (b) gaining knowledge and vision led by the perception of light – fixing perception of day, by night as day, by day as night – in order to develop a mind that is clear and unclouded and full of brightness (c) mindfulness and clear awareness led by knowing the feelings as they arise, remain and vanish – knowing one’s thoughts as they arise, remain and vanish (d) the destruction of the corruptions led by contemplating the rise and fall of the five aggregates (this is the arising and cessation of material form, feelings, perception, mental formations, and consciousness)</p>



<p>9. Spanning Techniques</p>	<p>Abiding (3:59): deva-abiding (celestial – detached from sensual desires, calm and into the four jhāna-stages), Brahma-abiding (sublime - meditations on loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity), Ariyan-abiding (best – awareness of the elimination of greed, hatred and delusion during the four postures of meditation)</p>	
<p>10. Skill in entering and returning from jhāna (Also as successive abiding) (2:9)</p>	<p>Jhānas (4:4): (a) one being detached from all sense-desires, unwholesome mental states – enters and remains in the first jhāna – which is with thinking and pondering, born of detachment, filled with delight and joy (b) putting the first jhāna aside and gaining inner tranquility and oneness of mind one remains in the second jhāna – which is without thinking and pondering (c) with the fading away of delight and remaining imperturbable, mindful and clearly aware experiences an additional delight that of dwelling in equanimity and mindfulness as the third jhāna (d) and after giving up pleasure and pain, and with the disappearance of the former gladness and sadness, the fourth jhāna is attained which is beyond pleasure and pain, purified by equanimity and mindfulness</p>	<p>formless jhānas (4:7): (a) passing entirely beyond bodily sensations, disappearance of all sense of resistance, and by non-attraction to the perception of diversity, seeing that space is infinite, reaches and remains in the Sphere of Infinite Space (b) by passing entirely beyond, seeing consciousness as infinite reaches and remains in the Sphere of Infinite Consciousness (c) by passing entirely beyond, and seeing that there is no thing, one reaches the Sphere of No-Thingness (d) and then by passing entirely beyond one reaches and remains in the Sphere of Neither Perception Nor Non Perception</p>
<p>11. Spheres or Realms</p>	<p>Successive cessations (9:5-6): (a) by the attainment of the first jhāna – perceptions of sensuality cease (b) by the attainment of the second jhāna – thinking and pondering cease (c) by the attainment of the third jhāna – delight ceases (d) by the attainment of the fourth jhāna – in and out breathing ceases (becomes so subtle as to be imperceptible) (e) by the attainment of the Sphere of Infinite Space – the perception of materiality ceases, by the attainment of the Sphere of Infinite-Consciousness – the perception of the Sphere of Infinite Space ceases, by the attainment of Sphere of No-Thingness – the perception of the Sphere of Infinite Consciousness ceases, by the attainment of the Sphere of Neither-Perception-Nor-Non-Perception – the perception of the Sphere of No-Thingness ceases, by the attainment of the Cessation of Perception and Feeling – perception and feelings cease</p> <p>Liberations (8:11): possessing form one sees forms, not perceiving material forms in oneself one sees them outside, thinking it is beautiful one becomes intent on it and enters the Sphere of Infinite Space, Sphere of Infinite-Consciousness, Sphere of No-Thingness, Sphere of Neither-Perception-Nor-Non-Perception, the Cessation of Perception and Feeling</p>	
<p>12. Brahma-viharas</p>	<p>boundless states (4:6) – pervading the four quarters and above, below, across and everywhere – abundant, magnified, unbounded, without hatred or ill-will through: (a) loving-kindness (b) compassion (c) sympathetic joy (d) equanimity</p>	<p>six elements for making for deliverance (6:17): emancipation through <i>loving-kindness</i> is the cure for ill-will; emancipation of the heart through <i>compassion</i> is the cure for cruelty; emancipation of the heart through <i>sympathetic joy</i> is the cure for aversion; emancipation of the heart through <i>equanimity</i> is the cure for lust; the signless emancipation of the heart is the cure for hankering after signs or the idea of: <i>I am</i>, is a repellent; and pays no idea to: <i>I am this</i>, that is the cure for doubt, uncertainty and problems that still may grip the heart</p>

For instance, these two meditation-charts can be resized, placed back-to-back, and laminated with plastic, and taken with the skilled-meditator to the jungle for mediation-recollections, as I have done and instructed others from this chart-card - designed from the Saṅgīti Sutta's contents. I hope you have enjoyed my contributions to Buddhist Studies and Buddhist Education.

Final Remarks:

I have written about the general characteristics of our associated scholars and the topics that we have engaged upon as a team of educators. I've discussed the quality of papers that I've received as the main editor for the conference publications; and the misinterpretations of Dhammas that are committed by some scholars. Further discussed were the failings of many Buddhist scholars and students, and suggested that educators become more familiar with the Saṅgīti Sutta, and material found in the Nettippakaraṇam. I've given a chart I designed for the presentation of different analytical tools and their origin inside the Tipitaka. Buddhist scholars should be some of the most brilliant thinkers in society, but I often see us making mistakes that would discredit our field: plagiarized portions of papers – essentially from online free encyclopedias. There are many things to write about, and I have shown how Buddhist Hermeneutics illuminates these new possibilities. Last year, I wrote about Discipline is Required for Resolving any Crisis, and I stand by those remarks. I could easily state: discipline is required for recovering from any crisis – and this would answer again, the theme for this year's conference; instead, I chose the role we should play as Buddhist educators.

Last year, I concluded, here with this paragraph, slightly revised for this year: The various crises that have developed globally are caused by a lack of social discipline. I've seen the lack of academic discipline stretched to extremes for the UNDV 2010 – to the point where I had to write this article as a warning, and the need to recover. Yet, to their respective extent, those responsible are not stupid and ignorant people – these are leaders that have skillfully managed to generate wealth for themselves, their businesses or universities. Educators and leaders should be virtuous people, assisting to uplift current and future generations of learning-students from various types of suffering or insufficiencies. We have to move beyond simple parroting of the Buddha's words – or we become parodies to the global community. We, in this room, know about the existence of suffering – and the path leading away from suffering, we know words that are better saved for other occasions by our disciplined and enlightened virtuous-siblings – we need to educate ourselves better and engage into these other scientific realms – respectfully.

My final remark: Buddhist scholars cannot afford to be lazy and just put out work for the sake of putting out work, like a machine. We must be very tactical in



our endeavors. Buddhists are known for being honest, effective, and very wise: we have to overcome our hindrances and invent new methods of doing things, rather than relying on 2500 year old wisdom – although it works; however, we are not offering anything worthwhile and new – and we must. In my paper, I offer a bit of old and some new illustrations - for Buddhism, to recovery from its global crisis of being under-represented and underappreciated in the academic world. We must do better amongst ourselves, and cease lying to ourselves. We must push down barriers wherever they are – as we come across something that stands in the way of attaining deeper wisdom. We can't settle, and let the world pass us by... as we idle near our Idol. We must be engaged with our education – and illuminate where our ways are best.

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Global Recovery through Buddhist Education

Enshin Saito

This time here I'm allocated to speak on the topic "Global Recovery through Buddhist Education."

First of all, I'd like to confirm that Buddhist Education can greatly contribute to Global Recovery. This is the starting point. When, where and how should Buddhist Education be carried out?

We are always acting as educators through temple talks, internet, pamphlets and other publications. Also whenever it is necessary, Buddhist Universities and temples can hold open lectures, intensive short courses, and special Buddhist ceremonies. In addition, although I think it doesn't always function well, Buddhist Education is carried out at Buddhist educational institutions like nursery schools, kindergartens, high schools, and universities.

From my experience teaching at a Buddhist University, together with academic lectures, we need to prepare classes of a practical nature, for example, social services through Buddhist teachings, contribution toward world peace through Buddhist teachings and so on.

By the way, when Pope John Paul II visited Japan in 1981, the Pope quoted a great religious leader in Japan. That leader said "To forget the self and work for the good for others is the height of compassion."

This leader, Saicho, is the founder of Japanese Tendai Buddhism. In the early 9th century he formulated an education system for his student monks and used the above words. It means that we should accept undesirable or unwanted hardships willingly, without insisting others have to undertake such hardships, and teach others how to undertake such hardships, passing on to others happiness, easy work and comfort. To benefit others is the ultimate form of compassion.

Saicho continuously said: What is the treasure of a nation? The treasure is a strong will to achieve enlightenment. Thus those who have this religious nature are the treasure of a nation. A wise man of olden times said that ten large pearls are not the treasure of a nation, but he who lights up a corner of his world is the true treasure of a nation.

He wanted to educate student monks to be such treasures through his education system. Saicho intended his student monks to be these persons who forget the self and benefit others, and light up their world.

Nowadays these words of Saicho's can help all people understand how they, too, can live an existence that lights up every corner of society or the world with a broad and far-sighted mind. If everyone in the world tries to be such a treasure, it will result in Global Recovery.

Under this guidance we of Tendai, have been promoting *The Light Up Your Corner Movement*, priests together with lay people. Of course in this movement many lecture meetings are held on Buddhism. I think this movement itself is one kind of Buddhist education that can contribute to Global Recovery.

The Light Up Your Corner Movement has three main objectives:

- 1) Life (let us thank all living beings!)
- 2) Service (let us practice, with gratitude, one's services for others with the spirit of *Fuse* [offering] and the ideal of freedom!)
- 3) Coexisting (let us live gently with the earth!)

Concretely, the followings are the activities of this movement:

- Supporting the work of UNICEF.
- Supporting the work of the Duang Prateep Foundation which is registered as an NGO in Thailand.
- Supporting the building and keeping of the children's house by the Pannya-Metta Association which is registered as an NGO in India.
- Building schools in remote places where few or no schools exist in Laos.
- Assisting with domestic disaster relief and support operations.
- Supporting programs to provide educational opportunities for low-income children (Educational foster-parent system).
- Carrying out street-level fund-raising campaigns in all parts of Japan.
- Promoting the hand copying of sūtras.
- The Light Up Your Corner Day which is to practice something individually in line with the three goals of this movement on the 4th of every month.

In addition, on the occasion of the earth-quake in Chile, Haiti, and China this office sent relief funds and this month, members of this movement visited Inner Mongolia in China to plant trees under a long term project. Here I'd like to quote a well-known story in Buddha's boyhood:

One day Siddhartha attended the spring farming festival at which people celebrated spring and prayed to the deities for bumper crops. During the ceremony a farmer dug the earth with a plough. Hibernating small insects appeared on the soil in the mild spring sun shine. At that time a little bird came, ate them, and flew up. Then a hawk flew over, took the little bird in its mouth, and flew away. All the people were surprised to see this scene, however, at the same time, they accepted as commonplace.

On the other hand Siddhartha was so terrified and shocked. He silently left there and began meditation under a tree. What do you think about it?

Set aside this story, In Japan, people used to have a common manners taught in the home before and after meal. I regret that nowadays people almost forget this important home tradition. I think it must be restored. This reminds us and teaches children famous Buddhist's words "Desiring little and knowing contentment." Before the meal, people put their hands together and say "Thank you for this meal" and after the meal say "Thank you for the effort that went into preparing this food."

Nowadays in major countries, whenever people go to a convenience store, they can buy food easily. Food is mass-produced for mass-consumption. People don't need to imagine the origin of their food. And yet so many people in the world face starvation.

What is food? How should we think about food? At least in order to sustain ourselves, we need to eat something. Whether we eat meat or vegetables, it means we sacrifice the life of others. Then we should be reminded the Buddhist word "Desiring little and knowing contentment." This wonderful teaching is applicable not only to food but also many other things. Excessive materialism resulted in the world economic crisis. It is still fresh in our memory. In a sense, this crisis derived from the idea of "Forgetting others and benefiting self." This is the exact opposite of Saicho's idea, "Forgetting self and benefiting others."

When I was invited to a luncheon and requested to lead the lunch service at the Corner Stone Community in Belfast, Northern Ireland, I recited a short Buddhist verse from which this custom manner originated. The Cornerstone Community is a Nobel-Peace nominated organization that works for reconciliation between Protestant and Catholic through citizens and Christian Churches at the front area of the conflict in Belfast. In Northern Ireland for the past 40 years, serious violence and terrorism between Protestant and Catholic had spread over all parts of the country. I, as a Buddhist priest, had been an outside co-worker to them for almost 10 years. This lunch service was held at a Methodist church and Protestant and Catholic residents sat together there. There I led lunch service with a short verse:



We are very happy to be able to take this meal to receive benefit from others. We humbly think about the origin of this food, who prepares this food for us and what sacrifices were made, so that we can take this meal, whether it taste good or doesn't. We can accept it.

After lunch both Protestant and Catholic people said "What a nice idea this verse is. Through these simple exercises we can work towards reconciliation not just between Protestant and Catholic but all people."

I think the materials for Buddhist Education for Global Recovery exist close at hand; they can be taken from our daily life too.

Global Recovery through Buddhist Education

Harkiman Racheman
Bodhi Dharma Buddhist College, Indonesia

Background:

The present-day world is still characterized by seemingly never-ending calamities which occur one after another at such an alarming rate. The face of our world as we know it is still tainted with various kinds of conflicts and wars. Across the globe, there are clashes and conflicts engineered either politically or culturally; there are also those caused by socio-economic reasons; and, in recent times, there are territorial battles often complicated by heavy religious overtones.

The majority of these problems - civil wars, suicide bombings, acts of militancy and terrorism, to name but just a few - are man-made; i.e. as they all spring from the same depth of the well of *dukkha*¹ or known traditionally as the three unwholesome roots of suffering (*akusala mūla*) of *lobha* (greed), *dosa* (anger) and *moha* (delusion); and, as such, they all can be anticipated, prevented or stopped.

While a quick fix is obviously impossible, a sensible solution right now which may promise continuous relevance is to reach out to the entire world's community in order to educate or enlighten its members with highly universal Buddhist values or principles.

Though sounding too much like a cliché, such worldwide edification seems to be increasingly relevant because suffering-inflicted problems and violent conflicts keep occurring around us due to our pandemic ignorance (*avidya/avijja*). As Most Ven. Thich Nhat Han has put it shrewdly, such problems continue to happen primarily because “we lack understanding.”²

Within that respect, only education in the broadest sense of the word, or rather re-education or un-education³ can be expected to generate enough understanding (read ‘*Dharma*’). Only enough knowledge about the Truth will enable

¹ In the present paper, both Sanskrit and Pali words may appear together side by side or used interchangeably. Though this may not seem wise to do; it was, however, done for the sake of convenience only.

² Via Sulak Sivaraksa, *Seeds of Peace* (Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1992), p. vii.

³ Re-education and un-education here suggest that there should be an opportunity to re-learn some neglected, but lofty values which have been undervalued and to un-learn (or replace) some negative or unwholesome values which have made their way into our subconscious minds.

everyone to create the right mental attitude which is, to use His Holiness the Dalai Lama's words, "the basic source of peace and happiness."⁴

The Buddhist values that shall be discussed below may hopefully complement other good values which are currently, also, striving to make a long-lived impact on the spiritual quality of humankind in all aspects.⁵ This way, those Buddhist values or principles will not be replacing any currently-existing attempts by members of other well-respected religious communities; but, on the contrary, they will hopefully co-exist with those other values in order to equally allow a fair chance for all members of humanity to contribute in their own way as far and generously as possible towards global recovery.

Strategy in Worldwide Buddhist Education:

However, it needs to be stated right from the outset that, as education is always often such a broad discipline which covers nearly a whole spectrum of related sub-disciplines, it may be feasible to look at 'Buddhist education' from a minimalist angle.

Rather than bringing down the whole weight of the Master's⁶ teachings, which—traditionally speaking—amount to the three 'huge' baskets of scriptural texts (read '*Tipitaka*'), it may as well be more sensible to offer a much-reduced package of carefully selected Buddhist information; i.e. one which is specifically geared towards helping accelerate global recovery and, hopefully, in due time create a lasting world peace.

In other words, instead of projecting the Buddha's voluminous teachings into public spotlight, as is mostly still the case up till now, only a highly relevant number of illuminating insights and parallels drawn from the exemplary events in the life of the Buddha (read '*Satthā-deva-manussānam*', 'the teacher of gods and humans') may

⁴ Ibid., p. ix. His Holiness the Dalai Lama also said, "During our stay on this planet, for ninety or a hundred years at most, we must try to do something good, something useful with our lives. By trying to be at peace with ourselves we can help others share that peace. If we can contribute to other people's happiness, we will find the true goal, the true meaning of life." (pp. ix-x)

⁵ Supreme Master Suma Ching Hai's spiritual movement, to mention but one example, is worth mentioning here as it seems to be at the forefront in propagating, perhaps a little too aggressively, a healthy vegan lifestyle as well as in raising a worldwide awareness towards the urgency of saving the already-too-vulnerable planet.

⁶ In the present discussion, I have employed the terms of address *the Buddha, the Master, the Teacher, Gotama Buddha, Sakyamuni Buddha, Tathagata Buddha*, etc. interchangeably to mean the same person. I realize that Gotama Buddha is perhaps more frequently referred to in Theravadin literature than Sakyamuni Buddha which is used more often in Mahayana contexts.

well be worth reemphasizing, readdressing or, even, ‘re-packaging’.⁷ Thus, as a substitute for a package of the Master’s teachings offered as ‘raw’ educational material, it may well be even more palatable, as it were, to serve the general public with only some deeper or far-reaching inspirations, guidance and implications derived from the Master’s 80-year-old worldly life.

This new strategy may not be overemphasized; however, as too much weight has all this time been given to dry scholastic studies or profound analyses of scriptural texts. Very little indeed has been done in introducing far and wide what the Buddha has implicitly tried to teach or convey to us through the spiritually-enlightening events of his life.

Haven’t we heard already that the Master *also* taught by examples - i.e. he was teaching through doing (read ‘showing’)? Buddhist education, therefore, should be reoriented as well towards this fundamental principle. That way, it can be expected to make a more tangible contribution towards global recovery and, hence, global peace.

Global Recovery is a Process:

The first important insight and parallel that can be obtained from a quick visit to the life of the Buddha or, even, from a glance at a Buddha representation is that lofty goals such as global peace and harmony for everyone can only be truly realized through an instrumental process. Global recovery, like most things in life, can not possibly happen out of the blue; there must be some united effort as well as strong determination from all concerned parties preceding the realization of such a universal goal.

The life of the Buddha as a whole constitutes a life-long process of departure from darkness (*avidya*) to light (*vidya*) or from suffering (*samsara*) to blissful happiness (*nirvana*). The realization of Nirvana did not happen overnight. One of the fundamental tenets held within the Buddhist religion, itself being a non-theistic religion, is that nothing good can come into being without some sort self-initiated work prior to it. The proverb *No gain without pain* is self-explanatory, indeed!

The Buddha’s enlightenment in Bodh Gaya, seen from this perspective, is an end result of a painstaking process of trials and errors that Prince Siddhartha himself initiated rather than something given to him freely by a generous God. There was already an urge within him at an early stage to look for a release from

⁷ Perhaps it is high time that more and more Buddhist symbols and images were reintroduced into the public domain, but in the most interesting (modern) way possible, in order to show an increasing Buddhist presence and participation in international affairs.

suffering. Even at the Royal Tiller Festival, the young prince had already identified the inherent suffering that underlies all forms of life. Thus, this preoccupation continued through to his adult life and culminated in the Great Renunciation. He practices austere asceticism, but to no avail. The Master tried various yoga disciplines and learned under two prominent *gurus* before he finally arrived at his self-reliant wisdom that led him to the final emancipation from suffering.

Similarly, to achieve global peace and harmony, a long process of trials and errors is truly essential. It is wrong to think that realizing such a lofty goal only requires short-cut measures such as issuing the highest level bi-lateral or multi-lateral peace agreements or treaties. The goal-attaining process will be long and hard and, as in the case of the Buddha's, there will be failures and errors which will cost a great deal of pain and suffering.

However, after suffering from a period of turmoil and a number of difficult adjustments, the common goal for worldwide lasting peace will hopefully feel a lot closer to its actual realization. With strong determination, perseverance, patience, moral strength, optimism, consistency, etc., as the Master seems to imply in his last words to Ananda quoted below, there is no reason why global recovery and peace cannot eventuate.

To Ananda who burst into tears *after* knowing the Master's Mahaparinirvana, the Master comforted him *before*, and said, "Do not sorrow. Have I not told you many times that everything changes and vanishes? How could something that came to being and was formed not be destroyed? For a long time, Ananda, you have attended the Perfect One, gladly, sensitively, sincerely and without reserve, with bodily acts of loving-kindness, as well as with speech and thoughts. You have made great merit, Ananda; keep on endeavoring and soon you will be free from all taints."

Global Recovery Requires Self-sacrifice:

Secondly, global recovery and, hence, global peace and harmony can only be made possible when everyone or every party concerned is willing make a self-sacrificial effort. This is another insight and parallel from the life of the Buddha that is too important to miss.

Though underexposed or unexposed, the life of the Buddha is nevertheless one example of extreme self-sacrifices by the Master for the sake of all. The fact that this powerful image of the Buddha as *a savior of all suffering beings* has not been projected to the outside world or treated with justice is regrettable, indeed! Like Jesus who sacrificed himself for the sake of saving others, Buddha Sakyamuni's self-sacrificial quest for enlightenment was in the first place motivated by his strong wish to free others from the round of births and deaths. The Buddhist savior chose to

leave behind all the luxurious comforts that he well deserved as heir to a powerful king and was well-determined to sacrifice his very life to realize the Way of salvation for all sentient beings.

Prince Siddhartha realized that a once-and-for-all solution to inherent suffering (*dukkha*) had to be discovered. Without hesitation or further procrastination, he decided to offer himself as the one who had to find the way for others to save themselves from suffering. Even though, this absolutely difficult decision nearly took his life as he had to sacrifice or give up everything he had for the sole quest for enlightenment. Not only did he have to go without being able to fulfill his duties and obligations towards his wife and his father King Suddhodana, he had to go without food and drinks, as well.

Later, after the attainment of enlightenment, the Buddha agreed to Sahampati's invitation to teach the Dharma for the benefit of all sentient beings and for the sake of saving them from the round of deaths and rebirths.

Similarly, to enhance global recovery and to realize achieve global peace and harmony, all the stakeholders need to learn to make self-sacrifices. One of the reasons why global recovery has not been easy to realize all this time is because each major country in the world refuses blatantly to make necessary sacrifices. On the contrary, most countries in fact are actively busy forcing and pressuring other countries and nations to sacrifice. This is in fact an irony because any attempt to bring about lasting peace to the world must be otherwise. Therefore, it is high time that the principle of self-sacrifice, as exemplified by the Buddha, was made relevant again in today's world.

Global Recovery Requires the Cessation of Greed, Anger and Delusion:

The third important insight and parallel that one can obtain from the life of the Buddha is that global conflicts and wars are the direct result of the three roots of evil actions (the three *akusalamula*) found within all of the warring parties involved. Hence, real global recovery can only be possible if sufficient efforts are channeled towards uprooting the three roots of evil actions which are in fact the very source of all human predicaments.

To speed up global recovery, everybody or all the stakeholders need to go as far back as possible in order to identify the root causes of global conflicts and wars. Fundamentally, all the problems that have led the world into disharmony can be traced back in origin to the three roots of greed, hatred and delusion. Thus, something systemic needs to be devised at the highest level possible in order to prevent humanity from falling deeper into the traps of more greed, more hatred and more delusion.

In today's world, greed seems to be one of the major reasons for widening conflicts and wars. We read about how certain major countries have tried to take control of the world's oil-rich regions and, for that matter, are willing to waste billions of dollars for waging wicked wars. Hatred similarly has been the culprit of civil wars and various terrorist attacks. There is so much violence going on in the world today which derives singularly from hatred. Finally, delusion being the foundation of the two evil roots has been providing a fertile ground for both greed and hatred to breed. Thus, if genuine global peace is to be realized, global efforts to put an end to the roots of human suffering once and for all should be strongly encouraged.

According to the Buddha, human suffering occurs because we are all trapped inside the *samsara* circle or the wheel of suffering-laden life. The circle knows neither beginning nor end. At the center of the wheel of suffering lies the evil roots of greed, hatred and delusion. Therefore, Siddhartha's strife for emancipation from *dukkha* should be construed herein as his consistent struggle to free himself from greed, hatred and ignorance as well.

The empirical examples from the life of the Buddha may shed some light on the importance of not falling into the traps of the evil roots. Although there was justifiable reasons to express his furor with regards to how he was slandered by *ciñcā-manavikā*, ill-treated by Devadatta, his father Suppabuddha as well as others, the Buddha - having relinquished greed, anger and delusion for good - dealt with his enemies with equanimity, tolerance and compassion.

Similarly, to free our world from conflicts and wars, all the stakeholders should find a way out of the vicious circle of greed, hatred and ignorance. Only then, can there be a genuine hope for global harmony and peace. The Dhammapada, Verse 5, reads "Hatred can never be appeased by hatred. Hatred can only be appeased by love. This is the eternal law."

Global Recovery Requires Tolerance:

Tolerance can bring about global peace and harmony. This is the fourth important insight and parallel that may show through the empirical life of the Buddha.

The life of the Buddha is marked by how the Master dealt all kinds of assaults addressed to him by his foes with tolerance. However, with an exemplary observation of tolerance, not only that those enemies of the Buddha would back down, but also they came to realize their wrongdoings and they repented of them.

The female ascetic *ciñcā-manavikā*'s cruel slandering towards the Buddha could be successfully overcome by the Buddha's equanimity, compassion and tolerance. Devadatta's and his father Suppabuddha's numerous plots to assassinate the Buddha had been tolerantly dealt with by the Buddha. There were other cases in the life of the Master in which his tolerance has emerged triumphant. The Master never retaliated against them; in fact, he showed them boundless tolerance and expected them to repent. However, when tolerance would not work any more, their own *karma* would take over the course of their lives as in the cases of Devadatta and Suppabuddha.

Similarly, today's world is still characterized by such an appalling lack of mutual tolerance among the nations of the world. While most people are busy competing with one another in arms race, no one single nation seems to stand out as role model in practicing global tolerance. Tolerance is a quality necessary to make a group of people allow other groups to exercise their different views or beliefs and to show an ability and readiness to endure them especially when they are felt to be unpleasant. Thus, without this quality, global recovery would come to a standstill.

To make global peace possible, it is urgent that all the major nations of the world put this principle of tolerance into real practice. The history of the Buddhist religion, for example, has clearly shown that tolerance, as taught by the Buddha, is in fact one of the reasons why Buddhism has survived for over 2,500 years as a major spiritual force for peace and harmony.⁸

Global Recovery is Possible when the Significance of Human Life is Acknowledged:

The fifth insight and parallel that may be obtained from pondering on the life of the Buddha is that, for global recovery and peace and harmony to happen, there should be a renewed awareness with regards to the spiritual value or significance of human lives.

It is mentioned in the Buddhist scriptures that to be born as a human being is extremely hard. The main reason for that is because it is in this human realm alone that a human being can realize his highest spiritual ideal; i.e. enlightenment. One must have accumulated tremendous merits in one's past life in order to qualify for a birth in the human realm. Therefore, this life should not be wasted for anything it has not been designed for.

The life of the Buddha is a testimony to how significant human life is and how high a spiritual achievement a human being can reach in this life. It was only

⁸ See Jorge Luis Borges, op. cit., p.58-59.

through the rare opportunity of being born human that Prince Siddhartha could aspire to become a Buddha. However, when people in their thousands have been killed in meaningless wars and conflicts, such a tremendous potential has just evaporated into thin air. In spiritual terms, this can be considered as a tremendous loss of golden opportunities. Therefore, the potential civil war between the Koliyas and the Sakyas had to be stopped by the Buddha as it would only take away so many innocent lives.

However, the conflicts and wars which are still happening in some parts of the world is a total denial of the spiritual significance of human lives. In many senseless and ugly wars thousands and even hundreds of thousands of innocent lives continue to be sacrificed. With the involvement of highly-sophisticated weapons of mass destruction and other modern killing machines, as is shown in the widely-televised wars of the Middle East, the significance of human lives has become even more degraded. Therefore, a great deal still needs to be done to increase global awareness of the value and significance of the human life on this planet.

In our attempt to bring about global peace, there needs to be a new kind of mass education as regards how valuable our lives as human beings are on this planet. Some other major religions would even go so far as to describe this life as the only opportunity for preparing oneself for a happy afterlife. That is why all kinds of measures should be taken in order to minimize any risks towards the continuity of human existence. If there were enough appreciation for human life, there would never be any young people who get trapped in acts of terrorism which not only destroy their valuable lives but also the innocent lives of many men, women and children.

Global Recovery is Possible when the Interconnectedness of Life is Fully-Realized:

The last insight and parallel that can be conjured up in relation to the life of the Master is that there is an essential principle of interconnectedness that controls everything in human life.

When Siddhartha escaped from his palace in order to find the ultimate truth, he did not think of his own spiritual salvation. His quest for spiritual liberation was in fact motivated by his compassion and love for all suffering all living beings. Therefore, upon becoming a Buddha, his Buddhahood opened the path for others'

salvation as well. That is why, as in the case of Jesus Christ, Buddha Sakyamuni is a savior through and through.⁹

That way, the life of the Buddha has a universal outlook. It concerns every human being. It is not surprising that the Master's struggle for Nirvana should appeal to the person, the society and the world as one because human suffering (*dukkha*) is the same everywhere.

This awareness that we are all one in striving to free ourselves from the pain of samsara can, therefore, act as a broad philosophical basis for a global cooperation for peace. Why? Because global recovery and global peace are both for the entire humanity, not for only one fragment of it. As Venerable Sangharakshita¹⁰ puts it, there can be no peace unless it is for all citizens of the world:

In other words, we shall be able to achieve peace only by regarding ourselves as citizens of the world, and learning to think not in terms of what is good for this or that nation-state, this or that political system, this or that ideology, but simply and solely in terms of what is good for the world, or for humanity, as a whole. There can be no peace- no world peace – so long as the governments and peoples of sovereign nation-states insist on regarding their separate, sometimes mutually exclusive, interests as paramount and to be pursued at all costs.¹¹

Conclusion:

It has been discussed above that, in order for Buddhist education to make its tangible contribution to global recovery, a new strategy—in addition to the already-existing *Dharma*-propagating strategies - needs to be devised and upheld. While the present *Dharma*-propagating methodology will continue to mark its stance, it is equally important to look at other alternative approaches for enrichment. The present paper has suggested that it may well be more effective and efficient to refocus on the life of the Master so as to reveal openly all the most relevant insights and parallels from within it for worldwide inspiration as well as spiritual guidance.

In addition to bringing the whole body of Buddhist teachings into public spotlight as something which constitutes the whole of what the Tathagata Buddha has ever taught verbally, it may be time that some priceless lessons derived from the life events of the Buddha were given a renewed attention and emphasis. After all, it goes

⁹ It is such a shame that the image of the Buddha's being the Saviour of humankind and, in fact, of all sentient beings has been weakened largely because of the Buddhist overemphasis on individual efforts for spiritual emancipation.

¹⁰ Sangharakshita, *Buddhism, World Peace & Nuclear War* (Windhorse Publication, 1984).

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

without saying that what the Buddha did can only be as spiritually significant as what he said.¹²

All the events in the Buddha's worldly life, as has been discussed earlier, demonstrate the Master's unmistakable way of ending the root causes of all the problems and sufferings in the human life as a whole. They constitute the different stages in the mental spiritual career that an ordinary human being will progress through.

Therefore, what the Buddha did throughout his earthly life constitutes the practical (read 'therapeutic') side of Buddhism—as opposed to what he taught verbally (or the *Dharma*) which is of the theoretical (read 'theological-doctrinal') domain. While both are equally essential as they make up the two faces of the same coin, the former—unlike the latter—has its own clearly distinctive function to serve.

Around 2500 years ago, through the various events in his life, the Buddha showed all of us that the root causes of human sufferings (i.e.: greed, hatred and delusion) could be wiped out. Today, 2500 years later, what he did with his life back then to help his disciples and followers to end their problems, conflicts, wars or, in one word which sums it all, *dukkha* (suffering) can still powerfully enlighten every one of us with a way to end all the mammoth-like problems created ignorantly and selfishly by contemporary humanity.

By helping the world's community to learn and get thoroughly inspired, guided or, better still, transformed through the implications or lessons or insights derived from examples in the life of the Buddha - especially by having recourse to the convenience and sophistication offered by the most advanced IT technology of modern times, most members of the world's community would be enabled to help our world recover from all the problems it still faces today. *"If we can recognize, in Siddhārtha's story, our own deepest strivings for ultimate liberation from the confines of conditioned existence, and the first steps we are already, perhaps, beginning to take in order to fulfil them, then we can also see that what Siddhārtha finally realized is what we too can realize, eventually, for ourselves."*¹³

¹² One thing that distinguishes the Buddha and mainstream philosophers is the fact that, while those philosophers have said a great deal of things they have never really done empirically or factually, the Master only said what he had done. Therefore, he left nothing for shallow speculation or dispute. From this perspective, 'doing' can be conceived as even far superior to 'saying.'

¹³ Sangharakshita, *Who is the Buddha?*, p. 48.

Buddhist Ethics and Its Relevance to Education

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Introduction:

The paper focuses on religious education and the ethical aspect of the philosophy mentioned by the Buddha - an enlightened one. This paper emphasizes a vital role of education and assigns supreme importance of education for the achievement of altruistic attitude in our social, public and personal life. It has left aside ever-complicated problematic issues being faced by us in our day-to-day life in practice belief and devotion. It can bring some changes in our behavioral and attitudinal patterns with a view to reducing and ceasing the tensions, hesitation, superstitions and conflicts in our social and public relations. It also tries to focus on the dimension of ever-glowing perpetual peace, happiness and sustainable development in the world by acquiring religious education based on ethical code. Towards the end of the paper some proposals have been made for the smooth and perfect acquisition of religious education based on Buddhist ethical articles.

Education is the backbone of every individual as well as nation. It is uniform, harmonious and systematic development of latent potentialities inherent in human beings. The aim of education is to make man perfect, pious and successful. The aim of Buddhism is also for the perfection and piousness of human beings.

Morality means a harmonious, prosperous and happy life. Buddhist education lays emphasis on this moral life and urges all political, social and economic institutions to promote morality among the members. Buddhist moral teachings, among others, comprises: panca-sila, attha-sila, dasa-sila and noble eight-fold path.

Buddhism teaches us peace, harmony, social welfare, social justice, love, compassion and amity. It is a religion of friendship, brotherhood, morality, non-violence and tolerance. Hence, it is a religion of merit-making and durable happiness. Buddhism has a respect for all living beings and approaches them with loving kindness. Buddhism dispels the darkness of ignorance and shows us path of peace and the path to be freed from sufferings. The Buddha's teachings are way of enlightenment, by way of acquiring knowledge and education. His message enabled us to think freely and wisely. His teachings are still illuminating the world with loving kindness.

The Buddha was a great teacher. His teachings are imperishable and amazing. He taught man for inspiring love and for establishing peace. He was unique among religious teachers of all time. The teachings of the Buddha inspired the blossoming of a whole civilization. Buddhist thought, education and philosophy have become a great force that moved through the history of civilization. Buddhism is an effective vehicle and a religion for humanity. The appeal of Buddhism is logical. It is a message of peace, loving-kindness. This message of peace radiated in all directions and the millions of followers found a new way of life. Though Buddha, the savior of mankind, is no more in the world yet, the sweet fragrance of his message of peace still remain with us. Buddhism has won the hearts of countless millions.

The Buddhist education has been wonderfully depicted in the Tripitaka. In Tripitaka there is a clear direction to mankind which leads them to emancipation and peace. Buddha's teachings are a Buddhist's education. This education was introduced in order to educate the society and civilized the people to lead in virtuous life. This education asserted that true greatness springs only from warm-hearted loving-kindness.

The Buddha realized that people are suffering; He wanted to find out the real happiness. He renounced the world and invented Noble Eight Fold Path, through which one can conquer sufferings. The middle way is the path of self-conquest, which leads man to real happiness and peace.

The Buddha's ethical pronouncements have a great deal to offer in this regard. We sincerely believe in the minimization of individual and social conflicts, which are found in the Four Noble Truths, as follows:

- 1) All existence is entangled in suffering.
- 2) There is a cause behind every form of suffering.
- 3) It is possible to end suffering.
- 4) There are ways to end suffering.

The Buddha perceives human life in terms of suffering and ultimate goal of his quest is cessation of suffering which he terms Nirvana. The Buddha's teaching is the emancipation of suffering by following righteous conduct and ethical principles. The way is to eradicate suffering and the attainment of perpetual peace. The Buddha's enunciation of truths is to be found in his code of ethics that can be set forth as follows:

- The Five Precepts: *not to kill, not to steal, not to commit adultery, not to lie and not to take intoxicating liquor.*

- The Noble Eight Fold Path: *right understanding, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration.*
- The Ten Transcendental Virtues: *generosity, morality, renunciation, wisdom, energy, patience, truthfulness, resolution, loving kindness and equanimity.*

Without much of disputation what we can concur here is that we traverse the path of right understanding, right thought, right speech, right action and practice actively. The virtues of generosity, patience, truthfulness and loving kindness will pave the way to a condition, where universal harmony and durable peace are guaranteed.

The ethics of Buddhists are Noble Eight –Fold Path which are the basic principles of Buddhist Education. The present world is threatened with violence. The manufacture and the sale of arms and ammunition is largely responsible for all killing and violence in the world and also for all terrorist activities in every corner of the globe. Eightfold Path is [right or correct livelihood]. Buddhist ethical codes also direct people to keep themselves away from drugs. At present drug abuse has become the major problem in the world. The manufacturing and selling of alcohol and drugs are greatly responsible for crimes in every society. Buddhist Education laid great stress on the abstention from liquor and drugs.

We are cutting trees and destroying the forest indiscriminately. Environment pollution has generated utter frustration in the world because we are not protecting the nature. Buddhism gives us clear idea in this direction. The Buddha’s whole life is deeply connected with forests and trees. He was born in garden, achieved Enlightenment under a tree, preached the First Sermon in a forest. Jetabon Vihar and Benuban Vihar were established in a forest. Buddha loved forest, trees and gardens. He directed his disciples not to cut any trees or plants but instructed them to plant trees. This teachings and ideas have to be disseminated throughout the world.

From going through Buddhist scriptures we learn: He who serves the sick and feeds the hungry serves the Buddha and the Dharma. It means by keeping the people hungry, peace cannot be established in the world. Buddha’s appeal to the people is that he should fight against poverty and stand beside the sick. This poverty is the cause of theft, terrorism and discontent in the society which is the main hindrance to progress, prosperity and peace. We find unthinkable examples of Buddhist Education in Ashokan rock edicts. Ashoka said: “Sabba manusa mama paja” – “All people are my children”. Therefore the time has come to preach the message of the Buddha in order to establish world peace.

Victory begets enmity. Happy people are neither the victor nor victim. Everybody should conquer one’s own mind rather than conquering thousands of enemies in the world. Self-victory [or victory over the self] is the best victory.

Buddha discarded war. Therefore we should control our minds and refrain from greed, hatred and violence for lasting peace.

The Buddha's teachings contain three useful major points: discipline, meditation and wisdom. Wisdom is the goal and deep meditation or concentration is the crucial process towards achieving wisdom. Discipline through observing precepts, is the method that helps one to achieve deep meditation; wisdom will then be realized naturally. The Buddha's entire teachings are conveyed in the Sutras and never really depart from these three points. Buddhism encompasses the entire collection of works by Shakyamuni Buddha which is called the Tripitaka. This can be classified into three categories: sutra, vinaya, and shastra which emphasize meditation, discipline or precepts, and wisdom respectively.

Nowadays many people do not understand the meaning and teachings of Buddhism. They mistake the multi-representations of Bodhisattvas as a sign of polytheism. What people fail to understand is the fact that the statues in Buddhism are teaching aids and not statues of gods. All Buddha's and Bodhisattvas represent our nature and cultivation of virtue. We have infinite capabilities within our true nature that cannot be expressed by just one single term. Therefore, we have multiple representations, for instance, a capable person today may have many titles on his business cards to show his positions and accomplishments. The Buddha and Bodhisattvas are actually representations of the nature within ourselves: Buddha, as in our true nature of mind, and the Bodhisattvas, in our virtue of cultivation. We all possess these qualities. These qualities are within ourselves.

The goal of Buddhist education is to attain wisdom. In Sanskrit, the language of ancient India, the Buddhist wisdom is called "nuttara-samyak-sambhodi", which means the perfect ultimate wisdom. The Buddha teaches us that the main objective of our practice or cultivation is to achieve this ultimate wisdom. He further taught us that everyone has the potential to realize this state of ultimate wisdom.

Monks, Nuns of Buddhist countries must be teachers and preachers. Their aim should be to moralize the public as well as to improve their ways of life. According to Buddhist beliefs, the cultivation and purification of the mind is the source of all good deeds. Thus, if we properly bring up children at the earliest, they will become good citizens and good human beings in the future. Their knowledge will be applied to save the world.

Monks and nuns of all Buddhist countries have had crucial roles especially in the moral education of the public. They are devoted to and inculcated with compassion, friendliness, and love of peace.

It is obvious that in Bangladesh only well-to-do families are able to send children to a good school. For many poor children in Bangladesh and those living in far away villages: they are condemned to stay with their parents, working for the rest of their lives. The sight of youngsters selling newspapers and garlands in the street is just an ordinary experience for everyone in Bangladesh. Similarly, outside the town areas of Bangladesh, far away in the countryside, small boys and girls watch cattle in the fields without any chance to enter school. Buddhist education teaches us co-operation and co-ordination among the people of the globe.

When we experience something to be right and good we feel under a moral obligation to do it. When we experience something to be bad and wrong, we feel under a moral obligation not to do it. The highest good of man may be regarded as the aim of ethics. The highest good implies both the personal good and the social good.

The Buddha elucidates what compassion or loving kindness means in the “Metta Sutta”, a discourse of major significance. As a mother, even at the risk of her own life, protects her son - so let everyone cultivate unbounded (maitri) loving-kindness towards the whole world, above, below, around, unstinted and unmixed with any feeling of difference or opposition (qtd. in Narasu, 1976 :74)

The following proposals are urgently and unavoidably needed for the smooth and perfect acquisition of religious education based on Buddhist ethical ideas.

- 1) Since Buddhism is scientific, logical and epoch-making it aims at developing the overall welfare of sentient human beings, the religion should be propagated nationally and internationally.
- 2) To increase and enhance co-operation between all schools of Buddhism and thereby promote unity and solidarity among Buddhists.
- 3) To propagate Buddhist education through different languages, realistic steps should be taken.
- 4) To create strong organizational body to deal with public relations for enhancement of Buddhism.
- 5) To encourage a realistic all-pervading approach to sustainable development based on the Buddhist education of the Middle way.
- 6) To encourage non-Buddhist countries to hold international Buddhist conferences on the Buddha’s Teachings.
- 7) Syllabus of Buddhism should introduce at all levels of education up to B.A. Hon’s and M.A. Degrees in Buddhist populated countries.

- 8) Books on Pāli language should be translated into different languages for textual resources.
- 9) National and international Libraries and Museums are required to be established.
- 10) Proper training should be given to the religious teachers under the guidance of erudite scholars of Buddhism.
- 11) Well-written religious books for householders are to be published widely and their free distribution is to be ensured.
- 12) International publication center is required to be established for healthy religious education in all Buddhist and non Buddhist Countries.
- 13) Scholarship is to be awarded to all the deserving Buddhist students for acquiring higher education on Buddhism.
- 14) Scholarships are to be awarded to the students and personalities who are engaged in research works on Buddhism.
- 15) Ancient heritages of Buddhism are to be preserved perfectly.
- 16) Training of monks and novices is unavoidably needed.
- 17) Proper steps are required to be taken regarding the renovation and preservation of the ancient universities: Nalanda, Thakhashila, Shalban Vihar, Paharpur Mahabihara, Vikram Shila, Pandit Vihara etc., which are source of inspiration for the Buddhist people of the world.

Ahimsā is the negation of *himsā* - it means non-violence, non-injury to all living beings. The concept includes both the violence and its negation. *Himsā* that is expressed in killing has been described in the conversation of King Milinda and Ven. Nagasena. In order to open the golden gate-way of tranquility and prosperity Buddhism should be practiced and taught in all Monasteries and other institutions as well.

The ethical ideas of Buddha are tolerance, friendship and mutual understanding. These ideas can be taught and learned in all Buddhist institutions in the world. This education can play a vital role in creating democratic society with openness of heart and mind. Such education also helps to establish close relationship between different social groups of the world. Moreover, such ethical education based on ethical viewpoints will, undoubtedly, eradicate conflict, chaos, confusion and confrontation across the globe. It is our firm belief that Buddhist education will transform the world to everlasting peace, glory, happiness, fullness and perception.

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Global Recovery through Buddhist Education

Kamaleswar Bhattacharya

The Four Noble Truths taught by the Buddha are compared by the Buddhist texts themselves to a medical transaction: diagnosis, etiology, recovery, and therapeutics, while the Buddha is held to be a Master of the art. It is therefore natural to look for a way to ‘Global Recovery’ from the ills the world is suffering from, in Buddhism. However, all the problems the world is confronted with today were not known to the Buddha. It is therefore vain and anachronistic to try to find direct answers to our present-day problems in the teachings of the Buddha (despite the tendency to identify re-interpretations and even creative extensions of ideas found in ancient texts with the original teaching).¹

I must confess that I have hardly read the immense literature on these questions that has grown over the years, but I cannot hide my astonishment when I encounter, e.g., an ecological explanation of a well-known, too well-known, passage of the Pāli Canon, from a well-known scholar:

*api ca kvāhaṃ, āvuso, imasmiñ ñeva vyāmamatte kaḷevare saññimhi samanake lokañ ca paññāpemi lokasamudayañ ca lokanirodhagāminiñ ca paṭipadam.*²

Much indeed has been written on this passage, each author finding in it an expression of his own pet idea. But, in the present context, I do not find in it anything like ‘The Physical Body as Environment’.³

The whole text is important, and Mrs. Rhys Davids was certainly right in saying: “It was a great opportunity for exegesis, but B[uddhaghosa] makes no use of it”.⁴

So far as I am aware, Mrs. Rhys Davids nowhere expressed her idea. But, in my modest way, some forty years ago, I explained the text as follows:

¹ See L. Schmithausen, ‘The Early Buddhist Tradition and Ecological Ethics,’ *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* 4 (1997), pp. 1-74.

² *Saṃyutta-Nikāya* I, pp. 61-62 = *Aṅguttara-Nikāya* II, pp. 47-49. (The editions of Pāli texts quoted are those of the Pāli Text Society.)

³ David J. Kalupahana (Dion Peoples, editor), ‘Buddhist Approach to the Environmental Problem,’ *Buddhist Approach to Environmental Crisis, UNDV Conference Volume*, 2009, p. 3.

⁴ *The Book of the Kindred Sayings I (Pāli Text Society Translation Series 7, London 1917)*, p. 86, n. 3.

Note that the “unborn, unproduced, uncreated, unformed (*ajāta, abhūta, akata, asaṃkhata*), in a word, the Unconditioned, is not another world, situated beyond the born, produced, created, formed” (*jāta, bhūta, kata, saṃkhata*). It is in us, is our very selves: it is our essential nature. It must, then, be discovered in the depths of our being, by transcending our phenomenal existence. It is not “by a local movement” (*gamanena*) that the “end of the world” (*lokassa anto = dukkhassa anto* “end of suffering”) is attained to, “where one is not born, does not grow old, does not die, where there is neither death nor rebirth” (*yattha na jāyati na jīyati na mīyati na cavati na uppajjati*). “But, I tell you, it is in this body, endowed with consciousness, which is no more than a fathom in height, that are found the origin of the world, the cessation of the world, and the way which leads to the cessation of the world.” And he who thus knows, in himself, the “end of the world”, aspires neither to this world nor to the other (*nāsiṃsati lokam imaṃ parañ ca*). *S. I*, pp. 61-62 = *A. II*, pp. 47-49 (an oft-quoted passage, most recently by P. Mus, “Où finit Puruṣa?” in *Mélanges Louis Renou*, p. 562). This is a formulation of the “Four Noble Truths” (*Cattāri Ariyasaccāni*), which is unusual. The “world” (*loka*) here means the empirical world, which is the place of our becoming (this is the reason why it is identified as sorrow, *dukkha*). But this world has its “origin” (*samudaya*) in ourselves, - in our imperfect consciousness, which confuses appearance and Being, and which is therefore called “ignorance” (*avidyā / avijjā*). It must therefore also have its “end” (*anta*) or “cessation” (*nirodha*) in ourselves, in the full unfolding of our consciousness. And the “way which leads to the cessation of the world” (*lokanirodhagāminī paṭipadā = dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā* of the “Four Noble Truths”) is the “noble eightfold path” (*ariyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo*) or *brahmacariya* (*lokantagū vusitabrahmacariyo*, *S. I*, p. 62, *gāthā* ...). We do not consider it a betrayal of the thought of the Buddha, to have him saying: Man is a finite being; however, his finitude, unlike that of inferior beings, is *open*: he contains in himself not only infinity, which is his true nature (as it is for all other beings) but also, by virtue of his consciousness, the capacity to discover that nature: through consciousness, he is capable of going beyond consciousness to become Consciousness...⁵

This is not meant to suggest that it is not possible to build a system of ecological, nay general ethics applicable to all mankind upon the basis of the genuine teachings of the Buddha. But that has not happened yet, so far as I am aware. I will therefore insist once more on a point on which I have had occasion to insist in the past, under the auspices of the UNESCO itself. This, I believe, should be the Buddhist Education in the present circumstances, firmly based on the Buddha’s teachings and at the same time adapted to the needs of the day.

⁵ K. Bhattacharya, *L’Ātman-Brahman dans le Bouddhisme ancien* (Publications de l’École française d’Extrême-Orient XC, Paris 1973), p. 12.

It must be recognized by all, irrespective of one's religious background, that all the problems the world has to face today, ecological, political, social, economical (which towers above all the other problems nowadays), derive ultimately from one source: egoism, under diverse forms. This was emphasized in a recent interview by the winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006, Muhammad Yunus.⁶ Now, there is to my knowledge no religious leader who has so much emphasized the eradication of the ego as the Buddha. This is the import of the famous doctrine of *anattā*, usually known as the doctrine of 'non-soul'.

Of all the problems the world has to face today, there is at least one with which the Buddha was familiar, the problem of violence and war. That is, of course, an eternal problem. History has recorded the cases of Buddhist rulers who have waged bloody wars, sometimes in the name of Buddhism itself. It is difficult (*duṣkara*) to rule according to *dharma*, which essentially consists in compassion (*kṛpāgarbha*), as the philosopher Nāgārjuna implicitly recognized in later times when he said to his royal friend that if he found it difficult to rule according to *dharma*, he should rather have recourse to religious life (*pravrajyādhiḡamaḡ kṣamaḡ*).⁷

Now, the Buddha, when he had to deal with some of the bloodiest rulers of his time, did not say: 'Don't go to war, make peace'. At the best, he taught what may be considered the Buddhist equivalent of the 'golden rule', 'so little followed':

*sabbā disā anupariḡamma cetasā
n' ev' ajjhagā piyataram attanā kvaci /
evaḡ piyo puthu attā paresaḡ
tasmā na hiḡse param attakāmo ||*⁸

There is nothing in the world that is dearer to me than myself, and so is the case with all others. One who wishes one's own good should therefore not harm others.

Various explanations have been offered. It has been suggested, e.g., that the Buddha 'may have considered interference in political matters futile, or even may have viewed it as potentially detrimental to the prosperity of the Order.'⁹

⁶ Published in the French Newspaper *Libération*, 4 February 2010.

⁷ *Ratnāvalī* (ed. M. Hahn, Bonn 1982), IV, 100.

⁸ See references in K. Bhattacharya, *Some Thoughts on Early Buddhism with special reference to its relation to the Upaniṣads* (*Acharya Dharamananda Kosambi Memorial Lectures*, Pune: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1998), p. 7, n. 13.

⁹ André Bareau, as presented in L. Schmithausen, 'Aspects of the Buddhist Attitude towards War,' *Violence Denied*, ed. J. E. M. Houben and K. R. van Kooij (Leiden 1999), p. 51.

I rather believe that, if the Buddha never clearly said ‘Don’t go to war, make peace,’ it was because he knew far too well that the problem of violence and war could not be solved by admonitions. Nor could it be solved by blindly following the Buddhist moral precepts, as did the Sakyas, the Buddha’s own people, who are said to have let themselves be killed rather than killing, in the name of the precept of non-killing (*pāṇātipātā veramaṇī*).

We see before our eyes that admonitions and laws have failed to curb the greed of people in the present economic crisis. We know that the UNO, whose mission it is to maintain peace in the world, has failed to prevent rulers from killing a part of their own population, to consolidate their own power or that of the dominant part of their population. We know that this august body has been instrumentalized by its mighty members to serve their own interests, or even ignored to wage wars in their own interest. There are rivalries within groups such as G8 and G20, and the very emergence of G20 is viewed with suspicion by the mighty powers of G8, afraid of losing their dominating power. We know that countries which proclaim lofty principles such as democracy and human rights do not hesitate to do business with, even to court, those which systematically violate or ignore those principles. There is egoism everywhere. As a famous statesman of the 20th century, General de Gaulle, used to say, in the Club of nations there are as many egoisms as there are registered members. There are sometimes talks about reforming the systems. But, as Muhammad Yunus recently said, ‘The machines do not change the world. The men, yes’.¹⁰

Indefatigably the Buddha taught the doctrine of *anattā*. What is this terrible doctrine, more often misunderstood than understood? We know that some contemporaries of the Buddha himself accused him of being ‘a nihilist who preached the destruction of the existing individual’ (*venayiko samaṇo Gotamo sato sattassa ucchedaṃ vināsaṃ vibhavaṃ paññāpeti*).¹¹ The Buddha, of course, protested against this idea.

The identification of the individual’s essence with the empirical psycho-physical elements of individuality, more or less privileged, is ingrained in humanity. In India, the earlier literature, represented by the Upaniṣads, mentions it, sometimes under a mythological garb. Thus, as a famous Sanskritist of the 20th century puts it, the Asura (demon) Virocana of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (VIII, 8) is the ‘eternal prototype of all men who merely see in the body the hope of immortality, and, therefore, deck it out on death with gay raiment’.¹² More intelligent people such as

¹⁰ *Loc. cit.*

¹¹ *Majjhima-Nikāya* I, p. 140.

¹² A. B. Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upaniṣads* II (*Harvard Oriental Series* 32, Cambridge, Mass. 1925), p. 517.

the god Indra (in the *Chāndogya* VIII, 11) and Maitreyī, the favorite wife of the great thinker Yājñavalkya (in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, II, 4, 13, and IV, 5, 14), on the other hand, see the essence of the individual in consciousness, the most precious of these elements, and, in the cessation of consciousness, they see the destruction of themselves (*vināśam evāpīto bhavati*).

This is the phenomenon that is echoed in a passage of the *Samyutta-Nikāya*, which says that the Samaṇas and Brāhmaṇas who envisage the essence of the individual – the self (*ātman*) – in diverse ways envisage either all the five aggregates (*khandha*) which constitute our empirical individuality or one or other of them:

*Ye hi keci, bhikkhave, samaṇā vā brāhmaṇā vā anekavihiṭaṃ attānaṃ samanupassamānā samanupassanti sabbe te pañcupādanakkhandhe samanupassanti etesaṃ vā aññataraṃ.*¹³

It was against this background that the Upaniṣads proclaimed the *ātman*, which is not an individual substance, a “soul”, but, identical with the *brahman*, the Being itself, the universal, absolute Consciousness beyond the subject-object split – the transcendent Impersonality which man realizes through the negation of his individuality.

The Buddha, more preoccupied with liberation, preached *anattā*. The elements of individuality are all impermanent (*anicca*) and hence painful (*dukkha*). Now, when one is attached to what is painful, saying: ‘this is mine, I am this, this is my *ātman*,’ can one understand one’s misery and liberate oneself from it? *yo nu kho dukkhaṃ allīno dukkhaṃ upagato dukkhaṃ ajjhosito dukkhaṃ etaṃ mama eso ’ham asmi eso me attā ti samanupassati, api nu kho so sāmaṃ vā dukkhaṃ parijāneyya dukkhaṃ vā parikkhepetvā vihareyya.*¹⁴

The Buddha, therefore, analyzing the aggregates, says: What is impermanent is painful (*yad aniccaṃ taṃ dukkhaṃ*), what is painful is *anattā* (*yaṃ dukkhaṃ tad anattā*), and, of what is *anattā*, one should understand through right knowledge: this is not mine, I am not this, this is not my *ātman*’ (*yad anattā taṃ n’ etaṃ mama n’ eso ’ham asmi, na m’ eso attā ti evam etaṃ yathābhūtaṃ samappaññāya daṭṭhabbam*).¹⁵

Now, if there is egoism, it is because of the false identification of ourselves with our psycho-physical individuality, which engenders the notions of ‘I’ and ‘mine’ (*ahaṃkāra, mamaṃkāra*).¹⁶ With the cessation of this identification, therefore, ceases egoism.

¹³ *Samyutta-Nikāya* III, p. 46.

¹⁴ *Majjhima-Nikāya* I, p. 233.

¹⁵ *Samyutta-Nikāya* III p. 22-23, etc. On the *Mahānidāna-Sutta* version of *anattā* see K. Bhattacharya, *Some Thoughts ...*, pp. 21 ff.

¹⁶ K. Bhattacharya, *L’Ātman-Brahman...*, p. 74.

But the Buddhas only teach, it is up to you to make the effort. *tumhehi kiccam ātappaṃ akkhātāro tathāgatā*.¹⁷ One must school oneself following the Buddhist Way, that which is described in the most venerated *Sutta* of mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*),¹⁸ on which is based the Vipassanā method of meditation (for which there are nowadays numerous centres all over the world), and which is not without connection with Zen.

There are four kinds of *satipaṭṭhāna*, consisting in the observation of the body (*kāyānupassanā*), the observation of the feelings (*vedanānupassanā*), the observation of the mind (*cittānupassanā*), and the observation of the mind-objects (*dhammānupassanā*).

Strictly speaking, the first two belong to the *samatha* (concentration) type of meditation, and the second two alone constitute the *vipassanā* (insight) type; and there is a hierarchy of levels among those who are apt to practice them.¹⁹ But, nowadays, all of them are included in Vipassanā, excepting, perhaps, the *ānāpānasati*, the mindfulness concerning the breathing in and out, which Tradition includes in the observation of the body.

However, all these ‘observations’ lead to the same result. We observe our body, our bodily activities in our day-to-day life, we observe our feelings, we observe our mind in the different states, and so on. We realize that everything comes and goes, that nothing is permanent, and thus we realize the three basic characteristics of all phenomenal things, according to Buddhism, namely that everything is impermanent (*anicca*), hence painful (*dukkha*), and hence not-self (*anattā*).

The false notion of self which each of us has is thus eliminated. With this elimination comes the elimination of the false distinction between ‘others’ and ‘self’, and this elimination means total integration, which is the real and unique source of the ‘global recovery’, from the ills the world is suffering from.²⁰

¹⁷ *Dhammapada* 276.

¹⁸ *Dīgha-Nikāya, Sutta 22; Majjhima-Nikāya, Sutta 10.*

¹⁹ Buddhaghosa, *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī* III, p. 754; *Papañcasūdanī* I, p. 239.

²⁰ See also Y. Kajiyama in *Buddhism and Nature. Proceedings of an International Symposium on the Occasion of Expo 1990* (Tokyo 1991), p. 40.



Buddhist Education for Recovering the Society

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Introduction:

Problems, we all face them; the world is filled with problems. In the words of Buddha himself, problem is termed as Dukkha or suffering. In Samyutta Nikaya, Buddha mentions that his teachings focus on two aspects; one is misery and the other, the way to free oneself from it. Hence it can be said that enlightenment, is basically the process and the product of coming out of suffering.

In the process of solving problems, people have come up with different fields and faculties in the society. Social laws were developed in order to solve social problems. Other fields like economics, politics, science, law, business etc, are also aimed at solving problems that arise from different other aspects of life, which in turn affect the society. Such fields and faculties were developed in different parts of the world and these theories are also innovated and revised time and again in order to solve the more prevalent problems. Experts in these fields have also ensured innovations and changes in the theory and practice of these faculties, which in turn are aimed at the betterment of mankind. In this context, one can say that these different fields were developed in the world to ensure that the people live at ease. Invention of new technology, theories etc., have also contributed to the betterment of life. But it is also true that such inventions have also caused destruction and in many cases these principles and technologies have been the cause of mass destruction instead of development.

Conflict also arose with the development of different political thoughts such as capitalism and communism; with such conflicts, the world witnessed gruesome situations, such as world war, for about an entire century. Science and the technologies derived from it, have been used for mass destruction and for developing weapons that cause such destruction. Hence the theories and practices that were intended to make life better and for problem solving have become the major cause of creating problems instead.

If we scrutinize the situation of these additional problems we can conclude that these theories and practices lack spiritualism. The lack of human discipline, ethics and moral values such as love, kindness, compassion, sympathy, honesty, consciousness and equanimity, are prevalent in today's society. Therefore, to solve

the social problem of the entire society and for the betterment of mankind as a whole these ethics and moral values have to be applied.

Five precepts as base of ethical society:

The word ethics can be defined as the theory and principle dealing with the relation between people as an individual and as a society. These principles need to be followed in order to survive in harmony. The five precepts¹ can be regarded as the standards for humans to follow as a guide to develop society towards their betterment. The five Buddhist precepts advise people to be honest with each other and to follow the laws of the nation. This precept is based on human ethical values and excellent code of moral which are universal in nature and encourage cultivating the social harmony. If everyone were disciplined according to these precepts, then every place on earth would be friendly and the society shall be peaceful and pleasant-sounding.

¹ Dunda Bahadur Bajracharya, *Dighanikaya*, (Lalitpur: Bir Purna Pustak Samgrahalaya,2000), p. 3. Further, these five precepts of Buddhist teachings are so common, they seldom need mentioned, but in the event that someone does not know them, they can be analyzed, as follows:

- **Not Killing:** *This precept requires people to respect every form of life. In this context it not only advises people to respect human life by avoiding acts such as human trafficking, but it also protects and respects the life of animals by rejecting animal trading. Buddhism advocates humans as superior to other animal lives and hence humans are required to cherish not only their own life but also the life of other sentient beings; hence, maintaining a social order. Refraining from killing other species and the idea of setting animals free is inclined towards environment protection as well, maintaining a natural balance over the world ecology. Refraining from taking a life also advocates an effort against violence of any kind, within a family and a society.*
- **Not Stealing:** *Stealing refers to un-rightfully taking other's wealth. Every property in the world has an owner; they may be few or many, but everything belongs to someone. Material properties are an outer layer of ones life. The precept of not stealing advises people to do no harm to the outer as well as inner layers of others life. It is only by not harming the outer or the inner layers of other's life can life last longer. Refraining from stealing is also a moral conduct, and this can have a positive effect on the moral sphere of the person generating more self satisfaction from their life.*
- **No Sexual Misconduct:** *This precept emphasizes on respecting sustainability of a family and its dignity. Families are the basic units of a society and the happiness of these single families influence the harmony of a society, directly or indirectly. Each person should respect the members of their own family as well as that of others, treating each other with courtesy ensures lesser threat and tragedy, as opposed to disrespecting other members of the society. This precept disseminates written regulation regarding gender deference for both men and women and also states the rules against and punishment for sexual harassment in all forms.*
- **Refrain from Lying and to be Sincere:** *Language is a necessity for communication, but dishonesty and insincerity can be regarded as a misuse of language. If we do not keep our words and promises and are insincere to others then deception and cheating will proliferate in our actions. Sincerity, hence, is: a behavioral key towards a harmonious life.*
- **Avoiding Consumption of Intoxicants and Being Conscious:** *Intoxication, as such induced by alcohol, can not only bring on the loss of consciousness, but can alter our behavior, making people act in un-social ways. Consumption of alcohol and drugs can very easily result in negative forms. National driving-laws even prohibit driving after drinking - this demonstrates the importance of retaining mental awareness and using ones wisdom.*

Cultivating extensive happiness in society:

Today, the whole of humanity is fraught with conflicts generated by political, economic, social, religious and racial consideration. There is not a remarkable space of the world free from conflict and turmoil. People are doing any types of activities to achieve short-term happiness. Which activities is being the cause of suffering? For example: earning - it is a way to sustain ones life and bring about a physical happiness. Filled with greed, people become more and more ignorant towards the value of human life and happiness; instead they follow their business and commerce with hook and crook. This may lead to temporary happiness but these unwholesome activities are bound to get back to the person who committed them and bring about suffering. In this context, Buddha alerts us in the Dhammapada stating:

*mattāsukhapariccāgo
passe ce vipulam sukham
caje mātta sukham dhāro
sampassam vipulam sukham²*

This means: in order to receive extensive happiness, one may abandon minor happiness, the intelligent person abandon minor happiness in consideration of extensive happiness. Buddha pronounces that people should give up short term happiness, if it were to lead to long term happiness - it is what an intelligent person would do. The above verse is in context to the spiritual practice in Vaisali, and can also be related in the context of a way to a livelihood. This can also be elaborated on as ‘the bad activities (in the name of earning a livelihood) performed to lead a happy life for a limited number of years can lead to unhappiness for an unlimited number of years, but leading a wholesome life, by giving up the temporary happiness, in favor of happiness for unlimited number of years, shall bring about permanent happiness’.

As is the life path, it is easier for people to be attracted to the unwholesome activities instead of the true and earnest path. Even in the course of earning a livelihood, people are keener towards them as opposed to the path of the truth and honesty. Buddha has said that the reason to this is the fact that the generation of income is easier through unwholesome activities rather than wholesome acts, but a life spent on the spoils of such cunning activities results in suffering for years. When in Jetavan, the Buddha uttered:

² *Dhammapada Pāli*, (Igatapur, Vipassana Research Institute), 1998, p. 50.

sujīvam ahirīkena
kākasūrena dhamsinā
pakkhandinā pagabbhena
samkilitthena jīvitam

This means: easy is the life of the shameless one who is as insolent as a crow, back biting, arrogant, and corrupt.³ It is, as mentioned earlier, easy for people to deviate from the path of the good and involve themselves in the unwholesome activities in the course of their businesses. It is a very common belief that any negative thing that people may do in order to earn their livelihood can be counterbalanced by religious activities such as worshipping or performing *Yanzna*. But such counterbalancing acts were not accepted by Buddha, according to Buddha, leading a good life meant giving up the unwholesome activities in every aspect of life and only be involved in wholesome activities. Buddha has stated in Dhammapada for living a good life as follows:

sabba pāpassa akaranam
kulalassa upasampadā
sacitta pariyodapanam
*yetam Buddhāna sāsanam*⁴

This means: don't do any evil, to accumulate good, to purify one's mind, this is the teachings of the Buddha. Therefore, in every aspect of life people should be conscious of the activities they are performing for the requirement of livelihood. In addition, Buddha in the course of preaching to the laymen and monks always emphasizes on the efforts of not performing such activities in the name of business.

natam kamman katam sadhu
yamkattwā anutappati
yassa assumukho rodham
*vipākam pati sevati.*⁵

This means: that deed is not well done when, after having it done one repents and when weeping with tearful face, one reaps the fruit thereof. Human life is

³ Tri Ratna Manandhar, *A Study on Buddha's approach to Business*, (Master degree unpublished thesis, submitted to Central Department of Buddhist Studies, Tribhuvan University) p.49.

⁴ *Op.cit, f.n.*, p. 36.

⁵ Narada , *The Dhammapada* (Taiwan: Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation, 1993) p. 67.

the product of many virtuous works and is so precious. But to survive this life: food, clothing and shelter are needed. In order to gain the fulfillment of them, people should not do any kinds of unwholesome activities. Honesty, as we have been told time and again, is the best policy, it should be implied in every step of life. It is also important to be alert and conscious in every activity in life. Regarding consciousness and alertness, Buddha has said:

appamādo amatam padamp

pamādo maccunopadam

appamattā na miyanti

epamatta yethā mata⁶

This means: heedfulness is the path of deathless, heedlessness is the path of death, the heedlessness do not die, the heedless are like unto the dead. Buddha had emphasized to live a life with ‘*appamada*’. Here ‘*appamada*’ means watchfulness. To be conscious is the watchfulness in doing work and this watchfulness minimizes the unwholesome activities. Therefore, people living in the society should be conscious and abandon unwholesome activities to get real happiness.

Right livelihood as a key for social life

Our existence is centered on our ability to sustain our survival. In this course one of the most important aspects of life is the capability to earn a livelihood. This activity of earning a livelihood supports our existence financially; every human should perform the right kind of activities, not only for oneself but also for others. In order to live a happy and peaceful life, Buddha, mentions the necessity of the right kind of livelihood. In Dhamma Chakkapavattna Sutta, Buddha describes this right livelihood in terms of the five ascetics in the course of preaching the four noble truths. The four noble truths, as mentioned by Buddha are – Suffering, the Cause of Suffering, the Cessation of Suffering and the Path that leads to the Cessation of Suffering. The final truth, that is, the Path that leads to the Cessation of Suffering, is an actual practice to be followed in order to free ones life from suffering or Dukha.⁷

The path is explained in terms of the Eightfold Noble Path.⁸ Amongst these eight: right speech, right action and right livelihood - are the most important aspects for the present context for society and the world. These teachings were firstly

⁶ *Op. cit.f.n.1*, p. 16.

⁷ Narada, *The Buddha and His Teachings*, (Taiwan: the Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation, 1988), p. 82-86.

⁸ *Ibid*, p. 89.

bestowed upon the five ascetics, but can also be applied in the common life. The basic idea behind these paths is to live according to the right livelihood and avoid the wrong. Buddha focused on the following five businesses as wrong kinds of livelihood:

1. Business of weapons
2. Business of meats
3. Business of animals
4. Business of intoxicants
5. Business of poisons

It can be said that the Buddha attributed the arising social problems in the world to the development of wrong business. The society is also getting worse, due to problems such as the business of weapons. It is a tragedy that such weapons are easily available and the result of such situations can be seen in the increase of crime and violence in society. It is human nature to want to harm each other in case of a conflict, the accessibility of such weapons of destruction can cause more harm than if the same were not as easily accessible. The same principle applies in the context of nations as well. The development and accessibility of weapons have resulted in mass destruction of life and property. History is further proof to this, where nations are involved in wars, not only due to the availability of such arms and ammunitions, but also in their mutual competition in producing these weapons. The two World Wars are evidences how the production and use of these weapons has caused not only destruction but also made society fearful and wary. The environment of trust and friendliness was destroyed as such. Due to such consequences, it is possible that the Buddha has regarded the business of weapons as a wrong means of earning a livelihood.

Killing innocent animals in order to run a business of meat and flesh is also regarded as unfair. It is cruel to kill another for the purpose of earning. Increase in the demand of meat, only increases the killing of these innocent animals, also the excess consumption of meat has been medically regarded as a cause for many life threatening diseases. So, keeping these effects in mind, it is possible that Buddha regarded the killing of animals as another wrong means of earning.

Likewise, the business of animals, which usually ends with slaughtering, also cannot be regarded as an innocent business. Purchasing and selling of animals indicates a lack of love and compassion, hence business of animals is also regarded as a wrong activity by Buddha.

Today, we find the advocates of human rights budding everywhere. But if we scrutinize the teachings of Buddha, we can find that Buddha has not only emphasized on human rights but animal rights as well. From the earliest times assumable, animals have been regarded as food, but by prohibiting the business of animals and meat, Buddha has stated the rights of animals. It is quite possible that Buddha was the first person to advocate the rights of animals.

The words ‘human-rights’, are often heard sounds and subject nowadays. But if we scrutinize the Buddha’s teaching of wrong livelihood we can see, not only about human rights but, it also gives emphasis on animal rights. From the earlier period the animal is taken as feed. But the Buddha, by prohibiting the business of animals and meat, had pronounced the right of animals. Buddha could be the first person who pronounced the right of animal.

Poison can be regarded as a means to bring about death. It can be used to murder others, like killing animals etc. or it can also be a tool for suicide. So, the business of poison is in fact the business of death, causing destruction of either human or animal life. Such activities clearly hamper society. Most people in the world have some kind of problem, and in many cases they may even contemplate suicide. With easy access to poison, it is possible that such contemplation can become reality for them. Besides through suicides and killing animals – poison or slow-poisons becomes a tool of murder to one or many people. In this regard, the Buddha has rendered the business of poison as yet another wrong means of earning.

These five businesses are the source of the prevalent problems in the society today. Violence, slavery, arms, race and drugs are the problems that disintegrate the world today. Therefore, in order to recover from these problems Buddha’s teaching pertaining to right livelihood should be taught, applied and followed.

Role of consciousness for the betterment of the society

According to Buddha the unwholesome activities are the product of impure mind. Impure mind is the mind with greed, hatred, illusion etc. so purification of mind is necessary for not involving in these unwholesome activities. There is a popular verse from the Buddha, as mentioned in Dhammapada Attha Kattha:

manopubbangamā dhammā

manosethā manomayā

manasā ce padutthena⁹

⁹ *Op. cit, f.n. 1, p. 13.*

This means: mind is the forerunner of all activities, mind is chief, all are mind made. Happiness, it is perhaps the goal of everyone. In order to achieve happiness people get into different occupations. But these occupations do not guarantee happiness; they can also lead to a bad result. One's actions can become their upward ladder to heaven or even end up as the downward ladder to hell!

Buddha listed five wrong doings which should be avoided in order to create a good future. A profession, considered as right by the society can in fact be wrong and evil if not based on truth and honesty. For example if a medical practitioner does not work honestly, his actions can lead to human loss. Similarly a lawyer can be more bent towards earning money rather than justice, an accountant and auditor can manipulate the accounts for personal gains. Engineers can pass a structure without checking the required specifications and this can result in accidents, which can be the cause of destruction of not only property but also life. Administrators can, unnecessarily, trouble citizens in order to receive bribe; journalists can spread wrong rumors in the media; businessmen can tamper with the quality of goods and also escalate the prices of goods and services by creating artificial shortages, etc. So any occupation, even ones that are regarded with prestige in the society, can be practiced with bad intentions, in such cases it is the mind of the people that plays a vital role. Thus it is important that the mind be purified and made clear of defilements, in order to bring peace and happiness into society.

Conclusion

When one applies Buddhist ethics, the orientation moves into harmony, stabilization and development in the society. These ethics are an expression of humanity, a process of survival with wisdom and aiming towards human development. The Buddhist principles are oriented to the cultivation of good and wholesome deeds, emphasizing on equality, right livelihood and pleasant speech and honesty. If such principles are popularized into the basic education of the common people, the conflicts of enmity and hatred shall disappear and a harmonious and sincere society can develop. Such a society shall build a strong solid relationship and would result in the purification of mind. Such a state will also be beneficial to society, in order to improve social morale and promote peace, safety and sustainability, and eventually help in creating a healthy and developed world. May peace prevail in the world.

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Buddhist Ideas for Global Recovery

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Buddhism understands that the world, by its inherent nature or essence, is full of immaculate, full of natural gifts, beautiful, harmonious and peaceful. Consciousness, by its inherent nature, is also pure and everybody is pure.¹ The world and individual becomes impure gradually by the contamination of other external elements with pure consciousness. In fact all are equal in many respects like its origination based upon the law of dependent origination, like happiness and dislike suffering. But one discriminates others from one's own self. Polluted environments such as social, political, criminal, economic, physical etc., are crises being created by misdeeds committed through mind, body and speech. But before Buddha Shakyamuni's advent, the world was full of wrong views in terms of philosophy, full of discrimination, animal sacrifice, violence and other extremism in terms of religious practices and materialistic practices. The Buddha changed the world with his ideas successfully. It is because the Buddha first addressed burning problems of human society. Secondly, the Buddha gave ideas and the ways to solve the problems. People of the time, who understood the Buddha's ideas and followed the way, accordingly, could solve their problems. Drastic and significant changes took place in society.

Now this world of 21st century is becoming almost full of artificial objects rather than the natural objects; individualistic rather than a harmonious and cooperative society; polluted rather than the immaculate; ugly rather than beautiful; unrest and violent rather than peaceful. In short, present world is in crises many aspects. The crises are known by different names but in fact are the same with the earlier ones. Firstly, let's highlight a few crises ongoing globally.

I. Social Crisis:

Social Crisis is the crisis which hampers the social life of an individual to society. An individual is a member of society. Individuals firm society. Social crisis is not only the disorder in an individual's social life but also a disorder in society that occurred in society by the unsocial elements or activities. Generally: recession, world war, terrorism etc. are considered as the major factors for social crisis. Here

¹ "svabhava suddha sarva dharmah, svabhasuddho'ham" (This verse is available in any Vajrayana Sadhana.)

a few other forms of social crisis are highlighted, which are not caused by the recession, war and terrorism but of course by human activities.

Nuclear family: Exclusion of Senior Citizen: Nuclear family system has already been established firmly in certain developed countries as the modern family system. It is growing up fast in developing countries too. ‘Old parents’ and ‘settled children’ are tied only legally as the family, but are far from each other physically, mentally and economically.

The responsibility of settled children towards old parents became limited. The relation between grandparent and grand children is limited by “name-relation” only. Meeting with old parents for settled children and meeting with grand-parents for grand-children occur very periodically, occasionally, and seems optional. While they meet, they are likely more intimate guests than family members for each other. On one hand seniors are being excluded in a family. On the other hand, settled children and grand children are being also excluded in a family.

Culture of Senior Home - Isolation of Senior: the nuclear family system finally introduces the ‘Senior Home’ system to meet the needs of the seniors who could not be self dependent due to old age and poor health. Senior home system is accepted as a passage of life by the society of America and Europe and gradually in certain developed Asian countries. Now senior home system is a culture of developed countries. But, the senior home system often only meets the material needs and health care of the senior, but cannot solve the isolation and depression of seniors. The senior home is also not an option for all seniors in terms of economy. The death of seniors is final liberation from isolation and depression, not a tragedy in life for them. The death of old parents causes many, at the least, sorrow for the settled children. The same could be said as a natural incident, rather than missing someone in life, for grand children. I could not forget: one of my Asian friends from US told me: once, a person from the US did not take food for a couple of days out of grief caused by demise of a pet; but, the news of the demise of elderly parents causes, just sorrow, and within only a couple of sentences, like: “Daddy/Mom was good, ...but, life is impermanent...”

Gay and Lesbian: A Post Modern Society? Gays and lesbians are termed, as: a form of post modern family/society in the West. In America 1990 census identified only 145,000 same sex unmarried households. In 2000 census reported that there are 105.5 million households in the USA; 5.5 million of these consist of unmarried partnerships and of these, 595,000 consist of same sex partners. Now in 2010, how many percentages have increased? One can only imagine.

In Britain: women, who had a same-sex sexual experience, not necessarily including genital contact, increased from 2.8% in 1990 to 9.7% in 2000. And men, who had a same-sex sexual experience too, increased up from 5.3% in 1990 to 8.4%

in 2000.² The same report says that only very little research that has been carried out on same-sex behavior in non-Western countries. However, the studies, carried out in the US and the UK, reveal the increasing population of gays and lesbians, which it is reasonable enough to assume that the gays and lesbians are prevalent throughout the world. Only widespread stigmatization and criminalization of same-sex behavior in many countries could have prevented gay men and lesbian women from openly expressing their sexuality. However homosexual-couples have been recognized legally in certain regions of the world, but they are not free from criticism as the social crisis widens.

Divorce – a Mushrooming Tragedy: Divorce is mushrooming so fast in the world. America has fifty percentage divorce rate which is the highest divorce rate in the world. Among the European countries, Britain hits the highest divorce rate in Europe. Britain has 2.7 divorces per 1,000 of the population, compared with a European average of 1.8 - according to Government figures in the study.³

In Singapore, the number of divorces is up a third since 1990, while it has nearly doubled in Thailand. In Japan, a couple gets married every 42 seconds, but another couple will divorce before 2 minutes are up. In the past 20 years, the divorce rate has doubled in mainland China and tripled in Taiwan. And the divorce rate in South Korea now exceeds that of many European countries, including the U.K., Denmark and Hungary. Even in India, where a wife was once considered so immutably tied to her husband if he died before she did, sociologists estimate that the divorce rate is 11 per 1,000, up from 7.41 per 1,000 in 1991.⁴ Each and every consumer-product has a warranty for a certain amount of months and years but there is no guarantee warranty for a successful marriage life in modern world.

Single parent, Remarriage, Step Family - An Injustice to Children: Divorce causes a single parent to remarry and this begins the mushrooming of step families. One can easily assume the rate of single parents in the world based on the divorce rate mentioned above. US is in foremost position in single parent families in the world.

A report says that more than a quarter of children in Britain now live in single-parent families. Single-parents are six percent in Greece, 12% in Austria, 13% in France, 14% in Germany and almost 15% per cent in Belgium.⁵ How many children are happy losing one parent and being associated with only single parent?

² <http://www.avert.org/gay-people.htm>

³ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/financetopics/financialcrisis/3174217/Financial-crisis-Countries-at-risk-of-bankruptcy-from-Pakistan-to-Baltics.html>

⁴ <http://www.time.com/time/asia/covers/50...ml?cnn=yes>)

⁵ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/financetopics/financialcrisis/3174217/Financial-crisis-Countries-at-risk-of-bankruptcy-from-Pakistan-to-Baltics.html>)

One more question may arise that how many children would be comfortable and happy with step parent and vice versa? What would be the psychological effects to the children? It can be assumed that children are helpless rather than happy to have only single parent, to be eyewitness for remarriage of parent and to live with step parent and step family. One may justify the advantage of divorce, single parent, remarriage, step family for one's own self but that would not be justice for the children and their life.

II. Economic crisis:

Economic crises are occurring around the world. Developing countries are suffering more from economic crisis. A developed country such as America is also in an economic crisis. Definitely, the US economic crisis impacts world economy; however a very few countries have claimed they are not affected by the US economic crisis.⁶ The European Commission brought into light the report of the economic crisis in Europe with causes, consequences and responses.⁷ Look at the a few examples of economic crisis in present world.

Bankruptcy: Total losses of US banks could reach as high as one-third of the total bank capital. The economies of central and Eastern Europe are being rocked by the crisis of world capitalism, compounded by the corrupt and pro-big business policies of their local elites. Analysts say they expect the scrutiny to fall hardest on countries that have already been flagged for their financial weaknesses. That group includes Ireland, Greece, the Baltic states, Ukraine, Pakistan, Romania and Bulgaria.⁸

Bankruptcy is a more recent strategy. It is a way to cut wages and benefits drastically for companies. It is a legal way granted by government to companies and individuals ultimately to escape from their committed liabilities towards public.

Unemployment: Most of the countries are facing unemployment; however, the percentage is different. A couple of countries are facing 90% of unemployment. About a half dozen countries are above 50% of unemployment. About a half dozen countries are under the 41-50% of unemployment. Half dozen countries are between 31-40% of unemployment. More than a dozen countries are in 21-30% of unemployment. More than three dozen countries are between 11-20% of unemployment. One to ten percent of more than a hundred countries are facing unemployment. At the end of 2009, the US has nearly 10% unemployment. The 10%

⁶ www.business.pundit

⁷ http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/publication15887_en.pdf

⁸ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/financetopics/financialcrisis/3174217/Financial-crisis-Countries-at-risk-of-bankruptcy-from-Pakistan-to-Baltics.html>

is more than 14 million people.⁹ Out of them, are thousands of couples, who are the only earning-source for the family, now with lost-jobs. One can imagine how it's going for unemployed American families.

Trade war: Many land-locked, under developed and under developing countries are always facing an unbalance in foreign trade. Beside the unbalance in foreign trade, one more sign that trade tensions are heating up between China and the world, is due to the imposed high tariffs on certain materials (polyamide-6/6 chips) that imported from the US, UK, Italy, and France, as well as Taiwan.¹⁰ Currently, the high possibility of a trade war between China and USA is under the microscope as a hot discussion or burning topic in US economy and world trade.

Poverty: More than 80 countries reveal they are facing the poverty. Above 50% of the populations of nearly three dozen countries are facing poverty. 41-50% of population of more than two dozen countries are under the poverty line. 31-40% of population of more than two dozen countries are affected by the poverty. Nearly three dozen countries have 11-20% of the population under the poverty line. Nearly a half dozen countries have 1-10% population under the poverty line.¹¹

III. Environmental Crisis:

Deforestation, drought, flooding, landslide, pollution etc. are old topics in the study of environmental crisis. Global warming is a comparatively new topic. In fact they are cause and effect for each other. Let's talk only about the Global Warming. The following text, quoted from a web site would be helpful to lay people to understand the meaning, cause and disaster effects of Global Warming.

Global Warming: "One of the first things scientists learned is that there are several greenhouse gases responsible for warming, and humans emit them in a variety of ways. Most come from the combustion of fossil fuels in cars, factories and electricity production. Other contributors include methane released from landfills and agriculture (especially from the digestive systems of grazing animals), nitrous oxide from fertilizers, gases used for refrigeration and industrial processes, and the loss of forests.

Global Warming effects: Greenhouse gases stay can stay in the atmosphere for an amount of years ranging from decades to hundreds and thousands of years. No matter what we do, global warming is going to have some effect on Earth. Here are the five deadliest effects of global warming: the spread of

⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_unemployment_rate

¹⁰ http://www.businessweek.com/globalbiz/blog/eyeonasia/archives/2009/10/one_more_sign_t.html

¹¹ http://www.businessweek.com/globalbiz/blog/eyeonasia/archives/2009/10/one_more_sign_t.html

disease, warmer waters and more hurricanes, increased probability and intensity of droughts and heat waves, economic consequences and polar ice cap melting.

- **Spread of disease:** As northern countries warm, disease carrying insects migrate north, bringing plague and disease with them. Indeed some scientists believe that in some countries thanks to global warming, malaria has not been fully eradicated.
- **Warmer waters and more hurricanes:** As the temperature of oceans rises, so will the probability of more frequent and stronger hurricanes. We saw in this in 2004 and 2005.
- **Increased probability and intensity of droughts and heat waves:** Although some areas of Earth will become wetter due to global warming, other areas will suffer serious droughts and heat waves. Africa will receive the worst of it, with more severe droughts also expected in Europe. Water is already a dangerously rare commodity in Africa, and according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, global warming will exacerbate the conditions and could lead to conflicts and war.
- **Economic consequences:** Most of the effects of anthropogenic global warming won't be good. And these effects spell one thing for the countries of the world: economic consequences. Hurricanes cause do billions of dollars in damage, diseases cost money to treat and control and conflicts exacerbate all of these.
- **Polar ice caps melting:** The ice caps melting are a four-pronged danger.
 - **First**, it will raise sea levels. There are 5,773,000 cubic miles of water in ice caps, glaciers, and permanent snow. According to the National Snow and Ice Data Center, if all glaciers melted today the seas would rise about 230 feet. Luckily, that's not going to happen all in one go! But sea levels will rise.
 - **Second**, melting ice caps will throw the global ecosystem out of balance. The ice caps are fresh water, and when they melt they will desalinate the ocean, or in plain English – make it less salty. The desalinization of the gulf current will “screw up” ocean currents, which regulate temperatures. The stream shutdown or irregularity would cool the area around north-east America and Western Europe. Luckily, that will slow some of the other effects of global warming in that area!
 - **Third**, temperature rises and change landscapes in the Arctic circle will endanger several species of animals. Only the most adaptable will survive.

- **Fourth**, global warming could snowball with the ice caps gone. Ice caps are white, and reflect sunlight, much of which is reflected back into space, further cooling Earth. If the ice caps melt, the only reflector is the ocean. Darker colors absorb sunlight, further warming the Earth.’¹²

IV. Internal and International Political Conflict & Violence:

Most of developing countries are suffering from internal political conflict and violence, and developed countries are not absolutely free from the internal political conflict and violence. On the other hand we are witnesses for ongoing international conflicts, too. The internal political conflict and international violence cause the immeasurable damage of property, tragedy and deaths of massive proportions of the population. It further causes the unmanageable size of refugees and displacement of people in the countries. The conflict pushes backward the developing countries for many decades.

The scale of destruction and fighting which occurs in African countries since 1986, is as if, like in Europe during WWII, *then this similar expression upon the African people may suggest a World War III.*¹³ It has been estimated that nearly 70,000 people died in the internal conflict in Peru that started in 1980, and although still ongoing, casualties and injuries are down since 2000.¹⁴ The ‘Mexican Drug War’ is an armed conflict taking place between rival drug cartels and government forces in Mexico. The cartels have become more powerful since the demise of Colombia's Cali and Medellín cartels in the 1990s. The Mexican Drug War and the drug causes serious drug addiction and tremendous violence in the country and in neighboring countries.¹⁵ The Arab–Israeli conflict spans roughly one century of political tensions and open hostilities, though Israel itself was only established as a sovereign state in 1948. Since then, the Israeli–Palestinian conflict is an ongoing dispute and one of the most enduring and explosive of all the world's conflicts.¹⁶ Since 1978, the death toll in Afghanistan is estimated at more than 1,000,000 people, with up to 6,000,000 refugees due to internal and international conflict.¹⁷ The decades-long civil war in Sri-Lanka caused 80,000 deaths; however it is ended in May 2009.¹⁸ The people of Iraq have had no relief from internal violence - even after the extermination of Saddam Hussein, in 2003. India is not free from fundamental

¹² <http://www.environmentalgraffiti.com/sciencetech/5-deadliest-effects-of-global-warming/276>

¹³ <http://www.globalissues.org/article/84/conflicts-in-africa-introduction>

¹⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internal_conflict_in_Peru

¹⁵ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mexican_Drug_War

¹⁶ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israeli%E2%80%93Palestinian_conflict

¹⁷ http://www.flashpoints.info/countries-conflicts/Afghanistan-web/afghanistan_briefing.html

¹⁸ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sri_Lanka_Civil_War

ethnic, religious and internal political violence since before and after its independence. In September 2009, the government of Nepal revealed and adjusted the total number of deaths from 13,000 to 16,278 and estimated the total number of displaced people at around 70,000 from the internal political conflict. In addition to that at least 5,000 people were displaced by ethnic violence in east and central Terai, in Nepal.¹⁹ These are just a few examples of the conflicts around the world. Most of the countries whether developed or developing are suffering from either internal, political or ethnic or religious conflict.

Many economists have offered theories about how economic crises develop and how they could be prevented. The European Commission has pointed out the long period of rapid credit growth; low risk premiums; abundant availability of liquidity; strong leveraging, soaring asset prices and the development of bubbles in the real estate sector.

Most come from the combustion of fossil fuels in cars, factories and electricity production, methane released from landfills and agriculture, nitrous oxide from fertilizers, gases used for refrigeration and industrial processes, and the loss of forests are the direct cause for green house gas and global warming ultimately.

Scholars have pointed out political corruption, lack of respect for rule of law, human rights violations are all common reasons for some of the causes of internal conflicts. Some scholars are of the opinion that the legacy of European Colonialism is also a root cause for the conflict in the countries and between neighboring countries of African continent and a couple of countries in Asia.

The causes for each crisis are very analytical, technical and scientific. The analysis is based on theories of sociology, economics, management, science, political sciences etc.

V. Buddhist Thoughts:

Below now, is an attempt is made to analysis one of the causes for the above mentioned crisis based on Buddhist thoughts.

Self-Centered/Egoism/Individualism - A Root Cause for Global Crisis:

The terms namely “self-centered thought”, “egoism” and individualism” literally, are different from each other, but ultimately are synonyms. Hence onwards only the term “Individualism” is used. Individualism is an advocacy of independence, freedom, privacy and one’s own development vs. dependent. Though, thought and

¹⁹ [http://www.internal-displacement.org/idmc/website/countries.nsf/\(httpEnvelopes\)/1949E98C81942B55C12571FE004D8821?OpenDocument](http://www.internal-displacement.org/idmc/website/countries.nsf/(httpEnvelopes)/1949E98C81942B55C12571FE004D8821?OpenDocument)

acted on accordingly only for the benefit of a family, a community, an institute, a political party and a country – this is indeed, another form of “Individualism”. The individualism of a person would be tiny compared to the individualism a family and so on; the level of individualism of a country would be higher than the individualism of a community.

However individualism could be beneficial for a couple, a family, a community, an institute, a political party and a country. Apparently, individualism may not directly intend to harm other. But the individualism, whether it is in a couple, of a family, of a business institute, of a political party or of a country - it also causes immorality, dishonesty, corruption, fundamentalism and domination for sake of individual benefit. In other words immorality, dishonesty, corruption, fundamentalism and domination are the by-products of individualism. The immorality, dishonesty, corruption, fundamentalism and domination ultimately harm others. So the individualism could be pointed out one of the root cause for social crisis, economic crisis, environmental crisis, internal and international political conflict and violence. It would be noteworthy to say that individualism eventually harms ones own self too. This is because if there is no “others” then who will recognize “the individual”. If you are alone how you could enjoy? If there is no spouse, then who will love you? If there are no family members, how you could be a family member? If there is only one institute, then who will respond to the institute? If there is only one race, color and so on who will recognize the race, color and so on. If no other countries exist, then how could your country could be a country?

Now questions arise that precautions can be taken from further crisis and the current crisis could be cured? If the suffering from the cycle of birth and death can be eliminated through Buddhist ideas and practice, then definitely through Buddhist ideas: world crisis can be reduced; prevention from further crisis can be undertaken and gradually this can make the world free from crisis: the state of Global recovery.

Understanding the Truths: The Law of Dependent Origination: In this world every entity – whether it is living being or non living beings- came into existence depending on other. Anything or being is a composition of many entities. One survives depending on other many things. One’s own identity depends on others identity. One and other are inter related. In the absent of other one loses its identity and vice versa. One’s suffering and happiness also depends on other. In the suffering of others one cannot be happy. In the suffering of one other cannot be happy. Co-existence is the reality. Co-existence with mutual respect and benefit causes real happiness in couple, family, community, institute, country and the world. “I am not world but we are the world.” This is a universal truth rather than a view. Shakyamuni Buddha is the first person in the world who discovered this truth and

threw light on it. Since then, it is now as a Buddhist idea. Understanding the Buddhist idea or law of depending origination would wipe out individualism. So understanding the law of dependent origination could be a causal factor for Global Recovery.

Understanding the Truth: The Law of Cause and Total Effects: Cause brings effect, and effect proves cause. The same effect becomes cause for other effect. One cause may bring many effects too. Shakyamuni Buddha has pointed out the total “twelve causes and effects” for the cycle of birth and rebirth of a human and ultimately the suffering. By knowing the total causes and effects, it became easy to get rid of suffering. Ignorance, in the law of cause and total effects, causes harm to others, one’s own self and ultimately to the world. Modern science-technology is cause for immediate effects like factories, cars, etc. The effects cause comfortable lives for human beings, but the same effects are becoming causes for the polluting “Greenhouse Gases”. The greenhouse gases cause “Global Warming”. Here it can be said that modern science and technology first focus on only immediate effect and are not aware of total effects, however it came to know but too late. This is an example of the ignorance of the law of cause and effects totally. Similarly, theories of trade, economy etc. on one hand cause profit in business but on other hand exploits human desire. The exploited human desire causes corruptions and ultimately economic crisis. It can also be said that although knew the law of cause and effects but wrong identification of cause and wrong assumption of effect cause the current global economic crisis. Understanding the truth the law of cause and total effects may prevent further side effects. So understanding the truth the law of cause and TOTAL effects could be a causal factor for the Global Recovery.

Understanding the Truth: The Law of Changing/Impermanence: Changes take place in every entity whether it is living entity or non living entity. Change is a natural phenomenon. Because of the law of change - not only the decline, decay, destruction but also origin, creation, improvement, development, promotion, seniority, transformation etc. are become possible. In other words, because of the law of change everything becomes possible. Origin, development and decline in either macro or micro levels are the sequential order of changes. Change is an unavoidable circumstance. Once one understands this truth, on one hand they will be able to develop a precautionary strategy from decay and develop the state of indifference mind while overwhelming happiness and suffering occur in life. On other hand one will be able develop an optimistic mind. So understanding the law of change/impermanence could be a causal factor for the enhancement of Global Recovery.

Practice of Loving-Kindness, Compassion, Joy and Indifference: On the rationalistic ground of the law of dependent origination and the cause and total effects now one will notice the truth that all are equal, equally important, equally

deserve for loving kindness, compassion, and for happy life. Then one can think and practice the loving kindness and compassion for all; one can think of enjoying and one can enjoy in the happiness of others. On the rationalistic ground of the law of change/impermanence one can easily practice the state of indifference mind from suffering and happiness in life too.

Practice of Bodhisattva Career: Main objective of Bodhisattva career is to be a Buddha in future for the welfare of all beings and world. A Bodhisattva starts his career with the practice of Loving-Kindness, Compassion, Joy and Indifference. Then a Bodhisattva makes arisen: the thought of enlightenment, to attain enlightenment and on the other hand to put one's own self in serving people. a bodhisattva practices: gift-giving, moral-precepts, tolerance, being energetic, meditation and wisdom. The story of a Bodhisattva can be taken as a "role model" for the welfare of all, with reason.

Concluding Remarks:

The Buddhist ideas and practices such as the law of dependent origination, cause and total effects, change, loving kindness, compassion, joy, indifference, arising thought of enlightenment, perfections etc. with similes (illustration, explanation, examples) according to understanding levels of people are to be propagated such a way so that these would be accessible to the all levels of society in this Globe.

Main stream of school education is the universally accepted floor and one of the vital instruments to educate and to benefit people globally. The above mentioned Buddhist ideas are to be introduced in main stream of education not because they are just Buddhist Ideas but because they are rationalistic ideas like the law of gravitation in science, law of demand and supply in economics, equation in mathematics so on. In this regard Buddhist Sangha and Scholars would be the most appropriate human resources. So it is time to think and act sincerely for the Global Recovery by Buddhist Sangha and Scholars. Buddhist Sangha and Scholars can think of strategic plan for the Buddhist ideas for the GLOBAL RECOVERY.

Psychological Benefits of Buddhist Mind Training

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Since their inception, the traditions of Buddhism and Western science have developed largely independently. Yet they share several important values, leading to some similarity among goals and methods. As Buddhists and Scientists, the authors feel fortunate to live in a time in which these two traditions are mutually engaging. For example, His Holiness the Dalai Lama delivered the keynote address at a recent international meeting of the Society for Neuroscience (the Dalai Lama, 2005). His observations and insights from Buddhist practice inform the ongoing scientific inquiry into mind. So too, scientific understanding of mind and brain are providing new insights regarding meditation (Grossenbacher & Crespi, 2009). This paper combines elements of Buddhism and science in order to bring a powerful theory provided by contemplative psychological science to bear on our current global crisis.

Both Buddhism and science involve communities of people who are committed to making the world a better place by seeking to bring benefit to others. Each tradition approaches this shared goal (beneficence) by ethically guided application of mental expertise in order to better understand things as they are. More specifically, each offers a systematic approach to observing what happens and understanding causes. Admittedly, concerns regarding the potential for harmful results from scientific developments are well founded. For example, the net impact on the world from technological ramifications of scientific discovery includes many drawbacks, from weapons of mass destruction to pollution. At the same time, intercontinental travel and internet communication have contributed to the spread of the Buddha's teachings, as well as facilitating our coming together at this international conference. Perhaps there is even greater potential for leveraging the scientific way of knowing in order to help bring benefit to the world through Buddhist activities such as mind training.

As ways of knowing, scientific inquiry and Buddhist practice both rely on empirical observation as a testing ground in which to determine the truth or validity of understanding. Scientifically, "observation and experience can and must drastically restrict the range of admissible scientific belief, else there would be no science" (Kuhn, 1962). When a scientific theory conflicts with reliable and systematic observation, priority is given to the data of experience, so the theory must then change to better fit the data. Buddhism teaches methods for observing experience, similar in several respects to scientific methods of observation, especially

regarding the distinction between observation and interpretation (Grossenbacher & Rossi, in preparation). In particular, Buddhism has maintained a tradition of observing one's own experience in meditation. A Buddhist path of meditation emphasizes noticing actual experience and reflecting on this experience, rather than preserving preconceived ideas about what should happen in life.

The four noble truths taught in all Buddhist lineages constitute a principal theoretical component of Buddhism: 1) Occurrence of Suffering, 2) Origin of Suffering, 3) Cessation of Suffering, and 4) Path to the Cessation of Suffering. Buddhist teachings present these as facts *that can be verified through each person's own experience*. The first noble truth, that people suffer, may be easiest to verify, even for non-Buddhists, via introspective observation. Depending on one's experience, the remaining noble truths may appear more theoretical (e.g., a conclusion derived from a reasoning process) than directly observable for people who have not carefully examined experience (e.g., via meditation).

Any empirical approach emphasizes observation over theory, and thereby contributes to worldviews in which thoughts, ideas, and beliefs are all considered with healthy skepticism. Skeptically suspending one's own understanding of reality in order to consider alternative possibilities requires openness to possibility and the humility of not knowing. This contributes to a disciplined approach to open-mindedness – how could a person be truly open-minded if they are unwilling to deviate from a pre-established thought pattern simply because it is familiar, comfortable and within their current scope of understanding?

Though sharing some important values and principles, science and Buddhism differ in their mode of observation. Dhamma focuses on the entirety of a person's own subjective experience (i.e., using directly lived, 1st person perspective), whereas science focuses on objects and events almost without concern for the medium of lived experience through which they are encountered (i.e., using an impersonal, 3rd person perspective). This latter perspective offers an objective approach to knowing about the world, understanding reality apart from any particular human experience. This fundamental difference in perspective may account for various disparities between Buddhism and science. For example, one commits to advancing knowledge in an entirely conceptual form, while the other sustains a commitment to wisdom that transcends the duality of concept and nonconcept. Though scientific discovery may stem in part from moments of nonconceptual insight, the important result drawn from such experience inevitably takes the purely conceptual form of innovative method or theory. In contrast, Buddhist teachings point to not limiting one's mind to purely conceptual knowledge, thereby affording the opportunity for wisdom to come about.

The scientific discipline of psychology seeks to understand experience, mind, and behavior through application of the scientific method. Due to numerous methodological and theoretical issues entailed by taking mental life as the object of scientific inquiry, psychology has always struggled with the limits of utilizing a 3rd person perspective for examining experiential phenomena. Conscious experience has long provided an important domain for psychological inquiry, and it has recently become more widely accepted as a viable topic for empirical investigation within psychological science. We suggest that empirical priority, the emphasis of observation over theory, affords an opportunity for a unique synergy between Buddhism and psychological science. At a minimum, Western psychological understanding stands to benefit from insights already available through Buddhist view and practice. It may also be of benefit to examine mind training in a scientific framework in order for the scientifically-minded to better understand it. Science may even have the potential for adding to our understanding of mind training and its contribution to human development.

This paper introduces scientific theory useful for understanding how Buddhist mind training cultivates the mental well-being necessary for overcoming large-scale obstacles facing our world today. The emerging discipline of contemplative psychological science investigates both conceptual and nonconceptual mental processes, and offers a level of analysis that helps us to understand ways that meditation and associated training lead to personal transformation with interpersonal ramifications and global impact.

Mind Training: Buddhadhamma and Meditation

Based on teachings given long ago by the Buddha and passed to us across successive generations, Buddhist mind training still relies on turning one's view (conceptual understanding) away from self-centering (egocentrism) in order to tread a path in which one's whole being, spanning both conceptual and nonconceptual aspects, is made available for transformation away from self-centering and its various symptoms (e.g., hatred, greed, jealousy). In foundational Buddhist traditions, this transformation is supported by practices such as taking refuge and meditation, as well as teachings, e.g., on The Four Noble Truths and The Noble Eightfold Path. Taking refuge in the three jewels declares a person's commitment recognize the Buddha as an enlightened human being, to respect and learn the Dhamma as teachings of the Buddha, and to honor fellow practitioners of Buddhist teachings as Saṅgha. Taking refuge thus fosters a set of values and attitudes that can become part of one's personal view. The Four Noble Truths concisely explain the pivotal role that self-centering plays in human suffering, and point to a path of training and development that leads away from the suffering of such selfishness. The Noble Eightfold Path starts with

right view (also right perspective, right understanding), (*Dīgha Nikāya*, Sutta 22), which can grow from an entirely conceptual comprehension of reality to a more direct encounter with things as they are. The second factor of the Noble Eightfold Path, right intention (also right aspiration, right resolve), concerns the putting into practice those discernments that stem from right view. Together, view and intention have the potential either for sustaining the suffering associated with egocentrism, or for transforming into wisdom. Three factors of the Noble Eightfold Path, right speech, right action, and right livelihood, together constitute ethical conduct (*sīla*). Behaving and living according to the values and attitudes provided by right view and right intention can be supported by further mind training.

In addition to working with the potential for conceptual understanding being transformed into wisdom, Buddhist mind training offers methods for cultivating (inviting) greater awareness. Through this cultivation, including meditation techniques involving mindfulness and awareness, individuals come to experience broader and deeper engagement with each moment of ongoing, lived experience. Buddhist mind training addresses experiential and/or conceptual dissociation from the nonconceptual. The Noble Eightfold Path includes three factors that pertain to wakeful, unperturbed awareness (*samādhi*): right effort, right mindfulness (right memory, right attention), and right concentration. Considered psychologically, this portion of the Noble Eightfold Path concerns direction of attention, sustaining of attention, and manner of attending, mental functions that can operate with concept as well as beyond concept. The invitation is to let experience arise and notice what actually happens. Meditators have reported that meditation helps them to notice more of what happens in mind, including the details of their lived experience and also how one's own mind works (Grossenbacher & Parkin, 2006). Mind training promotes a conceptual and nonconceptual development that leverages synergistic relationships between worldview and awareness.

The conceptual side of mind training involves learning new information as well as frameworks for organizing information. The Buddha can be thought of as an example of human enlightenment, and remembered so to inspire motivation. The Dhamma provides numerous instructions that can lead one to adopt attitudes, values, and beliefs that together align one's mind with right view (and therefore better accord with things as they are). These conceptual pieces are not just to be studied and memorized, but they are also available to be tested through exploration and observation in one's personal experience. This intimate connection between teachings and actual life experience during learning may help empower right view to contribute to ethical conduct on an ongoing basis.

Psychologically, we think about conceptual aspects of being in terms of *personal worldview*: everyone has a worldview, or conception of totality. Personal worldview may include both conscious and unconscious components, though mind

training may help bring more of one's understanding of reality into consciousness. Before being provided with mind training, someone's personal worldview may or may not emphasize values such as being of benefit, harmlessness, understanding root causes of suffering, beliefs in the possibility of enlightenment, the importance of karma, or the limits of conceptual mind. A primarily conceptual aspect of mind training often involves a serial refinement of view, sometimes referred to in Buddhism as addressing the veil of false belief. This can include the rejection of previously held values, attitudes, assumptions and other beliefs as well as the adoption of new ones. Within psychology, this refinement of view can be understood as transformation of personal worldview. Ultimately, the mixing of view with unperturbed wakefulness may call forth inconceivable wisdom.

Any worldview that is personally held in mind naturally gives rise to various specific *intentions* regarding how to be and what to do. (This relation between worldview and intention generalizes the relation between right view and right intention in the Noble Eightfold Path.) Regardless of mind training, intentions manifest within whatever limits are constrained by an individual's personal worldview. Contemplative mind training works with many specific intentions, including intention to attend during meditation, intention to carefully observe thoughts in contemplation practices, and intention to be of benefit during aspiration practices. One example of aspiration practice involves the Four Immeasurables (limitless ones), which begins with the contemplation of loving-kindness: "May all beings enjoy happiness and the root of happiness" (Sole-Laris, 1986). In this aspirational practice, awakened heart-mind (Bodhicitta) is directed toward the happiness of all sentient beings. Such practices systematically interrupt any habitual intentions arising from a self-centered view. Through the exercise of generating conscious intentions that are consistent with a more world-centric perspective, one's personal worldview may shift (perhaps gradually) to better align with such intentions. In particular, values may be learned or unlearned as a consequence of meditation.

In addition to training conceptual mind, Buddhist mind training uses practices such as taking refuge in the three jewels and meditation to work profoundly with nonconcept. The enlightenment exemplified by the Buddha himself seems inherently nonconceptual (and transcends the dualistic distinction between conceptual and nonconceptual). Likewise, Buddhadharma is geared to lead practitioners to awaken to nonconceptual parts of experience. So too, daily interactions with Saṅgha serve to provide a mirror in which a person's own conceptual and nonconceptual aspects of being are reflected with equal clarity. Together, the three jewels help to disrupt the mind's tendency to conceptually fixate on one's self.

Buddhist traditions of meditation typically provide personal instruction to each meditator so that, through highly experiential learning, one becomes increasingly skilled at sustaining relaxed attention with clarity. By resting in an upright posture and focusing attention, mind can relax. When relaxation combines with sustained attention, awareness becomes less obstructed. Placing attention on the breath, sensations of the body, a candle flame, or other object opens the practitioner to experiential nuance that goes beyond the seemingly simple technique. In sustaining and returning attention to what the mind is doing (mindfulness), any interrupted focus potentially resumes as enabled by awareness of the interruption. This engagement with awareness provides for direct encounter with nonconceptual experience.

We see the training of nonconceptual mind as working with both breadth and depth of engagement with awareness, so as to meet all parts of one's being in awareness (including concepts). Meditation trains attentional skills with techniques that employ at least two modes of attentional control. Concentrative techniques emphasize voluntary control in focusing attention on a single object for a sustained period. Techniques that encourage greater awareness, even of unanticipated events, emphasize a more broadly invitational mode of attentional control in which mental objects from any domain of experience are welcome to draw attention to themselves.

With extended meditation practice, a person's unintended habit of incessant thinking (imagining, fearing, and so on) transitions into a more purposeful alternation between intentional thinking and breaks from thinking. The practice of combining relaxation and awareness leads to honoring whatever experience is arising, inviting enough space to be cognizant of mental content and other present phenomena. Bringing attention into alignment with intention enables personal integration to manifest during meditation and post-meditation. Meditation develops psychological resources useful for engaging open awareness in daily life. This becomes the basis for further practice and transformation of self-understanding and engagement with awareness.

A New Theoretic Framework that Points to the Inconceivable

Human minds have two sides: one (conceptual) is conceivable and can be delineated, the other (nonconceptual) is inconceivable and cannot be delineated. *Concept* is a form of intentionality in which an idea or attitude represents something, like a map represents an actual territory. However inaccurate this representation may be, there is a sense of referring or pointing to something. Conceptualizing, grasping or holding an idea or value, occurs with various degrees of certainty, akin to the firmness or steadiness of a hand's grip. Often conceptualization has the quality of being tightly gripped, though there is the possibility of this mental grip relaxing, even

to a profound degree. When mixed with a quality of opening and/or relaxation, conception may become freed from any sense of tightness. In this case, the mind's frame of orientation itself may soften into open relaxation. The manner of conceptualizing and one's frame of mind are related: the tightness of conceptualized thought reflects the tightness (incompleteness of relaxation) of one's mind.

As already intimated above, one's conception of totality, *personal worldview*, includes an individual's attitudes, values, and beliefs about the world, life, reality, mind, self, and so on (Koltko-Rivera, 2004). This componential psychological construct broadly encompasses a person's understanding of the universe, ethical concerns, identity, the position of one's own being in relation to all that is, etc. Worldview includes values such as honesty, being of benefit, avoiding harm, authentic being, connecting with others, engaging awareness (waking up), appreciating sacredness, respecting diversity, exploring nonconceptuality, feeling love, living a life of devotion, and so on.

Awareness of something is the means by which it enters one's lived, experiential feel of the world. Awareness is entirely experiential, and is engaged via *attention*. For example, people have sensations throughout the body all the time, but are only aware of those that are objects of attention. Attention comprises those processes through which we influence the flow of our mind stream by emphasizing some things and de-emphasizing others. Highly focused attention centers on one thing; more distributed attention is spread out over many things. By focusing attention on only part of all that is happening, conscious experience is subject to this influence of attention in both conceptual and nonconceptual domains. Put simply, closed-mind operates with narrow worldview and restricted awareness, whereas open-mind enjoys expansive worldview and panoramic awareness. Experientially, tight mental grip seems to oppose open awareness. This is why finding and using ways of letting go are so important.

Engagement with awareness potentially encompasses the entirety of mind; this holistic integrity makes it difficult to analyze into a set of component constituents. Perhaps by virtue of this holistic quality, engagement with awareness provides a vital ingredient to the essence of direct experience. This experiential awareness provides a living medium enabling one to move beyond concept. Open awareness has the quality of being wakeful, alert, and highly cognizant, imbued with a sense of opening or expansiveness that extends beyond any boundary or limitation, a thorough resting that can be calm, relaxed, quiet, and even serene, unclouded by crescendos of thought. Awareness, what discovering greater openness or relaxation is like, has a limitless, never ending quality to it. Regardless of religious or other tradition, experience of sacredness can be understood as one example of potent engagement with awareness.

Transformational Development

Our Naropa University Consciousness Laboratory conducts a program of scientific research on meditation by using interview, focus group, and questionnaire methods to obtain verbal data regarding the teaching and learning of meditation, as well as its effects. These data indicate that two aspects of being, one conceptual and the other nonconceptual, each undergo transformational development as a result of training and practice in meditation and associated wisdom teachings (Grossenbacher & Parkin, 2006). We introduced above a framework that brings psychological science closer to the experience accessed via meditation. Now we use this framework to discuss the personal transformation cultivated by Buddhist mind training.

The developmental transformation of conceptualization is addressed by both Buddhism and psychological science. In Buddhist traditions, the noble eight-fold path starts with right view (which pertains to personal worldview), and this provides the ground from which right intention and the other path components arise. Outside of the meditation context, developmental psychologists have generated many elaborate theories that concern conceptual change in personal development (Miller & Cook-Greuter, 1994). Regardless of one or another theoretic interpretation, data from our laboratory clearly indicate that meditation lead to changes in worldview (Grossenbacher & Parkin, 2006). Our data “indicated transition during meditation from taking experience in an entirely personal manner to feeling less self-centered. In particular, as the pace of thoughts diminishes, sustained and focused attention illuminates interconnectedness throughout one’s sensory, conceptual, emotional, and spiritual domains of experience” (Grossenbacher & Crespi, 2009). Experience of interconnectedness during meditation may become accessible in other circumstances, and may thereby help to develop inner resources for being fully engaged in life.

Awareness and worldview are routes through which the world, including other beings, is known. Similar to conceptual transformation, nonconceptual development has been addressed in Buddhism and now in Western science. For example, data from our laboratory indicate that meditation may lead to increasing engagement with awareness (Grossenbacher & Parkin, 2006). Glimpses of awareness naturally happen from time to time. Meditation trains people to recognize these glimpses, invite them, and otherwise work intentionally with them. The noble eight-fold path includes right effort, mindfulness and concentration, which together cultivate engagement with awareness.

We see the developmental transformation of nonconceptual mind occurring along at least two dimensions, proceeding from narrow to broad and from surface engagement with awareness to deep engagement. Breadth of awareness is mediated by the number of content domains that are engaged (e.g., emotion and vision),

and depth of awareness reflects the level of specificity engaged per domain (e.g., specific qualities of sadness, particular texture of paper). Development in breadth and depth means increasing familiarity and skill with one's innate capacities for nonconceptual ways of knowing. Contentless awareness may be understood as broad and deep awareness that is void of activity in specific representations (e.g., concepts, sensations).

Conscious experience is the moment to moment unfolding of awareness, and worldview lends form to this experience. Personal worldview can be evident in one's experience because worldview both affords and constrains one's experience. That which is already known in one's view makes possible (affords) the arising and comprehension of experience along certain avenues. View repeatedly guides expectations that anticipate the next experience, and this "attentional set" makes a person more likely to notice that which is expected, at least if it occurs. Consider, for example, someone who views people from a perspective that cares about littering the planet with plastic and other non-biodegradable waste. If this person believes that most everyone does habitually litter, then each instance of someone littering may be perceived and remembered as confirming this worldview component. One's conception of what is possible also tends to constrain the range of conscious experience. Extending the previous example, by virtue of the same that most people litter, when in the presence of someone who refrains from littering, this abstaining from littering may not get noticed as such.

Part of personal worldview includes conception of experience as such. A person's overall attitude toward one's own experience may range from dismissal as relatively unimportant compared to articles of faith, to viewing subjective experience as the most accurate evidence about truth. A person might view their experience only as whatever is happening in a given moment on a given day. Another way of viewing experience is that every moment is part of an extended, experiential path having some sense of journey or progression. Experience that is in accord with one's understanding of reality may be easier to comprehend and remember.

Worldviews vary on whether truth is understood as already known or being sought: "Once a person begins to question their own worldview based on the evidence of their lived experience, an important and entirely new activity of seeking resolution to this fundamental incongruity may become prominent in this person's life" (Grossenbacher, 2006). A deep-seated human need to construct meaning from lived experience motivates *worldview-experience coherence*: concordance between one's understanding of life and the actual life experience. Lack of this coherence may result in experience of anxiety, which can motivate *worldview-awareness equilibration*, a process that modifies either worldview or awareness in order to establish worldview-experience coherence. Transformational development may therefore be punctuated by alternating periods of worldview-experience

incoherence and coherence. Incoherence between worldview and experience can be reconciled either by accommodation (worldview changes to better reflect the reality of experience), or by assimilation (experience gets justified or rationalized to make it appear to accord with pre-established conceptions). Alternatively, if experience blatantly exceeds view, engagement with awareness may diminish, allowing experience to be ignored or forgotten.

Change in one's worldview (e.g., as a consequence of studying dhamma) has the potential to increase worldview-experience incoherence (if one's experience disagrees with the teaching). This incoherence may lead one to seek new experience to test the learned view. If the experiential test confirms the view, then worldview and awareness are equilibrated without further changing the view. Conversely, if the view is not confirmed in experience, then either view reverts back to the previous perspective to reestablish worldview-experience coherence, or worldview-experience incoherence remains.

Change in one's worldview, such as adopting a new belief, may evoke conflict among worldview components. For example, the belief that all sentient beings are inherently good can conflict with the belief that human nature is evil. Periods of conflict among worldview components may serve as natural, unavoidable segues during contemplative development. Remedy for a conflicted worldview may be achieved either through part of one's personal worldview changing to become more consistent with other parts, or through developing a "both/and" reconciliation among apparently contradictory beliefs. In the latter case, instead of being disturbed by holding opposing points of view, a person may understand, and even appreciate, paradox.

View that accommodates nonconcept could facilitate nonconceptual experience by preempting any anxiety that would otherwise arise from the need for worldview-experience coherence. When the limitations of conceptual mind are understood, then nonconcept can be experienced without resultant worldview-experience incoherence. A worldview that motivates and contributes toward intentional engagement with awareness has the potential to thereby facilitate the inviting and sustaining of awareness. For example, one may learn about the value of nonconceptual experience from studying Buddhadhamma. When nonconcept has value in one's worldview, concept can serve to reinforce open awareness. Investing less energy in habitual attempts to explain reality, the individual has more energy for directly experiencing it.

Just as one's worldview may influence engagement with awareness, so too changes in awareness may initiate or influence changes in worldview. Awareness offers a gate into the present moment, and any moment of experience may contribute to modification of view. Generally speaking, wide-ranging content and scope of

awareness have the potential of inspiring and sustaining a worldview that values breadth and/or depth of being. More particularly, awareness of one's current thinking processes provides opportunity for allowing one's cognition to range beyond habitual thought, potentially broadening the scope of one's worldview (Grossenbacher & Crespi, 2009). Meditation practice enables this to occur by offering direct glimpses of the habitual movements of conceptual mind *as they are happening*. Insights drawn from these experiences can become reflected in an adjusted worldview that holds revised conceptions of mind and experience. For example, in seeing oneself more clearly, a person might seek to change those aspects of worldview which disagree with one's most deeply held core values. Furthermore, greater awareness of one's conceptual process may increase cognitive flexibility, thereby making one's worldview less rigid.

The effects of increasing engagement with awareness have a lasting impact on the meditator's life, and can foster an increasingly broad and inclusive worldview. This may occur when an individual is confronted with any important and novel experience that exceeds the limits of what is already known. Any experience that does not fit into the individual's personal worldview, even expansive engagement with awareness, could produce anxiety that motivates equilibration through broadening worldview to include new concepts that better align with awareness. In this light, progress along the path of contemplative development can be seen as an ongoing sequence of worldview-awareness equilibrations in which awareness tends to deepen and broaden as worldview becomes more expansive, inclusive, flexible, and spacious. Greater engagement with awareness supports an important mode of conceptual development in which "the subject of one stage becomes the object of the subject of the next" (Kegan, 1982). Perhaps it is through this successive process that "awareness can broaden one's perspective beyond the individual's customary egocentrism" (Grossenbacher, 2006).

In comparison to the flux evident in one's stream of consciousness, personal worldview changes slowly. There may be an asymmetry in the influence that awareness has in adding to and subtracting from worldview. Adding something to one's world through awareness may readily drive a modification of worldview, whereas something's absence from awareness does not typically result in a similar drive to modify view by subtraction. This is because worldview accumulates the various bits as they are recognized and understood, but otherwise view is not dynamically in flux. There is a cognitive momentum to the process of worldviewing (and so at times is referred to as a cognitive "structure" by virtue of its relatively long-lasting character). This forms the basis for a biased ratcheting mechanism that favors broadening of view over narrowing of view. Increasing scope of awareness has the potential to expand worldview, no matter how brief the experience, whereas a moment of diminished awareness may not detract equivalently from one's view.

Though not explored here, other factors (e.g., forgetting, karma, acquired beliefs) must also play a role – otherwise narrow-mindedness would be far scarcer than it actually appears to be.

In ways described above, transformation of either worldview or awareness can contribute to the development of the other. Moreover, the interaction between awareness and worldview is synergistic in that their combined development is more profound than the combination of how each could develop in isolation. In contemplative development, worldviewing blends with engagement with awareness, thereby transforming into wisdom, a profound non-separation of conceptual and nonconceptual.

Self-Centering and Our Global Crisis

The relation between human beings and the environment has spiraled out of balance. Our current global crisis is characterized by depleted resources, polluted air and water, industrial disasters, desertification, and global warming. Environmental harm is a transnational issue, affecting everyone on the planet. With widespread lack of employment, numerous armed conflicts, pervasive famine, epidemics, and a rapidly growing population, humanity is far from resolving even its own suffering, let alone all earth's inhabitants. These global problems are likely to propagate unless we collectively adopt better strategies for quelling suffering than have historically held sway.

Because our global crisis results largely from harmful human behavior, we must turn to the source of that behavior, the mental dis-ease beneath the symptoms: “Since the ecological crisis is a psychological crisis, the solution will lie with social changes rather than technological changes” (Pickering, 2007). Through focusing analysis at the level of individual people, psychological methods can reveal the processes that result in harmful behaviors, and thereby illuminate the root of our collective and planetary crisis. In turn, these mental processes can be utilized for global recovery. This psychological level of analysis invites us to examine each individual's personal contribution to the planetary crisis, and exposes our individual capacity to begin changing the situation for the better.

So many major issues facing our world today manifest one or another type of *psychological disconnection*. Mental speed, aggression, confusion, bias, or other mental affliction can fuel this disconnection, and also negatively influence a person's behavior. For example, students in Christian seminary studying the importance of helping strangers overlooked a suffering stranger slumped over in an alleyway when they thought they were running late for an appointment (Darley, 1973). This study's results clearly indicate that induced time pressure (thinking they were late) had

the effect of decreasing helping behavior, whereas the content of the students' thoughts, whether focused on helping others or not, was less important. Could the thought of being in a hurry have diminished engagement with awareness to the point of failing to notice a fellow human being in apparent need of help? This is consistent with an understanding that mental speed relying on habitual mental tendencies (automatic processing) "precludes considerations of options more congruent with needs and values" (Brown & Ryan, 2003), increasing the likelihood of harm to others and the planet.

When engaging only partially with experience, human beings readily ignore the life beyond one's selfish concerns. A self-centered worldview identifies with self-concept, prioritizes the conceptual self in one's worldview, and dissociates from nonconceptual aspects of being. Just as concepts divide the world into parts, self-centering fragments one's being. Individuals who are disconnected are thought to suffer dissonance in their identity, make larger demands on others, and hold rigidly to their views (Sinnott & Berlanstein, 2006). Through self-centering, one adopts a narrow agenda for satisfying only one's own needs. Yet through the direct experience afforded by mind training, one can perceive that there actually is no self to be satisfied. Therefore when worldview and awareness center on a self that does not exist, the resulting confusion and suffering cannot be remedied no matter how many resources are consumed. Like a gravitational force, egocentrism collapses one's concepts and awareness to comprise a small mind, thereby perpetuating suffering. Fixation on a conceptual self causes one to overlook much that is of vital importance to our living well together. Self-centering fuels humanity's psychological disconnection with others and with Earth: egocentrism splits experience into self and world. To the extent that engagement with awareness and worldview exclude concern for others and the environment, behavior can be destructive. People driven by self-centered motivation consume resources faster than the planet can provide them.

Because of inseparability between self and world (interdependence), each individual's actions affect all beings. Ramifications of self-centering extend beyond the egocentric individual through behavior (action) within a world to which he or she belongs. Moreover, one person's disconnection spreads to others: a single person's feeling of disconnection from others (loneliness) spreads contagiously through social networks, influencing others up to three degrees of separation (Cacioppo, Fowler, & Christakis, 2009). Cultural decay, violence, and environmental harm are the collective results stemming from self-centered mind.

Global Recovery Through World-Centering

The path of contemplative development and transformation is a path of increasing connection. World-centric broadening of personal worldview and awareness grows beyond self-centered needs and values to include the needs of others and those of the planet. Transcending egocentrism, world-centering includes an awareness of the relationship of one's own and others' well-being. From this awareness, wisdom of the interdependence of self and other grounds world-centric well-being as a sustainable enterprise. Taking care of oneself and the planet are not mutually exclusive, and may be mutually supportive: mindfulness and values such as personal growth have been correlated with subjective well-being and ecologically responsible behavior (Brown & Kasser, 2005). Prioritizing the benefit of others (at interpersonal, communal, organizational, and/or global levels) in one's thoughts and actions tends to bring life fulfillment and happiness. It can be a great relief to relinquish the burden of striving for self satisfaction, and this naturally elicits positive emotions such as happiness, joy, and bliss.

Positive emotions may help to sustain world-centering and its consequents. A 7-week, longitudinal study used loving-kindness meditation to investigate the influence of increased positive emotion on development of personal resources (Fredrickson, Cohn, Coffey, Pek, & Finkel, 2008). Loving-kindness practice resulted in more positive emotions, and these positive emotions were correlated with increases in: mindfulness, belief in many routes to reach the same goal, savoring the future, environmental competence, self-acceptance, purpose in life, social support received, positive relations with others, and (decreased) illness symptoms. The authors conclude that *the broadened outlooks* resulting from positive emotion *facilitate behaviors which build personal resources* (Fredrickson et al., 2008). In addition to loving-kindness practices, other kinds of Buddhist mind training have been shown to promote positive emotion, e.g., Zen (Brown & Ryan, 2003), and Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (Davidson et al., 2003)). As a consequence of meditation, positive emotion may help promote constructive behaviors and personal resources over the long term.

Meditation helps ground one in the present moment, providing greater sensitivity, empathy, and unimpeded expression while interacting with others. As conceptual and nonconceptual transformation unfold, behavior reflects these changes. Perhaps this is because broadening worldview and awareness from self-centering to world-centering increases personal resources and sustains well-being. For example, open awareness facilitates choice of behaviors that are consistent with a person's needs and values (Ryan & Deci, 2006). Through this profound synergy, the mind and heart develop greater capacities for genuineness, sensitivity, interpersonal connection, appreciation, apt communication, and benevolent action.

Fostering well-being through personal transformation empowers people to change their behavior, as individuals and, consequentially, at societal levels.

The durative nature of worldview may make the influence of world-centering personally sustainable, in comparison to the behavioral benefits of positive emotion alone, which may be more fleeting. Present-moment awareness enables beneficial actions to occur when they are most needed. The contagious influence of a person's virtuous behavior on the actions of others has been demonstrated scientifically. For example, just as was found with spread of disconnection (i.e., loneliness as described earlier), cooperative behavior such as generosity also spreads through social networks across up to three degrees of separation (Fowler & Christakis, 2010). By virtue of increasing connection, the personal transformation cultivated by mind training has great potential for enabling humanity to live on this planet sustainably and in peace.

The theory advanced in this paper is offered with the intention that it be used to help more people understand the particular importance of mind training. As detailed at various points above, scientific evidence demonstrates several benefits of mind training that are evident in people's behavior. The objective nature of this evidence should help for these benefits to become more widely recognized and appreciated, regardless of religion or professional discipline. Contemplative psychological science is developing methods needed for measuring world-centrism and other conceptual and nonconceptual aspects of transformational development. Our laboratory and others will continue empirical study and theoretical analysis in order to better understand and integrate the benefits of mind training, including a world-centric well-being that serves the whole planet. In the meanwhile, the accumulating understanding of contemplative development already provides the basis for developing and implementing contemplative approaches to education, mindfulness-oriented therapies, meditatively grounded approaches to dialogue and other communication, and other applications geared to further spread the profound benefits of mind training. In these and other ways, may world-centering spread and flourish!

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Remembering the Future¹ Lessons from Nālandā

Ronald Y. Nakasone

Fourteen summers ago, 1996, I participated in *Tochi wa inochi* or “Land is Life,” a conference that commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II by providing a forum for survivors of war and the abuse of militarism to share their wartime experiences. The testimony of Seo-woon Jeong, a former “comfort woman”² still haunts me. During the five day event as I listened and observed the diminutive Ms. Jeong, it was clear that even after fifty years, she could not comprehend the demeaning inhumanity she experienced. Her brutalization by other human beings diminished her belief in the rationality of human existence and human meaning. Whatever faith Ms. Jeong may have had in the goodness of humanity and such values as compassion, respect for another, humility, and common decency had all but vanished. I left Okinawa, the site of the conference, with the sad observation that only one survivor mentioned religion or spiritual values as a source of solace and strength. Robert Jay Lifton makes a similar observation of the “survivors” of Hiroshima. No idea, even religious ones, in which death was transcended, was powerful enough to adequately deal with the horrors they experienced.³

If religious and spiritual values and ideals are meaningful only in a context where human decency is honored, it is of limited value. It is most disturbing to know that a few years of militant nationalism could undermine centuries of Buddhist and Confucian education.⁴ What insights might the Buddhist tradition offer to persons like Ms. Jeong to come to terms with her experiences and give her solace? What resources does Buddhism have that can expand our collective moral imaginations to

¹I am indebted to the Sarvāstivādin doctors who posited the reality of the three time periods for the expression “remembering the future.” The Sarvāstivāda believed that time appears in the future, flows to the present, and disappears into the past. The rationale for the reality of the three periods of time is derived from the proposition that *nāma* and *rūpa* are concomitant. That thoughts (mind) of the future (object) are possible affirms the reality of future. Thus to remember the future thus is to imagine the kind of world we would like to have and to work toward that end.

²“Comfort Woman” is euphemism. It refers to the estimated 200,000 women forced into prostitution by the Japanese Imperial Forces during World War II. For a more extensive review of “comfort women” see George Hicks. 1997.

³Lifton 1967: 372-386; and Lifton 1981:15.

⁴Confucian thought entered Japan with the importation of Chinese culture at least 1500 years ago. Such ideals as filiality, ancestral rites, the *bushidō* codes, and the Imperial Rescript on Education have a strong Confucian flavor. Confucius maintained that the proper education would restore morality and establish a just society. Fifteen centuries later, Chu Hsi (1130-1200) echoed his spiritual mentor by advocating that personal morality would restore the nation to harmony and peace. Like Confucius, Chu Hsi lived during a time of social upheaval and believed education to be the vehicle to restore a just and prosperous society. Their belief in the perfectibility of human nature guided their educational vision.

prevent future holocausts? To this end this essay is a reflection on the potential impact of Buddhist education for a global recovery through a brief review of the curriculum and its underlying rationale at the Mahāvihārā Nālandā (University of Nālandā),⁵ the most successful Buddhist experiment in higher education. Since education is directed to a better future, the success and failure of Nālandā offers clues in implementing a global recovery.

The Nālandā Curriculum

The educational philosophy that supported the curriculum at Nālandā University draws inspiration from Śākyamuni Buddha (ca.565-486 B.C.E.), whose life and teachings modeled self-cultivation, self-transformation, self-realization and the transformation of that realization into practical solutions to human problems. In short, the trustees of Nālandā aspired to produce a monk who personified the highest ideals of the Buddhadharmā. Accordingly its trustees instituted a fourfold curriculum that included spiritual, moral, secular, and literary training.

Spiritual education at Nālandā was grounded on the critical appreciation of the Buddhadharmā. For that reason students at Nālandā studied the *sūtras* and *śāstras* that detail the life of the Buddha and doctrines that articulated his insights. Instruction included lectures on Mahāyāna, Sarvātivāda, Mahāsāṅghika, and other Buddhist schools. The student also spent a good portion of the day exercising the body and fine tuning the mind for spiritual receptivity. Yogic exercises of trance (*dhyaṇa*) and concentration (*samādhi*) reinforced doctrinal study; while understanding of doctrinal rationalizations reinforced meditative insight. The monk primes a life style conducive to spiritual unfolding by observing the five basic precepts: refrain from killing, stealing, lying, sexual misconduct, and imbibing of intoxicants along with the other *prātimokṣa* rules. Cultivating the precepts, such as refrain from taking what is not yours, generates an ease that reinforces to mindful-practice and mutual trust within the community. The students were expected to observe rules for communal living that included personal hygiene and proper diet; expected to honor their spiritual preceptors and the elderly; demonstrate respect to the laity, civil authority, and all life.

The moral life was understood to be a pedagogical tool. Śākyamuni Buddha's success in spreading the Buddhadharmā is attributed his exemplary lifestyle more than to his exposition of theory or his moral prescriptions. "The

⁵ Nālandā, the site of the university, appears to have been an important commercial center that attracted religious leaders including the Buddha. Later, because of its association with the Buddha and his legends, Buddhists came to regard Nālandā as a holy place. The Gupta king, Kumarāgupta I (reigned C. 415-454) established a *vihāra* in the town that subsequently evolved into a *mahāvihāra* and eventually a center of learning.

Buddha “taught more by the impact of his personality than by his expressed utterances.”⁶ Demonstrating the living reality of the Buddhadharma is repeatedly articulated. “If there is a good Bhikkhu [monk] who follows the rules of conduct of Vinaya, then he is possessed of good behavior. If one who has not faith sees such a person, then faith is produced.”⁷ And yet again: “Good conduct is the basic ground of the teaching.”⁸

Secular education, the third branch of Nālandā’s curriculum involved the study of metaphysics, i.e. non-Buddhist traditions, inner sciences, i.e., spirituality and psychology, epistemology, and specialized disciplines in all branches of Indian learning, including medicine and pharmacology, fine arts, astronomy, mathematics, and engineering. Hsüan-tsang (600-664), the Chinese pilgrim and a translator, who studied with Śīlabhadra (sixth and seventh centuries) reported that there were 100 pulpits or lectures daily. The royal house sponsored academic conferences and debates, which tested the monk’s intellectual abilities and hone their debating skills. Scholars were rewarded for their intellectual achievements.

The fourth focus of Nālandā’s curriculum, literary education gave rise to growth of Buddhist literature and scholasticism needed to defend and spread the tradition. With an eye to defending the faith, Nālandā schooled its students in foreign languages, linguistics, grammar, philology, debate, and the literature and language of its competitors. This also led to the development of logic and an expansion of the commentarial tradition. Nālandā’s curriculum included the study of Brahmanic and Jain thought. The outpouring of Sanskrit literature and poetry from Nālandā⁹ was the result of a conscious effort to communicate the Buddhadharma, which was an exercise in *upāya*, the skill to recognize the needs and capacities of the audience and to teach accordingly. It is a virtue even more profound than perfect wisdom.¹⁰ Dharmapāla (sixth century) composed the larger *Śūrangama Sūtra* while serving as its rector. Santideva (eighth century) composed the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* during his tenure at Nālandā.

Nālandā evolved into a university in the truest sense during the Gupta Period (320-647) by offering instruction to all manner of thought and secular disciplines. The rectors of Nālandā were individuals of liberal learning and broad intellectual outlook. This approach has served Buddhists well. Nālandā’s universal intellectual interests withstood and even prospered during the height of the Brahmanic challenge

⁶ Varma 1973:202.

⁷ Shan-Chien-P’i-P’o-Sha (*Samantapāsādikā*) 1970:167.

⁸ Shan-Chien-P’i-P’o-Sha (*Samantapāsādikā*) 1970:165.

⁹ Chinese Buddhist hold the *Śūrangama Sūtra* in great esteem, The *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, a masterpiece of religious poetry in Sanskrit, expounds doctrine of *śūnyatā*. Both texts view the Vinaya, the clerical precepts, to be the cultivation of certain attitudes rather than the observance of a set of rules.

¹⁰ Conze 1967:133.

in the seventh and eighth centuries. It enabled the Dharma to take root outside its home land.

Reflections

To be sure the educational ideals that inspired Nālandā University are worthy of emulation. But education is not simply the transmission of information and the wisdom of the past. To my mind Nālandā's success lay in its adoption of the Buddha's attitude of "benevolent skepticism" and his critical method; these are his most enduring pedagogical gifts. The Buddha understood his Dharma to be a method, and not an end. "The Buddha always stressed that he was a guide, not an authority, and that all propositions must be tested, including his own."¹¹ This critical legacy is clearly articulated in the *Samantapāsādikā*.

If anyone wants to have knowledge about the words of a rule of conduct, or the original text of a rule, or if he has any difficulty in answering the question on the same, he must know the fourfold [aspects of the] Vinaya, which the great elders with miraculous powers have found out and have explained to people. At the time when the congregation had assembled, there was a question: What are the fourfold aspects? (1) First, the original text [of the Vinaya]; (2) second, what is in consonance with the original text; (3) third, the words of teachers; and (4) one's opinion.¹²

In this passage the Buddha outlines the levels of authorities that a person should appeal to in determining proper conduct. The words of the Buddha as they are articulated in the Vinaya constitute the final authority. "What is in consonance with the original text" refers to the implicit spirit of the Buddha's teaching. Third, "the words of the teachers" refer to the interpretations of others. In response to the question, "What is meant by one's own opinion?" The Buddha responded:

Leaving aside the original text, leaving aside what is in consonance with the original text and leaving aside what is the word of Teachers, to infer with one's own mind, or with the help of other means such as the detailed explanatory commentaries..., or with what is said by Teachers--this is called one's opinion."¹³

The Buddha had great confidence in a person's ability, given all the information, to decide and take proper action; and he clearly understood that the Vinaya he established could not possibly apply to every situation and. "One's own opinion" places the ultimate responsibility on the individual. Taking Buddha's caution against over-reliance on dogma and doctrine to heart, the Vietnamese monk

¹¹ Conze 1982:12.

¹² Shan-Chien-P'i-P'o-Sha (*Samantapāsādikā*) 1970:171-173.

¹³ Shan-Chien-P'i-P'o-Sha (*Samantapāsādikā*) 1970:172.

Thich Nhat Hanh reinterpreted and condensed the traditional Buddhist precepts into Fourteen Guidelines for Engaged Buddhism in response to war time conditions. The first Guideline reads: Do not be idolatrous about or bound to any doctrine, theory, or ideology, even Buddhist ones. Buddhist systems of thought are guiding means; they are not absolute truth. Even meritorious teachings become a burden if one does not know when to discard them.¹⁴

The need to reinterpret the Dharma appears when the real—events on the ground—fail to match the ideal. What may be true in one circumstance may be wrong in another. Zeami (c. 1363 – c. 1443), the *noh* actor and aesthetician, makes a similar observation with reference to the changing circumstances of his art—performing. He buttresses his claim with an apparent reference to Dōgen (1200-1253), Zeami writes,

The non-believer (*turtika*) quires the Buddha. “Yesterday, what kind of Dharma did you preach?”

“Yesterday I preached the unambiguous Dharma.”

“What kind of Dharma will you preach today?”

“I will preach the ambiguous Dharma.”

“Why do you preach the ambiguous Dharma today?”

“Yesterday’s unambiguous Dharma is today’s ambiguous Dharma.”¹⁵

Buddha offered a method by which the devotee could interpret and apply the rules of conduct to unprecedented encounters. The Buddha’s ambiguity toward his own ideas and his insistence that an individual must ultimately rely on his or her own judgment and ambiguity are grounded in the notion of *pratītyasamutpāda* and is given full metaphysical justification in the thought of the Chinese cleric Fazang (643-

¹⁴ Thich Nhat Hahn. 1987. *Interbeing*. Berkeley: Parallax Press, 27. In *Old Path White Clouds, Walking in the Footsteps of the Buddha* Thich Nhat Hanh Thich Nhat Hanh interweaves two lessons on the Dharma as method the Buddha offered. He writes.

My teaching is not a dogma or a doctrine, but no doubt some people will take it as such. I must state clearly that my teaching is a method to experience reality and not reality itself just as a finger pointing to the moon is not the moon itself. A person who only looks at the finger and mistakes it for the moon will never see the real moon. My teaching is a means of practice, not something to hold onto or worship. My teaching is like a raft used to cross the river. Only a fool would carry the life raft around after he had already reached the other shore, the shore of liberation.

This passage is a reworking of the Parable of the Raft with the Parable of the Finger Pointing to the Moon with the Buddha’s instruction to Dighanakha. The Parable of the Raft (*Alagaddupama sutta*, 22:13) and the Buddha’s instruction to Dighanakha (*Dighamakha sutta* 74) appears in the *Majjhima Nikaya*.

¹⁵ Konishi 1970: 305-306.

712). I refer to the reader to my essay, “Buddhist Thought for the New Millennium: The Structure and Relevance of Buddhist Thinking.”¹⁶

In keeping with the Buddha’s critical method, Nālandā’s curriculum encouraged its students to explore and measure the Buddhadharmā against other faith traditions. According Nālandā offered instruction on the different branches of Brāhmanical tradition and philosophies. Tuition on the secular disciplines, especially medicine and pharmacology instilled the students with the practical aspects of compassion.¹⁷ Additionally, the presence of foreign students and scholars from central, east, and south Asia no doubt introduced non-Indian visions of reality, healing, and problem solving. More than forty scholar-monks from China, Korea, Tibet, Central and Southeast Asia studied at Nālandā during the approximately thirty years between Hsüan-tsang’s and I-Tsing’s time there.¹⁸ The interaction among the different peoples and their experiences must have been mutually enriching. In addition to the foreign students who returned to their homes, Indian scholar-monks who left India carried Nālandā’s critical training and broad knowledge to other parts of Asia. Edward Conze attributes the spread of Buddhism to monks, who “Having the advantage of a liberal education, ... react to the unproven with a benevolent skepticism and so ... have been able to accommodate themselves to every kind of popular belief not only in India, but in all countries they moved into.”¹⁹

If the experience of Nālandā is any guide, Buddhist education must prepare those who would lead in a global recovery with a liberal education that grounds the student with a critical mind to measuring the value of competing views and with an appreciation for “relative values.”²⁰ We live in a complex, ever-changing web of interrelationships and differing points of views. A global recovery—whether it be the environment, climate change, financial reform, telecommunications, immigration, poverty, economic and social justice—requires taking into account all manner of interests and sufferings. No single perspective or method however powerful can possibly solve every problem. A multiplicity of opinions and problem solving techniques will have to converge effectuate change and minimize suffering.

¹⁶ Nakasone 2005:105-146.

¹⁷ Tatz 1985:50-53. The medical training Buddhists monks received greatly assisted in the propagation of the Dharma beyond India.

¹⁸ Joshi 1967:140.

¹⁹ Conze 1982: 12.

²⁰ “Relative values” is an expression coined by Ōe Kenzaburō. Ōe’s interest in peripheral cultures emerged from his discovery of values in Okinawa, an island on the very fringe of the Japanese cultural sphere. He writes,

No matter how Japanized (or “Yamotonized”), it may outwardly appear now, Okinawa still maintains its non-Yamato cultural identity; and, unlike the insular, unaccommodating and emperor focused culture of the rest of Japan, it is blessed with a richness and diversity peculiar to peripheral cultures. Its people possess an openness to the world that comes from knowing the meaning of relative values. Ōe 1995: 32.

The critical mind is essential in a world of conflicting demands and responsibilities. Such a mind will need clarity on all relevant facts before passing judgment and taking action. This daunting task may prove impossible. Too often we act or make decisions before we have explored all causes and investigated all alternatives. Though this may be cumbersome, believing that we are right and that we have all the answers is to fail to appreciate other points of views. An issue may be irresolvable and may remain forever ambiguous. Yet living and working in ambiguity may be the most productive way of ethical deliberation and action. Such a posture forces us to deliberate, make decisions, and act knowingly that others have different values and may not approve or follow our example. The values I hold must be always be measured against other values and perspectives. To be “objective” is to consider all points of views. This approach may be likened to Cubist artist who renders an object from different perspectives, in contrast with European Renaissance painters who employed mathematical perspectives to paint from a single fixed point.

During the Gupta Period, Dharmapāla, Śīlabhadra, and other scholar-monks of liberal learning and wide philosophical outlook were chosen to lead Nālandā.²¹ However, after three centuries Nālandā universal educational vision gave way to a focus on “Buddhist Tantra, an amalgamation of mysticism, and magic that radically departed from classical Buddhist teachings of *śūnyatā* and other fundamental ideas. Tantra incorporated unorthodox elements into Buddhist ritual and practice, including sexual components. Tantra emphasis on the necessity of a guru to guide the devotee limited the glories of the Dharma to a select few.²²

This intellectual narrowing limited the exposure to alternative visions of reality and thus solutions to human questions. Scholars speculate that this intellectual stunting was a major reason Nālandā was unable to adequately respond from the Brahmanic and Muslim challenges. While Brahmanism was able to recover from the destruction of its temples and the slaughter of its ascetics, Nālandā was unable to.²³ Passing the secrets of the Dharma from teacher to disciple also suggests the decline of Buddhism as a living faith; the laity was not included in the fruits of the academy. Further dependent on imperial patronage, Nālandā did not forge strong ties with secular society. Over intellectualization and secreting the spiritual treasures of the Dharma to a select few distanced Nālandā from the wider society. While the scholar-clerics cultivated rarified states of mindfulness, investigated the universal human suffering, and glorified the absolute value of the all beings, they did not involve itself

²¹ Joshi 1977:345.

²² The decline of Buddhism can also be attributed to moral degeneration, sectarian disputes, its approach to Hinduism, and the hostility and rivalry of Brahmanism. Joshi 1967: 304-327. See also Dutt: 344-345.

²³ Dutt 1962:344. Joshi 1977:304-327. According to Joshi the decline of Buddhism can also be attributed to any number of factors, including the moral degeneration of its clerics, sectarian disputes, and the hostility of Brahmanism.

with rituals for birth, marriage, and death. Buddhist leaders relegated these mundane tasks to the Brahmanic clergy.²⁴

The narrowing of intellectual interests and estrangement the society distanced Nālandā from the concerns of the common person. What comfort can speculation on the rarefied reaches of mind and inspiring songs of compassion offer to persons like Ms Jeong who have been brutalized by their human compatriots? I am not sure what solace the Buddhadharma can offer those who have brutalized. Can anyone or any faith tradition? Buddhist doctrine may be able to rationalize the inhuman brutalization Ms Jeong suffered by appealing to the doctrine of karma and successive lives. Such rationalization may offer ideological neatness, but does not address personal and existential anguish. She firmly stated that only the image of her father and mother and the need to tell her people what had happened to her gave her the strength to survive. The Japanese cleric Shinran (1173-1262) writes that the Buddha offers compassion most readily to the least worthy, because these are most needy of spiritual transformation. I on the other hand would hope that compassion flows most bountifully, not to the least worthy, but to those brutalized by the least worthy.²⁵

How would you respond to Ms Jeong's anguish? Some experiences are just too painful to recover from. I welcome any insight you may have. My only suggestion is that in thinking about global recovery, Buddhists must give priority to preventing the brutalization of people and to work among those who are in the most need of help. The challenge for a global recovery of course is for the highest ideals of humanity guide our everyday activities and national policies; and to exemplify these ideals in our ordinary routines.

To close, the moral ends of Buddhist education and its pedagogy stressed by the Buddha and their institutionalization at Nālandā and other monastic institutions can be useful models for thinking about the spiritual legacy and world Buddhists may wish to bequeath. Nālandā's four pronged curriculum contributed to its success as an educational experiment, and its role in defending the faith and its propagation beyond India. An education rooted a "benevolent skepticism" that entails a responsibility to question long accepted rules and a mode of thinking requires a liberal education to understand different points of views. A liberal education fosters humility and flexibility; it prepares one to be open to different ideas, experiences, and implementing change. These attitudes are embedded in the Buddhist doctrines of *pratīyasamutpāda*, *anātman*, and *sūnyatā* provide the rationale for investigating, solving, and implementing a global recovery. These ideas are have universal application.

²⁴ Joshi 1967:323.

²⁵ Nakasone 1996: 10-12.

Global Recovery, the theme of the 2010 United Nations Day of Vesak is an invitation to look into the future and to imagine what that future can be. We need to remember that future and work to that end. With this in mind, I reviewed the story of University of Nālandā for clues Buddhist education may offer toward a more enlightened and humane future. I thank the organizers of the 2010 United Nations Day of Vesak for giving me this opportunity to exercise my moral imagination.

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Buddhism: A Way of Life Leading to the Complete Recovery of Global Grief (With Special Reference to Buddhist Sanskrit Literature)

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The age we live in is full of evil thoughts, selfishness, jealousy, hatred, enmity, anger, ill-will and all inhuman values. A sense of darkness of despair, distrust, restlessness, pain, sorrow and sufferings is prevailing all around the world. Each nation and individual is badly in the grip of ignorance, superstition and suspicion and is feeling danger, always at the hands of others. Due to scientific developments, totally devoid of ethical codes and human values; there has arisen deep disgust, evil motives, antipathies and inordinate race for love of mightiness in human mind. The tendency of collecting more and more arms and ammunitions of the nations of the world is threatening its peace and tranquility all the time and has put out explosive substance which will burst, at what moment, no one knows. The so called scientific development has made man's mind quite irrational; materialistic thinking and worldly progress has overpowered the whole human race and has narrowed down the canvas of his thinking. Man has become more and more selfish; he can't think above his own interest anytime, even, the interest of his own wife, children, parents and other kith and kin is secondary for him. This situation has taken the whole world in the grip of great grief and miseries.

In such a period of crisis Buddhism and Buddhism alone can suggest a way to out from such situations. The observance of Buddhistic approaches of life are from the dire needs of the hour. The quest of humanity, with the realization of the relevance of Buddhism in the world, was the last message of the Lord Buddha. The quality of love, pity, friendliness, universal brotherhood, social harmony, non-violence which are the essence of Buddhism are closely related to the concept of humanity and humanistic approach of life, and this alone can help the world today in having a better and brighter future of humans and humanity, both. This sort of spirit has expression in the following verse of Lalitavistara:

Ciraprasuptamimam lokam tamahskandhāvaguṅthitam
bavān prajñāpradīpena samarthah pratibodhitum
cirāture jīvaloke kuśavyādhiprapīdīte
vaidyarāṭ tvam samutpannah sarvavyādhi pramocakah¹

Buddhism is not merely a philosophy or a religion but it is a way of life which leads to a state of complete peace, pleasure, fraternity, ecstasy, co-existence and all other human values – away from desperation, enmity, distrust, sense of violence, hatred, disgust and so on in life. Buddhism, virtually, is a science of peace and a nucleus of peace which helps all without discriminating against caste, creed, country, sex, religion, region, etc. It strives to establish perfect humanism in man and society at large by having control over the fickle and dynamic mind of man and also by promoting *Satya* (truth), *Ahiṃsā* (non-violence), *Karuṇā* (pity) and *Viśvamaitrī* (universal brotherhood) in him. It has the quality to remove: sense of greed, hatred, delusion, ignorance, jealousy and enmity in man. It acts for ushering in peace and harmony in mankind. It is a unique path of enlightenment, which preaches the gospel of love and compassion based on the cardinal principle of human values in life devoted fully to the well being of mankind and the other worldly being as well. The above maintained context has superbly been woven in the words in the following verse of the Jātakamālā –

na cātmadukhaksāyamātrakeṇa me prayati santoṣapanthena mānasam
amūnanāthānabhivīkṣya dehinah prasaktatīvravyasanaśramaturān
anena puṇyena tu sarvadarśitāmavāpya nirgitya ca doṣavidviṣah
jara-rūjā-mṛtyumahormisankulātsamudhareyambhavasāgarājjagat.²

The Lord Buddha appeared on the horizon of the world about 2550 years ago when there was skepticism, fanaticism, ritualism, superstition and miseries - all around in the society. He twinkled with a practical and easily acceptable approach of life which were neither metaphysical nor ritualistic, neither skeptical nor dogmatic, neither optimistic nor pessimistic, neither theocentric nor fully homocentric, neither absolutely this worldly nor other worldly. It poses faith neither in self-mortification nor in self-indulgence; neither in eternalism nor in nihilism. Buddha virtually arose with the perception of a unique path of life which is urgent for the search of peace,

¹ Lalitavistara saṅstavaparivarta 23/5-6

² Jātakamālā, Maitrībala jātaka śloka no- 54-55

harmony and brotherhood in society. He spread his views about life amongst the common masses throughout his life. He moved very close with the people from all walks of life without any discrimination, preaching to them and discussing with them: social, political, ethical, psychological, sociological and the moral issues of human life. He maintained that the solitary purpose of human life is to attain solace in life and to have perfect peace in the world which was quite new and distinguished in nature. He not only showed the way also through which it can be achieved; he suggested the formula also by applying which the idea or dream of perfect peace and social harmony in the world can be had.

A close study of Buddhism and Buddhist Sanskrit Literature discovers the fact that the practice of some particular principles in light of today's world of crisis may help the aggrieved society in having a way or leading to *eliminate* global grief, worries and miseries. Following are the cardinal principles suggested by the Lord Buddha:

- The principle of Four Noble Truths.
- The principle of the Noble Eight Fold Path.
- The principle of Brahmavihāra
- The principle of Pancaśīla
- The principle of Majjhimapratipadā

The doctrine of Four Noble Truths is the soul or the perfume of Buddhism: *dukha* (sufferings), *dukha-samudaya* (the cause of sufferings), *dukha-nirodha* (cessation of sufferings), and *dukha-nirodhagāmi-pratipadā* (the path leading to the cessation of sufferings) are the four factors which the Lord Buddha termed as the Four Noble Truths. *Dukha* is imperfection of all kinds arising out of the realization of the fact that man can never fully find himself. On examining the constituent of *Dukha* we find that in the ultimate sense the whole world and all worldly creatures are devoid of any reality; they are impermanent in nature and are subject to death, decay, diseases. This view gets image in the following verse:

Kāye sati vyādhijarādhi dukkham kśuttarṣabarṣosṇahimādi caiva.

Rūpaśrite cetasi sānubandhe śokāratikrodhabhayādi dukkham³

Having been born, man strives to have happiness in this world of futility but all that he has is dissatisfaction, disgust, hatred, anger, jealousy, ill-will, conflict, bitterness, rivalry, indignity, evil-thoughts, distrust and so on. This *dukha* the Lord

³ saundaranandam, canto -16, śloka- 13

Buddha has said to be the first Noble Truth. The Second Noble Truth is the origin or cause of dukha which arises out of craving or desire in life in presence of doṣa (hatred), moha (ignorance) lobha (greed) and avidyā (want of knowledge). Therefore, he preached to renounce 'desire'. At this point in Saundaranandam it has been mentioned that:

Mānasam balavadadukkham tarṣe tiṣṭhatitiṣṭhati

Tam tarṣam chindhi dukkham hi tṣṣṇā cāsti ca nāsti ca.⁴

The cessation of all sufferings (dukha) is the Third Noble Truth which can be achieved by total eradication of all forms of desire or craving; and if not possible, at least, to check it and not to leave it unbridled. This, He, said to be the right way of life of having recovery of global grief and miseries. So, we must check the tendency of longing for more and more in life and by doing so we can achieve the state of bliss and happiness in life which in the term of Buddhistic Philosophy is called Nibbana, the *summum bonum*. This is the creed or central theme of Buddhistic principles of life. Buddha describes, supremely, the blissful state of Nibbana which can be, attained through total emancipation from the worldly existence. This is a transcendent state of mind in which all kind of sins and defilements is conquered, all worldly pain and sufferings is eliminated and all desire and attachment with the worldly things are destroyed. This unproduced and unceasing state is fully peaceful, blissful and devoid of all fear and inhuman values. The path leading to the cessation of suffering, to the deliverance from the cycle is the state of Nibbāna, is called the Fourth Noble Truth. The first three Noble Truths would have made man more unhappy - had the Lord Buddha not suggested the fourth.

The Noble Eight Fold Path is nothing but, more or less, greater details of the Four Noble Truths, which the Lord Buddha discussed amongst the common masses. All the religious practices, ethical principles, philosophical ideals and moral values revolve around the Noble Eight Fold Path. It envisages a mode of conduct in which essentials of both the extreme course of life become harmonized and significant. It suggests a way of life which ultimately effects into a wonderful improvement in human life and the society at large. It purifies human mind gradually culminating in total transformation of an ordinary man into spiritually elevated man. It is so called because of its eight following constituents:

- Right View (samyak dṛṣṭi)
- Right Thought (samyak vicāra)
- Right Speech (samyak vāk)

⁴ Ibid, canto-11, śloka-36

- Right Action (samyak karma)
- Right Livelihood (samyak ājīvikā)
- Right Effort (samyak prayatna)
- Right Mindfulness (samyak smṛti)
- Right Concentration (samyak samādhi)

The first two constituents are grouped as wisdom (prajñā), the next three as morality (śīla) and the last three as concentration (samādhi).

Right view means to see the world and worldly things as they really are; that means, to have knowledge of suffering, cause of suffering, cessation of suffering and the way leading to cessation of suffering. This is the Right View. If every man in the society has right view, there will be complete calm and peace in the society everywhere and everytime. It influences the remaining seven constituents of the Noble Eight Fold path. Right View helps a man in having Right Thought which promotes a man towards good words and deeds. It is associated with renunciation, absence of ill-will and cruelty. It inspires for non-violence, friendship, compassion, mutual co-operation, etc., in the society. Right Thought helps us in having Right Speech and inspires man towards Right Action. If the thoughts are right, it stimulates man in making Right Speech. It controls man's verbal and physical action and his behavior at large. A person making Right Speech is right in his action also. A man of Right Action does always earns his livelihood through just and proper means. Right Livelihood means refraining from earning livelihood by improper and just means. Right Livelihood brings happiness and prosperity to an individual. We should live always honestly and earn livelihood only by right means and also by right conduct. If each individual behaves well, earns decently and honestly in life, the peace and complete harmony is bound to prevail in the society.

Right Speech, Right Action and Right Livelihood are the factors which comprises morality and which guides and controls our conduct and behavior. Right Effort is the sixth constituent of the Noble Eight Fold Path. It means the unceasing desire and endeavor to get rid of all non- virtuous thoughts and actions. It is four in number i.e., the effort to prevent the arising of evil thoughts that have not arisen; the effort to eliminate the evil thoughts that have already arisen; the efforts to culminate good thoughts that have not arisen yet; and effort to conserve the good thoughts that have already arisen. Buddha's Right Effort reached its highest when he sat under the Bodhi Tree for deep meditation and became ultimately, the Enlightened Soul. So, the right effort is very much needed today in our society. Right Mindfulness is the seventh element of the Noble Eight Fold Path. It is based on a constant awareness which we should learn to develop within ourselves. It helps us to differentiate between right views and wrong views, right thoughts and wrong

thoughts, right speech and wrong speech, right action and wrong action, right livelihood and wrong livelihood, right effort and wrong effort and also between right mindfulness and wrong mindfulness. As a result of Right Mindfulness all sins and defilements are effectively countered and we become free to practice virtuous deeds of body, speech and mind. It strengthens our character and adds an additional vigor to our personality; it helps us in our mental development. The last factor of this cardinal principle is Right Concentration which means mental exercise of man for his inner development. It is an important stage of meditation which transcends a man and the society in the state of complete peace and tranquility. So has been said by Aśvaghōṣa in his epic Saundaranandam in the following verse:

Triskandhametam praviḡāhya mārgam
Praspaṣṭamaṣṭāṅgamahāryamāryam
Dukkhasyahetūṅprajahāti doṣān
Prāpnoti cātyantaśīvan padam tat.⁵

The world today may have a remedy sure against the present global grief if the different constituents of the Noble Eight Fold Path is observed in its true spirit. One may destroy the fetters that keep him in bondage by following the moral and mental disciplines of the Noble Path. Noble are the Four Great Truth, Noble is the Eight Fold Path, the glory and efforts of which remain afresh even after hundred of generations after the Buddha. The theory of Brahmavihāra is the other cardinal characteristic which the Buddhism advocates for and which the Lord Buddha himself practically practiced successfully in his life. Bodhisattvas have advised about this only after they have practiced them in their own lives. They have suggested the way of cultivation of the qualities comprising Brahmavihāra on their own experience. It suggests for the cultivation of four sublime values in human life; they are: *mettā* (loving-kindness), *muditā* (sympathetic-joy), *karuṇā* (compassion) and *upekkhā* (equanimity) which are popularly known as Brahmavihāra in the Buddhist world. They are also known as *appamañña*; they are so known since these four qualities give infinite happiness to living beings. They are like spiritual abodes in the Buddhist thoughts. In Buddhist philosophy, they are known as four noble practices of mental development through which man can attain subsequent rebirth in the Brahmaloaka. A close study of Buddhist Sanskrit Texts suggests that the whole world is a single unit and as without the development of different limbs of our body a complete and full growth of the person is not possible; similarly the world can't ever be flourished and feel pleasure without the upliftment of each and every individual of the world; the suffering of the whole world is to be considered

⁵ Ibid, canto- 16, śloka- 37

as integral. In this regard in Bodhicaryāvatāra it has been mentioned by Shantideva that:

hast ādibhedena bahuprakārah kāyo yatheik paripālanīyah
tathā jagadbhinnamabhinnadukkkhasukhātmaakam sarvamidam tathaiva.⁶

Metta (love) is the first and foremost quality of Brahmavihāra which generates quality of tolerance in human being. It is a kind of positive desire towards being in distress; it is a desire to remove sorrow and suffering from the life of others. It is the premier quality of followers of Lord Buddha. For Buddhists it reached to such an extreme that even the miscreants who destroy the images of Buddha and who hurts Bodhisattvas, don't pain them. The tolerance of Buddhists reaches the highest degree when they say that Bodhisattvas should bear all kinds of pain of pain of all creatures. Bodhisattvas even desire that he himself may be changed into food and drink to remove the pain of thirst and hunger of the creature during the famine, desires to be an inexhaustible treasure for the poor; desire to be a doctor, medicine and nurse for all sick of the world until everyone is treated. The above mentioned facts is expressed, in the following verses of Bodhicaryāvatāra of Shantideva:

Glānāmasmi bhaiṣajyam bhaveyam vaidya eva ca
Tadupsthāyakaścaiva yāvadrogāpunar bhavah.⁷
Cintāmaṇirbhadraghatah siddhavidyā mahauṣadhīh
Bhaveyam kalpavṛkśaśca kāmadhenuśca dehinām.⁸

Furthermore, forgiveness is the highest virtue and it leads to Buddhahood, so even enemies and wrongdoers should be served, honoured and worshiped. Therefore, it has been said in Bodhicaryāvatāra that:

Dukham praveṣṭukāmasya ye kapāṭatvamāgatāh
Buddhādhiṣṭhānata eva dveṣateṣu katham mama.⁹

Still further it has been said that an honored, learned and virtuous man should exchange himself with a destitute and aggrieved in the society and thereafter he should strive afresh to uplift himself. This is a peculiar spiritual idea of Buddhism

⁶ Bodhicaryāvatāra, pariccheda- 8 śloka- 91

⁷ Ibid, Pariccheda-3, śloka-7

⁸ Ibid, śloka- 19

⁹ Ibid, pariccheda-6, śloka-101

which perhaps is quite uncommon to any other religion. The following verse of Shantideva in Bodhicaryāvatāra reflects this idea:

Jñātvāv sadoṣamātmānam parānapi gunodadhīn

Ātmabhāva parityāgam parādānam ca bhāvyet.¹⁰

Muditā (sympathetic joy) is the second divine quality which implies rejoicing at others success, happiness or prosperity. A certain race should be happy over the growing prosperity of another race; one religion should appreciate another; a nation should acknowledge and appreciate the achievements of the other nations of the world. This is Muditā which has as its object, the eradication of jealousy, which retards and obstructs one's progress. This spirit has got expression in the following verse of the Jātakamālā:

Nirātmake bhedini sārāhīne dukha kṛtaghne satatāśucau ca

Dehe parasmāyupayu jyamāne na pṛtimānyo na vicakśaṅṅah sah.¹¹

Karuṇā (compassion) is the third sublime state which implies the feeling of the hurt for removing pain and sufferings of others which offers happiness to others and it is the easiest way to introduce peace in the society. It should be extended towards all whether man, animal, or insects without any distinction. The Yugoslavian non-Buddhist, Mother Teresa, is a global role-model, or the best embodiment of this quality, doing her most-notable work in India. In this regard Aśvaghōṣa in his book Saundaranandam has rightly mentioned that:

Duṣṭena ceha manasā bādhyate vā paro na vā

Saddhastu dahyate tāvatsvam mano duṣṭa cetasaḥ

Tasmāsarveṣu bhūteṣu maitrīm kāruṇyameva ca

Na vyāpādam vihimsā vā vikalpayitumrhasi.¹²

Upekkhā (equanimity) is the fourth and final quality of Brahmavihāra which stands for looking impartially, justly, neutrally or without favor or disfavor. It teaches that one should not be dated or pleased when he or she is honored or praised, simultaneously, one should not be enraged or depressed when he or she is insulted or blamed. It should be extended towards all beings equally, possessing of two opposite qualities like the good and the bad, the loved and the unloved,

¹⁰ Ibid, pariccheda-8, śloka-113

¹¹ Jatakamālā, vyaghri Jātaka, śloka-22

¹² saundaranandam, canto-15, śloka- 16-17

the pleasant and the unpleasant. If a boy passing by the road taunts another boy, and the later boy does not get angry, he performs equanimity and if he gets angry, this is not equanimity. It is essential to maintain peace, unity and harmony in the society and the world. This scene is implied in the following verse of the Jatakamālā:

Na spardhyā naiva y śobhilāṣāṇna svargalābhāṇna ca rājahetoh

Nātyantikeapyātmasukhe yathāyam mamādaroanyatra parārthasiddheh.¹³

Besides the Four Noble Truth, the Noble Eight Fold Path and the Brahmavihāra, the Pancaśīla and the Majjhimapratipadā are the two other cardinal creeds for the Buddhist principles of peace, harmony and co-existence. The propagation of the five precepts or moral antidotes of *non-killing*, *non-stealing*, *non-adultery*, *non-lying* and *non-intoxication* by the Lord Buddha are popularly known as Pancaśīla. They purify man's mind and embolden him from within and without. The last and the final significant preaching or philosophy that Lord Buddha gave to his followers for a peaceful life in the world, was his theory of Majjhimapratipadā, that is the theory of Middle Path. He preached this as if getting smooth and sweet music - as we pull on the strings of the Vīṇā: neither very hard nor keep it very loose, similarly, we should avoid the two extremes of life and adopt the Middle Path. This makes one's life and the world: sweet, peaceful and harmonious. This theory of Middle Path has worked as a magic in promoting world peace and goodwill in the past and it can do so wonderfully even today.

Keeping the facts and ideas discussed above in view, it can be said that Buddhism isn't really focused on the soul, God, the Transcendent, the Holy – as other religions profess. There is no battle for God in the Buddhist world. In this over-materialized world, Buddhism is human-friendly and altruistic. It is a way to experience the nobility of life without the intervention of concepts. It is artless, natural and simple. Herein meditation is to fill any unnoticed void in life. It is not to be hollow men stuffed with dogmas. It is bhīyyobhāva “becoming-more”, the faring in the grand of the universes, the long way of becoming”, the yānā, as we see ourselves as further-fares. The path to the goal of Nibbāna consists of ethics, meditation and understanding. Whatever Buddha preached is first and foremost a way for each individual to make spiritual progress. Values are long – continuing modes of thought and behavior that condition the subjective as well as the materialistic and analytical and spiritual as well. The six stages of spiritual perfection or Pāramitās in the Bodhisattva's progress to Buddhahood are the practice of charity (dāna), morality (śīla), patience (kṣānti), vigor (vīrya), meditation (dhyāna) and wisdom (prajñā). Buddhism is the noble sacredization of life, of human ethics, harmony of life and virtue, without any intervention of an external Being.

¹³ Jatakamālā, vyāghrī Jātaka śloka-30

The Buddhist Middle Path is a way to our era which stands at civilization's impasse, groping for direction, seeking symbols of consciousness, a quantum jump towards wholeness. It summons us to a dialogue of timeless day, from thought to awakening awareness, from dogma to dialogue, from ideology to ideas. Humankind is a child of the triple collision of modernization, environment pollution and cultural cataclysm. We stand at the threshold of the imbalance of the biosphere of our inheritance and the technosphere of our creation. We face a future that opens on to a crisis more inescapable than any ever encountered by human race.

Furthermore, eternity is vaster than moments of time: the rustling breeze of fragrance awakens the sensitivities of Buddhist people to the ideal of the Bodhisattva, who says: "The whole world of living-beings - I must rescue, from the terrors of birth, of old age, of sickness, of death and rebirth, of all kinds of moral offence, of all states of woe, of the whole cycle of birth-and-death, of the jungle of false views, of the loss of wholesome dharmas, of the concomitants of ignorance". The selfless love, the infinite compassion, the universal redemption of the Bodhisattva ideal can free men and nations from hate, fear and insecurity of existence. For the last twenty-five centuries Buddhism has spread the message of understanding and resolution, communion and compassion, to lead to universal horizons of human loyalty. Buddhism with hundreds of Sutras is the openness to multiple forms of reality. They are the many structures of meaning and being in which we constantly live. No universal proposal for a single human meaning can come up: the depths can be lived out of the rag bag of the ever-changing many. Buddhism teaches an acceptance of the various nesses of ourselves and of others. The others have to own the expanding consciousness, in contradistinction to the orthodoxy of revelation, a new humility in the diversity of modern existence.

Still further, the long career of Sākyamuni's evolution into a Tathāgata, a Buddha, is represented by five hundred Jatakas which embody his practice of Parāmitās or perfections of virtues. These highly valued qualities are exemplified not only by human incarnations, but also by animals who appear in several Jātakās. They created image values and raised all levels of life to nobility, and let humans awake to all of nature. These mindscapes gave rise to a new sense within us, to a universal unfolding of purity, light and height, to a discovery of pure pleasure in symbiosis. Killing or injuring living beings is bad karma. Compassion and sympathy with all the lives is the spirit of Buddhism. The insatiable greed of human is the cause of environmental disasters.

Conclusion:

To sum up my paper I am bold enough to say: if the fragrance of virtuous flowers of Buddha's teachings and preaching are allowed to scatter into the world without interruption and disturbance, there will be peace, harmony, goodwill, love, friendship, integrity and prosperity all around in the society and the world at large. It will help the world in having a way to complete recovery of global grief and miseries. Buddhist values are well equipped as human imperatives, and they can shape a path for walking on – of which: the human race may overpower all inhuman values.

It seems to be most appropriate and significant in the present day to avoid conflicts of different nature: social, religious, regional, national, international and even conflicts between individuals. The teachings may kiss the world with compassion and all human values; it may diffuse light and love in the hearts of the people; it may become the lit-lamp of hope and peace - in place of frustration and disgust. It may prove to be medicine to the arid and injured heart of man who is ceaselessly, running futile in the furious chase to nowhere and for nothing. The principles of Anitayatā, Sūnyatā and Pāramitā brought by Lord Buddha, the Prince of Peace, are the only ray of hope for the world today. It was Buddhism and its philosophy which transformed 'Ashoka, the Ruthless' into 'Ashoka, the Righteous'; it was Buddhism which inspired the world community for the formation of the United Nations Organization after the dreadful havoc of nuclear devastation caused on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the year 1945. The charter of this international organization is certainly inspired and based on the features of Buddhism for the world brotherhood.

A streaming radiance has to flow between two banks of the River of Life, to transcend human and humanism into the Divine. Belonging to humanity, nothing human should be alien to us but prevailing should be all of the virtuous and humanistic qualities in the people of the world. The perennial message of the Buddha underlines the human imperative in the following words: bahujanahitāyabahujanasukhaya. Whatsoever argument be made, the fact remains that if the world today intends to have a way towards complete recovery of global grief and miseries: "Let Buddha be Our Refuge." *Buddham Saranam Gacchami.*

Seeking an Appropriate Lifestyle in Times of Crisis

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“Crisis” is a current event word in today’s life. The heat it carries has been spreading around every aspect of life, from municipal to rural areas, from rich and civilized countries to poor and backward territories. This very complicated and multi-faceted crisis varies over time, space, culture... In the philosophers’ eyes, this is a ‘cultural crisis’, meaning a life ideal crisis, which originated from *Southwest Judaism* and Catholics, then spread everywhere as the world’s cultural foundation depends a lot on their religious philosophy.¹ In other words, the fact that followers are seen less and less often in churches and temples means life philosophies of religions are no more appropriate for contemporary people. Some even talked about ‘an ethical and moral crisis’ which occurs when life values favor materialistic and practical ideas. But psychologists believe that the crisis came from the so-called ‘malaise, ennui, mal du siècle”, meaning ‘boredom, discomfort, sickness for the century’. That is the ‘deadening of life, automatization of man, his alienation from himself, from his fellow man and nature’.² In places which undergo more irregular and harsher weather conditions, environment is the main topic. But perhaps the one which is haunting mankind is the global econo-financial crisis. It is this crisis which upsets the life of people of all social strata. Its consequences do not only bring a heavy burden to poor and miserable people but also have a strong impact on other social classes.

Numerous energies, think tanks and efforts have been mobilized in an attempt to seek a way to remove mankind from this deluge. According to the common opinion, the crisis came from problems related to monetary and finance markets, property and security investments. Therefore, to remedy the consequences, financial solutions must be used, with an emphasis to be put on monetary and budgeting policies, together with strengthening means to effectively and fully control financial institutions activities so as to minimize similar crises in the future. Obviously, this is a logical and correct idea. However, from a Buddhist point of view, this solution may lessen the crisis and the superficial part of the issue only but cannot tackle the root cause. The reason for this is that all the crises, be it faith, environmental, ethical or economic crisis, originate from one main cause: excessive

¹ Peccei.A- Daisaku Idkeda, *Beore It Is Too Late*, Tokyo-New York-London, 1978

² Suzuki . D.T - E. Fromm- R.D Martino, *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism*, London- Great Britain, 1960

human greed and lack of a loving and altruistic mind as Buddha has taught in the Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta: The main cause of sufferings that mankind is today facing is its craving (tanha)³. In other words, egoism and extremism are the sources of all current trouble. The above reasoning can be construed as follows:

- Faith crisis because most contemporary people tend to live and enjoy a materialistic life.
- Ethical crisis because practicality is eroding humanitarian values.
- Environmental crisis because nature is brutally exploited to serve human desire.
- Financial crisis because greed is turning people into slaves of their own craving...

It is clear that the root cause of all crises lies in human craving and the consequence is that mankind is deeply immersed in wars, poverty, social vices and weather calamities... According to Buddhism, human cravings can be divided into three kinds:

- (a) The first is called kāmmanhā or craving for sensual objects
- (b) The second, bhavatanhā, or craving for existence and fame and
- (c) The last, vibhavatanhā, or craving for non-existence, self annihilation.⁴

Hence, to have a peaceful and happy life, we must be able to control, reduce, subdue cravings, and finally, to extinguish it.

It goes without saying that hedonists and practicalists will not agree with the above statement because, according to them, life is craving, life is to enjoy and life is to satisfy sensual desires. So Buddhist doctrine is concluded to be a path leading to life extinction.

Of course, Buddhism cannot and can never be a life-extinguishing religion; on the contrary, with its 26 centuries of expansion, Buddhism has become the good ideal for life for people across this planet. From reading the following basic teaching given by Buddha, we can see that the life of all sentient beings and non sentient beings should be seriously and meaningfully protected: *'It is true, Simha, that I denounce activities, but only the activities that lead to the evil in words, thoughts, or deeds. It is true, Simha, that I preach extinction, but only the extinction of pride, lust, evil thought, and ignorance, not that of forgiveness, love, charity, and truth.'*⁵

There is surely no culture or civilization in this world which praises or agrees to evil thoughts and deeds, compromising the life of oneself or others! There is

³ Majjhima-Nikāya, Saccavibhangacittasuttam

⁴ Samyutta Nikāya Vol. V, Majjhima-Nikāya Vol. III

⁵ Samyutta Nikāya

surely no people, no religion which encourages or fosters: pride, lust, evil thought, and ignorance, which are the root causes of all forms of sufferings in this world! In fact, contemporary mankind has no reason to object to Buddhism for such wise and charitable teachings.

Moreover, if we observe how mankind responds to crisis then we will perceive the true value of the above teaching, for economic policies of capitalist countries involve production and consumption. Success of a market economy lies in stimulating the likings and desires of consumers; its goal is to find every way to consume all the goods produced. Obviously, this economic doctrine has met all the expectations it set forth. Mankind considered it as an end for a long time. People got blissful with life and the comfort it brought and became walk sleepers in the consumption-process and enjoy paradise; but, after a while, after fully exploiting all the natural resources from sky to sea to serve their endless desires, those who upheld that lifestyle, brought about this planet's ecological imbalance. Thence, calamities such as irregular rainfalls and sunshine, typhoons, tsunamis, earthquakes and ice melting are the inevitable aftermath of inconsiderate actions. Flood, tidal waves, droughts and other natural calamities that we have to cope with every day, every hour, can be considered as nature's self defense mechanism after being gravely hit. Arnold. J. Toynbee and D. Ikeda said "It seems unquestionable that man's power over his environment has already reached a degree at which this power will lead to self-destruction if man continues to serve his greed".⁶

Fortunately, after some time sleepwalking in the enjoyment world, mankind woke up and found out that the disaster is coming close. People started to try to seek a solution to rectify the situation. Activities of Green peace or anti-nuclear development, anti-pollution, anti-forest destruction movements can be cited as typical ones.

Especially, in March 2009, to cope with the energy crisis, to avoid combustible resource exhaustion as well as to reduce the disposal of noxious wastes, carbon dioxide for example, into the atmosphere causing damage to the ozone layer, causing the greenhouse effect and other potential disasters, WWF called on worldwide people to participate in the Earth Hour by voluntarily putting out the electric lights for one hour, from 20:30 to 21:30 local time. Organizers hoped that citizens of about 1,000 cities would respond to the call but results exceeded their expectations: according to statistics, citizens of more than 4,000 cities in almost 88 counties have mutually joined in this meaningful action.

⁶ A.J. Toynbee and D. Ikeda, *Man Himself Must Choose*, Koddansha. I. Ltd., Tokyo & USA

It should be noted that, when the Earth Hour was first initiated in March 2007, there was only Sydney of Australia which responded to the call but after two years, specifically in March 2009, it was responded by people all over this planet in a voluntary and positive manner. Or just observe the way citizens in developed countries like the USA, the UK, France or Australia react to the current economic crisis; we will see changes in their thinking and behavior. In the pre-crisis period, to follow the motto of a market economy which is ‘Production and Consumption’, people bought whatever they liked, renewed their facilities, kept up with fashion trends, ranging from clothes, cosmetics to cars, houses. According to a German psycho-analyst, a market economy features exchange and receipt, exchange and consumption. Also, according to him, everything, be it mental or physical, can become object of exchange and consumption. Even a human being can become merchandise in business and trade.⁷

But, recently, people's thinking is changing. People tend to buy what they need, not what they like. People tend to buy fuel-saving and eco-friendly vehicles, not expensive and luxury car. The bankruptcy of airlines and car makers and the setback of the high fashion industry reflect the new concept of life of citizens in those countries. People can say it is due, on one hand, to the economic recession which leads to a negative-looking lifestyle, on the other, to the perception of risks threatening all the lives on this earth, which brings about mindful behavior. In other words, with this change, mankind has been making efforts to control their greed, liking and craving, which are the causes leading to the current crisis. Buddha mentioned in the cattāri ariyasaccani, this is the way to end sufferings: ‘extinction of craving is nirvana’.

It is certain that when somebody gives up a bad habit or practice, deeply engraved in their mind and closely associated to their lifestyle, they have found a more beneficial lifestyle which brings them peace and happiness because, to human beings, the purpose of life is not possessing the good or nice thing but is happiness.⁸ To some extent, happiness can be perceived as the presence of comfortable feelings and absence of distressed feelings.⁹ But the practical and materialistic way of life, to satisfy sense pleasures that people have been experiencing so far, seems not to be enough, for: as far as sense pleasures are concerned, the more intense the pleasure, the shorter the time; sense pleasure intensity varies inversely with time.¹⁰ It is clear that, if not satisfied, the thirst will burn and get you find new sensations and of course, the intensity is higher than before. This is the main drive leading to

⁷ Erich Fromm, *The Art of Living*, Harper Collins Publishers, London, 1985

⁸ Will Durant, *The Story of Philosophy*.

⁹ Will Durant, *The Story of Philosophy*.

¹⁰ G. Banzelade, *Ethics*

the formation of new industries manufacturing material entertainment utilities, even recreational drugs, such as ecstasy, opium, cocaine, which cause health problems and ruin people's life, to satisfy human sense pleasures. Paradoxically, the more the enjoyment, the greater the thirst; it is something like drinking sea water when thirsty and, of course, the thirst can never be relieved.

More seriously, unsatisfied desire will push people into psychological crisis. People feel empty, feel deficient, are sick of feelings, of themselves and of life. This lifestyle will lead to debauchery, alcohol abuse, revolt and finally, suicide. According to UN annual statistics, the USA, Denmark, New Zealand and Sweden are rated highest on the list of social problems like murder, suicide and alcohol abuse; but these problems are not only erupting in Europe, but are also occurring, with high concern, in Asian countries like Japan, Korea, China, Vietnam...¹¹

Thus, only from the perception of the view – Buddhists call them wrong view and wrong thinking – which leads to crisis in every aspect of life, as mentioned above, can people undergo deep changes in thinking and behaving. Instead of engaging in dangerous games to look for exciting feelings, instead of rummaging for new entertainment utilities, people prefer to rest in the calm space, in the natural environment to experience the purity of the universe with a peaceful mind. If people preferred *yesterday*, rather than frequenting dancing clubs, entertainment places, tea rooms, bars to fill voidness in their mind with deafening sounds, today - they would prefer to stay at home with their loved ones to enjoy relaxing and affectionate moments, after a hard day's work. If before people only thought about their personal life and interest and sought every means to satisfy their own feeling, today, most people would be willing to open their heart to care for the life and the happiness of others, for the life of sentient beings and non-sentient beings.

It can be said that this art of living has completely conveyed the spirit of loving kindness and compassion (*metta-karuna*) and wisdom (*pañña*) of Buddhism: Thanks to wisdom, people can differentiate between right and wrong, between good and bad; thanks to loving kindness, compassion, people can know how to love others and themselves and nature. Of course, this lifestyle has been bringing many practical benefits for the ones who adopt it and this choice not only helps save money, preserve health, protect natural resources and the ecological environment but this sublime lifestyle also brings happiness. To everybody, the supreme ideal and meaning of life is essentially the issue of happiness.¹² Of course, the happiness that this lifestyle upholds is the mental one, for, according to Buddhism, sensual feeling is only one sixteenth worth as compared to happy feeling¹³; spiritual feeling being

¹¹ Trover Ling, *Buddha, Max and God*, The Macmillan Press Ltd, London, 1979

¹² G. Banzelade, *Ethics*

¹³ *Anguttara Nikàya*, IV



linear with time, the more intense, the longer it will last.¹⁴ That is the reason why the Euro-American world shows more interest in and feels more attracted to the Buddhist way of life, for after applying Buddhist teachings in everyday life, those people, who once favored sensual experiences, now appreciate the value of this simple but efficient lifestyle as said by Prof. Rhys Davids: ‘Being a Buddhist or not, I studied every great religions of the world but could not find anything nobler than the Buddha’s Eightfold Path. I have only one thing to do, that is to arrange my living so that it conforms to the Path.’¹⁵

It can be therefore said that this art of living will be one of the wise choices for those who still get confused in the crisis as it delivers what is expected. With the application of Eightfold Path teachings (right view, right thinking, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration) in everyday life, the practitioner will immediately experience the presence of peace and happiness in every step and every breath. In addition, this art of living is also able to make available a clear mind to step by step solve the current confusion and crisis, at the same time, helps set up all life values for the whole human world as well as nature’s world.

¹⁴ G. Banzelade, Ethics

¹⁵ Nārada Thera, The Buddha and His Teaching

**GLOBAL RECOVERY THROUGH
ENGAGED BUDDHISM**

Kalyāṇamittatā or friendship- in the Pali Canon and as contemporary emphasizes Buddhist practice

Amoghamati Traud-Dubois

Friendship as spiritual practice

In the Pali Canon we find numerous examples of the Buddha describing and teaching kalyāṇamittatā or spiritual friendship as an important means for spiritual development. In his own life the Buddha embodies spiritual friendship. As teacher and friend he is always available for his disciples to give spiritual guidance and support. So the Buddha is the prototype of a spiritual friend, or, exemplifies the archetype of kalyāṇamittatā in terms of teacher-disciple-relationship. Spiritual teachers are alike until today. Lucky are those who live close enough to their teacher to enjoy this kind of friendship. However, many practitioners don't have personally close and regular contact with their teacher. Probably the vast majority of disciples lack that ongoing personal contact. Therefore, the relationship to peers and companions on the path is for most practitioners of utmost importance; and the reason why the Buddha stresses the need for spiritual friendship. One can describe the teacher-disciple-relationship as a kind of vertical kalyāṇamittatā, meaning that the teacher always remains in hierarchy above the disciple. Whereas the horizontal aspect of kalyāṇamittatā relates to the spiritual friendship between peers or companions¹, and is this paper's focus.

I'm going to refer to suttas from the Pali Canon, namely the Meghīya Sutta (Anguttara Nikāya A.IX.3) the Sigalovāda Sutta (Digha Nikāya 31) and the Upaddha Sutta (Samyutta Nikāya 45.2). I then focus on how we emphasize kalyāṇamittatā in the tradition I belong to, namely the Triratna Buddhist Order. Lastly, I give an account of the international aspect of the ideal of spiritual friendship with special regard to our Order and the Buddhist movement in India.

In the scriptures

In the Suttas there are numerous examples of description of the ideal of spiritual friendship. In the Sigalovāda Sutta the Buddha describes six different human relationships: comparing the cardinal directions with human relations, he links the parents to the east, teachers to the south, spouse and family to the west, friends and colleagues to the north, workers and servants to the lower direction, and ascetics

¹ Urgyen Sangharakshita: The Essential Sangharakshita, Wisdom Publications, Boston 2009, pp.530ff.

and holy men to the upper direction. This is the advice to the young Brahmin Sigalo, who worships the directions without really knowing the reason behind. The Buddha goes on explaining the characteristics of each of these relationships. For the description of the friend, he says:

“In five ways should friends and colleagues as the northern direction be respected: by generosity, kind words, acting for their welfare, impartiality, and honesty. And, friends and colleagues so respected reciprocate with compassion in five ways: by protecting you when you are vulnerable, and likewise your wealth, being a refuge when you are afraid, not abandoning you in misfortunes, and honoring all your descendants. In this way, the northern direction is protected and made peaceful and secure.”²

So, in this advice to a young man the Buddha explains the virtues and duties of friendship. In so far we are generous to our friends, speak kindly, look after their well-being, walk in their shoes and be honest, we build up friendship. And likewise we will enjoy the benefits of friendship.

In the Meghīya Sutta as another example from the scriptures, the Buddha refers to the horizontal aspect of kalyāṇamittatā and teaches five aspects of the benefits of enjoying the spiritual community. That is the Sangha of spiritual adepts who are all - more or less - on the same level of spiritual attainment. The Buddha points out that we need the companionship of spiritual friends, as support for our ethical practice, for uplifting pondering on the Dharma and as booster for inspiration and insight.

Here, Meghiya, a bhikkhu has good friends, good associates, good companions. When mind-deliverance is as yet immature, Meghiya, this is the first thing that leads to its maturity. ...It is to be expected of a bhikkhu who has good friends, good associates, good companions, that he will be virtuous, that he will live restrained by the restraint of the Patimokkha, endowed with conduct and resort, and that seeing danger in the smallest faults, he will train in the training rules he has accepted. It is to be expected of a bhikkhu who has good friends... that he will obtain at will, with no trouble or difficulty, talk that is effacing, a help in opening up the mind... talk about the knowledge and vision of deliverance. It is to be expected of a bhikkhu who has good friends... that he will live with energy instigated... vigorous, energetic, and persevering with regard to wholesome states. It is to be expected of a bhikkhu who has good friends... that he will be wise, endowed

² Sigalovāda Sutta: The Buddha's Advice to Sigalaka translated from the Pali by John Kelly, Sue Sawyer, and Victoria Yareham, <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/dn/dn.31.0.ksw0.html> (15.04.2010)

with the noble ones' penetrative understanding of rise and disappearance leading to the complete ending of suffering.³

Another good example of the importance the Buddha puts on *kalyāṇamittatā* can be found in the *Upaddha Sutta*, *Samyutta Nikāya* 45.2, in the famous dialogue with *Ānanda*:

...Ven. *Ananda* said to the Blessed One: “This is half of the holy life, lord: admirable friendship, admirable companionship, admirable camaraderie.” “Don't say that, *Ananda*. Don't say that. Admirable friendship, admirable companionship, admirable camaraderie is actually the whole of the holy life. When a monk has admirable people as friends, companions, & comrades, he can be expected to develop & pursue the noble eightfold path.”⁴ (*Upaddha Sutta*, *Samyutta Nikāya* 45.2)

So *kalyāṇamittatā*, the good friendship is considered the whole of the spiritual life. What does the Buddha mean by that statement? No less than that we necessarily need friends in order to progress on the spiritual path.

Nowadays, observing contemporary Buddhist traditions, one frequently finds a *Sangha* centered on the spiritual leader; thus a strongly developed vertical relationship between a teacher and his disciples. The horizontal aspect of *kalyāṇamittatā* often seems to be much less stressed. Whereas the venerated teacher may not always be available, spiritual companions more probably are. Therefore friendship is the constituent of *Sangha* as such: “Spiritual friendship (not just including friendship between peers) is also vital to Buddhism socially or collectively because it creates the *Sangha*. Membership of a spiritual community consists not in adherence to a list of abstract propositions, but in participation in a common spirit, and this spirit can only be adequately experienced in friendship. One of the benefits of spiritual friendship is the development of the *Sangha*, with the *Aryasangha* – the community of the Enlightened – at its summit. It is only through the medium of the *Sangha*, especially the *Aryasangha*, that the *Dharma* (the truths that Buddhism imparts through its teachings) can be perpetuated as a living force over a period of generations.”⁵

³ *Meghiya Sutta*: *Meghiya* translated from the Pali by John D. Ireland, <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/kn/ud/ud.4.01.irel.html> (14.04.2010)

⁴ SN 45.2 PTS: S v 2 CDB ii 1524 *Upaddha Sutta*: Half (of the Holy Life) translated from the Pali by *Thanissaro Bhikkhu*, <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn45/sn45.002.than.html> (14.04.2010)

⁵ *Dhammacari Subhuti*: *Good Company*, <http://www.dharmalife.com/issue17/goodcompany.html>, winter. 2001 (16.04.2010)

Triratna Buddhist Community

The tradition of the *Triratna Buddhist Order* was until recently known as the *Western Buddhist Order* or *Friends of the Western Buddhist Order*. The founder, the venerable Bhante Sangharakshita felt that the name “Western” is no longer be appropriate, since the movement grew far beyond the West and is now-a-days internationally worldwide. The Indian wing used to be called Trailokya Bauddha Mahasangha Sahayak Gana (TBMSG). It has always been provisionally to have separate names for the Western and the Indian region. Additionally, the Order is now active in countries which are not covered by either name. Therefore the venerable Bhante Sangharakshita, after a consultation process with the Order, decided on one single comprehensive name for the whole movement. The re-naming ceremony took place 42 years after the founding of this Buddhist movement earlier this year.

The importance of spiritual friendship is generally highlighted in Triratna. One can even say that the importance accredited to spiritual friendship is a distinctive feature of the tradition set up by Bhante Sangharakshita. Therefore in Triratna Buddhist Centers there is a strong emphasize on friendship and the development of *kalyāṇamittatā*.

Bhante Sangharakshita points out: “In the modern West, friendship is probably the most neglected of all the primary human relationships, but from the spiritual point of view, from the Buddhist point of view, friendship is extremely important. It has, according to Buddhist tradition, a direct connection with spiritual life.”⁶

Referring to the Buddha’s advice to Sigalo mentioned earlier, Bhante Sangharakshita stresses the importance of developing the virtues and duties of friendship, as there are:

- Generosity, giving, sharing. We should share with our friends whatever we have.
- Kind and compassionate speech. We should never speak harshly or bitterly to our friends.
- Welfare of our friends. We should especially look after their spiritual welfare. We should look after their health, look after their economic well-being.

⁶ Bhante Sangharakshita: The meaning of friendship in Buddhism, lecture, Berlin 1992, <http://www.freebuddhistaudio.com/talks/details?num=DE01> (13.04.2010)

- Impartiality. We should treat our friends in the same way that we treat our own self. It means breaking down the barrier between ourselves and others which is a big thing to achieve.
- Honesty. We should keep our word to our friends, keep our promise.⁷

If we act like this, we become friends and will reciprocally be befriended, will enjoy the benefits of friendship. We will get support and guidance, inspiration and community by our friends and thus will build Sangha.

“A test of the spiritual vitality of any spiritual institution is therefore whether there are strong friendships among its members. A clue would be found in the relative importance given to friendship over other kinds of relationship. If, on examining such a group, one saw that even married members put more emphasis on their spiritual friendships than on their family relationships (while not shirking their family duties, of course) it would augur well for the survival of that fellowship as a true spiritual community. One should also, however, consider whether the members not only got on well among themselves, but were also friendly to people beyond their own charmed circle. True friendship is not exclusive; it always includes a willingness to make new friends.

Association with the wise becomes so crucial to spiritual development because the example and advice of a noble-minded counselor is often the decisive factor that awakens and nurtures the unfolding of our own untapped spiritual potential. The uncultivated mind harbors a vast diversity of unrealized possibilities, ranging from the depths of selfishness, egotism and aggressivity to the heights of wisdom, self-sacrifice and compassion. The task confronting us, as followers of the Dhamma, is to keep the unwholesome tendencies in check and to foster the growth of the wholesome tendencies, the qualities that lead to awakening, to freedom and purification. However, our internal tendencies do not mature and decline in a vacuum. They are subject to the constant impact of the broader environment, and among the most powerful of these influences is the company we keep, the people we look upon as teachers, advisors and friends. Such people silently speak to the hidden potentials of our own being, potentials that will either unfold or wither under their influence.⁸

Through the Sangha, the Dharma can live on as something more than a body of texts or an institutional 'shell'. In this way, spiritual friendship, as well as benefiting the individuals who practise it, also benefits future generations. This gives

⁷ ibidem

⁸ "Association with the Wise", by Bhikkhu Bodhi. *Access to Insight*, June 7, 2009, http://www.accesstoinight.org/lib/authors/bodhi/bps-essay_26.html (16.04.2010)

us yet another perspective on the Buddha's statement that friendship is the whole of the spiritual life.”⁹

Finally it can be said that Sangharakshita would like spiritual community — particularly the Order he himself founded — to be a ‘network of friendships’.¹⁰

Sangha in India

Of course this applies to the Sangha in India, too. For the Buddhist movement in India the ideal of *kalyāṇamittatā* has still another implication. To understand this one has to take into account the Indian social system and the fact that many Buddhists in India descend from the lowest strata of Indian society. The Indian social system is extremely hierarchical with strict borders between different layers. Friendship or solidarity is upheld by default only within the family and the Jati, the caste attained by birth. It can hardly transgress the limits of caste. Furthermore, for those at the bottom of that hierarchy their status implies to be treated as impure, as untouchable, which resulted in being denied any equal opportunities to access water, shelter, food, education or spiritual development. Being treated for ages as less worthy by birth has left a deep impact in their psyche even today. Although it is banned by Constitution today the mind-set survived in the heads of many Indians until today. Therefore the Buddhist approach of human dignity and spiritual friendship is a revolutionary and total opposite pattern.

The Buddhist revival started in 1956 when Dr. Ambedkar as political leader converted to Buddhism and thus started what is now called a new Buddhist movement in India. After centuries of virtually no Sangha, nowadays there live about 30 million Buddhists in the birth land of the Buddha. And every year sees more conversions.

Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar

The revival of Buddhism in India is mainly due to the former Law Minister Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar. In 1956 he converted to Buddhism, only two months before his death. He led five hundred thousands of followers into conversion to Buddhism, mostly belonging to his own Mahar caste, which has been treated as untouchable.

⁹ Dhammacari Subhuti: The Significance of Dr Ambedkar In the West, public talk on 11th April 2010 <http://www.freebuddhistaudio.co.uk/talks/details?num=LOC332> (15.04.2010)

¹⁰ <http://www.fwbo.org/fwbo/spiritualfriendship.html> (16.04.2010)

Dr. Ambedkar had been pondering the question of an appropriate humanitarian religion for decades. Again and again, he made a plea to fight casteism amongst the scheduled castes. He passionately put forward the argument that the scheduled caste movement needed unity, self-reliance, and organizational strength, and also that women had to take an active part in it to make it a success.

When he finally embraced Buddhism, his understanding of the Dhamma was founded on a radical rejection of Hinduism and the caste system. Dr. Ambedkar had suffered a lot from caste discrimination. He was painfully aware of the entanglement of religion and society through the example of Hinduism and the caste system. Therefore, he intended to reconstruct Buddhism not only as a religion for the Dalit people but as a humanistic and social religion. His Buddhism projected a religion for a modern, civic society.

Dr. Ambedkar had met Bhante Sangharakshita shortly before his death. Sangharaksita later played a key part in the revival of Buddhism in India, particularly through his work with the followers of Dr. Ambedkar. After Dr. Ambedkar's sudden death, Sangharakshita stepped in to give countless lectures and talks on the Dhamma for the new Buddhist communities and introduced them to Buddhism. That has laid the seed for the Indian wing of the Triratna Bauddha Mahasangha with now more than 400 Order members. The overall number of Buddhists in India is now around 30 Million.

Still today Buddhists in India take as their inspiration Dr. Ambedkar's vision of social change through the practice and propagation of the Dhamma. Perhaps the most important is Dr. Ambedkar's insights into the need for society to be grounded in Ethics that are 'sacred and universal,' obviously he felt the Dhamma was the best expression of that. We know that Dr. Ambedkar chanted the mantra of Avalokiteshvara. At a start of a radio interview, when greeted by the interviewer he replied with Om Mani Padme Hum. In the following conversation about why he said that Dr Ambedkar pointed to the spiritual significance of relating to all beings on the basis of their potential to gain enlightenment, and explained how the mantra represented this.¹¹ This is a beautiful description of friendship indeed, to relate to the other on the basis of his or her potential to gain enlightenment.

International Dimension of Kalyāṇamittatā

So kalyāṇamittatā has an extra connotation for the new Buddhists. The enjoyment of friendship among peers regardless of their social background, without caring for social hierarchy, is something we in the West may take for granted. For the

¹¹ Dhammacari Subhuti: Good company

Sangha in India it is definitely extraordinary. Maybe it's difficult for everybody with a Western or Buddhist upbringing to realize, how deeply affected many of the Dalits still are by their history.

Therefore one aspect of our social projects in India has always been to foster the spirit of friendship and a healthy self-esteem especially in young people.

When the activities started more than 30 years ago, it soon became clear that simply teaching Buddhism was not enough. There was clearly a need for practical and material help, so a charity, Bahujan Hitay ("for the welfare of the many"), was set up to run social work projects. These projects have educational, medical and cultural objectives and they are now spreading throughout India.

One example for a project with special focus on the development of positive mind set is the Ashvagoshya Project. Story-telling and street theatre is used for awareness raising and to explore issues relevant to local communities. Karate classes are offered for children, which too, help greatly in the development of self esteem. As mentioned before, hundreds of years of oppression have left a deep mark on the psyche of many new Buddhists; who therefore often lack the healthy self esteem that can be seen as the very basis for the development of a strong and happy human being. A strong focus of this project lays on Ethics. It's a crucial issue for Buddhists to follow the precepts of course. In additions, it provides positive self esteem to be able to act ethically or at least strive for it. It's also a statement of dignity within the deeply corrupt Indian society and therefore an expression of self esteem.

The educational projects are an important part of the broader strategy and involve running 20 educational hostels. Here children can stay who would otherwise not be able to continue their schooling. Other projects include kinder gardens, adult literacy classes, and non-formal education classes, where children learn to improve their communication skills for instance. Skilful communication is one prerequisite for friendship we've heard. Medical projects include health centres and networks of slum-based community health workers.

Beside the social projects, the teaching of the Dharma is a very important part of activities; which is now mainly provided by Indian Order members. Still a lack of education and also lack of Dhamma knowledge prevail in the Indian Buddhist community. One also has to take into account that many of the Dalits converted primarily for social reasons and less out of genuine religious conviction. Therefore the need for Dhamma teaching is tremendous.

All this work is primarily financed through the fundraising of the Buddhist run charities Karuna Trust UK and on a much smaller scale Karuna Germany.¹² I am involved in both charities, as project manager for Karuna Trust and as chair women

¹² www.karuna.org; www.karunadeutschland.org (17.04.2010)

of Karuna Deutschland. For the work of both charities kalyāṇamittatā is an important feature of our work to take into account. While doing fundraising for projects in India we work on the basis of spiritual friendship. Working in a team implies all kinds of challenges and again, the virtues of friendship as given by the Buddha to Sigalo apply to a “team based right-livelihood”¹³ situation as well. So we try in all our international meetings to foster the spirit of friendship and beneficial communication. We feel the need to engage in compassionate activities. We want to contribute to the needs of our friends in India. We appreciate very much how lucky we are to live in prosperous, free and tolerant countries, and to be well educated and having met the Dhamma. We feel honored that we can pay back a tiny bit of that good fortune by working and fundraising for social and Dhamma projects for people less fortunate. And through the personal contacts and visits the relationships and friendships continues to deepen.

Like this we strive to contribute to global recovery through actions of engaged Buddhism. To finish I’d like to quote my teacher Bhante Sangharakshita:

“Spiritual friendship is a training in unselfishness, in egolessness. You share everything with your friend or friends. You speak to them kindly and affectionately, and show concern for their welfare, especially for their spiritual welfare. You treat them in the same way you treat yourself - that is you treat them as being equal to yourself. You relate to them with an attitude of metta, not according to where the power between you lies. Of course this is very difficult; it goes against the grain, because we are naturally selfish. The development of spiritual friendship is very difficult. Leading the spiritual life is very difficult. Being a Buddhist - a real Buddhist - is very difficult. We need help. ...It is in this way that spiritual friendship is indeed the whole of the spiritual life.”¹⁴

¹³ http://www.fwbo.org/fwbo/right_livelihood.html (17.04.2010)

¹⁴ Urgyen Sangharakshita: The Essential Sangharakshita, pp.511-2

Global Recovery by Volunteers: A Case Study from Volunteer Group of the College of Religious Studies, Mahidol University

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1. Introduction

Volunteer Mind or Volunteer Spirit is the person who dedicated himself to do something for others, so we can call them: “giver”. The giver can dedicate something or everything that they have to another person in the society without reward. For example, they give material such as rice, waters, clothes, medicines, and food to the poor, give money to help suffering people, give them energy to help others who are weak, and give them precious time to improve better society.

The volunteer mind is the light of the society. We should encourage the people in the society to grow volunteer minds. The light of loving kindness and compassion will shine around the world. The case study in my research is one case that shows us about the power of the volunteer mind to change the world from crisis to happiness. Although in this case the volunteer group can't change the whole world but at least it is point use to see that volunteer mind can make the world better.

It is the fully-manifested suffering in the world that invokes humane and volunteer mind in its many different forms. Many different kinds of action are intended to benefit mankind. These range from simple case study acts of teaching, consulting, training and charity organized kinds of service, “right livelihood” in and outside the helping professions, and through various kinds of community development.

However, the powers of volunteer mind are less if volunteers are not united. For example, someone can have a volunteer mind but they don't know how or what they should do for society. Unification of volunteer mind is very useful and more power to do social work because the group can plan to do the best appropriate action for community. In this way volunteer mind will have a lost of power to recovery the world.

Recovering the world from crisis is very hard work. We must to pool our efforts with everyone and with every part of society. The group of volunteer mind is very important to change the world. In the past, since the establishing of

the Buddhist Sangha it has been working for the welfare of all human beings, as it is initially intended to be, in various ways spiritually or materially whenever it is required. In fact the starting point of Buddhism is to help all human beings irrespective of whoever they are, and whatever religions and communities they belong to. The spirit of concerns for others or volunteer mind is the basis of Buddhism. With the spirit of caring for others and volunteer mind, the Buddha started preaching the Universal Truth to all mankind. Countless followers of Him benefited from His teaching and guiding. Not only the compassionate-himself engaged in the affair of guiding people for their own good, he also encouraged his Bhikkhu community to work for all without discrimination at all. His instruction to the Bhikkhu is: “Bhikkhu go forth on journey; teach the universal truth; for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion.” This article will show you about one group of volunteer mind that they have been worked in rural area or border of Thailand. The effect from them work show us that the group of volunteer mind can make the world better for instant they can encourage risk girl, ethnic group, novice and children in the school of Nan province of Thailand to the right view and live happy in every day life.

2. The Concern in Buddhism for Volunteer Mind

Compassion is the root of volunteer mind. Without compassion, volunteer mind can't happen. The teaching about compassion is holding the central value in Buddhism. Compassion was the motivation for Prince Siddhartha to propagate for the welfare of all humans and other beings, the Dhamma, which he discovered as he became the Buddha. And due to their compassion the disciples of the Buddha traveled far and wide to bring Dhamma to show the way out from suffering and the release to all those who suffer no matter who and where they were. In all his teaching Buddha emphasized volunteer mind or compassion as one of the four sublime emotions that make humans the most refined beings.

Among his followers one of the most remarkable in history was Emperor Asoka (273-232 BCE) who was transformed by the Dhamma from being a warrior to become a benefactor for mankind. He is acclaimed for constructing hospitals for animals and renovating major roads throughout India. Along the roads he had many banyan trees planted so that they can give shade to animals and humans. At regular intervals he had wells dug, rest houses built. He banned slavery, animal-hunting, fishing and deforestation. He also recommended his people to study and respect all religions. He taught the lesson of unity, peace, equality and love and allowed females to be educated and to enter religious institutions.

3. Relation between Volunteer mind and Action

Buddhism is a pragmatic teaching which starts from certain fundamental propositions about how we experience the world and how we act in it. It teaches that it is possible to transcend this sorrow-laden world of our experience and is concerned first and last with way of achieving that transcendence. What finally leads to such transcendence is what we call Wisdom.

Taking the case of Emperor Asoka, we can already see the necessary link between volunteer mind and action. Emperor Asoka found that his conquest of Kalinga actually meant the plunder and destruction, and death of hundreds of thousands of people. The brutality of the conquest led him to adopt Buddhism and practice of volunteer mind or compassion in concrete actions. Assent to the doctrines of religion is not enough unless it is expressed in concrete deeds; the emphasis of ‘volunteer mind’ is to become involved in expressions in actions - the compassion and concern directed toward those who are in various kinds of need, individually and also corporately. The needs may differ both in time and space. Some may arise out of poverty, society circumstances, or political situation. Some may undergo suffering because of the situation of physical environment or unexpected natural disasters, such as floods, earthquakes, fires, oppressive laws, deprivation of property and communal conflicts.

4. Volunteer Group of the College of Religious Studies, Mahidol University

Generally speaking, college is dedicated to foster, among people of different religious traditions: mutual understanding, harmony, respect, and cooperation to address creatively the challenges, opportunities and matters of common concern in the contemporary world. It seeks to provide students with the opportunity to study profoundly and critically their own religious beliefs, and to gain a greater understanding of the moral issues at large within society and which impact on their own lives, and the lives of the members of the communities at large.

In particular, our College fosters, among the students (monk and lay): Buddhist values. The value most emphasized is volunteer mind. Study at the College is complemented by actual living experience of Thai Buddhist practice and the practice of religion in a multi-faith setting. The study and training are not confined to lectures in classes but especially for the practice of volunteer mind or compassion by encouraging students to contribute to service for the benefit of others. Arrangements are made for them to travel during the summer holidays to villages for rural uplift work.

It is important also to state that nearly all student monks come from rural areas, themselves. Many of the members of the villages from where they come are poverty-stricken. Their study and living expenses are underwritten by lay donors. After graduation many volunteer to work in schools which are in need of teachers of Buddhism.

Volunteer group or monk graduates from the College, particularly in their efforts to serve needy communities among whom they live, can be referred to as being those who are practicing ‘volunteer mind’ in particular situations. There are presently some 313 monks, nuns, lay men and women volunteering in 186 schools to carry out social-service work.

This year our college got a lot of requests from many school in the rural area, which are in need of volunteers to help in many kind of development because they know that volunteer mind can recovery them from the crisis. I would like to give examples of the volunteer work that the groups are engaged in:

4.1 Teaching Buddhism for novice in the schools

Volunteers are dedicated to teach novices in high school, especially the school in the rural areas such as Nan, Prae and Sisaket province which don't have enough teachers. Volunteers try to teach students to know about the methods of applying Buddhism to daily life and applying Buddhism to solve every problem in life, such as: economic problems, society problems, education problems, etc. Furthermore students who deeply understand Buddhism will know the value of life and every thing around them - they intend to be good people, forever.

4.2 Teaching Buddhism for ethic community

Volunteer group are dedicated to help teaching in ethic-minority communities, needing Buddhism teachers - especially in Nan and Prae provinces, in the northern part of Thailand. They teach pupils from the poor ethic communities - the temple provides schooling opportunity. Apart from doing other needed work at the schools they are also counselors to the pupils to tackle life's problems such as those coming from broken families and in particular cases those suffering from drug addiction.

4.3 Helping risk groups

One thing that varies: another important work of the volunteer group from the College of Religious Studies is helping risk groups. They often teach the at-risk girls – those from broken families and suffering from drug addiction.

Volunteer group who have been helping risk groups are not only monks but also nuns. For nuns, they give time to counsel young women involved with

the so-called ‘at risk groups’. Many rural girls from the poor sectors in specific areas of the country, including cities such as Chiang Mai, Phuket and even those across the borders in neighboring nations, are lured by urban ‘pimps’. According to some records there are about 63 persons presently who are in such a ‘risk group’. Child prostitution is also an allied problem. One important emphasis in such work is for the counselors to build up the sense of dignity and self-confidence among these girls so that they may face their reformed future with hope and confidence and not in despair.

4.4 Recovery morality of young age

Another thing, the work of volunteer groups from our college recovers the morality of young age. Although, this work is very hard for them, they never surrender because they know very well that this problem is the root problem of society. If they can’t grow in morality from a young age, the society will never be without problems. During the tenth year they have been working they can change many young ages from the wrong view to the right view.

The work of the volunteer group focuses on bringing Dhamma to rural youth in poor areas. They help develop income-generating projects and arrange to provide needed vocational training. The teaching of the Dhamma is to help the rural youth to be moral persons, caring for others and also protecting the environment, helping with re-forestation where relevant. They also encourage rural youth to develop themselves through self-study as local libraries are set up. For the adults, Dhamma is taught to cultivate self-confidence and to help themselves without waiting for governmental help. They are also encouraged to practice meditation to calm their mind and to develop inner-power, to do work. Correct methods of cultivation are also taught by those capable of doing it so that there may be more plentiful harvests. Finally, the collection and distribution of clothing and such articles for the poor, form another effort not just for merit-making but also to build bridges, even in some small ways - to narrow the gap between the rich and the poor.

4.5 Teaching meditation for community

The next work of the volunteer group was teaching meditation for people in the community. After teaching in the school in the day, the volunteers come back to the temple and teach meditation for the laity that come to temple in the evening. This is one part that varies and is important to recover from global-crisis. If the community is strong, the globe will strong too. So, this work is the key to recovery every dimension of crisis in the world. The method of teaching meditation for community was: not only sitting and walking meditation, but also: working meditation. From my observations, meditation helps them to get more happiness.

They got way from drugs, alcoholics and gambling. They can solve economic problem by themselves. Today, the community is very peaceful and helpful.

4.6 Other works

Volunteer groups did a lot of work, not only in the above that I mentioned, but also in many other special projects, such as: novice ordination in the summer vacation time, forest ordination, water ordination and other activity for children-day, etc. All projects are free from financial support from any organization. The money was donated by the volunteers, themselves and with some activities they cooperate with administration sub-section.

5. Volunteer mind in the larger context

Yet despite such social service roles, accompanying the vocation of learning, there is a number of village-town monks who still feel the need for more involvement with the needy poor in certain areas of the country. In contrast to forest monks and conservative town monks these monks are socially active monks who want to make a more active contribution to the material and spiritual welfare of the people. They want to break away from tradition by engaging in ‘labor’ and by emphasizing the importance of working to assist people in poverty-stricken areas. These progressive monks are now labeled ‘development monks’. All of them have volunteer mind.

The movement was started some 30 years ago by a small number of rural monks in the Northeast of Thailand and some other poverty-stricken regions. Drought, water scarcity, salty soil, low-level of health, and the lack of communication have aggravated development of the underdeveloped Northeast. It was estimated that in 1990 about 1.6 million rai of farmland were already damaged and some 49,958 families in 3,557 villages were in distress. In spite of the government’s decision to allocate a sum of 139 million baht as Disaster Relief Fund to assist the victims in nearly 40 of the country’s 76 provinces and the Army’s plan to undertake the Royal Compassion project - there was skepticism among the region’s population about realizing the set and declared goals. Within this atmosphere of doubt more people were turning to the monks at the wat in their villages for assistance as they did in the past. Moved by the miseries of the community, some rural monks had taken upon themselves to provide leadership to development activities to relieve the villagers of their wretched lot.

In the mid 70s, where Wat Phukhao Thong in Chaiyabhum Province is located, nearly everyone in the village of Ta Mafai was involved in violence, gambling and alcoholism. The increasing indulgence of the villagers in such vices prompted Phra Kam Khien, the abbot of the Wat Phukhao Thong to interrupt his

pursuit of the vocation of meditation to devote his energy instead in leading the villagers away from such vices.

Apart from teaching the Dhamma the monk undertook society work such as the construction of road, the digging of wells, and the setting up of a cooperative and a day-care center. Part of the poverty of the villagers had also arisen from natural conditions of the area. The shallow, coarse sandy soil with humus-deficiency was not suitable for cultivation. The situation was aggravated by drought and occasional floods caused by deforestation – originating from damage caused by squatter farmers and logging companies.

The monk tried first to awaken them to regain strength and confidence and then took the lead and example by working on the denuded land of the Wat by himself with the purpose of showing the villagers that the ecological damage in and outside the village could be ameliorated without waiting for help from the government. He considered that the reclamation of drought-stricken and salty soil in the arid areas was of prime importance. As a result of the long and arduous effort, the vast barren land of 1000 rai has been completely reforested.

In another wat, in yet another province, a water buffalo bank and a rice bank were established within the large compound of the wat. The buffalo bank was set up to enable peasants who do not own buffaloes to work in the field to hire these animals at minimum rates to be paid in rice grains. Should calves be born during the time of their hire the peasant concerned gets credit and he is entitled to keep the second calf as his own. This bank has now 400 buffaloes available to those in need.

Similarly the rice bank is set up to enable the needy peasants to secure seedlings at the beginning of each agricultural season, without having to turn to loan sharks at exorbitant rates of interest. The bank is a means to decrease the indebtedness of the peasants and to serve as community store - where rice-grains, collected from the renting of buffaloes, are stored for charity: for needy villagers.

So, instead of just receiving offerings from villagers, these development monks contribute to the socio-economic development of the community through their time and energy. Everywhere, the poor and the disadvantaged groups expect the monks to respond to their cries for justice, not merely by providing them with mere consolation but with concrete actions to alleviate their suffering. The increased involvement of Thai monks in various social welfare work, such as: the drug rehabilitation program of Wat Tham Krabok and the orphanage of Wat Srakeo are other examples of healthy responses made by Volunteer Mind to new social needs.

6. Conclusions

We have shared with you: our understanding of the reason why, as Buddhists, we express our compassion in action as average citizens. The way the ‘volunteer mind’ in contemporary Thailand works, is to get themselves involved in dealing with the economic burdens of the members of rural communities, by providing needed initiatives and models of self-help: ‘water-buffalo banks’, ‘rice banks’, etc. Also this conveys the work of ‘Engaged Buddhism’. Of course these ‘volunteer minds’ are not the only ones to be identified as ‘Engaged Buddhists’.

There are also other groups which rightly declare themselves as ‘engaged Buddhist’ as they get involved in ameliorating people-problems in such fields as national affairs, education, or in direct social actions. It is our hope that the information we have shared with you may stimulate you in your reflections on the way you make your contribution in your own contexts. In conclusion we can surely affirm that the volunteer mind is not expressed as meaningless action, and possibly action which does not arise from volunteer mind can be fruitless and may even lead to harm.

Buddhism in India after 1956: A Psychological Approach for Peace and Development

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Background of Buddhist in India:

Approximately 3500 years ago, there was a land popularly known as “Jambu Dweep” where children were born as children of human beings. Gradually, some people started leading the masses and framed unwritten rules for leading the so called: ‘successful life’. These unwritten rules later on took the form of a ‘religion’. The day this religion was established in “Jambu Dweep”, the children were not born only as human beings, but they were divided into different categories. Some children were born as Brahmins; some came into existence along with the label of Kshatriyas; the others were Vaishyas and the last category was Shudra.

Since the establishment of that particular religion in Jambu Dweep, and despite a name change, even in modern India - the children are still being born in innumerable categories; because human beings were not only divided into four major categories but there additional innumerable number of sub-categories also. This process is going on, despite an exception of a period of 500 years which is known as ‘golden era’ of the Indian history when the people in “Jambu Dweep” were following the great ‘Dhamma’ – from an early world religion: ‘Buddhism’.

Of the four categories, the first three categories of children had the right of collecting wealth, earning bread and butter for themselves and their family members, and also they had the right to educate themselves. The fourth category of “Shudra” neither had any right to earn bread and butter for themselves and their family members, nor could they accumulate wealth. They didn’t have any right to educate themselves; not only that, if some body is chanting the “mantra” or “shloka” of that particular religion and per chance the sounds were heard by a Shudra Fellow, then he has to face the punishment, in which boiling lead was poured in the ears of that individual. During ‘British Reign’ the shudra-communities got the opportunity to enjoy freedom and educate themselves. However, there were several obstacles in their paths. After 1950, people of this community got the constitutional rights and also a good number of facilities were made available to them. It is this community, which has embraced Buddhism along with their ‘Messiah’, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, on 14th October 1956. To be specific, the poorest people of India embraced Buddhism and later on made considerable progress in varied fields.

Even after independence their paths were not free from difficulties; this community was labeled as “untouchables”. Not only their touch but even their shadow could spoil the purity of the three major categories of people described earlier. Those who had embraced Buddhism changed their identity, developed a new self concept and began marching through the path of progress. Despite the fact that untouchability is legally banned, through “legal untouchability”: Buddhists people still face innumerable difficulties. But still they are overcome obstacles in their way and develop themselves.

Religion: Major Types

I prefer dividing religions into two major categories. The first category consists of those religions where the major key concepts are imaginary, for example: the imaginary concept of god, and another imaginary concept of soul; the other types of religions are those, where there is no space for these imaginary concepts of god and soul.

From a psychological point of view, if we perceive towards these types of religion, then one finds that where there are the key concepts of god and soul; there is ample scope for bluffing and fooling the common people. Because for justifying one (a lie) imaginary concept these people have to generate several imaginary (many lies) concepts. These could be termed as hell or heaven etc., and in such cases: there is very little scope for logical and rational thinking. These principles help in generating several faiths and blind faiths. They had to allure the common people showing good effects of their particular type of behavior, and ill effects of their another type of behavior. In fact they had to generate so many imaginary abstract concepts, of which the prime aim appears to be to keep the masses in the dark and far from the scientific knowledge. While a particular group of people can earn their lives through the ignorance of masses, and accumulate wealth for their own benefits. In India it happened, and still persists.

In second type of religion where there is no scope for the god and soul, there is no need to create a great many imaginary concepts. In my opinion, Buddhism is such a religion which is more scientific, more logical and which provides a meaningful path to lead the life successfully and peacefully. Religion should provide a correct and scientific path along with proper guidelines, useful for the growth and development of an individual. Probably, there is only one religion in the world which has given a scientific psychological approach for the development of personality of every individual. However, before touching this scientific approach I would like to attract your attention humbly, to a historical and psychological reality.

After the “Mahaparinirvana” of Lord Buddha for a couple of years most people in India followed Buddhism. History tells us that, only those religions which were supported by the kings flourished during those days. A few hundred years after the mahaparinirvana of Buddha, there was a decline among the followers of Buddhism. The process of collecting and preserving the thoughts and guidelines given by Buddha through “Sanginis” started late. During this period much water had flown beneath the bridge. One must remember that, in “Bhikkhu Sangha”, there were more than 70% bhikkhus who were Brahmins. There is a law in Experimental Psychology which is popularly known as: ‘Jost Law’. According, to which if two associations are now of equal strength but of different ages, the older one will lose strength more slowly with the further passage of time. Earlier, these Bhikkhu were following the principles of their religion. Later on they took their *pravajja* and then only they began following the principles of Buddhism. Obviously, the forgetting of older associations might be slow. As a result, the teaching of Buddha, when collected through Sanginis, most of the thoughts from the earlier followed religion might have percolated in the pure stream of Buddhism; and that is why there was a sect of Buddhism in which mantra, tantra and some magic were greatly followed. This was recognized well by the great scholar of several religions and specifically of Buddhism: Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. For the Buddhists in India he wrote a Gospel entitled, “The Buddha and His Dhamma’. He made all possible attempts to remove the impurities percolated in Buddhism and presented the pure and true form of Buddhism preached by the Lord Buddha.

How the imaginary stories were woven by the people, could be understood, from the reasons stated so far - for he (Gautama) forsook his kingdom and dedicated his life to find solutions to suffering. The most popular story is that, he (Gautama) got his father’s permission to leave the palace, to see the country but he was greatly disturbed by the seeing on successive occasions a very old man, severely ill person, and funeral procession. These were his first encounters with old age, sickness and death. This story is very popular in India and also all over the world, but in *The Buddha and His Dhamma*, Ambedkar presented an entirely different cause and which was nothing but offer of exile by the Senapati. Siddhartha Gautama had reached the age of twenty, it was time for him to be initiated into the Sangha and become the member of the Sangha. This was the tradition followed among the Shakya people. Siddhartha Gautama born in the family of Shuddhodhna of the Shakya clan, got the membership of Shakya Sangha. So he has to safeguard the interest of Shakyas by his body, mind and money. For about eight yrs, he was very devoted and steadfast member of the Sangha. In the eighth yrs of his membership, an event occurred which resulted in a tragedy for the family of Shuddhodhna and a crisis in the life of Siddhartha.

Bordering on the state of the Shakyas was state of Koliyas. The two kingdoms were divided by river Rohini, the water of Rohini was used by both the Shakyas and the Koliyas for irrigating their fields. Every season there used to be disputes between them as who should take the water of the Rohini first and how much. These disputes resulted in quarrels and sometimes in affrays. In the years when the Siddhartha was twenty-eight, there was a major clash over the waters between the servants of Shakya and the servants of Koliyas. Both side suffered injuries. Coming to know of this, the Shakya and the Koliyas felt that the issue must be settled once for all by war. The Senapati of Shakya therefore called a session of the Shakya Sangha to consider the question of declaring war on the Koliyas. Addressing the members of the Sangha the Senapati said, "...I propose that Sangha do declare war on the Koliyas. Those who wish to oppose may speak".

Siddhartha Gautama rose in his seat and said, "I oppose this resolution, war does not solve any question, waging war will not solve our purpose. It will sow the seeds of another war..."

Thus the dialogues went on. Till the last Siddhartha Gautama opposed the resolution of war. The Senapati grew angry and addressing Siddhartha said, "Your eloquence will not help you. You must obey the majority decision of Sangha... Remember that the Sangha has many ways of punishing you. The Sangha can declare a social boycott against your family and the Sangha can confiscate your family land. For this the Sangha does not have to obtain the permission of the king of Koshalas".

Siddhartha realized the consequences that would follow, if he continued his opposition to the Sangha in its plan of war against the Koliyas. He had three alternatives to consider... To join the forces and participate in the war; to consent to be hanged or exiled, and to allow the members of his family to be condemned to a social boycott and confiscation of property.

Accordingly, Siddhartha spoke to the Sangha. "Please do not punish my family, do not put them in distress by subjecting them to a social boycott. Do not make them destitute by confiscating their land which is their only means of livelihood. They are innocent. I am the guilty person, let me alone suffer for my wrong. Sentence me to death or exile, whichever you like, I will willingly accept and I promise I shall not appeal to the king of the Kosalas."¹

Likewise, many similar imaginary descriptions might have percolated in the pure serene flow of Buddhism. Here I shall like to quote an excellent example how people believed the religious doctrine, without questioning its reliability. In original "Mahabharata" there is no "Gita", when Mahabharata was conceived, it

¹ The complete details are given in the 'Buddha and his Dhamma'. (See page no. 22-35).

consisted of approximately twenty-eight thousands Sholkas. After Mahabharata was conceived, about 700 or more yrs later, Gita was introduced. In Mahabharata also there are characters of Krishna and Arjuna and in Gita, there are dialogues between Arjuna and Krishna. People believed that, these are inseparable, because they do not know the facts.

On this background, I have to suggest that, it is necessary to retain only the scientific thoughts in the teachings of Lord Buddha, because Buddhism is much different than almost all the religions in the world. In all the other religions the philosophical thoughts and several imaginary concepts are more predominant. In my opinion probably Lord Buddha is the first psychologist who has given systematic approach to most of the psychological concepts such as perception, consciousness, wisdom and even personality development. He refused to believe the imaginary concepts of god and soul. He never claimed, he was “giver of salvation” but said that he is a “way finder”. Most religions are described as revelations but the Buddha’s religion is not a revelation. A revealed religion is so called because it is a message of god to his creatures to worship their maker and save their souls. Often the message is sent through chosen individual who is called a ‘prophet’ to whom the message is revealed and who reveals it to the people. It is then called religion. The obligation of the prophet is to ensure salvation to the faithful. Salvation of the faithful means the saving of their souls, from being sent to hell, provided they obey god’s commands and recognize the prophet as his messenger. The Buddha never claimed that, he was prophet or messenger of god. He repudiated any such description. A more important point than this is that, his religion is a discovery. As such it must be sharply distinguished from a religion which is called Revelation. All prophets have promised salvation. The Buddha is the one teacher who did not make any such promise. He made a sharp distinction between a ‘Mokshadata’ and a ‘Margadata’, one who gives salvation, and one who only shows the way (Ambedkar, 1957).

Without showing the allurements of every possible and impossible luxury in the heaven, and any kind of possible and impossible punishment in the hell, the Buddha succeeded in preaching a scientific religion. That is why a good number of principles from Buddha’s teaching were incorporated in the scientific study of psychology. There is a very famous doctrine entitled as, “Milind Prashna”, this is a dialogue between King Minander and the learned Bhikku Nagsena. The complete dialogue tells us that, the major theme of dialogue was borrowed by three German psychologists Max Wertheimer, Wolfgang Kohler and Kurt Koffka who are responsible for establishing an important theory in psychology known as ‘Gestalt Theory’. The key concept of Gestalt Theory is that, “The whole is important than the part”. Gestalt theory is totally based on perception and it is the perception which is most important in acquisition of knowledge. Mere attention and sensation are not sufficient. In the very first meeting with the learned Bhikku Nagsena, King

Minander asked the question: ‘What is Nagsena?’ ‘Are the hairs Nagsena?’, to which Nagsena replied no; are the hands Nagsena, to which Nagsena replied no; in this way dialogues went on. King Minander was elated and said I have defeated Nagsena for he could not give me appropriate answers to my questions. The learned Bhikku then asked: O’King how you came here? King Minander said I came in a chariot. Then learned Bhikku Nagsena asked him, are wheels of chariot the chariot? Are the horses of the chariot, the chariot and so on. Through such dialogues the great learned Bhikku Nagsena was able to convince King Minander “that the whole is important than the part”. I do not find any such scientific approach borrowed from any other religion in the field of psychology. No doubt philosophy might have been enriched by the teachings of other religions, not psychology, but there is a long list of psychologists who were influenced by the teachings of Buddha: Carl Jung, Alfred Adler, Erik Fromm, Karen Horney, Karl Rogers, Abraham Maslow to name a few.

Here I have to bring into light, an important fact: since long-ago psychologists proposed several theories of personality. It is believed that, the first such scientific theory of personality was proposed by Sigmund Freud. However, Buddha has proposed the most scientific approach of personality thousands of years before. Students of psychology refer a book entitled “Theories of Personality” edited by Hall and Lindzey. During the 1970s, a theory was incorporated in the book, and the theory was entitled: “Abhidhamma Theory of Personality”. Since then, in one or the other form, the theory is included under different headings and is studied by psychologists as a useful theory of developing personality. In some other books it is repeated under the heading “Zen Buddhism”. However, the basic principles are the same. In which it is stated that, “there were then more philosophical schools and positions in India than ever developed in ancient Greece. These ranged from a form of Vedic mysticism that postulates a universal creator, or Brahma and individual souls (Atman) who transmigrates through many lives in order to become purified and rejoin the universal Brahma. There was another extreme which was externalist position, where a person’s soul or atman continues eternally and the other the annihilationist position, postulating that a human being is completely destroyed at death. The Buddha discovered a position between these extremes. He called this position “dependent origination”. He also advocated a life style that avoided the extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification. This position became known as the “middle way”.

The teaching of dependent origination is at the core of the Buddha’s dhamma. Dependent origination is a law of causality that says, “this is, because that is; this is not, because that is not; when this arises, that arises; when ceases, that ceases”. Despite the apparent simplicity of this law, it is a far reaching truth that leaves nothing untouched and causality connects everything in the universe, for it implies that all phenomena whether they be external or internal events, come into

existence depending on causes and conditions without which they could not be (Szehidewicz, 2000). These causes and conditions can themselves be either internal or external. The concept of dependent origination results in an understanding of existence as a process of change, the results of an infinite web of causal conditions, with birth and death marking either the start and nor the end. The conditions that result in our present existence represent a beginningless chain; the consequences of our actions become causal conditions whose effects will continue after we die (Katagari, 1988). The Buddha talked about rebirth, by this expression he did not mean reincarnation in the Vedic sense, where a soul inhabits a succession of bodies, but continuation in the sense in which a way is reborn in the ocean after apparently dying on seashore. All the water is still there and the process continues endlessly. But no soul travels from one wave to the other. There is no transmigrating soul, only a continuing karmic process. Who we are lives on the effects we have on others and our world (Varela, 1997). The Buddha realized that, there are three characteristics of existence:

- Anicca or impermanent means: everything is always changing nothing is immutable or permanent.
- Dukkha, is usually translated as: suffering - refers to the dissatisfaction and distress that results from attachment and aversion. The Buddha's solution to the problem of suffering which has been called, "the most important psychological discovery of all time" (Mosig, 1989), represents an application of the far reaching principle of dependent origination. If suffering is, it must have come into being as the result of causal conditions and if suffering is to cease, those conditions must cease. His solution was expressed in the form the four noble truths (Sheng-Yen, 2000).
- Anatta means 'no soul'

The Noble Truths:

The first noble truth (dukkha) describes the problem of suffering, the universal dissatisfaction that characterizes human existence: our perception of pain, illness, old age, not getting what we want, etc. The Buddha does not deny happiness in life, when he says there is suffering; on the contrary, he admits different forms of happiness both material and spiritual, for laypeople as well as for monks. In the Anguttara-Nikaya, one of the five original collections in Pali containing the Buddha's discourses, there is a list of happiness (sukhani), such as happiness of family life, and the happiness of the life of recluse, the happiness of sense pleasure and the happiness of renunciation, the happiness of attachment and the happiness of detachment, physical happiness and mental happiness, etc. (Rahula, 1978).

The second noble truth (*samudaya*) begins the application of dependent origination to the problem, identifying the causal conditions on which suffering depends.

The third noble truth (*nirodha*) derives a solution through the application of the same principle because human suffering arises out of craving, to bring our “disease” to an end, we must cease the self-defeating liking and disliking that causes it, we must stop the “picking and choosing” that is the “sickness of the mind” (Seng-Tsan-in-Sheng-Yen, 1987). Although we cannot get rid of illness, physical pain, aging and death, we can eliminate the anxiety, we cause ourselves with our cognitive processing. In doing so, we can achieve freedom from unnecessary psychological pain (Kalupahana & Kalupahana, 1982; Henh, 1999). To eliminate suffering we must get rid of craving. To answer to how we can do this is contained in the Buddha’s fourth noble truth known as Eight Fold Path. It consists of:

- (*Sammaditthi*) Right Understanding: understanding the interconnectedness and impermanence of everything and specially the Four Noble Truths.
- (*Sammasankappa*) Right Thinking: cultivating thoughts of selfless detachment, compassion and non-harming and extending these to all sentient beings.
- (*Sammavaca*) Right Speech: abstaining from lying, slander, gossip and injurious speech, speaking only that which is positive and constructive otherwise maintaining a noble silence.
- (*Sammakammanta*) Right Action: acting in ways that will benefit and not cause suffering to others or one self.
- (*Sammaajiva*) Right Livelihood: avoiding ways of making a living that are based on the exploitation of the suffering of animals or people.
- (*Sammavayama*) Right Effort: cutting of unwholesome thoughts before they can be transformed in to actions and nurturing wholesome ones.
- (*Sammasati*) Right Mindfulness: maintaining full awareness of our actions and experiences in the present moment and their likely consequences.
- (*Samma Samadhi*) Right Concentration: the disciplining, concentration and one-pointedness of mind resulting from the practice of meditation. (Piyadassi, 1974; Rahula, 1974; Sheng-Yen 2000).

The first two components of “Eight fold Paths” are related to wisdom; the following three, to moderate conduct; and the last three, to mental discipline. All these different eight paths are interdependent. Without wisdom one would not see the necessity of understanding the Path, without moral development one would not be ready to undertake it, and without mental discipline one would not be able to do it.

The moral conduct aspects of the Path relate also to concept of karma. Karma means volitional action whether of word, deed or thought.

The ultimate state of mind in Buddhism is Nirvana - not a place like heaven, but a mental state in which all cravings, desires and realistic ideas have been completely extinguished through the complete realization of anicca and anatta. The Buddha taught that, liberation is within the grasp of everyone.

The psychological insights of the Buddha have been explicated by number of commentators. One of the most important ones was Vasubandhu an outstanding Buddhist scholar living in the fourth century. He was a founder of the school known as Vijñānavāda (Path of Knowledge) and the author of one of most important books of Buddhist psychology, “The Abhidharma Kosh” (de La Vallee, Poussin, 1989, 1990). According to Vasubandhu all that, can be experienced to exist is “mind only” or the mental processes of knowing. There is experience, but there is no subject having the experience. Vijñāna or “consciousness” is a multilayered concept including both conscious and unconscious aspects. According to Vasubandhu there are eight consciousnesses not just one.

Need of Present Day Buddhists:

Religion is developed for the betterment of human beings. However, religious principles do not function themselves, they are to be made functional. Though the principles preached by the Lord Buddha are extremely useful today, the overall conditions have changed significantly; the changes are taking so fast that it is not possible to compare the life style during the Buddha period and the life style today. But still it is necessary to develop the personality of each Buddhist in the world, in such a manner that he/she can lead a successful and satisfactory life, whether he is a Buddhist monk or a lay person. To achieve this, expertise only in Buddhism is not sufficient, but expertise in different disciplines is also necessary. For this, collective efforts must be done, and for them - Buddhists multidisciplinary institutions should be established for them in different countries.

Information Technology, Biotechnology, Nanotechnology, Psychometry and many such disciplines having interdisciplinary approach are flourishing today. These disciplines should be taught in these institutions; but along with them every day at least one or two hours of each student must be utilized for developing right understanding (samma ditthi); right thinking (samma sankappa); right speech (samma vaca) etc.

Today the world has become a “global village”. Every country is dependent on other country for one thing or another strength of that other country. In the countries where Buddhism is followed by many people – they should come together

and form associations through which necessary technical know-how, religious know-how and knowledge in different disciplines are imparted to Buddhists in the world, then it is possible to develop Buddhists in the world, well in accordance with “Eightfold Path” of Buddha. Buddhists in the world could be trained to lead successful lives: economically, socially, culturally, etc. For example: if Indian Buddhists are experts in Information Technology, as most of the out sourcing of USA is fulfilled by the Indian IT industry - then this knowledge could be imparted to the Thai Buddhists. If the Buddhists in Japan have expertise in technical know-how in small industries, then this knowledge could be imparted to the Buddhists of those countries where it is needed and thus they can enhance their economic, social, and cultural standard.

To some extent some efforts are being made; Japan has taken initiative and made available some type of technical training for the Indian Buddhists. However, efforts in this direction need to be made on large scale. This task can be done with the help of organization of Buddhists countries. Often it is observed that, there is exchange of thoughts and people only for the cause of religion. As I have stated earlier, religion must provide practical implications of its principles and hence, techniques suitable to develop a particular kind of behavioral characteristics needs to be formulated and developed scientifically. For example: suppose we have to develop “*sammasankappa*” that is right thought, then through suitable modern techniques - right thought could be developed, systematically and scientifically. Similar, such efforts should be made finalized for developing scientific approaches for imbibing the different Paths suggested by the Buddha. Such efforts were made by “Zen Buddhism”: they had developed “Kizen” technique of management, they have made use of the Buddhists principles. This Kizen technique of management brought a revolution in the field of management skills.

Using the principles of Buddhism, a German-born author, *E.F. Schumacher*, wrote an excellent book for successful businesses, known as: “*Small is Beautiful*”. If the experts from different Buddhists countries come together and think over developing techniques for overall personality-development of Buddhists people in the world, then much could be achieved. The single effort, of only one country trying to be self sufficient is not practical in the present day. Even in the countries like USA and Japan, they have to get the help of other countries for the completion of their several projects. There are hardly a few Buddhists countries in which all the Buddhists or most of the Buddhists are leading a successful and happy life. On the other hand, there are many Buddhists living in the Buddhist countries and facing lot of hardships to fulfill their basic needs. Through this conference, I like to appeal the representatives of different countries to take cognizance of what that is proposed here.

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Buddhism and Rehabilitation Therapy: A Short Case Study of an Original Collaboration

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“Since death exists, life is not that certain anymore.”

-Woody Allen

Presentation

This presentation is about the successful cooperation between the Buddhist institute Yeunten Ling and a private health care organization by the name of Top-Care. Which vision is this cooperation based upon? Which approach has been developed by the two parties? What results for the patients have been delivered by this initiative? I would like to emphasize on the importance of Buddhism, which played a major part in this process.

Who Are These Organizations?

Yeunten Ling is a Buddhist institute in Belgium that, for more than 25 years, has been providing the opportunity to get acquainted with Buddhism and its practice to both individuals and groups. The services of Yeunten Ling are used by 10.000 people annually. Additionally, a network of cooperation with universities and cultural associations has been created. The institute is located in forested, hilly surroundings. For a long time, the original, ancient castle, has served as the only residence. However, recently it has been extended with a new complex with modern facilities and a big temple. Three Buddhist teachers live there permanently.

Top-Care Health Services is an innovative healthcare provider in the area of outpatient rehabilitation therapy. It has six branches in the Netherlands and has one hundred and fifty employees. In 2009 the company has been recognized as an institution for medical specialist care in rehabilitation medicine. In the period 2000 to 2009 the expenses of the Top-Care interventions fell to the clients, usually an employer. From 2009 the treatment is included in the healthcare system whereby each insured Dutchman can use this service for free. The treatment is granted after an assessment by physician or company doctor. Outcome measure of treatment, called the measure of effectiveness of care, is a successful and sustainable return to

working life. The companies are responsible, especially financially, in case of illness of their employees. This responsibility is regulated. Top-Care helps employees who are unable to work because of their illness to find a cure so they can return to their old jobs. The target customers are employees of all levels, both lower and upper levels, who after longer treatment by doctor, physiotherapist or psychologist, are still not functioning adequately. The rehabilitation process for each insured is fully compensated by insurance. The forecast for 2010 is two thousand clients with a budgeted turnover of twelve million Euros. Top-Care has committed itself to serving five thousand clients in 2012.

The vision

Top-Care contacted Yeunten Ling five years ago. The general estimation was that many of the patients struggled with existential problems. Therefore Top-Care turned to the Buddhist institute for advice.

The current concept of Top-Care is based on an integrated approach to treatment and work, with a focus on the five axes of mental and physical capacities, personality, coping and transformative dynamics¹ (*see attachment 1*).

In particular, the focus on an efficient way for patients to cope in the working, home and family environments, and the transformative dynamics (giving meaning and other philosophical aspects) lent this treatment an additional dimension. It is precisely these last two factors that can influence a lasting recovery.

Top-Care requested the contribution of Buddhism to shape this dimension and insert it into this path to recovery. Together with the Buddhist teachers, Top-Care developed a method for the intake and the treatment. It took two years for this approach to become operational.

In both Buddhism as well as the Top-Care vision, health is seen as the individual art of ever again achieving a personal physical, mental and social balance by being able to react and anticipate the events and interactions within their own environment. This implies learning ways to react and anticipate on pleasant and unpleasant events and to learn how to interact with one's surrounding. Work carried out, in whatever form, may contribute to the health and well being of people.

¹ Transformative dynamics: the courage to deal with uncertainty, the strength to deal with adversity and the desire to constantly remain convinced that it is worthwhile to keep working at it. This positive attitude - driven by the desire to know yourself and others to be happy - has a real and even transformative impact on people and society. It is supported by an understanding of the fluctuating nature of everything that exists, and by the conviction that everything is, or can become, intrinsically good. Thus, transformative dynamics provides an inexhaustible source of trust and energy to go through life frank and candidly. Furthermore, it offers the greatest opportunity to avoid disappointment and cause happiness.

Life, according to Buddhism but also to a Western scientist like Nobel Prize laureate Linus Pauling, is not only present in molecules or in cells, but mainly through the connections within all organisms and beings: connections between molecules and cells, between mind and body, between human beings, and between man and nature. This holistic approach similarly implies a broad view on healthcare, taking into account not only psychological, sociological and environmental considerations, but also inter-relationships between thoughts, words and actions and the existential dimension of all experiences. The starting point is that we are not separate from each other; we depend upon each other. Neither are we separate from our deeds, words and thoughts. As the Buddha said: “We are what we think. All that we are, arises with our thoughts. With our thoughts we make the world we live in.”

How it worked out

The rehabilitation approach includes a total package. The average supervision time of a rehabilitation program to Top-Care takes 4 months, includes 120 hours and is performed by a multidisciplinary team of doctors, physiotherapists, manual therapists, psychologists, rehabilitation specialists and physician assistants philosophical level. The total treatment program is conducted under the supervision and responsibility of a rehabilitation physician.

In almost all cases the patient can function normally again at home and at work after eight weeks. Retrospective studies show only a very small percentage of patients relapse one year after completion of treatment.

The rehabilitation process offered by Top-Care consists of both mental and physical training, exercises in the field of personality, coping resources and transformative dynamics. For this last aspect a collaboration project has been developed with the Buddhist Institute Yeunten Ling in Belgium.

To answer the question whether and to what extent patients were struggling with existential issues, Top-Care needed an instrument. Against the background outlined above, Top-Care, together with the Tibetan Institute, developed a validated questionnaire, including reporting, called the Transformative Dynamic Questionnaire and Reporting. Using this instrument, it is possible to determine whether someone is struggling with questions of existence at an early stage of the process.

The results from the TD-questionnaire provide some pointers for treatment/approach which encourages people to once again feel happier, experiencing more meaning in life and to feel again at home in working life.

To achieve a practical approach it was decided to be consistent with models like those used by Buddhists.

Firstly, this meant that a heuristic framework was available to develop the TD-questionnaire. Secondly, the Buddhist communities have wide experience in assisting people in their personal growth and helping them to give meaning to their existence. On the basis of these experiences practical treatments/approaches were developed with which people can be helped to (re)gain employment.

When it comes to the actual treatment the cooperation has given rise firstly to the incorporation of Buddhist paramita's in the care plan. The six paramita's of generosity, ethical behavior, patience, Endeavour, mental stability and wisdom constitute together a code for a happier life. They are included in the questionnaire which is filled in by all participants/clients at the beginning of the therapy. Based on the answers, the client/participant and the care giver together ascertain the nature of the problem and how it can be resolved. Together they draft a report of the intake that serves as a tool during the whole route.

The second result of the cooperation when it comes to the actual treatment plans, is a seminar based upon the four noble truths. Since 3 years this seminar has been offered successfully to two groups per month, each consisting of some forty persons. Although the treatment is personalized for each individual, out of practical considerations, the choice for group teaching was made. The extent to which these lessons have an effect on the individual, will be the result of a personal evolution. The participants that are on a turning point in their life, stay two nights in a Buddhist institute. For a short while they are fully detached from their own home situation, which enables them to reflect some more on the lessons. The 2.5 day program is conducted by professional coaches of Top-Care and Buddhist teachers of Yeunten Ling. It creates a strong resourcing power.

At this moment approximately one thousand clients from Top-Care participated in this 2.5-day training. It is expected that by 2011 at least 3500 clients annually will participate in these trainings.

This year the University of Maastricht (Faculty of Health Sciences) and the College of Higher Education in Nijmegen will conduct scientific research on the results and the sustainability of the program.

A short film

In a short film of some twenty minutes, Top-Care presents their vision about 'Health Being' to all clients. This film is an introduction to a conversation at the start of the rehabilitation route. The message is: real health is much more related to mental and physical well-being and balance than with the absence of illness or the use of medication.

Let's look at the short film together. After this I would like to take a look at the way in which this atypical but apparently fruitful cooperation between Top-Care and the Buddhist Institute proves to be a good example of the silent, but profound acculturation of Buddhism. I would like to provide a commentary to accompany the short film with three themes:

- the societal relevance of 'silence'
- the concept of curing or healing
- the integration between body and mind

Theme 1: The path from the inside to the outside, or the societal relevance of silence

The fact that people in general, and thus also Top-Care clients reflect upon their life, is not so strange. In a world where people get hurried up, are pampered and misinformed, people feel the need to withdraw into silence more and more. The interest in the societal relevance of silence is increasing. For a Buddhist, the silence or serenity is the essence of our true nature, our deepest inner being. Silence is also the answer when one is confronted with the marvelous or the indescribable. It was because of this effect, that the Buddha was silent seven weeks after his 'awakening' and even after that he would talk only when answering questions. Thus, silence forms the gate to the experience, that the Buddha represents.

Samsara is the village fair made by all those who ignore their inner forces. They can't really rely on their inner forces and that's why they make so much noise. Continuously the mind is distracted and gets exhausted because of discontent or other 'disturbing' emotions. It's twittering from this little ego-person that seized the power.

It's meditation that counters the restlessness and quiets everything. Through paying attention to silence, you will regain control over your mind.

Practicing meditation can help us to calm down the racket in our mind. Thus making is easier to get in touch with our inner silence, which is the unity of clarity and calmness.

When Western people hear that someone is practicing meditation, they often ask: "What are you meditating on?". Most Buddhists won't understand that question, because they are not meditating about something, just like one doesn't breathe about something. We just breathe, and, in the same way, we meditate.

The habit of living in a mindful way spontaneously, is gaining ground in both political and economic realms. Thus, rather than an ideological point of view, an awareness will be developed. The Belgian professor of Economy, Christian

Arnsperger for example, thinks that in order to be able to analyze the post-capitalistic society successfully, a firm approach to the existential uncertainties is needed. He speaks of “existential militants”. Others talk about “meditating militants” (Verhelst), or “int riorit  citoyenne” (D’Ansembourg).

All these terms refer to a change of paradigm, in which the emphasis is placed more on the inner strength than on outer appearance or material possessions. This is not so far removed from Buddha's advice.

According to Trungpa in his recently published book *Smile at your fear*, a constant connection with ones self-confidence will nurture basic goodness of people, a delight in life as well as to humor and non-violence. Lack of inner conviction and submission to external structures of authority are two causes, or who knows, perhaps the results, of the implosion of spiritual traditions. Fear of silence and being unable to abstain from the urge to control and to possess are the origin of those two negative habits. I perfectly understand the necessity of an initiative like this one from Top-Care and Yeunten Ling.

Theme 2. The whole of society is looking for a cure

Although I don’t like to complain about it: "There is something rotten in the state of Denmark", to quote Shakespeare . One can regularly read all kind of publications about this fact. Sometimes I feel the urge to quote Susan Orman: *“We buy things we don't need or want, with money that isn't ours, to impress people we don't know or like.”* Although politicians are able to suggest practical solutions to current problems, most don’t succeed in making a thorough analysis of society. An analysis which, ideally, is set up in such a way that it contains clear ‘to do ‘items’ which will activate people to take up tasks. In Buddhist circles the works of David Loy are viewed as a good example of a thorough analysis of society.

Those who swim against the tide, speak of the fact that we have to rediscover the beautiful virtues of being content, of voluntary simplicity and of frugality. Qualities such as mildness for oneself, learning how to and being willing to take responsibility are mentioned. Also mentioned are attention for non material aspects such as physiological, aesthetic, intellectual and spiritual needs, as well as a need for safety, recognition and esteem, personal realization and finding of meaningfulness in life. In short, society is looking for a cure and it wants to get rid of impulsive patterns of behavior.

People, who reflect about the science of health, ever more often emphasize the ‘healing power of the mind’. One of those people is Thierry Janssen who has been advocating a new science of body and mind, which in modern wording is called the “Psycho-neuro-endocrino-immunology”. It’s an approach in which is revealed,

the deeper relations between thoughts, emotions in physical responses, while exploring, amongst other things, the immunity system. Thus, illness would be an attempt to recover health. In the same way the French philosopher Henri Bergson observed: *“Illness is the shortest way to come /to get to oneself.”*

According to a group of experts consisting of health professionals, businessmen, biomedical researchers and futurologists, who met in Washington in 1988 at the initiative of the Institute for Alternative Futures, concepts like ‘health’ and ‘illness’ should no longer be diametrically opposed to each other.

On page 296 in his book ‘La maladie a-t-elle un sens?’ Thierry Janssen is saying this: *“On the contrary, illness should be considered as a manifestation of health, a response of the individual to keep his physical, psychological and spiritual balance. Whatever the cause might be, -health, environment, social or professional factors, the illness appears because a shortage or a disequilibrium is entering one’s life. Thus, it may be seen as an attempt of the organism to develop sufficient immunity to eliminate certain toxic elements, to refill a shortage, to replenish a deficiency, to recover chemical or energetic balances and to reinterpret specific genetic codes. They may be also considered as an attempt of the individual to regain his physical well being, to remain his psychological integrity, to protect his intellectual coherence and to hold on or to redefine his spiritual idea.”*

That same Institute for Alternative Futures claims that the illness of ‘lack of meaning’ of which we all suffer, causes a whole range of other diseases: cardiovascular afflictions, illnesses of the immune system, neurodegenerative illnesses, depressions, dementia or cancer, but also social violence, wars, genocide or destruction of our environment. These are syndromes that, according to the World Health Organization amongst others, will strongly increase over the next years.

Yet, it is noticeable that one transfers from psychology to neurobiology a bit too easily. Statements like: “headache is a deficiency of aspirins in the brain”, create expectations with the majority of people that can easily become certainties: the conviction that the underlying genetically basis and the parent neurobiological mechanisms of many disorders have been already discovered. The conviction that it is possible to have a quick, efficient and cheap solution. A solution in which, obviously, the patient doesn't need to engage him or herself any more. One just has to take the right pill. Everything, even traumatic life events, is reduced to a case of disturbed chemical balance. If one is convinced that the cause of one’s problems is neurobiological, than why should he or she trouble himself or herself to change things, let alone to engage in a demanding and trying psychotherapeutic process?

The top 5 most favorite answers about the causes of illness are: it's something in the brain; it is in the genes, bad friends, additives in the food, early childhood experiences.

These are all reasons that have nothing to do with the patient himself and which he cannot do anything about.

All of this of course squarely opposes what the new approach of the phenomenon health and hearing is promoting. This last approach, which comes rather close to the advices of the Enlightened One, who is sometimes called the “Great Healer”, has given five centuries B.C. It is no coincidence that both of these approaches are characterized by the fact that body and mind should not be separated. Our science is very good at dismantling, separating, detailing, analyzing, classifying. Its method offers the possibility to expose the intimate ‘mechanisms’ of nature. Nevertheless, sciences methods are not really able to make connections and understand reality as a whole. The teaching of the Buddha on the two kinds of wisdom: the wisdom of “the appearance of phenomena” and wisdom of “the ultimate nature of phenomena” is exactly about this point.

Looking back at the film we saw earlier, it is clear that Top-Care has integrated this new approach of redefining illness into their program.

Theme 3: From body to mind and back again

The duality of body and mind is the subject of an endless debate in Western philosophy. On the knowledge of our mind, character and the essential being of ourselves and others, as well as on the question of the path to authentic happiness, throughout history and especially nowadays, a lot of researches, many interpretations and a multitude of therapies have arisen. The theories and debate have always been, and still are, characterized by a back and forth movement from the body to the mind and vice versa. Psychiatry, psychology and psychotherapy on one side, and medical, biological and chemical sciences on the other side, have all had the upper hand in the debate at one time or another. Researchers and professional healers involved, attempted to codify, to use the same systems of classification as used in regular medicine. In other words they wanted to reduce human behavior to a set of scientific formula.

Each of them at one time or another, thought they could discard all other approaches. There was a time for instance, when it was generally claimed that the development of “alparitm” would generate personal growth and creativity and diminish fears and neuroses. It would make further medication and psychotherapy superfluous and relieve people from insomnia, sexual problems and

childhood trauma forever. It was even thought to ‘starve’ warts and cancer tumors and finally extend lifetime.

We have already come quite a long way ‘from Freud to Omega’. These days one hears people say many things like: an Omega 3 deficiency would lead to interruptions in hormones and neurotransmitters and thus cause various civilization illnesses like depression, chronic fatigue, ADHD and fibromyalgia.

Sometimes, people accuse classical Western medicine of only suppressing the symptoms with anti-depressives and Ritalin.

It was not so long ago that a burn-out would be reduced to being cholesterol pathology. These days, we have reached a point that most people are convinced of the fact that there is more than meets the eye. Psychosomatic symptoms find their roots in the complex relationship between body and mind. A positive mind can be of great help in dealing with difficulties such as trauma, shock, stress, etc. It has a significant effect on protecting and improving our immune system and our general health.

Unwholesome states of mind such as worry, anger or grief can sometimes result in sleeping disorders, headaches, ulcers, poor resistance to illness, alcohol addiction and drug abuse. Since the mind has the power to heal itself and given its influence on the body, it is worthwhile to develop increasingly healthy states of mind. In the long run, they offer a good approach to a balance of professional and an active private life, and to a beneficial participation in a global multicultural society where citizens are confronted with unknown habits and have to deal with it without putting into to danger their inner health and balance. We can choose for ourselves to have constructive or destructive thoughts to guide our life. A healthy mind is flexible, open, relaxed and joyful. It can help us to avoid illness and become an agreeable person. It can work in a preventive and in a curative way. This does not mean that, when the situation is bad or not improving, one should not see the doctor or condemn treatment or medication prescribed by traditional western medicine.

In recent years, on the back and forth research journey between mind and body, interesting encounters have taken place between Buddhism and science, e.g. the neurology. More and more it becomes clear that all partners involved can learn a lot from each other. But also on a daily basis, like in the case of Top-Care and Yeuten Ling, the interaction has proven to be very fruitful. Therefore, the conclusion is may be that Buddhism fits well with these new tendencies.

Buddhism fits in well with these new tendencies

I like to see all teachings of the Buddha as a coherent, actual, and up till now, applicable pedagogical project. We can see how he guided his students to a prosperous, meaningful and peaceful life/existence and to lasting happiness, through advice about interpersonal relations, decision-making and in being a healthy personality in society. A good example of the topicality of his statements is probably the next one: *“The Buddha observed that being free of loan payments is a great relief (anan sukha) for the layperson. Dependence on loans to enjoy a lavish lifestyle is one of the biggest mistakes a layperson can make. The Buddha compared such a person to “a man who would pluck all the fruit from a tree, to then only eat what is ripe.”*

Clearly the Buddha’s advice touches all kinds of current sociological phenomena such as the voluntary simplicity movement, the tendency to provide for places of silence everywhere, scientific research about happiness, large-scale analyses of satisfaction of people, etc.

We notice indeed the emergence of a strong trend in modern society: the ethical dimension is getting more and more attention. This is true in the economy, the corporate world and even in politics. The devastating effect of blind or unconscious convictions, extreme claims of truth or other exclusive habit patterns, and the attempts to avoid this entire are put being forward. The Buddha also lived in difficult times, with many gurus and myths complicating the life of many people. The teachings given by the Buddha about how you don’t get taken for a ride by yourself, about how you can learn to develop self confidence, about what you can learn from a vivid consciousness about the of impermanence of everything ...so many wise words which are not tied to a particular culture, and of which we hear an echo in theories of wise men from with us. Petrarca said: “It is more important to want the good than to know the truth.” Nowadays philosophy is again applied as a down to earth practical activity, which may lead to a change in which we live our lives, how we view the world and reality. Knowledge and virtue are strongly connected again. Indeed Nirvana means finally to see the things as they really are.

Top-Care and the Buddhist Centre Yeunten Ling developed a vision about a transformative dynamic aiming at developing the same positive outcomes that the healing power of the Buddha’s teachings provide.

Confidence in the future

To conclude this lecture, I would like to share a couple of figures with you. A very important fact is that 4 out of 5 clients who followed the Top-Care treatment, advice other people to participate in the program. These first results are part of a survey which was done between January 2008 and October 2009: 76% say they

have improved or are complaint free, after finishing the program. 19% of the clients report they still have the same complaints. These complaints seem to be difficult to heal, yet people state they have learned to deal with them. With 4.8% of the clients, complaints have increased. And 81, 4% didn't need to be absent from work anymore.

In almost all cases, after a period of 8 weeks, the patient is able to function in a normal way again, both at home and at work. Retrospective research also shows a very small percentage of regression one year after completing the treatment. The entire set-up will be researched into more detail, looking specifically at the links between spirituality and health, meaning of life and work participation. To this end, two universities in the Netherlands have been approached.

The joined cooperation between the Buddhist institute and Top-Care has proven to be fruitful. Top-Care, being a commercial company, takes into account a strong increase in the number of patients for their prognoses.

The spontaneous synergy that emerged between both organizations and the great interest for the program are a clear indication of these particular needs that are surfacing in society. People reach out to an uplifting approach that supports their self-confidence and gives them the courage to reflect upon their personal situation and to redefine themselves. In his time, the Buddha was also someone with guts in thinking and doing: *“Not only did he establish a progressive new society within the traditional, rigid Vedic society, he also convinced most traditionalists to abandon their beliefs and practices and join him. He influenced people’s ways of thinking profoundly and brought about drastic social changes.”* According to the Buddha, fallacious argumentations restrict our mental capacity and disturb our reasoning power.

The definitions of real wisdom contain many modern concepts such as knowledge, skills, intellectual strength, emotional maturity, attitudinal improvement, and reasoning power. Therefore it is also worthwhile to study the teachings of the Buddha in their original language.

One often fully forgets the following: *“Sixth century B.C.E. was an age of renaissance in India. Business people carried on extensive trading with Persia and the Greek world by land and by sea. With business booming and wealth increasing, affluent communities expanded in Magadha and Kosala – the two states in which the Buddha travelled widely. Consequently, business management and wise decision-making along with family life and managing social relationships – emerged as important aspects of daily life. The Buddha, with his power, popularity, and rational approach to such topics, distinguished himself in that society as the most qualified adviser to the lay community.”*



He brought the good news that people are capable to free themselves from fallacious argumentations and to refrain himself from clinging to self created meanings attributed to sense objects. To him it was evident that suffering and distress, misfortune and setbacks would stir up the urge/or craving to freedom, at least if one would react wisely to these situations.

We will be curious to find out after some decades, how the service delivered by Buddhism in this particular case to society can be estimated, and in addition, to what extent the history of the acculturalization of Buddhism might conform that Buddhism may be seen as a support for all forces that strive for a new world and for the well being of the entire human family.

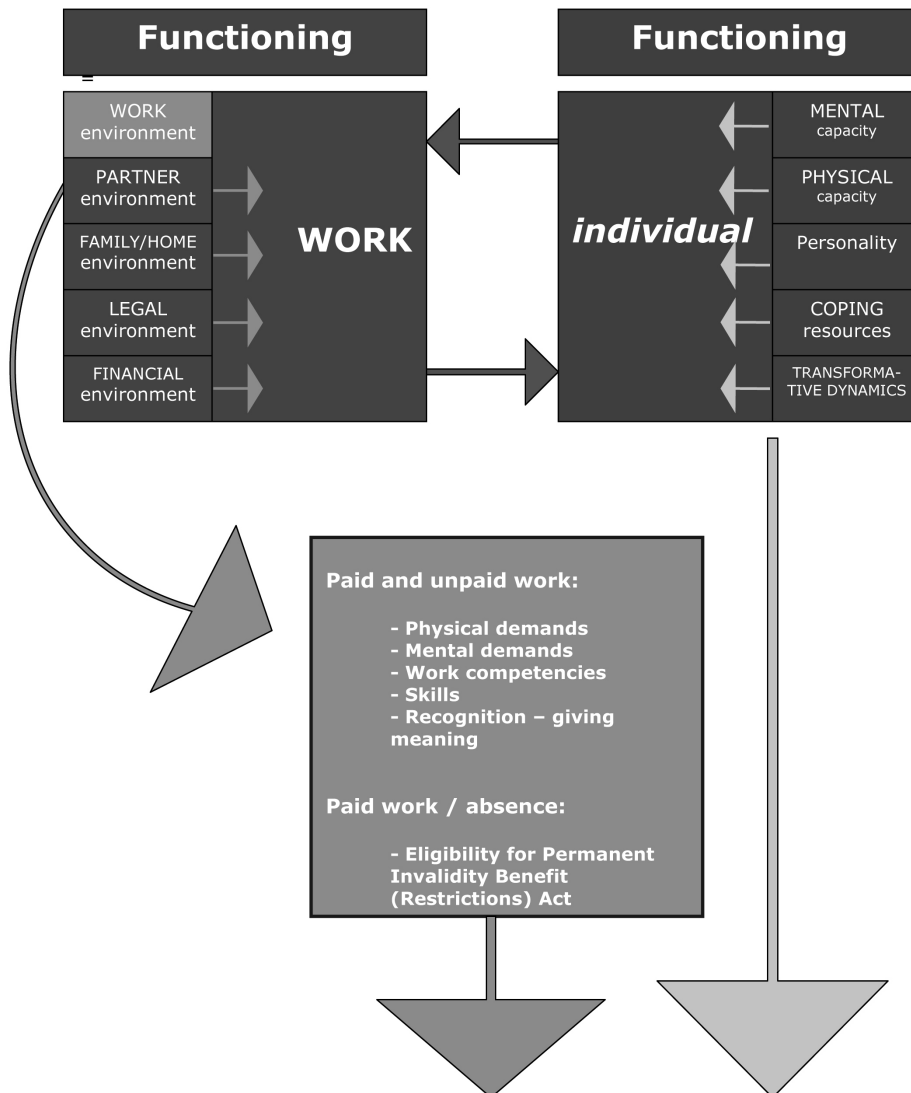
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INTEGRAL REHABILITATION AND WORK-ACTIVATION

Target group:
Clients who have ceased to make progress in their recovery due to multiple underlying issues.



Samdong Rinpoche's Buddhist Satyāgraha: Reflections on the Relationship Between Truth, Ahimsā¹, and Justice

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Samdong Rinpoche, the democratically elected prime minister of Tibet's government-in-exile, is not the first Buddhist to use the Gandhian term, *satyāgraha*² ("truth insistence"), but he is the first Buddhist to develop a sophisticated philosophical presentation of the idea. Samdong Rinpoche's presentation of *satyāgraha* clearly draw from three sources: Gandhi's writings and actions, his own extensive training in Buddhist thought and practice and his reflections on that³, and his analysis of the political situation in Tibet as it has manifest in the sixty plus years since the initial Chinese invasion and colonial occupation.⁴ The result is a set of ideas and a prescription for practice and action that would seem quite familiar to a Gandhian activist, but demonstrates a uniquely Buddhist flavor. Though a comparison of Gandhi's and Samdong Rinpoche's *satyāgraha* philosophies would be a very fruitful exercise (and one I plan to pursue in the near future), such a project is outside the scope of the present paper. The object of this paper is to simply present the basic framework and uniquely Buddhist qualities of Samdong Rinpoche's ideas on *satyāgraha* and to offer some analysis of its potential as a beginning point in developing a Buddhist theory of justice.

¹ Though the Sanskrit term, *ahimsā*, which was also used extensively by Gandhi is often translated simply as "non-violence" or "non-harm", Samdong Rinpoche explains a much broader sense of the term in his usage, one that includes a prescription for action and its relationship to truth. This will be discussed further below.

² B.R. Ambedkar used the term to describe the non-violent protest actions of untouchables in the early 20th century campaign for untouchable rights in India. Technically, this was before his personal conversion to Buddhism and the mass conversion of untouchables.

³ For example, he writes in Samdong Rinpoche and Donovan Roebert (2002), ".... my own view of Satyagraha is much conditioned or influenced by Buddhist teachings." Having achieved a "geshe" (*dge shes*) degree, the highest scholastic achievement in his Geluk school of Tibetan Buddhism, and served as Director of the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies where he oversaw numerous scholarly research projects on Buddhism, it is clear that his extensive knowledge of the philosophical traditions of Buddhism must have informed his re-presentation of Gandhi's ideas.

⁴ Samdong Rinpoche's essay, *Satyāgraha: Truth Insistence: A Proposal*, is a discussion of the topic framed around the "spiritual practice of restoring Tibet's freedom". The specifics of his presentation of *satyāgraha*, while at times theoretical, are all grounded in this practice and the specifics of the Tibet situation.

Elsewhere I have argued that Buddhists ought to begin to formulate clear and sophisticated presentations of their ideas about justice if they wish to be meaningful participants in discussions on issues concerning justice and related issues like human rights, etc. in dialogues on the world stage.⁵ I believe there are strong reasons to argue that such work should be done with a degree of awareness and perhaps direct reflection on Western theories of justice since the term emerges from the Western canon and is not indigenous as a philosophical category to Buddhism. That said however, I do not think specifically addressing or comparing evolving Buddhist notions with Western ideas is a necessity at this beginning stage as long as the Buddhist ideas are clearly and rationally defined in ways that are meaningful to Buddhists and defensible in comparative philosophy and inter-cultural dialogue. Samdong Rinpoche is a contemporary Buddhist philosopher who is doing just that. His description of truth and *ahimsā* as being like opposite sides of the same coin, and justice as being, "an aspect of the truth," are among the first examples of a contemporary Buddhist philosopher beginning the hard work of articulating a specifically Buddhist theory of justice. Samdong Rinpoche's discussion of justice takes place in the context of his writing about his Buddhist reading of Gandhi's notion of *satyāgraha* with specific regard to the current situation in Tibet. Thus, it does not address a number of issues that are central to Western philosophical notions of justice, nor does he contrast his ideas with mainline Western philosophical discussions of justice which I believe will ultimately be critical if Buddhists are to freely use a term or category from the Western philosophical canon that is specifically alien to the Buddhist tradition. However, Samdong Rinpoche is among the first to discuss the notion in a systematic and sophisticated way, thus representing a critical beginning point for further Buddhist philosophical discussions of the topic. Perhaps it is best to begin to articulate a theory and then to do the comparative work. We have to start somewhere.

This paper is divided into two primary parts: a presentation of Samdong Rinpoche's ideas about justice in light of his broader discussions of *satyāgraha*, truth, and *ahimsā*, and my own attempt to unpack and analyze some of the subtleties and insights in his ideas and to raise questions and offer suggestions for further work.

Truth, *Ahimsā*, and Justice: A Buddhist *Satyāgraha*

Samdong Rinpoche delivered a speech in Prague on the topic of *satyāgraha* in 2003 where he stated quite plainly that, "The objective [of *satyāgraha*] is to find

⁵ See Blumenthal (2009) "Towards A Buddhist Theory of Justice". *Journal of Global Buddhism*. Vol. 10, pp. 321-349.

the truth".⁶ This notion may seem abstract at first glance (and in some respects has abstract dimensions to it), but he is quick to make clear its very down-to-earth and pragmatic connotations (discussed below with regard to ultimate and conventional truths). To identify the Buddhist foundation of this notion that has clear Gandhian origins, Samdong Rinpoche points out that one can begin with an examination of the life of Śākyamuni Buddha himself. He argues that Śākyamuni's own pursuit of truth, the liberating wisdom that would free him from *samsāra*, was an act of *satyāgraha*. As with any *satyāgrahi* (practitioner of *satyāgraha*), Śākyamuni's pursuit of the truth and enlightenment was so determined that he was willing to endure the most severe austerities – austerities that were so extreme at points that they reduced his physical body to hardly more than a skeleton and nearly led to his death. Eventually his pursuit of truth led to a middle-way approach, but his willingness to personally sacrifice to such a degree was, according to Samdong Rinpoche, "a form of *satyāgraha* in search of Truth".⁷ The non-socio-political nature of the Siddhartha's pursuit may seem curious at first when reflecting on Gandhi's overtly political actions that he described as *satyāgraha*, but both Gandhi and Samdong Rinpoche are clear that *satyāgraha* is, at its foundations, a spiritual practice. Of course the truth that Śākyamuni was seeking at that time was the ultimate truth. According to the Madhyamaka school of Buddhist philosophy that Samdong Rinpoche follows, there are two truths: ultimate truths and conventional truths. In the realm of politics and social justice, Samdong Rinpoche argues that the ultimate truth does not work, and that we must rely on the conventional or relative truths.⁸ Perceptions of relative truth can vary from person to person, and even in the same person over time. Samdong Rinpoche argues that for Gandhi, as for his own *satyāgraha* theory, what is most important in this type of *satyāgraha* activity is consistency between one's perception of truth at any given time and the action's one takes.⁹

As was just mentioned above, *satyāgraha* is, at its foundations, a spiritual practice for Samdong Rinpoche. In its application that he urges for the Tibetan people in their work to restore Tibet's freedom, the heart of the activities are spiritual works done with the Mahāyāna Buddhist motivation of doing it for the benefit and well-being of sentient beings. Thus, while there are certainly social-political

⁶ Samdong Rinpoche and Donovan Roebert. (2006) *Uncompromising Truth for a Compromised World: Tibetan Buddhism and Today's World*. Bloomington: World Wisdom Inc., p. 163.

⁷ Ibid. 168.

⁸ For an interesting analysis of the dangers of conflating ultimate and conventional truths and perspectives with regard to Buddhist social justice work, see John Dunne. (2000) "On Essences, Goals, and Social Justice: An Exercise in Buddhist Theology" in Jackson, Roger and John Makransky (eds.) *Buddhist Theology: Critical Reflections by Contemporary Buddhist Scholars*. London: Curzon Press, pp. 275-292.

⁹ Ibid. 164.

objectives that are a dimension of it, the fundamental crux of the Tibetan *satyāgrahi*'s activities are a spiritual practice. This does not in any way negate the necessity of truth in all respects with regard to the social or political dimensions of the activities. Samdong Rinpoche goes to great pains to articulate the truth behind Tibetan claims regarding their stances on the current political situation.¹⁰ While the achievement of a particular social objective may be an aspect of a *satyāgrahi*'s practice, ends never justify means in *satyāgraha*. As he stated in his speech in Prague:

"In *satyāgraha* there is no victory or defeat... Victory is partial; it is compared with defeat, then there is fear and desire. As long as fear and desire remain in one's mind, one may not be a completely true *satyāgrahi*."

At the heart of notions of victory and defeat, or desire and fear, are the attachment and aversion that are the two sides of the self-cherishing, egotistic attitude that is at the heart of ignorance and *saṃsāric* suffering. Thus, in *satyāgraha*, the purity of the method, which is *ahiṃsā*, is critical even in pursuit of limited social objectives that may indeed reflect truth. In Samdong Rinpoche's view, non-violence or *ahiṃsā* and truth are simply different sides of the same coin. Thus, pursuing truth by non-violent means is, as it was for Gandhi, a pursuit of truthful ends by truthful means. The ends do not justify the means; the means are a reflection of the ends when appropriately carried out in this manner. Put another way, even if the goal of Tibet's freedom is truthful, if it is pursued by means of violence or militarism, Samdong Rinpoche argues that that would be "a serious mistake".¹¹ In his text, *Satyāgraha*, he makes this point quite clearly when he states:

... the philosophical understanding here is that one cannot achieve faultless goals if one does not rely on faultless methods.¹²

This idea is, of course, a reflection of Buddhist notions of causality, and specifically the idea of dependent-origination – that all phenomena depend on causes and conditions for their existence and that such effects are directly related to their causes and conditions. Again, Samdong Rinpoche writes:

However noble or great your objective may be, if your method is not perfect you cannot achieve the aim you have set out to achieve. You may achieve something, but it will be outside of your truth-vision of it. And even if the objective is partially achieved, it will be negatively affected by the law of

¹⁰ Samdong Losang Tenzin Rinpoche (1997) *Satyāgraha: Truth Insistence: A Proposal*. (Unpublished translation by John Dunne) pp. 5-7.

¹¹ Samdong Rinpoche. (1997) *Satyāgraha: Truth Insistence: A Proposal*, p. 5. (Unpublished translation by John Dunne).

¹² Ibid.

causality, particularly the way in which the nature of causality is understood by Buddhism: the result would be completely determined by the nature of the goal, together with the methods employed to achieve it. A bad goal and a bad method would bring about a bad result; that principle is accepted by all schools of Buddhism. This applies also to the purity of the practice of *satyāgraha* – even a little defilement would be reflected in the end result.¹³

Thus, the method of the *satyāgrahi* is always the non-violent path of peace. In the final sentence of the statement above, Samdong Rinpoche, like Gandhi, holds those who commit to the path of a *satyāgrahi* to incredibly high ethical standards, for as he alludes in this statement, "even a little defilement" in the deeds or ethical stature of the *satyāgrahi* will negatively impact the end result.¹⁴

When discussing the key philosophical terms in his theory, Samdong Rinpoche equates *ahimsā* or non-violence with truth quite explicitly in his writings. He goes so far as to describe them as "synonymous" in some senses. Justice, he argues, is an aspect of the truth. Thus, justice must also be an aspect of *ahimsā*, or perhaps, *ahimsā* is an aspect of justice. The specifics need to be made explicit. Though he does not explicitly state this, it seems reasonable to infer that for a Buddhist *satyāgrahi* of the type he is trying to encourage, to a certain degree, activities that may be described as just would be those that lead to peace (*ahimsā*, very broadly construed) and that correspond with truth. Here we would have the beginnings of a Buddhist philosophical notion of justice. It would also align perfectly with Samdong Rinpoche's presentation of *ahimsā* as a spiritual practice, for the Buddhist path, in many senses, is a spiritual path that leads to peace and corresponds with truth.

He argues that the *satyāgrahi*, the Buddhist activist who has committed to living by the *satyāgraha* principles he has outlined,¹⁵ has a responsibility to respond to and resist injustice. It is common in Buddhism for the antidotes to afflictions to be the application of the opposite. For example, wisdom is described as the antidote to ignorance. If injustice has, in part at least, a dimension of violence or harm to others, then the prescribed resistance to injustice would always be marked with *ahimsā* or

¹³ Samdong Rinpoche and Donovan Roebert. (2006) *Uncompromising Truth for a Compromised World: Tibetan Buddhism and Today's World*. Bloomington: World Wisdom Inc., pp. 170-171.

¹⁴ For a detailed discussion of the qualifications and commitments of a *satyāgrahi* as outlined by Samdong Rinpoche, see Samdong Losang Tenzin. (1997) *Satyāgraha: Truth Insistence: A Proposal*, p. 5. (Unpublished translation by John Dunne), and Samdong Rinpoche and Donovan Roebert. (2006) *Uncompromising Truth for a Compromised World: Tibetan Buddhism and Today's World*. Bloomington: World Wisdom Inc., p. 171-176).

¹⁵ Samdong Losang Tenzin Rinpoche. (1997) *Satyāgraha: Truth Insistence: A Proposal*, pp. 5-13. (Unpublished translation by John Dunne).

non-harm/non-violence. Samdong Rinpoche argues that there is a moral imperative for a *satyāgrahi* to personally resist injustice. In the broad construal of these terms, it is not unlike a bodhisattva's commitment to taking responsibility to work to help alleviate the suffering of all sentient beings. I am hesitant to read too far into Samdong Rinpoche's ideas in this section of the paper since its intention is simply to outline the basic framework of his theory. Perhaps this is a good place to move on to the second part of this paper.

Reflections and Analysis:

I think the time has come again for Buddhists to engage in meaningful philosophical conversations with advocates of other traditions of thought. I say "again" here because in the heyday of India's vibrant philosophical culture of the first millennium of the common-era, it was common for there to be large-scale public debates between the philosophers of various traditions, including active participation by numerous Buddhists. The stakes, often royal patronage of monasteries, were different than the stakes today, but the importance of inter-tradition philosophical dialogue were critically important then, as I would argue, they are now. Social justice, environmental justice, human rights, etc. (not to mention inter-religious harmony) are all critical issues that need to be hashed out rationally in global venues to address some of the world's most pressing problems. Since many of these issues trace to philosophical categories like "justice" that are not indigenous to Buddhism in the way they are discussed on the world stage, it is imperative for Buddhists to begin to formulate their ideas in this contemporary language if they want to have a voice in these discussions as stakeholders in the global shapings and articulations of our basic human values and ethos. To claim that "justice" is not a philosophical category indigenous to Buddhism is not to say that there is not a wealth of resources in the Buddhist tradition to draw from on this topic. There is. But the Buddha did not state plainly, "This is my view on justice" in the way that he did with regards to the notion of a permanent self. I am simply arguing that the work of clearly articulating a Buddhist theory of justice (or several Buddhist theories of justice) is work that still needs to be done. Otherwise, when we use terms like "justice", either when speaking with other Buddhists or when speaking with friends from other traditions, it is not at all clear what we mean.

Though it may be my hope or goal more than it is Samdong Rinpoche's to articulate a clear and rational Buddhist theory of justice for global discourse in the twenty-first century, Samdong Rinpoche has clearly made important strides towards articulating one, both in Buddhist language and the language of global discourse. He has elaborated in some detail on his inter-related ideas about

satyāgraha, justice, truth, and *ahimsā*/non-violence and illustrated how they connect with fundamental Buddhist philosophical tenets and tie in to mainline Buddhist views, as I have attempted to outline here. That said, I would like to see more. I am not arguing that Samdong Rinpoche's theory here necessarily ought to be the starting point of *the* Buddhist theory of justice, but I think if his ideas are more thoroughly fleshed out, they can make an excellent ground for *a* Buddhist theory of justice. At this point however, there is need for further elaboration of some of the details.

Specifically, I think there needs to be very clearly articulated definitions of terms like "justice" or "social justice". Samdong Rinpoche discusses these quite a bit in interesting ways. Towards the end of the previous section I tried to tease out some of what I believe to be the implications of his use of the terms, but I think definitions need to be made explicit. The same is true for a term like "truth".¹⁶ There are many senses to the word "truth" in Buddhism and Buddhist philosophical discourse.¹⁷ Its use in Samdong Rinpoche's thought here draws on these. I think it is important to be very clear about what sense the term is being used for in any particular context. It may also be the case that for him, there are new connotations that are worth clarifying and defining as well. He briefly mentions the two truths framework (ultimate truths and conventional truths) articulated by the great Madhyamaka philosopher, Nāgārjuna (c. 2nd CE), and ties conventional truths to work for justice. An explicit explanation of the understanding of conventional truth he means to use here¹⁸ and a clear explanation of how that meaning relates to the truth pursued by the *satyāgraha* in the Gandhian sense would be immensely beneficial in the sophisticated articulation of the theory. One gets the clear impression that Samdong Rinpoche has thought these issues through; he is a very sophisticated and profound thinker, not to mention, an outstanding scholar. Obviously the ideas I would urge him to articulate are complex and quite subtle. Perhaps one might argue that these complexities are not necessary for the type of global discourse with which I imagine Buddhists involved. I would agree that discussion of the subtleties of interpretation of Nāgārjuna's two truths theory and the details of its relationship to justice is not practical material for inter-tradition dialogue. But that is not to say that having a sophisticated philosophical ground articulated, even if it is not the subject of

¹⁶ For an insightful analysis and discussion of "truth" in Samdong Rinpoche's thought, see Jay Garfield (2002) "The 'Satya' in Satyagraha: Samdong Rinpoche's Approach to Non-Violence" in *Empty Words: Buddhist Philosophy and Cross-Cultural Interpretation*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 220-228.

¹⁷ For an interesting discussion of truth in Buddhism *vis à vis* Western philosophical truth theories such as correspondence theories and pragmatic theories of truth, see José Cabezon (2000) "Truth in Buddhist Theology" in Jackson, Roger and John Makransky (eds.) *Buddhist Theology: Critical Reflections by Contemporary Buddhist Scholars*. London: Curzon Press, pp. 136-154.

¹⁸ There is an immense diversity of opinion among interpreters of Nāgārjuna's thought about how to properly understand the two truths.

mainstream dialogue, is not critical for moving from that to a useful presentation in inter-tradition dialogue. Nor is it to say that it would not be a very important ground to articulate in relation to *satyāgraha* and justice theory for Buddhist communities.

In a similar vein, once "truth" is well-defined, I think it would be useful to explain further exactly what it means to pursue or insist on the truth? How does one determine what the truth is with regards to the work of a *satyāgrahi*? In other words, how might a *satyāgrahi* determine their pursuits with regards to issues concerning justice? We know what it meant for the Buddha in Samdong Rinpoche's explanation, and he articulates what it would mean for a Tibetan *satyāgrahi*, but beyond these examples, I think there is, again, a need for a clearly articulated theoretical ground by which any given Buddhist *satyāgrahi* might legitimately move forward in decision making. Clearly, he wants beings who are not yet enlightened to be able to engage in this important practice and work. How do we figure out what to do?

Samdong Rinpoche makes a strong case for *satyāgraha* actions on behalf of Tibet, particularly with regard to the responsibilities of ethnic Tibetans. His argument is not based on politics or nation-state theories, but on a responsibility to preserve and disseminate, "the unique inner sciences and cultural traditions... [that in] these modern times, ...are close linked to the well being of all peoples."¹⁹ In some senses he seems to equate *satyāgraha* work for the Tibetan cause with bodhisattva-type activity for the welfare of all beings. That assessment very well may be true. What I would like to see articulated is that specific theoretical ground – the explicit claim that pursuit of the truth equates with pursuit of bodhisattva-like goals in *satyāgraha* activities in the relative world of conventional truths. This seems to be what he is suggesting, but it would be useful for it to be made explicit.

Samdong Rinpoche is an incredibly important, yet often unacknowledged voice in the broader contemporary Engaged Buddhist movement. Outside of Tibetan-speaking circles, his voice is unfortunately not well-known. This is a particular shame because he is one of contemporary Buddhism's most profound thinkers on these subjects and has so much to contribute to these conversations. My own criticisms, or expressions of a wish for further articulation of his views on these issues is merely a reflection of my appreciation for what he has done and what he has offered in print. I am unaware of much scholarly discussion of Samdong Rinpoche's ideas or discussion of them in the broader Buddhist or engaged Buddhist world. Hopefully this article will help stimulate further discussion of the ideas of one of contemporary Buddhism's most profound thinkers.

¹⁹ Samdong Rinpoche. (1997) *Satyāgraha: Truth Insistence: A Proposal*, p. 3. (Unpublished translation by John Dunne).

Positive Social Functions of Chinese Buddhism

Li Hujiang & Wei Yanzeng¹

Introduction:

In the society of China today, Buddhism plays positive social functions, mainly reflected in five aspects, namely: the function of behavioral norms achieved through Buddhist ethics; the function of psychological adjustment achieved through Buddhist rites and Buddhist meditation; the function of social integration achieved through Buddhist practice of social relief; the function of social control achieved through Buddhist disciplines; and the function of social identity achieved through Buddhist social interaction.

Function of Behavioral Norms Achieved through Buddhist Ethics

Buddhism has the function of ethics by disseminating the theories of Heaven and Hell and karma and the doctrine of blessing the good and punishing the evil through various ways, including religious disciplines, taboo, tales in Buddhist classics as well as Buddhist sutras expounding, in an effort to regulate people's social behavior and to adjust social relationships among people.²

In many Buddhist classics, Buddha sets a number of precepts about laymen's secular life. Here are some examples. "In the 1283rd sutra of *Samyutta-nikaya*, Buddha gives the answer to question of how to make fortune through wisdom in the form of gatha."³ In *Sigalovada Sutta*, Buddha instructs the youth how to make friends, how to manage finances⁴ and how to handle interpersonal relationships. "In Chapter 12 of the *Samyukta-āgama*, Buddha centers on peasants making a living by farming"⁵ In Chapter 35 of *Anguttara-nikaya*, Buddha urges people to plant

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² Jin Yijiu, *Contemporary Religion and Extremist*, (Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, January, 2008), 1st edition, p. 76.

³ Chen Bin, *Rereading Sakyamuni*, (Taipei, Oak Tree Publishing Co., January, 2003), 1st edition, p. 231.

⁴ "In *Samyutta-nika*, Buddha says that personal income should be divided into six parts for diet, property, savings, credit, marriage and housing." Referred in: Chen Bin, *Buddha's Wisdom*, (Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Books Publishing House, January, 2006), 1st edition, p.224.

⁵ Chen Bin, *Rereading Sakyamuni*, (Taipei, Oak Tree Publishing Co., January, 2003), 1st edition, p. 231.

trees, construct bridges and manufacture ships.⁶ In response to Sudatta's requirement, Buddha educates Yuye, a pretty woman of noble birth, who used to sleep around, converting her into a moral one. As can be seen in the four volumes of *Samyutta-nikaya*, Buddha endeavors to elaborate on the roles that every member plays in society, the rights that he/she enjoys and the obligations that he/she has to assume in every aspect of family life and social life, giving directions to the disciples how to live a sensible secular life and social life. As Buddhist ethics embodied in tales of Buddhist classics is prone to regulate disciples' spiritual life and secular life, it contributes to constructing warm families and harmonious society. The four volumes of *Agama Sutras*, which belong to the Pāli Language classics of Theravada Buddhism, circulate among the people in the areas of Yunnan Province where Theravada Buddhism is embraced; while the Chinese version of *Agama Sutras*, which was translated from Pāli language long time ago, is more widely spread around the areas of Mahayana; further, the Tibetan version of *Agama Sutras* is widespread in the areas of Vajrayana influence. As can be seen from above, the influence of *Agama Sutras* on Chinese Buddhism is all-around and they have the function of regulating the disciples' behavior through education in the Buddhist classics.

Function of Psychological Adjustment Achieved through Buddhist Rites and Buddhist Meditation

“The psychological adjustment function of religion refers to the function of a religious belief to change the adherents' mental state from unbalance to a comparative equilibrium; and subsequently to achieve a state of harmony in their psychology, physiology and actions...”⁷ Today, various natural and social crises are still threatening the survival of humans. Especially in recent years, environmental catastrophes came thick and fast; to just name some of them: the Indian Ocean Tsunami, Myanmar Cyclone, Wenchuan Earthquake, Taiwan Flood Disaster, Haiti Earthquake and Chile Earthquake. The blows are too harsh for them to bear and some of them turn to religion. Just as Arnold Joseph Toynbee puts it: deterioration *and* adversity reminds us of religion. In China, as Buddhist belief spreads far and wide, the disciples naturally turn to Buddhism for psychological solace.

Hans Selye, the Canadian endocrinologist, introduced the General Adaptation Syndrome model, showing the non-specific response of the organism to stressors. He observed that the body would struggle to maintain its internal balance and it would respond to any external biological source of stress by making an

⁶ Chen Bin, *Rereading Sakyamuni*, (Taipei, Oak Tree Publishing Co., January, 2003), 1st edition, p. 235.

⁷ Chen Linshu and Chen Xia, *Principle of Religion*, (Beijing: Religious Culture Publishing House, January, 2003), 1st edition, p. 117.

adjustment to restore the balance.⁸ With the general adaptation syndrome, a human's adaptive response to stress has three distinct phases: alarm stage, resistance stage and exhaustion stage.

- Alarm stage -The first reaction to stress recognizes there's a danger and prepares to deal with the threat.
- Resistance stage -The body shifts into this second phase with the source of stress being possibly resolved. Homeostasis begins restoring balance and a period of recovery for repair and renewal takes place.
- Exhaustion stage -At this phase, the stress has continued for some time. The body's ability to resist is lost because its adaptation energy supply is gone. Often referred to as overload, burnout, adrenal fatigue, or maladaptation – here is where stress levels go up and stay up! These problems can eventually lead to serious life-threatening illnesses such as heart attacks, kidney disease, and cancer.⁹

The Wenchuan Earthquake of May 12th, 2008, a sudden catastrophe that could not have been prevented, brought great trauma to the victims both physiologically and psychologically. This is the non-specific response. This strong stress is liable to cause dysfunction of nervous system, immune system, digestive system and cardiovascular system, and various diseases come subsequently, including depression and increasing psychological inclination to commit suicide. Here are two typical instances of suicide after Wenchuan Earthquake. Dong Yufei, director of the agricultural office and earthquake relief office of Beichuan government, committed suicide on October 3rd, 2008. Feng Xiang, deputy director of the Propaganda Department of the Party committee of Beichaun County, committed suicide on April 20th, 2009.

Research shows that the frequency of disciples' participation in religious activities is in direct proportion to their sense of happiness, that is, the more pious a disciple is and the more frequently he/she attends religious activities, the higher the sense of his/her happiness grows and the less likely they are to commit suicide.¹⁰ After the Wenchuan Earthquake, Baoguang Temple in Chendu held *Qifu* and *Zhuijian* Assembly (*Qifu*, Buddhist rites to pray for blessing; *Zhuijian*, Buddhist rites for relief and rebirth of the deceased) for Earthquake-stricken Areas on May 29th, Buddhist Circles of Sichuan Province held 100-day *Chaodu* (another way of saying

⁸ *Guide to Basic Nursing Science for Certified Nurses: Theory of Stress and Adaptation*, ccun.com.cn, September 14th, 2009.

⁹ Same above.

¹⁰ Plant TG, Sharma NK, Religious faith and mental health outcomes. In: Plante TG, Sherman AC. (Eds.) *Faith and healing: psychological perspectives*[M]New York: The Guilford Press, 2001: 240-61.

Zhuijian) Assembly for the victims in Wenchuan Earthquake in Shifang Luohan Temple on August 20th, 2008. Based on a social survey, Liu Yangang and Liuning said, “As a traditional religious activity, *Chaojian* has the function of consoling the survivors that cannot be replaced by any other form of psychotherapy, which is confirmed in the questionnaires. The approval of the Buddhist assemblies by the people from all walks of life proves that the assemblies did achieve the positive effects of ‘reincarnation of the deceased and consolation of the survivors’.”¹¹

In addition, various meditative practices in Buddhism, such as sitting meditation, are helpful to physical and psychological adjustment. Robert K. Wallace and Herbert Benson from Medical School, Harvard University conducted an experiment. They had the subjects meditate for 30 minutes. At the beginning, oxygen consumption of the bodies was decreased rapidly and they began to ease down physically and mentally; their skin resistance markedly increased, which indicated that they were relaxed and easy; their heart rate decreased and they felt comfortable; there was an increase in the intensity and frequency of alpha brain waves, which reflected that they were peaceful; their arterial blood lactate was lowered and anxiety was relieved.”¹² In his *Buddhism and psychotherapy*, Huang Guosheng holds that from the aspect of clinical psychology, precept, concentration, and wisdom can be interpreted into the three ways of psychotherapy, that is: Occupational Therapy; Meditation Therapy; and Insight Therapy - collectively called transcendental therapy. Meditation therapy, combining Buddhist meditation with relaxation training and self-suggestion, helps patients to achieve the physical and mental relaxation and reach semi-hypnotic state, generating a positive self-suggestion to remove psychological barriers and physical symptoms. Chinese Buddhism emphasizes the combination of Concentration and Wisdom - contemplating Buddhist theory while concentrating so that the theory would strike root in the hearts. Insight Therapy is a way to expound to patients principles of Buddhism and relevant theory of clinical psychology so that they would be informed of the pathogenesis and treatment principles of the psychological barrier and obtain relief. Practice proves that transcendental therapy is effective to a number of psychological barriers.”¹³ In China, many large-scale Buddhist monasteries, such as Berlin Temple in Zhao County, Hebei Province and Wenshu Monastery in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, regularly organize meditation training camps and other activities, to help the learners to acquire the skill of Buddhist meditation. For them, Buddhist meditation has played the function of psychological adjustment.

¹¹ Liu Yangang and Liu Ning, “Report on worst-hit areas of Beichuan County and Some Other Places in Mianyang City of Sichuan Earthquake of May 12th” from *Studies in World Religions*, 1st edition, 2009.

¹² Zheng Shiyan, *Meditation: Training of Psychological Effectiveness*, (Guilin: Guangxi Normal University Press November, 2009), 1st edition, p. 9-10.

¹³ Huang Guosheng, preface of *Buddhism and psychotherapy*, (Beijing: Religious Culture Publishing House, November, 2002), 1st edition, p. 3-4.

Function of Social Integration Achieved through Buddhist Practice of Social Relief

Buddhism has the function of social integration. The idea of social integration was first put forward by the French sociologist Emile Durkheim (1858-1917), and the concept was clearly defined in *Social System and the Evolution of Action Theory* (1977) by the American sociologist T. Parsons. It is defined as the process of integrating different factors of social structure into an organic whole through a variety of ways. Buddhism has the capability to make the social existence and the various elements of social development connected, integrating different individuals and groups, or various social forces and classes into a whole. This is the function of social integration of Buddhism.

Due to the common belief in Buddhism and the special affinity of the charismatic Buddhist leaders, Buddhism will be able to fully play the function of social integration. Take the cause of social assistance of Chinese Buddhism as an example. Established in 1994, Charitable Foundation of Nanputuo Temple in Xiamen in southern China, is the mainland China's first Buddhist charity organization; Hebei Buddhist Charity Association in northern China, established in 1995, provided various forms of services for vulnerable groups mainly made up of orphans and poor students; Huanyan Temple Foundation in Chongqing in the middle of China, established in May 2006, made outstanding contributions in response to sudden natural disasters, especially, the Wenchuan Earthquake. In accordance with the relevant provisions of the Buddhist precepts, monks do not engage in production and business, nor do they keep private wealth. Where does the large amount of money that Buddhist charities need come from? Buddhism plays the role of social integration at this time. After Wenchuan Earthquake, Master Daojian of Huanyan Temple in Chongqing, raised funds and relief supplies worthy of more than 4 million *yuan* from the community of Buddhist believers for the earthquake-stricken areas, among which Wenhong, a star from Hong Kong show business, donated money to the disaster areas through Huayan Cultural and Educational Foundation, and Yangzhao, the director of Hong Kong Rising Sun Group, contributed money to Huayan Temple for disaster relief. The reason why they gave a lot of donations to the disaster areas, of course, derived from their own love, but it was also inseparable from their Buddhist belief as well as the unique personal charm of Master Daojian.

Function of Social Control Achieved through Buddhist Disciplines

Buddhist disciplines have the function of social control, defined as "the society's control over the behavior of social actors in every aspect."¹⁴ On the one hand, the disciplines regulate believers' behavior through rules and guidance; on the other hand, they impose punishment and deterrence. Buddhist disciplines achieve the function of social control by regulating individual behavior of believers from both positive and negative perspectives.

1.Regulations and Guidance

Buddhist discipline is essentially the norms of behaviors that require believers to abide by consciously, by internal legislation of Buddhism, as a way to show disciples' deep faith in Buddhism and as marks of their own virtues. So it is not only a sacred sense of duty, but also a sacred right and a sacred sense of happiness for disciples to comply with Buddhist discipline. Disciples, especially devout ones, are prone to observe the disciplines consciously. Many devout Buddhists have become models of self-discipline in moral-- eminent monks are respected and admired by people.

Buddhist disciplines are based on believers' faith. Compliance with Buddhist disciplines is an important guarantee for practice in Buddhism and liberation. To govern all beings with endless desire, Buddha established detailed precepts (e.g. In Chinese Buddhism, monks receive a set of 250 precepts while nuns receive a set of 348 precepts) to help disciples out of desires. Besides, Buddhist sutras make a long list of benefits for those practitioners. In *Mahaprajna-paramita-sastra*, Buddhist morality is divided into three ranks: upper morality, middle morality and lower morality, which is cited as follows: those who adhere to lower morality will be reborn as a human being; those who abide by middle morality will be reborn in six heavens of the desire realm; those who comply with upper morality plus the four meditations of the form realm and four formless concentrations will be reborn in pure dharma realm of form or formless realm. Those who observe upper morality are subdivided into three levels: those who observe lower purification reach the state of full attainment of arahatship; those who observe middle purification will reach solitary realizer; those observe who upper purification will reach the Buddha-stage.¹⁵ Many promises like this in Buddhist sutras persuade Buddhists to strictly observe precepts and practice as instructed.

¹⁴ Sun Shangyang, *Religious Sociology*, (Beijing: Beijing University Press, August 2001) 1st edition, p. 87.

¹⁵ Chapter 13 in *Mahaprajna-paramita-sastra* of V. 25 of *Taisho Tripitaka*, p.153b.

2. Punishment and Deterrence.

First of all, for the punishments for violation of precepts, all kinds of disciplines provide detailed provisions. Take *Vinaya of the Four Categories* as an example. Monks who commit four severe sins (killing, stealing, sexual behavior and lying) are to be dismissed and expelled from the Sangha; Monks who commit Sanghadisesa are to be placed on probation. Those direct punishments on the violation of precepts impose restrictions on Buddhists. Secondly, compliance with the Buddhist precepts is linked to the theory of karma and samsara. Those who transgress the precepts will not only be punished directly in reality but also be dragged to hells and suffer tortures. Such Future Retribution is the most severe punishment for faithful believers.

American anthropologist Serena Nanda says that religion achieves social control through a mysterious supernatural way.¹⁶ The Buddhist precepts are associated with the theory of karma and samsara, advocating: “Good and evil will have their karmic retribution when their time comes,” and, “What you are like in this life results from what you did in the previous life while what you will be like in your afterlife depends on what you do in this life.” “Karma, as the mechanism of moral restrictions, which is designed to be proved in one’s afterlife, cannot not be easily falsified, and so has the effect of psychological deterrence.”¹⁷ Hence, adherents show great reverence toward Buddhist morality and regard it as sacred. Buddhist precepts are based on the theory of karma. Whether one is to be liberated from bondage of samsara or to continue to suffer the round of repeated birth and death depends on whether they adhere to Buddhist morality. “With the theory of karma, Buddhism places the power of seeking happiness onto the hands of individuals and the key to liberation lies in one’s adherence to Buddhist morality. In this way, Buddhist morality undoubtedly increases the binding force and appeal to the adherents.”¹⁸

In addition, Buddhist precepts can make up deficiencies in laws and regulations. “Only when one does wrong against laws and regulations that can be seen, and what he/she did is reported, [*then*] he/she subject to negative social sanctions. Religious control extends to wrongdoings that are not seen and reported, and thus, the requirement that people have to play the role of observers or opponent is reduced to minimal.”¹⁹ As laws and regulations can only impose punishments and

¹⁶ Serena Nanda, *Cultural Anthropology* (Chinese translation), (Xi’an: Shaanxi People's Education Press, 1987) , p. 283.

¹⁷ Yan Yaozhong, “*Buddhist Precepts and Confucian Ritual Commandments*,” from *Academic Monthly*, 2002, V. 09.

¹⁸ Sun Yiping, “*On the Characteristics of Buddhist Precepts and their Roles in the Development of Buddhism*,” from *Buddhist Studies*, 1998, p. 353.

¹⁹ (U.S.) D. Popenoe, “*Sociology*” (second volume), (Shenyang: Liaoning People's Publishing House, 1987), p. 356.

sanctions on wrongdoings that can be seen and the punishment is characterized by timeliness and certainty, offenders can only feel at ease to face and accept a fait accompli; In contrast, as the Buddhist precepts are associated with karma and samsara, the punishment for transgression of precepts is prolonged to the future and the afterlife and the punishment is characterized by no timeliness and uncertainty, wrongdoers will suffer much more psychological pressure than the former, especially for devout adherents. Besides, law stresses heteronomy, which belongs to external control, while religion emphasizes self-discipline, which pertains to internal control. Believers comply with the precepts voluntarily rather than forcibly. For them, the internal control of the Buddhist precepts is obviously greater than that of laws and regulations. In the areas that laws cannot reach, the Buddhist precepts on the basis of karma theory play a role of restriction on the mind and behavior of Buddhists. Therefore, Buddhist precepts have the function of filling up the deficiencies of laws and regulations. In China, "Buddhist precepts as well as their spirit have greatly deepened the traditional Chinese moral binding mechanism, and even influence China's judiciary in practice and statutes."²⁰

Function of Social Identity Achieved through Buddhist Social Interaction.

"The function of social identity refers to the function that promotes convergence of people's beliefs and values."²¹ The function of Buddhist social identity is based on common Buddhist beliefs, which play a role of bridge and link, bringing Buddhists together.

Habermas, the author of *Theory of Communicative Action*, argues communicative action has following functions:

- reaching a new understanding of dissemination, preservation and updating of cultural knowledge through communicative action
- meeting the need of social integration and solidarity through coordinated communicative action.
- meeting the need of the formation of individual identity through actors' socialized communicative action.²²

²⁰ Yan Yaozhong, "On the Characteristics of the Chinese Buddhist Precepts," from *Study of World Religions*, 2005 V. 03.

²¹ Dai Kangsheng and Pang Yiu *Religious Sociology*, (Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, May 2007), 2nd edition, p. 140.

²² (America) Jonathan • H. Turner, translators: Qiu Zec and Mao-yuan, *The Structure of Sociological Theory* (7th edition), (Beijing: Huaxia Publishing House, July 2006), 1st edition, p. 209.

From this perspective, Buddhism also serves as a special means of communication and exercises its own communicative function in society.

The tooth sarira and the finger sarira being worshipped in Taiwan and Hong Kong is an instance of communication among disciples in the Chinese mainland, Taiwan and Hong Kong. There are only two existing tooth sariras in the world, one in Sri Lanka, and the other in Lingguang Temple in Beijing, which is regarded as the holy article and national treasure in the Buddhist circle. The finger sarira discovered in Famen Temple in Xi'an, Shanxi Province in 1987 is unique and incomparable. In 1999, the tooth sarira of Lingguang Temple was transferred to Hong Kong to be worshiped there; in 2002, The finger sarira was shipped to Taiwan to be worshiped there; in 2005 it was conveyed to Hong Kong to be worshiped there. It is especially worth mentioning the pilgrimage in Taiwan. "In 2002, the finger sarira was requested to be worshiped by Buddhist circles in Taiwan and was worshiped there for 37 days. Over 4 million people out of the total population of 23 million people went on a pilgrimage for the finger sarira. 500 thousand people, old and young, turned out to greet the holy relic on bended knees along the way. The occasion was unprecedented."²³ These activities satisfied needs of Buddhists and promoted friendly intercourse and cultural exchange between the Mainland, Taiwan and Hong Kong.

In 1982, the film *Shaolin Temple* made a hit, which made the temple in reality in Songshan, Henan Province well known around the world and turned the star Lillianjie into an international film star. Li himself also became a pious Buddhist later and established One Foundation, engaging himself in charity work. Today, Chinese Shaolin Martial Arts Group toured around the world, and its wonderful performances are well praised by overseas people. Many foreigners come to Shaolin Temple to learn martial arts and experience the Buddhist culture. In this regard, Shaolin Temple has played an important role in promoting Buddhist cultural exchange.

²³ Ye Xiaowen, *100 Collected Works of Xiaowen*, (Beijing: People's Publishing House, December 2008), 1st edition, p. 270.

Engaged and Humanistic Buddhism for the Rehabilitation Process of post-war Sri Lanka

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Buddhism, Its Central Message and Worldly Concerns

The historical Buddha's vision of religious life always had a higher aim that went beyond worldly concerns. Most of his teachings, with an exception of a tiny bit that concerns worldly matters, which were passed down to us through the tradition of Buddhist masters always have at the center of exploration the noble aim of attaining liberation from the immense suffering that human beings undergo while going through the cycle of birth and death in the *samsāra*.

The religious orientation presented to us in the early Buddhism, some might identify as an 'other-worldly' tendency. However, this does not prevent Buddhists engaging in this-worldly affairs as 'Engaged Buddhism' requires today.

Global Recovery: A Local Case

In terms of local 'recovery' that ensures 'global' recovery, this paper focuses on a local context and a modern case. This local case and local concern might have some international impact and implications given the recent international political context of human rights and issues of treatment towards war-affected populations around the world in international forums.

The immediate local context is the post-war Sri Lanka. The purpose of this paper is to reflect upon the rehabilitation initiatives undertaken in Sri Lanka by the Sri Lankan government and local non-governmental Buddhism based organizations.

We are informed and assured that by 17th May 2009, the Sri Lankan government forces secured a considerable military victory. The government forces formally ended the atrocities committed by the members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) by defeating them militarily. This is a successful story on many levels. On the levels of military strategies, the following can be stated. Nowhere else in the world a fearsome guerilla army with similar local and international operations to the LTTE has ever been defeated by military might alone. Given the violent context that spread throughout the island nearly three decades and significant damage done to the people and its religious and cultural values, this is an issue worth

concentrating on. How to rehabilitate a post-war society? How Buddhism can be used in that process? How can humanism be enriched in highly militarized, ethnically-fragmented communities? What are the issues of democratic governance? How should equal opportunities and freedom to exercise people's will to govern be secured?

After the Sri Lankan government forces secured a military victory, there is no doubt now a greater humanistic mission lies ahead. It is a challenge and a difficult task both for the government and duly concerned well-thought out citizens. The burden of that humanistic mission is primarily for the Sri Lankan government as the nation state but also to the majority population, Buddhists who also have a greater role and duty to play a significant role in that process.

In political terms, the mission involves primarily establishing democracy and reintroducing democratic governance to the north and east. This has become a more difficult task due the fact that that part of the country was controlled heavily by undemocratic means using terrorist tactics and fear as a means of controlling and mobilizing people for an alleged cause of an independent land for the Tamils for extending nearly three decades.

Providing efficient civil structures and decent way of life to the ethnic and religious minorities who live in north and east of the country is an essential and immediate need. Over three decades, they have suffered immensely, and quick and sustainable answers to their demands and needs must be provided.

Sarvodaya: An Engaged Buddhist Organization Based on Human Values and aimed at Uprooting Rural Poverty

In achieving this greater humanistic and socially uplifting mission, Buddhism inspired 'Engaged Buddhism' can be extremely valuable. Engaged Buddhism is a technical term that we often use today when we mean the application of Buddhist teachings or practices, which have Buddhist foundations, in resolving contemporary issues in the modern world such as poverty, social injustice, war, violence, etc.

The current meaning of 'engaged Buddhism,' Buddhism as used in pragmatic and practical contexts, is not new to Sri Lankans. Engaged Buddhism is ingrained in the Sri Lankan Buddhist culture. To our surprise, in the Sri Lankan context, Engaged Buddhism has functioned to fulfill its roles more than five decades, even before the very appearance of that term in the English speaking world.

The Vietnamese Zen master and peace activist, Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh (b. 1926-) is credited with introducing the term 'Engaged Buddhism' in the 1960s to describe 'antiwar movement' in Vietnam. Well before that the Sarvodaya Śramadāna

movement had engaged in using Buddhist ideals and teachings in uplifting the lifestyle of impoverished people in Sri Lanka since 1958.

Sarvodaya ('the awakening of all') has its programs in 11,600 villages. It is undoubtedly the foremost and the exemplary lay Buddhist movement in Sri Lanka. Its strong active role in society for uplifting the standard of human life both materially and spiritually has drawn the attention of international community with many awards to its founder Mr. A.T. Ariyaratne (b. 1931-).

Sarvodaya's Buddhist roots are explicit both in doctrine and practice. Its outlook bears witness to the simplicity of the founder. Its philosophy of 'active social engagement' put into practice some of the basic Buddhist teachings into rural development of Sri Lanka by transcending very successfully both ethnic and religious boundaries and barriers.

In the first week of December 1958, Laṅkā Jātika Sarvodaya Śramadāna Movement was born with a noble vision. It is important to note that humble and insignificant beginnings are the key for any successful Buddhist or non-Buddhist social welfare organization. Sarvodaya as an engaged Buddhist institution proves a point here.

Surprisingly Sarvodaya began with a school children's two-week social work camp. The first work camp was held in an underdeveloped, neglected, untouchable Caṇḍāla village named Kantoluva, Bingiriya. Its explicit aim was to alleviate poverty among the villagers and improve their social conditions and wellbeing. Indirectly, it was addressing the issues of caste discrimination that was prevalent in that area of Sri Lanka and showing a way forward how Buddhism can be used in a contemporary context as an instrument and an empowering movement against social injustice and inequality even in modern Sri Lankan society today.

At the time of founding Sarvodaya, Mr. A.T. Ariyaratne was a school teacher. He had accepted the appointment as a teacher of Biology and Mathematics at Nālandā College, a prominent Buddhist school founded during the Buddhist revival on 1st January 1958. Ariyaratne led the Grade 10 students' work camp. Its aim was to provide an opportunity for urban Colombo youth to understand rural ways of life and problems of the poor. It intended to empower the ruler poor to stand in their own feet.

In India, Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948) had already used the term Sarvodaya with the meaning of 'welfare of all.' Ariyaratne adopted it and reinterpreted it in the Sri Lankan cultural context as 'awakening of all' in light of inspiration derived from the teachings of the Buddha.

Ariyaratne interpreted his movement using some of the Buddhist ideas. He believed that the four Sublime Abodes (loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity) and the four Modes of Social Conduct (the absence

of desire, hatred, fear and delusion) taught by the Buddha helped the personality awakening process.

For Ariyaratne, Sarvōdaya was and is an activity of ‘awakening all.’ It begins with an individual perspective centering on oneself but soon moves to a wholesome state which can embrace the entire humanity. This awakening process, according to him, works on many levels such as “spiritual, moral, cultural, social, economic and political.”

One crucial term—*śramadāna* (donating labour)—characterizes Sarvōdaya’s distinct contribution to social development as a movement inspired by Buddhist ideas. *Śramadāna* is a selfless act of sharing one’s labor with others. This act of charity, which Sarvōdaya broadly defines as “an act of sharing one’s time, thought, effort and other resources with the community.” Sarvōdaya has employed *śramadāna* to awaken oneself as well as others.

From the very beginning, Sarvōdaya had a keen interest in using Buddhist teachings as a vehicle for rural development. In its efforts, it did not ignore the value of inculcating of Buddhist values. Sarvōdaya affirmed Buddhist teachings which had social dimensions and actively encouraged the application of Buddhist teachings to daily contexts in communal settings.

Unlike most other non-governmental organizations, Sarvōdaya had a strong criticism of materiality for the sake of material wellbeing alone and believed that aggressive accumulation of wealth destroys virtues and values of Buddhist societies that are rooted in an unsophisticated rural community. However, Sarvōdaya also faced criticisms from certain quarters. In recent years, Sarvōdaya has been increasingly attacked by some for alleged implementation of urban, bourgeois, middle-class values and ideals among rural people. In the early 1990s, it faced severe political threats from the Sri Lankan Government of the late President Ranasinghe Premadāsa (1924-1993) pushing it to the point of near extinction. In this decade, again Sarvōdaya has been again severely criticized by Buddhist youth groups led by Buddhist monks because of its heavy reliance on external funding agencies from abroad.

Nevertheless, one cannot ignore the fact that the objective of the Sarvōdaya movement has been the generation of a “non-violent revolution towards the creation of a Sarvōdaya Social Order which will ensure the total awakening of human personalities.”

What is striking is that using Buddhist philosophical insights, traditional values and customs and deep aspirations of the Sri Lankan culture and Gandhian ideas, Ariyaratne was able to propose and develop a sustainable, nature-friendly alternative development strategy. It has drawn attention of the like-minded international groups.

As an Engaged Buddhist group, in Sarvōdaya's four decades of village development work, four values—truth, non-violence, self-denial and charity—have dominated the scene. They also have determined its success as a grass-root Buddhist movement. Buddhist organizations such as Sarvōdaya have proven that they can use some of the teachings of the Buddha in alleviating poverty and uplifting the standard of living of the all Sri Lankans.

How Buddhism can Play its Role in the Rehabilitation Process?

Now the challenge for the Sri Lankan government is a question of managing the demands and needs of the ethnic minorities who were under constant threat of terrorism. This presentation will explore in detail the efforts made by Sri Lankan individuals as well as the Sri Lankan government to rehabilitate the war affected Tamil and Muslim communities both in the east and north of the country. The way some of the Buddhist teachings and practices can aid the rehabilitation process by strengthening the notions of co-existence of diverse ethnic and religious communities within one nation need exploration.

There are plenty of signs in all over Sri Lanka that brutal challenges of terrorism have paralyzed Sri Lankan economy as well as religious life of Sri Lankans. This makes a timely need that Buddhist monks and Buddhist institutions pay particular attention to the upliftment of values of Buddhists.

Theravada Buddhism in Sri Lanka is equipped with some resources to handle better the issues of rehabilitation. Both Buddhist laity and monks who suffered immensely during the war are keen to help and appropriate Buddhism for rebuilding the nation. As in the Tsunami crisis has proven, monks and Buddhist organizations can be immensely useful to the government in bringing in humanistic values of treating minorities so that trust is grown over minor differences and better social space created by enhancing the rehabilitation process.

Global Recovery and the Culturally/ Socially Engaged Artist

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Introduction:

The culturally and socially engaged artist involved with global recovery work is examined in this paper through the lens of essential Buddhist principles from a lay, or non-monastic perspective. At the core of Buddhist belief is that there is a collective responsibility to take some form of action to assuage suffering in the world. This topic is addressed in this paper first by examining how certain inner unconscious processes can be exposed and understood, through the dharma practice of artistic sublimation. Before setting out to do socially engaged work it is important to untangle inner triggers. Art, as understood through the mindful process of sublimation, is one way to practice restraint and free will when it comes to acting out the impulses emerging from the body, speech, and mind. The focus then shifts to the outer view of the socially and culturally engaged artist. The subject of the Naropa Community Art Studio (NCAS), including a short case vignette, is offered as an example of applied global recovery through art.

The contemporary phenomenon of Engaged Buddhism primarily emerged in the 20th century fanning out across Asia, Europe, and the United States. During this time it has become an international movement whereby the deeply held tenets of Buddhism are skillfully and nonviolently applied to present-day societal, cultural, political, economic, and ecological challenges (Kraft, 1999). One way to mindfully address these global systemic needs of recovery is through humanistic applications of the arts, particularly the visual arts, which is the subject of this chapter. More and more, artists are coming out of the cloistered environment of the studio and directly addressing social and cultural issues of global recovery, particularly at the grass roots level of community engagement (Kaplan, 2005). Although these artists do not necessarily identify as Buddhist, there are correlations to draw between their humanistic actions and cultural interventions with the practices of Engaged Buddhism. Overall, artists contribute to culture and also serve as interpreters of culture. Socially and culturally engaged artists, through nonviolent means, interact with the larger psychosocial, ecological subject matter alive within their communities, towns, and geographic regions (Cohen, 2005-6; Jones, 2005-6; Kaplan, 2005; Lacy, 2005-6; Matheson, 2005-6). This paper explores this promising subject

of the socially and culturally engaged artist participating in global recovery efforts from a humanistic and a lay Buddhist perspective. First, a brief definition of humanistic engagement and Engaged Buddhism is offered followed by an explanation of sublimation and art as a dharma practice for untangling the seeds of hijacking emotions. This section of the paper marks an important step for cultivating inner skillful means for exposing unconscious patterns before directly engaging with others in social and cultural work. Next comes the outer view where the socially engaged artist is discussed. Finally, the topic of global recovery through art is addressed by utilizing the example of the Naropa Community Art Studio (NCAS).

Defining Compassion and Humanistic Engagement

Humanistic engagement is a moral practice of compassionate concern for not only people, but all of the living systems that comprise our planet. Since human beings are capable of positively and negatively influencing our global environment, from the layered geology of the earth to the uppermost atmosphere of our planet, it is necessary to compassionately expose and directly address the outcomes of human behavior. In order to accomplish this goal, an understanding of compassion is in order since this term is at the root of the social and cultural action suggested in this paper.

According to Swami Chidvilasananda, the meaning of the word *compassion* has two parts. *Com* refers to the Latin word meaning “together” and *patti* means “to suffer” (1994, p. 84). Etymologically, *compassion* thus implies how suffering is a form of social connective tissue, whereby shared experiences of anguish can join people together. Similar to empathy (Berger, 1987), compassion is the altruistic thread that not only civilizes human judgments, it also spiritualizes human actions by providing a pathway to altruistic caring.

Empathy and compassion are close neighbors. Both erode the distance created by various forms of separation, which is a root cause of suffering. Empathy is feeling with and into what is before one. Compassion shortens the distance between oneself and another and provides heartfelt resonance with that “other” person. And it is important to mention that a compassionate presence, expressed through caring observation, is not always enough. Certain forms of direct skillful action, as found in Engaged Buddhism, may be required to meet what waits for us in our communities.

Defining Engaged Buddhism

Many have written on the subject of Engaged Buddhism (Jones, 1989; King, 2005; Kraft, 1999; Queen, Prebish, & Keown, 2003; Nhat Hanh, 1987). There is also

a nascent literature on the arts and Engaged Buddhism (Cohen, 2005-6; Jones, 2005-6; Lacy, 2005-6; Matheson, 2005-6). Although a complex subject to define, Engaged Buddhism is briefly described in the following terms. First, it is important to say that this is not a new Buddhism but rather an obvious extension of the core teaching (Jones, 1989). Within Engaged Buddhism, the guiding principles of compassion, wisdom, and loving kindness are expressed in forms of practical nonviolent action. As well, between Buddhism's focus on suffering and Gautama's focus on teaching, from the very beginning, there has been an initial emphasis on engagement. Furthermore, Gautama's practice of instruction is an early version of direct engagement with the subject of suffering and is therefore considered an early application of social engagement (King, 2009).

Over the millennia, Buddhism has pursued a considerable focus on inner development. As the injustices and violence of the 20th century unfolded, Buddhism needed to become directly engaged with society. If it did not move out into the global culture, some believe it would have moved towards extinction (King, 2009). Thich Nhat Hanh conceived of the term "Engaged Buddhism" (p. 4). King addresses how his view of Buddhism was to directly incorporate the wisdom and compassion of the tradition into direct action that supports all sentient beings. Nhat Hanh's book, *Interbeing* (1987), offers 14 guidelines for practicing Engaged Buddhism. One specific guideline is discussed below as it relates to contemplative applications of art when working with the "seeds" of charged emotions capable of hijacking human behavior. The reason why this particular guideline is being singled out, and applied to art, is because before outer action is commenced, inner awareness is essential. In this context, art practice holds its own dharma or truth teachings that are worth excavating. The art process, in essence, is the mind externalized. We can literally see our thoughts emerge and take shape. This expressive process reflects our current state of body and mind back to us through the symbolic speech of art. If we pay attention, we can commune with both the form and content alive within the visual narrative coming to life before us. Similarly, artworks created by communities' serve as evidence that reflect the bigger mind and symbolic speech held by that community.

Art therefore can be a method for bridging the divide between inner awareness practices with effective social action. One aspect of all the arts, according to Langer (1951), allows for inner experiences to be objectified and for outer experiences to be subjectified. Bringing internal experiences to the outside through the art process, where they can be contemplated and then reabsorbed for further investigation, is an important lesson inherent in the dharma teachings of the artistic process. Additionally, as awareness through art increases, questions concerning social engagement can become clarified and realized as clarity improves.

According to the Buddha, every action manifests through the three doors of body, speech, and mind, which are the pathways through which karma gets created (Sivaraksa, 2005). The Buddha also taught that all actions begin in the mind. From the mind, according to Sivaraksa, actions are then expressed through the body or through speech. Since the arts, according to Langer, are also considered expressive methods for working with human emotion, they offer a direct strategy for processing the content of body, mind, and speech narratives.

Therefore skillful means, or *upaya*, of which art is a legitimate practice of *upaya*, is needed to monitor the inner thoughts that spawn karma so that appropriate actions can and will be performed. According to a Buddhist view, violence begins in the mind and therefore must be transformed in the mind. Within the mind, there are three main types of violent poisonous thoughts. In fact these three forms of mental violence are known as the three poisons. They are: “greed, hatred, and delusion or ignorance” (Sivaraksa, 2005, p. 3). In terms of speech, verbal violence can manifest in four primary ways: “divisive speech, gossip, harmful words, and slander” (p. 4). Art offers a way to literally see this speech in visual forms before merging into destructive cascading behaviors. While to some this approach to art may seem like further indulgence of a harmful thought, it can also become a strategy to tame and mollify that thought.

Concerning behavioral violence, the three primary forms are: killing, stealing, and sexual misconduct” (p. 4). Since every violent act first begins in the mind as one or a combination of the three poisons, we need skillful strategies to manage these cognitive impulses before they become spoken or behaviorally acted upon. Transcendental actions, known as the six *Paramitas* from the Mahayana tradition, help to train the mind to not act violently. They are: generosity, morality, patience, effort, meditation, and wisdom” (p. 4).

Four more paramitas are added from the Theravada tradition. They are: “renunciation, truth, resolution, and loving-kindness (p. 4). Additionally, there is also the Four Brahmaviharas or “Divine Abodes” which are “loving-kindness (*metta*), compassion (*karuna*), sympathetic joy (*mudita*), and equanimity (*upekkha*)” (p. 4). Between the emergence in the mind of the three poisons and ethical and moral response of the six Paramitas is a gap. It is the space within this gap that this next section on artistic sublimation is focusing. Art, as will be discussed, adds a layer of wisdom practice between impulse and the goal of moral reasoning. Also, within this liminal space, art becomes a practice of aesthetically titrating the seeds of aggression.

Working with the Seeds of Aggression Through Sublimation and Art

Nhat Hanh (1987) outlines and discusses fourteen guidelines for practicing engaged Buddhism. The sixth guideline is of particular interest for this chapter

because it addresses the importance of working with the seeds of anger and hatred. It states:

Do not maintain anger or hatred. Learn to penetrate and transform them when they are still seeds in your consciousness. As soon as they arise, turn your attention to your breath in order to see and understand the nature of your anger and hatred and the nature of the persons who have caused your anger and hatred. (Nhat Hanh, 1987, pg. 18)

How does one effectively penetrate and transform the seeds of anger and hatred? And why is this important for matters of global recovery? This is a complex question since human beings are often plagued with a struggle to balance and manage unchecked base emotions such as aggression and complex corporeal impulses. Rather than become taken over by these spontaneous impulsive urges and unconsciously act them out, another way exists to skillfully work with their unconscious and eventual disruptive consequences. This process, known as sublimation, when joined with art (Kramer, 1971), allows penetrating access to the original impulsive urges while also transforming these urges into artistic compositions (Franklin & Seimon, 2009). In short, artistic sublimation is a way to be inwardly and socially productive with personal urges and disruptive behaviors.

As a process for exposing and clearing ignorance, artistic sublimation has several sub-stages. Two of these stages, *displacement* and *projection*, are processes by which emotional material is directly projected or transferred from an internal state into and onto the art materials and the emerging visual symbols. At first, as would be expected, unintegrated discharged emotion often translates into visual chaos. Externalized visual chaos can directly reference internal chaotic feelings. Known as *isomorphism*, the essential point here is that visual relationships of form and content, process and product, can directly relate to and access one's innermost truths (Rhyne, 1998). Key to understanding sublimation and isomorphism is therefore the notion that externalized art forms can ultimately be similar in structure—through line, shape, and color—to the inner state of the artists mind and that these forms can be modified and unified through artistic processes. Emotion that is primarily either unchecked or inaccessible can now be accessed, seen, and known through expressive use of the materials. The visual symbols created in this process can retell the autobiographical story of one's emotional inner life. Suzanne Langer (1951, 1953) persuasively argued that all of the arts were in fact the most accurate language for human emotion. She, and later Kramer (1979), skillfully established the foundational thesis that the function and purpose of the arts is to articulate complex affect and make it accessible to others so that they might experience their own vicarious experience of sublimation.

By creating aesthetic compositions containing an emotional array of feelings such as anger and hatred, ignorance to one's actions is lessened. The equation of

being seduced by these unconscious stimuli and eventually making them conscious through art therefore signifies that the impulse is now accessible to a different, albeit contemplative response. Art fosters insight into unconscious ignorance by exposing and making these hidden narratives visible through the creation process. Before engaging with others or with communities, it is prudent to clear the mind and expose the triggers that ignite our patterns. By doing so, the culturally engaged artist can be of genuine help to others.

When Nhat Hanh (1987) proposes that we “learn to penetrate and transform inner chaotic emotion when it is still nascent and in seed form, he suggests using the breath as the primary transformative strategy. As soon as these impulses arise, art, combined with other contemplative practices such as meditation, becomes a complete way to turn our attention towards this base material in order to see and understand the nature of these emotions. For the purposes of this paper, meditation is defined by Walsh and Shapiro (2006) as “a family of self-regulation practices that focus on training attention and awareness in order to bring mental processes under greater voluntary control and thereby foster general mental well-being and development and/or specific capacities such as calm, clarity, and concentration” (p. 229). Through this conjoined process of linking meditation with art, the seeds of aggression are exposed and mitigated.

Art, as understood through the mindful process of sublimation, is one way to practice restraint and free will when it comes to acting out the impulses emerging from body, speech, and mind. And art is not proposed here as a panacea that remedies this complex perspective on cause and effect relationships. Instead art is viewed as a contemplative practice tool to develop awareness by directly sublimating impulses through creative work.

Kramer (1971) further argues that sublimation through art results in actions that are socially productive, a point that ties sublimation to a humanistic and engaged aesthetic. When art is created to reference charged subject matter through symbolic pathways rather than through destructive behaviors, a caustic pattern is bifurcated and redirected. More to the point, the connection between art and contemplative practice becomes evident when considering how sublimation circumvents the accumulation of karmic debt that eventually must be accounted for. Since thoughts create karma, as do actions, sublimation through art is an effective strategy for unangling ignorance and developing insight. According to the Buddha, every action manifests through the three doors of body, speech, and mind, which are the pathways through which karma gets created (Sivaraksa, 2005). Artistic sublimation stands at the entry or passageway of these doors, ready to catch powerful emotions before they are acted upon and do direct harm to others and our planet. Lastly, I am not suggesting that creating art does not create karma. Art is a symbolic process that can surface the poisons of the mind. If thoughts create karma and art is a visual

representation of our thoughts, then art too creates karma. And yet, art is a way to retain and hold back charged impulses before they can do harm to others.

Once disruptive inner seeds of emotions like aggression have been untangled, a clear mind and wholesome intentions can more efficiently manifest in socially engaged work. This next section addresses several significant points of the role of the socially engaged artist.

The Socially and Culturally Engaged Artist

The socially and culturally engaged artist embraces a social activist, altruistic, peaceful role. Within this role, a need or calling is identified and the artist engages with an effort toward non-attachment to outcomes. Liberated from psychological ownership of results is a very different form of participation in both art and cultural work. Rather than remain cloistered in the studio, the larger calling of social need beckons the artist to directly engage. This relational approach to art considers the importance of human need and how art can offer back to these social causes.

The “art” is not necessarily only in the object of creation. It is also in the act of engagement. This was the focus behind the work of artists like Joseph Beuys, Dominique Mazeaud, and writers like Suzi Gablik (1991). Gablik (1987) also addresses the need to remythologize the world by utilizing the art process in order to locate a living cosmology as a way to reduce social and spiritual alienation so prevalent in Western culture. She believes that human suffering, in part, is the result of separating ourselves from what is sacred. From her point of view, the artist models a way to reengage revered and venerated connections with our planet. This is accomplished through an aesthetic of sacralizing the relational connections between environment, self, other, and spiritual yearnings. In this capacity, the artist serves as a figure that awakens the culture to see its habits of consumerism, alienation, and oppression. Connecting artistic action with social action is key when considering connections with an engaged art-based spirituality. Art is also a direct way to manifest personal empowerment by visually articulating a marginalized point of view. Those who are oppressed, disenfranchised, or socially exploited deserve to have their voices seen and heard. However, in some settings this is dangerous work. The symbolic coding of visual imagery, through allegory and metaphor, can be a method for symbolically speaking truth to power in a way that is not initially decipherable. This could be a helpful avenue to follow for those working under more oppressive circumstances. And, as mentioned before, it can still reap dangerous consequences.

There are many examples artists are helping to directly transform communities and foster local, regional, and global recovery (Lacy, 2005-6). For example, the extreme cycles of poverty can result in homelessness. In Albuquerque New Mexico, during the mid 90's Artstreet was born. This thriving studio setting directly addressed poverty within the city by helping the homeless population have a place to create, learn artistic skills, and sell their work (Timm-Bottos, 1995). Similar to Artstreet was the community studio called "Vincent's" in Wellington New Zealand. This community art studio was founded on the principle of having a safe place for psychiatric survivors to come and work together (Franklin, 1996). More recently art therapists have been involved with conflict resolution, gun violence, and trauma work (Kaplan, 2005).

Another example of global recovery through art is the Naropa Community Art Studio (NCAS). It is in the NCAS that marginalized voices from our community can be heard through the articulate language of art.

NCAS: Empowering the Silent Margins of a Community

As our mission statement says, the guiding vision behind the NCAS is to provide a safe space for various age groups and marginalized populations from our local community to gather and create art together. Equal access for our members is stressed, particularly those people who are unlikely to have direct contact with the humanizing practice of engaging in creative, artistic behavior. The NCAS is a studio setting for a wide range of community members. Naropa University Art Therapy faculty/alumni and graduate students manage the studio, organizing and running the many ways in which this space is used. Respect for cultural, ethnic, gender, and spiritual diversity is a founding principal of the studio. Unity in diversity, the birthright to pursue creative expression, and the capacity of visual art to contain and communicate the full range of human experiences comprise the essence of our mission and focus. We currently have four groups per week that serve young teen women, developmentally delayed adults, adults with psychiatric challenges successfully living in our community, and adults survivors of either a head injury, stroke, or both. Their impairments often result in aphasia, which is the focus of this next section.

On Fridays, for the past seven years, we have facilitated a group for people in the NCAS with aphasia. Aphasia usually results from a brain injury such as a stroke. Such an injury can result in an impaired ability to use or comprehend words. Aphasia can also involve more than speech. It can affect writing, reading, the ability to draw, and repeating words that are heard. An example of someone with aphasia experiencing life-changing results by attending the NCAS is Jude.

One of our graduate students, Kristin Scroggs, has worked closely with Jude. According to Ms. Scroggs, Jude is a highly educated woman who has spent many years traveling internationally in her work for the U.S. government. She was injured in a car accident, causing her to have aphasia, a condition characterized by the loss of the ability to communicate verbally or with written words. She began attending the (NCAS) in the fall of 2009 so that she could begin to connect with others who have similar struggles and who desire to have their voices heard through art.

Jude has been driving about 40-50 miles round trip to attend the NCAS. Since the fall she has been very prolific in her artwork. She makes books and considers herself to be an author. Jude's books are comprised of mixed media boxes of objects from her past and sometimes contain a few words. She eloquently models the possibilities available through the art process.

Ms. Scroggs also reports that while Jude has had many significant problems due to her brain injury, she is slightly more verbally expressive than many others in the group who have more marked symptoms of aphasia. Because of this, Jude wants to write the stories of those in the Aphasia group. As a result of this intention she works to get to know everyone through the images that they create.

Furthermore, Jude has strong feelings about the animals and plants that are becoming endangered and extinct due to the impact of humans. Since these animals and plants do not have a voice – much like Jude and others with aphasia – she is creating art on their behalf. This act of selflessness and empathy has touched and inspired many of us to see beyond ourselves in our art making processes. Jude has found a sense community within the NCAS and will be moving closer to the NCAS in order to be with her new friends in the aphasia group.

Conclusion

Ahimsa, or the direct practice of non-violence or not harming, is usually not discussed in relationship to visual art. And yet, this is exactly the focus of this paper. Art can teach one to gently untangle inner patterns and model a unique form of inner compassion for oneself and others. This is essential work to address before directly engaging with triggering situations that are alive within communities.

Concerning the outer work of social and cultural engagement, as disengaged artists step out of the studio and directly work for the welfare of others, worldly interconnections are strengthened resulting in *loka-samgraha* (Feuerstein (2003). This Sanskrit phrase literally means “world gathering” or “pulling people together” (p. 48) in such a way that the social environment is transformed. Feuerstein goes on to say that “our own personal wholeness, founded in self-surrender, actively transforms our social environment, contributing to its wholeness” (p. 48). With this



viewpoint in mind, the question then arises, how can these principles be explored in communal art settings where the environment, the materials, and community each becomes a place for refuge? The sanctuary of these simultaneously present spaces fosters sane environments where personal and collective truths can be explored. Ultimately, this form of artistic milieu humanizes the place where it thrives.

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The Political Thought in the Tipitaka

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When we talk about political thought, the course and development of political thought may have two approaches: Western approaches – the European Union & the United States of America; and Eastern approaches – from China, Japan, India, etc. The western approach appears in literature of ancient philosophers: Plato, Aristotle, and countless others – until these theories were developed into modern political science; however, the Eastern approach appears in religious scriptures, from: Confucianism and Lao Zi of China, Taoism of Japan, and Hinduism and Buddhism of India, etc.

Keep in mind that politics and religion are social institutions and have similar objectives for building a humane society - to be a regular and peaceful society. One time in the west, the states were theocratic. Religion dominated politics. The state was not independent of the church and the priests interfered in administration. In contrast to the other Oriental political systems, the states were not theocratic. Religion did not dominate politics. The state was independent of the temple, and the priests did not interfere in administration. The dictates of religion were limited to principles of moral guidance for ruler and subjects alike

Buddhism was one which originated and thrived in ancient India in Lather Vedic period. The Buddha (623 B.C.-543 B.C.) lived in North India. The Buddha's personal name is Siddhattha and the clan name is Gotama. Thus he is sometime called as Siddhattha Gotama. Generally Indian people call him the Buddha or Gotama the Buddha. He was born as a prince of the Sakyan kingdom which was located at the foot of the Himalaya. His father named Suddhodana who was the chief of kings ruling over the State of Sakka; and his mother's name was Maya. At the age of 29, he left the palace and led the life of a wandering ascetic, devoting himself to finding some way to overcome sufferings. At the age of 36, he attained the Enlightenment to be the Buddha. After that he wandered from place to place throughout the remaining 45 years of his life, teaching his discoveries to all people. And he had passed way at the age of 80 in 543 B.C. at Kusinara the capital city of

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the Malla State. His teachings were transmitted from generation to generation and were inscribed in palm leaves for the first time in B.E. 433.¹

Buddhism doctrine is contained in 45 volumes entitled “Tipitaka.” Tipitaka is Buddhist scripture which has contained all Doctrine and Discipline of the Buddha. This is the Three Baskets or the three divisions of the Buddhist Canon: Vinaya, Suttanta and Abhidhamma, generally know as the Pāli Canon. It is profound and wide and there is capability to educate for the human beings. Particularly, Theravada Buddhism holds that Tipitaka is an important scripture to study for each and every Buddhists.

About politics, Buddhism concerns himself with politics by teaching because Buddha’s teaching expresses politics. The Buddha was the teacher or advisor of people of society in that time and had good relationship with every countries politician and rulers.² He was in the position of being above politics or neutral status and involved in politics as adviser who gave ‘Dhamma’ (the doctrine) in connection with administration and management to the kings and rulers. Furthermore, he instructed the people being a good subordinator and a good subject of the country.

The political thought is brought to study in the Tipitaka. It is used as the primary source for searching Buddha’s political thought. Political thought in Tipitaka means the thought about the state and its whole component in lifetime of Buddha (623 B.C. – 543 B.C.). His (Buddha’s) thought is presented in Buddhist Pali canon named Tipitika. Buddha’s political thought has been described in three divisions as:

1. Political thought on socio-political in Ancient India
2. Political thought on his teaching about state and its origin
3. Political thought on his Sangha governance

1. Socio-political condition in Ancient India.

Socio-political condition at the lifetime of the Buddha was not complex. The people in that period lived under the influence of the Vedic and social, economic and political condition followed the caste system or social class.

¹ Phra Rajavaramuni (P.A.Payutto), *Thai Buddhism in the Buddhist World*, Bangkok: Mahachulalongkorn Buddhist University press 1990 p.4

² Chamnong Thongprasert, *Universal Religions*, (Bangkok: Thaiwattanaphanit.) 1977 pp. 172-173

Brahman was the priest, Khattiya was the ruler, Vessa was the general people Sudda was the servant and Candala was the humble people or outcaste.³

About religious trends, there were several religious beliefs; but the main ideas and practices, which could be called religion, can be divided in to three categories:

1. There was the sacrificial cult of the hereditary priestly class, the Brahmins.
2. There were popular cult and beliefs of the ordinary people mostly villagers, who are the majority of the population.
3. There were various kinds of ideas and practices expounded by various non-Brahmanical teachers who were commonly know as Samana or Sharmana.

About political condition, the ancient India was called Jambudipa and it divided into 5 divisions as:

1. Uttarapatha : the Northern India
2. Aparantaka : the Western India
3. Majjhimadesa : the Central India
4. Pracya : the Eastern India
5. Dakkhinapatha : the Southern India⁴

Before and during the life of Buddha, “India” was divided into independent kingdoms like the city-state of Greece. The kingdoms were most implied and had played an important role in the history of ancient India as called Solasa Mahajanapadas or the Great Sixteen States. Beside these States, there were small states as called Janapadas. Of both Mahajanapadas and Janapadas, some were independent, some were protectorates, whereas some were annexed to other state as appear in Uposatha Sutta⁵ that there were the great sixteen states as Anga, Magadha, Kasi, Kosala, Vajji, Malla, Jeta, Vamsa, Kuru, Panjala, Maccha, Surasena, Avanti, Assaka, Grandhara and Kambhoja. The small states which appear in other Sutta were as (1) Sakya of Kapilavatthu (2) the Koliyas of Ramagama (3) The Bhaggas of Sumsumaragiri (4) The Moriyas of Piphalikan (5) The Bulis of

³ Prince Vajirayanavarorasa. (Siri Buddhasukh translated from Thai to English). Life of the Buddha. (Bangkok: Manamakuta Educational Council, The Buddhist University. 1995, p.3

⁴ B. C. Law. Geography of early Buddhism, (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt.Ltd.) 1979, p.xxi.

⁵ Su. A. Ti. 20 /501/201.

Allakappa (6) The Kalamas of Kesaputta⁶. In the Buddha's lifetime, there were five powerful states as (1) Magadha kingdom (2) Kosala kingdom (3) Federal state of Vajji (4) Vamsa kingdom and (5) Avanti kingdom.

There were two political systems as absolute monarchies and republics, which were ruled by warrior class. Republic might be called aristocracy because it was ruled by the group of noble class or was called federal because to enjoin between small clans, to be state and be governed by the group of people as called "Gana" or "Sangha"⁷

For state rulers who belonged to monarchical form, the Buddha had delivered many discourses to those kings especially the *dasarajadhamma* the tenfold virtues or duties of the king: *dana* (generosity) *sila* (morality), *pariccata* (liberality), *ajjava* (uprightness), *maddava* (gentleness), *tapo* (self-restraint), *akkodha* (non-anger), *avihimsa* (non-hurtfulness), *khanti* (forbearance), *avirodhana* (non-opposition)⁸

The Buddha also had close relationship with the rulers in republican states. He had represented the 'unity' or 'harmony' as the heart of ruling the republican state. He has taught the seven conditions of welfare as called '*aparihanidhamma*'. There were: (1) Holding frequent public meetings of their tribe which everyone attended; (2) Meeting together to make their decisions and carrying out their undertaking in concord; (3) upholding tradition and honoring their pledges; (4) Respecting and supporting their elders; (5) No women or girl were allowed to be taken by force or abduction; (6) Maintaining and paying due respect to their places of worship; and (7) Supporting and fully protecting the holy men (*arahants*) among them.⁹

2. Political thought on his teaching about state and its origin.

The concept of states might be well known in the sense of country or kingdom ever before the Buddha's appearance. On that time there were so many states Ancient India like city-state of Greek, but the Buddha did not describe about state directly.

When we consider to the elements of state, the Buddha did not speak elements of state directly but it can be comparable following to the elements of state as following:

⁶ R. S. Tripathi, *History of Ancient India*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Co.Lmt.)1992 p.85

⁷ A.S. Altekar, *State and Government in Ancient India*, Dheli: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Co.Lmt.) 1997 p.109

⁸ Su.M.M.13 /453/272, Su.Khu.Ja. 27/110/137, Su.Khu.Ja. 28/1257/247

⁹ Su. Di. M. 10 / 68 / 86, Su. A. Satta. 23 / 20 / 22

1. Population as human beings
2. Territory as the realm of rulers
3. Sovereignty as the norm
4. Government as a supreme ruler in state

The Buddha presented the happiness as the gold of life for human bring as well as political thinkers, who have presented the happiness as the end of state. Further he had presented the way to attain the highest happiness by (1) exercise government without smiting, conquering and punishing but by Norm¹⁰, (2) support the people to live following the principle of the noble eightfold Path¹¹ (3) maintain the interests in present and future¹² and (4) attain common happiness and the interest happiness as Nibbana.¹³

About the origin of state, the state, according to Buddhism, has evolved out of the natural process and reason. According to *Aggañña Sutta*¹⁴ it indicated that the (another) world had manifested, remained and passed away before this world's appearance. The primitive humans were living a special mode of life without any socio-political institutions. Their mode of life was perfect and there was a perfect society because human beings lived in accordance with virtue and morality. In such society, there was no concept of master, slave, ruler, ruled, social systems, or political institutions. Their feeling was full of good will without the interference of any other passionate evil. Then some impurities i.e. craving, greed, desire, laziness, selfishness and conceit, had arisen in their minds in chronological order. Their mode of life was changed from purity to impurity. The gender, the family, the private property, the ruler - became manifest and then the state in chronological order.

About state government, the Buddha supported state exercising without smiting, conquering and punishing but by Norm. He uphold the Norm (Dhamma: the law of truth and righteousness) as called 'dhammadhipateyya' to be supreme power on state governance. 'Dhammaadhipateyya' mean 'the norm being sovereignty'. Dhammaadhipateyya could not preserve itself besides human beings that accepted and upheld it as sovereignty. The Buddha demonstrated the means to preserve dhammadhipateyya by (1) having a good leader or ruler (2) to prevent the people from evil (3) to distribute the resources to the poor and (4) to solve the

¹⁰ Su. S. S. 15 /475/115

¹¹ Su. Dī. M. 10 / 299 / 348; Su. M. Mu. 12 / 149 / 123

¹² Su. A. Attha. 23 / 144 / 289-292

¹³ Su. A. Attha.23 / 144 / 222

¹⁴ Su. Dī. Pa. 11/ 56 / 61

trouble of people. He speaks of the Norm (Dhamma: law truth and righteousness) as sovereignty and the means to preserve the Norm.

About State rulers and citizens, the Buddha had described the origin and growth of state rulers as:

1. King (Mahajana Sammata, Khattiya, Raja)
2. The group of King (Ganaraja)
3. the Emperor (Cakkavattiraja)

The Buddha had described the origin and growth of those state rulers and supported them by giving the Dhamma as virtue. He taught Dasarajadhamma or tenfold virtues of duties of king for the King¹⁵; the aprarihanidhamma or the Norm (Dhamma or law of righteousness) which never leads to declination but only to prosperity for the group of Kings¹⁶; Cakkavattivatta¹⁷ or five duties of Emperor¹⁸. Otherwise he taught the virtue of Rajasevaka who under the king or the group of kings is called 'Rajavasatidhamma'¹⁹ for citizens of state, he taught them to be good citizens. Five precepts were presented by him for the people who are citizens of state.

The idea of Cakkavattiraja was the new idea which appeared in Tipitaka. The Buddha had described that the emperorship had to be endowed with 32 characteristics as called 'maha purisa lakkhana', good qualifications such as he had to be well born on both sides, on mother's side and on the father side, of pure descent back through seven generations and so slur was cast upon him, and no approach in respect of birth etc., the seven treasures as Wheel, Elephant, Horse, Gem, Woman, Housefather, and Adviser and virtues as the five conditions of Cakkavattivatta completely. And virtue was the most important endowment.

3. Political thought on his Sangha governance

During the time of the Buddha, political groups and trade guilds were called 'Sangha'²⁰. The term was also applied to religious orders and thus the Buddhist Order was called a 'Sangha'. Buddhist Sangha society was established by

¹⁵ Ibid. p.272

¹⁶ Ibid.p.76

¹⁷ The word 'Cakkavattiraja' has many meaning as 'a world-king', 'a world-monarch', 'a universal monarch', 'Universal king', 'a Wheel-turning king' 'a Wheel-turning monarch', 'a roller of the wheel'

¹⁸ Su. Di..Pa. 11 / 35 /43

¹⁹ Su.Khu.Jā. 28/ 957-972/ 181-184

²⁰ B.M.Barua, Lectures on Buddhism, delivered in Ceylon, 1944. lect. No.6 p.217 quote in Shobha Mukerji. The republican trends in Ancient India. (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal) 1969 p.150-151.

the Buddha and has the aim to attain Salvation. Buddhist Sangha community was not theocratic. The origin and growth of Buddhist Sangha society in Buddha's lifetime began with the preaching of the first sermon called Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta²¹.

The evaluations of Buddha's forms of Sangha governance can classify as (1) Monarchy: the power of decision-making is vested in the hand of Buddha and is transferred to seniors Bhikkhus like the king and his subjects who work under his business and (2) Democracy: the power of decision-making was vested in the hands of all Bhikkhu as Sangha.

For the form of government the Buddha adopted the republican ways practiced in the communities with which he had very close relations. When the Buddha had passed away, the power of decision making was vested in the hand of Sangha. There was the characteristic of democracy. When we consider in detail, Buddha's Sangha governance was similar with democratic system as follows:

1. Government of Bhikkhus, by Bhikkhus, for Bhikkhus.
2. All Bhikkhus were equal under the law--Dhamma and Vinaya.
3. All Bhikkhus can participate to comment and advice to the Sangha.
4. Decision-making by all Bhikkhus

Thus, most of political thinkers adopted Buddha's thought as democracy. But, his some practices on his Sangha governance was socialism or communism, because his action was follows the society. His teaching was change to be suitable for each society. The Buddhist Sangha is the classless society. The Buddhist Sangha was a unique form of society in which there was no class or social stratification. It is a society which supported the principle of classless society, fraternity, liberty and equality. Everybody in the Buddhist Sangha society is equal under the same law. There was no system of high and low position; but only the principle of senior and junior.

It could not be said that Buddha's thought on Sangha Governance was democracy or communism, liberalism or socialism but Buddhist Sangha Society was established by the Buddha around 2600 years ago; he emphasized quality of the persons who left home to be homelessness. They had to have the high moral standard of mind and could adopt Buddha's teachings and follow it. They could get self-control along with his discipline.

²¹ Vi. M. 4 / 9-76 / 11-62



The main feature of the Buddhist Sangha Society could be concluded as follows:

1. It was governed by law--Dhamma and Vinaya.
2. All Bhikkhus had the high standard of moral conduct and were equal under the law--Dhamma and Vinaya.
3. Governmental power was in the assembly of Bhikkhus.
4. It had no central government: all Bhikkhus could from the assembly following the Vinaya.
5. Decision making must be done by all Bhikkhus, not by majority.
6. It was the classless society, no caste, no class or social status.

The Challenge of Socially Engaged Buddhism in Thailand Today

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Introduction

Socially engaged Buddhism in Thailand is a type of Thai Buddhism apart from normative Buddhism, popular Buddhism and intellectual Buddhism. It is expected by many Thai Buddhists today to solve their immediate problems and render social prosperity because it transcends the barriers of the Buddhist Discipline and tradition in order to serve the needs of an individual and the entire society. If we consider the characteristics of the 4 types of Thai Buddhism carefully, we may understand why socially engaged Buddhism plays a prominent role in the present life.

The first type to be considered here is normative Buddhism which is now mainstream Buddhism in Thailand. Its beliefs and practices are based on the Buddhist teachings in the Tipitaka and the Buddhist Commentaries. It can thus be called textual or doctrinal Buddhism. Normative Buddhism is well supported by the State and the Sangha as the standard type of Thai Buddhism. Its outstanding characteristics are its assertion of the authority of the Buddhist Discipline (the Vinaya) and the sacredness of the Pāli language as well as its differentiation of the monastic status from lay status. It, therefore, asserts the Pāli study as crucial means of knowledge of the Buddha's teachings.

The second type of Thai Buddhism is popular Buddhism or folk Buddhism. It is the combination of Buddhism, Hinduism, and Animism. It emphasizes the roles of supernatural beings and gods in providing human beings with luck and loss. Nibbāna, however, is not popular Buddhists' destination. They long to be reborn in the realm of Metteyya Buddha which is like the Paradise on earth.

The third type of Thai Buddhism is intellectual Buddhism which is best illustrated in the teachings and way of practice of Buddhadasa Bhikkhu. In the light of Buddhadasa, wisdom (paññā) is the essential path to the attainment of Nibbāna. It is a spiritual quality which can penetrate the truth of oneself and the whole world, i.e., impermanence, state of suffering, and not-self/ soullessness. It thus does not take the literal meaning of the Buddha's teachings in the Tipitaka and the Buddhist Commentaries.

The last type of Thai Buddhism to be mentioned here is socially-engaged Buddhism. It is most interesting to all Buddhist activists and socio-political movers today who believe that a religion cannot exist by itself but is a function of a society.

Though, phenomenologically and sociologically, Thai Buddhism is differentiated into 4 types. Thai Buddhists do not consider themselves accordingly different from one another. A Buddhist can express himself/herself more than one type throughout his/her Buddhist life. For example, s/he may wear amulets and worship a deity as well as be an efficient scholar of Buddhist Scriptures. S/he may be a popular Buddhist only at a certain time and in a certain place. It can be noted that if a Thai Buddhist is asked what Thai Buddhism is, the answer will always be the description of normative Buddhism. The assertion of normative Buddhism signifies the standard type of Thai Buddhism while socially engaged Buddhism is recognized by Thai people in general as the effective means for a better life on earth.¹

1. The Significance of Socially Engaged Buddhism

Socially engaged Buddhism is the most appropriate type of all 4 types of Buddhism to deal with all human problems and development of the world today. It selects some parts of the Buddha's teachings concerning all virtues and practices leading to peace and happiness of all beings in this life. It thus responds to the needs of the followers rather than the goal of the master. Virtues and moral practices in the Buddha's teachings as emphasized by socially engaged Buddhism are, for example: loving kindness, compassion, self-sacrifice, selflessness, and altruistic spirit. The sense of working for the sake of other appeared first, as recorded by the Tipitaka or the Buddhist Scriptures, in the time of the Buddha when he ordered 60 monk disciples to propagate his religion as follows.

Go forth, O Bhikkhus, for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, benefit, and happiness of gods and men. Let not two go by one way: Preach, O Bhikkhus, the Dhamma, excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle, excellent in the end, both in the spirit and in the letter. Proclaim the Holy Life, altogether perfect and pure.²

These monk disciples of the Buddha were all the Arahants (The Buddhist saints). They first purified themselves from all defilements before going forth to

¹ P.A. Payutto, A Constitution for Living. The Pali Canon : What a Buddhist Must Know (Bangkok : Printing House of Thammasat University, B.E. 2551/2008), p. 38-39.

² Vinaya, Mahāvagga, Mahā-Khandhaka, in Narada, The Buddha and His Teachings (Kuala Lumpur : Buddhist Missionary Society, 1988), p.108.

assist others. This is the Buddha's guideline that monks should first practice the Dhamma and then propagate the Dhamma. Besides, according to the Sigālovāda Sutta in the Tipitaka, one of a monk's duties to a layperson is to "love him/her with a kind heart".³ Such duty encourages monks to work for laypeople in all dimensions, e.g., political, social and ecological. Here, monks' practices are quite different from those of normative Buddhist monks who strictly keep the Vinaya and a distance from laity. Thought and practices of socially engaged Buddhists are primarily based on loving kindness and compassion which inspire monks to be community leaders and laity to serve one another. In the time of the Buddha, Anāthapiṇḍika, the millionaire, is an example of socially engaged Buddhists who had the Jetavana monastery built for the Buddha, in Sāvathi, and alms-houses for giving food and clothing to all the needy. Moreover, the application of Buddhism for social welfare could be seen in King Asoka's roles in the Third Buddhist Century (The Third Century B.C.). King Asoka was the great Patron of Buddhism. He had 84,000 Buddhist monasteries constructed in his reign, patronized the Third Buddhist Council, and had many hospitals, public wells and three-laned roads constructed for the benefits of all people and animals. Generally, world historians consider King Asoka's work the best success in social services first recorded in the Buddhist history.⁴

It is not true that Theravada Buddhists who uphold the original teachings of the Buddha are escapists and avoid socially engaged activities. Though they are taught to be loners in their search for Nibbāna, they are also encouraged to develop loving kindness and compassion in their hearts and work for the sake of other beings. Buddhism since the time of the Buddha has thus been the religion not only for the good of an individual but also for the best of all beings.

2. The Buddhist Roles in Social Services

The spirit of social engaged Buddhists which develops from the sense of loving kindness and compassion is well supported by many passages in the Buddhist Scriptures such as the Teaching of the Five Ennobling Virtues (pañca-dhamma) and the Teaching of the Ten Perfections (dasa-pāramī). In Thailand today, many famous Thai monks have successfully implemented the virtues of loving kindness and compassion in their social work. Phra Raja-dharmanidesa (Payom Kalayano) is one example of social engage Buddhist monks at present who has shown his altruistic spirit in his many projects for many past years.

³ The Sigālovāda Sutta quoted in *ibid.* p. 590.

⁴ Fred Eppsteiner, ed., *The Path of Compassion : Writings on Socially Engaged Buddhism* (Berkeley, CA : Parallax Press, 1988), p. 173

Phra Payom Kalayano came from a poor family, He had had a tough life when he was a boy. Nevertheless, he was diligent and hard-working. He was ordained as a monk in B.E. 2513 (1970). Three years after that, he became a Doctrine Knower of the Highest Grade (Nak Tham Ek). Gradually, he had won many prizes from many Institutes and had been honored nationally. For example, he was honored with the Master Degree in Buddhist Studies by Mahachulalongkorn Buddhist University in B.E. 2536 (1993) and with his achievements in the Anti-Smoking Project by the Bangkok Metropolitan Bureau in B.E.2531 (1988).

Outstanding social service began when Phra Payom Kalayano was the abbot of Wat Suan Kaew in B.E. 2523 (1980) and established Wat Suan Kaew Foundation in B.E. 2529 (1986). At present, he is the abbot of Wat Suan Kaew and the Chairperson of Wat Suan Kaew Foundation which provides Thai society with many useful projects, e.g., the Old People's Home Project, the Canine Condominium Project, the Project for Hungry Young Brothers/Sisters, and the Social Services Project.

The Social Services Project was set up in B.E. 2531 (1988) in order to train the homeless who stayed in Wat Suan Kaew to be able to work for their own living. The Project encourages the miserable to be able to rely on themselves and is supported by benefactors. Phra Payom Kalayano invites many volunteers to give training courses in carpentry, handicraft and so on which a trainee can take as a job in the future.

The Project for Hungry Young Brothers/Sisters began in B.E. 2534 (1991) in order to encourage poor children to work and earn enough income to support themselves financially in schools. During their vacation, poor students outside Bangkok usually come to apply for an educational fund at Wat Suan Kaew. Phra Payom Kalayano thus provides them with some work such as woodwork and handmade production. He also prepares a place for displaying and selling their products. The income totally belongs to students who work hard and deserve the outcome of their work. Moreover, Phra Payom Kalayano asks school administrators to send their poor students to work in his Wat (temple or monastery) in order to earn more income. Through Phra Payom's management, these students can have enough money to continue their studying and can learn to cultivate their moral conducts, e.g., living sufficiently, being truthful, and working diligently. His Project is widely appreciated and commended as follows:

Working in order to get an educational funding, which is the Project's condition, is a strategy to train young people to realize the value of hard-working. One should work honestly, diligently, and patiently in order

to be successful, i.e., being funded for further studying or being supported by employers to be able to graduate from a university.⁵

The Old People's Home Project was originated in B.E. 2535 (1992) for the good of neglected old people. Nowadays, most people are burdened with earning their living. They have no time to look after their parents and their elderly family members. This Project thus provides the elderly with shelters and happiness throughout the final years of their lives. It also initiates many activities in which the elderly can exchange ideas with one another, take part in the development of the monastery, and be able to keep their minds and bodies in good health; remarkably, many old people, after having been in this place, look more healthy.

The last Project to be mentioned here is the Canine Condominium Project. It signifies the virtues of loving kindness and compassion of Phra Payom Kalayano which extend beyond the human species. This Project was originated in B.E. 2546 (2003) in order to cooperate with the Bangkok Metropolitan Office in the solution of an abundance of strayed dogs in Bangkok. Phra Payom offered some space in his Wat to be dogs' shelters where strayed dogs can stay, be fed and be cured of their disease.

These Projects may be criticized, especially by normative Buddhists, that they are neither monks' business nor in accord with the monastic discipline. Nevertheless, it may be unfair for socially engaged Buddhist activities to be judged merely on the basis of the Buddhist discipline. As far as a good intention and Buddhist virtues are concerned, one needs to closely scrutinize the value of socially engaged Buddhism to the present world.

3. The Transgression of the Vinaya

Since the main objective of socially engaged Buddhism is the good of others, it allows, in some cases, a transgression of the Vinaya (The Buddhist Discipline). Let us consider thought and practices of some eminent socially engaged Buddhists. Phra Pisal Visalo is a socially engaged Buddhist monk who has continuously worked for Thai social development. He is now the abbot of Wat Pah Sukhato (The Sukhato Forest Hermitage) in Chaiyaphum Province. He is the author of many publications, e.g., *Making Merit Wisely* and *Thai Buddhism in the Future: A Critical Tendency and an Exit from Crisis*. His work puts a special emphasis on the reduction of pain and the promotion of happiness in one's life and in society. He pays less attention to a normative Buddhist monk's roles and status. He considers Buddhism a product of a society and thus depends on the people. A Buddhist monk should be concerned for

⁵ Nichamon Salyawuti, "The Role and Significance of the Project for Hungry Young Brothers/Sisters in Youth Development," *WFB Journal* Vol.38 No.253 (October-December B.E. 2548/2005) : 65. (In Thai)

the well-being of his society and participate with other social members in order to make the best of the society in all dimensions. He even criticizes of the State and the Sangha as follows:

Though the Council of the Elders states that one qualification of the preceptor is “the ability to train his followers to be good monks and novices, according to the Vinaya,” in practice, however, this crucial rule is overlooked. At present the preceptor’s qualification most emphasized by the Sangha is: “being in the monastic rank not less than the level of the abbot”. It is thus difficult to select the right one to enter monkhood if the qualification of the preceptor is inadequate for being a good trainer.⁶

Moreover, Phra Pisal also supports the ordination of female monks (bhikkhunī) which is opposed by the Sangha and normative Buddhists. The latter consider the bhikkhunī extinct from Sri Lanka, the mould of normative Thai Buddhism, around 17th Century B.E. (11th Century C.E.). Therefore, the Thai Sangha could not find a group of Theravāda Bhikkhunī to ordain a laywoman and continue the lineage of female monks in Thailand. Once, H.E. Sarala Fernando, the Ambassador of Sri Lanka to Thailand from B.E. 2538 (1995) to B.E. 2541 (1998), gave her interview that the Sri Lankan Sangha did not approve the ordination of bhikkhunī in Buddhagayā in B.E. 2540 (1997) in which Mahayāna female monks from U.S.A., Korea and Taiwan were preceptors of women around the world who wanted to be Theravāda bhikkhunī. She commented that the movement brought extensive conflict to Theravāda countries.⁷

Nevertheless, Phra Pisal still calls for the support of the ordination of female monks. He asserts that the chance of Thai women to be ordained as bhikkhunī will yields benefits to Thai Society as follows:

If a female monk existed and took more roles in Thai Buddhism, The Buddhist teachings of loving kindness and compassion which were emphasized in Mahayāna Buddhism through the symbol of Kwan-Yin would be prominent in Thailand. The tender teachings of Mahayāna Buddhism can fulfill the strict teachings of the theravādins. In other words, the Mahayāna attitude will balance male and female status in Thai Buddhism and adjust the Buddhist teachings for the good of female conditions.⁸

Phra Pisal Visalo considers social utility more important than traditional practices. He assists that one can make merits without spending money. While most

⁶ Phra Pisal Visalo, *Thai Buddhism in the Future : A Critical Tendency and an Exit from Crisis* (Bangkok : Sodsri-Saritwong Foundation, B.E. 2546/2003), p. 281 (In Thai).

⁷ Sarala Fernando, “Buddhism in Sri Lanka, “reported by Patatapom Sirikanachana in *WFB Journal* Vol. 31 No. 212 (July-August B.E. 2541/1998) : 19. (In Thai).

⁸ Phra Pisal Visals, *Thai Buddhism in the Future : A Critical Tendency and an Exit from Crisis*, p. 364. (In Thai).

Thai Buddhists make merits through financial donation and giving things to others, Phra Pisal suggests making merits without money by means of working, e.g., feeding orphans in a nursery, visiting the elderly in an Old People's Home, and being volunteers in a temple.⁹

The transgression of the Vinaya as sometimes practiced by socially engaged Buddhists facilitates monks' cooperation with laypeople in social and political activities. It is noted that many political actions against the power of the State have been led by monks, e.g., the Dhamma-yatrā pilgrimage against the gas-line construction near Songkhla Lake in order to preserve the forest around the Lake and to protect natural environments. Even in the demonstration of the United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship (UDD) at present, one can find a considerable number of Thai Buddhist monks participating actively in order to force the Prime Minister, Mr. Abhisit Vejjajiva, to dissolve the House of Parliament or to resign.

In fact, the interference in politics is not first initiated by monks. On the contrary, the State is the first one who launched the project of missionary monks in order to persuade people in the villages and in remote areas to reject Communism and accept the Thai State's ruling power instead. This project was originated in Thailand in B.E. 2507 (1964) in the name of the Missionary Monks Project (Phra Dhammadūta Project). It was the attempt of the Thai government, through the Office of Religious Affairs, to cooperate with monks in cultivating the Buddhist morality of the villagers and to train the villagers with skillful livelihood. At that time, the Project was successful in protecting Thai people from being communist because they began to realize the value of "Thainess", to appreciate the Buddha's teachings, and to be able to earn their living. Nowadays, the Dhammadūta Project does not work against Communism any more. It becomes the crucial means of the propagation of Buddhism abroad and is well supported by the Office of Religious Affairs, Mahāmakuta Buddhist University, and Mahāchulalongkorn Buddhist University. Apart from the Dhammadūta Project, the Thai government, under the management of the Ministry of Interior Affairs, initiated the Wandering Dhamma Preacher Project (Phra Dhammacārika Project) in B.E. 2508 (1965). Its main objective was to propagate Buddhism to hill-tribe people, in Northern Thailand, who lived in remote areas, beyond the reach of the Thai government, grew poppy plants, and worked on drifting plantations. Monks in this Project helped the hill-tribe villagers quit their immoral livelihood and be good Thai citizens who were faithful to the Nation, the Religion, and the Monarchy. Since many governmental and non-governmental organizations can reach the hill-tribe

⁹ Phra Chai Worathammo and Phra Pisal Visalo, Making Merits Wisely : A Collection of Things Worth Knowing and Manual for Making Merits Properly (Bangkok : Medsai Printing, B.E. 2544/2001), pp. 50-53. (In Thai)

communities today, the need for missionary monks in Phra Dhammacārika Project in these areas is quite less than before.

Obviously, all socially engaged Buddhist activities are beneficial to the State and to Thai people. They are thus not opposed by the Thai government. Nevertheless, there are some activities which challenge the State's power, e.g., the demonstration against the governmental policies.¹⁰ These activities may be barred and judged under the Thai law. Though some Buddhists may not be quite happy with the socially engaged Buddhist monks' transgression of the Vinaya, e.g., touching women, cutting grass, digging in earth, and wearing untidy robes, they still find much benefit in their work.

4. A Civil Religion and Self - Reliance

Socially engaged Buddhism is a civil religion. It is the religion defined by the people. Its beliefs, practices and movements are initiated by people in a community for the best of their living. It thus takes crucial roles in solving problems and developing lives and environments of the community.

An example here is Phra Boonrod Adhipuñño in Saithong Village, Kalasin Province, Thailand. Phra Boonrod works in order to turn the community into the Drinking-Free Village. He preaches the evil of drinking and being alcoholic. He offers jobs in his Temple for those who can quit drinking. He teaches children to understand Buddhist morality and practice accordingly. He also initiates many project which effectively free villagers from their poor lives, e.g. weaving silk cloth and farming.¹¹

Phra Kroo Pipattanachot, the abbot of Don Temple, Songkhla Province, in Southern Thailand also works to help villagers overcome their own poverty. He is the founder of the Bank of Life aiming to free the Community of Hua Kwai (Buffalo's Head) Village from all debts. The Bank of Life is a form of banking of which the objectives are rather for helping its customers than sharing benefits. A villager should deposit 30-baht (about one dollar) in the Bank every month.

Those who want to take out a loan should sign the agreement one month ahead. They cannot take out a loan more than a double amount of their deposit and should pay the interest of one percent per month. All benefits from this banking

¹⁰ [Editor's comment: a monk was video-taped striking the car that the prime-minister was supposed to be in during an early Red Shirt protest]

¹¹ Theera Vacharapraanee and Anan Manpajak, Drinking-Free Village (Bangkok : Champathong Printing, B.E. 2550/2007), pp. 17-27. (In Thai).

system go to hospital welfare for all villagers and educational funds for children in the village.¹²

Cooperation of monks and laypeople in order to protect and develop their community can be also seen in the role of Phra Kroo Pitak-nantakun, the leader of “Love the Nan City” Foundation who restores the villagers’ conscience and the forest to its former richness through the strategy of “ordaining the forest” in Nan, a province in Northern Thailand. He and the villagers tie yellow cloths around many big trees in the forest in order to make them ordained. They hope that when choppers see trees with yellow cloths, they may feel guilty to chop down the ordained trees.¹³

Cooperation of monks and laity to save their community is a characteristic of a civil religion. A civil religion aims at stimulating a public mind and conscience for the sake of one’s community and one’s personal right in one’s religious activities. Thai Buddhism as a civil religion plays an important role in Thailand.

In the civil religion, the people or religious followers are conscious of using their religion to develop their lives and learning to depend on themselves. They do not just wait for governmental assistance. Nevertheless, Thai Buddhism as a civil religion still needs monks as leaders of civil communities.

The fundamental element of a civil society is self-reliance and mutual cooperation for social utility. In Thailand, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej the Great is the greatest socially engaged Buddhist. He has done many projects for the benefits of his people. His projects are based on Buddhist teachings. For example, his “New Theory for the Solution of Drought for Farmers” and “The Theory of Sufficient Economy” is based on the Buddhist teaching of self-reliance and a moderate life. According to this Theory, each farmer who averagely owns the land of 6 acres per family should make the best benefit of the land by dividing it into 4 parts. The first part about 30% of the land is used for water storage by digging a pond where fish are kept and water is used in the dry season. The second part, 30% of the land, is used for growing rice which yields food to the family during the whole year. The third part, 30% of the land, is used for growing vegetable and fruit plants for eating and selling. The fourth part which is 10% of the land is used for building a house, raising animals and growing small plants.¹⁴ Through this management of land, farmers will be able to live sufficiently and overcome all difficulties throughout their lives.

¹² Somkiat Meethan, “Phra Kroo Pipattanachot and the Bank of life,” in *Sekhiyaddharma* Vol.10 No. 43 (January-March, B.E. 2543/2000) : 136-139. (In Thai).

¹³ Banchit Sairawkam and Thanat Baiya, *Hak Muang Nan (Love Nan City)* (Chiangmai : Nontagarn Graphic Printing B.E. 2549/20206), p.51. (In Thai).

¹⁴ Pragas Wacharaporn, *Phra Raja Panithan Nailuang (His Majesty the King’s Resolution)* (Bangkok : Prapansam Printing, B.E. 2542/1999), pp. 205-207. (In Thai).

Though His Majesty the King's work affirms his being a socially engaged Buddhist, he is basically and primarily representing followers of mainstream Normative Buddhism. His role as a socially engaged Buddhist is the outcome of his loving kindness and compassion toward his people. Nevertheless, he needs to strictly preserve and follow the norm of the country.

The theory of Sufficient Economy was first introduced by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand to his people in order to deal with problems of poverty, morality and environments in Thailand. He first presented his Theory to the students of Kasetsart University on July 18, B.E. 2517/C.E. 1974 as a means to solve economic problems of the country. A part of his lecture on this Theory is as follows:

The Development of the country should follow a step-by-step plan. It should first provide the people with self-sufficiency by means of an economical way of life and proper management. Then it can proceed to a higher step of economic success and social prosperity.¹⁵

Sufficient economy promotes self-reliance of a person. A person who is economically secure can survive and help others. The practical dimension of the sufficient economy aims at economic sustainability of one's community through living in moderation. It is not to be mistaken as a form of localism which is the antagonistic view to modern capitalism. In fact, sufficient economy can be applied to all levels of life, e.g. lives of local, town, lower class and middle class people. In other words, sufficient economic is a philosophy that stresses the Middle Path¹⁶ as an overriding principle for appropriate conduct by the populace at all levels. It is a holistic concept of moderation and contentment which can be applied to all conducts in family, community and nation.

The Middle Path is the Buddha's teaching as recorded in the Tipitaka and the principle of the Buddhist practices. The Renunciation of Prince Siddhattha can illustrate the meaning of the Middle Path which is the avoidance of the two extremities, i.e. the luxurious life in the three palaces and self-mortification of an ascetic during the Search of Truth. His Majesty the King gives his exposition of sufficient economic as follows:

Sufficient economy is an economy which can help those who practice it attain self-sufficiency and live without trouble. It promotes primarily the establishment of one's economic foundation or self-sufficiency. Those

¹⁵ The Message of His Majesty the King delivered on the Occasion of the commencement of Kasetsart University Students.

¹⁶ The Middle Path is the Path between the two extremities and the way toward the end of suffering as enlightened by the Buddha

who are able to stand firmly on their self-sufficient bases can proceed to a higher level of their economic progress.¹⁷

Self-sufficiency enables self-reliance. It strengthens economic stability of an individual and his/her community and supports them to live harmoniously with their natural environment. In the Tipitaka, one can find the Buddhist teaching which promotes self-sufficiency, i.e. the virtues leading to Temporal Welfare, as follows:

- 1) Endowment of Industry: One should be energetic and apply oneself to one's duty and honest living.
- 2) Endowment of Protection: One should know how to protect the fruitfulness of one's labor which is gained through one's honest efforts.
- 3) Association with Good Friends: One should not associate with those who lead one downward. One should associate with people who are learned, worthy capable and endowed with qualities helpful to one's livelihood.
- 4) Sufficient Livelihood (Living Moderately): One should keep track of one's income and expense and live accordingly so that one can be secured financially.¹⁸

The Tipitaka also suggests the Buddhists to divide their income into 4 parts. One part is for supporting themselves, their dependants and for good causes. Two parts are for investment. The last part is for saving for future needs.¹⁹ Similarly, the sufficient economy asserts the right method for managing one's own property, i.e. the acquisition of wealth through intelligent and moral acts and the protection of wealth for one's own development and security. Especially, it encourages all human beings to attain sustainable happiness. Sustainable happiness worth pursuing according to the Tipitaka can be described as follows:

Happiness of possessing one's property which is the outcome of one's own effort and moral conduct. Happiness of spending one's property for the sake of one's own self, one's own family, the needy and the public welfare. Happiness of freedom from debt; Happiness of blameless conduct²⁰

Sufficient economy values happiness of the people more than economic growth and wealth of the country. Evidently, the Kingdom of Bhutan closely follows the Theory of Sufficient Economy. The King of Bhutan is knowledgeable about western civilization and development. Yet, he does not allow his country to be westernized. In addition, the people of Bhutan are devout Buddhists. They live

¹⁷ The Message of His Majesty the King delivered on the occasion of His Birthday Anniversary Celebration on December 4, 2541/1998.

¹⁸ P.A. Payutto, A Constitution for Living/The Pali Canon : What a Buddhist Must Know , p. 41.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 42

²⁰ Ibid., p.44.

moderate and sufficient lives and strictly observe Buddhist precepts and ceremonies. They prefer living with nature and in natural environment to living in materialism and modern technology. The Bhutanese aim to attain the ideology of GNH (Gross National Happiness). Though Bhutan is considered a poor country with low income and simple life style, the people are content with their ways of lives.

His Majesty the King of Thailand presented the Theory of Sufficient Economy to Thai people when the country suffered from economic deterioration. Primarily, he expected to save all in lower social status, e.g. farmers and laborers, from economic poverty. At present, he loves to have his Theory followed by all Thais who want to attain sustainable happiness. His Theory was recommended by the United Nations (UN) which honored him with the Human Development Lifetime Achievement Award in May 26, B.E. 2549 (C.E.2006). In the UN Lecture in honor of him, the Theory of Sufficient Economy was praised as a worthy theory for Thailand and all nations. In addition, the UN encourages its 166 nation members to apply this Theory to their sustainable development.

The chance of being self-reliant can free a person from materialism and consumerism. Socially engaged Buddhism promotes freedom from money. It encourages mutual cooperation as means of problem solutions and development. For example, if one wants to have a monastery built, one should work together with others in the community instead of trying to collect money in order to pay to the builders. Sulak Sivaraksa, a socially engaged Thai Buddhist and an internationally famous activist also opposes materialism and consumerism. He criticizes that materialism and consumerism represent greed and feelings of power. Through them, people are deceived into believing that the more they consume, the more convenient lives they will have.²¹

Conclusion

In summary, the characteristics of Socially Engaged Buddhism can be presented as follows:

- 1) It put more emphasis on the solution of immediate problems than on the preservation of the Buddhist discipline and tradition. For example, a monk can touch a woman if he intends to save her life or to cure her from her illness.
- 2) Pāli language and Pāli Scriptures are not considered crucial for a Buddhist life. Buddhist teachings and practices which serve immediate needs of the community are particularly emphasized, e.g. Buddhist teachings of herbal medicine, environmental protection and the Present Benefits of Life which consists of

²¹ Sulak Sivaraksa, "The Religion of Consumerism," in *Spirit for Change*, ed. Christopher Titmuss (London : The Merlin Press Ltd., 1989), p. 101.

- the fulfillment of hard-working, the protection of one's own property, the association of good people and the economical living.
- 3) It supports a civil society and encourages a cultivation of a public mind. It values the ideology of altruism and social responsibility. Monks live in a village or near a lay community. They work for the sake of others rather than for their own final liberation.
 - 4) It supports all movements for the social development. For example, unlike Normative Buddhism, It approves the ordination of female monks (bhikkhunis). In Socially Engaged Buddhism, monks and laypeople work together to promote human right, freedom and the benefits of all beings.

Thailand today encounters problems in all dimensions. We have educational courses which cannot practically develop good and efficient students. We have politicians who concern more with their own benefit than the benefits of the people. We have an economic system which promotes materialism and consumerism. People basically live for their own survival. Therefore, a proper type of Buddhism is needed to immediately solve the problems. Normative Buddhism suggests that one should solve the problem at its root cause. Popular Buddhism encourages one to seek supernatural and divine assistance. Intellectual Buddhism asserts the solution of all problems by means of wisdom and the understanding of their causes which ends up with non-attachment. Though normative Buddhism and Intellectual Buddhism can solve all problems properly, they require a considerable effort of an individual and a long period of time to succeed. Popular Buddhism, on the other hand, tends to allow one's dependence on others rather than on one's own self and thus cannot solve any problem successfully. Therefore, the solution of all problems at present according to socially engaged Buddhism may be the most appropriate choice since it neither demand the eradication of defilements nor the blind faith in supernaturalism. On the contrary, it promotes loving kindness, compassion, and peaceful attitude to help one's own self as well as to help others. The critical situation of the world today calls for an immediate solution. Socially engaged Buddhism is surely our answer.

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Buddhist Restorative Principles towards the Physical and Mental Eudaemonia of Conflict-induced Displaced People in the World

Ven. Pinnawala Sangasumana

Introduction

The need of displaced persons for protection and assistance was one of the factors that prompted a shift in global policy and thinking on state responsibility. The deployment of more humanitarian and peacekeeping operations to protect civilians reflects a new reality as do preventive and peace building efforts. In this juncture, new faith based approaches are important in order to address the real situation of people who have been displaced due to the war. At present war-displaced population of the world has reached over 37 million. Over the past three decades most of the governments are either unable or unwilling to provide displaced with the protection or assistance they have a right to expect. The reasons are obvious because they could not apply the practical realities mixed with the system in order to match with people's aspirations. Lack of conceptual understanding of displaced lives has created some critical issues in seeking durable solutions to the problem. To create a good set up for physical and mental well being of Conflict Induced IDPs, the study has attempted to realize what actually displaced life is and how it can be address in an appropriate manner. Here it is understood that displacement as an indicator of inbetweenness characterized by uncertainty, fear and anxiety factors outside displaced control.

Conceptual Framework

Oxford dictionary explains an old fashion idiom 'betwixt and between' as in a middle position; neither one thing nor the other. When two prepositions 'in' and 'between' are used collectively it denotes the idea of '*at or to a point in the area of interval bounded by two or more other points in space, time, sequence... etc* (Oxford Dictionary:123). The addition of the German suffix 'ness' give the meaning of '*a state or condition of someone or something in a certain place in the area or interval bounded by two or more other places in space, time etc.* (ibid: 914) But as a human experience it has a broad, complex meaning.



Inbetweenness is the plane of endless interconnected possibilities of existents of movement and vibration. This is of course, not a place. It is a plane where the limitations of dimensionality do not apply. In this plane, everything is movement and vibration. This ranges from the most solid entities all the way to pure spirit. A solid entity is formed by the least vibration, so to speak, whereas pure spirit is the highest in vibration. All existents are energy. The matter of any substance is energy. Matter is not even substantial. Any changes affecting any existent are due to change in energy which is driven by movement and vibration. The process of ice melting, for example, is due to change in its vibration. Simply, the quantum properties of water vibrate more than those of ice. This vibration is what makes ice out of water. This plane consists of interconnected possibilities that make up the wholeness of it all. This interconnectedness of the cosmos constitutes the way humans act. Being a part of this wholeness, as humans, every action affects this wholeness. This gives rise to the idea of humans as spiritual participators. Doing what is right and avoiding what is wrong as rules and regulations are even beneath the possibility of a spiritual participator. The spiritual participator's way of being is self-regulating.

The Buddhist interpretation of existence is psychological rather than metaphysical. Buddhism sees this psychological process as an interconnectedness of interdependent arising. Interdependent arising could be explained as follows: this rises, that rises; this decays, that decays. Nothing also goes out of existence solely and for no reason. An event takes place because one or more events cause it to do so. It also means that a phenomenon takes place because one or more phenomena give it existence. This is the vision of Buddhism since it does not believe in a personal god as a creator who exists outside this process. If this god existed, it would be inside the dimensionality of this process, so to speak and it would be changeable. If this god changed, it would not be a god to begin with. This is due to the fact that the world is change. Everything, when it comes to Buddhism, is traced back to interdependent arising. Nothing, Buddhism talks of, exists outside this process. Buddhism started as a solution to the problematic of human suffering. It traces this suffering back to original human ignorance. Simply, suffering rises because ignorance rises. When ignorance decays, suffering will eventually decay. This means that everything is interconnected through rising and falling, which are forms of movement and vibration. Buddhism also subscribes to the Noble Eightfold Path as the solution to suffering. This path consists of the right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration. When interdependent arising and the eightfold path are understood, one is ultimately led to Nirvana, which is a state of bliss. The way to Nirvana starts with the eightfold path, advances to what is called Dharmakaya. Dharmakaya is a term that describes religious consciousness or Buddha's original body. Humans reach that state when they become spiritually enlightened. This is beyond following

the eightfold path. It is doing what is good because it is the only way to be. Simply, it is the spiritual participator's way of being.

1. From Theory to Practice

Beyond physical eudaemonia of displaced people, awareness of mental situation in uncertainties should be come first in restoration process. It is significant to stress that with *Inbetweenness* an IDP does not act a certain way because this participator is following laws or regulations of any sort. This participator does not act appropriately only because of the mere belief of a certain religion. The spiritual participator acts appropriately because this behavior results from a way of being not a way of following or abiding. This way of being, which gives rise to such behavior, rises out of the understanding of the wholeness and oneness of everything. This is due to the fact that spirituality cuts across and even goes beyond all religions.

Now here, an attempt has been made to present the term 'in-between' or 'inbetweenness' with the help of some empirical evidences presented by some of the IDPs themselves. Some of the responses given to the researcher by the respondents in the field could be utilized to formulate the nature of the state of inbetweenness experienced by the IDPs themselves.

When the researcher posed the questions: *Who are you? What do you think about your present life?* The respondents answered in the following ways:

- 'When the terrorists attack our villages we get into camps. After a brief period we go back to the village again. This is a nomadic life'
- 'If we stay here we have to beg from the others. We lose our villages too. But if we go back to village we are not sure of our lives. We are uncertain about our future. We just go on thinking and we are torn between two worlds'
- 'How happy when we were in our villages. Now we have come to an alien place. We pay for our sins like rootless people'

The Sinhala terms of each and every respondent show how each one perceive the state of inbetweenness, as they have left their familiar places to a temporary camp in an unfamiliar area. The literary term for inbetweenness in Sinhala is '*ataramedibhawaya*': a condition of in between two or more ends. But the depth of the meanings of the above underlined terms should be analyzed to understand the gravity of the conditions that they live in.

In the first interview the respondent uses the Sinhala term '*nannaththàra*' which could be translated as either 'nomadic' or 'pathetic' life any one leads. The meaning of the Sinhala term in day-to-day colloquial usage is that someone is undergoing a bad patch in his life. In simple terms the person is undergoing or

experiencing such a hard time in his life. When a person is unstable his social recognition and acceptance is lost or less. So in such a condition whatever he does is not accepted. Then it can become a time of self-withdrawal from all forms of social activities. Since the individual cannot retain in a specific place he is confused in planning his life. The idea behind the response is that the respondent IDP himself has come to an understanding that he is a 'marginalized' character. So he loses social contacts in two ways. The others avoid him since he is not a stable character, knowing that he avoids the others.

The second respondent's phrase is that '*delovatama nethi ekak*' compares her life as something (*ekak*) that does not have a hold (*nethi*) in both worlds (*de – two, lova-* worlds). The traditionally conditioned villagers suffer from the salvation anxiety which means that they are worried about the life after death. To have a better life after death they have to engage in meritorious acts in this life and accumulate merits for the life after death. Since this world is instable the individuals are unable to engage in any such meritorious deeds therefore, they themselves know that the life after death is not so comfortable. The condition arises out of the present state that they are in. This kind of uncertainty has affected his life so much that he is not only worried about this life but also the life that is to come. This kind of psychological trauma can be considered a common feature among the majority or almost all the IDPs.

Another important concept that came into the discussion is the sense of belonging. In all social contexts the human beings want to belong to somewhere as a social being. It is the part of the identity. Especially the individual belongs to a particular ethnic group, caste, village, geographical region, linguistic community or a religious group. But the term '*àthak pàthak nethi ewun*' means that the individual does not belong to anywhere. This is one of the tragic outcomes of the internal displacement in Sri Lanka. All those who have got displaced have lost their 'roots'; the sense of belonging. The rootlessness has affected the individuals in many ways. So all the terms the respondents used denote the meanings of rootlessness, alienation, dispossession and marginalization show that they are in a state of inbetweenness. Even though there are certain dissimilarities in how they 'feel' it there is uniformity in how all 'perceive' the state of inbetweenness. The same condition could be emphasized as the researcher had a rare opportunity to meet and interview a Buddhist monk who was among the Tamil IDPs as they cross the rebel held areas to get into the government controlled areas.

The Buddhist monk had been surviving in an area totally controlled by a group that fights against the Buddhist monk's ethnic community. Further the cultural, religious environments of the Tamils were entirely different from the Sinhalese culture and religion. At the time of the interview the researcher found out that the Buddhist monk had been an epitome of the state of inbetweenness in

many facets. When I questioned ‘What do you think?’ his response was extremely critical:

Monk: *‘At the end of my life what should I think. Everything that can happen to man has happened. With an unstable mind how should I think?’*

Researcher: ‘What about this displaced life?’

Monk: *‘I am not displaced. That is what you think and see. Only my body is here. I will die there.’*

Researcher: ‘What do you think of your future?’

Monk: *‘There is no use of thinking about past or future. When your present is unstable how do you guarantee about future, if future comes then I think of present.’¹*

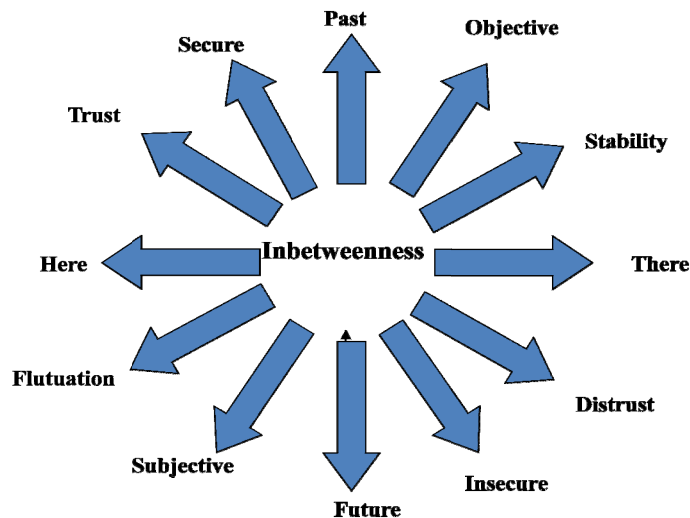
All these answers show how a Buddhist monk perceives the state of inbetweenness. The ideas of the respondents who are the IDPs themselves present the true picture of an inbetweenness. According to their responses the state of inbetweenness is a condition that fluctuates between two ends. According to the displaced monk the IDPs are the people who fluctuate psychologically between ‘here’ and ‘there’. In these two ends ‘body’ and ‘mind’ could be there. Sometimes those two may be ‘past’ and ‘present’. But the present condition has destroyed both. The Buddhist monk sees present as articulations for past and future. Bammer (1994: xii) explains this as a ‘simultaneously split and doubled existence – stretched across the multiple ruptures between ‘here’ and ‘there’. In the light of the above, displacement indicates a state of inbetweenness which is characterized by a fluctuation between here and there, past and present, body and mind, thought and action etc.

2. Buddhist Approach

In explaining the state of inbetweenness, a Buddhist concept: Mandala can be used as a best start for reading the physical and mental body of displaced people. The word *mandala* itself is derived from the root *manda*, which means essence, to which the suffix *la*, meaning container, has been added. Thus, one obvious connotation of mandala is that it is a container of essence. As an image, a mandala may symbolize both the mind and the body of the Buddha. In esoteric

¹ It was reported that this monk passed away after a brief illness at Vavuniya hospital in January 2010 and buried at Kilinochchi as his last will.

Buddhism the principle in the mandala is the presence of the Buddha in it, but images of deities are not necessary. They may be presented either as a wheel, a tree, or a jewel, or in any other symbolic manifestation. The origin of the mandala is the center, a dot. It is a symbol apparently free of dimensions. It means a 'seed', 'sperm', 'drop', the salient starting point. It is the gathering center in which the outside energies are drawn, and in the act of drawing the forces, the devotee's own energies unfold and are also drawn. The word '*mandala*' is Sanskrit for 'circle' and 'centre'. It signifies the diagram which represents the movement of one to the many and movement of many to the one. Here this concept has been used to signify the importance of the stronghold 'one' the inbetweenness on the one hand, the contrasting conditions on the other. The point of inbetweenness is much stronger when people are in the uncertain situation. The point of this mandala may have been higher when people fluctuate because of the displacement - see the figure, below:



The concept of patichchasamuppada could be related to this concept in explaining the interconnected extremes of this mandala. According to this teaching, everything is interconnected. Everything affects everything else. Everything that is, *is* because other things *are*. This is the teaching of Dependent Origination. The Buddha explained: When this is, that is. This arising, that arises. When this is not, that is not. This ceasing, that ceases.

The Buddha himself has stated that conviction (comprehending fully) of the Law, is not an easy task. When Ananda, the Chief Disciple, stated that the Law is easily understood, The Buddha countered, "Say not so, Ananda, say not so, it is really difficult to understand. And therefore, humans do not see the way to liberation from the bondage of the cycle of birth." This confirms the difficulty of fully

comprehending such kind of situations in all its ramifications. In this matter, the difference or the distinction between trust and distrust and conviction or comprehension of the law should be properly perceived. The concept of *truth* and *trust* is very important in seeking solutions to the uncertainties in relation to the state of inbetweenness. Since people fluctuate between trust and distrust all the time Buddha said:

...Do not believe in anything simply because you have heard it. Do not believe in anything simply because it is spoken and rumored by many. Do not believe in anything simply because it is found written in your religious books. Do not believe in anything merely on the authority of your teachers and elders. Do not believe in traditions because they have been handed down for many generations. But after observation and analysis, when you find that anything agrees with reason and is conducive to the good and benefit of one and all, then accept it and live up to it. (Anguttara-Nikāya, Kalama Sutta).

How Buddhism explains the state of inbetweenness too goes along with the above description. In addition the state of Inbetweenness is explained in relation to the concept of existence (*Bhawa*), but it is in the understanding the life one lives. In Buddhist Pāli text the state of inbetweenness is defined as '*ubhayamantarena*'; the condition in between two ends. If we explain it further '*idha*'; present existence, '*hura*'; the existence after this life, '*ubhayamantaraena*'; the existence between *idha* and *hura* (Udana Pali: Suppabuddhakutti Sutta). In addition to this terminological explanation, four main characteristics related to inbetweenness are explained in Buddhist texts.

1. Vichikichcha – to get into a difficult situation by questioning something in doubt
2. Sandeha – unable to take a decision on which way to proceed
3. Evam nukho nanukho kimnukho kathamnukho – is this as it is, or is it not? Why is this as it is and not otherwise? How is this as it is and not otherwise
4. Chalitam – regularly changing

(*Digha-Nikāya: Brahmajala Sutta and Majjhima-Nikāya: Uparipannasa Paliya*)

Further the *Metta Sutta* of *Sutta Nipatha* describes how nature of a person who experiences the state of inbetweenness. In that '*Bhuta*' are the individuals who are stable while '*Sambhawesiwa*' are the ones who seek stability. But the people who experience the state of inbetweenness are called '*Sambavesee*'. In another place the same is called '*kathamkathi*'. This also denotes a person in between two conditions engages in a discourse with himself to decide to get into one end

(Digha-Nikāya: Atuwa). The phrase ‘*dvelhaka jato puriso*’ means the person cling into both ends without being able to decide.

In reviewing the issues faced by displaced in war, the psychosis has become a major challenge in restoration process. IDPs who had witnessed the war trauma and atrocities can have diminished cognitive abilities. They frequently have working difficulties at many places. Some have behavioral disorders. Most of them do not receive proper psychological therapies and rehabilitation. Children who have experienced or been exposed to war trauma may have numerous symptoms including trauma based behavior. They grow up with a generalized fear and hostility which affects their future lives. Trauma is often associated with intense feelings of humiliation, self-blame, shame and guilt, which result from the sense of powerlessness and may lead to a sense of alienation and avoidance. Therefore the initial trauma should be addressed very carefully. The Buddhist way in healing such kind of situation is much strong. Buddhist psychotherapy is a proper system of treating such mentally challenged people. The basic method is to be found in discourses like; Satipattana Sutta (Majjima Nikāya No.10), Sabbasawa Sutta (ibid: 1) and Vatthupama Sutta (ibid:17). Among those Sabbasawa Sutta presents a series of restorative principles to getting rid of all cares and troubles (asawa).² This sutta here used figuratively and embraces both psychological cares and physical troubles and difficulties as can be seen in the sequel. The Buddha explains seven principles:

1. There are cares and troubles which are to be got rid of by insight
2. There are cares and troubles which are to be got rid of by restraints
3. There are cares and troubles which are to be got rid of by use
4. There are cares and troubles which are to be got rid of by endurance
5. There are cares and troubles which are to be got rid of by avoidance
6. There are cares and troubles which are to be got rid of by dispersal
7. There are cares and troubles which are to be got rid of by culture

To have awareness of the importance of having moderate life and contentment, the second principal is more appropriate. It clearly explains how to use the four basic needs of a monk; *cheewara* (robes/cloths), *pindapatha* (food), *senasana* (shelter), *gilanapachchaya* (medicine). ‘*Bhikkus! a bhikku, considering wisely, makes use of his robes (cloth-only to keep off cold, to keep off heat, to keep off gladflies, mosquitoes, winds and the sun, and creeping creatures, and to cover himself decently. [...] food neither for pleasures nor for excess (intoxication), neither for beauty no adornment, but only to support and sustain this body...*”

² The term asawa in this sutta has wider senses than its usual pshychological and ethical meanings such as ‘influx’, ‘outflow’, ‘defilement’, ‘impurity’ (Rahula 1959:99)

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The Revival of the Buddhist Tradition in India

Pravin Bhalesain

Introduction: Revival of Buddhist Tradition in 20th Century

Even though India is the land of birth of Buddhism, today there are very few Buddhists. Before 7th A.D. Century Indian subcontinent was Buddhist majority. Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh and present India were Buddhists majority; also this period is known as Golden era of Indian History. In Indian history: from the 7th A.D. century until the 11th A.D. century, there were mass persecutions of Buddhists; after the 12th Century Buddhism became extinct from its land of birth. Some people tried to revive it, but their efforts were small and there was no national impact. The strongest revivalist Buddhist Movement began in 20th century when the leader of the Avarna-Untouchables, Dr. Ambedkar converted about 500,000 people en-mass at Nagpur on 14th October 1956. This was the year when parts of the world were celebrating the 2500th Vesak Day!

German Scholar, Dr. Maren Bellwinkel-Schempp in her article on Ambedkar Buddhism¹ says, “When Dr Ambedkar embraced Buddhism in 1956, his understanding of Dhamma was founded on a radical rejection of Hinduism and the caste system and a critical evaluation of existing Buddhisms (Rodrigues 1993). Dr Ambedkar was, through the example of Hinduism and the caste system, painfully aware of the entanglement of religion and society; therefore, he intended to reconstruct Buddhism not only as a religion for the untouchables but as a humanist and social religion, which combined scientific understanding with universal truth. His Buddhism projected a religion for a modern, civic society (see Fuchs 2001).”

Dr. Ambedkar announced to renounce Hinduism on 13th October 1935 but he worked for 21 years to declare himself as a Buddhist. These 21 years he spent in deep study of different religions, traditions such as Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism, and Jainism. He was also well-studied in Communism. He did his studies along with his social movement of empowering oppressed people and giving them the social and political rights.

¹ Dr. Maren Bellwinkel-Schempp, Roots of Ambedkar Buddhism in Kanpur, (in: Jondhale, Surendra and Beltz, Johannes: Reconstructing the World: B.R. Ambedkar and Buddhism in India. New Delhi, OUP 2004, p. 221-244.) <http://www.maren-bellwinkel.de/artikel/ambedkarbuddhism.pdf>

His movement was democratic and a bloodless revolution. After the deep study he chose Buddhism but along with some changes in the methodology of its propagation.² He projected socially engaged Buddhism.

Over the period of last 50 years Ambedkar Buddhism has established itself as widely practiced Engaged Buddhism in the Revival of Buddhist Tradition in India. As the statistics shown in my earlier paper on Buddhist Ethics and Social Development³, those people who followed this path could achieve significant changes in their personal and social life.

Texts in Ambedkar Buddhism

As Buddha's teachings are very vast; to fulfil the common man's need: a Bible like book was necessary to create. Dr. Ambedkar wrote "*The Buddha and His Dhamma*"⁴, which was published after his demise in 1957. It received many critics from the established world – especially when the use of authentic resources for the writing was questioned. Later American Scholar Adele M. Fiske did the thesis "*The Use of Buddhist Scriptures in Dr. Ambedkar's The Buddha and His Dhamma*"⁵ to show the authentic resources especially *Tipitaka* references used in the writings of the *The Buddha and His Dhamma*. To counter communism, Dr. Ambedkar wrote "*Buddha or Karl Marx*"⁶. To learn how Buddhism disappeared from India, he wrote: "*Revolution and Counter Revolution in Ancient India*".⁷ These three books laid the foundation for Buddhist missionary work.

Pali Language is preferred for the study as well as practice of Buddhism. Dr. Ambedkar who was learned in *English, German* and *Farsi* Language also studied *Pali* Language to understand Buddhist Texts. His personal library had more than thirty thousand books. He referred to many primary as well as secondary texts; *Pāli* and other translations were used. For the study of *Pali* Language in other Indian Languages, Dr. Ambedkar prepared a handy *Pali Dictionary*⁸ for three different languages *Pali-Marathi, Pali-Gujarati* and *Pali-Hindi*. He also prepared English translation of *Pali Dhammapada*.

² Dr. Ambedkar B. R. Writings and Speeches, Volume No. 11, The Buddha and His Dhamma

³ Bhalesain Pravin (Dion Peoples, editor), Buddhist Ethics and Social Development, International Association of Buddhist Universities (IABU) Conference on Buddhist Ethics, Sep. 2008

⁴ Dr. Ambedkar B.R. Writings and Speeches, Volume 11, The Buddha and His Dhamma

⁵ Adele M. Fiske, "The Use of Buddhist Scriptures in Dr. Ambedkar's The Buddha and His Dhamma". Also published as supplement to Volume 11

⁶ Dr. Ambedkar B.R. Writings and Speeches, Volume 3, Buddha or Karl Marx

⁷ Dr. Ambedkar B.R. Writings and Speeches, Volume 3, Revolution and Counter Revolution in Ancient India

⁸ Dr. Ambedkar B.R. Writings and Speeches, Volume 16, Pali Dictionary

He prepared a handy book *Bouddha Pooja Path* (Buddhist Ritual Book) for regular practices. It is in Pāli and English. Later people translated it in *Marathi* and *Hindi* language. In the same book one can find the Tibetan connection he established. As a regular mantra for chanting he gave: “*Aum Mani Padme Hum*”, in the same book.

Meditation and Ambedkar Buddhism

Dr. Ambedkar interprets Buddha’s teachings⁹, as: “The principles spoken by Bhagavan Buddha are immortal. But the Buddha did not make a claim for this, however. There is an opportunity of making changes according to the times. Such open-mindedness is not found in any other religion”.

Harvard University scholar Christopher Queen, who is a writer on Engaged Buddhism¹⁰, says: “Ambedkar modified the tradition quite freely. One of the most important changes he made was a rather radical re-interpretation of what was meant by nirvana. According to Ambedkar, nirvana is not a metaphysical or psychological state or attainment, but a society founded in peace and justice. He brought a transcendent view of nirvana down to earth.

This is an important feature of engaged Buddhism as manifested in many parts of Asia today. A common feature of this movement is to disregard notions of another world, whether it's a psychological world or a metaphysical world, and to translate that into a society based on equality and the free exchange of ideas and goods. This is a kind of socialism, and Ambedkar himself, though not a socialist per se, was significantly influenced by socialist thinkers.”

Christopher Queen takes Ambedkar as a challenge¹¹, “Given the way Buddhism is evolving in the West, with its strong emphasis upon meditation and psychology, Ambedkar's perspective is very provocative. Many of us are drawn to Buddhism because it offers peace – inner-peace and world-peace. We would like to be more imperturbable, loving, compassionate and joyful, rather than the crusading radicals some of us were in the sixties. If Buddhism has to do with stilling the fires of passion, then *mettā bhāvanā* [the cultivation of loving-kindness] is probably the best and highest practice for engaged Buddhism in the traditional mold - achieving peace and then projecting that peace to others. If this attainment of peace has some

⁹ Dr. Ambedkar B. R., Historic Conversion Speech, 1956
http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00ambedkar/txt_ambedkar_conversion.html

¹⁰ A Fourth Turning of the Wheel?, Christopher Queen, Harvard University, 2005
<http://www.buddhistchannel.tv/index.php?id=70.1296.0.0.1.0>

¹¹ Ibid

ripples in the world, great; but the world is really not the primary concern of a traditional Buddhist. It is rather training the monkey mind to settle down.

But it may be worth looking closely at Ambedkar's idea that Buddhism is something we receive and then have to work with. Buddhist teachings invite us to take responsibility for ourselves, and this is being interpreted in engaged Buddhist circles as taking responsibility for the entire Sangha, the larger community, and ultimately, our eco-system on this planet Earth. Ambedkar's approach tells us that if we spend too much time in personal meditation practice, and in retreat from the world of social relationship, we will be irresponsible to our community. So we need to get off the cushion, get out of the house, get out there and start to educate, agitate and organize. This is a collectivist notion of Sangha as people working together for a society of justice, wherein our Buddhist practice becomes the engaged activity of social change.”

Dhammadiksha – Conversion Ceremony for Lay People

Dhammadiksha has become core practice in Ambedkar Buddhism. The tradition does not believe in Buddhist by birth but it advocates every person; even if he is born in a Buddhist family or not; he has to go for a formal Conversion Ceremony, i.e. *Dhammadiksha*¹². In this ceremony a person takes refuge to the three jewels (Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha), Panchsila and 22 Vows in a public function; primarily in Buddha Vihara or at any Dhamma Ceremony. The 22 vows are:

1. I will have no faith in Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh nor will I worship them.
2. I will have no faith in Rama and Krishna who are believed to be incarnation of God nor will I worship them.
3. I will have no faith in ‘Gauri’, Ganapati and other gods and goddesses of Hindus nor will I worship them.
4. I do not believe in the incarnation of God.
5. I do not and will not believe that Lord Buddha was the incarnation of Vishnu. I believe this to be sheer madness and false propaganda.
6. I will not perform ‘Shraddha’ nor will I give ‘Pind-dan’.
7. I will not act in a manner violating the principles and teachings of the Buddha.
8. I will not allow any ceremonies to be performed by Brahmins.

¹² Dr. Ambedkar B. R., Historic Conversion Speech, 1956
http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00ambedkar/txt_ambedkar_conversion.html



9. I will believe in the equality of man.
10. I will endeavor to establish equality.
11. I will follow the ‘noble eightfold path’ of the Buddha.
12. I will follow the ‘*paramitas*’ prescribed by the Buddha.
13. I will have compassion and loving kindness for all living beings and protect them.
14. I will not steal.
15. I will not tell lies.
16. I will not commit carnal sins.
17. I will not take intoxicants like liquor, drugs etc.
18. I will endeavor to follow the noble eightfold path and practice compassion and loving kindness in every day life.
19. I renounce Hinduism which is harmful for humanity and impedes the advancement and development of humanity because it is based on inequality, and adopt Buddhism as my religion.
20. I firmly believe the Dhamma of the Buddha is the only true religion.
21. I believe that I am having a re-birth.
22. I solemnly declare and affirm that I will hereafter lead my life according to the principles and teachings of the Buddha and his Dhamma.

Dr. Maren Bellwinkel-Schempp observes¹³, “Ambedkar converted to Buddhism on October 14, 1956. He had designed his Buddhism with a holy book, a conversion ritual with 22 “Buddhist Oaths” and a dress code [Zelliot 1992: 215]. While swearing these oaths, the convert should reject Hindu deities as well as rituals and fight for an equal and just society.”

These vows could liberate converts from superstitions, wasteful and meaningless rituals, which have led to pauperization of masses and enrichment of castes of Hindus. Also the direction is set for the new converts to follow Buddhist principles. There is a clear separation between Hinduism and Buddhism. Oath numbers from 1-6 then 8 and 19 shows clear separation from Hinduism and Oath numbers 7, 9-18, 21 and 22 advocates to follow Buddha’s teachings.

¹³ Dr. Maren Bellwinkel-Schempp From Bhakti to Buddhism: Ravidas and Ambedkar, Economic and Political Weekly, 2007

On 15th October 1956 speech Dr. Ambedkar asked his followers to follow his example to initiate others as Buddhist. He said¹⁴, “This new way is one of responsibility. We have made some resolutions, have expressed some desires. The young should remember this. They should not become only petty officers for the sake of their stomach. We should make this decision: “I will give at least one-twentieth of my earnings to this work.” I want to take all of you with me. In the first instance, the Tathagata gave initiation to some individuals, and gave them this advice: “Spread this religion.” In that way, *Yesha and his forty friends* were converted to Buddhism. Yesha was from a wealthy family. Bhagvan said to him, “What is this religion like? It is: ‘for the welfare of many people, for the friendship of many people, for compassion for the world; Dhamma is welfare in the beginning, welfare in the middle, conducive to welfare in the end.’” In the conditions of that age, in that way, the Tathagata made ready the way for the spreading of his religion. Now we also must make ready the way [a word meaning mechanism]. After this function, each one should give initiation to each one. Every Buddhist man has the authority to give initiation, this I proclaim.”

Priesthood and Rituals in Ambedkar Buddhism

Ambedkar Buddhism recognizes the need of basic rituals to fulfill the common man’s need but it is certainly not as ritualistic faith as Brahminism or Hinduism. It is an engaged activity where people visit Buddha Vihara at least once a week primarily on Sunday and few daily practices are also advised. Dr. Ambedkar wrote a small ritual book on demand by many people i.e. *Bouddha Pooja Path*¹⁵, it is like a Buddhist Rituals Book.

Bouddha Pooja Path is a small and handy booklet. It is prepared based on Theravada rituals practiced in SriLanka. It is useful for daily prayers. It also contains instructions and prayers to perform different rituals such as Birth Ceremony, Death Ceremony, Marriage Ritual and other Dhamma Functions etc.

Priesthood is highly debated issue. Bhikkhus or Bhikkhunis in India now-a-days are involved with the society to cater their spiritual needs as well as ritualistic needs. But Bhikkhu population in India is very small and also have lot of difficulties to face. Lay people even householders also become priests. Especially in villages learned people refer *Bouddha Pooja Path* to cater the need of common people who declare themselves and Buddhists and follow Buddhist Rituals.

¹⁴ Dr. Ambedkar B. R., Historic Conversion Speech, 1956, University of Columbia URL http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00ambedkar/txt_ambedkar_conversion.html

¹⁵ Dr. Ambedkar B.R. Writing and Speeches, Volume 16, Bouddha Pooja Path

The change in priesthood is brought with a specific need as well as with historic experience. In the writings about the Decline and Fall of Buddhism in India, Dr. Ambedkar said¹⁶: “Those who will pursue the matter will find that there were three special circumstances which made it possible for Brahmanism and impossible for Buddhism to survive the calamity of Muslim invasions. In the first place Brahmanism at the time of the Muslim invasions had the support of the State. Buddhism had no such support. What is however more important is the fact that this State support to Brahmanism lasted till Islam had become a quiet religion and the flames of its original fury as a mission against idolatry had died out. Secondly the Buddhist priesthood perished by the sword of Islam and could not be resuscitated. On the other hand it was not possible for Islam to annihilate the Brahmanic priesthood. In the third place the Buddhist laity was persecuted by the Brahmanic rulers of India and to escape this tyranny the mass of the Buddhist population of India embraced Islam and renounced Buddhism”

While examining the cause of the Decline and Fall of Buddhism, Dr. Ambedkar further writes¹⁷: “Such was the slaughter of the Buddhist priesthood perpetrated by the Islamic invaders. The axe was struck at the very root. For by killing the Buddhist priesthood Islam killed Buddhism. This was the greatest disaster that befell the religion of Buddha in India. Religion like any other ideology can be attained only by propaganda. If propaganda fails, religion must disappear. The priestly class, however detestable it may be, is necessary to the sustenance of religion. For it is by its propaganda that religion is kept up. Without the priestly class religion must disappear. The sword of Islam fell heavily upon the priestly class. It perished or it fled outside India. Nobody remained to keep the flame of Buddhism burning.

It may be said that the same thing must have happened to the Brahmanic priesthood - it was possible, though not to the same extent; but, there is this difference between the constitution of the two religions and the difference is so great that it contains the whole reason why Brahmanism survived the attack of Islam and why Buddhism did not. This difference relates to the constitution of the clergy.

The Brahmanic priesthood has a most elaborate organization. A clear and succinct account¹⁸ of it has been given by the late Sir Ramakrishna Bhandarkar in the pages of the *Indian Antiquary*:

‘Every Brahmanic family,’ he writes, ‘is devoted to the study of a particular Veda, and a particular Sakha (recension) of a Veda; and the domestic rites of

¹⁶ Dr. Ambedkar B.R. *Writing and Speeches*, Volume 3, *Revolution and Counter Revolution in Ancient India*, Volume 3, p.230

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p.233

¹⁸ *Indian Antiquary* 1874 p.132 quoted by Max Muller, *Hibbert Lectures* (1878), pp. 168-164

the family are performed according to the ritual described in the Sutra connected with that Veda. The study consists in getting by heart, the books forming, the particular Veda. In Northern India, where the predominant Veda is the White Yagush, and the Sakha is that of the Madhyandinas - this study has almost died out, except at Benares, where Brahmanic families from all parts of India are settled. It prevails to some extent in Gujarat, but to a much greater extent in the Maratha country; and in Tailangana there is a large number of Brahmans who still devote their life to this study. Numbers of these go about to all parts of the country in search of *dakshina* (fee, alms), and all well-to-do natives patronize them according to their means, by getting them to repeat portions of their Veda, which is mostly the Black Yagush, with Apastamba for their Sutra. Hardly a week passes here, in Bombay, in which no Tailangana Brahman comes to me to ask for *dakshina*. On each occasion I get the men to repeat what they have learned, and compare it with the printed texts in my possession.

With reference to their occupation, Brahmans of each Veda are generally divided into two classes, Grihasthas and Bhikshukas. The former devote themselves to a worldly avocation, while the latter spend their time in the study of their sacred books and the practice of their religious rites. Both these classes have to repeat daily the Sandhya-vandana or twilight-prayers, the forms of which are somewhat different for the different Vedas. But the repetition of the Gayatri-mantra 'Tat Savitur Varenyam' etc., five, then twenty eight, or a hundred and eight times, which forms the principal portion of the ceremony, is common to all.

Besides this, a great many perform daily what is called Brahmayagna, which on certain occasions is incumbent on all. This for the Rig-Veda consists of the first hymn of the first mandal, and the opening sentences of the Aitareya Brahmana, the five parts of the Aitareya Aranyaka, the Yagus-samhita, the Sama-samhita, the Atharva-samhita, Asvalayana Kalpa Sutra, Nirukta, Khandas, Nighantu, Jyotisha, Siksha, Panini, Yagnavalkya Smriti, Mahabharata, and the Sutras of Kanada, Jaimini, and Badarayan.' The point to be remembered is that in the matter of officiation there is no distinction between a Bhikshuka and a Grahastha. In Brahmanism both are priest and the Grahastha is no less entitled to officiate as a priest than a Bhikshu is. If a Grahastha does not choose to officiate as a priest, it is because he has not mastered the mantras and the ceremonies or because he follows some more lucrative vocation. Under Brahmanic dispensation every Brahmin who is not an outcast has the capacity to be a priest. The Bhikshuka is an actual priest, a Grahastha is a potential priest. All Brahmans can be recruited to form the army of Brahmanic priesthood. Further no particular training or initiation ceremony is necessary for a Brahmin to act as a priest. His will to officiate is enough to make him function as a priest. In Brahmanism the priesthood can never become extinct. Every Brahmin is a potential priest of Brahmanism and be drafted in service when the need

be. There is nothing to stop the rake's life and progress. This is not possible in Buddhism. A person must be ordained in accordance with established rites by priests already ordained, before he can act as a priest. After the massacre of the Buddhist priests, ordination became impossible so that the priesthood almost ceased to exist. Some attempt was made to fill the depleted ranks of the Buddhist priests. New recruits for the priesthood had to be drawn from all available sources. They certainly were not the best. According to Haraprasad Shastri¹⁹:

“The paucity of Bhiksus brought about a great change in the composition of the Buddhist priesthood. It was the married clergy with families, who were called Aryas that took the place of the Bhiksus proper, and began to cater to the religious needs of the Buddhists generally. They commenced attaining the normal status of Bhiksus through the performance of some sacraments. (Intro. pp. 19.7, quoting Tatakara Guptas’ Adikarmaracana: 149, pp. 1207-1208). They officiated at the religious ceremonies but at the same time, in addition to their profession of priesthood, earned their livelihood through such avocations as those of a mason, painter, sculptor, goldsmith, and carpenter. These artisan priests who were in later times larger in numbers than the Bhiksus proper became the religious guides of the people. Their avocations left them little time and desire for the acquisition of learning, for deep thinking, or for devotion to Dhyana and other spiritual exercises. They could not be expected to raise the declining Buddhism to a higher position through their endeavors nor could they check its course towards its ruin through the introduction of salutary reforms.” It is obvious that this new Buddhist priesthood had neither dignity nor learning and were a poor match for the rival, the Brahmins whose cunning was not unequal to their learning.

The reason why Brahmanism rose from the ashes and Buddhism did not, is to be accounted for, not by any inherent superiority of Brahmanism over Buddhism. It is to be found in the peculiar character of their priesthood. Buddhism died because its army of priests died and it was not possible to recreate. Though beaten it was never completely broken. Every Brahmin alive became priest and took the place of every Brahmin priest who died.”

Learning from the past experiences and other traditions - Ambedkar Buddhism has given stress on promoting Buddhist Priesthood keeping the same respect and status for the Buddhist Monks and Nuns Order. One can find that in present practice of Ambedkar Buddhism; any person can become a Buddhist after the *DhammaDiksha* Ceremony. He or She can be unmarried or married but can learn and study the necessary rituals using *Bouddha Pooja Path* and then can practice as a priest. Men and women both have equal right to become a priest. This makes the Buddhist practices more socially engaged. This show how some practices from

¹⁹ Summary of his views by Narendra Nath Law in Harprasad Shastri Memorial Volume pp. 363-64

Mahayana sect and Theravada sect are molded together in Ambedkar Buddhism. The householder Buddhist priests are playing important role in practice and promotion of Buddhism in the revival movement.

Missionary Aspects of Ambedkar Buddhism

Buddhism and Brahmanism; these two main religious forces always had a conflict since the beginning. Even though Buddhists preached non-violence and compassion the Brahminical forces always opposed the spread and growth of Buddhism in several different ways; starting from large scale violence to co-opting Buddhism as part of their faith.

While reviving Buddhism Dr. Ambedkar studied and sorted out many complexities about the Hindu Social Order which is based on Varna and Caste. He also gives relations and differences about Hindu Caste System and Hindu System of Untouchability. For the help of Buddhist Missionaries he gave clear distinction between Savarna and Avarna people. Savarnas are Brahmin (Priests), Kshatriya (Warriors), Vaishya (Businessman) and Shudras (Service People) while the Avarnas are Untouchables (Scheduled Castes), Tribals (Scheduled Tribes) and Nomads (Nomadic Tribes). The Scheduled Castes are referred as SCs, Scheduled Tribes as STs and Nomadic Tribes as NTs. Avarnas constitutes more than 30% population of the Hindu Society.

Brahmanism has been transformed into Hinduism in last few hundred years. As Prof. Richard Gombrich points out: "Hinduism is not a one religion but it is made up of different religions".²⁰ Different Brahminical practices now considered as part of Hinduism. The most integral part of Hinduism is *VarnaShramDharma* based on ChaturVarna²¹ and Graded Inequality which preaches vertical division of society. Equality is not recognized by Hinduism. Varna and Caste are different so both must not be mixed. ChaturVarna is the father of Hindu Caste System.

In his book *Who Were Shudras?*²², Dr. Ambedkar tells that Hindus, irrespective of caste have become Shudras and that they should realize how they were degraded. He coined a term for Shudras as *Chaparasi Kshatriyas* because Hindus believe that even if they are in Service Industry which is meant for Shudras in their religion, the Caste in which they born remains Kshatriya (Warrior). Majority Hindus are confused between Varna and Caste. They do not accept that they have become Shudras. Shudras are social police of Brahminism. By separating Avarnas (SC/ST/NT), Ambedkar Buddhism attacks the Shudras who believe their Caste is

²⁰ Gombrich Richard, Pali Summer School, Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies, 2009

²¹ Rig-Veda, Book No. 10 Paragraph 90, Verse No.12. Also in BhagavadGita, Chapter 4 verse no. 13

²² Dr. Ambedkar B.R. Writings and Speeches, Volume 7, Who were Shudras?

Brahmin, Kshatriya or Vaishya - even if they are in Service Industry today, and their Varna has become Shudra.

He stressed that there is more need to study and understand the Avarnas. Avarnas (SC/ST/NTs) should be brought into Buddhist fold on priority. As these oppressed and suffering masses are looking for the change. He pointed out the mistakes done by Christian missionaries: instead of converting the lower castes first, they gave priority to higher castes. That was big mistake by the Christians, because the high caste Hindus when converted to Christianity did not change their age old customs and practices. So Christianity could not grow in last 400 years even after their missionary work. Also the Hindus carried their Castes into Christianity and polluted it. In his opinion the propagation of Buddhism has to come from the bottom of Hindu Society.

As a step ahead to understand the Avarnas Dr. Ambedkar wrote a book, “The Untouchables – Who were They and They became?”²³, he establishes a link between the Decline and Fall of Buddhism with the history of Untouchables. In his theory, he concludes: “While Untouchability did not exist in 200 A.D., it had emerged by 600 A.D. These are the two limits, upper and lower, for determining the birth of Untouchability. Can we fix an approximate date for the birth of Untouchability? I think we can, if we take beef-eating, which is the root of Untouchability, as the point to start from. Taking the ban on beef-eating as a point to reconnoiter from, it follows that the date of the birth of Untouchability must be intimately connected with the ban on cow-killing and on eating beef. If we can answer when cow-killing became an offence and beef-eating became a sin, we can fix an approximate date for the birth of Untouchability. When did cow-killing become an offence? We know that Manu did not prohibit the eating of beef nor did he make cow-killing an offence. When did it become an offence? As has been shown by Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar, cow-killing was made a capital offence by the Gupta kings some time in the 4th Century A.D.

We can, therefore, say with some confidence that Untouchability was born some time about 400 A.D. It is born out of the struggle for supremacy between Buddhism and Brahmanism which has so completely molded the history of India and the study of which is so woefully neglected by students of Indian history.”

Emphasis has been given on study of different texts also a comparative approach to different religions is taken. To counter the difficulties in propagation of Buddhism and its opponents Dr. Ambedkar wrote “*Riddles in Hinduism*”.²⁴ This book questions many aspects of Hindu way life i.e. Religious, Social and

²³ Dr. Ambedkar B.R. Writings and Speeches, Volume 7, The Untouchables – Who were they and they became?

²⁴ Dr. Ambedkar B.R. Writings and Speeches, Volume 4, Riddles in Hinduism

Political practices. In his book *Pakistan or Partition of India*²⁵, he analyses the Islamic faith and mindset.

The tradition promotes lay organizations who study Buddhist Tradition and also do missionary work. In the last 50 years, Buddhism has grown well in India, and it can absorb into different sections of society.

Conclusion

The revival of Buddhist Tradition in India is an ongoing process. It has a solid foundation laid by Buddhist Revivalist, Dr. Ambedkar. Many Texts were prepared for the revival. The tradition has evolved in such a way that the lay people's involvement in revivalist movement has increased. A formal conversion ceremony *Dhammadiksha* has become core practice. For a person to declare as a Buddhist, he has to go for *Dhammadiksha*. In addition to taking refuge to Three Jewels and Panchsila, taking 22 Vows is now a necessary part of the conversion ceremony.

Lay people can become priests. Men and women have equal right to become priest. *The Buddha and His Dhamma* is referred as a Bible in this tradition. It is a socially engaged tradition. *Pāli* Language is the preferred language. Daily prayers and other rituals are performed in *Pāli* Language. Decline and Fall of Buddhism is studied and it is linked with the Hindu Social Order and Chaturvarna.

After reviewing the texts and social forms associated with “Ambedkar Buddhism”, we find that it is missionary in nature. Buddha's teachings are interpreted according to the social needs of people. Emphasis is also given on separation between Hinduism and Buddhism. Meditation practices are not denied but the priority is given to bring justice for the common masses. It meets the practical needs of the followers, and at the same time, supports their spiritual growth. Ambedkar Buddhism projects a religion for a modern, civic society.

²⁵ Dr. Ambedkar B.R. Writings and Speeches, Volume 8, Pakistan or Partition of India

The Concept of Socially Engaged Buddhism in the Thai Society

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Abstract:

This article discusses the concept of socially engaged Buddhism in the Thai society. It aims to study the perspective of two prominent Thai scholars; the venerable Buddhadasa Bhikkhu and the venerable Phra Brahmaganabhorn (P. A. Payutto). The study found that both scholars assert that socially engaged Buddhism is a original concept of Buddhism. Phra Brahmaganabhorn's view lies on the level of *Sīla* and *Vinaya* which aid in organizing social system and social environment that are relevant to human development, however, Buddhadasa presents it based on the teaching of *Idappaccayatā* or the principle of interdependent arising,

Introduction

The term '*Socially Engaged Buddhism*', in this paper refers to the concept and process in Buddhism which Buddhism and society must be engaged, and that there is no dualistic split between spiritual and worldly domains, or an individual and a society. It is interested in solving problems in social structure rather than an individual's. It also tries to interpret and adapt the methods in Buddhism to solve such social problems as injustice, environment, violence, economics, and political, etc.¹

At present, there is an academic question whether socially engaged Buddhism exists in traditional Buddhism, or it is just a movement of modern Buddhists. This movement took place as an answer to social context after the World War II in the countries attempting to free themselves from being colonized. They made effort to search for their own cultural roots as guide to the direction in developing their countries after being freed. The concept of Buddhist socialism was set examples by General U Nu of Myanmar and Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement in Sri Lanka. However, there are some dual views between the academics. The first group sees that socially engaged Buddhism existed during the period of the Buddha time, but it has not been concretely studied. Those which are abided by this view are

¹ Damien Keown, *A Dictionary of Buddhism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 86.

Buddhist thinkers and scholars. The later takes that socially engaged Buddhism did not exist in the history of Theravāda, Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna, but formed by modernist Buddhists to solve social problems of the new age. Most members of this group are Western scholars.

Nonetheless, I do not attempt to argue whether socially engaged Buddhism has existed or just been formed, but to discuss the concept of socially engaged Buddhism in the Thai society. Also, their concepts on socially engaged Buddhism are a most systematic and clear one and I will focus on the views of the two prominent Thai scholars, the venerable Buddhadasa and the venerable Phra Brahmaganabhorn (P.A. Payutto).

Buddhadasa's View

Buddhadasa was the forerunner Thai Bhikkhu who believed that socially engaged Buddhism is the original foundation of Buddhism. He saw that the principle of *Idappaccayatā* which was reflected social concept in Buddhism. Buddhadasa's speech on "*Dhammic Socialism*" was so significant work which reflected his perspective on socially engaged Buddhism. He presented this concept at the time when Thai society fell in the situation that the social and political turmoil was resulted from incident on the 14 October 2516 (C.E 1973). Buddhadasa explained the meaning of *Dhammic Socialism* as society or socialism which stood on the Dhamma or comprised the Dhamma. He also defined "Dhamma" as the nature or the law of nature. He said, "*The true nature characterized by socialism, and socialistic intention. It is socialism because nothing is independent. There is no any person, thing, part, element, or particle existing alone. It is impossible. Things are compounded. Socialism exists even in one particle.*"²

Buddhadasa viewed that the nature which embraces socialistic intention is the system of interdependent arising of all things, ranging from the smallest particle to the vast universe. It is this socialistic intention that supports the existence of all things. He asserted that, "*There must be socialistic system in the body to survive. A village can also survive because of socialistic system, just as the world. It should be laughed at when say that the universe system is socialism, otherwise, it would come to an end.*"³

According to Buddhadasa, socialism is utilized in term of ethics in defining the social responsible conscience which is opposite to selfishness. He further explained that, "*Socialism means for the sake of society, therefore, one cannot be*

² Buddhadasa Bhikkhu, **Dhammic Socialism** (Bangkok: Siamprathes Publisher, 1995), p. 144.

³ Ibid., p. 136.

selfish.”⁴ Buddhadasa stated on an example of the Bodhisatta ideal. He said a person who attempted to help others display socialistic intention of activities. “*Bodhisattava ideal focuses on helping others, dedicating to others, he can even sacrifice his life for sake of the society. Buddhism accepts this ideal because it has socialistic intention.*”⁵ In term of the systems of *sīla* and *vinaya*, he saw them as the rules laid down in accordance with the Dhamma of socialistic intention or the nature (*Dhammic Socialism*). That is the system created to bind people in the society by the intention of Dhamma. As said:

*The Vinaya system laid down by the Buddha shows us as an inseparable binding system. The term “Sangha” means a group or members. It does not mean an individual, or a person. When there is a group, there must have relation or the principle of truth that connects the Order of the Sangha from a myriad of units into the right society.*⁶

It can be said that the concept of social dimension in Buddhism presented by Buddhadasa based on the concept of Dhamma or the law of nature (*Idappaccayatā*). Buddhadasa saw that Dhamma or the law of nature has socialistic intention (*Dhammic Socialism*). Nothing exists freely by its own because all things in the universe are interdependent arising in accordance with this law. Men live together in a society and share mutual benefits that they have followed the socialistic intention of nature (Buddhadasa argued that individualism and consumerism do not follow the will of nature.). In order to follow the will of society, the Buddha laid down the *vinaya*, established the Order, and exhorted men to help others with loving-kindness.

Phra Brahmaganabhorn’s View

Phra Brahmaganabhorn (P. A. Payutto) is also one of the Thai Bhikkhu who takes socially engaged Buddhism as a basic concept of Buddhism, but it has been overlooked and lost its social dimension because of misinterpretation. It is widely known that *sīla* and *vinaya* which are the common practice in the Thai society mainly focus on the virtue of an individual. It views that many good people make a good society. Nonetheless, the significance of *sīla* as the process of establishing the social structure and environment which is appropriate for human development has not been mentioned. It can be said that Phra Brahmaganabhorn is the precursor Thai Bhikkhu who attempts to present the social dimension of the *sīla* and the *vinaya*. Moreover, he has dedicated a book-chapter in his *Buddhadhamma* (20 pages) explaining social

⁴ Ibid., p. 141-142.

⁵ Ibid., p. 124.

⁶ Ibid., p. 122.

dimension of the *sīla* and the *vinaya*. In this chapter, “*Sīla and Social Intention*”,⁷ Phra Brahmaganabhorn says that the most distinction in the Buddhist teaching which confirms social dimension in Buddhism is the teaching of *sīla* and *vinaya*.

*Sīla is the teaching and rules for practice in Buddhism. It mostly involves in society, and reflects the Buddhist intention in terms of the social relation. Because sīla is the system that controls a human’s external life, verbal and bodily expression, and the order of relationship with others and environment, especially relationship among people, thus, it allows proper arrangement of social activities, living condition, and environment of the society. It also brings happiness to all members of which the society encourages them to perform better deeds.*⁸

Phra Brahmaganabhorn sees that if we do not understand social intention of *sīla*, not only will it not grow into the practice of lay people, but existing intention of discipline in the *Sangha* will be torn down to only religious rite performance as well. Hence, in order to revive *sīla* or *vinaya*, one should not focus only on the restriction of form, but to maintain social intention of *sīla* and the *Sangha vinaya*. Moreover, social intention of *sīla* should be expanded into the practice of lay people by arranging the order of disciplines which is appropriate for the system of lives, and social order of the people.⁹

In term of the *Sangha* disciplines and rules, Phra Brahmaganabhorn says that it is the system that cover external life of the monk in all aspects, beginning with a specific quality, rights, duty, and methods for accepting new members into the *Sangha*, and the training for its new members. Moreover, it involves the appointment of qualified officer to oversee various activities of the Order; and rules regarding examining, managing, maintaining and sharing the four requisites as well as rules for receiving and dividing portions of food, robe making and rules on using the robes. Besides, there are rules concerning with the sick and persons who take care of the sick, arrangement of accommodations, rules for residents, rules for the construction and its responsibility, including the arrangement for *Sangha* living quarter. Also, there are procedures for the meeting, the case of disputation, the complainant, the defendant, the judge, legal action, judging, and punishment. The above mentioned are procedure in social intention of *sīla*.¹⁰

Conclusion

⁷ Phra Brahmaganabhorn (P.A. Payutto), **Buddhadhamma** (Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Press, 1999), p. 431-451.

⁸ Ibid., p. 431.

⁹ Ibid., p. 451.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 448-449.



To conclude, both Buddhadasa and Phra Brahmaganabhorn agree that socially engaged Buddhism is the original concept in Buddhism. While Phra Brahmaganabhorn's view is based on the teaching of *sīla* or *vinaya*, the Buddhadasa's based on the teaching of "*Idappaccayatā*" or the teaching of interdependent arising. Buddhadasa focuses in depth the socially engaged Buddhism on the law of nature because this law unavoidably determines social dimension in Buddhism. As for Phra Brahmaganabhorn's perspective, socially engaged Buddhism is based on the level of *sīla* or *vinaya*. It deals with the social rules and order fit for human development. He does not focus as deep into the law of nature as Buddhadasa. Nonetheless, Phra Brahmaganabhorn accepts that the Buddha laid down disciplinary rules of *sīla* or *vinaya* from his knowledge, penetrating through the law of nature, and acquired this law to set forth social system. However, he does not confirm there is socialism in the Dhamma or the law of nature as presented by Buddhadasa.

New Buddhist movements in Thailand: Mainstream Socially Engage Buddhism?

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1. Introduction

Present society has complexities in both the social and individual scales and the quest for more gratification of the individual and community is of unique characteristics as well as that of the mainstream Sangha Council of Elders – having no an outstanding role in the public and therefore, there is no participation of Buddhist responsibility beyond the appeared-dimension. This constitutes the emptiness of faith-system. The Buddhist spiritual center: the “temples” spring up across the country while the image of Sangha gives values to the social context; but to some extent, this is less than it should be. The image of mainstream Buddhist organizations has functioned as “ritual-merit specialized-tradition holy-water-magic”. As Payutto notes that this globalization age witnesses a remarkable prevalence of animistic and superstitious beliefs and practices, including faith healing, spirit healing, miracle working and, most notably, mediumistic practices, which point to the inadequacy or inefficacy of modern science and technology either in solving the current human problems or in educating the people - this brings about solution-movements for particular beliefs and focuses objectives in Buddhism. Nithi views such action as being separated-out from Buddhadhamma but is one of phenomenon dependent on Buddhism: “...to adhere to cult and ritual that mushroom, the majority (mainstream) are pretty contradictory to Buddhadhamma even hiding in the shadow of Buddhism...” But this alienation becomes the seeming acceptance by mainstream beliefs in accordance with engagement as one of ritual without any anxiety about such intentional alienation.

Such diversity of society expects different styles of Buddhism as well as their grasps and perceptions of Buddhism are distinct in manners. Under these circumstances, the demand for Buddhism needs modifying - its varieties respond to multiple groups. By these varieties, Phaisarn provides information on his research that it is transformation for responding to social complexity. In other words, it would be Buddhist modification due to the failings of mainstream Buddhism isolating itself from the Buddha’s intentions, day by day. This results in true values in terms of transformation in implications - done by Buddhist academics. These streams of

thought or transformations flow into society – and are powerful in consequences when relating to the original religion in that society; there are four categories:

1. that religion has decreasing role
2. original religion goes along with new situation or thought
3. there is some adaption or modification for former values
4. that self-protected religion turns to find ‘true values’ in the past

As a whole, that appears as alienated and simultaneously, for any reason, new movements with their variety and dimension for new reinterpretation of Buddhadhamma for particular group, has its own objective - relevant to the comprehensive mainstream-Tipitaka or Buddhism. This results in new dimension of Buddhism with new movements. This takes into account for this new movement with particular social dynamism; or in one case, it would be dynamic for responding to more group individuals.

This paper focus on the exploration of each group, its activity and its leader, it is a kind of organization and working for Buddhism, in other words, mainstream Buddhism in Thailand has not responded their overall satisfaction. This forms new movements for new designs of Buddhism expected by each individual and group and results in social dynamism as appeared in the present. Mainstream Buddhism seems to embrace its Buddhist texts as the center of all correction. There are Sangha Acts, adopting structural pattern, and its particular articles: its order, communiqués, resolutions... but, there appears to be no enforcement and implementation in process, this Sangha Council of Elders is under challenge or one of the phenomena of the transformation patterns in society.

2. New Buddhist Movements in Thailand

2.1 Change

In the plight of changing society, and its structural complexity - compelling and dynamic reasons result in change, with different states leading to change. These phenomena bring about different situations. This paper explains distinctively that there are any factors leading to new Buddhist movements.

Any changes in Thai society therefore, bring about new Buddhist movements or efforts made to create new image of Buddhism in one own particular characteristics and simultaneously these states of change render alienation to arise. The push of external and internal changes reflects accelerating and supporting factors as well as put into - the occurrence of new Buddhist movements.

2.2 Internal Change

The theory of function by Spenser upholds that society is of the same character as an eagle with various components functions for its survival, each can be separate and has its own function. Society can maintain itself, depending on particular functions relevant to a social study - to consider different components of society such as religion, politics, economy – and then its functions and to consider how it is inter-related as society. In brief, society is a system that comprise of different components, controlling mechanisms - even having some negative functions maintained. The gradual change of society and unity among social members has mutual values so as to maintain a stable and solid society. Thus, Buddhism has never existed in isolation, and often internal changes can be connected to social changes outside of the Sangha.

2.2.1 Internal Factors

a. Four Assemblies

Considering assemblies: see that ‘assemblies’ serve as Buddhist components and Buddhism views that such relationship-dimension has something to do and harmonizes Buddhist personnel. It is therefore, necessary, how Buddhist assemblies view change and prepare for perceiving uncertainty or change. In social context as a social dynamics Buddhist assemblies have something to be basis of preparation for that situation until acceptance of reasonable change and by Buddhists. Buddhist assemblies welcome change and are designers of Buddhism in their own way or seek for relevant approaches to patterns or self-fulfillments.

b. Sangha Councils of Elders

Sangha Council of Elders: the governing body of the national Sangha in charge of religious affairs in the country and represents every aspect of Buddhism, as the supreme leading administrators of Buddhist organization. They have preparations to some extent, and attitudes toward ‘change’. Consider the issue irrelevant to the change of mainstream Sangha appearing in Nithi’s view: the Sangha administrative system cannot respond to the currents of social dynamism at once – that, leads movement for new way-out.

c. Lack of spiritual leadership in mainstream Buddhist organization

In the current situation, another thing is: the state of loss of spiritual leadership in Buddhism leads to the new Buddhist emergence for new answers or for new forms of Buddhism in the spiritual-sphere or on individual-beliefs. In reality, functions and responsibility taken by anybody, is not so clear, but it turns out that these images convey attachment - as it is.

2.2.2 External Factors

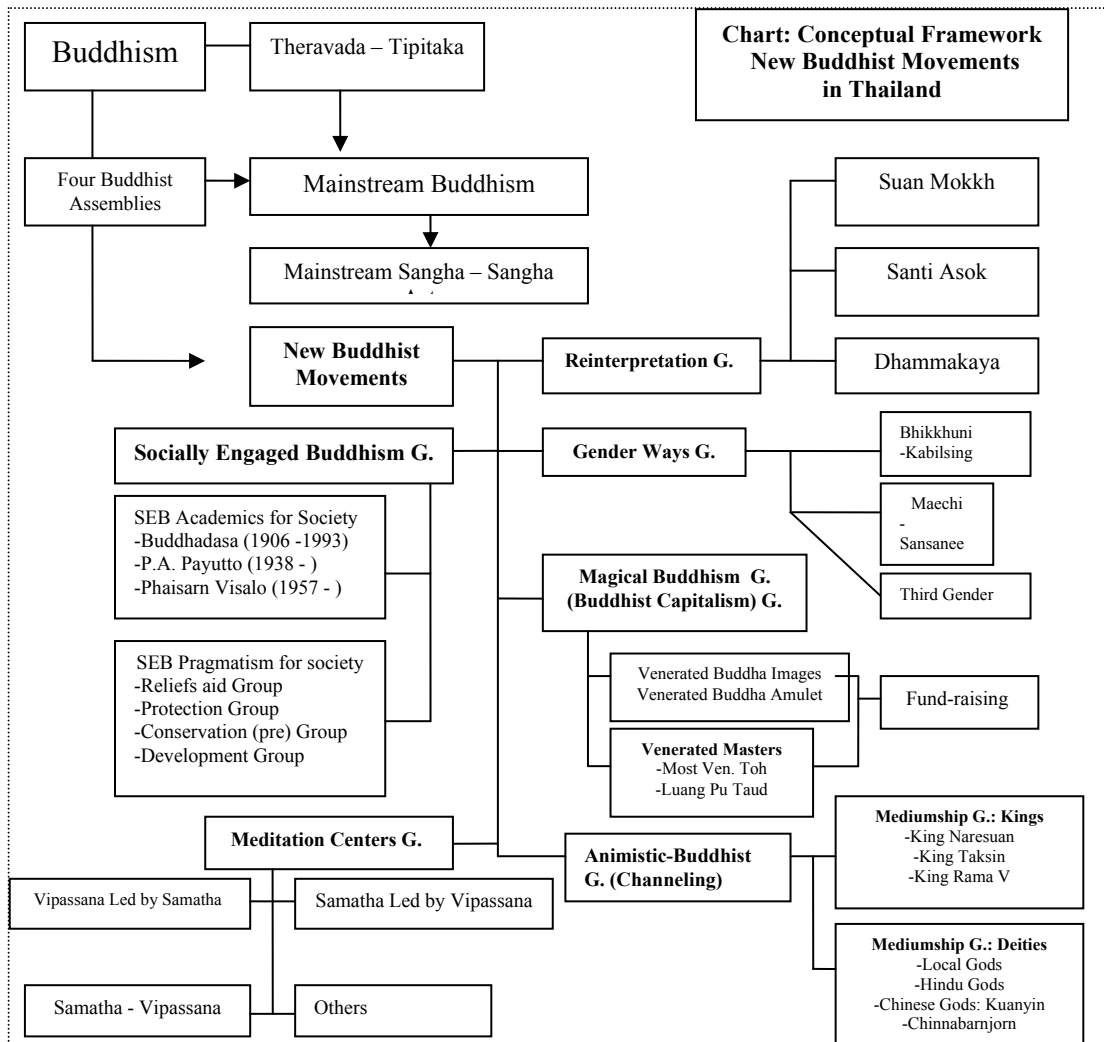
In current society and in the increasing complexity of our changing-dynamic society, people are more aware of looking for individual values through Buddhism in different ways. The more complicated society, economy and culture are, the more people are less confident with these phenomena. Those cause non-confidence and efforts made to replace such things. Thai society steps forward, as: “a capitalist society”. To seek, to gain and to accumulate and to keep its security, are based on: religious and social beliefs by way of self-existent power. “Sanctity” may be referred to practice, as sacred objects and simultaneously these are sought after for answers of life and or the end of life - and society walks to its end, evidently. The movement commences with seeking for answer. Buddhism is, thus: re-interpreted for better understanding, benefits for education, and preserving it in different ways. Through external factors Buddhism needs:

- security in pattern of responding to material gratification
- expectations from the mainstream and rise for self-creativity such as reinterpretation, meditation and gender issues
- responses to capitalistic groups.

New Buddhist movements correspond with modernity or globalization which needs more exploring and classifying in Thailand. Hence, each new Buddhist movement has its own development in individual approaches in order to respond to more individual satisfaction or fulfillment. The development of each group depends on the objective, its own founder’s vision and the way of presentation. This paper classifies new Buddhist movements into 6 groups:

1. Reinterpretation Group (กลุ่มตีความใหม่)
2. Meditation Lineage Group (กลุ่มสำนักปฏิบัติ)
3. Feminist Group (กลุ่มเพศวิถี)
4. Animistic-Buddhist Group (กลุ่มไสย-อิงพุทธ)
5. Magical Group (Buddhist Capitalism) (กลุ่มวัตถุมิถุนิธิ: ทุนนิยม)
6. Socially Engaged Buddhism (กลุ่มพุทธศาสนาเพื่อสังคม)

We will discuss about in brief its movement of each group as a whole for the reflection about dynamic phenomena in partial and whole Buddhist ways:



a. Reinterpretation Group (กลุ่มตีความใหม่)

Group of Buddhist reinterpretation have been in existence for a long time, and they continue to development; and simultaneously, they have their own objective of reinterpretation:

- to grasp the true spirit of Buddhadhamma,
- to gratify their own needs for the response of school teaching and practices for better living in society,
- to create their own unique characteristic as their own objective meant for their own requirements or perception or school or lineage founder.

This first dates back to King Lithai's interpretation about 'kamma, heaven and hell' – in his groundbreaking *Traibhumikatha*, for his purpose towards Buddhist methods of social control - and then follows by Ayutthaya period about the basic beliefs on monarch status as 'conventional deity', lasting until King Rama 4 who was a pioneer of new reinterpretation in Buddhism according to Phaisan. In a more democratic system, when the Thai government was steered by Prime Minister Marshall P. Phiboonsongkhram: the offered policy to the mainstream Sangha was a new reinterpretation of some Dhamma (santutthi: contentment) which was not relevant to the development of the country in capitalist society. But such phenomenon would not last long. More or less, until now new interpretations have developed in Thai society for a long period. This paper refers to 3 schools or lineages of thought:

- Suan Moke by Buddhadhasa Bhikkhu (1906-1993)
- Santi Ashoke by Samana Bothirak (1934-)
- Dhammakaya (1970-).

It does not matter whatever group of reinterpretation or its purpose would be, but this is born from the dynamics of interpretation group simultaneously practice the distinct thought in society. Moreover, the strength of reinterpretation for profound dhamma and for here and now, practically correspond to results in the emergence of satisfied new group. This is a question that new Buddhist group seeks for new approach in Buddhist practices in new worldview and individual satisfaction, as Phaisarn said: "Phenomena about Buddhist practice is a matter of individuals, the strong point is that everyone can adopt their own practice relevant to his/her temperament and conditions...on the other hand, Buddhism can be easily interpretable with one's own preference and feasible to be distorted from original principle". Everyone has more freedom to choose rituals, symbols and teachings from any Buddhist sects, schools and lineages. Thus, with different reinterpretations, new monastic movements have developed with their own settlements outside of the mainstream Sangha and main-tradition; further, corrupt and perverted monks and laities feed on the religious faith of the populace and other challenges to the religiously supreme authority of the Sangha.

b. Meditation Lineage Group (กลุ่มสำนักปฏิบัติ)

Amongst the meditation lineages, the masters are considered as having 'phenomena' within Thai society for a long-time. In those days, meditation masters or 'forest monks' had their own authentic ways of practicing and there were two groups: village and forest monks until their clear classification has been blurred now, but this paper merely focuses on the whole picture of each present group in

meditation lineage. It can be broken into 4 lineage groups of meditation technique as follows:

- Vipassana led by Samatha Technique
- Samatha led by Vipassana Technique
- Samatha as well as Vipassana Technique
- Other some Techniques cannot be put under any first three ones.

So, meditation groups have destinations or objectives in their practice and encourage practitioners in higher levels and to establish Buddhism in long run, as well as providing benefits when behaviors are designed and meant for the benefit of preservation and forging of true benefits and happiness.

The increase of interest in meditation among modern Thai people, particularly among the intellectuals as result of technological advances: the major part of the society indulges more and more in sensual pleasures and material quest which result in disillusion and turn to the spirituality. This has led to the emergence of new meditation centers and the growing number of the practitioners. In their own independent search of spirituality without a central authority and leadership, different teachers and groups develop different interpretations of the Buddha's teachings and different methods of practice. Moreover, they still criticize one another for misinterpretation and wrong practices.

c. Feminist Group (กลุ่มเพศวิถี)

Gender Ways Group or Feminism Group appeared evident in Thailand in B.E. 2471 when Narin Bhasit (Phranomsaranarin B.E. 2417) and her work: "Bulletin on Samanerinareevong" -ordained her daughter, as samaneree (female novice). There are three issues on Gender Ways:

- Bhikkhuni
- Thai Mae Chi Institute
- Third Gender.

To seek for spaces or restore women's rights for the Thai Bhikkhuni – this is a complicated issue - to greatest extent, starting from, or constituting from the Dhamma & Vinaya, Tipitaka, Sangha Acts, and women's rights... Each is so difficult to talk about, leading to controversy, as recent activities in Australia have demonstrated. Nonetheless, this group has developed more and more socially.

d. Animistic-Buddhist/Mediumship Group (กลุ่มไสย-อิงพุทธ)

Out of the mainstream Sangha there are many varieties of Buddhism and systems dependent on Buddhism; there are many centers springing up independently or unrelated to meditation centers or Sangha residences, such as: Kuanyin centers, and any other centers. Some are imported from international branches in Mahayana tradition or Hindu or Chinese deities, but mixed with Theravada and animism. These mediumship-centers have developed and had their own adherents and simultaneously with different objectives, it is not completely separate from the mainstream Buddhism - at least, it is a mixture between ghost, animism, and certain Buddhist aspects - with their objective to offer faith to their own adherents.

e. Magic Object Group (Buddhist capitalism) (กลุ่มวัตถุมีฤทธิ์: ทุนนิยม)

This Buddhist group has developed socially, economically, as a result of dependence on the former group of Animistic-Buddhist/Mediumship Group and as a response to other Buddhist groups – dealing with capitalists and material benefits rather than any other groups. It turns out that many Buddhist temples within the mainstream Sangha depend on this. That is because many high ranking monks are listed as a chairman of auspicious victory candle lighting and extinguishing, due to their expertise in this regard - or the art of easy money-making. The use of charms, talismans, and such objects as Buddha lockets or votive tablets were neither part of the Buddha’s teaching, nor recommended by him. They were adopted by Buddhists in a much later period and have become popular in a comparatively recent time.

For this group, it is interpretable that it is a skillful means of re-explaining Dhamma to people for their adherence to “recollection of the Buddha.” To reach “so-called Buddhānussati” or certain spiritual masters as “Sanghānussati”, and to have Buddha amulet on one’s body is to recollect and perform or conduct good deeds as “Dhammānussati.” This explanation is acceptable to hear from and share, but at the same time, process of this group depends on capitalist pattern and method for capital or budget (Buddhathunniyom: Buddhist Capitalism) - to macro economics, as marketers view the growth of magical consumerism. Marketing technique are indeed used in this form of commerce in “magic objects” and there is a constant quest or demand for these created objects.

In later times the connection between Buddha-lockets or votive tablets as magic objects and the Dhamma, seem to have been lost or forgotten altogether. Many no longer have faith in the Dhamma but have come to blindly believe in so far as indulge in the sole powers of magic. Sacred objects cease to be an effective tool or skillful means for the practice of Dhamma and lose their original, more sublime purposes. Modern day magic has become so commercialized that there are concerted efforts to spread superstition among the gullible for commercial ends. They are being promoted through advertising like household commodities. Many temples, instead of being spiritual centers for Dhamma, represent places for spreading magic, or predictions for lottery ticket numbers, and other activities, rather than Dhamma dissemination.

3. Socially Engaged Buddhism (กลุ่มพุทธศาสนาเพื่อสังคม)

In Thai Buddhism, a temple as a spiritual center, focuses on linking between other parts of community: the village and school. The role that the monks play towards society is often no more than ritual, no more than that. Socially Engaged Buddhism is designed for new Buddhist movements to create Buddhist principles integral for Society – it is a Buddhism designed for each group’s destination with limitations, not inclusive of diverse Buddhist groups. The majority of temples in Thailand adhere to this pattern but not obviously so far as it can mobilize Buddhism, as it should be, in accordance with temples and monks/novices.

Ultimately, new Buddhist movements in the present are all designed for responding to the needs of diverse Buddhist groups, stressing mainly on individual satisfaction. The development commenced during King Rama IV, with the transformation and reinterpretation of Buddhism based on scientific and empirical approaches, later followed and expounded upon by the late Buddhadasa Bhikkhu - his reinterpreted easy and approachable ideas to practice “Human Language, Dhamma Language”, were designed for easier approaches and practice. Later on, Santi Asok and Dhammakaya became additional products of reinterpretative groups, making great efforts to look for their own identity and characteristics for wider acceptance, within individual group.

Simultaneously globalization encourages groups to claim more space and moreover laws opened for freedom in beliefs and faiths, resulting in more religious space for: “women and religious rights” motivating gender-rights advocates or any other groups or ways of practice against the existing rules and regulations, or the mainstream Sangha. Some new Buddhist movements are partially Buddhists with authentic spirit of Buddhism itself, while some are dependent on mainstream Buddhism but have their own apparently mixed approach. Also some are related to

Buddhism but never encourage Buddhist teachings such as Animistic-Buddhist Group and Magical Group (Buddhist Capitalism). In the same way, the development of these Buddhist groups are in the form of groups and their social dynamics – including, encouraging the capitalist system and support away from the mainstream Sangha as well. Thus, the characteristic of the new Buddhist movements in the present period of spiritual confusion, generate a renewed interest in new forms of Buddhism and create further division, disharmony, conflict and criticisms.

4. **Socially Engaged Buddhism** (กลุ่มพุทธศาสนาเพื่อสังคม)

“As a bee gathers honey from the flower without injuring its color or fragrance, even so the sage goes on his alms-round in village”¹

The above words from the Buddha, are not only a direct translation and meaning, but further imply the authentic ideas in social aspects that the monks or Buddhists who engage themselves in society should never injure society; on the other hand they are obliged to aid, relieve, protect, preserve and develop society which will be discussed in the next fragment. Subsequently, this section discusses two major groups of socially engaged Buddhism:

- Buddhist Academics for Society
- Buddhist Pragmatism for Society

a. **Buddhist Academics for Society**

This group incorporates Buddhist teachings, concepts and values for responding to social, political and economic dimensions as well as for integrating with new modern sciences. It does not accord with traditionalist Buddhism but focuses on analysis of Buddhadhamma to correspond with the changing society - not transforming the true essence, because that is called “Transformed Dhamma” which distorts from the original or early teachings.

Under this group, international Buddhist world include H.H. the 14th Dalai Lama and his “universal responsibility”, meant for current problems such as economic, environmental, social injustice; Thich Nhat Hanh (1926 -), and his pioneer concept of socially engaged Buddhism about “interbeing” for injustice in social structure; and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar (1891-1956) and his concept “Neo or New Buddhism) for injustice with his statement: “human suffering springs from social embedment.” Inside Thailand, we have some notable Buddhist academics for

¹ Dh. 49. This verse is translated from the Pali by Acharya Buddhakkhita.

socially-engaged Buddhism: Buddhadhasa and his concept of “Dhammic Socialism”; Prayudh Payutto, for his concept of: “Vinaya & Sila and Social Intention”; and Phaisan Visalo - who received ideas from both Buddhadhasa or Payutto through academic works in socially-engaged Buddhism.

b. Buddhist Pragmatism For Society

Socially Engaged Buddhism, in part of pragmatism, occurred for: responding to variety of social requirements and more complicated problems. This group can be sub-divided into groups in particular monks working for society in local or community level as follows:

- *Aids or Reliefs Group*
- *Protection & Vigilance Group*
- *Conservation (pre) Group*
- *Development Group*
- **Aids or Reliefs Group**

This group emphasizes on rendering a helping hand to relieve the deteriorating situations or events such as ad-hoc groups for special missions to help disaster victims, including the Buddhist teaching-based Micro Bank by Phra Subin Panito in Trad Province to help assist members independent from commercial banks called ‘Saccasasomsap’; HIV Project by Prachathorn – this is why some monasteries are well-known for being charitable nursing homes for the aged or terminally-ill AIDS patients.

- **Protection & Vigilance Group**

This group aims at protecting and being vigilant to intoxicants or corrupt actions such as drug-addictions – ran by local monks who want to operate charitable therapeutic centers aimed at healing or rehabilitating addicted people.

1. Conservation Group

This group focuses on consistently trying raise public awareness and the conservation of culture or environment, such as: cultural conservation, forest preservation as a result of multi-cultural impositions, ecological degradation, pollution, and deforestation. In the conservation of culture, many Buddhist groups help preserve local culture based on Buddhism, such as: puppet-performances by local-rural temples, and ecological preservation performed by notable pioneer-leaders and organizations, such as Phra Prachak Kutacitto - who had been a forest monk for

dozen years working to save forests, and other activities like ordaining trees by wrapping them in monastic robes and trying a sacred string around a forest area. Monks in the forest meditation centers play, therefore, key roles in conserving and preserving fast diminishing Thai forest reserves and wild life.

- **Development Group**

This group is meant for rendering service-minds to help develop society in different levels, such as, Luang Por Nan, one of the first ‘development monks’ in the Isan-area, who explains: “True human development starts from within”. Another is Phra Khru Supajarat, a Buddhist monk who works for developments for rural people. Under his initiative and support, schools are built in remote rural areas, roads are constructed to connect villages, wells are dug to provide more water to villagers, funds are established to enable poor children to attend school and colleges, family disputes are amicably settled, electricity is brought into long forgotten village settlements, etc.

Apart from the above mentioned material and temporal development, some groups run activities to develop mentally and spiritually by incorporating or integrating morality (Dhamma) into training: there is a Dhamma/Morality camp for youth called “Buddhaputra Camp (Buddha’s son)/ Dhammadayart Camp (Heir to Dhamma)” with many groups and styles for varieties of youths, as well as “Novice/Youth Summer Camp” with intention to giving opportunities to underprivileged kids to better understand spirituality.

Thus, individual Sangha members outside of mainstream Sangha are quite capable, socially-conscientious and dedicated. They do contribute substantially to society, in terms of social welfare, environmental issues, material or temporal development and spiritual well-being. It is hoped that they will become effective and efficient in realizing the Buddhist-ideal of: “going forth for the welfare and happiness of the many” by helping and guiding the society as a whole, through process of right and real development - also they should not be concerned not only about the maintenance of the monk’s status, or fame - in the changing traditional society, but also about the restoration of the monks to their proper place as leaders in modern society.

5. Socially Engaged Buddhism trendy or mainstream in Thai Buddhism?

Classifying group of mainstream Thai Sangha seems symbolic representation of Buddhism as a whole for mainstream Buddhist organization but Sangha Council of Elders still follows tradition and lack outstanding social roles. The outstanding social role they play is on ritual officiating and state protocol and not on educational, social

welfare and propagation aspects, including: no public-sphere participation taken by civil society. One factor is that they may place more reliance on the secular government or the state than dedicating support to people like Phaisan Visalo. Uniform or standardized Buddhism is a thing of the past. Thai Buddhism is returning to diversity... in the past uniform-Buddhism was possible because of state or centralized Sangha-control. Recent trends suggest that Buddhism is becoming independent of the state [*thus the intention of Buddhism being a world-renouncing system*] and Sangha hierarchy - returning Buddhism back, into the hands of the people.

SEB does not deal with only preaching without action in society, but also new ideas of morality are needed for reinterpretation or integration because communities have changed in this globalization-age – everyone is in a new global community. That’s why revering the mother Earth, doing business with social responsibility and gender inclusiveness are also urgent issues for Buddhism – and Buddhists must take responsibility in every level and aspect.

In Thai Buddhism even the mainstream seems tradition-oriented on the surface level. But on the deeper level, Buddhism in part of Sangha and lay Buddhists is still actively engaged in society but not true essence of Buddhism because the mainstream on emphasizes on ritual more than social works.

For Thai Buddhism, the Sangha is believed to be the main shareholder of Buddhism who has monopoly to take over all burdens and obligations of Buddhist matters whereas the other stakeholders (lay Buddhists) have a little role in taking responsibility of Buddhism as a whole. Thus, new Buddhist movements in particular, socially-engaged Buddhism - on the surface level, has no less influence over the national level than community and regional levels. Those results from the long-term plan and Buddhism-based strategy for social engagements which is not clearly or widely accepted by hierarchical Sangha’s responsibility.

As above, analysis of sub-groups of engaged Buddhism: AIDS/relief, protection, conservation, preservation and development provides detailed information to understand more about engaged Buddhism in Thailand. In national level, engaged Buddhism is seen as having not played an important role in leading the society as it should be. This reflects that mainstream Sangha organization does not respond to this engagement and neither determines strategy as long-term policy for responsible development. Socially Engaged Buddhism is therefore confined only to some extent, to near society – at the community level but is not exposed to the larger society – at the national-public level, or in the world as it really is. I would like to propose some ideas for mainstream Thai Buddhism as follows:



- First: to accept the main teachings of the law of the three common signs (Tilakkhaṇa) — impermanence (aniccā) which means ‘change’ in modern language by understanding the change of every dimension of life, society, environment not adhere only to the tradition but not pay attention on modernity, globalization. Suffering and non-self are the other two characteristics.
- Second: to accept the main concept of ‘Dukkha’ which appears in many main teachings—Four Noble Truths, Dependent Origination, Three Common Signs and Five Khandas — which means ‘problems or crises’ in modern language by engaging in the perceiving of and healing the world from suffering, starting from the leaders.
- Third: To understand the main teaching of ‘interdependence of everything’ in dependent origination by not separating Sangha or Buddhist teachings from society but ready to contribute to solving the every level and degree of problems—personal life, family, community, nation, and globe.
- Fourth: To integrate or interpret the normative Buddhist teachings into detailed or descriptive ones for responding to the new context whether it be economic, social, political, and ecological but the authentic essence or substance of Buddhadhamma still exists.
- Fifth: To take universal responsibility or put Buddhist ideas into practical action or every field of lifestyles or circles.

Thus, socially engaged Buddhism in Thailand is not only trendy but also now considered mainstream. Leaders or administrators of Sangha Councils of Elders and secular Buddhist organizations as well as the residual mainstream Buddhists should accept and understand the ‘**change**’ by having greater vision about the world and engage in the alleviation of human or social sufferings on every level - by not separating out the Sangha or Buddhist teachings from society but seeing the interdependence (Paṭiccasamuppāda) between the world and the dhamma reasonably. In reality, Buddhism still maintains its social-standing - by the people by means of adapting distorted attitude (mijjhādiṭṭhi) from different contexts into proper attitude (sāmmādiṭṭhi), as it really is.

6. Conclusion

To recover from the global crises in different dimensions, socially engaged Buddhism should take more responsibility, globally, through comprehensive values, such as universal responsibility. In the same way as, with the varied forms of new Buddhism in Thailand, designed for responding to individual or group preferences, based on faith and education in the globalization age - is on the other hand, designed

for diversity as a particular choice for all Buddhist levels of group. Another dimension is that diversity becomes Buddhist culture and becomes benefit of particular groups which in long run, corrodes the true essence of Buddhism and wrecks Buddhism including beliefs outside of Buddhist teachings. How do the Buddhists have attitude or view alienation of each Buddhist group or group inherent with other Buddhists? In another sense, how can we have any actions that lead to keep the Buddhist essence in accordance with Buddhist principles because each group proclaims “Buddhists” but which style of Buddhism and which dimension is exactly it. Therefore, my observations are:

1. How to help keep Buddhism in holistic and diverse dimension by the objective of keeping Buddhism in accordance with Dhamma & Vinaya
2. How to build up unity in diversity on practices because most practices do not agree on Dhamma & Vinaya, it becomes social dispute as appeared in the present we cannot accept alienation based on discrimination of Buddhists.
3. How to build unity in accountability and balance reasonably, not to monitor without attitude of unity in any aspects and it weakens the structure of the Sangha and diverges from the true principles. Buddhists expect the future with Buddhism and it would have multiple diversities as well as keeping with the true essence but not secondary essence in Buddhism or something rejected by the Buddha himself as the mainstream appeared in the present.

Socially Engaged Buddhism intends to replace traditional Buddhism or become mainstream in Thai Buddhism, and not in the hand of the mainstream Sangha Council of Elders or monks. Instead it must be the mainstream in the hand of all comprising the assembly of Buddhists (the authentic owner of Buddhism) in every walk of life, circles for responding to fulfillments and requirements of all Buddhist civil society. That is called ‘authentic mainstream Buddhism’, and it extends out to be mainstream for the happiness, benefit of the entire world.



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อโศก (เอกสารงานมอบหมาย)

Inner Freedom: A Spiritual Journey for Jail Inmates

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External Freedom and Inner Freedom

The feelings of comfort and happiness usually go along with the idea of a person being free. Freedom is of two kinds: external freedom and inner freedom. In the Western way of life, they often speak of external freedoms. External freedom is manifested in the conduct of outside activities such as: free speech, political freedom, social freedom, freedom of choice and so on, to meet individual aspirations. With an individualistic attitude, people get upset when these freedoms are restricted.

People who seek and guard this external freedom often compete against one another. This way of life always has been praised and protected by legal rules in the western culture. Unfortunately it has caused increased selfishness and a wide gap between people, due to the tendency toward minding one's own business and not paying any attention to others.

Another kind of freedom, very often mentioned in Buddhism, is inner freedom. In this state of mind, people release their mind from all bondage. One observes carefully his own mind, working with the six senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch and mind) to unveil the basic ignorance which has caused one's fear, suspicion and hostility and which could eventually lead one to retaliate, kill or hurt others.

In this process, it is inner freedom that is sought. Firstly, we have to overcome all limitations of self-concept and the entanglement of thoughts that can make us lose all freedom, and release ourselves of all habitual emotions, perceptions and deeds to live in a state of freedom.

Secondly, according to Buddhism, we must make an effort to release craving, anger and delusion, which are the three main causes of people feeling distracted and unhappy. Though it is only a mental process, the bigger this attitude of craving becomes, the more people become slaves of their own emotions and lose self-control, easily becoming depressed.

Cravings are normally people's urges for everyday things like food, clothes, jewelry, love, and so on. However, if in rushing to satisfy these demands we lose our sense of direction, we can become totally dependent on them. Moreover, if we don't

acquire these things honestly, we bring serious consequences on ourselves and our relatives.

Thirdly, we need to release inhibitions and inner conflicts. Sometimes in our search for a lasting happiness, we end up hurting other people in the community through our careless deeds. If we can resolve these inhibitions and inner contradictions, we can have inner harmony and mental equilibrium. This is the first step towards inner freedom.

The Master of Healing Sutra mentioned two Bodhisattvas named “Sunlight lighting up everywhere” and “Moonlight lighting up everywhere”. It was thought that the Sun and the Moon never could appear together; either the Sun was visible or the Moon was, as it was either day or night. If they were present at the same time, a solar or lunar eclipse would occur and would damage crops and health. However, in the Sutra, these two Bodhisattvas were efficient assistants to the Healing Buddha, the Buddha of Spiritual Medicine who merged two opposite entities completing each other. Similarly, if we can settle the conflict of inward contradiction between looking for one’s own happiness and protecting other people’s happiness in the community, we truly will find a lasting happiness.

Considerate Actions

In Buddhism, there is a principle, which teaches us to be mindful of our actions: “Before you decide to do anything, think of the result.” We should recall these words frequently as a reminder to carefully consider our actions, even if they are only saying a word or harboring some secret thoughts nobody knows about. Even in these cases we have to suffer the consequences of our own actions, and those consequences affect, directly or indirectly, not only ourselves and our relatives but also other people around us. If we can distinguish right from wrong, we are morally responsible and have some control over our deeds.

Inner freedom makes us feel free in spirit, peaceful and joyful wherever we are. All of us can be free and successful if we strive to improve our morals. Our sense of our own inner freedom gives rise to respect for other people’s freedom. It opens our eyes. It is as important for us as having air to breathe, food to eat, clothes to protect us from harsh elements, and so on; it is essential for living.

An act performed without inner freedom can cause us loss and regret in the future. Inward freedom causes the growth of one’s morals, changing one’s actions and mind for the better.

Attaining Inner Freedom

To acquire inner freedom we must limit our pursuit of objects of desire and try to pursue them in accordance with laws and morals. We have to remember to aim at true and lasting happiness for ourselves, our family and the community, and this is maintained only on the basis of inner freedom.

To begin with, we must identify what the objects of our desires are, and then evaluate which ones need to be developed and which ones need to be dropped. Satisfaction of desire that harms other living beings could cause us to be punished. Therefore, changing these desires is an important need. To be able to perceive the good and bad in our desires, we must observe carefully. We should recognize that the desires would give us problems as well as cause damage to community and society. It would bring us usefulness and not have any evil influences on others.

Each of the choices asks for a serious thought, and we have to know the way to design and calculate one's life not only in the present but also in the future. A person who designs his life, based strictly on right thoughts of moral standards and usefulness, surely he would avoid feeling regret in the long run.

Secondly, we should think whether these desires can be obtained or not, some desires can be obtained in few days or in few years, sometimes it could take 50 – 70 years. They are the desires of morals, positive values and happiness.

We should not be disappointed about the time to attain them, and give up the desires. If we only want to satisfy our senses and ignore the consequence, we would become a slave of senses, desires and poor habits; leading to the loss of values and inner freedom.

Thirdly, we must aim at happiness and the ways to retain it. The aim of inner freedom is to build personality for the self on a basis of respect for others. Everybody in the world is born equal, enjoys the right to freedom, peace, happiness in the long run; while we cause the ruin of others, which means we also hurt one's happiness.

The Buddha taught us “we should appreciate highly among all things of what we do not like to be hurt by others”. Thus, we should respect everybody.

Freedom through Meditation

The first step reaching towards the inward freedom is dhyāna or meditation. Dhyāna is a process to clean one's mind. It does not relate to belief in religion, or superstition, it is a process to change the inside. The sorrow experienced during life made us lose happiness and peace. Dhyāna could have the ability of balancing feelings and awareness in order to re-establish the spiritual values lost in humdrum

everyday life. When we practice dhyāna, we could change the prison (tù) into a monastery (tu).

There are the silent rooms and corners in the monasteries, the places for the monks after they are tired for Buddha's affairs. The time spent staying there is a necessary requirement to re-create the spirit energy sources and morals, that might be lost during the period of activities.

They must serve themselves-- eats, drink and keep healthy during the period, observe silence, and isolate themselves from the outside world completely.

During the first days, we could be faced with fear so much; the fear of the soliloquy, for the people always have the need to express sorrow, happiness to others to release the stress, but it is not allowed to a person who entered the silent rooms. They must alter their own mind by Dhyana-contemplation, and they must face the self. Unless they have an ability to change the mind, they are too different to achieve anything.

The basic practice of meditation is to sit cross-legged, the left foot put on the right foot at first. After being acquainted with this posture, cross left sole of the foot on the right thigh and the right sole of the foot on the left thigh. Sitting in this posture would give us biological energy in the body, the Buddha named it "Posture of Lotus", or "Yin –Yang merging" i.e. Yin and Yang work harmoniously in one's body. In the field of medicine, we keep a Yin – Yang balance, which means to create a biologic energy sources in support of our spirit actively, all stresses of fears, anxieties, sorrow, cravings, anger and delusion would change.

The posture of Dhyana is to sit with back straight, head and spinal column in a straight line, maintain this posture for a long while to relax one's mind, combined with deep breathing smoothly, not having any mental inhibitions.

We should practice to concentrate on the breath, only pay attention to one's breath, keep always breath and one's mind together; breathe in and out by nose, not by mouth, for the breath going out from the mouth causes lost much more calories, the breath go in from nose being cleansed with hairs of nose. Thus, the pure airs go in, it is better for the metabolism process of the body and the nervous system makes us feel light and a tranquil soul.

Sitting in the posture of Lotus would give us relaxation in body and would support to relax one's spirit. Thus, our emotions would change, and we would begin to follow one's idea on how to reflect, keep thoughts and breath together, throw away thoughts of lover, relatives, friends, family, works and desires so on and so forth during the period of Dhyana, at that time we have only breath and correct thoughts; life of morals and spiritualism. We breathe as light and deep as possible with a smile on lips to support and reduce the stress on brain, according to the ability how long

each of us can maintain. We could combine breath with thoughts “When I consume materials, material things consume me.”

Why should we recognize this fact? We daily consume food including vegetables, meat so on and so forth. Each of the foods reflects different culture of eating and drinking. All animals have a life and the right to live. Eating meat, we cause the death of animals, cause unhappiness and lament from their souls. It makes our body heavy and unclean -- besides, it also causes biologically chemical reaction in our physical chemistry, so we easily get angry, worry and are saddened, affecting our health badly.

Further, the meat, today, is produced from animals, improperly fed to gain weight from foods, stuffed with many toxins. We would bring poison into our body, if we eat their meat.

Checking Bad Habits

Consumerism could make us victims. If we use toxic products, habit would be formed, and we would become addicted to alcohol, beer, tobacco, drugs and so on, craving to enjoy their taste. However, the more we consume, the more slavish we become. Knowing their bad effects on our health and emotions, we should not consume them.

One’s sense of dressing, activities and habits in communication with each other, are called a person’s character. The Buddha taught us: “It is not right to think that character doesn’t change”. This point of view could make us accept easily the fate. If we were in financial and social difficulties, we would always come to a standstill, and have a thought: “It is useless to do one’s best”, and become slave of Godhead.

The Buddha taught us: “Anybody who believes in Spirits and God, will lose one’s inner freedom” and “we have to take direct responsibility for happiness and unhappiness to others and ourselves.”

Therefore, the first step of inner freedom is to strive by Dhyana; give up a faulty thought process that tells us that a fate rules over happiness and unhappiness, and they are pre-destined.

“Arrange a vicissitude life, would be a vicissitudes life. Arrange a noble life, would be a noble life.”

Vicissitude or noble life is the effects caused by words, deeds and occupation, in a state of consciousness or unconsciousness, morally.

We have to observe ourselves while we use materials. Materialism could corrode us, if we are not wise in its use we would become a slave to western pragmatism. We would also become a victim of unhappiness and then suffering would follow us for a long time.

Young people think that they formed the habits of smoking and drinking due to following the examples of the society. The first time, it is due to one's companions, but gradually we fall a victim, without realizing when became addicted to smoking, wine and drugs.

At first, habit is just a cobweb to break through easily by a finger or a blow. After sometime, however, it would be like the chains tightening one's awareness, actions and living. Then, we depend on it completely. For example, a woman liked chewing betel leaves, and she would feel tired if she did not have betel. Somebody has a habit of drinking coffee, and cannot concentrate on work unless he has a cup of coffee. The monks were trained by habit, for never using stimulants like coffee, smoke, and beer, wine and so on; for bad habits, once formed, corrode oneself.

We should combine our breath with thought: 'Materialism corrodes me in condition, I use it'. Thus, we would have a choice to use necessities or reject unnecessary things.

Intelligent Investigation

We should exercise to observe our mind as a mirror that would reflect a true image about what is in front of it. If we had the desires of enjoyment, possession, adultery, bad habit and so on...Then, the mirror of the mind would give us an image of human being having fully lost the inner freedom and one's happiness. We should return our own mind without any evil stick in thought, and at that time desire, anger and delusion would disappear.

We should have an intelligent investigation about all aspects of difficulties in living, like the desires, the pleasures as well as how they appear, what is their course, whether it is natural, and then we could control our mind.

Whenever the desires appear in our mind, we learn that "I consume desires, and otherwise desires corrode me", and I would be unhappy.

If someone gives us a slap on the face, we decide to retaliate against him, i.e. the anger appears in our thought, and we use the anger, then, peace and happiness would not exist in us anymore.

It is the same thing with suspicion, jealousy and selfishness or with regard to other people's unhappiness, which bears our anger. When we remain cool, ignore

other people's bad behavior, like a stone or piece of wood - then we know how to retain peace and happiness.

We investigate that by feeling inwardly free gradually makes us release bad habits and overcome different kinds of emotions.

This investigation is very necessary, and we could do it before going to bed or after we get up. It is the time when our mind is calm. We can develop happiness, then we become wholly a new person. We take a rebirth once more, even though unchanged in physical figure, but changed in manners.

The process of inner freedom would create a new face of happiness to replace sorrow among everybody. We should not talk about one's mistake so much, for it would cause the spread of bad morals to everyone, and particularly to those who have not yet the ability to change themselves. They would learn bad habits easily, and become a victim of unhappiness. It is better to talk about good and right things of life, and let the sorrow go by.

To have success in Dhyana, we should not recall the past, the Buddha said.

Due to all the good memories having passed along with time, the happiness did not exist anymore. The mistake done in the past, intentionally or unintentionally, would always bring pain in our mind, throwing us off-balance.

The current happiness as the standard in the Dhyana, forget the past and sorrow. Do your best with all your heart, awareness, love as well as the strong faith. "I could become a new person, useful and happy person", with thoughts like these, we can still exercise the Dhyana while we are at work.

"One day without labor, one day without eating", Chinese Zen Master Gui Shan said, i.e. not to have a meal unless we work. Thus, the fruit one's labor would be a repayment, and the value of work would bring the reward of blessedness. By not working, one would owe to a benefactor.

One should not harbor thoughts, like: 'labor is an obligation'; but should consider: "labor would bring a fruit of good deeds" - then, enjoyment in work will appear immensely. We sometimes have to work double time due to the absence of a colleague; we should consider ourselves fortunate to have a chance to work as two persons. The result of that work would be great, if we truly work with a pleasant heart. The monks in the monastery always work eight to ten hours a day. They feel very happy to plant a tree, pull grass, and the works for public benefit, all for free.

One should not do idle talk with each other, for it would lose so much calories. One should observe silence, and follow the breath even while working. The acts done following in-and-out breathing bring us happiness. The monks always practice this at monasteries besides repeating the name of the Buddha.

Controlling Desires

We should practice the attitude of “less desires and causal satisfaction”. Wise people should know how to minimize desires. For a climb up at a ladder would bring snobbery. If desires are not met on remain discontent. Fierce desires would arise from comparison with others about personal property, and it is so much that they would gain one’s craving no matter whether they had to act illegally or unethically. In the end, one would become a prey to a trap of pleasures. Observing less desire i.e. by reducing unnecessary demands, thus, one would not appear to climb the demand ladder, and we would be satisfied with what we really got from our labors causally. We lose happiness when we harm others, but not lose happiness for being poor. Riches are only material conditions to give us pleasure, not for being happy.

We would cultivate happiness by knowing how to reduce negative desires, and realizing that it better to be content with what one has and not to complain about one’s loss. We must do our best by using our intelligence, physical labor and heart. It would not bring much gain by being dissatisfied with life.

According to Buddhism, cause and effect is the essential condition to decide failure or success in the life. We must practice to maintain mental equilibrium, despite meeting with life’s ups and downs. That is way we could have self-control, and form the process of inner freedom.

Cultivating Moral Character

The persons at all levels of the society, be they monks, King, Prime Minister, civilians, so on and so forth, still need to self-improve their morals and personality. The process of self-improvement in Buddhism includes following factors.

- Change acts of killing human or conscious beings into acts of respecting life and protecting rights of living animals as well as peace and natural environment, for the ecological environment can contribute to survival of species.
- No stealing; should have respect other’s ownership. The Buddha taught us to share money, and advised to lend a helping hand whole-heartedly as the spirit of Vietnamese goes: “good leaf wrap rag leaf”.
- Change habit of saying useless, bad and hurting words that create divisions and hurt others’ feelings. One must use true words that can establish solidarity, reconcile two enemies and help them become friends, and lift the spirit of people who are depressed.

- Change character and have right conduct in marriage. Polygamy and flirting with others would cause disaster, destroy a happy family. Buddhism always encourages us to have just one husband and one wife in a family. Love and happiness are established by two hearts through sympathy and respect for each other. It is not acceptable to have illicit relationships, even if that is only feelings in a mind. Moreover, today there are many diseases spread through sex.
- Buddhism tells us to abstain from the bad habits like drinking, smoking, drugs and toxins, for it affects one's health, family and the society.

A man who is a drunk and an addict, he would neglect his duties towards society and family surely, has no time to help his family, furthermore he could lose one's lucid mind, self-control, and do bad, violent actions. So, by changing the habit of taking stimulants, we would avoid deeds which harm oneself, and one would not regret and have a clear conscience. We should be afraid of immoral deeds, which would cause effects - the consequences would not only last during this life, but also in future life; unhappiness will follow us everywhere in many different ways.

If we changed this, we would not be uncomfortable, afraid and nervous any more, we would be a new man with a moral life.

We should self-improve to keep a balanced disposition even when we are cheerful, sad, angry and nervous. If feelings are not balanced, grief will burn oneself ten times, hundred times more than the hottest month of June. When we are angry and sad, and argue with someone, we should breathe in and out deeply with a smile to help us reduce the stress. If we find it hard to practice, we could go in isolation by going out, breath smoothly and think that happiness of life is one's aim. Forget anger and remember that "a soft answer is better than wrath"; and by doing this we overcome our anger.

People always have cravings, so we should take our mind frequently to thoughts that happiness is not related to wealth or poverty, but it only goes along with personality and moral life. Happiness that we get from a material life, is merely a feeling of senses, lasting only for a short period. This happiness forms in our brain is scientifically not true, and it just exists actually, only when each of us could harmonize immanent freedom. We should not blame others and God, in that way, we could remember our responsibility. Thus, what we should do at that time is an intelligent contemplation. Whenever sorrow rises, we should use this feeling as a tool to self-improve our moral values. We should think about the image of Lotus. Although it grows up and flowers in mud, but is pretty and useful. Meditation on the symbolism of lotus gives us encouragement to alleviate feelings of sadness and find true happiness.



Finally, we should release all thoughts of sexual desires by realizing that desires do not relate to happiness. The monks have to overcome sexual desires and most of them are successful. The physical and mental restraints change one's attitude. Thus, we must release desires by cultivate loving kindness and compassion in our mind as substitute for sexual desires. The inhibition is to give up desires that we did not satisfy even if it is right or wrong, we should consider it as an obvious truth to overcome, and we could have to make efforts a lot of time to have a success in peace and happiness. We should consider any matter in life as very normal, not to exaggerate sorrow and unhappiness, let it pass with impermanent time. This attitude could change our lives with regard to health, work, sex, society and so on. Besides, we should realize that moral life is important and we must self-improve to bring us a lasting happiness.

The practice of inner freedom implies that one acts peacefully everywhere. The way of inner freedom would help recover one's physical, spiritual and moral life. It is a long process and is not simple. We should analyze our psychological behaviors carefully, and should not commit mistakes of thought. We should work with our whole heart and wish to bring happiness to others and ourselves.

A good action would bring a good reward. If we make efforts in doing good deeds, the fruit of happiness and peace would prevail. The monastics do not attach worldly things in order to keep their mind free so that they can study and practice successfully. We are not happy anywhere unless we practice inner freedom on the basis of morality and wisdom.

Vietnam Buddhist University in Hochiminh City Overcoming the First Obstacles in the Project to Prevent and Combat HIV/AIDS – The Confidential Lessons

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With its motto ‘*Duy tuệ thị nghiệp*’ (Wisdom in actions) Vietnam Buddhist University in Hochiminh City (VBU), whose former name was ‘*Vạn Hạnh University*’¹, has tried its best to train the ‘perfect students’ who know how to apply Buddhism to society in order to serve human beings.



Vietnam Buddhist University in Hochiminh City (VBU)

¹ ‘*Vạn Hạnh University*’, the first private Buddhist University in Vietnam, was founded in 1964 in *Sài Gòn* (now Hochiminh City) and lasted till 1975, run by Ven. *Thích Minh Châu*, Rector. It included 04 Faculties: Literature & Humanism, Buddhist Studies, Social Sciences, Education and 01 Language Center. *Vạn Hạnh* was a Vietnamese Zen Master, who was devoted throughout his lifetime to ‘*Hộ quốc an dân*’ (protecting his country and calming the people down) and deserved well of his country in establishing the *Lý* Dynasty in Vietnam (AD 1010 – AD 1225). The *Lý* dynasty started a splendid period of *Đại Việt* (name of Vietnam from AD 1054 to AD 1400) civilisation growing in all aspects, from infrastructure to superstructure, and defended her territory against the *Sung* Chinese in the North and *Champa* in the South. Under the *Lý*, Buddhism became a state religion contributing considerably to the glorious career of the nation. In 1984 Vietnam Buddhist University in Hochiminh City was founded and run by Most Ven. *Thích Minh Châu*, Rector, till 2008 when he was old and weak. And nearly 1,700 monk and nun students are now studying in this University.

Responding to the appeal for an ‘Engaged Buddhism² in 21st Century’ and especially ‘Buddhist Civil Society and Assistance to HIV Infected People in Thailand’ in a conference held by co-organizers, VBU and Mahachulalongkorn University (MCU), in Hochiminh City, Vietnam for two days, 18-19 December 2006, VBU has set up project to prevent and combat HIV/AIDS and had the following activities:

- To participate in activities relating to preventing and combating HIV/AIDS through signing cooperation with NAV³, a non-governmental organization in North Europe to help Vietnam, in the year 2007.
- To give its permission to establish a receiving-regulating Section on the work of preventing HIV/AIDS.
- To mobilize monk and nun students to take part in this work through the proper policies such as granting scholarships, creating good conditions on time for them at work, study or examination.

Like other projects of NAV/USAID, activities of VBU include enhancing the sense of monk and nun students about HIV/AIDS. In the years 2007 and 2008, two media and care groups including 40 members were trained through courses at city and national level held by Central Vietnamese Fatherland Front and by NAV/USAID. Then, they have gradually engaged in community activities.

² Engaged Buddhism: This is a movement, referred to as ‘Socially Engaged Buddhism’, concerned with developing Buddhist solutions to social, political, and ecological problems. It aims at reducing suffering and oppression through the reform of unjust and repressive social and political structures, while not losing sight of the traditional Buddhist emphasis on inward spiritual growth. This movement appeared in Vietnam in the twentieth century AD, the time of resistance against the French, the dictatorial regime *Ngô Đình Diệm* and the US. In fact, ‘Socially Engaged Buddhism’ was one of main reasons for the birth of Mahayana Buddhism in India around the First century BC, a response to the charge that Buddhism had been too passive and aloof rather than reaching out to the mass of humankind. That is why *Bodhisattvas* play decisive roles in saving the suffering sentient beings. Once wisdom comes out from the inward spiritual growth, the Enlightened One realizes the real nature of things, dependent origination and non-self. He then raises his great compassion to engage in society ‘selflessly’, ‘the sun is never worse for shining on a dunghill’.

³ Nordic Assistance to Vietnam (NAV).



A training course on HIV/AIDS in Vietnam Buddhist University in HCMC

1. The first lesson: The people infected with HIV and AIDS victims in nooks and crannies of a big city receive medical care from the compassion of nun students of VBU.

Right from the start, doing the project to prevent and combat HIV/AIDS faced challenges from the hesitation of some members about the thinking ‘That is not the duty of priest, especially of monk and nun students’, the limited time of students till getting into difficulties while approaching the people infected with HIV. Sometimes, the care part was thought to be hard to implement. In the belief that monk and nun students of VBU taking care of the people infected with HIV in communities would set the pattern for a practical introduction of Buddhism responding to HIV/AIDS and being ready to provide a solid foundation for a stable development of responding of Buddhism to HIV/AIDS at pagodas, Most Ven. Prof. *Lê Mạnh Thát* – Vice Rector, and Ven. *Thích Quảng Thiện* – Head of Department of Students’ Work have tried their best to support the capacity building, to visit, to care, to consult, to give advice and to call for patrons to help the people infected with HIV at Hospital *Phạm Ngọc Thạch* and at their home. In the year 2009, the Care Group of VBU did approach and take care of 260 people infected with HIV and 160 children affected by or infected with the epidemic (OVC⁴).

⁴ Orphaned vulnerable children (OVC)



A training session about care skills and education for orphaned vulnerable children (OVC)

Answering the question put by Prof. *Chung Á⁵* about the process of implementing the care part in communities, Nun *Thanh Nguyên* – the Care group leader – answered mildly about the first difficulties:

The people infected with HIV [have an] inferiority complex, the care does [have] yet to create the confidence and support of communities. The thinking: “Why don’t the priests concentrate on developing their mind but engage with the epidemic” is still insisted on. Thanks to the whole-hearted visit to every house to take care of the people infected with HIV, we have participated in reducing the discrimination attitude towards them in communities. The images of the Buddhist priests with familiar grey, brown, yellow robes going to take care of the infected at the final period, to support the funeral... have had a profound impact on the way of looking, the way of living of neighbors towards them. In the small housing areas, it’s hard for the people with HIV and AIDS to conceal their disease for a long time, so, as often as not, we visit them in a situation that they are clearly known as the infected and are being discriminated...

Nun *Thích Nữ Trung Tỳ* shared:

...Coming to a temporary hut near *Thanh Đa, Bình Thạnh District*, seeing the anonymous couple infected with HIV being abandoned by their kindreds, the husband being bedridden, the wife – jobless – carrying their child 12 months of age and weeping for the bad debt, we are struck dumb with emotion. Their suicide attempts made us stunned. The project budget is not

⁵ Ex- Vice Chairman of National Committee for HIV and AIDS control in Vietnam

enough to help her! Our group including three nuns raised money from monk and nun students of VBU and even from the Section leader (as you know, those monks and nuns have very little money). Finally, the amount for form's sake did help them resolve the crisis situation... Then, we continue to provide both of them advice, not to let the 'idea of suicide' re-appear in them. She is now often coming to our group activity...



Paying a visit to the people infected with HIV and AIDS victims

2. The second lesson: The flexibility and initiative of the Media groups of VBU.

Until December 2008, the Media group of VBU did approach and provide information of changing behavior in accordance with the ABC method (abstinence, being faithful and condoms), reducing the discrimination against the people infected with HIV for a target audience of 10,181, namely Buddhists, Buddhist priests and emigrants. Viewing the discrimination against HIV/AIDS remaining great, in the years 2007 and 2008, the Group organized *small Media groups* in the Primary Buddhist Classes in *Gò Vấp* and *Tân Bình* Districts, in VBU, in *Ngọc Phương* Monastery, in *Huỳnh Kim*, in *Aṭṭhaṅgika-sīla* and Buddhist Youth groups of *Hoằng Pháp*, *Pháp Bảo*, *Kỳ Quang II*, *Từ Tân* and *Châu An* pagodas. Combining with the Municipal Labor Union and People's Committee of *Gò Vấp* district, the Group did inform 376 people of movements and at high-risk the preventive measures towards HIV/AIDS.

- The “15-minute” communications – chances to change the views of communities:

In 2007 and early 2008, the Group actually got into difficulties. The audiences had no sympathy for us. Most Buddhists and some Buddhist priests said: ‘*That is not the business of monks...*’ In the face of reluctant response: ‘*agreeing [with] you to communicate for only 15 minutes...*’, the Group were not worried at all. With their skill in choosing facts and knowledge in conformity with the situation, with their impressive approach, with the use of their knowledge of Buddhism and HIV/AIDS, members of the Group, who were former lecturers of the Department of spreading the *Dhamma*, did start the 15-minute communications in front of people without sympathetic glints. However, when the 15-minute communications were over the speaker looked delicately at the Organization Committee and received a lesser reluctant permission: “*Please continue speaking...*” Then, after several such 15-minute communications, the Group felt relief all of a sudden when receiving suggestions: ‘*Please come to communicate again...*’ or ‘*I have some questions and need to talk with you...*’ The discrimination against the people infected with HIV and the difficulties for speakers on HIV/AIDS are still ahead, so the Media Group remain bound to prepare for such 15-minute communications, to be equipped with knowledge, skill, enthusiasm and devotions to share with communities.



A Media session on HIV/AIDS for the Buddhist youth

- Media – sympathies through voices, eyes and heart-to-heart

The greatest hardship of the Media group is to avoid dullness, bore of communications in communities, especially to the high-risk group that the Group approached in the year 2009. Not satisfied with the method of 2-way communications which had been the principle of the Group or with the leaflets which had been collected from various sources, the Group did meet and decide to take the idea ‘the A, B, C boats’ by Anders Dahl – a lecturer on media changing behaviors. Monk *Đông Nguyên*, the Media group leader, had initiatives in contacting the publisher to ‘print 3 boats drifting out to the sea of the epidemic HIV/AIDS...’ and he ‘came to

the News stands buying old fashion magazines to find out the illustrations for the media aims...’



A Media session on HIV/AIDS

3. The third lesson: The strong attachment of VBU leadership playing a great role in the development and stability of the project.
 - The rapid development of the project in VBU has two causes: Firstly, exploiting and bringing into play the enthusiasm, ability to digest and adapt oneself to new spheres; Secondly, the leaders of VBU were sharp-witted to make their monk and nun students experimenting with social work. This provides the solid foundation for the application of Buddhism to social work, a branch of VBU will be established and developed in future.
 - To ensure the stability of the project, the approval and support of VBU leaders is the first essential factor:
 - Due to the relation between the syllabus, timetable of lessons and social activities.
 - Due to the needs of mobilizing the human, financial and material resources for the project at present and for a long time. It is manifested in:
 - # Selecting the key personnel of the project from staffs of VBU, preparing for the mission of training and training again the staff of media and care who usually change for the temporary nature of the students of VBU – four-year course.
 - # Raising money from individuals, governmental and non-governmental organizations.

- The use of project activities to serve the policy on experiment and application of training program of social work should be supported and approved soon by VBU leadership to expand the range of activities in order to enhance the sense, set up the right attitude of monk and nun students towards HIV/AIDS, and determine the proper responses to the epidemic when they are studying in VBU and even when they return back to their home pagodas.

To conclude my share of experience, I would like to quote the strong will and clear orientation of VBU leadership in its speeches in the national conference on ‘The Vietnam Buddhist Universities and Project to Prevent and Combat HIV/AIDS’ co-organized by NAV and Central Committee of Vietnamese Fatherland Front in *Hà Nội* on July 10, 2009, and again in the conference ‘To Increase the Commitment of Women and Men of Religions in Preventing, Combating HIV/AIDS in Vietnam’ organized in *Huế* on September 22-23, 2009:



A leader of VBU giving a speech in a conference on HIV/AIDS

....Based on the determination of the Government, the support of NAV as well as its first achievements in the task to prevent and combat HIV/AIDS, Vietnam Buddhist University in HMC will keep on promoting its ability and overcoming obstacles and difficulties to develop the project work. And information on HIV/AIDS will be provided to all monk and nun students in their extra-curriculum activities this year 2010.

All are for a Vietnam and world of well-being.

Propagation of Buddhism in Jambudvipa- Analytical View

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After enlightenment, Lord Buddha established the Sangha and started a long-lasting, intensive and integrated Dhamma Movement for 45 years for the welfare and happiness of the majority of the Bahujans - emperors, kings, queens, princes, traders, farmers, rich and poor, high and low, all supported Lord Buddha's Dhamma Movement and came under the fold of Sangha.

Asoka ruled for a period of 37 years and gave the greatest boost to the spread of Dhamma in his own Kingdom known as Jambudvipa as well as in others countries by sending Buddhist missionaries to Sri Lanka, Burma and Thailand. Legacy of Mouryan emperors was followed by preceding emperors such as Kanishka, Harshvardhana, Satvahana. Dhammasasana had seen a great golden period of about 500 years.

Unfortunately, Buddhism has seen a gradual downfall in Jambudvipa. Many reasons are generally maintained by various scholars for this downfall. Inner breakdown of Buddhist Sangha and a drift due to sectarian attitude, Brahmnism and its rejection by Lord Buddha, caste system imposed by Brahmins in India, support of Pushyamitra Shunga, Shashaka & other contemporary Kings to the counter revolution, Chanakyanitee and Muslim invasion are the major reasons. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar writes, "The sword of Islam fell so heavily upon the priestly class. It perished or it fled outside India. Nobody remained alive to keep the flame of Buddhism burning".

Answer of Venerable Bhikkhu Nagasena to a question asked by King Milinda, about the reasons of downfall of any religion is remarkable. "If a particular religion is immature: the basic principles of that religion have no depth. It becomes a temporal religion and such religion survives only for short period. If there are no learned preachers in that religion, then the religion declines. If the preachers of the religion are not prepared to hold debate with the opponents, then the religion declines. If the religion and the religious principles are only for learned persons, then the religion declines. For common people there are temples and shrines. They go there and worship supernatural power". Verily after a sharp drift no scholar

preachers of the religion were left to hold debate with the opponents causing a continuous fall in the mainland.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's view about Culture & Politics categorically maintained with examples that "Every Political Revolution precedes the Cultural Revolution". The political revolution led by Mauryan Emperors was preceded by the religious and social revolution of Lord Buddha. At the time of Asoka whole Jambudvīpa was the land of Buddha and it remained so till the advent of Islam. Buddhist monasteries were ransacked and the Buddhist monks and nuns were massacred. The decline and fall of Buddhism started from this political upheaval. The Buddhist lay population without the royal shelter and spiritual guidance was easy prey for the forced conversion to Islam. Thus the land of Buddha turned into the land of no Buddha.

Indian fabric of society was divided in caste system with the Brahmins at the highest and the Buddhists (Dalits) at the lowest level. Dalits were made untouchables in the society with a complete social boycott by the upper caste Hindus. All their Buddhist shrines of worship were either destroyed, buried underground or converted to other religious temples. They were socially and economically suppressed for generations to generations. They were barred from educational attainments and from the study of religious and cultural literature. Dalits survived by doing the lowest heinous services of the society for their livelihood.

Buddhist Revival Movement in India

British exploration of Buddhist sites were seriously undertaken under the leadership of Sir Alexander Cunningham (1814-1893), British Army officer & archaeologist during his 28 years in the British service. Mrs. and Mr Rhys David's founded Theosophical Society of India and a scientific enquiry of the researches from all corners of the world started on Buddhism. The Buddhist revival in India practically took shape under Anagarika Dharmapala (1864-1933), who established the Maha Bodhi Society in India in 1891. However, a definite turn to the Buddhist Revival Movement was given by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar –who vowed in 1935 at Yeola, Nashik that, "I have taken birth as a Hindu, it was not in my hands, but I will never die as a Hindu". His historical vow brought rays of sunshine - happiness, peace and prosperity on 14th October 1956 when Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar took Buddha Dhamma-Diksha along with his five hundred thousand lay-followers at Deeksha Bhoomi ground at Nagpur, a sacred land of Naga peoples.

Why did Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and his followers embraced Buddhism? It is a very obvious question asked by many during and after the conversion. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar explained it in his famous Dhamma Diksha Speech of 14th

Oct., 1956, “Man does not need only the food. He has mind and the mind feeds on thoughts. If the religion does not develop hope and optimism in the minds of the people, it cannot be called religion at all. The Hindu religion and the Hindus have trampled down the religious sentiments and the enthusiasm among the downtrodden people. This forced me and my people to change the religion. The Buddha Dhamma has no limitations of period and time. In the past it prospered in India and many other foreign countries and it can prosper again”.

Impact of Great Buddhist Conversion of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was very much visible in the Indian subcontinent society immediately after the Dhamma Diksha. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was further aiming at many such conversions in other cities of India. Buddhist Seminaries were aimed to be established at New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Nagpur. The “Republican Party of India” was established for political tributary of the Dalit movement. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar’s revolutionary slogan “Educate, Unite and Agitate” brought revolution in the lives of millions of new Buddhist people in Maharashtra. Impact of the conversion was so massive that the Hindu establishments were totally bewildered and shuddered. Many Hindu organizations called it a political stunt of Dr. Ambedkar and not the real conversion to Buddhism. The impact of Buddhist Conversion ended with the pahanirvana of Dr. Ambedkar on 6th Dec., 1956.

Impact of Great Buddhist Conversion after the life time of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar is still viewed very vividly in Indian Society. Babasaheb’s slogan “Educate, Unite and Agitate” brought social change in religious, social, economical and political attainments of the downtrodden people of not only converted Buddhists but also among the other oppressed classes of the society. Global survey indicated that Maharashtrian New Buddhists have made the fastest progress in the history of mankind. A thought of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, was: “Politics is the fundamental key for Developments” attracted new Buddhists towards politics. However, Republican Party of India, could not perform well in Indian as well as Maharashtrian political canvas and the political leadership faded away with time. “Bahujan Samaj Party” a National political party established by Kanshiram with the missionary goal of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar has emerged as a strong political power in Uttar Pradesh. During all these developments, missionary efforts were not taken by the converted Buddhist people in proper directions to establish Buddhist Sangha to take ahead the Buddhist Cultural Revolution. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar maintained in his revolutionary speech of 14th October 1956 that, “Bhikkus are needed for the spread and propagation of Dhamma. They should go to the people and impart them knowledge of Buddha Dhamma. They should develop in the people the affection for Dhamma. Their work should not be limited to acquiring knowledge for themselves. They have to strive hard for the people’s welfare. They should teach the people the norm-discipline and the principles of Dhamma and they should

liberate the people from the old bad customs which have been cultivated over the years and to which the peoples are strongly tied". Such religious leadership of monks would have given a strong boost to a faster propagation of Buddhism in India. Unfortunately it did not happen after the great home coming to our ancestral original Buddhist religion. Even now after 53 years of conversion, enthusiasm of Maharastrian Buddhist can do miracles in Jambudvipa to bring back the glorious days to make India a more stronger, peaceful and richer country that could be a cultural capital of humanity for the whole world.

Diksha Bhumi, with course of time started observing conversions of many people of other states of India to Buddhism. Few conversions to Buddhism in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh of India had also taken place. Major conversion took place at Mumbai, on 27th May 2007, marking the 50th year of Dr. Ambedkar's Dhamma Diksha. Ayus. Laxman Mane, a revolutionary leader and noted writer of Maharashtra has embraced Buddhism along with his millions of followers - spread up in 42 nomadic tribes. Dalai Lama, called it as a "largest religious conversion in modern India".

Exact figures of the total number of original Buddhists before Dhamma Diksha of 14th October 1956, are not available. Number of Buddhists present during Dhamma Diksha of 14th Oct., 1956 is mentioned as 500,000. However about 1,000,000 of Buddhist attended the Mumbai's historical biggest funeral procession of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar on 6th December 1956, just after 54 days of conversion. Number of total Buddhists in Maharashtra as per 2001 census amounts to 7,800,000 - which share about 6% of the total population. Number of total Buddhists in India as per 2001 census amounts to 11,000,000 - where the share of Maharastrian Buddhists amounts to 58.3% in which total number of Second Generation Buddhist amounts to about 5,000,000.

Present status of Buddhists People in India

Maharastrian Buddhists has emerged as a united force in modern India. Their social stability is challenged time to time by majority Hindus as the Buddhists are still in minority. Majority of them have poor economical stability. Educationally: Buddhists (Literacy rate: 72%), are 2nd highest in Maharashtra, 1st being Brahmins (84%). About 3% of total Buddhist population is employed, with about 50 Officers in higher civil services and 500,000 people in Officers grades. About 50 thousand people have small scale industries. Their migration to developed countries for jobs is increasing year by year.

Maharastrian Buddhists are fastest urbanized population in modern India. Their quality of life has changed drastically. They are politically aware people with

firm and boldness in character, good communication skill and positive mental attitude. They are very loyal to their commitment and work.

Maharashtrian Buddhists however, are politically very much disturbed and scattered. They could not develop and strengthen religious leadership. Many lay people are poor as a practicing Buddhists and many are still attached to Hindu tradition in Maharashtra. Obstacles are very many from the outside but ironically, some forces from inside are also working negatively. New Buddhists themselves many a times put hurdles in the propagation of Buddhist culture. There are very few Bhikkhus practicing Patimokkha and Vinaya who could lead the society. To bridge this gap, certain organizations have initiated training to lay people to bring about the missionary goals. But such propagatory steps may do more harm to the society as the preacher with their own poorly thatched houses seldom become the saviors for others. Buddhist history also does not reveal such successful examples in the pages of history either in India or in other Buddhist countries. It is also important note the bare fact that the government has always looking toward the Buddhists with a step-motherly attitude.

Maharashtrian Buddhists can work as a united force nationally and globally due to their enthusiasm, energy and positive attitude. Maharashtrian Buddhists can be galvanized as the emerging power at religious, political, economical, social and cultural fronts in the world. *Most Important Challenge - A Dream of Bodhisatva Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar*, states: "I will make a whole India, Buddhist India", shall be beholden by the Maharashtrian Buddhists on their shoulders and work out to achieve this missionary goal of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar.

Vision & Goals of Buddhists in India

Our immediate objectives shall be to establish and strengthen Buddhist Sangha in India. To initiate this activity we must start to establish Buddhist Training Centers for Bhikkhus, Bhikkunis, Upasak and Upasikas to develop well cultured Buddhist Society. We should also put our efforts into developing collaborations with other religious communities to make them aware about the benefits of being Buddhist. There is a need to use the political awareness of the Buddhists people to channelize it into a political power at state and national levels. It is also important to develop collaboration with International Buddhist Organizations for one Universal Buddhist Culture in the Buddhist World.

Most Recent News from Buddhist India

In the eastern land of Suvannabhumi (Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia, etc.) there is a prophecy that during the middle period of Buddhism, there will be a tremendous re-upsurge of Buddhism led by a great monk from Suvannabhumi to revive Buddhism, first in Jambudvipa, then to spread out through the rest of the world. Even without laying claim to that prophecy, it could be seen that the time is now ripe for the next step in the revival of Buddhism in Jambudvipa to carry further the great work of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar.

The Most Venerable Arayawangso Bhikku, Chief Abbot, Wat Pa Buddhapoj Haripunchai, Lamphun, Thailand known popularly as “Guruji” in India and Nepal, has started his Buddhist Missionary Work in India. Under the leadership of Guruji Arayawangso, Buddhist people and Buddhist organizations of India have just recently introduced and celebrated: the “World Magha Puja Parva B.E. 2553” event. First public event for Buddhist lay people was organised at Diksha Bhumi, Nagpur, Maharashtra State, on Sunday, 21st February 2010 with a theme: “*Buddhism as One in the Buddhist Era*” to demonstrate the unity and the faith of the global Buddhist community. It was a grand success with a participation of more than 20,000 Buddhists from across the country. Second public event was organised for the Sangha participation with a theme: “*Celebration to Ensure the Continuity of Buddhism*”. It reflected the importance of the ‘Patimokkha’, Magh Full Moon day, at the Veluwana Mahavihara, Rajgir, Bihar State, during 26th-28th February 2010. It was attended by Venrable Bhikkus of more than fourteen countries.

The most recent conversion has taken place in India at village Aaripur, Dist. Jahanabad, Central Bihar, just about 30 KM away from Buddhagaya on Tuesday, 30th March 2010. About 1000 mostly educated young people accepted Buddhism by Dhamma Diksha at the hands of Venerable Bhikkhu Kusalacitto Maha Thero of Sri Lanka. The people are fully convinced with their practical experiences that Buddhasasana and Buddhism can only save Humanity in the whole world.

An excerpt of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar’s speech of 14th October 1956, gives golden hope for our country, Jambudvipa, when he proclaims: “I hope that this tide of Buddha Dhamma Diksha will reach the entire country and India will become the land of Buddha. This is so because India has no alternative except Buddha Dhamma. Therefore, to safeguard the freedom and integrity of the country, the people in this country need to accept Buddhism”.

Action Plan to Achieve Missionary Goals

Intensive partnership of Government, Industry, Buddhist Organizations & Sangha is needed to establish Buddhist people and Buddhism in India. Immediate

initiatives shall be taken by Buddhists to establish National-level Buddhist Seminary at the center place like Nagpur in India. Buddhist Seminary shall be self sufficient with class rooms, conference halls, library and residential quarters. Buddhist Seminary shall formulate courses and grant certificates, diplomas and degrees to the applicants who spend specific time in the study of Dhamma, in the campus. The Seminary shall sponsor the Scholar Exchange Programs and undertake research in Buddhism. Buddhist Seminary shall undertake training of Bhikkus, Bhikkunis, lay Buddhist upasak and upasikas and send them to country side to preach and propagate Buddha Dhamma in India. More fruitful Buddhist International Conferences shall be organized from time to time for closely exchanging the new ideas. The Buddhist festivals shall be celebrated locally and internationally with fervor and enthusiasm.

Assistance and supports in all possible ways is very much necessity from established Buddhist countries to develop and strengthen Buddhist Sangha in India. Support is also needed for Training to Buddhist Monks, Nuns, Lay Buddhist Upasak and Upasikas. Relevant guidelines for Celebration of Buddhist Festivals are also needed from fellow Buddhist countries to develop complete Buddhist Culture in the Society.

Now is the time to take the next step forward, to aim to find ways of strengthening our practice in Buddhism, to aim to declare to the world, of our great devotion and to bring the group of Buddhists in India to come forward and stand shoulder to shoulder with the mainstream of Buddhists throughout the world. If it would not be disagreeable, we all Indian Buddhists would propose to United Nations Vesak Day Organising Committee to organize the next years 2554 BE, UN Vesak Day Celebration in land of Buddha with the support of Thailand, Sri Lanka and Myanmar. It is necessary to have Buddhism in India. Buddha and Buddhasasana of India has nurtured and nurturing the whole Asia in the past. Buddhism can only deliver the lost peace and happiness to all beings and save the humanity as well as the whole world from the present day social, economical degradation and our very earthly existence.

Buddhism and Politics for Worldly Peace and Justice: An Example from the Sacred Golden Land, Myanmar

Yulianti

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“We are staging this performance to reflect the hardship our people are facing due to the government’s fuel price hike,” Said Min Ko Naing, a leader of the 88 Generation Student’s Group. (Irrawaddy, August 22, 2009) According to information gathered from Irrawaddy newspaper based in Thailand, the gas price hike has worsened the people’s economy in Myanmar. On August 15, 2007 the government of Myanmar, doubled the price for petrol by 100 percent and for CNG (Compress Natural Gas) by 500 percent. The worst part of this unprecedented change, there was no advanced warning from the government. Thus, in shock - people had to face the increase in prices of other commodities as an effect of fuel price hikes. Soon enough in August 19, 2007 a group led by the “88 Generation Students Group-88 GSG” held a peaceful march in Rangoon in which housewives participated in the event.

On August 28, 2007 monks in Arakan states were reportedly March through Sittwe in protest against the poor economic state that people in Myanmar have to face. Ignoring the government warning that monks should not engage in protest, the support from monks to protests against the government policy on economy was in steady flow. The peak of the demo was taking place in Pakokku, where security forces confronted demonstrating monks, and fire warning shots in the air. In this heated situation, one monk was reportedly being killed and at least three of them were arrested. Instead of putting the situation for rest, the accident has caused even more resistance from the people. Monks group has obviously put themselves in more organized way in supporting people’s right and went on against government despite a strong warning from the authorities that monks shouldn’t engage in social matters.

This is obvious that monks’ movement was prompted not by political discourse itself but merely action stemmed from the economic hardship imposed upon the people. The warnings came from the government that it is unlawful for monks to engage themselves in social activities was not effective enough to discourage them from their involvement. They didn’t heed the warning and challenged the authorities to hold a “*pattanajjana kamma*” –refusal to accept alms from military member and their family—the government would not hear the cry of the people over the gas price hike; the Junta ignored this and later came the series of rallies in September.

This paper is not going to judge whether monks involvement in political arena is right or wrong but rather to see how monks have become sensitive about the social issues affecting their circumstance. It is crucial to note, that their involvement in social cohesion by marching through the road is a milestone for their community. Their so called “*pattanajjana kamma*” was precisely used to dodge the attack from the government who accused them of violating the monastic rule: that monks should not engaged in politics. It is a way too unfair to judge that these monks have been violating their monastic rules while they were acting on the behalf of their helpless people, who literally are their supporters, standing for the lives of many.

Political practice, economic and Religion in Myanmar

Myanmar has been a part of ASEAN member in 1997 and has also become the most economically underdeveloped country. The name former colonial name of “Burma” has been officially replaced by the more indigenous term: “Myanmar” following the mount of the military regime as new government in 1962. Since then, Myanmar has been ruled over by Junta military who also been said to be notorious and brutal to their own people. Demographically, 62% of citizens are ethnic Burmese while the remainders are of different smaller ethnic groups most of them whom live in hill areas. (Woodward, 2007) The vast majority of Burmese people are the follower of Theravada Buddhism while the rest are of Christians, Hindus, and Muslims. Thus officially, Myanmar is a Buddhist state. (Woodward, 2007)

As a bearer of one of the poorest country in Southeast Asian countries, Myanmar’s economy condition has been absolutely in the hand of the military regime. Through their economy’s policy, “The Burmese Road to Socialism”, Myanmar has imposed the self sufficiency, import substitution and extreme rigid foreign currency control and low exchange rate. As a matter of fact, these are their key element to handle their economy. Now, while still bewildered with a positive result that such a policy could bring to enhance the life of the people, what lies ahead is a vast region living under severe poverty. This fact is so contradictory to the fact that Myanmar is actually a country with rich and abundant fertile fields, mineral and forest resources.

The most uncomfortable truth in this country is malnutrition. This is one of the biggest health problems springs up from dire poverty in Myanmar. According to WFP, there are one out of five Burmese children under the age of five suffer from malnutrition. It is also said that more than 10% of children do not live to reach adulthood. (Woodward, 2007) Besides malnutrition, lacks in medical infrastructure and medical supply also have been the constant contributors to such epidemic. I remembered that during my stay in Myanmar (2002-2006) I had always been

warned to check the expiry date whenever buying medicine from local pharmacies. As it is widely known that many of imported medications were too old, or simply counterfeits. Towards most of the Burmese, their government encourages them to use Burmese traditional medicine. While people are fighting their diseases with local medicines, their generals, ironically are treated in world class hospitals in Singapore. (Woodward, 2007)

As far as foods are concern, Burmese people are a big fan of using cooking oil almost in every food they eat. The shortage or high price of fuel is therefore very likely to prompt social unrest. In addition, being already in the deepest level of poverty, the people of Myanmar would not be able to handle any condition that requires them to dig deeper into their pockets. Such was the condition when government increased the fuel price in October 15th, 2007 which ironically enough, there was no advance-announcement upon the following 500% fuel price hike. (SEAPA, 2007) As has been stated earlier, perhaps this was the worst move ever done by the Junta; such unscrupulous decisions result in demonstrations by both civilians and religious institutions. This also, again, made the Junta's bad reputation known in the eyes of the world.

However, it is misleading to think that such demonstration was an expression of freedom of voice in Myanmar. In fact, discussion over politic and economy by common people are among taboo things that people should not indulge in public sphere. To my experience, this is just one thing that Burmese people know not to be part of their table. I remembered, one of my Burmese friends said that 'we shouldn't talk about politics and economic situation in Myanmar with foreigners because there are spies everywhere and we never know who there are!' or "we don't mind talking about politics and economics with you but we might be in trouble if they would overhear our conversation." That is just another sign for us, the foreigners, to avoid as much as possible discussion regarding socio-economic conditions with Burmese people in public space as it might cause trouble to the locals.

Another common deceptive understanding about Myanmar is that this is a Buddhist State. Although the majority of the population is Buddhists - 89%, Myanmar is still not a Buddhist state.¹ In the history of religious life in Myanmar shows that Buddhists have to suffer at the same level as other religious groups are. After the monks demonstration in 1990, many demonstrating monasteries were kept under surveillance for a period of time, or at least until they consented to join the government's Sangha committee.² Numerous numbers of monks and nuns were detained and jailed under politics accusation. In there, monks were forced to disrobe and not allowed to use their ordained name. "I was also slapped and punched in

¹ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bm.html>

² <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs/97-98-15RELIGION.PDF>

the face. My interrogators stepped on my toes with their army boots. They demanded to know what organizations I was in touch with and who I had contacted.” This was the recollection of Ashin Pannasiri who was taken to police station in Monywa, where he was also disrobed, beaten and interrogated.³ Furthermore, the Human Right Yearbook 1997-98: Myanmar, reported that since 1988, there have been 19 monks have died in the prison and also a few of them have been sentenced to life in prison.⁴ There are also a couple of reports that SPDC troops had come to a couple of monasteries in Shan State and caused destruction to those monasteries.⁵

As to the other religions, Islam and Christianity are similarly endured the same condition. As a matter of fact, the military regime in Myanmar has often tried to stir up religious and racial tensions in order to divide the population and to divert attention away from political and economical concerns. To give one of examples here is when Buddhist monks accused SPDC of trying to steal sacred rubies believed to give the owner power to defeat any enemy. These rubies were rumored to be hidden in one of six monasteries in Mandalay, possibly inside the Maha Myatmuni Buddha Statue itself. As a result all of six suspected monasteries were broken into by the SPDC. Enraged by such disrespectful behavior, monks took to the streets in Mandalay on March, 1997, burning mosques and harassing Bengali Muslims. Because of this incidence, SPDC has been accused of instigating attack against Muslims and aggravating existing tensions between the Muslims and Buddhists.⁶

The condition is not different to Christian believers’, in term of religious harassment projected by the authorities. In the States which majority of population are Christians such as in Chin, Karen, Kachin, and some of Sagaing division, religious persecution is said to be the most common problem. In Chin State, for an example, people have been forced by the military to build Buddhist pagodas in their villages.⁷ In early 2007, three Buddhist monks together with a section of soldiers came to Chin state to preach Buddhism. During this visit, soldiers were coercively ordering the Christians to attend the Buddhist preaching. The ‘monks’ on the other hands asked the adults and the young to become monks and novices, and to follow Buddhist rules. This coercive conversion was accompanied by a threat that they would be taken as porters if they objected.⁸

³ Human Right Watch, The Resistance of the Monks: Buddhism and Activism. p. 79

⁴ <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs/97-98-15RELIGION.PDF>

⁵ <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs/97-98-15RELIGION.PDF>

⁶ <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs/97-98-15RELIGION.PDF>

⁷ <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs/97-98-15RELIGION.PDF>

⁸ <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs/97-98-15RELIGION.PDF>

Thus in so far, it is appeared that the military government has continued to use Buddhism as a legitimizing instrument. In what by New York Times called the Junta's "*showcase religious project*",⁹ which one of them is by building glorifying pagoda—tooth relic pagoda—which cost US\$1.6 million.¹⁰ However similar cover has also been taken by SPDC when they decided to construct a massive new pagoda in their new capitol at Nawpyidaw in central Myanmar. This pagoda is named Uppatasanti pagoda (peace pagoda), which is the replica of Rangoon's most famous Shwedagon pagoda.¹¹ It reportedly receives donation of tooth relic from Than Shwe, the president of Myanmar. Lavish gifts and pagoda renovations have been carried on throughout Myanmar, including monks. Such actions usually covered by the state controlled media, for an example: The New Light of Myanmar.

From the aforementioned paragraphs, it is pretty obvious that Buddhism itself actually has been suffering from dual treatment: enjoy counterfeited privilege of being Buddhists as well severe harassment from being Buddhists - just in as much as another belief-system experiences. Thus, monks have always been in the forefront of the religious movements. In a later section, this paper will demonstrate more details on how monks have always been on the frontlines, despite the fact that such movements have been considered as rebellious act by the central authorities. And accordingly, the authorities have often retaliated unjustly and often with coarse physical torment.

How Theravada Buddhism, particularly the Sangha in Myanmar try to estrange political issue from their discourse:

When it comes to social activism, especially pertaining to politics, Buddhist monks from the Theravada school commonly become an estranged group. In most opinions, a monk should not engage in worldly issues, as such involvement would violate their monastic rules (vinaya). However, this is not the whole case, for what is happening in Myanmar. As each of large demonstration always involve monks as great supporters, it is very easy to know that not all Theravadin monks in Myanmar oppose political activism. Now, since there are two opposing groups of monks: one which strictly denounces any political engagement and on the other hand who justify their role in the political activism. The first group of monks usually condemns the later, stating that they are not following the Buddha's rule. Spiro in his books

⁹ Philip Shannon, "Yangon Journal: Raising a pagoda for a Statecraft and Buddha's Tooth," *The New York Times*, July 31, 1995.

¹⁰ Human Right Watch, *The Resistance of the Monks: Buddhism and Activism*. P. 60

¹¹ "Uppatasanti pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw hosts a grand religious ceremony," *New Light of Myanmar*, March 8, 2009, p. 4.

interviewed a monk about his attitude toward politically active groups in which the monks answered:

“I thought you were interested in Nirvana; those organizations have nothing to do with attaining nirvana.” And then the monk continued: “A horse who does a dog’s work is fated to die.” Still according to him, such activism is not only bad because their interests are worldly, but also because they could create disunity in the monkhood and quarrels among laymen.¹² This monk was certainly referring to monk’s monastic rule which run: People should not become monks in order to engage in quarrels.” Another monk from Mandalay which happened to be a very learned abbot was equally blaming monks who involve in politics. According to this monk, regardless the motivation behind the involvement, simply dismiss the idea claiming the idea as, “a completely false reading of the Teaching of the Buddha.” This learned abbot persisted, that monks’ duty is to assist people to attain nibbana and not some lower (worldly) goal. In addition to this, he said that the Buddha taught only three things, and so the monks, too should only be concerned with these three: “to help the ignorant to know the Law, so that they can move from a worldly to an otherworldly plane; to help worldlings to escape from the Wheel of Rebirth; to attain Buddhahood oneself. How does it related to politics? NO! Monks who engage in politics do so for fame, for power, and for privileges. They are not Sons of the Buddha.”¹³

The above mentioned monks both believed that monks’ involvement on politics is wrong and futile. This is including comments given to those monks who were a part of struggle for Burmese Independence. The most typical comment they uttered to these struggling monks are, “they were not true monks. Protesting, picketing, fighting and killing—this is not monks’ work, regardless of its purpose.” This was also referred to those who supported the movement, although they did not participate in it.¹⁴ Almost similar remark was also made by recent Burmese monks whose positions are against the protesting monks. Following the deteriorating situation in 1988, State Sangha Maha Nayaka Sayadaws,¹⁵ issued directives for monks to abide by the Vinaya discipline and therein should restrain themselves from getting involved in political affairs.¹⁶ In addition to the former directives, the Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee issued the Directive no. 93 on September 24th, 2007 for monks to carry out religious duties only and not to get involve in violence and political affairs.¹⁷ To the very least, both government and Sangha Nayaka Committee assumes that those protesting monks, “were in total disregard to the Sasana and the Buddha’s teachings, and they attempt to tarnish the image of Buddhasasana and sow

¹² Spiro, p. 393.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid, p. 392.

¹⁵ The highest level of Sangha organization formed by the Government

¹⁶ <http://www.myanmar-information.net/infosheet/2006/07>

¹⁷ Ibid

discord between the government and the people. As a result, the Sasana as well as the country was affected. So it proved that the destructionists were sticking to the means of confrontation and utter devastation.”¹⁸ Following to that statement there was issued of an order to take action on whom they called as bogus monks, namely U Gambira, U Vicitta, U Obhasa, and U Padaka. These monks were accused to have led the instigation and disturbances and therefore should be expelled in order to ensure peace and tranquility, the rule of law and perpetuity of the Sasana.

Having learnt about the first groups, of what monks have said about the protesting monks, now the later group would sound completely different. This group is of those who directly involve themselves in the protest or merely supporters. U Pyinya Jota, as quoted in Irrawaddy newspapers said, “People’s suffering can easily move monks. As Sons of the Buddha, how can we ignore the disasters that afflict people live? So we took a leading role against evil rulers who have shown no concern for the need of the people.” U Pyinya Jota statement was referring to the dramatic increase in fuel price that led to widespread hardship. He added, “We monks should show our disagreement with evil acts in a peaceful way. We monks must actively engaged in social issues. People in Myanmar often talk about *metta* (loving kindness) but this is not just a word to chant. It must also be practiced. Everyone in the world needs active *metta*. Active *metta* can bring peace to the whole world.”¹⁹

Similar reactions were also given by other protesting monks, U Pannacara, a 27-year-old monk said, “traditionally, we monks are not supposed to be politically active. The military has ruled out country for more than 40 years, and they don’t care about the welfare of the people, they care only for themselves and their relatives, and how to remain in power forever. That was why the people rose up against them. There are three powerful groups in Myanmar: the sit-tha (sons of was), that’s the military; the kyaung-tha (sons of the school), the students; and the paya-tha (sons of the Buddha) - that’s us, the monks.” Another monk by named U Vicitta claimed that their act was not a politics in the following interview by HRW:

for us, it was not politics, but a question of religion. We just went out into street to recite metta sutta, loving kindness. We did not advocate violence to overthrow the government, but we wanted an apology for what happened in Pakokku. We wanted the government to have a better policy for the people. So we decided to boycott the junta with our bowls turned upside-down. That’s called patta nikkujjana kamma. We did not accept food, medicines or anything from the authorities. That is the only way we can fight for our

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ <http://www.irrawaddy.com/april/>



rights. This has nothing to do with politics. The same thing happened during the time of the Buddha when there was a bad king, an evil king, who hurt the monks and the people. At that time, the monks also protested. But then the king had to apologize, and it was all over. But this junta refused to apologize. That was why we continued our protests. They are continuing - We are still opposed to the junta, but we can't fight against men with guns. We are biding our time; but we are not afraid to protest again.²⁰

From what has been mentioned earlier, we can perceive that there are two major opposite groups in Myanmar. The first group has more inclination toward the authorities - the Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee, which has become the only legal and highest monk organization formed by government. According to this line, monks should deliberately abstain themselves from any social issues, including politics. Any monastery which is considered to be the member of this committee can be assumed as adhering to the junta and certainly opposing the protesting monks. On the other hand, quite a few protesting monasteries, during post demonstration, were under strict surveillance until they joined the committee. Therefore, we also can assume that the members of that committee are not always voluntarily agreeing to align with the government. As for the position of protesting monks, it is clear that they are in opposition to the authorities. However for them, their involvement is not for the sake of politics but rather for the sake of humanity and religiosity – through this social engagement, perhaps they can find or inspire solutions for the hardship that their devotees were facing due to the government policy.

What is Social Engaged Buddhism all about?

The term of socially engaged Buddhism dates back as far as 1954. The term was coined by Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh in response to what he claimed to be the period of full confusion upon people in Vietnam, especially – monks, nuns, and lay people. Confusion here is referred to political confusion during which time the people of Vietnam were sandwiched between the North - inspired by Marxist-Leninist ideology; and the South – the President, Ngo Dinh Diem, a Catholic, tried to run the country with a “personalism” ideology. It seemed that an ideological war had begun. The term was initially called ‘engaged Buddhism’, seeking for Buddhist values to concretely implement in different aspect of life, ranging from: politics, education, economics, etc. Later, in its course of development, ‘engaged Buddhism’ evolved into ‘Socially Engaged Buddhism’.

²⁰ Human Right Watch, The Resistance of the Monks: Buddhism and Activism. P. 84

Today, socially engaged Buddhism becomes one of the hottest issues in Buddhism which at the same time become one of terms that Buddhist from most schools are proud of. The social aspects, such as: economics, education, ecology and politics are evolving-contemporary-subjects that this Buddhist-movement mostly seeks to work within. However, the last subject, such as politics is not as famous as the other to be involved in, particularly among the monastic members. However, looking at the laid out facts on the history of the origin of socially engaged Buddhism - politics was the grave reason for Socially Engaged Buddhist to come into existence. As for the unpopularity of politics – a popular topic within the monastic societies – monks often fail for the reason that they have renounced their worldly life and issues, thereby re-engaging in such a worldly politic-life is considered a low practice. Such denouncement depicts the narrowness of understanding of the field of politics and how actually engagement between the two could contribute to a better society, and promote peace and justice. Considering those aims, it is rather odd to think that Buddhism or Buddhist religious leaders should refrain from politics.

Although generally the term Engaged Buddhism are repeatedly compelled to refer to certain Buddhist schools, according to Kennet Kraft the primary aims are indeed non sectarian.²¹ Maruyama Teruo, Japanese priest also concurs: “The movement to revive Buddhism is not for the sake of Buddhism at all. We must reassess Buddhism once more in the context of problems such as the potential destruction of the human race.”²² One of the most prominent monks from Sri Lanka, Walpola Rahula, supported his role in political arena on the idea that to be Buddhist is nothing but to give service to others and therefore: political and social engagement was the heritage of the bhikkhu and the essence of Buddhism.²³ Therefore, despite harsh criticism that protesting monks endure, there are also plenty of support for them or at least there are abundant source that they may use to support their activism.

That was exactly what had happened in Myanmar. Protesting monks were seeking consolation from Buddhist texts, some of them from their vinaya and discourses from the Buddha. As for the first one, monks simply observed *patta nikkujjana kamma*, admonishment addressed to lay people for their inappropriate action. And at last they emphasized more on the active loving kindness (metta). The chant of metta was a part of their way to express their desire to appeal the government during their protest. Such as what U Panya Jota stated earlier that monks today need to actualize their loving kindness into concrete action and not just mere words that, according to him, have no stronger effect than action.

²¹ Kenneth Kraft, p. 14

²² Meruyama Teruo, p. 104

²³ Stanley Tambiah, p. 14

Betraying the Monastic Code... What if They Do and Don't, in the Case of Myanmar?

During the course of writing this paper, I often found myself deep in thought - pondering what actually monks should do when facing this kind of polemic-situation. The first thing I did was ask some of my acquaintances who are monks. I would like to hear directly from them – towards comparing them to most Burmese monks who were directly involved with the protests, whose cries I have read. From such conversations, I found that there are basically two strands of answers, whether monks should engage in politics or not.

The first strand is that monks should not engaged in politics at all at any cost. This first opinion and argument is definitely not new. According to them, monks should not bother themselves with worldly issues, much less on political matters. One young monk responded me, “It is a big mistake for monks to be engaged in politics and such an act would certainly upset the monk’s monastic rule.” However the second strand portrays more relaxed opinion. They suggest: it is right for monks not to get involve in politics or other social-related issue, but they also should not be aimlessly-blamed. The context and social situation are also factors that may prompt them to act accordingly as an immediate respond to the condition. From a brief overview above we can have general idea on how vary it is regarding the matter among monks themselves.

In the case of Myanmar, monks’ involvement in politics should not regarded as a new issue. In fact it has been there since the anti-colonial period and the subsequent period under parliamentary government, through until the military-socialist regime in 1962 – which prohibited religious activism. Before the accident in 2007, the young Buddhist monks’ activist confronted the regime directly in 1988. And in 1990, they resurfaced to oppose the manipulation of election by the regime over the Democratic Party. During that escalation, monks declared a boycott against the military and their families, refusing to accept alms from them and limiting their ability to earn donor merit. Although the response from the government was quite predictable - taking immediate measures to crush protests with force; further, they detained and disrobed monks who associated with the demonstration. But the movement has evidently resurfaced whenever the government went too far exercising their power on their people.

Monasteries in Myanmar have been the backbone of most of the community. Having been to Myanmar myself, I could see how much the monasteries get involved in helping people. Their engagements are not limited to religious service, but have been stretched to provide food to the hungry, traditional medicine for the sick, and dying and education. There is also a monastery in which the HIV/AIDS contracted people take shelter in. This is just a few examples to illustrate how monk’s

institutions have been playing pivotal roles in social-society. It is not hard to mention that the monasteries have become the heartbeat of most people's lives in Myanmar.

Moreover, being on the ground with most of people, monks build a very strong relationship with people from different walks of life. To mention: it is their lifestyle as monks, being economically and materially depend on laypersons - makes them understand the hardships that people are facing. Theravada Buddhist monks in Myanmar, traditionally receive material donations from laity to support their life and religious pursuance. People would come to the monastery to offer donations in respect to monks' noble practice. In a regular routine, monks would go for alms-rounding from house to house to accept food from the people. In such situations, it is very likely for them to know first-hand knowledge regarding the situation that is going on within society. As a matter of fact, this was reflected during the protest, cried out in slogans, asking the government to ease the people's burden by reducing the commodity prices.

Thus one should at least take this account into consideration before jump into a judgmental conclusion whether or not monks' involvement in political arena is valid. It is important to note that one should not reduce this matter neither to become exclusively religious nor politic only. But rather as a process or a way of defending and protecting the people from further exposure to unfavorable situation. Finally it is left up to us whether we would remind in what so called as 'modest and humble' way and take no action at all or we would use the wisdom inherited to use to face the problem of life: to remove the suffering in the world.

Conclusion

The engagement of monks in the political arena is not new in the Buddhist-world. Socially Engaged Buddhism itself actually was a fetus born from political unrest and it was pioneered by a Buddhist monk. As for Myanmar, the involvement by monks has always been pivotal and it has become a force – something that the governments of Myanmar have always paid attention to. However, monastic engagement in society, or the political arena, has never been for the sake of their solo power; but, rather to show support to people who are their own religious supporters. Therefore the classic argument that monks should not be engaged in worldly issues should not be just reasoned that they have broken a monastic rule. It should be dealt with, more contextually – since, if there was no absence of those brave hearts – we may have had different results.

**GLOBAL RECOVERY THROUGH
HARMONIOUS CO-EXISTENCE**

Dispelling the Enemy Image with Clear and Compassionate Speech

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*“The genuine warrior becomes truly gentle because there is no enemy at all.”
Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche*

Introduction

Mindful attention to speech is fundamental to human relationships, personal well-being and Buddhist practice. This paper explores how particular usage of imagery in language shapes our thinking and emotional reactivity as well as our interpersonal relationships. The subtle psychological and physiological effects of the “enemy image” created through word and phrase construction is explored in relation to the experience of fear in the body. This study investigates how many common language “pictures” create an inaccurate conceptual frame for perceived phenomena and compound difficulty in communication when states of fear underlie these distorted expressions of speech. To understand the extent to which fear both drives and is an outcome of these generalized expressions of speech, this paper investigates the role fear plays in painful emotional states. Based on the teachings of Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche this paper examines how fear is equated with suffering. Suggestions for moving towards greater clarity in language are offered from the growing field of Nonviolent Communications as it intersects Buddhist understanding of the human experience and the cessation of suffering. The examples offered include applications for increasing self-compassion and creating more clear and compassionate understanding between individuals and groups.

The Enemy Image

Nonviolent Communication defines the enemy image as words that inaccurately reflect, negatively label, and separate us from each other and ourselves (Rosenberg, 2005). It suggests that much habitual language and word usage is characterized by images of violence and victimization. I would like to suggest that states of fear are the driver of these word formations and also an outcome of their usage. It is important to recognize that these destructive language patterns are

culturally embedded and cross-culturally ubiquitous. We are universally saturated with negative speech forms and objectifying labels that drive us further from present experience and recognition of our mutually beneficial interdependence. While language will never convey direct experience it can be utilized with increased intention, specificity and compassion to create positive exchange between human beings.

Let's look at an example of a common usage of an enemy image in modern speech. A negotiation is taking place between two parties and one member, Tom, frowns visibly, quickly folds his arms across his chest, pulls his body back and emphatically states, "You have pushed me too far!" While the other person was not directly labeled as "pushy" the picture imagined by this statement is of a physical gesture of pushing in a way that is "too far". The individual who has made this statement has imagined himself in a victim "picture" of receiving a push. The accompanying body gestures suggest a defensive posture of moving away, protecting the body with crossed arms and slightly raising the volume of speech. Accompanying the outer gestures would likely be signs of readying for action including a slight rise in pulse, blood pressure and muscle flexion following an increase in hormonal secretions (Ledoux, 1996).

The receiving individual, Sue, is likely to unconsciously respond to the picture image that has been projected and reciprocally respond in a defensive posture as well. The picture image of "pushing" may land as an accusation, suggesting she is aggressing against the first individual and is the "enemy". A habitual reaction to counter the statement by the second person may include an argument and further escalation of conflict signaled by defensive postural gestures. To further dissect the above example we can observe fear at the root of the original word image in demonstrated signs in Tom of flight (moving back), freeze (crossing the arms across the chest) and fight (increased voice volume) responses.

The word image of "pushing" in this example has the effect of solidifying and sustaining fear states over time. Tom pictures himself as a victim of aggression and aggresses back through language with a projected image of Sue as an enemy. Sue may unconsciously succumb to *projective identification* and struggle internally and externally with the implication of her action as "pushing too far." Sue has identified with the projection by joining in the experience of the word image that suggests her action is harming the other person. A two-fold fear and reactive response may ensue as she internally fights the image of herself doing "wrong" and externally resists Tom, who has now become an "enemy" as she imagines herself the victim in his word picture. Now she too experiences a heightened physiological response common to states of fear and may likely respond with a word picture such as "You are not listening to me!" suggesting she is the victim and he is in the wrong.

The first thing we notice in this exchange is how both comments are directed at summing up the actions of the other person and offer no revelation regarding the speaker's internal awareness or positive needs in the situation. In fact, these all-too-common language exchanges reinforce a pattern of not reflecting on one's own actions and the false imagining of the other's action. Instead of inquiry about self or other, each makes assumptions and escalates the conflict with inaccurate and exaggerated word pictures. While tone and vocal inflection have an obvious effect on levels of physical and emotional arousal, it is also necessary to look at the pictures that are aroused in the mind's eye. Each word picture refers to a physical action or non-action, suggestive of something each person does not want and fears. Neither statement made by Tom or Sue accurately reflects what actually did happen, or what behavior either person would have preferred from their talking partner. Neither individual paused to relax in the moment and examine his or her immediate sensations and perceptions. If both individuals were to continue verbal exchanges in the same manner, no doubt increasing levels of fear induced arousal could be physically measured (LeDoux, 1996). Their suffering would be reflected in heightened fight, freeze or flight behaviors exhibited in verbal and non-verbal gestures.

Suffering is Fear

To investigate the role of fear in human difficulties it is helpful to look at the emphasis placed by Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche on the Buddha's teaching, summing up the meaning of suffering in one word: fear (Ponlop, 2007). When we clearly understand the pervasiveness of fear in all experience, starting with ourselves, we can understand the suffering of others and are able to compassionately respond (Ponlop, 2002). Lama Tenpa further delineates three primary fears based on the three types of suffering symbolically reflected in the lower, human and god realms (Gyaltzen, 2010). These include the fear of not being physically safe (lower realm), the fear of being alone (god realm), and the fear of not having worth (human realm). Tenpa also accentuates how fear is a result of *false imagination* (Gyaltzen, 2009). From this we can deduce that it is false to imagine we are not safe, that we are alone, and that we are without worth. The first two faulty imaginings contradict the truth of emptiness, in that there is no selfhood to protect and that we are interdependent and not singular, separate or permanent. The third misperception of worthlessness contradicts the truth of our basic goodness, Buddha Nature, and our capacity to awaken in any moment. Embodiment of these truths leads to the cessation of fear and hence suffering, the third noble truth.

Fearful imagining is reflected in and can be induced by word pictures that imply danger, abandonment or worthlessness, the three types of fear to which humans are most vulnerable. These basic fears and their antidotes are reflected in three foundational rungs of Maslow's hierarchy of human needs: safety, belonging and esteem (Maslow, 1999). Looking closely at the earlier dialogue, we see how even minor statements can trigger these three fears, fear-based behaviors, and the imagined unmet needs driving fear. We can see in the first statement, "You have pushed me too far!" how Tom conjures a picture of threat to his safety. He may also imagine that he would be alone in his position and increasingly unsafe. The picture of someone pushing him may also precipitate unexamined thoughts that Sue does not respect or value him, threatening his worth as a human being. Hearing these words she may imagine Tom has accused her of ill will and fear she has lost value as a decent human being. She may also feel shame and imagine increased isolation. Her response, "You are not listening to me!" is a generalized statement that deflects a blameful image back onto him. It suggests a picture that both individuals are alone and not connected through hearing. Sue has mirrored his increased volume of speech, suggesting a returned force that would likely increase a fear-based visceral excitement in both individuals.

If we were to continue to observe escalating interactions between these two people we would note increased signs of aggression, attachment and ignorance expressed in the fear-induced reactions of fight, flight or freeze behaviors. While ignorance is at the root of each of these kleshas, fear is an outcome of ignorance and also drives the strategy of ignorance as a defense. Ignorance is obviously at work in the misperception of one another and compounded by conceptual word pictures that move each person further from direct experience. Both individuals also ignore certain phenomena that would help them see themselves, one another and the situation more fully. Ignorance can be seen in a spectrum of behaviors from lack of awareness to *dissociative* states that serve to screen against contact that is imagined to be harmful. Aggression is a forward moving posture of attack for defense or gain. Its energetic quality is to move perceived danger away or to take something that is imagined as necessary. Fight behavior is understood as a survival mechanism, and here we can see how it is a response to imagined threats to safety, connection and self-worth. The problem of attachment is intertwined in ignorance and aggression. Our grasping clouds reality and confuses strategies for getting needs met with actual needs that are simply a reflection of our interdependence. The attachment to a particular strategy and outcome drives aggression and further mistaken thinking. Flight and freeze responses generally reflect strategies to maintain safety yet typically move us toward isolation and away from the experience of connection. Flight and freeze responses can also be utilized to avoid or hide from reality, compound ignorance and further suffering.

Fear behind Difficult Feelings

Experiences described as feelings or emotions are an amalgam of body sensations and cognitions built on past association, interpretation and future projection. It behooves us to look at how fear colors cognitive processes and is played out in difficult emotional states including anger, shame, guilt, worry, depression, confusion and desperation.

Anger is a defensive gesture in response to fears of loss of safety, connection and esteem. It is a form of aggression aimed at intimidating and creating fear in the “other”. The denial of fear underlying anger is necessary to actualize its intended effect. Individuals embodying anger will “puff up” to appear big and move quickly and forcefully like an animal that is cornered or hunting for survival. Phrases such as “I won’t let you,” or “I know better than you,” are used to inflate one’s power. To deflate the power of an imagined enemy, phrases such as “you’re disgusting,” or “you don’t know what you are talking about,” are utilized to increase the power differential by diminishing the other. The denied fear behind the display of anger is projected onto the other and this projection further solidifies an enemy image of other as weak and contemptible. Non-verbal expressions of anger increase physical excitement and may generate anxiety and fear in the person who is the target of anger. Fear and anger then become a repeating cycle of cause and effect for both participants in an escalating fight.

A phrase that captures the attitude of shame is, “I’m a bad person.” Immobilized postures of hiding, submission or withdrawal typify the social relationship of self to other in states of shame. This frozen posture is a fear response to the imagined threat of continued shaming from others. *Retrospected* anger, where we turn aggression back on the self, is a common aspect of extended states of shame. The message of shame is internalized as an enemy image and used repeatedly against the self, often in phrases that mimic “I’m bad.” The long-term effect of shame increases isolation, diminishes worth and habituates high arousal states in the body.

Guilt is a similar phenomenon to shame in that thoughts are turned against the actions of the self. Guilt may occur following the commitment of a harmful action as an expression of self-reflection and regret. Individuals may use time alone to reflect on their actions and move toward self-forgiveness, amends and positive aspirations for the future. When guilt becomes an entrenched attitude, it perpetuates harmful retrospected anger characterized by an internal dialogue of repeated recriminations. A phrase that captures this continuously looping dialogue is, “My actions are bad”. Fear of isolation increases alongside hopelessness towards change and the ability to benefit others. An extended attitude of guilt degenerates into an internalized enemy image of a shamed self in the eyes of an unrelenting world.

Undue mental rumination expressed in worry creates repeated images of suffering and anxiety based on future imagined scenarios. In worry, our thinking includes pictures of disaster exacerbated by figures of speech such as: “I’ll just die if...,” “He’ll kill me if...,” and “I’ll never forgive myself if...” An exaggerated and distorted past is often invoked in the faulty prognostication of the future. This is inflamed by mental pictures captured in phrases such as: “I was such fool when...” and “I can never take it back.” Worry freezes the capacity to respond effectively as every imagined solution is shot down by an internal voice that declares, “It’s hopeless.” Worry stretches across a continuum of normal concern based on projections of probable consequences to flight into obsessive, delusional and paranoid thought patterns.

Many forms of depression are exacerbated by internalized and retroflected anger. A part of the falsely constructed self *depresses*, or presses against, another imagined aspect of the self. The internal struggle is manifested in a deadlocked and nullifying expression. The internalized fight is expressed physiologically, exhausting movement and freezing the individual in fear. This frozen state reduces environmental contact and diminishes awareness and choice. The individual is stuck in a war of self-hatred, often expressed unconsciously, leading to increased hopelessness and despair. The imagined parts of the self are enemy images to one another. Aggressive and shaming phrases expressed in this deadening internal dialogue include: “I hate myself”, don’t even try” and “you’re a loser”. These invalid cognitions are the result of a spiraling pattern of negative thoughts that become increasingly exaggerated and can lead to serious depressive episodes (Begley, 2007).

Confusion is a fog we hide in, to deflect fear. We may be afraid to make choices that we imagine would isolate ourselves from others or envision our safety is in jeopardy if we make the “wrong choice.” We may have an imagined belief that we are not capable of making a “right decision” reflecting an attitude of low self-worth. Conflicting internal drives are at work in confusion, and uncertainty is a fog into which we unconsciously take flight. Escaping reality, we avoid identifying the source of our confusion and flee decision-making. We continue to wander in the fog of ignorance as fear of a haunting and unidentified enemy grows over time. The enemy image lurking in the fog of oblivion may be the expression of imagined helplessness or the anticipation of a dreaded result. The deadlock of helplessness and fearful expectation contribute to the holding pattern or frozen quality exhibited in confusion. *Deflection*, a pattern of turning attention away from oneself or the environment, the imagined enemy, is the flight component of confusion. Dissociation is the result of a continued and exaggerated pattern of deflection and flight from contact with what we imagine as the enemy within ourselves and the world.

An attitude of desperation leads to grasping behaviors to deflect fears associated with survival, degradation and loneliness. We take flight through deflection into driven and addictive behaviors of excessive consumption, compulsive activities, fantasy, drugs and codependency to quench pain or escape imagined self-deficit. Desperation assumes we need an external support, and we become fixated on a particular strategy to acquire it. Underlying desperation is a significant component of fearful expectation that we are not physically safe, connected to others or adequate. Instead of relaxing into the interdependent and ever changing nature of existence, we panic, and grasp onto certainty and what we imagine we can extract from the “other.” In codependency we cling to others and the imagined belief that meeting their needs will make us worthy. Trusting in the ultimate nature of our interdependence, we do not target specific outcomes or particular people as necessary for the satisfaction of our needs for belonging. We know we have purpose and belong. Understanding emptiness we trust the unrestricted options available to us in each and every moment.

The Enemy Images of Self and Other

The false conceptual construction of “self” and “other” is the basis of the enemy image and the fundamental fear it provokes. The self is an enemy image because it separates us from others and we also fear its loss. The other is an enemy image because it is separate and frightening in its unpredictability. The other represents a threat in the “gain” we receive from it as well as in the “loss” we anticipate it will cause. The other is also represented in the cherished object we fear losing and the difficulty, such as an illness, we dread to gain. Even the state of happiness is immersed in fear as we suffer the anticipation of its passing. In modern terms we may understand this as existential anxiety. Ponlop describes this fear as a subliminal panic that is all-pervasive in every living heart (Ponlop, 2007).

Language is the tool that is primarily utilized to conceptually divide the world into “self” and “other”. To compound factors, thinking itself is a retroflective activity where the imagined self is divided into self and other and acted upon (Perls, 1980). In our internal dialogue we become an object to ourselves and hence, the enemy. The internalized other is patterned on an *introjected* other from the environment. Cognitive processes would not have developed if we did not have an “other” in the environment with which to speak. Thinking, and its technology speech, is built on the template of the self-other relationship in the world (Mead, 1969). Nonviolent Communication, in its thrust to move language patterns toward more accurate observations of direct perception, offers a significant upgrade. It explicates much of what is implicit in Buddhist teachings on Right Speech by offering us a systematic approach to identifying and rooting out harsh words.

Speaking with a Courageous Heart

To face fear is to have courage, honesty and heart. In the speech that binds our relationships, we must look directly at the indicators of fear arising in our words. Mindfully, we can learn to listen for the suffering beneath the enemy labels in speech. As we investigate and touch this fear in others and ourselves, our hearts naturally respond with compassion. We must be willing to acknowledge the sadness we discover below the fear of anticipated loss. It is this acknowledgement that begins to heal the division of self and other. NVC suggests we lead with the tender heart in holding an intention to connect with others and give voice to our feelings of concern and vulnerability. We must take the courageous step of contacting and vocalizing our deeper awareness and human longing for safety, belonging and worth. With others we can compassionately listen for these needs below their painful expressions and assist them in discovering their tender heart. Our curiosity, openness and interest in contributing to the well being of self and other will eventually collapse the imagined divide. Presented here are six factors effective in addressing conflict and creating understanding between people. These interface the NVC approach with basic Buddhist principals and include:

1. Setting an intention to connect
2. Willingness to rest in unknown
3. Clear observations and reflections
4. Compassionate embrace of feelings
5. Investigation and insight into interdependent needs
6. Open, courageous and inviting requests

In our exploration we will look back at the earlier example of miscommunication and show how the application of these factors cultivates clear and compassionate speech.

Setting an Intention to Connect

In setting an intention to connect with others we prioritize clear understanding and relationship over any other imagined outcome in our dialogue (Rosenberg, 2002). An intention to connect is a commitment to deep listening and compassionate hearing as guiding principles. The intention serves as a reminder to pay close attention to internal messages as well as the information we are receiving from the “other.” We must be willing to shuttle our attention between self and other. This means at times we need to bracket our own experience to deeply listen to the other. At other times, it is a commitment to bracket external stimuli to listen deeply to our internal experience. In the earlier example an intention to connect

would have provided some breathing space in the conflict between the man and the woman. When Sue first heard Tom's exclamation, "You are pushing me too far!" it would be helpful for her to follow an NVC approach. She could first focus on her internal experience and offer herself some empathy. It would be a good idea for her to then take a slow, intentional breath to calm some of the fear-based excitement she registered in her body. Next, shuttling her attention to him, Sue could reflect on his signs of distress and reflect on the deeper feelings and needs beneath Tom's strong expression. The intention to compassionately hear is a willingness to consider and appreciate the fear and suffering in the experience of both self and other. Our trust in the power of this intention is a trust in the desire for happiness that lies beneath the suffering of all people. It reflects a trust in our basic goodness and capacity for clarity and compassion in each moment. Our intention also serves to help us accept our imperfections in the dialogue process and remain focused on our priority of meaningful connection.

Resting in the Unknown

If we wish to create understanding, at any point in a difficult conversation we must be willing to generate a mindful gap and rest in the unknown. Spaciousness is by created when we remember to hold still with emotions that arise and relax the tensions precipitated in the body. In the second example, when Sue took a moment to clearly see her response and calm her energy with an intentional deep breath, she was better able to let go of fear and pay attention to Tom. In the first example, unattended fears clouded her perception and she jumped to the conclusion that he was "not listening." While her interest in being understood may not have been immediately met, relaxing into "not knowing" about the man's aggression would provide space for compassionate investigation to arise. In a calm state, mental activity is relaxed and space opens in the mind for reflection. We are better able to slow our speech and not respond impulsively in return. It takes courage to rest in the unknown and not be attached to a particular outcome in our interactions with others. We must be willing to let go of agendas and complicated strategies to meet our needs (Rosenberg, 2002). The simple three-step process of *mindful gap*, *seeing clearly* and *letting go* makes room for compassion to arise naturally (Ponlop, 2008). In the mindful gap we open to the unknown, the false dichotomy of self and other collapses in clearly seeing the truth of suffering, and in letting go we open to the next moment, relaxed and emptied of fearful expectations.

Clear Reflections and Observations

The mindful use of language to describe experience is a cornerstone of Nonviolent Communications. We must pay acute attention to the words we choose in resolving conflict and helping individuals make contact in meaningful ways. Commonly used metaphors in speech often derail understanding and take us further from accurately describing phenomena. Our goal in moving closer to the truth with the choice of our words moves us closer to one another. The recognition and translation of enemy images is crucial in this process. Beneath the use of an enemy image, we can always assume a sense of threat, pain or separation from others. This is obvious in our example, “You are pushing me too far!” In responding to Tom we would never correct him, rather we would first offer a clear reflection of his words and nonverbal communication that demonstrates we had heard him correctly. Something as simple as, “You stated that I was pushing you too far and your voice doubled in volume.” We would immediately follow this with a further observation, “I’m wondering if you are feeling irritated and need respect?” When we reflect our simple perceptions, we offer a more accurate mirror for our dialogue partner to consider. Our reflection of our view of the other person is less distorted and we come closer to a shared view based on valid cognition. The guess we offer, in our effort to translate his enemy image into feelings and needs, further demonstrates our interest in joining with his experience in creating a more accurate and mutual understanding.

We must be careful to note the difference between an evaluative interpretation and a clear observation. If Tom was schooled in Nonviolent Communication, he would have first noted his internal state including feelings and needs, looked for the stimulus in the environment he was responding to, and shared this information stating, “I feel upset when you suggest we delay the peace negotiations until next year. I need consideration for all the work we have done so far.” In his willingness to share the awareness of his personal experience, he is more likely to sustain Sue’s engagement in the dialogue and assist her in understanding his perspective. He stays closer to the facts when he calmly and specifically states what he was responding to. Tom would be more likely to move toward meeting his needs for consideration if he were to ask Sue to reflect his statement with the request, “Would you be willing to tell me what you heard me say?” This request would also serve to keep the dialogue focused on clear observations, instead of evaluative interpretations of each other’s behavior.

Compassionate Embrace of Feelings

In the compassionate embrace of difficult feelings we appreciate the opportunity to recognize and face suffering. Instead of judging emotion as bad we welcome the opportunity to investigate the suffering we witness in its expression (Nhat Hanh, 2001). In Nonviolent Communication we encourage the expression of difficult feelings so we may better understand the nature of pain and the causes driving its expression. When we assist others in clarifying their feelings we help them to differentiate between emotion and thought. In our example if Tom were to help clarify the Sue's feelings, he could reflect what she said and offer a guess as to her experience based on his observations. NVC would suggest his inquiry begin with a comment such as, "When you say I am not listening to you, I imagine you might be feeling angry. Is that true?" He translates her enemy image of "not listening," and guesses the more immediate feeling she may be experiencing. Tom's speculation is a gesture towards understanding and serves to assist her in clarifying her internal awareness. Sue may affirm his guess or offer something closer to her experience such as, "No, I'm feeling frustrated!" It would then be helpful for him to probe more deeply in search of the fear beneath her frustration and offer a comment such as, "I'm also wondering if you are afraid that your concerns are not being addressed?" During this conversation Tom may need to shuttle his attention briefly to emotion rising in his own body and take a moment to see, compassionately embrace, and let go of his own fear. Here we see how acceptance and investigation of emotional states provides the ground for their release. Suffering is liberated on the spot and space is opened for further dialogue and understanding.

Investigation and Insight into Interdependent Needs

Needs, as defined in Nonviolent Communication, are an expression of life and universal in nature. From the Buddhist point of view we can understand this definition of needs as an expression of our interdependence. In relationships, they are not an expression of attachment, or desire for something specific from the other person. Needs represent universal human requirements for optimal health and well-being. When we reflect on each other's needs in a specific situation, we create understanding of our mutual humanity and hence, connection. We value and affirm the needs that others strive to express and meet through their communication. We also value our own need to contribute and join with others in a way that provides mutually beneficial exchange. When we name the need that is driving a challenging feeling, we uncover the positive longing beneath a painful expression. We affirm the truth of our basic selflessness, interdependence and human value.

We can see how naming the needs for understanding, respect and consideration explored in our sample dialogue would better lead to their manifestation. If Sue had been versed in Nonviolent Communication, she could speak more straightforwardly and positively assert her need to be understood. Instead of offering an enemy image of Tom “not listening,” she could calmly state her feelings of frustration after offering a clear reflection of what she heard him say. Then it would be helpful for her to immediately add, “I would like to know that you understand my reasoning for waiting until we have a better solution. Would you be willing to hear a more detailed explanation?” This request furthers her need for understanding in a manner that is inviting and not forceful. When Sue expresses her personal feelings and needs, Tom is more likely to be drawn toward her request, than repelled by criticism and blame. If he responds positively, she might also clearly state her need to contribute to a peaceful negotiation with the statement, “I would also like you to understand my shared desire to contribute to a successful resolution. Would you be willing to reflect what you just heard me say?” Here, Sue acknowledges their mutual needs to contribute, receive consideration, and respect for their diligent efforts. She also requests a reflection of her statement to ascertain that she has been heard and understood.

Open and Inviting Requests

In each of the above scenarios we heard requests that are simple, specific, doable and present-centered. Requests must be grounded in the here and now, and not vaguely refer to the universal need from which they arise. When we make a request that is doable, we offer our talking partner an opportunity to contribute positively to the ongoing dialogue and relationship. The specificity of the request adds to clarity and a measurable outcome. In our example Tom could make the request, “I am very tired and guess you are too. After we have an opportunity to rest and reconsider our options, would you be willing continue our discussion tomorrow morning for two more hours?” Sue may counter with the affirmation that she is very tired, yet unable to meet his request due to her time constraints. Tom could state that he would be willing to listen to her reasoning and suggest a time frame in the near future that could meet both their needs.

A request is different from a demand in that it neither forces nor intimidates the other person. We know our requests are actually demands by the quality of our response when they are denied. If we become angry when we hear “no,” we can assume we had a secret expectation couched in our request. When we are denied a request, it is not a sign to give up. It is an opportunity to explore what is behind our partner’s “no” (Rosenberg, 2002). This further investigation helps us better understand his or her point of view and stay connected in the process of negotiating

toward a meeting point. We must learn to face our fear after clearly seeing that we have imagined our safety is threatened, imagined that we have been “pushed” into isolation or imagined we have been devalued through rejection. When we deeply investigate the “no” of the other person, we discover his or her underlying needs are valid and do not reflect negatively on our being. In making requests, we must remember that we are ultimately responsible for meeting our own needs to contribute and create understanding, respect and peace in our lives.

Conclusion

This paper provides a brief introduction to methods of Nonviolent Communication that is practical and integrates well with Buddhist principles. The approach is simple but not necessarily easy, and necessitates practice over time. We begin with looking at our internal dialogue as well as our external patterns of speech. Reflecting on the speech of our partners in dialogue, we apply the same diligent investigation and understanding we apply to ourselves. We must be as conscientious and mindful in our interpersonal practices as we are with our practice of meditation. Our willingness to experiment with these methods rests on our positive intention to connect and faith in the interdependent nature of existence. Our missteps become grist for the mill, for as Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso states, “Erring and erring, we walk the unerring path” (Ponlop, 2009).

Our openness to the outcome of any dialogue reflects our willingness to fully accept others and ourselves in the moment. The fearless pursuit of kindness, truth and human dignity is our birthright. We must not be shy in doggedly pursuing these basic human needs for others and ourselves. Learning nonviolent methods of compassionate speech is essential for this task. While holding the view of nonduality, we respect our relative experience of self and other. We accept the joy and sadness inherent in the world and in human relationship. The warriorship we practice with our words must not invoke delusion and fear. It must be clear and gentle, honest and strong.

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Water War of the Mae Ta Chang Basin, Chiang Mai: Concept and Tools for Conflict Management in Buddhist Perspective

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1. Introduction

Water plays a very essential role in human life.¹ In his royal speech, King Bhumibhol says: “The important thing is we must have water for drink and agriculture. Wherever people exist, they can live if there is water. But if there is no water, they cannot live. On the contrary, if there is no electricity, one can live. If, however, there is electricity but no water, one cannot live.”²

According to Ismail Serageldin, Vice President of World Bank, the war in the twentieth century resulted from the fight for oil. Yet the war in the twenty-first century will be the battle for water.³ In this regards, we sees the water war in several countries, for example, India⁴, Bangladesh⁵, Sudan, Egypt, and Kenya⁶. The United

¹ National Institute of Development Administration, *Kaan Pramoen Phon Krongkan Phatthana Laeng Nam Phuea Kaan Auppaphok lae Boriphok* (The Evaluation of the Development of Water Resource Project for Consumption). Bangkok: Liang Siang, 1994, p. 2.

² Cited in Office of Secretary General of House of Representatives, *Raai Ngaan Kaan Phitcarana Sueksaa Panhaa Phai Laeng lae Authokkaphai* (Report on the Study of Drought and Flood Problems). p. 55.

³ See Sirilak Manawongcharoen (trans.), *Songkrhraam Nam* (Water War). Bangkok: Suan Ngoen Mee Maa, 2003, p. 1.

⁴ The Cauvery River entailed the bloodshed conflict between two states of Southern India, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, in 1991. Approximately a hundred thousand of people had to flee from their homeland. See Neil Pelkey, “The Cauvery Water War”, in <<http://www.des.ucdavis.edu/staff/pelkey/cauvery.htm>>

⁵ The conflict of water resource became an internationally political issue when the Indian government built the dams on the Bramaputra River and the Ganga River, causing the decrease of water amount in Bangladesh. Both Indian and Bangladesh governments, in 1996, made a contract for controlling water in the Ganga River. The contract has become effective for thirty years. See Suthat Yoksan, “*Waree Wikrit: Patcuban lae Anakhot*” (Water Crisis: Present and Future), in *Phucatkaan Raai Wan*. 21 May 2003: 9.

Nations thus warns: “In the future, there will be a water crisis which leads to more water wars on international stage.”⁷

In the same way, the New York Times points out the issue regarding the lack of water in Texas in the first year of the twenty-first century: “For Texas now, water has become liquid gold instead of oil.”⁸ The expression of this issue is not an exaggeration when the severe situation of water crisis was found in 1998. It is also believed that the number is rising up to 56 countries within the year 2005. During 1990-2005, the number of population in these water crisis areas would likely increase from 131 million to 817 million.

Since the initiation of the National Economic and Social Development Plan in the late 1950s, Thailand’s capitalism and consumerism has expanded continually. Such expansion together with the growth of materialism results in the “unbalanced condition” between man, environment, and society, which is followed by the “non-correspondence” between economics, politics, society, culture, tradition, and environment.

In Thailand, intellectuals also point out the water crisis in the same way. As Srisak Vallibhotama, a senior intellectual, says: “From now on, there will not be any conflicts that could lead to violence in human society as severe as those of water management.”⁹ According to Chaiwat Satha-anan, a political scientist, the war in this age will not be that for land nor oil any more.¹⁰ The scariest war to come is a water war. Likewise, Chaiyaphan Praphasawat, Director of Institute for Community’s Right in Chiangmai, who is a key person in reviving the Mae Ta Chang Basin, agrees that there will not be any wars as threatening to human today as a water war.¹¹

It can be said that the conflict of usurping water resource is becoming an issue that its severity dramatically increases. The bipolar of the conflict is discernible not only among inhabitants, but also between the locals VS the newcomers. In addition to this, the conflict between the local people who join with NGO or

⁶ All of these three countries encountered the conflict of usurping water on the Nile River. After Egypt, the upper part of the river, built a dam, Sudan and Kenya had trouble in the shortage of water in such a way that the political issue together with that of usurping water resource were raised on international stage. BBC News, 21 December 2003 in <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3313893.stm>>

⁷ BBC News (5 March 2003) in <<http://www.news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech/2880831.stm>>

⁸ Jim Yardly, “For Texas Now, Water, Not Oil, Is Liquid Gold,” *New York Times*, 16 April 2001: 1.

⁹ Srisak Vallibhotama, in Sirilak Manawongcharoen (trans.), *ibid.* preface.

¹⁰ “Kawaam Runraeng lae Khwaam Khatyaeng” (Violence and Conflict), Lecture, 18 February 2004. King Prajadhipok’s Institute.

¹¹ “Sathanakaan Kan Yaeng Ching Nam Lum Mae Nam Taa Chaang” (Situation of Usurping Water on the Mae Taa Chaang Basin), Lecture, 29 February 2004. The Amity Green Hill Hotel, Chiangmai.

conservative activists and a group of businessmen who sees natural resources as a source of money or benefit is also found.

The situation about the conflict of usurping water as mentioned above arouses this writer to raise questions towards the Mae Ta Chang Basin on the issues of conflict and operation on conflict management. This paper aims to study what kind of conflict has happened in the Mae Ta Chang Basin as well as to examine the concept and the conduct in coping with the inhabitants' problem. Furthermore, it investigates the similarity and difference between Western and Buddhist concepts on the conflict management appeared in its operation for the basin. It will also trace whether and how Buddhist way of peace is employed to resolve the problem.

2. Situation of Conflict at the Mae Ta Chang Basin

The Mae Ta Chang Basin¹², consisting of 64 creeks, is a branch of the Ping River. Its origin is located on the Suthep-Pui National Park and the Orb Khan National Park; it flows down and converges the Ping River in the area of Amphoe Hang Dong in Chiangmai. Geographically, the Mae Ta Chang Basin covers the area of 3 Amphoes, that is, its upstream source in Ampoe Mae Rim and Amphoe Mueang; its mid-stream in Tambon Baan Pok, Ampoe Haang Dong; and its downstream in Tambon Nong Khwaai, Tambon Nam Phrae, Tambon Haang Dong, Tambon Baan Waen, Tambon San Phak Waen, Amphoe Haang Dong. Ethnically, there are 2 ethnic groups living around the basin: Hmong¹³ and Mueang. While the upstream is occupied by Hmong people who live in the highland, the Mueang or the local people of Chiangmai inhabit in the mid-stream and downstream areas.

The conflict situation at the Mae Ta Chang Basin leads to questions for this study. What are the main and subordinate issues causing the conflict? What is a feature of this conflict? Who is a stakeholder? What are its standpoint, benefit, cause, and effect? How do people carry on the strategy in terms of problem framework, aim,

¹² The term "Mae Taa Chaang" is apparently believed to have its origin from two ways. 1) As the size of its well house was as large as that of an elephant's eye (*taa chaang*, Thai), so it was called by comparison. 2) As a legend says, a Chiangmai's king crossed the river to Amphoe Cormthorng to bring the Buddha relic for bathing in town, the king got off an elephant's back at the river bank. This area was then called "*thaa chaang*" (elephant quay); the sound "*thaa*" was later changed to "*taa*".

¹³ The origin of the Hmong tribe was in the areas of the Huang He or Yellow River Basin and the Qiangjiang Basin in China. They took refuge to settle down in Thailand for the first time in 1889 by journeying across mountains through Laos to Amphoe Chieng Khorng, Chiengrai, and Amphoe Thung Chaang, Nan. The overall Hmong population is at 124,211; most of them have settled down in the areas of Chiangmai, Tak, Chiengrai, nan, and Phetchaboon. See more details in Research on Hill Tribe Institute, *Khor Moon Prachaakorn Chao Khao nai Prathet Thai* (The Information about Hill Tribes' population in Thailand), Chiangmai: Research on Hill Tribe Institute, 1998.

process and method, operation plan, and conduct? What kind of peace concept for resolving the conflict is it based on?

3. Issues of Conflict at the Mae Ta Chang Basin

Issues are an indicator of conflict's content, tangibly and intangibly. Is it a conflict on natural resources that one can recognize by the five senses, or an abstract one such as value, culture, feeling, and so on? The issues play an important role in managing the conflict more effectively. In so doing, the study finds that the main issue of the conflict at the Mae Ta Chang Basin is usurping water resource. The study of a paradigm and a set of belief of the basin's communities also finds that these people's way of life principally relies on water resource. Their lives have long been bound to the stream, and thus they view water as "life". Such view clearly appears on their way of thinking and lifestyle which express in their practice towards the stream in various dimensions: 1) Water is essential for life. 2) Water is considered as public property. 3) Lives are connected by the stream. 4) No one has right to destroy or overuse water resource. 5) Nothing can replace water. 6) Water must be preserved. 7) There is a limited amount of water which can be used up. 8) People get water without paid and it is for living one's life. These ideas are instilled by those in the local communities in an attempt to give significance to water.

However, the distinctive views on water resource generate the explicit conflict by means of the quarrel between two main groups, the locals versus resorts' entrepreneurs, and this is expressed by destroying resorts' barrage some times. Apart from this, the inhabitants of mid-stream and downstream areas such as those in Tambon Huay Pong and Tambon San Phak Waan, also have negative view on the upstream communities, namely, the Hmong, in that they view Hmong people overuse water regardless of the need of those in the mid-stream and downstream areas. Moreover, as they see, the deforestation caused by the Hmong results in the lack of forest for absorbing water, which leads to the conflict between those in the mid-stream and downstream areas versus those in the upstream. To understand the issue of conflict more clearly, the context of conflict will be studied.

4. Historical Context of Conflict

In analyzing any conflict's situation, the study of economic, political, social, and cultural contexts is highly important. The examination shows that the conflict at the Mae Ta Chang Basin has its historical background in three points, as follows:

4.1 State's Division of Governing Boundary

The boundaries are geographically divided by designating the upstream area of the Mount Suthep side governed by Amphoe Mueang, while the other side of the upstream belonging to Amphoe Mae Rim, and the mid-stream and downstream area under Amphoe Haang Dong's governing. Such division's result is the disintegration of the basin communities' unity leading to a rift. A main reason for the division is due to the upstream area where the convenient route for traveling up and down the mountain, which is in Amphoe Mueang.

Formerly, the indigenous people of the basin divided the area different from the state's division since they used the stream as a centre, which was a holistic management. In this respect, the stream was not broken into parts, as the state did. The holistic management of the locals brought to the unity of water distribution by an officer called "*kae mueang kae faai*". The system distributed the resource effectively and efficiently. It is clear that the division by being based on geopolitical thinking and method separates the inhabitants, thus followed by their dissociation.

4.2 Development of Water Distribution

The local wisdom regarding water distribution in northern Thailand is the system of *kae mueang kae faai*, a person who takes control of water distribution for the benefit of all communities on the basin. At the same time, when a dispute about usurping water resource occurs, *kae mueang kae faai* served as an arbitrator.¹⁴ The study finds that several communities appoint their local politicians to mediate a conflict of water resource. Yet an agreement is never met mostly. In certain communities, moreover, the contradiction turns to become more widespread as a result of these politicians' setting fire to the problem. This is because people in those communities consider the politicians unfair in the conflict management, the agreement of these politicians is then unacceptable in their view.

4.3 Transformation of Agricultural System into Capitalism

Originally, Hmong people who live in fertile environment of the upstream area are agriculturists. However, they turn to commercial plantation as a result of social and economic change. In this respect, planting of peach which requires less water is replaced by an economic plant with more marketing value, lychee, in need of more water. And when the product is inadequate for the market's need, the deforestation for such planting including other economic vegetables, such as lettuce

¹⁴ Ekkawit Na Thalang, *Phum Panya Chaobaan See Phoomiphaak: Withee Cheewit lae Krabuan Kaan Rianroo khong Chaobaan Thai* (Local Wisdoms of 4 Regions: Way of Life and the Learning Process of Thai People), Bangkok: Sukhothaimathirath University, 1998, p. 62-63.

and cabbage, increasingly expands. The more the economic plantations increase, the more the need for using water rises.

As for those in the lowland where is the mid-stream area particularly at Tambon Baan Pong, here was a small village where a small number of planting area was found due to its location flanked by hills on two sides. Nevertheless, the relation of people in the community was a relative system; and there was a close interrelationship in the community. Mainly, the people here grow rice and farm crops; looking for things in the forest such as bamboo shoot, mushrooms, and wild vegetables, for trading in Chiangmai is also part of their way of life.

5. Factors in Usurping Water Resource

As mentioned above, the issue of the conflict in the Mae Ta Chang Basin is of the “issue of usurping water resource”. This section seeks to look for its original cause or important factors of this conflict. The finding is as follows:

5.1 Insult of Race, Language, and Belief

The study of the values of people on the basin illustrates that these people are from different ethnic groups. Those in the mid-stream and downstream areas regard themselves as “*khon mueang*” (Lanna people). To them, their culture is believed to be higher and finer than that of Hmong people in the highland where their living, tradition, and custom remain uncivilized and unsophisticated. For this reason, the “*khon mueang*” group usually has a distorted attitude toward the Hmong as being “marginal people”. This view reflects in the term they call the Hmong as “*maeng hmong*” by comparing with and giving value to them in the equivalent of an insect.

Another interesting issue is a matter of language. Even though language is an important instrument in human communication, it becomes “a powerful weapon” in destroying each other. This is because different languages people speak are able to generate a gap of communicating information, reason, and need among various groups of people. While Hmong people use Hmong language, the language of those in the mid-stream and downstream area is called *mueang* language, Chiangmai’s dialect. The non-correspondence of language results in the fact that the communication between Hmong and *mueang* people about their need, namely what the water is used for, to what extent the water is needed, why Hmong people use the water regardless of other groups’ need, is stuck. This, hence, leads to the dissatisfaction and the severe contradiction.

Besides this, the religions of the *khon mueang* and the marginal people are distinctively different. Traditionally, animism is the Hmong’s religion; some people

later turn to have faith in Christianity and Buddhism today. As for the *khon mueang*, their religion is mainly based on Buddhism.

5.2 Lack of Information

The discrepancy of sending and receiving messages displays the problem about information of people on the basin. Misunderstanding from conveying non-correspond meaning becomes “a trap” for them in usurping water resource; in some situations, the conflict develops into violence.

The field research finds the discrepancy of information. The interesting question is what information is considered deviated. The geographical condition should also be taken into consideration. The locations of all those in the upstream, mid-stream, and downstream areas, have mountain ridge as a base for each group. While the Hmong’s base is located in Amphoe Mueang and on the top of *Doi Pui* or Mount Pui in Tambon Doi Suthep, the *khon mueang* group is in Amphoe Haang Dong.

Such geography causes the non-correspondence and non-thoroughness of information communication among the inhabitants on the basin. As a result, those in the mid-stream and downstream areas believe that the main reason of water shortage derives from the Hmong’s deforestation which makes a lack of rain. In contrast to this, as Phor Luang Traiphob Yang explains, this accusation is all untrue. The result of non-exchange of information among them through a meeting or seminar continually, however, is a vacuum of information communication and later creates the conflict.

5.3 Alienated Relation

Man usually alienates himself from others by nature, yet the diaspora creates the clearer alienation between the locals and the newcomers. Particularly the difference of language, religion, belief, and culture is a basic element for such alienation. And when the conflict in the issue of usurping water resource rises, the trace of separation among the groups of inhabitants is more easily found.

An important thing in the theory of alienation is that it is easy to create alienation both within the same group and with the others due to the lack of relation and meeting of these inhabitants. As the upstream people physically alienates from the others, the social separation of this group from the others is seen. Moreover, when the group’s alienation has existed for a period of time and no meeting for exchanging information and need takes place, the expansion of rift among these inhabitants becomes faster. It can be said that, based on the theory for examining the root of conflict, the alienation can be considered as a vital element leading to a separation and a rift.

5.4 Increase of Agricultural Crops and the Growing Need of Water for Crops

The study portrays that in 1963 the government tried to initiate the Hmong people to plant economic crops such as lychee, peach, persimmon, and coffee, in order to replace opium. The product of growing peach gave benefit to the Hmong economics to a large degree, as the Hmong group at Doi Pui was able to sell their products to a factory for making preserved peach. This mirrors the transformation of subsistence production system into commercial production system which causes the expansion of planting area together with the increasing need of using water.

During 1977-1992, the Hmong people viewed that growing lychee could cost more benefit, the expansion of its plantation then dramatically rose up in number. The weak point of this plant, however, is being an un-absorbable crop. Also, the plantation of lychee needs an enormous amount of water especially during the period of bud's developing from December to April. It is interesting to note that this period is when the lowland people are growing crops off season. This creates an effect on the shortage of water in the lowland and thus results in an argument between the lowland and the highland people.

5.5 Expansion of Tourism

As explained in the previous topic, the Hmong's production system radically changes from subsistence to capitalism. Their plantation is for the purpose of adding marketing value instead of growing crops for family consumption as in the past.

From 1971 onwards, the Hmong people had adapted themselves into another aspect of capitalism particularly by the introduction of tourism industry. That is to say, one of the most popular tourist attractions is "*Baan Doi Pui*" (Doi Pui Village). The observation finds that the village contains a museum and shops for tourists. Furthermore, when the number of tourists increases, the Hmong villagers need to provide more water. The source of water for sure is the Mae Ta Chang Basin.

5.6 Expansion of Housing Development, Villa, and Resort

During 1983-1991, several groups of investors bought a large number of lands in the vicinity of mid-stream and downstream of the basin. It appears that there are 54 resorts, bungalows, hotels, agricultural gardens, and housing developments altogether in the mid-stream vicinity, the number will increase continually. Additionally, 21 house developments are also found in the downstream area. Almost all of these lands were agricultural areas of the locals. Hence, over 80% of farming fields dramatically decreases.

6. Patterns of Conflict Management with Peaceful Means at the Mae Ta Chang Basin

6.1 Basic Concept in Conflict Management at the Mae Ta Chang Basin

Concept is regarded as a knowledge base or a tool for applying in conflict management. Without concept, the operation process cannot be carried in a right direction, and the conflict management will be done unsuccessfully. The use of concepts as a tool and a framework for the conflict management at the basin is as follows:

6.1.1 Dissolution of Ego

The dissolution of ego refers to the reduction or disappearance of selfishness. If man is less selfish, he/she will conversely think of others. This concept mirrors the Buddhist principle of non-ego. The study of the inhabitants' thought and behavior shows that the leaders of these stakeholders attempt to reduce and dissolve their persistence of egoism and ethnic identity. This can be seen from the dialogue of these groups to find the resolution. In the early stage of the conflict, the representatives of every group seemed reserved and reticent for fear of a loss of negotiation power. As Phor Luang Traiphob insists, "the leader of Doi Pui village in the early period did not consent to talk with the mid-stream and downstream groups about the conflicts." But when Phor Luang Traiphob becomes a leader of the village, he starts to talk with the others. As a result, the tension of situation turns to the atmosphere of finding a way out together.

As the Hmong group or the entrepreneur group does not seek to claim or persist on their right in using water resource, their meeting and talk can find a clearer resolution. The outcome of their talk is also the non-separation of each group and the acquiescence of the others' ethnic identities.

6.1.2 Acknowledgement of Diversity

The positive result deriving from the dissolution of ego is that the groups try to acknowledge the diversity of ethnic, belief, and language each other. This is shown by the diversity of ethnic groups in the basin, which consists of the original inhabitants and the newcomer, namely the Hmong who are marginalized people; the *khon mueang* consider themselves as being better ethnically and holding a higher civilization; any newcomer from Bangkok gains more opportunity and power than the locals.

In fact, the acknowledgement of diversity was not developed in the early stage. It is not until each group dissolves their own identities, a stage for exchanging

and learning the others' way of life and need is then found. Additionally, the listening and acceptance of different views reduces the tension of conflicts to certain degree.

6.1.3 Respect for the Others' Life and Resource

Another outcome of the dissolution of their identity's persistence is that they show their respect and honor to each other. The *khon mueang* group and the business group honor the Hmong by stopping the viewing of the Hmong as *maeng hmong* and people who destroy the moisture of upstream forests. As a result, the Hmong group seeks to restore and take care of the forest together with to prevent from trespassing the stream and cutting off wild banana which is a water absorber. This also includes the careful use of water in that they are aware of the others' need of water.

6.1.4 Participation

Having shown respect for the others' life and resource, they build up a stage for exchanging, learning, and negotiating about their needs. The inhabitants on the basin whose advisors are a group of scholars and NGOs make use of the participation process as a tool for the conflict management. The process begins with allowing all groups of the inhabitants join in cognition regarding the issue of usurping water resource. After that, they then join in expressing their opinion on its cause so as to apportion their responsibility towards the conflict together. They then take the problem under their consideration and join in making a decision for the best resolution. The operation process is lastly carried to cope with the conflict. At every stage of the operation process, everyone has equivalently right to monitor what is going on. This aims at the fair distribution of water resource to every group.

6.1.5 Interdependence

According to the law of dependent origination (*paticca samuppada*), the interdependence is also the outcome of dissolving their self. The study finds that in the early period of usurping water resource, each group lived on their own independently. This is consistent with the geographical condition which is cut off by mountain. Although separated living was a benefit for the upstream people, it became a bad effect on the mid-stream and downstream groups directly. Encouraging the Hmong group turns to more interdependent living helps them take the others in their concern. If not, the effect on the Hmong's peacefulness and well-being plausibly appears due to the problem they created by themselves. A sustainable resolution is the upstream group's awareness of interdependent system in that a survival of the *khon mueang* reciprocally ensures the maintenance and existence of the Hmong. Such awareness finally leads to their unity.

6.1.6 Sharing

The upstream group usually claims their rights on using water on the basis of the assertion of water flow as well as their ownership of the areas. Accordingly, the entrepreneurs' group sees that if the stream is flowing through their zones, it is also their privilege to use water as much as they need. Such claims are unfair to them, according to the mid-stream and downstream groups' view. These two groups also consider themselves the locals, while the newcomers, i.e. the entrepreneurs, have no right to claim any privileges at all.

As a result of each group's assertion, certain scholars observe that "the conflict of the inhabitants derived from the use of the concept of 'right' which is a western concept in managing the problem."¹⁵ In an attempt to find a way out, the assertion of water flow and ownership is altered to the right of community's benefit and fair distribution.

The concept of the right of water distribution is basically aimed at the benefit of communities in the basin. In addition to fairness, the distribution must be carried to every community equally. This is because the distribution in some cases is fair but it does not go to every community equally as the upstream group is a main distributor.

It can be said that the use of the concept of right is probably suitable for the assertion of land. When applied to the case of water resource, the conflict continually occurs. However, the problem is eased up mainly because of turning to the use of the concept of sharing, which is an eastern concept. This concept can work well in resolving the problem. As some scholars say, "the Mae Ta Chang case is different from those the state has experienced. In fighting, we must insist on our knowledge, the state has no skill. Though the state knows about the irrigation system, it does not work well in resolving our problem. However, the local irrigation system or *kae mueang kae faai* can distribute water resource well. This must be pointed out and we have to put community's power together in order to deal with the problem by themselves."¹⁶

6.2 Methods of the Conflict management of the Mae Ta Chang Basin

At the beginning, the inhabitants chose to rely on violent methods in coping with the conflict, for example, the destruction of barricade and crops, as well as insulting. Such methods could not bring them to find a resolution together. Moreover,

¹⁵ Seelaphorn Buasaai, Document on the Forest Ordained Ceremony of the Mae Taa Chang Basin Community, The Stream of Community's Life, The Committee for Studying the Restoration and Management of the Mae Taa Chaang Basin in association with Institute for Community's Right, p. 20.

¹⁶ Ibid.

the tension of conflict went further. An important turning point is therefore the use of non-violence in the conflict management among these stakeholders. The ways for finding a resolution are:

6.2.1 Negotiation

This becomes the first set of practices they managed to deal with the conflict as seen from the case of negotiating for ceasing the conflict of Moo 2 Baan Pong's barrage destruction.¹⁷ This conflict was based on the problem that the downstream people lacked water for agriculture since the mid-stream group built a barrage. The barrage was then destroyed by the downstream group. The elementary outcome of negotiation was the establishment of subcommittee for examining the problem. The bilateral negotiation in this case led to the statement of reasons making each group decide to undertake in the problem together with the attempt to find a resolution.

It is interesting to note that these conflicts often occur among the inhabitants of the basin. The negotiation on their own is usually the first way they relied on in the early stage. Nevertheless, a weak point of this kind of negotiation is that it is not able to solve the problem sustainably. When the conflict seriously developed, they therefore invited a mediator to participate in finding a resolution.

6.2.2 Mediation

The process of negotiation by a middleman was offered by a group of intellectuals who viewed this process as an alternative capable of creating an agreement and reconciliation for the communities in the basin. Accordingly, a middleman for the negotiation was nominated, namely, Chaiyaphan Prapasawat, a NGO activist, including Nidhi Aeosiwong and Mingsan Khaosa-at as being advisors, Chalerm Anwiset and Inthorn Thipkhamma, former *kamnan* (Tambon headman) as being staff for collecting information and liaison. The process of negotiation by middleman generates four main issues of elementary agreement:

1. The stakeholders agree on the right of using water regardless of the ownership of land. While a landowner has privilege in making a living on his land, water resource is regarded as a public property which everybody can use and be distributed thoroughly and equally.
2. The Committee of the basin should be set up in each group, that is, the upstream, mid-stream, and downstream group. And each group selects their own members. These committees participate in water distribution. Each group also nominates

¹⁷ In this conflict, both sides of opposition made use of bilateral negotiation for three times on 11 and 13 January 2002 as well as 11 February 2002.

their representatives to the main committee of the basin in order to set up the regulation of resource management of the basin. The interesting agreement includes Section 6 Water Usage, Section 7 Public Brook and Ditch, and Section 8 Barrage.

3. The registration or the account of water users should be systematically initiated for at least five years in order to inform the authorities regarding the number of water users, a calendar of land usage, kinds of crops, amount of water usage categorized by activities. This is for the local water resource management. Besides, fee for registration should be collected from water users on the basis of the number of crops or plants, for example, four baht per trunk for longan, so as to set a fund for serving in activities of water users.
4. The agreement of rotation as in the *kae mueang kae faai* system is revived for distributing water in dry season. Its principle is that the water source area and the need for water must be realized so that the rotation can be managed effectively. The data of rain quantity of the same period in the previous year is brought to calculate water asset. However, a restriction of the Mae Ta Chang is being a natural stream. This is different from the Mae Taeng irrigation, a concreted canal where seep is less than natural water resource. Due to no information about rotation, the rotation of the Mae Ta Chang Basin is based on the inhabitants' experience. The villagers of Baan Pong and Doi Pui decided to set up the rotation by learning from their experience and experiment. They finally found a conclusion that sharing water use in half could evenly benefit both villages. But if other groups of water users intend to join the rotation, such agreement and experience are probably adapted to suit new condition. The negotiation by a middleman is a process that can increase potential for the conflict management in some levels as the negotiation on their own is sometimes unable to find a conclusion or an agreement. This practice helps litigants be aware of rules and agreements in making social contract with other groups. On the contrary, a disadvantage of this process is that they are unable to bring every group of those who have more authority in using water to the negotiation, particularly certain groups of resort entrepreneurs. Hence, the process of conflict management cannot sustainably appear in the Mae Ta Chang area.

6.2.3 Creation of Participation Process

The creation of participation process is considered as the key for success in the conflict management at the Mae Ta Chang Basin as this process is after the establishment of the committee of the basin by a group of mediators' attempt. The committee comprises those from upstream, mid-stream, and downstream group

together with representatives of resort entrepreneur group. The committee's mission is to set up rules and regulations for water resource management.

The participation procedure begins with the meetings regarding the first step for finding a resolution. In so doing, each group expresses their needs or resolutions, for example, how water is distributed or used so that it is sufficient for people on the basin. The study of their minutes finds that the committee helps suggest resolutions every time the conflicts occur.

Furthermore, the process of monitoring how the concurrence is going on is also carried as an operational tool. It investigates whether there is water smuggling; the pipes used are bigger than what is specified; resorts store water in a whirlpool which causes water flow slowly. This process is conducted by the committee whose function is to inspect the use of water resource of the basin.

An important issue is the participation of people in maintaining water resource, particularly, finding new water resource, afforestation for storing water underground, and partaking in religious rites for implanting the inhabitants' consciousness on the significance of the basin. The process of participation appears in various forms, for example:

6.2.3.1 Partaking in Activities

Leaders of local wisdom in association with the Institute for Community's Right make use of activities as an instrument in connecting people from various groups to take part in doing activities. The remarkable and effective activities are:

1) Fate Extending Rite for the Stream

The *phithi suep chaaTa* (fate extending rite) is a traditional ceremony of *Lanna* or northern people. It is regarded as "an invented rite" organized by the collaboration of leaders of local wisdom, scholars, and people on the basin at Ha Nuea Village in the mid-stream area. It is believed that the rite is able to make the stream exist longer for supporting the inhabitants. Its essence emphasizes on instilling consciousness on the significance of water resource so that people will be grateful to and value water resource.

2) Forest Ordained Rite

The *phithi buat paa* (forest ordained rite) is also an invented rite. The forest area of Mae Ha community in Tambon Baan Pong, Amphoe Hang Dong, Chiang Mai for the purpose of protecting forests in the Mae Ta Chang Basin area; building the inhabitants' consciousness; creating the co-operation in taking care of natural resources from every sector and level.

The outstanding features of the rite are found in two points. 1) The tradition of entering a monkhood is adopted and adapted by covering each tree with monk's robes to create a symbol of being ordained. 2) Psychologically, such symbol makes people be ashamed of cutting down the wood indirectly leading to the maintenance of forest.

To sum up, the forest ordained rite is a symbolized activity of the community stressing on the creation of added value to society as well as resources by being based on Buddhist tradition. The result goes directly to the forest and thus indirectly to water resource in the basin. Clearly, this activity also gives an opportunity for people and sectors, both private and government, to work collaboratively and to enhance their own potential.

3) Planting Wild Banana for Water Restoration

This activity is designed by each committee of the basin to serve the plan for restoring and developing water resource and ecology of the Mae Ta Chang Basin area. It took place on August 30, 2003 at Baan Doi Pui, Tambon Suthep, Amphoe Mueang, Chiangmai. The objectives of the activity in the area are: 1) to keep the upstream more fertile and 2) to build natural resource because wild banana can absorb water and create moisture of ecology in the upstream area.

Planting wild banana is the implementation of local knowledge in accordance with natural condition of the area where various sort of wild bananas with a variety of qualifications are found. Wild banana the Hmong chose to plant is called "*coe la*" whose qualification is well absorb of water, fast breeding by sprouting and seeding. It can exist beneath a big tree; more importantly, it is edible. If, however, it is well breeding or becomes old, it should be cut off, it will not otherwise sprout. This is really an interesting point of local knowledge management.

6.2.3.2 Establishment of the Committee of the Basin

In November 1998, the Centre of Ethnic in collaboration with the Northern Development Foundation, the Network of Northern Farmers Group, and the People Coordination for Local Committee organized a meeting between the lowland and the highland groups at the Northern Development Foundation Auditorium. The conclusion of the meeting was the establishment of the committee of the basin whose members should be representatives of all villages of water users. The committee was expected to set meetings consistently to solve problems, and later to allow representatives of all resorts to be the members of committee.

Later in December 1998, the second meeting was held at Baan Forn Temple, Tambon Nong Khwaai, Amphoe Haang Dong, Chiangmai. The meeting consisted of over 150 participants, i.e. governing officers, forest officers, members of city council,

scholars, NGO's staff, and representatives of all villages, entrepreneurs, and hill tribe. The consensus was to set up "the Committee for Studying the Restoration and Management of the Mae Ta Chang Basin" to solve the problem of usurping resources, water in particular. The committee consisted of two parts: 1) the central committee included 290 members selected from 5 representatives from each of 56 villages and 10 representatives from each of 10 resort's entrepreneurs; 2) the operation committee, chosen from the central committee, included 18 members selected from 2 representatives of each of 8 Tambon and 2 representatives from all resort's entrepreneurs.

The main objectives in setting up the committee of the basin are: 1) to foster all communities so that they can participate in natural resource management; 2) to make all water users of the basin live in harmony; 3) to create the community's consciousness on loving homeland, natural resources and environments; 4) to set the community's rule and regulation for administration by people's organization.

To operate the problem resolution, the committee designates their roles: 1) to design a plan for the Mae Ta Chang Basin development for the benefit of all inhabitants and other people; 2) to manage the problem in accordance with plan and consensus; 3) to strengthen people's organization by using campaign, training, seminar, study tour, and experience exchange in every aspect of community; 4) To maintain, prevent, protect, and restore natural resources both in the Mae Ta Chang Basin and outside the area which has effect on the community. 5) to unify all communities ; 6) to provide a fund for self-development of organization.

The strategies serving 3 sets of peaceful means process are as follows:

1) Persuasion

In the processes of negotiations on their own and by a middleman, the litigants and middleman usually persuaded opposing person or group to realize a negative result of the conflict, that is, the encounter with violence. The plausible way out was negotiation. This can be seen from a case study in which Kamnan Chalerm Anwiset, Chairman of the basin, and Chaiyaphan Praphasawat, showed the inhabitants the disadvantage of usurping water and the advantage of sharing water.

2) Cooperation

The negotiators tried to bring each group and sector to join in the negotiation. The cooperation appeared physically and mentally, that is, they discovered each group's need and joined in looking for a way out.

3) Supporting

The detail of this method can be evaluated by each group's support for negotiation, while the pattern of support is discernible from resort group's funding and providing places for meetings. In addition, the Office of National Research Council, Chiangmai University's scholars, and the Institute for Community Right help support and promote researches and set up a stage for exchange information among groups. The outcome of this support entails more positive feeling these people give each other together with better understanding of each group's need and necessity.

4) Compromising

Compromising plays a pivotal role in their negotiation strategy. It is the process that each group leaves their own standpoint and turns to talk about their real need. There are two cases of study. 1) The upstream group did not try to explain their right in consuming water unrestrictedly due to the location, however, they could help the other groups have a chance to use water at requested time. 2) Some resort groups did not consider that they had better economic power and tried to partake in activities, while they gave an opportunity for the mid-stream and downstream groups to monitor water consumption as well as to join in drafting the concurrence.

5) Voting

This method is really relied on as a last choice in setting up a basic concurrence about water resource usage and the selection of committees. It would be used when the negotiation outside the meeting was unsuccessful or each group could not accept the agreement. A weak point of this method is that some entrepreneurs viewed the committee's using a vote as an indirect way of putting pressure on them, meanwhile voting could entail a following question that it was not based on legal regulation. Nevertheless, certain of the committee viewed that such method could bring justice to water consumers. Even though there was no legal endorsement, the vote was an agreement between the inhabitants of the basin in seeking to find a resolution.

To sum up, the conflict's resolution became clearer in the light of these strategies. Though the situation is much improved today, the conflict still springs up from time to time during a drought crisis. The temperature of conflict, however, is different from those previously happened.

7. Conclusion and Analysis

The study finds that a factor causing the conflict can be evaluated by the fact that certain groups of people, either some groups of hill tribe together with resort groups, need to develop capitalist economics, which result in the need for using water in their business and added value for their products and goods. Furthermore, the extension of lychee and longan plantations also increases the need for water consumption. The “inner factor”, water consumption regardless of the other groups’ need, makes some parts of the mid-stream and downstream realize an injustice. As far as their privilege on water resource is concerned, they should have a chance to consume water as equal as those in the upstream. Moreover, when the newcomer can afford the overuse of water, the tangible climate of conflict is more distinct.

The heat of conflict is calmed down when all communities realize the significance of participation in managing the basin. In so doing, Chaiyaphan Praphasawat and a team of scholars are key figures in giving assistance and advice, including bringing all groups together for meeting and talking to find a resolution. What make positive attitude in this case are a dissolution of each group’s identity, a reciprocal assistance, and a distribution of restricted resource to sufficiently serve their needs. Additionally, the concept of unification is a main idea presented in the participation of those people in determining their own life and fate.

The strategy of unification among those people is the process of conflict management by relying on a suitable choice, namely, the process of negotiation by a middleman. After studying the context of the basin and preparing a procedure, the middleman successfully manages to mediate in some degree by showing the advantage of negotiation instead of other forms of resolving process.

This writer sees that the SWOT analysis makes us view the image of the Mae Ta Chang Basin more clearly in every aspect. These affect conflict management, including other issues, more thoroughly. In comparison with western concepts, the concept and operation used in this conflict management of the Mae Ta Chang Basin is found similarly in certain degree, the process of negotiation by a middleman and the peaceful means. This can be seen from encountering the conflict, persuading the litigants to solving the problem, compromising the conflict by negotiation, creating the participation process after setting up a regulation, and distributing water resource. An interesting point is the implementation of “measuring water” concept as a tool for distributing the resource. In this respect, the amount of rain and water in the stream is measured for the possibility of sufficient and equal distribution.

Another significant aspect is the application of Buddhist principles, that is to say, the transformation of “usurping to sharing”, that of “persisting to dissolving and destroying identity”, that of “un-unified to unified condition”, and that of “gathering but not joining hand or un-gathering but join hand to gathering and joining hand in

resolving the problem”. Moreover, the people of the basin also borrow some Buddhist rites in combination with local wisdom, such as the fate extending rite for the stream, the forest ordained rite, and the practice of Dhamma walking, to create consciousness and foster values. This makes the people be aware of the significance of forest and stream, together with have right attitudes and practices towards forest and stream. Moreover, the conflict of ethnic and a matter of fact are solved to a “balanced” point.

Even though the problems of issues such as usurping water, ethnic, or hidden conflicts have much been improved, the situation of usurping water usually occurs in dry season. The government agencies seek to physically solve the issue by looking for or building new water resources to serve the people’s need. However, what should be done side-by-side the management of water resource, which is a physical management, is human management, a mentally management, so that the people of the basin can manage their need to suit the amount of water worthily. As Chaiyaphan always refers to Mahatama Gandhi’s saying, “there exists sufficient resource for all people in the world, yet there exists insufficiencies for a greedy man.”

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“Bring Strangers Together: Chinese/Chinese American Engaged Buddhism, Race and Inter-Ethnic Relations in America”

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Abstract

Asian immigrants from China, Japan, Korea, and India have been immigrating to the United States of America since the early 1840s. Since the Fall of Saigon in 1975, Southeast Asian immigrants from Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos have come as refugees. Each wave of Asian immigrants came with their religion, with the primary religion being Buddhism in all its cultural forms. The change in U.S. immigration policy since 1965 has dramatically changed the religious landscape in America, making Buddhism increasingly more visible with each passing decade. As historian Ronald Takaki showed, Asians come as “*strangers* from a different shore,” and their religion, too, is strange. What happens when these strangers (e.g. Buddhists) encounter non-Buddhists in America? Interreligious and interethnic conflicts can erupt. Not Protestant or Protestant-like Asian Americans, who maintain their heritage religion, reinforce the image of Asian Americans as “perpetual foreigners.” There are reported cases of Buddhist, Hindu, and Sikh temples being the targets of vandalism. Similarly, there are reported incidences of attempts to prevent Asian American Buddhists communities from settling their roots, or from settling too deep on American soil. The humanistic Chinese Buddhist community at Hsi Lai Temple in Hacienda, California, and the Sikh *gurdwara* in San Jose, California have both faced opposition from White and Christian opponents when attempting to build their sacred sites in America. Just this year, during the summer of 2009, the Thai Buddhist Temple, Wat Mongkolratanaram, located in Berkeley, California (one of the most liberal communities in the U.S.), has come under attack by its neighbors for “disturbing the peace” with its “offensive food odors” from its weekly Sunday food service. Without the food service, Berkeley’s Thai American Buddhist community will drastically be affected, because the proceeds are used to fund the operations of the temple: support of the monks and nuns, support of Thai language and cultural classes, and so on. During the Berkeley City Council hearing, opponents voiced culturally insensitive arguments, along with legitimate criticisms related to zoning, parking, and noise.

This paper explores how strangers (Buddhists and others) in America can harmoniously co-exist with its neighbors through an investigation of Chinese/Chinese American engaged Buddhist activities of the Compassion Relief Tzu Chi U.S.A. organization. Compassion Relief’s non-dogmatic, socially engaged “*Just do it*” ethos, has paved a way for better understanding among Buddhists and non-Buddhist (e.g. Christians, Muslims, Sikhs, Jews) neighbors in America. Compassion Relief is intimately involved in providing social, educational, charitable, and medical relief to the underprivileged and underserved, throughout and beyond Taiwan regardless of race, ethnicity, class, sex and religion. In this paper, I seek to examine the role of Compassion Relief U.S.A. in negotiating interracial and interethnic relations, specifically among Asian American Buddhist communities and Latino, Black, and the White communities. Compassion Relief U.S.A. is changing the way Buddhists are imagined, and by extension, Asian Americans are imagined, in and throughout American society. I argue that socially engaged Buddhism, as exemplified by Compassion Relief U.S.A., can bring strangers together to foster harmonious co-existence. Their compassionate relief work does not just stay in America, because they are a transnational, globally orientated, socially engaged Buddhist community. If Compassion Relief’s socially engaged work can help soften and resolve deep seeded interethnic and interracial tensions in America, it will have a rippling effect globally, and could help move the world towards lessening suffering caused by intolerance and ignorance. Lastly, I will propose some recommendations for other non-socially engaged Buddhist communities in America to follow, taking cues from the Berkeley Thai Temple’s experience.

Theravada Buddhist Temple Building in America

Since 1975 more than one million refugees from Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam have entered the United States. Cambodian and Lao Theravada Buddhist temple building comes with a potential backlash from xenophobic neighbors who invoke zoning laws and regulations in attempts to stop the building of temples in their neighborhoods, as evidenced by an example in Silver Spring, Maryland, where, in 2008, neighbors counted cars and kept detailed records and photos of people visiting the temple during festival celebrations. The Maryland State Supreme Court denied the group, then known as the Khmer Buddhist Society, a permit to build a temple on Newtown Hilltop. Afterwards, the Newtown Zoning Board presented the Khmer Buddhist Society with a “cease all religious services and festivals permanently” order (*The Hartford Courant*).

In the late 1980s, Lao refugees in Rockford, Illinois, a rural blue collar town faced extreme violence in their attempt to build a temple on a small farmstead on the outskirts town. The Lao temple was the target of a firebomb and drive-by rifle fire.¹

The Thai Americans did not come to the United States as refugees. The first settlements of Thai immigrants did not appear until the late 1960s. Thais have immigrated to America for many different reasons. Shortage of nurses in the U.S. was the main cause that first drew large numbers of Thai immigrants into the country. In the late 1960s, the American government began to give a warm welcome to Thai nurses by offering green cards to them right when they landed on American soil. By the early 1970s, large numbers of Thai immigrants had already settled down in America.² These immigrants still keep their culture alive and try to pass it down to their children who are mostly American born. They speak Thai in their families and communities, cook Thai food, practice Thai Buddhism, and maintain their Thai identities.

Because the majority of Thais in Thailand, America, and within the Thai diaspora are mainly Buddhist, Buddhist rituals and beliefs are key to be Thai in America. In Buddhist custom, people can come to a temple every day to offer food to the monk(s), as a part of religious practice called *thumbun*, literally meaning making merit. This activity is done in early morning for breakfast and around 11:00 a.m. for lunch. According to tradition, monks are not supposed to eat beyond noon until the next morning. In Buddhist practice [reality], a meal beyond noon time is not necessary. In America, usually, in this regular *thumbun*, offering food to the monks on a regular basis, mostly only those who are available (especially ones who live close by) appear at the temple regularly. As a result, not everybody shows up at the temple every day. Members who live far away prefer to come to the temple only on important occasions.

Berkeley's Thai Buddhist temple, Wat Mongkolratanaram

The Berkeley Thai Buddhist Temple, Wat Mongkolratanaram was founded in 1981. Ever since, it has serve a Sunday food service, as a form of *thumbun* for local Thai Americans. The temple's weekly Sunday food service is well attended, upwards to 600 visitors. Neighbors discovered that the temple's zoning permit dated 1993 only allowed for food to be served three times a year. This discovery

¹ Similar to Lao, Vietnamese, Sikh, and Chinese Americans, some Cambodian American communities face social and religious prejudice in their attempts to rebuild religious institutions in America (see Taggart Siegel 1987, *Blue Collar and Buddha* DVD; Jaideep Singh 2003; Irene Lin 1996).

² By the 1980s although nurses were still in high demand in America, the numbers of Thai nurses decreased due to political conditions and the changing relationship between the two countries.

galvanized some neighbors who said, “We believe we have a right to reside in peace, to enjoy our residential neighborhood without a large commercial restaurant in our midst,” (Fowler 2009, *The Wall Street Journal*). After the initial hearing about the zoning problem, the Temple was granted a zoning adjustment. This is good news for the Temple. However, certain neighbors want to appeal this decision and have also expressed concerns about new development plans for expanding the size of the main Buddha hall (bood) beyond a size allowed by the municipal code. At the hearing, there were accusations that the food served at the temple was drugged. Some opponents of the temple’s food service suggested that they were forced to live with odors. Others were more focused on their complaints. As recorded in *The Wall Street Journal*:

“We have no opposition to Buddhism,” says Ms. Shoulders, the neighbor. “We have no problem with Thai culture. We even actually like Thai food.” All she is seeking, she says, is changes in the temple's operations (Fowler 2009, *The Wall Street Journal*).

It appears, that the Thai Temple has become a victim of its own success and popularity. Those who support the Thai temple and want to save the food service argue that there is a direct connection between saving the food service and saving the temple because the majority of its operating funds comes from the weekly food fair. However, local neighbors and homeowners—especially residents in this neighborhood—have a right to challenge offensive odors, loud early morning noise, and excessive traffic, that they feel adversely impacts the quality of life in their neighborhood.

On September 22, 2009 the Berkeley City Council voted unanimously (9-0) in favor of the broader land use permits granted by the Zoning Adjustment Board (ZAB) in decision favoring the Berkeley Thai Temple, Wat Mongkolratanaram. However, the tension, accusations of racism, cultural insensitivities, and discrimination between the Thai and non-Thai American neighbors have harmed the harmony and peace of the community.

Is it possible for there to be harmonious co-existence? Can differences be overcome to promote unity and peaceful living? This paper argues that it is possible for harmonious co-existence to exist among Thai/non-Thai, Lao/non-Lao, Cambodian/non-Cambodian, and other Theravada Buddhist communities in the United States. As centers of ethnic enclaves in American, the temples serve mainly an ethnic community. To the outsider, it is close and secretive, which leads to rumors and innuendoes. This leads to misunderstanding and ignorance, which when coupled with back economic conditions, cultural misunderstanding, and tensions from war will lead, and have resulted in violence. Theravada Buddhism is not known for being “socially engaged.” But maybe, in America, Theravada Buddhist

communities will need to “get engaged.” It cannot exist alone in an ethnic enclave. One example of this is with the Taiwanese base Compassion Relief Tzu Chi U.S.A. Buddhist communities.

Engaged Mahayana Buddhism: Tzu Chi U.S.A.

Compassion Relief has transplanted its “just do it” socially engaged Chinese Buddhist relief work onto the “new American religious landscape.”³ Compassion Relief’s fourfold mission encompasses disaster relief, medical and general healthcare, education and culture, and environmentalism, together reflecting a global orientation.⁴ *Compassion* coupled with *upaya* (expedient means), two central teachings of Mahayana Buddhism, guide its relief efforts to serve clients without regard to age, sex, race, ethnicity, class, or religious affiliation.⁵ Although a religious institution, its primary goal is not evangelical, but rather, encourages followers to emulate or to become living bodhisattvas who bring “compassion” into “action” to assist others in need. In the early nineteenth century, French sociologist Alex de Tocqueville observed and admired American society because of its voluntary associations and civic society,⁶ which continues to this day. Although, social service work is nothing new to Compassion Relief, its relief work in American society has impacted the role of religion in the public sphere and, further, it has comprehensively redefined notions of race and ethnicity, interfaith dialogue and practices, making diversity meaningful, and by extension, has brought new attention to Buddhism and civic service, which legitimates Chinese Buddhism in particular, and Buddhism in general within American society.

This paper seeks to discuss how Compassion Relief’s work crosses, transcends, and negotiates the boundaries of religious, linguistic, inter-ethnic and inter-racial relations, together with cultural and national identities. First, I will examine Compassion Relief’s medical and general healthcare outreach in California, Hawai’i, and New York, in addition to its international bone marrow bank, which has provided an outlet for a relatively new ethnically Chinese immigrant Buddhist mission society to transplant itself onto American mainstream society. A discussion of Compassion Relief’s educational and cultural outreach will follow, reflecting degrees of “acculturation,” civic responsibilities, and inter-ethnic cooperation. Third,

³ Diane Eck

⁴ Tzu Chi’s official ideological fourfold mission includes charity, medicine, culture, and education.

⁵ Jonathan H. X. Lee. “Chinese Religions in North America” and *A Glimpse into the Heart of Master Cheng Yen*. This is point reiterated in many Tzu Chi publications, and on their webpage.

⁶ Alexis de Tocqueville. *Democracy in America*. J. P. Mayer, ed. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1969).

I will explore the national attention gained by Compassion Relief's outreach after the horrific terrorist attack of 9/11, and the devastating impact of Hurricane Katrina, affecting the boundaries of international U.S.-Taiwan relations. While racial and ethnic tensions pierced America in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Compassion Relief's work provided a platform for new dialogue of inter-ethnic and inter-racial relations between African-Americans and Asian-Americans in general, and Chinese-Americans in particular. Finally, I will argue that even though Compassion Relief's organizational structure is transnational in scale, its mission is "global" in ambition.

Medical and Healthcare Relief

In November 1993, under the leadership of Ven. Cheng Yen, Compassion Relief U.S.A. established its medical outreach free clinic in Alhambra, California, providing Chinese and western medicine, in addition to dental care – that includes two mobile dental units – to the disadvantaged, underprivileged, and uninsured communities of Los Angeles proper. In May, 1997, Compassion Relief U.S.A. founded its second free clinic on Honolulu, Hawai'i, serving the economically disenfranchised indigenous populations of the islands, focusing on providing primary healthcare for school aged children, and free vaccinations. From its base in Honolulu, Compassion Relief extends its medical outreach to the outlying Pacific Islands (e.g. Samoa), just as the Alhambra branch extends its medical services to the migrant Mexican populations of California's agricultural Central Valley. The newest addition to Compassion Relief's medical outreach was established in September 1997, in New York City. Compassion Relief's New York mobile free clinic, travels around the New York area, delivering and providing basic healthcare to low income families, homeless residents, and the uninsured – by 2000 – they had already served over four thousand patients.⁷

Ven. Cheng Yen's medical mission started while in Taiwan, whereupon she realized that the primary cause of people's suffering stems from the lack of adequate healthcare and inability to cultivation and sustain healthy living. It was one incident in particular, that motivated her to vow, to provide healthcare for the residents in the rural county of Hualien, in eastern Taiwan, wherein she witness a woman turned away from a hospital, after traveling several hours, because she was uninsured. Ven. Cheng Yen's vision has made its way to America, and the spirit of assisting the uninsured poor remains just as strong, all the while upholding Ven. Cheng Yen's

⁷ <http://www2.tzuchi.org.tw/tc-medical/index.htm>, lasted visited May 25, 2006. Compassion Relief's free clinic medical mission outreach in other countries: Canada, established October, 1996; the Philippines' established December, 2001; Brazil in 1996; Indonesia in 1995; Vietnam in 1998; Japan in 2001; and mainland China in 1999.

view on polity. In Taiwan, Ven. Cheng Yen has taken a very steadfast apolitical non-partisan position, which secures and ensures her trust among the people. Therefore, any volunteer or follower who become politically active, or run for political office, or is employed by a political party is required to resign as a Compassion Relief worker. Furthermore, Ven. Cheng Yen does not permit the use of Compassion Relief's logo, or the likeness of her image in any political campaigns, be it implicit or explicit.⁸ Compassion Relief's apolitical stance plays itself out in America as well.

In America, various forms of financial resources are accessible through the local, state, and federal governments to support civic service groups, albeit minimal, however, Compassion Relief U.S.A. has refused to apply and or receive such government funding, exclusively relying on private fund raising and donations, fearing that their services to those most in need may be compromised due to limitations and restrictions which may accompany such funds. For instance, in California, as well as New York, Compassion Relief works with many new immigrant Americans, some legal, some not, hence, accepting government funding means they may have to restrict themselves from serving residents in need, which they compassionately refuse to do.⁹ Recent developments over immigration legislation present Compassion Relief U.S.A.'s medical relief with new challenges, namely the proposal for immigration reform which condemns both the immigrants as well as those who assist them.¹⁰ Will Compassion Relief U.S.A. be able to continue providing health care to new immigrants without proper documentation, or will they obey the discriminatory immigration law if it should become a reality?

Serving the new immigrant communities comes with linguistic challenges, for example, Compassion Relief's medical outreach in the Central Valley of California, serves mainly migrants farm workers who speak Mixtec (or Mixteca), rather than Spanish, although possessing a working knowledge of Spanish.¹¹ Compassion Relief's volunteers, although primarily Taiwanese-Americans, for whom Mandarin Chinese and or Taiwanese is their month language, either start to learn Spanish themselves, or seek out volunteers who are capable of communicating in both Spanish and Chinese or English. At times, there is a domino relay translation

⁸ Guo Chengtian, "Taiwan de minzhu yu zongjiao/Democracy and Religion in Taiwan" in *Yazhou zhengjiao guanxi/Religion and Politics in Asia*. Taipei: Weibo wenhua chubanshe, 2003, p. 114.

⁹ Lee, p. ?

¹⁰ "Immigration fight looms in Senate", CNN:
<http://www.cnn.com/2006/POLITICS/03/28/immigration/index.html>

¹¹ Vivian-Lee Nyitray, "History, Memory, and Narrative Ethics" forthcoming Macau Ricci Institute. The Mixtec (or Mixteca) are indigenous people centered in the Mexican state of Oaxaca. Some Mixtecan languages are called by names other than Mixtec, particularly Cuicatec (Cuicateco), and Triqui (or Trique).

among English, Chinese, and Spanish, if they are lucky enough to have two volunteers – one bilingual in Chinese and English, the other Spanish and English. Besides English, Mixtec, or Spanish speaking new immigrant Americans, Compassion Relief U.S.A. also serves diverse immigrant-Chinese communities for whom Cantonese is their primary language of communication.

Bilingual Compassion Relief volunteers are few and precious as they are at the forefront of assisting non-English speaking new Chinese Americans, be they Mandarin, Cantonese, or Taiwanese speakers. Bilingual Compassion Relief volunteers assist patients in hospitals who do not have immediate family or friends to assist them upon entering the hospital as a result of an emergency or other medical complication. Unable to communicate with the healthcare staff, Compassion Relief volunteers are crucial to both the patients and medical personnel who treat them. Compassion Relief volunteers also visit patients, while hospitalized who has no family or friends, and if the situation deems it necessary, they will recite the Guanyin sutra as a healing technique or to prepare them for the next stage of *samsara*.

Ven. Cheng Yen created a bone marrow bank in Taiwan, in response to the plea of a young lady named Win Wen-Ling, who discovered she had leukemia while studying for her doctoral degree at Ohio State University.¹² Unable to find a matching donor in the U.S. she returned to Taiwan, and upon realizing that Taiwan lacked any organized bone marrow registry, she wanted to establish one. In order to do so, she would need someone that people can trust, hence, she turned to Ven. Cheng Yen, to beseeched her support. After thoughtful deliberation, and ensured that donors themselves will not be harmed in the process, Ven. Cheng Yen publicly announced in 1994 her endorsement of a bone marrow bank in Taiwan, and encouraged volunteers and members to organize blood drives in their neighborhood throughout the island.

Within two years, Compassion Relief Bone Marrow Bank became one of the major bone marrow bank in East Asia. Today, Compassion Relief Bone Marrow Bank is connected to those of other countries, making it more efficient, and hence, crossing national, as well as, potential ethnic and racial boundaries.¹³ It is here, that notions of race and ethnicity potentially become dissolved, outside of academic jargon. For instance, a German man, who had successfully received a bone marrow donation from Compassion Relief, expressed his feelings of gratitude and desires to visit Taiwan, coupled with the fact that he never thought he shared the same blood with “Asians”.¹⁴ Consequently, people who receive benefit from Compassion

¹² Her Rey-Sheng “Great Love as a Running Water”...p. 9

¹³ U.S. National Marrow Donor Program, Japan and Germany’s Bone Marrow Banks.

¹⁴ Her Rey-Sheng, p., 93.

Relief's bone marrow registry are not limited to one ethnic group – the Chinese/Chinese-Americans – although it was established to meet their needs, which has great implications for changes in America's inter-ethnic and inter-racial dialogue, because racial ideologies may slowly be deconstructed at the level of flesh-and-bone. For example, non-Chinese recipients of successful bone marrow transplantation – as illustrated by the above example of the German man – may arrive at a new understanding of race and ethnicity when they discover that they had received bone marrow from a non-white donor, and vice versa.

Educational Programs

Compassion Relief's educational mission started after its disaster and medical relief were firmly in order. To this end, they have built elementary, junior high, and high schools throughout Taiwan, in addition to a university located in Hualien, which houses a graduate school of nursing. Compassion Relief U.S.A.'s educational programs includes programs such as “Everybody Read” in addition to a newly establish scholarship foundation to assist economically disadvantage high school students as they enter college.

Although “Everybody Read” is an educational program, it is simultaneously an implicit interfaith activity as well. Volunteers, from any and all religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, are all welcome to participate. They meet once a month at a local elementary school, providing reading lessons, storytelling, arts and crafts, and gifts for elementary school students in disadvantage inner-city public schools. The majority of “Everybody Read” volunteers are younger generation Taiwanese-Americans, because they are bilingual in both English and Chinese, unlike their parents and grandparents, for whom English is not yet a primary language of communication. A self-described Catholic Latina Compassion Relief volunteer at “Everybody Read” reflects on her experiences and says:

I was made aware of Tzu Chi through a youth group friend who introduced me to the “Everybody Read” Tzu Chi staff. She learned of it through an online volunteer website. I've volunteered with the “Everybody Read” for about half a year before I moved away. I am a late teen Catholic (sorry I'm not Buddhist or Daoist) who enjoys volunteering and experiencing new things. Even though my time conniving with them was short, I enjoyed every last minute. They were a pleasure to volunteer with, and have a positive attitude towards others. They are the nicest people I've met and they made me feel welcomed even though I wasn't part of their religion. They are open for anyone who is searching for a little help. While

volunteering they were very compassionate and patient towards the children, their patience made the kids enjoy them as much as I did.¹⁵

Our self-identified Catholic Latina's reflection highlights Compassion Relief's interfaith consciousness and inclusive approach to civic work in the American public sphere. Another example comes from a self-identified bilingual "Asian mother" who expressed:

I am an Asian mother who have volunteered with Tzu Chi approximately two years or so. The program I am currently actively participating is the "Everybody Read" program. I also join them during the year-end delivery of goods and gift cards to the needy, and have visited with patients in the "New Start Home" program. Some memorable experiences I have had while volunteering would be receiving a big hug from a small girl and hearing her say 'Thank you and I will miss you' after the "Everybody Read" program. I also witness how several needy families survive in cramped living spaces, watched patients in the "New Start Home" program cope with their limited ability to move. Tzu Chi is a great organization.... It believes in the equality of all beings and the Buddha-nature potential in every person....

The motivation to volunteer expressed by the aforementioned ladies are common to all Compassion Relief's volunteers, however, the personal profile and linguistic abilities are markedly different because the majority of Compassion Relief volunteers are middle aged, and or semi-retired or retired Taiwanese/Chinese housewives and mothers for whom English is not a viable language of communication.¹⁶

Besides educational programming such as "Everybody Read" Compassion Relief U.S.A. has been active in community fairs, both interfaith and secular. For instance, each year, the Santa Anita community holds a back-to-school fair and here, Compassion Relief provides new clothes, shoes, and school supplies for economically disadvantaged children, catching the attention of the local press and evening news.¹⁷ Recently, Compassion Relief established a scholarship foundation to support economically disadvantaged high school students throughout the U.S., moreover, they continue to sidestep restrictions, by making the eligibility

¹⁵ Interview, March 8, 2006.

¹⁶ Julia C. Huang, Andre Liberte and Robert Weller

¹⁷ I first saw Tzu Chi on the Channel 4 evening news, participating in the Santa Anita community fair, during the summer of 2004.

requirements vague, hence, not restricting their scholarship to “legal residents” alone, as state and federal financial aid is.¹⁸

Cultural Outreach and Acculturation

Similar to other modern large scale transnational lay Buddhist groups,¹⁹ Compassion Relief makes full use of in-house publishing facilities, radio and television broadcasting, video and internet conferencing, and the use of the internet to maintain close contact with followers around the globe. Publications of books, magazines, and journals, for example, 慈濟世界 *Tzu Chi Shijie (Tzu Chi World)* or *Tzu Chi Quarterly – Buddhism in Action*, are available in simplified and or traditional Chinese, English, Spanish, Japanese, and German.²⁰ Compassion Relief founded 大愛 *Da'ai*, Great Love, television and radio, as a way to reach people worldwide, purifying TV culture, constantly reminding followers of their successes, and work that still needs to be done, in addition to hearing and seeing Ven. Cheng Yen’s daily *dharma* lessons, in which she transitions, smoothly, between Taiwanese and Mandarin. *Da'ai*’s dramas are series of shows that are didactic, providing examples of individual heroism, filial piety, compassion, and humility, all the while reinforcing the importance of Compassion Relief’s charity and relief work, and now, made available via the Public Broadcasting Station (PBS), in the Bay Area, Los Angeles Area, New York Area, and Houston Area, and other cable networks around the world, in addition to live online video streaming. While conducting field research, one Taiwanese expatriate shared with me that she watches *Da'ai* every afternoon, after her morning recitations of sutras, commenting that one day, she would like to visit Compassion Relief’s headquarter in Hualien, Taiwan.

Compassion Relief has been active, since it transplanted itself on American soil, assiduously endeavoring to be inclusive, although difficult because the majority

¹⁸ Tzu Chi Scholars 2006 application. Beside academic excellence and graduating high school senior requirements, they require demonstration of financial need, and intent to enroll in an accredited U.S. college full-time, with no mention of “legal” residency common to other scholarship programs in the U.S.

¹⁹ Foguang Shan, Dharma Drum Mountain, etc.

²⁰ English books Published by Compassion Relief/Books on Ven. Cheng Yen’s teachings including the follower as of May 2006: *Still Thoughts, Volume One and Two*, *Enveloping the World with Great Love*, *Great Love across the Taiwan Straits*, *The Thirty-Seven Principles of Enlightenment*, *People Have Twenty Difficulties*, *The Sutra of the Bodhisattva’s Eight Realizations*, *Overcoming the Ten Evil Forces*, *Three Ways to the Pure Land*, *The Master Tells Stories, Volume One and Two*, *Rebirth – Transformation in Tzu Chi*, *Inspiring Aphorisms – The Phrase that Benefits Me Most*. *Stille Gedanken*, the German translation of *Still Thoughts, Volume One and Two* are also available. In addition, Compassion Relief publishes a series of children’s books, for instance, *A Child’s Heart Reflects the Moon*, *The Little Monk Called “Amo,”* and so on.

of their staff and or volunteers are non-native English speakers, for whom, Taiwanese and Mandarin Chinese are their primary or secondary languages. Even so, Compassion Relief takes care to serve their larger communities through their social services and energetic participation in American holidays, for instance, during Thanksgiving – they provide baskets of essential holiday goodies, during Christmas – gifts and foods, to local economically underprivileged residents, all the while, serving the diverse ethnically Chinese immigrant communities. Beyond cultural, medical, and educational outreach and programming, Compassion Relief is active in local interfaith community activities as well.

Compassion Relief takes every opportunity to be involved in interfaith activities and community meetings. They also welcome, open heartedly, request from other religious groups who need assistance to help their followers. For instance, if a Christian church refers someone who needs money, for rent or food, over to Compassion Relief, they do not hesitate in receiving and assisting them. Compassion Relief realizes that it is located in a multi-ethnic, multi-racial, multi-religious environment, in Taiwan and throughout the world, hence disregards religious affiliation in its outreach programs, because all people are capable of meeting with hard times, and in need of compassionate aid.

Disaster Relief

Compassion Relief's international outreach started in 1984 with overseas Taiwanese expatriates. From a humble beginning of 30 female followers, Compassion Relief now claims 5,000,000 members worldwide, with branches in 39 countries, and to date, has implemented rescue and relief work in over 61 countries. In the U.S. alone, there are a total of 49 Compassion Relief branches, including three free clinics. At present, Compassion Relief is active helping victims of natural as well as human caused disasters in South and Southeast Asia following the December 26, 2004 earthquake and tsunami, in addition to Afghanistan, Iran, El Salvador, and the U.S. Compassion Relief U.S.A. became a national player in relief work following the terrorist attack of 9/11, and in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina that shattered the gulf-coast.

While chaos and terror filled the minds and hearts of all Americans immediately after the terrorist attack of 9/11, Compassion Relief's New York office joined forces with the American Red Cross, at ground zero, to provide emergency medical aid. Compassion Relief's medical volunteers, Tzu Chi International Medical

Association (TIMA)²¹, quickly mobilized in the hours after the morning of 9/11 ready to assist the injured. Beyond the immediate large scale relief efforts, Compassion Relief also paid attention to the minor details of post-9/11 relief, for instance, providing food and water to rescue workers. Compassion Relief U.S.A. has committed itself to long term recovery efforts, continuing to financially assist working class families – factory and restaurant laborers – survive, day by day.

Hurricane Katrina was the sixth-strongest, costliest, and deadliest Atlantic hurricane ever recorded in U.S. history. The storm surge caused major damage along the coastlines of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama, however, it was damage to the levees separating Lake Pontchartrain from New Orleans, Louisiana that flooded roughly 80 percent of the historic city, subsequently causing gargantuan social and public disorder, leaving many people homeless, in addition to extensive injuries, and fatalities. The September 19, 2005 international edition of *Newsweek* conveys America’s racial and economic inequality depicting an African-American baby with tears streaming down her cheeks, entitled “Poverty, Race, and Katrina: Lessons of A National Shame.”²² Senator Barack Obama, bewailed, “I hope we realize that the people of New Orleans weren’t just abandoned during the hurricane... They were abandoned long ago – to murder and mayhem in the streets, to substandard schools, to dilapidated housing, to inadequate health care, to a pervasive sense of hopelessness.”²³ Better yet, let us call to mind Barbara P. Bush’s statement, “So many of the people in the arenas here, you know, were underprivileged anyway. So this is working very well for them,” referring to the crowded 10,000 plus strangers cramped into the makeshift evacuation center.²⁴ Not to mention Yahoo News’ coverage, which described waterlogged whites as “carrying food” whereas blacks holding food were depicted as “looters”.²⁵

Let us journey back to April 1992 when a mostly white jury acquitted four white police officers accused in the videotaped beating of African-American motorist Rodney King, which instantaneously erupted into a massive inner-city riot whereupon thousands of young African-American and Latino males²⁶ participated in

²¹ TIMA was founded in 1996 by a group of healthcare professionals under the auspices of Compassion Relief, and relies solely on donations and funding raising activities. TIMA provides the highest possible quality healthcare to individuals around the world who are in need of medical attention at minimal or no cost to the patient. Currently, TIMA has 17 branch offices worldwide in 9 countries including: Taiwan, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Philippines, United States, Paraguay, and Brazil.

²² *Newsweek*, international edition, September 19, 2005.

²³ Jonathan Alter, “The Other America,” in *Newsweek*, international edition, September 19, 2005, p. 14.

²⁴ *Ibid*, p. 16.

²⁵ *Ibid*, p. 20.

²⁶ Young white males from outside the district looted as well, but the media mainly showed African-Americans and Latinos.

what has often been characterized as a “race riot” in which racial and ethnic tensions turned from a “black v. white” issue, to one of inter-ethnic discontent involving African-Americans and Korean-Americans. During and after the riots, the cultural misunderstanding and inter-ethnic, inter-racial tensions between African-Americans and Korean-Americans were of principal concern for the rebuilding of Los Angeles. Post-Katrina offers new fertile ground for increase dialogue between African-Americans and Asian-Americans, many time viewed as modeled-minority citizens or as “honorary whites” who are sheltered, privileged, and secluded away in their upper-middle class communities. Compassion Relief workers were at the forefront of post-Katrina relief efforts, donating millions of dollars to families and taking into their own homes countless dislocated survivors. At one moment, Compassion Relief volunteers withdrew \$50,000 dollars from their own personal accounts to purchase gift-card and vouchers for families in need because banks were not open. Post-Katrina relief work provides fertile possibility for inter-ethnic and inter-racial solidarity between African-Americans, white-Americans, and Asian-Americans, as they come into contact with one another, and stereotypes give way to positive experiences, encounters, memories, and harmonious co-existence.

Recommendations for Theravada Communities in America

Compassion Relief has been successful in forming positive community relationships with it non-Buddhist, non-Chinese and non-Taiwanese neighbors through their programs of engaged compassion. It is not necessary for Theravada communities to be as engage as Compassion Relief, but they do need to be more open. The recommendations I make are simple steps to improve interethnic relationships, which makes possible harmonious co-existence.

Recommendations:

1. *Have regular open house.* This will allow neighbors to learn about Theravada Buddhism, the temple and community, which will decrease potential for the rumor and gossip about “what might go on, on the premise.”
2. *Become involved in civic festivals and celebrations.* Go out and join the non-Buddhist community.
3. *Give back to the local community.* Make it public.
4. *Provide educational workshops on Theravada Buddhism – in English.*
5. *Temper the impulse to accuse neighbors of racial discrimination and prejudice.*



6. *Be willing to compromise so for a win-win solution.* A win-lose resolution will not bring about harmonious co-existence.
7. *Be a part of community organizations and programs that educate youth on racism and discrimination.* If none are available, start one.

These small steps, are important measures to take to begin the process of bring people together for harmonious co-existence.

Friendship and Buddhism

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This essay explains ideas about authentic friendship and Buddhism. Authentic Buddhists are thoughtful friends. Further, friendship is a gift that Buddhism gives to people and to the world. This gift can help heal the anger that causes problems today. I have an ecumenical perspective, and I appreciate what Buddhism brings to people, their problems, and their potentialities. Friendship as taught by Buddhism is a great opportunity to gain merit beginning with forgiveness.

One of the best writers on this topic is the fourteenth Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso. The Dalai Lama teaches about love, altruism, and forgiveness. He is a great example because he demonstrates forgiveness for the Chinese who have cruelly killed and tortured many Tibetans since the occupation of his country. His teaching makes sense for everyday life.

The Dalai Lama believes that all people should be treated with altruism. He believes that we should treat everyone, even enemies, as our friends. Using traditional Tibetan methods, the Dalai Lama leads people through a logical process. Anger, like worry, has real limitations. If you can do something to alleviate the problem, do it. Otherwise be still. Either way: forgive!

Holding a grudge is harmful both to our relationships and to our selves. Negative thoughts about others waste energy. When we run a tape loop in our minds repeating negative thoughts about others, then we augment that same negativity in ourselves. We can only perceive in others qualities that are already within ourselves, at least tacitly.

In personal and spiritual development, the productive practice is to focus on improving oneself rather than criticizing others. Forgiveness is a necessary passage in the development of spirituality, and friendship is an obvious place to practice.

The Dalai Lama explains that if we begin with thinking about a friend - someone we know has our best interests at heart - we can extend this perception to others. As we practice forgiveness, we accept others as well as situations as they actually are. Hence we become free by virtue of our ability to forgive.

Sometimes friendships and other relationships become caught in a downward spiral. Partners begin to see each other as abusive and uncaring. Each partner begins to collect a “file” of evidence about the other’s unfriendly behavior or character.

Both partners begin to behave more negatively, and together they construct a negative spiral of communication.

Resentment is poorly understood. We could turn our resentment into indignation. Indignation is a powerful form of love. The difference between resentment and indignation is that indignation is a short-term response to an error such as disrespect someone shows you. Of course, it is appropriate to express emotion, but cultivate your emotion. Practice indignation rather than resentment. Resentment endures and is the cause of ongoing enmity, disease, and even war. Indignation is dignified and works for the transformation of another.

Each negative thought form and its attendant emotion has its complement. Rage is out of control anger. Rage has as its complement - outrage, which is a spontaneous, short-term emotion. Practice outrage rather than rage. Use reflection to change rather than to dwell on guilt. Practice forgiveness rather than long-term angry fantasies. Realize optimism rather than cynicism. Overcoming negativity takes work to be authentic, but this work is a necessary feature of human growth. For a while, we may have to acknowledge our confusion until we figure out our emotional dilemmas.

Most of us have flaws and these show up in our friendships. Do not take anyone's flaws too seriously, including your own. Forgiveness goes a long way in maintaining friendships. Forgiveness keeps our expectations low, which also helps friendship to endure. Forgiveness enables us to look through the flaws of our friends and appreciate them for the gift they are. Our friends' flaws are an opportunity to learn how to forgive.

Regarding our own errors in friendship, let us be generous. If in doubt, apologize for any contribution you might have made to your friend's difficulties. Yet be kind to yourself. Forgiveness is a two-way street. Forgive and accept yourself and others also.

Living Friendship

Authentic caring, appreciation, and forgiveness enable a friendship to succeed. However, authenticity can be difficult to attain. We easily fool ourselves and give mixed messages that show our ambivalence. An obvious example is acting like we forgive someone while holding an unconscious grudge. Passive aggression is a poor substitute for direct expression. Until the resentment is understood and transformed at a deep level, we can acknowledge that we have mixed feelings. If we continue to observe and communicate completely about the resentment, it will gradually go away. Make your forgiveness real.

We can be aware of our observations. What just happened? We can be aware of our thoughts. How and why? We can be aware of our feelings. How do we feel about this? And we can be aware of our needs. What do we want? Take the time to understand and, if you like, express your perceptions, thoughts, feelings, and needs. Bring the resentment to awareness and alter it through observation, reflection, and complete expression.

Aggressive humor is often a mainstay of friendly communication. Yet this friendly behavior works only because behind the disparaging remark, “Your new girlfriend seems like a real nerd,” there is sincere caring. Aggressive humor between friends can lower anxiety.

For some people, the heart deadens over time. The mind employs a ceaseless inner dialogue that is negative about self and others. This repetitive, negative dialogue deadens the heart with cynicism. The result is not only a dead heart. The result is dead relationships and even physical disease. Friendships die and the result is loneliness.

Our inner dialogue is often egotistical and our inner emotion is often trite. This ceaseless chatter in the mind takes us away from being present. Consciousness becomes fragmented, even corrupt as the person dwells in their judgments. To be authentic—to be really present—is a revolution in consciousness, a fundamental liberation of the person inside and out.

What is necessary is to rekindle the warmth of the heart, but this must be experienced. The concept is not enough. Genuine friendship is living and not dead. We need to be awake for our friends and bring them life. We must develop a passion for friendship. Also, we must overcome the roadblocks to friendship, which are in the mind.

Roadblocks to Friendship

The famous American, Howard Hughes, had all the money, all the connections, all the opportunities, and all the sexual partners anyone could ever need. He fell short, however, on two interrelated characteristics—his thinking and his friendships. Those people who worked with Hughes came forward and revealed that he was a cruel man, a man who it was easy to despise. In their stories, Hughes’ colleagues spoke to the essential defect in his character. Hughes objectified people as instruments for his own ego. People were to be used as objects for Hughes’ plans, as means to Hughes’ ends.

We overcome the roadblocks to friendship by treating people how we would like to be treated. Ask yourself, what do you want from a friend? And then give it.

We would all like to be appreciated as wonderful, mysterious, and worthy of being known, as far as that might be possible. We would rather be known as knowing subjects rather than as objects defined by someone else's ego. This is a basic distinction in relationship, I-Thou versus I-It, or subjective versus objective. In an intersubjective relationship such as a friendship, I-Thou prevails.

The roadblock to friendship is the objectification of people—treating them not as mysterious expressions of spirit but rather as defined objects to be used. When we objectify people we show this in our language. We refer to “those people” or “you people.” “There is one over there,” is an extreme example of objectification.

Objectification occurs in two major ways—*instrumentality* and *categorization*. Instrumentality is a key to understanding relationship failures. When we communicate with people as if they are pawns in our own game, as if they are instruments for our own goals, then we objectify them.

This is not to undermine the idea of trading. Surely, we give and take with others all the time, we borrow and we lend, and this makes up much of human relating. But what is the quality of the relating as we trade with others? Are we interested in others as they really are, or are we interested only in the surface? Are we willing to make ourselves available as we really are? Or are we merely trying to impress? Are we managing our image, or are we real?

Again, using people as means to our own ends is often revealed in our language, verbal and nonverbal. I once heard someone say, “I want to know you so I can *get* something from you.” His tone was greedy, not deeply respectful. The tone of a comment speaks to a person's intention. Do we only want to use someone, or do we really care about her or him? When we speak, the depth of our thinking comes through our tone, often nonverbally. We can say, “I am enjoying this talk” and mean it, or we can mean the opposite by speaking with a sarcastic tone.

Instrumentality is a trap. Once I was asked to be a consulting partner in a spiritually focused organization which had the purpose of teaching meditation. I admired the founders in many ways, but one quality was off. They related to others as instrumental to their purposes in developing the organization. The leader once said, “I would like to understand how we can become friends.” The blunt answer was, “Overcome your instrumental attitude toward your collaborators.” There was a high turnover among his collaborators because he failed to truly care for them. In the best collaborations we invite others as they really are and behold them in awe.

Another major form of objectification is categorization. Conventional social science is limited to generalizations. Science's knowledge of human relationships is incomplete because generalizations do not address people as one-of-a-kind.

Social science does make a contribution to knowledge. The problem is that social science only goes so far, and some of its territory is counterproductive. Again, the product of social science is generalizations.

Consider friendship. Social science tells us women's same-sex conversations between friends are different than men's. Men are more instrumental than women and tend to *do* things together like playing sports. Women prefer to have conversations. Moreover, both men and women tend to prefer women as friends. All of this information is true at a simple, categorical level. Perhaps this is helpful in understanding some aspects of our relationships. Maybe this categorical information leads to skills that can help us manage our predicaments—a husband and wife who talk at cross-purposes can begin to understand each other, for example. Also, we may be able to avoid breaking the taboos of a particular culture.

However, categorical thinking is a real problem because it runs counter to the perception of uniqueness. As a professor talking in front of class, I used to generalize because it was entertaining. I entertained by talking about how Japanese are high context and the gift of a flower means so much. In contrast, German culture is the most explicit because the literal meaning of words is more important than the non-verbal circumstances. Moreover, Canadians, Thai, Senegalese and Brazilians all ascribe different meanings to the same behavior.

Then I realized most of this generalization was counterproductive. Sweeping statements say nothing about the person who is unique and complex, even inexplicable. Further, our generalizations about others become projections. We think about other people using categories. People do not like to be thought about in categorical terms. This is particularly true because so many categories are judgmental. *Men are superficial. Women are overly emotional.* When it comes to actual persons, none of these generalizations is necessarily true. Worse yet, categorical thinking alienates us from each other.

The tendency to categorical thinking is dominant in many cultures and languages. We emphasize the analysis of phenomena into categories—components in a machine, types of rocks, types of people. This is helpful to manipulate things. The problem with this thinking is that when nature and people are things to be categorized and manipulated, then the connection is machine-like and not human. The personal and the exceptional go missing. Reality itself is not perceived. Errors are rampant in interpersonal relationships.

The tendency to perceive other people in categories affects how we relate to them. For example, if I perceive a man as aggressive, this perception may be precipitated by a category in my mind such as “aggressive males.” Speaking to him as if he were a category is counterproductive. Why not accept him as he is? To create something new, he and I will have to start together from where we both

actually are. We need to find out more about how each person thinks. Otherwise, our messages form a path to disconnection.

Friendship requires getting to know each other as distinctive persons. This can be particularly true when friends belong to different cultures. Avoid generalizing about the inner worlds of your friends, even those who seem tied to their roles and who seem to live a life of image management. We connect with our friends when we perceive them as irreplaceable. Categorical thinking is painful for everyone, particularly the person who thinks in categories.

Watch yourself for a day. Discern between how you feel when you are judgmental of someone using categorical thinking, and how you feel when you are relating to people as a mystery to be appreciated and explored. I bet you will find yourself much happier when you treat people as unique.

Honesty and Friendship

“Friends do not live in harmony merely, as some say, but in melody,” wrote Henry David Thoreau in *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack River*, first published in 1849. There is nothing wrong with harmony—singing the same chord. Friends most often share commonalities: similar backgrounds, experiences, and values. However, the word *melody* implies something more. Melody suggests different notes that are in the same key but are not necessarily harmonious. In a melody, some notes are harmonious, forming a chord, and some are not. The difference makes a melody interesting.

There is in philosophy an idea called “clearing.” Often, baggage builds up in a relationship. This baggage consists primarily of judgments, resentments, and competitiveness. Sometimes a relationship falls to the level of habitual abuse because the unconscious colors so many of the perceptions and reactions that go on between partners. Sometimes, what people really think and feel remains hidden. Clearing happens when what is hidden yet coloring the relationship is brought to light.

There are different levels of clearing. Clearing with defensive anger could be just a continuation of the competitiveness, the need to win, to be right while the other is wrong. Such attacks are polarizing and are easily part of the downward spiral of negative communication that characterizes a relationship in demise.

At another level is the clearing that characterizes positive communication and a relationship turning around in a positive direction. This is confrontation with empathy and caring. The expectations of friendship—help, honesty, and loyalty—are

maintained in confrontation when we show empathy by being sympathetic to the friend's view.

Recall a time when a friend gave you honest feedback. Can you remember a friend who said something that was honest, painful, and helpful? At first, it must have been difficult to see beyond the pain. Such feedback can be hard to hear because it smashes one's ego. Yet, can you remember a time when you felt better because the truth had been told? You had learned something, and you felt even more connected to your friend. I hope you can remember such an experience because it is a gift. You feel enhanced because something is added to who you are.

Confronting with empathy and caring is not easy, but it is necessary to maintain loyalty, which is an expectation most of us have about friendship. How do we prepare for such a difficult conversation? There are many ways. I know someone who prepared for a business meeting she knew would be a confrontation. She repeated the word "caring" like a mantra. She said it worked. Repeating "caring" reminded her of what was important.

There is a distinction between confrontation and criticism, between confrontation and judgment. In friendship, confrontation clears the way for deeper connection. In contrast, criticism and judgment are pointless in friendship. Why? We can be replaced and friendship can end. Sympathy works better than judgment.

Honesty is something we hope for in our friendships. We cannot be satisfied with dishonesty. With our closest friends we feel a need for the truth. What is deepest within us seeks confirmation. Honesty is an expectation in friendship that builds and maintains trust.

A human being has a deep need to be truthful. The themes in this essay have been described by Buddhists such as the Dalai Lama. Using authentic friendship as an orientation helps us to take up the challenges of being truly human in our relationships with others. Whether our spiritual life is formal or informal, active or contemplative, or even if the word *spiritual* is not relevant at all, when we work on ourselves we take time to work on the development of friendship.

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Mutual Co-existence in the Zen Tradition of Mahayana Buddhism

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The Historical Background

In India approximately 2,560 years ago Shakyamuni meditated under the Bodhi Tree at Bodh Gaya and, on the morning of December 8th (according to the Japanese Zen tradition), experienced complete enlightenment upon seeing the morning star. Buddhism in its essence is the teaching of Shakyamuni Buddha to help living people realize their own true original nature and achieve perfection of character.

However, after Buddhism was transmitted to China, the Indian Buddhist custom of performing memorial services for the deceased every seven days until the forty-ninth day became heavily influenced by the two predominant forms of Chinese religion: Taoism (which is primarily concerned with spiritual matters) and Confucianism (which is primarily concerned with ethical development).

Taoism teaches that after their deaths people are judged by the Ten Kings of the underworld. One of the Ten Kings was designated to preside over each of the seven weekly memorial services between the time of death and the forty-ninth day. That left three kings, so in China three memorial ceremonies were added to the original seven. One was on the hundredth day after death, the second was held a year after death, and the third was held two years after death. Later in history the Ten Kings evolved into the Ten Bodhisattvas, giving these ceremonies a stronger Buddhist flavor.

Then Buddhism was introduced to Japan in the middle of the sixth century it came into contact with Japan's native religion, known as Shinto. Shinto is a shamanistic system that regards all natural phenomena, such as the sun, moon, water, and land, as deities. At the very beginning the contact between the two religions was confrontational, but within a short time this conflict was resolved and Buddhism was designated the national religion. At first the practice of Buddhism was largely limited to the ruling classes.

The earliest wave of Buddhism to reach Japan was made up the six schools of so-called Nara Buddhism, which focused on Buddhist ritual, philosophy, and ethics. Three of these schools survive today: first, the Risshu (Vinaya) School with its headquarters at Toshodai-ji; second, the Yogachara (Hosso) School with its headquarters at Yakushi-ji; and third, the Avatamsaka (Kegon) School with its headquarters at Todai-ji.

At this time a syncretistic merging of Buddhism and Shinto took place, in which the Shinto deities were regarded as manifestations of the buddhas and bodhisattvas. As a result Buddhist temples were established in the precincts of Shinto shrines, and, more often, Shinto shrines were established in the precincts of Buddhist temples.

In the ninth century the Tendai and Shingon schools of Buddhism were introduced to Japan from China. These teachings spread throughout the country, and a more distinctly Japanese form of Buddhism took shape. This process of naturalization continued during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when several new schools of Buddhism gained wide popularity among the Japanese people. These schools included the Zen school, which was supported largely by the ruling and warrior classes; the Nichiren school, which was based on the Lotus Sutra and was popular among the townspeople; and the Jodo, Shin, and Ji schools, which were based on Pure Land thought and were popular among the country people.

In Japan the memorial services for the deceased underwent further development. A memorial service came to be offered at the beginning of the seventh year after death, to correspond to the service held on the seventh day. At the end of the thirteenth year another service was added to correspond to the service held at the end of the second week (it is held in the thirteenth year rather than the fourteenth year since even numbers are considered inauspicious in Japan). Following this a memorial service came to be held at the beginning of the thirty-third year after death, based on the fact that the Mahayana bodhisattva Kannon (Avalokiteshvara in Sanskrit) is capable of thirty-three transformations to help save sentient beings. Together with the ten memorial services that originated in China, these three services resulted in a total of thirteen services, each of which is watched over by a particular Buddha or bodhisattva.

During the Edo period, a feudal age that lasted from 1600 to 1868, the government instituted what is known as the danka system, in which each family was compelled to register with a Buddhist temple. With the development of this system several additional memorial services were added to the thirteen mentioned above. These additional services were held at the beginning of the seventeenth year, the twenty-third year, the twenty-fifth year, the twenty-seventh year, and the fiftieth year. In addition, a service was held every fifty years after the fiftieth memorial service.



Thus one of the distinguishing characteristics of Japanese Buddhism is remembrance of one's ancestors. This can be seen as an outgrowth of the ancestor worship of Shinto, and shows the influence of Buddhist-Shinto syncretism on Buddhism in Japan.

The Spirit of Zen

I myself am a Rinzai Zen monk. The Rinzai Zen school practices zazen (seated meditation) with the ultimate aim of experiencing, or at least approaching, Shakyamuni's great awakening under the Bodhi Tree at Bodhi Gaya and realization that all beings are essentially buddhas. Zen gives thanks for the fact that we have been granted life, and strives for the benefit of other beings.

The philosophy of Zen is that of the very universe. It is now well known from the Big Bang theory of modern physics that the universe has its source in emptiness. From out of this primal emptiness occurred what is known as a cosmic inflation, during which the contents of the universe expanded exponentially from a state of infinite temperature and density, and, owing to the presence of quantum fluctuations, gave rise to the structure of the universe as we know it. The original emptiness was not a nihilistic state, but one that was between being and nonbeing. Anyone who truly understands this extremely difficult occurrence could become a Zen master of the highest rank. That is, he could equally become being or nonbeing, and eradicate the universal human characteristic of desire.

All human beings are conscious of other people, comparing themselves with others in appearance, intelligence, and other qualities. If we can stop thinking about others and focus on polishing our own minds so that we return to the state of spotless purity of the new-born infant, for whom self and other are the same, then this is the world of emptiness.

The Spirit of Mahayana

The fundamental spirit of Mahayana Buddhism is to attain enlightenment for oneself, then share that joy with those around one. In this way the circle of gratitude widens and a community of joy naturally forms. An ancient Chinese master said, "Zen is a name for the mind; mind is the essence of Zen." To seek Zen is to seek your very own mind. All who have the mind of Buddha have the mind of Zen. Zen believes that if a person, in the spirit of Mahayana Buddhism and with a mind purified by meditation, becomes the first link in a chain of happiness, then eventually this will be accepted and spread throughout the world.

For this to happen a spirit of tolerance is necessary. If Buddhists were to believe that everyone except other Buddhists are enemies, then even regional stability would be impossible, to say nothing of world peace. What is important as a human being is to have respect for others: for their personhood, for their religion, and for their hearts.

In Japan many people think of Buddhism as nothing more than the practice of ancestor remembrance. They therefore miss the true essence of Buddhism, which is Shakyamuni's teaching for the attainment of spiritual tranquility and the perfection of character. Whenever I have occasion to speak in Japan I always stress that Buddhism is a religion not for the dead, but for we who are living in the world today.

Buddhism as a living religion is practiced in Sri Lanka, Thailand, Malaysia, and the other nations of Southeast Asia. Buddhist practice as a part of everyday life is deeply rooted in these lands. Every day Buddhist monks go out on their mendicancy rounds. When you meet monks and nuns they always greet you with palms pressed together.

Many people living in different lands and following different religions live on the face of this planet. If these people do not join hands as we move into the future, what will become of the Earth? The fastest route to peace is tolerance for what other people believe in most deeply, that is, religion. Mutual acceptance of the religion and personhood of others is, I believe, the only path to co-existence. And the first necessary step in that direction is for us to transform our own way of perceiving things.

Thank you very much.



Concept of Peace in Buddhism and Gandhian Thought

Ratugamage Asha Nimali Fernando

Introduction:

In this study we have made an attempt to crystallized peace thoughts of two prominent persons whom many people would like to describe as two great sons of mother India. They are both spiritual giants of two different ages who were beacon lights in their own age but remain so far their posterity as well. The Buddha Gotama and Mahatma Gandhi lived twenty five centuries apart from each other. They had many similarities in their thoughts and action. However, there were differences as well mostly owing to their respective times and their goals.

The Buddha and Gandhi were both critics of their ages. The Buddha lived in a feudal society where ascending imperialistic goals of monarchies had given rise to rapid urbanization, militarization and commercialization. Gandhi lived when his country was occupied by a very powerful foreign empire. However, in his society there were evident ideological social changes from traditional values and institutions taking place. Both Gandhi and Buddha had roles in politics. The Buddha was born in a royal family as crown prince. But he renounced all what he inherited in search of higher truth. However, after his enlightenment he remained concerned about politics but in a different manner. Gandhi on the other hand was not born having any political inheritance but increasingly moved on to political arena. He never accepted a higher role in governing the country but remained functioning as a political sage. So, pertaining to the thinking of the Buddha and the thinking of the Gandhi – [both taught] theories to be practiced by their adherents. There are of course functional differences; yet one may appreciate that they are owed to their chronological context. Gandhi had to work closer with freedom fighters and to get actively involved in politics, far more than the Buddha needed to.

Both the Buddha and Gandhi had their roots deeply rooted in Indian religio-philosophic tradition in different ways. Gandhi may appear, prima-facie, a theist while the Buddha atheist; but this is more apparent, than real. Gandhi had a sophisticated concept of God not contributing to anthropomorphic and popular type of personal God. It was such a broad abstract, yet practical concept that Gandhi could even state that atheism is also a way of believing god. His God was truth, non-violence, peace or justice. In other words his God was not someone out there but

something within. This concept would not upset a believing Buddhist who also has the nature of *Dhamma* or Buddha within him.

Both Gandhi and the Buddha believed the potency of truth. In Buddhist literature we have reference to *Satya-kriya* or act of truth. While in Gandhian thought we have Satyagraha, hold of truth. Both are mobilizations of truth for realizing a just cause. These two great thinkers associated themselves with the concept of non-violence, which is a classical Indian expression of the modern concept of peace. Its grammatical formation may give the wrong impression that it denotes a negative quality. But the Indian languages very often contain such technically negative terms denoting highly positive meanings. For the Buddha and Gandhi, Ahimsa or non-violence was a highly positive and wide ranging concept which had immense practical meanings. In our study we crystallized the peace concept the Buddha and Gandhi in three dimensions: (a) peace as a political concept; (b) peace as a social concept; and (c) peace as a spiritual concept.

Part I: Peace as a Political Concept

According to King James “justice and peace shall kiss”.¹ In that way, peace can also, as we can see, has a presence of justice. Peace at political level should ensure the equal rights to all human beings. According to John F. Dulles, former Secretary of State for the United States of America: "peace and justice are inseparable."² Internationalists-those favoring the development of a world community-define peace as international or world justice, once meant orderly and constitutional procedures but which has become a more complex concept, involving social justice, economic welfare, and ecological balance.

Buddhist Perspectives

The thrust of the Buddha’s *Dhamma* is not directed to the creation of new political institutions and establishing political arrangements. Basically, it seeks to approach the problems of society by reforming the individuals constituting that society and by suggesting some general principles through which the society can be guided towards greater humanism, improved welfare of its members, and more equitable sharing of resources.

¹ Rummel R.J Understanding Conflict & War: Vol 05 p 118
(<http://www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/TJP.CHAP3.HTM>)

² Ibid

There are several aspects of the Buddha's teachings which are directly relevant to the achievement of political peace. Firstly, the Buddha spoke about the equality of all human beings. That classes and castes are artificial barriers erected by society. The only classification of human beings, according to the Buddha, is based on the quality of their moral conduct. Secondly, the Buddha encouraged the spirit of social-cooperation and active participation in society. This spirit is actively promoted in the political process of modern societies. Thirdly, since no one was appointed as the Buddha's successor, the members of the Order were to be guided by the *Dhamma* and *Vinaya*, or in short, the Rule of Law. Fourthly, the Buddha encouraged the spirit of consultation and the democratic process. This is shown within the community of the Order in which all members have the right to decide on matters of general concern. When a serious question arose demanding attention, the issues were put before the monks and discussed in a manner similar to the democratic parliamentary system used today.

The Buddhist approach to political power is the moralization and the responsible use of public power. The Buddha preached non-violence and peace as a universal message. He did not approve of violence or the destruction of life, and declared that there is no such thing as a 'just' war. He taught: 'The victor breeds hatred, the defeated lives in misery. He who renounces both victory and defeat is happy and peaceful.' Not only did the Buddha teach non-violence and peace, He was perhaps the first and only religious teacher who went to the battlefield personally to prevent the outbreak of a war. He diffused tension between the Sakyas and the Koliyas who were about to wage war over the waters of Rohini.

The Buddha discussed the importance and the prerequisites of a good government. He showed how the country could become corrupt, degenerate and unhappy when the head of the government becomes corrupt and unjust. He spoke against corruption and how a government should act based on humanitarian principles (see: *Anguttara-Nikaya*). In the *Kutadanta Sutta*, the Buddha suggested economic development instead of force to reduce crime. The government should use the country's resources to improve the economic conditions of the country. Buddha had given rules for Good Government, known as '*Dasa Raja Dharma*'. These ten rules can be applied even today by any government which wishes to rule the country peacefully.

Gandhian Perspectives

Gandhi's views on peace within political context are essentially connected with his theory of knowledge. His main epistemological argument is that the truth is God. Tracing the idea of truth to God as the fountain head of all eternal things, he claimed that truth is blissful and eternal. He says: "where there is no truth there

can be no true knowledge. And where there is true knowledge there is always bliss, the sorrow has no place. And even as truth is eternal, so is bliss.”³ In his political philosophy he used this idea as a main vision of the state. He accepted the traditional Indian value theory of the four *purusharthas* (aims of life), according to which the fulfillment of human life requires the coordinated pursuit of *dharma* (ethics), *artha* (wealth and power), *kama* (pleasure), and *moksha* (spiritual liberation), and the pursuit of *artha*, which comprises both politics and economics – these require the institutions of the state.

According to him, the power of the state was derived from the people, and legitimacy of the government depended on the consent of the governed. The purpose of the state was the defense and protection of the right of its citizens. And state responsibility is security of the people. This idea can be traced his to views on ‘*purna swaraj*.’ In the Declaration of Indian Independence, explaining the meaning of *purna swaraj*, Gandhi explained that it meant sovereign state of independence. Further, he stated the use of non-violence is instrumental in making the state harmonized.

Part II: Peace as a Social Concept

Old and the New Testaments contains the message that peace is social harmony. The Hebrew word for peace used in the Old Testament is *shalom* which has the shades of calmness and lack of social disturbance. One of the early meanings of *pax*, the Roman concept of peace, is of a state of relations free of conflicts.⁴ Peace philosophers use the concept in the same meaning; external or the outer peace. What is behind this is the assumption of a society free from the roots of conflict.

Buddhist Concept of Society

One of the important discourses that help us to understand the Buddha’s perception of society is the “Discourse Relating to the Beginnings” (*Aggañña-Suttanta*) which according to many writes locus classics of his theory of society. It is mainly a refutation of the conception of society in the Brahmanical tradition. According to the Brahmanic dogma, Brahma is the profound cause, and the four castes (*varna*) represent the manner in which the individuals are grouped.

The Buddha stated that the first conception to occur is “living beings, living beings” (*satta, satta*), The repetition of the term ‘living beings’ as with other

³ M.K Gandhi, from *Yarvada*, Mandir, Ahmedabad, Navajivan, 1945

⁴ Rummel, R.J, *Understanding Conflict & War: Vol. 2, The conflict Helix*, 1976 p 276

concepts that are to follow, seems to have been intended as a way of avoiding reification, a method adopted profusely in some of the later treaties such as the *Vajracchedika-prajnaparamita*. Another notable feature of the description is the use of the phrase *Sankham gacchanti* meaning ‘conceiving occur’ or ‘reckoning take place.’ In another words, the first conception is something that happened instead of being deliberately put together.

According to the Buddha’s explanation of the society evolution of social institution was a gradual process. Transition from fruit gathering economy and agrarian economy gave rise to private property. Sacristy of supplies laziness and greed coupled with imitation has provided occasion for crime. Then the discourse was on to describe how prevalence of crime necessitated law and order. In the case of the Brahmanical tradition, the caste had been used to mean birth-rights (*jati*). In the case of Buddhism, it represented a moral-right (*kamma*). The Buddha’s explanation of the society here seems rather open ended. The moral conduct is very much important to this society. The Buddha did precisely this with the organization that he founded, namely: the Community of monks and nuns. Such restructuring should take place having the concern of the welfare of oneself and others, that is, mutual self-interest.

The best account of this concept of society based on mutual human interest is found in the ‘Discourse on the Admonition to ‘*Sigala*’ (*Sigalovada- sutanta*).⁵ The Buddha’s admonition may be quoted in full because it provides the best account of the rights and responsibilities of the individuals in society: “And how, household’s son, does the Aryan disciple protect the six directions? These six groups of people are to be regarded as the six directions. The east denotes mother and father. The south denotes teachers. The west denotes wife and children. The north denotes friends and companions. The nadir denotes servants, workers and helpers. The zenith denotes recluses and *Brahamans*.

Several important features stand out in the detailed description of mutual relations set out in the *Sigalovada- sutanta*. It begins with the micro unit of the society, namely, the family. Without harmonious and healthy families there cannot be a healthy society. The mutual responsibilities of the parents and children include not only looking after and nurturing one another, but also taking care of their moral welfare. The pursuit of the happiness and welfare of oneself and others, the foundation of the Buddha’s moral philosophy, is inculcated in every form of relationship, whether it is between parents and children, husband and wife, teacher and pupil, renunciation and the householder, master and servants or among friends. Benevolence and compassion are the most important sentiments inspiring each

⁵ Digha-nikaya 3.180-193

person's behavior. Finally, the Buddhist conception of society is not confined to the humans. In a profound ethical sense it includes all living beings (*sabbe satta*), animals as well as lower creatures.

Buddhist views on Social Institution and Conflicts

There are some conventional views that state: no two human beings are equal. Among the human beings there are many differences; and for that matter, societies are also different from each other this is an old-time *conventional-truth*. In Brahmanical society, female-members are given lower status. The Buddha, though, did not recognize hierarchy in terms of gender. According to him, the weak points in women's characters are shared by men too. The first discourse in the *Anguttara-nikaya* is a testimony to the Buddha's non-discriminatory perception of the character of both men and women.⁶ In Buddhism, an attempt is made to maintain the gender balance in the society since the Buddha seems to have realized the gender discrimination is a cause for conflict. Gender equality is a need to establish societal peace.

The Buddha analyzed the factors which may be considered as reasons for conflicts among human beings. He discussed three kinds of defilements (*upakkilesa*), gross, middle and subtle. The gross defilements are evil behavior (*duccarita*) in body (*kaya*), word (*vaci*) and mind (*mano*). The middle defilements are thoughts (*vitakka*) of pleasures of sense (*kama*), of injury (*vihimsa*) and of malevolence (*vyapada*). The subtle ones consist of thoughts (*vitakka*) of birth (*jati*), of country (*janapada*) and those associated with dignity (*anavannatti sampayutta*).⁷ The last three are the sentiments of birth (*jativada*), about clan (*gottavada*) and about pride (*manavada*). The Buddha identified those notions and used them in explaining breach of peace creating suffering and conflict in human life.

The Buddha *ultimately* visualized a society based on love, compassion, and forbearance. He contended that violence is unnatural to man. Violence would only induce more violence. Violence is not to be met by violence; neither is hatred to be met by hatred, because, "Never in this world has hatred ceased by hatred ceases by love".⁸ One who has given up violence and has replaced hatred by love is at peace with the world and with him. Bitterness, anger and envy would never sully his thought and all unfriendly feelings would remain foreign to his spirit of universal benevolence. He is a true follower of ahimsa and will ever remain happy. Sincerity,

⁶ Anguttara-nikaya, 1.1-2

⁷ Anguttara-nikaya, 1.254.

⁸ Dhammapada,

humility, and the creed of non-violence find their place in the Buddhist doctrine in terms of their relevance and importance to each other. Through these practical values, Buddha tries to rejuvenate the decadent social order of his time with spiritual vigor.

The Buddha condemned all discrimination, recognized the *ultimate* equality of people, spoke on the need to improve socio-economic conditions, recognized the importance of a more equitable distribution of wealth among the rich and the poor, raised the status of women, recommended the incorporation of humanism in government and administration, and taught that a society should not be run by greed but with consideration and compassion for the people.

Gandhi and Society

Peace and non-violence was the fundamental and frequently discourse the axiomatic notion of Gandhian philosophy. In the social order, non-violence implies getting rid of group conflict and coercion and fostering harmony instead. An imperative of Gandhian non-violence is that it is a social instrument in the flight for justice and freedom. To Gandhi there cannot be better practice of morality than fighting evil and justice. His commitment to non-violence meant the eradication of injustice and crude inequalities from society. Gandhi's method of checking injustice at the level of society is non-violent resistance or *Satyagraha*. Without entering into a discussion of the meaning of the terms, we can note that the aim of *Satyagraha* is not merely to protest, to dissent, but to change social practices and laws by changing human heart. It has his recognition of the need for non-traditional alliances, i.e. beyond the boundaries of caste and creed.

Gandhi's views on Conflict Analysis

In Gandhi's times the situation of India and the life style of the humans were totally different with that of the Buddha. So Gandhi had to see things in a modern and global perspective. Within the industrial society he saw a different scenario of conflict; the conflict of the labor and the capital in industry; the conflict of tenant and landlord in agriculture; conflict of village and city. Gandhi pointed out the differences between the city and the countryside. The city centers cooperate with the metropolis in exploiting the rest of their own country. He was conscious of the enormous gap that existed between the villages and the cities in education, culture, medicine, recreation and employment opportunities. The gulf was always increasing and he wanted to stop this process and allow the villages to grow and prosper. Even though Gandhi was very critical of the cities, he never wanted to eliminate them. He wanted to reform them and place them in a natural setting.

Part III: Peace as a Spiritual Concept

The highest level of peace is to be found at spiritual level. It is beyond body and mind. It transcends all physical and material dimensions. Inner peace or peace of mind is a colloquialism that refers to state of being mentally or spiritually at peace, with enough knowledge and understanding to keep oneself strong in the face of discord or stress. Being “at peace” is considered by many to be healthy and the opposite of being stressed or anxious. Peace of mind is generally associated with bliss and happiness.⁹ Peace of mind, serenity, and calmness are descriptions of a disposition free from the effects of stress.

Buddhists Views on Inner Peace

The Buddha pointed out that world peace should be achieved through individual peace. The ideal and reality of peace should begin from the mind of the individuals. The highest spiritual achievement in Buddhism is nirvana which is described by Buddha as freedom and peace. This is achieved by realizing fourfold truths. At the time of achievement of that highest inner peace the Buddha state: “There arose in me vision, knowledge, wisdom, and comprehension, light regarding things unheard before.”¹⁰ This perhaps was one of the earliest claims of attainment of peace by enlightenment. Enlightenment in the Buddha’s systems meant understanding the real nature of life. He described his discovery as peaceful (*santi*). Following upon that peaceful perspective, he attained internal peace referred to as “the appeasement of all dispositions” (*sabbasankharasamatha*).¹¹ This is internal peace (*ajjhattasanti*).¹² The nature of this internal peace and how it is achieved constitute the subject-matter of an entire discourse included into the *Sutta-nipata*: the ‘Discourse Before the Disintegration’ (*Purabheda-sutta*).¹³

The elimination of craving (*tanha*), delight (*rati*) or passion (*raga*) and dislike (*arati*), hatred (*dosa*) or aversion (*patigha*) and ignorance (*avijja*) or confusion (*moha*) are generally considered to be the equivalent of the attainment of enlightenment and freedom. He was familiar with almost every theory propounded by the previous thinkers in the Indian tradition in the matter of explaining such phenomena. Therefore, the above discourse, after enumerating all the conditions that need to be eliminated in order to be peaceful, conditions beginning with craving

⁹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/inner-peace>

¹⁰ Samyutta-nikaya, 5.422.

¹¹ Majjhima-nikaya, 1.167.

¹² Sutta-nipata, 837-839

¹³ K.R Norman’s, The Group of Discourse (Sutta-nipata) , 1999, pp.98-99

(*tanha*), finally refers to the *coup d'état* that needs to be administered in order to attain internal peace. This is the overcoming of the obsession with theories that are supposed to mirror the nature of phenomena but which are more often the figments carved out on the basis of one's own interests.

An enlightened one is not above the *dhamma*: he is one who respects the *dhamma*. As such, he continues to tread the noble path (*ariya pathe kamamanam*). Once he is described as: a human being, perfectly enlightened, one who has tamed himself, is concentrated, traversing the higher path (*iriyamanam brahmapathe*) and delighted in the appeasement of thought. In this manner that is the way to develop man's inner quality by psychological and moral transformation to build good personality.

Gandhi's on Peace as Spiritual Concept

Gandhi, in spite of being a freedom fighter for his motherland at mainly the political level, most very often overwhelmed with the beauty of inner peace. The following quotation epitomizes Gandhi's almost aesthetic stand: "I am a man of peace, I believe in peace. But I do not want peace at any price. I do not want the peace you find in stone, I do not want the peace which you find embedded in the human breast which is exposed to the arrows of a whole world, but which is protected from all harm by the power of the almighty God."¹⁴ To Gandhi, the fountain of peace was human-mind. It definitely has to come from the mind. Man is guided by God, who again, in Gandhian thought, was nothing but Truth. Practice of peace therefore, should begin first from within. Gandhi-held spiritualism is: action-purity of mind, with very high esteem. Every action should be necessary preceded by introspective analysis. Gandhi's entire life was an experiment in the search of spiritual excellence. To him spiritualism is the essence of Truth, Goodness and Beauty. It has no limitation in time but what really matters is whether something is real good, beautiful and conducive for spiritual solace. Gandhi believed prayer has a positive role in life of man. According to him prayer is the soul and the essence of religion.¹⁵ Pointing out why man needed prayer, he says: "When man is down, his prayers to God lifts him up... Human effort must be there always. Those who are left behind must have help. Such reconstruction as is possible will no doubt be undertaken. All this and much more along the same line can never be a substitute for prayer."¹⁶ Gandhi believed that prayer is an instrument to enhance mental capacity. It helps to develop the mind and the personality. In modern developmental

¹⁴ Young India; 19-122

¹⁵ Young India, 23-01-1930, p. 25

¹⁶ Harija, 08-06-1935, p 132

psychology the importance of prayers is recognized for the development of personality. It also helps to reduced mental stress.

Conclusion

In our perusal we have found the Buddha's conception of peace had its origin more in epistemology while that of Gandhi was more ethical and political. This is understandable because the Buddha had a different mission from that of Gandhi as a religious philosopher. The Buddha was leading a group of renunciants towards enlightenment while Gandhi had to mobilize a nation towards political freedom which he called *Purna Swaraja*. They were aiming at two different liberations. However, this does not mean that they did not share fields. The Buddha offered very positive philosophical contributions to political philosophy while Gandhi gave expression to positive religious thoughts, whenever he found it relevant. The Buddha's philosophy of peace, we have found, is not simply the glorification of moral importance of peace. It has its base in epistemology. Any cause of action in relation to individual or social goal at practical level had to be justified in terms of enlightened, intellectual stand. In the case of Gandhi he was not so keen in delving into complicated epistemological issues. He had his roots in Upanishad and Bhagavat Gita. But he was not reluctant to use his rational apparatus. Following the all enveloping nature of rich Hindu thought, he used: God, Truth, Love, etc., as interchangeable concepts. Sometimes he appeared more sentimentally attached to religion rather than to philosophy.

Gandhi had a very difficult task of matching the spiritual concept of peace with its political and social applications. For instance, when the problem of violence was discussed he had to accept certain conditions demanded by the practical situations. For instance when a soldier had to carry out orders from the top hierarchical positions, whether the soldier could disobey for the reason that he does not want to kill, was presented as a problem to Gandhi; he was not ready to compromise military discipline for the sake of ahimsa. The soldier, according to Gandhi, had to carry out the orders even if it did involve killing. Even in the case of exterminating stray dogs, he had to concede the action as benefiting mankind. In the first example we can compare Gandhi's stand to that of the Buddha, as the Buddha also recognized the service in the army as an approved occasion - ordaining a decamping soldier was prohibited for the Buddhist Order. Gandhi being a politician was in a more delicate and real situations. He could not remain an ideal pacifist all the time. His ahimsa was a political weapon. He insisted that one should show ones strength not weakness at Satyagraha. This is not a stand that the Buddha would disapprove. He has also instructed that one should not keep his mouth shut when encountering injustice.



At all three dimensions we noted that *conventionally*, the Buddha and Gandhi shared similar ideological and practical grounds. In this case we must admit that Gandhi's case was more difficult than that of the Buddha. A good example is how Gandhi dealt with the problem of untouchability. The Buddha as a spiritual leader and the founder of new religious movement had comparatively more freedom than Gandhi in presenting argument against the deprivations that the *Sudras* suffered. But in the case of Gandhi he had to be very careful in his dealings. He had to mobilize the entire nation against imperialists' oppression. So he could not hurt the feelings of upper class people. Therefore, in his straggle of uplifting the position of Harijans he had to re-interpret and draw inspiration from Hindu scriptures itself. For his advantage, however, at that time, a reasonable majority of Indian nation had been exposed to sophisticated Western democratic values. In his struggle to better the position of women also, perhaps he had this advantage; however, he managed to address his people in a convincing sentimental language, which of course, had roots in his genuine saintliness and controlled soul. There is no question about Gandhi being influenced by the Buddha; Gandhi had genuine respect for the Buddha and had spoken for certain Buddhist rights as well. He seems to have gained much inspiration from the Buddha's teachings but did not speak very much in terms of Buddhists religion because it was not of much importance, strategically, in his chosen-struggle of mobilizing the Indian nation against British imperialism.

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The Fundamentals of Buddhist Happiness

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Happiness or Eudemonia, is the last intention of all thoughts and actions in human beings. Buddhism probes into the status and meaning of people in the world, and actualize the worthiness of life. The Buddha, Sakyamuni, understood and observed the suffering of the world and life, thought out the root of suffering, and lastly - fulfilled the happiness of life after practicing life. I should discuss the relation between sensuality and morality, morality and intellectuality, individual happiness and all being's happiness, real happiness and happiness itself. By this meaning, we can say that Buddhism is the knowledge of life's happiness and how to realize it, is a eudemonic education.

Happiness in Pāli or Sanskrit is sukha. Sukha means 'happiness', 'comfort' or 'ease'. Happiness has two different expressions in the Buddhist canon, one is the happiness resulting from good karma, and another is *Nirvāṇa*: foremost happiness without the attachment and desire. Buddhist happiness contains all sort of happiness from the world to the beyond-world. Buddhism is a way of life. In Buddhist teachings, economic welfare, society and politics are requisites for human happiness; but attaining these is from a moral way. Buddhism always lays great stress on the development of morality and spiritual character, for: a happy, peaceful and contented society. Morality is the core of Buddhist Happiness.

Sensuality and Morality

Although Buddhism does not deny the happiness of the worldly life, Buddhist morality advocates a moderate life within reasonable limits, not extreme enjoyment. For the lay Buddhist, Master Yinshun denoted that they need three actions: the normal economic life, reasonable social life, moral political life.

The normal economic life keeps the necessary creature comfortable. In *Samyuktāgama*, Buddha told Brahman that lay people would live a presently serene and happy life through four ways, namely: having lots of skill to earn the money, guarding the money not to lose it, having good teacher and friend, and being good at expending to keep its balance between the income and payout.¹

¹ Samyuktāgama (杂阿含经) (4 fasc.), Taishō.2, p. 23a-b.

Buddhism always emphasized that money has only instrumental value, should be acquired through righteous means, and expended also in a righteous manner.

The second action is a reasonable social life. When ordinary people live in the society, they shall have mutual relations and do their duty according to these relations. It is easy that people feel happy in reasonable societies. In *Śīgalovāga sūtra*, Buddha told Śīgala that six family and social groups, like parents and children, husband and wife, teacher and pupil, friends, relatives and neighbors, employer and employee, religious and laity, must perform one's duties each other because these relations are sacred, worthy of respect and worship.² These six relations contain family, society, culture and religion. Buddhist enhances the social harmony to help more people to get happiness by the aid of that the worldly life is also sacred and respected. In Chinese Confucian ethic, these relations also are regarded, but by lack of the relation between the religious and laity. It is most difference between the Chinese ethic and Indian ethic that the latter think much of the religious live than the former.

In the family and society, people often pursue pleasure of sex, fame and longevity. Buddhism recognizes the sex attraction between human-beings. In Buddhist discipline, layman should abstain from adultery; *Sangha* should give up the will and action of all sexual endeavors. Sex as an expression of conjugal love is a satisfying emotional experience, but it is not the only concern of the family life. In *Śīgalovāga sūtra*, Buddha teaches the household life for a husband and wife:

A husband should treat his wife with respect, courtesy and fidelity. He should leave the housekeeping to her and... provide for her needs, such as accessories. At the same time, a wife should take pains with the housekeeping, manage the servants wisely, maintains her virtue as a good wife should. She should not waste her husband's income, and should manage the house properly and faithfully. If these rules are followed, a happy family will be maintained and there will arise no quarrelling.³

In Buddhism, monogamy is the ideal form of marriage, while chastity and fidelity form ideal behaviors.⁴ Besides, virtues, like: mutual confidence, morality, self-denial, and prudence are emphasized which ensure conjugal happiness and success. Mutual confidence means dependability, morality implies strength of

² *Śīgalovāga sūtra* (善生经), see *Madhyamāgama* (中阿含经) (33 fasc.) and *Dīrghāgama* (长阿含经) (11 fasc.).

³ Ibid. English translation see *The Teaching of Buddha*, Tokyo: Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai, 1985, p.424-426.

⁴ V. Nithyanandam, *Buddhist Philosophy of Social Action*, Delhi: Global Vision Publishing House, 2004, p.76.

character, self-denial or the joy of selfless service to the beloved denotes, emotional maturity, and prudence shows intellectual maturity. The man or woman continues to change themselves, self-deny and self-sacrifice for love. Emotional and intellectual maturity is also a Buddhist practice; the family is sacred and respected, also is the ‘monastery’ for the lay Buddhist. Sensuality is absolutely necessarily, but not regarded as the goal of family life. Morality is the ultimate goal of it.

Buddhism accepts the fame and longevity as a result of good *karma*, or good deed, and emphasis the danger in pursuit of them. Life is impermanent; we do not know how long we can live. If we attach them, we will distort our intellectual capacities.

Moral political life is the political ideal of ancient Indian. The wise king named Cakre-varti-rājan, pushed moral politics and created happiness amongst human beings. Buddhist political goal is non-violence and peace.

In the worldly life of Buddhist Eudemonism, Buddhism regards economy, family, society, and politics as features to improve happiness in life. Sensuality is absolutely necessarily, but not regarded as the goal of family and social life. Morality is the ultimate goal.

Morality and Intellectuality

In different philosophies and religions, Eudemonism often discusses the relationship between morality and happiness. Buddhism emphasizes that oneself is the master his own destiny and should never be controlled by external forces or God. Happiness is the individual effort and results of morality, rather than a gift of divinity, some superman, or some mysterious results. The moral life constitutes permanent and eternal happiness bearing the stamp of spirituality and sacredness. In Asaṅga’s *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra*⁵, the Six Pāramitā functions were explained:

The function of removing poverty is *dāna* (charity); leading to lustration is *śīla* (virtues) that if one bears the virtues this should put out the thirst of troublesome objects; destroying anger is *kṣānti* (tolerance) that can fully destroy it; constituting good is *vīrya* (fortitude) having the force to do it; *dhyāna* (meditation) concentrates the mind; *prajñā* (wisdom, or intellectual) understands the true dharma and ultimate truth.⁶

⁵ Yajñeshwar S. Shastri, *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra of Asaṅga: A Study in Vinīṅnavāda Buddhism*, Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1989, p.113-115.

⁶ *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* (大乘庄严经论) (7 fasc.), Taishō.31, p.628b.

One who destroys: poverty, thirstiness and angry - can endeavor in moral practice, concentrate the mind and understand the truth – this person, certainly is happiest.

Practice of Buddhahood is not only moral but also spiritual or Intellectual. Especially in Mahayana Buddhist, the six pāramitā, other five pāramitā ultimately transform into prajñā, and prajñā is the guiding principle throughout the disciplinary process. Through this discipline, one can realize things as they really are. According to the relation of six pāramitā, Murti said that prajñāpāramitā is the unity of the intellectual, moral and religious consciousness.⁷ Prajñā can dissolve the conceptual-construction that is the root-cause of bondage and pain. This is *Nirvāṇa* or Freedom, the ultimate happiness. Buddhist religion can only be a species of Absolutist Pantheism.⁸ Without the realization of the ultimate, no virtue can be practiced fully. Prajñā as intellectuality is the leading way of happiness in Buddhist Eudemonism.

Individual happiness and all being's happiness

Intellectuality and compassion are two principal features of a Bodhisattva. Intellectual intuition is the insight of śūnyatā (emptiness), and identical with the Absolute. The stereological philosophy of śūnyatā focuses attention directly on the problem of context and relation, dramatically manifest in our need to think and act in harmony with each other and with the rest of the sentient and insentient world in which we live.⁹ Compassion is the highest expression of no clinging, as: the intellectuality of emptiness. Śūnyatā, emptiness is the abstract universal reality of which no determinations can be predicated; it is beyond the duality of good and evil, love and hatred, virtue and vice. Compassion is the active principle and concrete expression to emptiness in phenomena, and is: goodness, love and pure actions. Bodhisattva prepare for any sacrifice, for any one, and at all times to release all beings and get them real happiness. According to the concept of compassion found in Mahayana Buddhism, discussions can relate between the Individual happiness and all being's happiness.

The above mentioned lay Buddhist – they want to get happiness through entering into the commitment of family and society. For general people, the goals of all their efforts of commitment or obligations are individual happiness. This is limited, and is too small of a 'happiness'.

⁷ T. R.V. Murti, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism: A Study of Mādhyamika System*, p. 301.

⁸ *Ibid.* p.266.

⁹ C. W. Huntington, Jr. & Geshé Namgyal Wangchen, *The Emptiness of Emptiness: An Introduction to Early Indian Mādhyamika*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1992, p. 124.

From the thought of compassion, individual happiness is based on all being's happiness. Everybody likes to be happy; our goal in life is similar. If the pursuits of happiness leave all being's to happiness, it should be not-rooted and destroyed easily by the other force. *Buddhāvataṅsaka malāvaipulya sūtra* says:

Without all beings, the Bodhisattva at last cannot attain the supreme enlightenment. All beings as the root of tree, all Buddha and Bodhisattvas as the flower and fruit, Bodhisattva give all beings the benefit of water of compassion, should blossom and come to fruition of all Buddha.¹⁰

The arising and cultivation of compassion, is a matter of mind as well as a matter of practice. The ultimate accomplishment of compassion is the natural manifestation of the understanding of 'one in all' and 'all in one', dissolving duality. Therefore true compassion is found in *sūnyatā*; with the realization of *sūnyatā*, compassion is a pure compassion beyond the emotional feeling of conventional truth.

The existence of human beings is found in various relationships. It implies that between one person and other person, between individuals and society, they are closely connected: our happiness, our living depends on the society, and depends on others. Naturally, we are grateful to the society and grateful to others. Thus, we develop the attitude of selfless, mutual help and willingness to repay gratitude. Individual happiness and all being's happiness is one.

Real happiness and happiness itself

What is happiness? Happiness is happiness itself, is not of others. According to the theory of *sūnyatā*, happiness and suffering is dependent and all is attachment. *Nirvāṇa* as the uppermost Buddhist eudemonia is beyond all terms of duality and relativity, containing the happiness and suffering. When we say 'happiness in itself', we also cannot speculate as to what it is and how it is. The Buddha was not prepared to identify happiness with one particular feeling or sensation. For him, happiness is contextual. Wherever it is obtained, through whatever source, he was prepared to recognize happiness. In other words, he was not willing to speak of happiness in an abstract way. This was his anti-essentialist approach.¹¹ In the *Madhyamaka śāstra*, Nāgārjuna says:

¹⁰ *Buddhāvataṅsaka malāvaipulya sūtra* (大方广佛华严经) (40 fasc.), Taishō.10, p.846a.

¹¹ David J. Kalupahana, *A History of Buddhist Philosophy: Continuities and Discontinuities*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1992, p.100.



Nirvāṇa, first of all, is not a kind of existing entities; it would then have decay and death. There altogether is no existing entity which is not subject to decay and death. If *Nirvāṇa* is existing entities, it is produced by causes. Nowhere and no entity exists which would not be produced by causes.¹²

If the phenomenal world is not real, neither can it have a real end. To suppose that the phenomenal world really existed before *Nirvāṇa*, in order to be changed so as not to exist after *Nirvāṇa*, is an illusion which must be given up and the sooner it is given up the better.¹³ In full accordance with the idea of a monistic universe, it is now asserted, [*in this paper by the author*], that there is not a shade of difference between the Absolute and the phenomenal, between *Nirvāṇa* and Saṃsāra.

Real happiness as *Nirvāṇa*, is: no existing entity, and is not produced by causes. If the happiness can be produced, it should be the phenomenal and be impermanent; it certainly is not real happiness. Happiness, as the ultimate goal of Buddhist, is not the effect of morality, wisdom and compassion. Happiness is happiness itself.

¹² Madhyamaka Śāstra (中论) (4 fasc.), Taishō.30, p.35a.

¹³ Theodore Stcherbatsky, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1977, p. 56.

Religions and Peace: Buddhist Solutions to the Chaotic World

Dr. Suchitra Onkom

Buddhist Solutions to the Chaotic World

The more scientifically and technologically advanced the world has become, the more problems we seem to be facing. Due to better transport and communication, the world is becoming a global village. As such, what happens in one corner of the world may affect another corner of the globe too. The beginning of the new century has not brought us much hope for a peaceful and harmonious human existence. In fact the threat of a nuclear war is not over. There are now more countries than before that possess nuclear weapons. Religious and political terrorism seems to be the norm of the day. Hatred and distrust rule many of our human hearts or minds. There is a rapid depletion of the world's natural resources too. The rising oil prices have adversely affected global economy. The venerable, P.A. Payutto, a renowned scholarly monk in Thailand, says that:

“The enormous amount of natural resources on this planet amassed over hundreds of millions of years have mostly been consumed by humanity in a period of only one or two hundred years...” (P.A. Payutto, 1998, p. 64).

People are blinded by their greed and concern over personal or self-interest. To make matters worse, we are all still very much divided over our ideological, political and religious view points. The result is more and greater chaos.

Indeed it is within us that our enemies lay hidden. These enemies take the abstract form of selfishness, greed, lust, delusion and many other kinds of human weakness. Selfishness is something that comes from the instinctive sense of ‘self’. If unchecked, it can be a very serious problem not only for other people and society as a whole, but also for we us. It exists in every society. People do improper things out of selfishness. Big and powerful nations may exploit or take advantage of smaller nations on account of selfish motives. A clever but cunning politician may exploit whatever loopholes of the laws to reap benefits for his own while at the same time knows the way to avoid the laws. A selfish teacher will not be truly concerned over the performance and well-being of his students and a selfish policeman will find plenty of ways to engage in corrupted practices. A selfish monk will never be a good monk. He cannot even save his own ‘soul’, how could he possibly save the others?

Buddhism advocates the destruction of this selfish or egoistic ‘self’. Many of our problems take roots in this matter of ‘self’. Lots of people are selfish and self-centered. People put self-interests above every other thing. In this age of materialism, consumerism and information, life becomes competitive, oppressive and sometimes even unbearable. The more competitive it gets, the more selfish people become. The sense of clinging to this ‘self’ or the feeling of being ‘I’ or ‘mine’ is still very strong among the vast majority of people in this world. The result is ever increasing selfishness and self-centeredness, all of which lead to conflicts. Thus one may hear someone proclaiming: *“I am a Hindu, I can’t allow Muslims to build a mosque here;”* or *“I am a Muslim, I will have nothing to do with those Hindus.”* So, people are still very much divided by this sense of being ‘I’ or ‘mine’.

To tackle a problem, we have to start from the root cause. Right education forms the basis of a just, harmonious and peaceful society. Thus we have to begin from education. Something is missing or lacking in our present system of education. Children are forced to learn a lot of external things and commit into their memories a lot of facts and figures, but they know little about obligation, gratitude, modesty, filial, parental, graciousness, fraternity and decency. Young people are getting more and more self-centered and even selfish. We, therefore, need to have an education that helps to diminish selfishness and promote a spirit of unselfishness and mutual concern. We need an education system that provides the Right View and Right Thought as well as the right kind of spiritual guidance so that children will not grow up to be intolerant religious fanatics and selfish citizens.

We should not blame science and technology for the ills of today, because after all, we are the ones who create and develop it. If we use it wisely, it is sure to benefit us; on the contrary, if we apply it for the wrong purpose, then it will bring us harm. Human beings are very intelligent animals, and yet intelligent as we are, we often do stupid things and commit offences or crimes of the most appalling nature. Clearly, just to be intelligent does not necessary mean that one is at the same time wise. Therefore we need an education that can make us wise. This is where a good religion can make its contribution. Before we set about establishing a sound and right education system, we have to develop some right views in the first place. We must include ethical and moral consideration when forming educational policies; but do bear in mind that even moral teaching itself has to be of the right kind. It should be one that helps to eradicate selfishness, greed, hatred and delusion. It should be one that sets us free from being slaves to unhealthy religious dogmas that promote intolerance and hostility. It should not be biased and treat people of other faiths and racial origins as inferiors or enemies that deserve to be killed. In short all moral teaching should be based on right views. The opposite of right views is of course wrong view or false views. We cannot really afford to have wrong views to run our lives, can we?

Without right views as the basis of our thoughts, things we do will go wrong. Truth is based on right view. The concept of human rights is not necessarily a natural truth. It is a right demanded on behalf of a human being by the Human Rights Group. That human rights come into the world political scene is due to our attempt to help those who have been unfairly oppressed or treated by their government. Thus it is a human creation based on a humanitarian ground and also a form of '*international justice*'. It works only when it is recognized as some kind of '*just*'. Therefore it is not necessarily a natural truth and its legality may change in the course of time.

Buddhist principles or the Buddha's teaching take root in the ever-changing nature of all things and phenomena in Nature. The Buddha thus preached Natural Truths of Life. Birth is a natural truth of life, death is also a natural truth, so is old age, sickness, love, hatred and the list goes on. So we have to learn to accept the truths of life and act or react in the most appropriate and suitable manner under any circumstances at all.

The September 11 event in the U.S., the continued violence in the Middle East and all the bombings which had taken place in many other countries such as Indonesia and even England as well as the outburst of the anger of France's African community should have sobered us enough to make us realize that the world simply cannot afford to go on in this way. Political and religious leaders alike must re-consider their responsibilities seriously. Nothing in the world justifies indiscriminate violence, especially when violence is committed in the name of religion because a healthy religion never encourages believers to make wars or to kill, no matter whatever reason there may be.

The purpose of religions is to make human beings the noblest of all living creatures that dwell upon the earth. We must peer or look deeper into our religious teachings for the most profound wisdom that helps to promote tolerance, true compassion and peace instead of intolerance, hatred and wars. All religions contain some truths in common that form the basic foundation for a decent and harmonious co-existence. We should thus deepen and widen these truths in our present circumstances for the purpose of encouraging and supporting tolerance and peaceful co-existence instead of rejecting one another and waging wars. A war can hardly be justified as holy when blood has been shed and lives, even those of the innocent civilians, have been destroyed. Religious extremists love to use the term '*holy war*' to give justification legitimacy to their cause, and religious adherents can be eventually persuaded to answer the call for a '*holy*' war especially insecure political and social or economic conditions have become unbearable. However, violence begets violence. Holy wars are not the right solutions for the world's problems. We have to resort to most basic religious values to solve our human

problems: tolerance, mutual understanding, love and compassion. Make peace, however difficult it may be.

For a future of peace and harmony, we have to provide the younger generations with the kind of teaching that stimulates the love for tolerance, respect for others, unselfishness and non-violence. There must be a true form of democracy in which human rights, real political justice and religious freedom of a healthy nature should be the predominant elements or factors. The world's rich countries should do the best to promote an effective and sustainable economic policy and development for the poorer nations. The United Nation Organization should be a truly strong, just and effective body that can help tackling the world's problems independent of any super-power nation's or nations' manipulation. There must be a genuine effort to halt the manufacturing of nuclear and other highly dangerous weapons of mass destruction. After all, where would more wars lead us to? Have we not learned enough from all those wars of the past?

We live in a religiously diverse world and religions remain a very big and forceful issue in our daily life. Problems have multiplied and become even more complex than before. What many people regard as political and religious terrorists have become martyrs in the eyes of some. This is a chaotic world that has turned very chaotic shortly after the beginning of a new millennium. The world has gone astray. We seem to have lost our way; but more than two thousand years ago in the land of India, the great peace-loving ancient sage, the Buddha had shown us the most peaceful and harmonious way for the journey ahead. His is a way that seeks harmony with Nature and avoids all forms of extremism. Should we have followed his words, we would have eventually reached our most noble destination – true world peace.

The late Venerable Buddhadasa Bhikkhu of Thailand said, *“All religions are different routes which lead to the same destination: spiritual peace”* (Buddhadasa Bhikkhu, 2000, p.3). All religions encourage all of us to cultivate and nurture the noblest and best of human qualities in us. They are basically the same for they are meant the betterment of the spiritual well-being of the humankind. So why fight over a name? Remember: Roses be to have any other names would smell as sweet!

Conclusion:

Our mind normally clings to something which we like or dislike. We cling to those things as though they are permanent. These attachments to likes and dislikes (or indifference) mould our thinking and determine our action. Thus our mind is not free. It is always a slave of our likes or dislikes. For example, both the feeling of love and hatred can enslave our mind, rendering us blind to everything and leading us

into doing something silly or even dangerous. Not only hatred can be dangerous, love can be dangerous too, especially when it is being abusively applied. Excessive love for one religion may lead to violent hatred for other religions, and that is highly dangerous.

The Buddha had shown us the way to liberate ourselves from being slaves to our own craving, desires or material defilements of all sorts. Through breathing meditation or mindfulness of in- and out-breathing known as Anapanasati, the Buddha has attained his Enlightenment (Syamaratthassa Tepitakam Vol.19, 1995, p.401). By practicing meditation, we will be able to develop our mental factors. That will help us to discern the causes and conditions which lead to all our activities. Meditation gives us rise to mindfulness needed by us to observe how ethical and unethical behaviors are being motivated by our own mental qualities. Through meditation, we will be able to gain an insight of the true nature of our likes and dislikes or desires as a whole. We can therefore be a fair judge to our own inclination and guide it towards the ethical side. We can also better resist the temptation to do wrong and choose instead a morally sound course that aims at true well-being. In this way, we will be able to make the most appropriate decision in all matters. What is most important of all is that through meditation, we will eventually attain true insight and wisdom which will truly liberate us from the enslavement of all desires and the subsequent suffering, and give us a real peace which flow out from a truly tranquil mind.

Religions should be the cure of a troubled mind. Therefore, there should be no elements of violence in them. We are living in a world that is increasingly violent and the violent events of today are uglier and more tragic than what they used to be in the past. The world cannot be restrained if we do not learn to restrain ourselves individually.

Buddhist meditation provides a most convenient way of learning how to restrain ourselves, especially this so-called Anapanasati meditation which is a meditation based on the regulating of our own breathing. Since breathing is a natural occurrence whether one is awake or asleep, it is thus the most convenient way of meditating. One does not have to pay for one's own breathing, proper instruction guidance is all that is needed.

The world is now sliding more and more to the extremes in an almost every respect of our lives; be it in the economic, social, political or religious field. Many of us seem not to have realized that we are drifting away from the wisdom of moderation which is the very core of Buddhism. Nature itself has proved to us rather clearly that all living beings thrive well in moderate climatic conditions. Not many trees and animals flourish in the extreme weather of deserts or the north and south poles of this planet. Thus human activities too, must be harnessed by this concept of



moderation so that there will be a balance or equilibrium in our thinking and our deeds.

Knowing the perils of the extremes, the Buddha wisely suggests the Middle Path for all humankind to tread. Nowadays there have been a lot of distortions made upon religions by unscrupulously selfish or deviated people just to meet or satisfy their motives and interest. The most regrettable fact is that many people succumb to distorted views and therefore we see the rise of fundamentalism, fanaticism and worst of all - terrorism. Plenty of religious adherents have been misled to tread the wrong path which will lead the world into the bottomless pit of darkness and suffering. So it is time for each of us and everyone to do some serious thinking that reflects on this modern age of ours and see if we could save our chaotic world from more turbulence, turmoil and self-destruction. May Dharma, or May God help us all.

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GLOBAL RECOVERY THROUGH MENTAL WELL-BEING

Reflections on Mental Illness and the Buddhist Approach to Mental Health

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Introduction

Buddhism regards health as “the highest gain (*ārogya paramī lābhā*).”¹ In the constitution of the World Health Organization (WHO), health was defined as being “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of illness or infirmity.”² Needless to say, this holds true for all aspects of health, both physical and mental. Health is related to many aspects of our life. To be a healthy human being: it is necessary to develop both our physical and mental health. However, mostly we care for only our physical health and neglect to care for our mental health.

But Buddhism emphasizes caring more for mental health rather than physical health. For example, once when Nakulapita visited the Buddha in old age and the Buddha advised him to take care, to remain mentally healthy, even though the body is feeble.³ Disease or illness is considered a basic characteristic of life. According to the definition of *dukkha* (suffering), illness is a cause of suffering in life (*vyādhi pi dukkha*).⁴ In Buddhism, the root cause of mental illness, generally considered, originates from the negative qualities of the mind. Therefore, Buddhism emphasizes care of the mind, as the solution. The whole teaching of the Buddha is directed towards the mental care of the individual. To cure one’s mind, Buddha prescribed his discovery of Four Noble Truths or Noble Eightfold Path which has great therapeutic value. In this regard, the teaching of Buddhist psychology could impact psychopathology, on the one hand, and influence therapy, on the other. Thus, it is essential for clinicians to understand the concept and practice of Buddhist psychology.

In this essay, an attempt shall be made to discuss the causes of mental illness together with the Buddhist approach to mental health. The theme of mindfulness meditation is understood by many as a spiritual healing power of the *dhamma*.

¹ Dhṛp. v. 204

² WHO (2006, 1)

³ S III, 1

⁴ S V, 420

Therefore, an attempt has been made in this essay to investigate its healing power. The source material for this essay mainly deals with the Buddhist Canonical texts, its Commentaries and Sub-commentaries. However, various academic writings and instructional manuals on Buddhist meditation and mental health have been consulted. It is the authors' hope that this work will serve as a pathway which lead individuals to their mental wellbeing and meaningful living.

Mental Illness

A mental disorder or mental illness is a psychological or behavioral pattern that occurs in an individual and is thought to cause distress or disability that is not expected as part of normal development or culture.⁵ Buddhism recognized two kinds of illnesses: illness of the body and illness of the mind (*dve vedanā kāyika ca cetasika ca*).⁶ In this regard Buddha said:

Monks, there are to be seen, beings who can admit freedom from bodily illness for one year, for two years, for three years, four, five, for ten, twenty, thirty, forty and fifty years; who can admit freedom from bodily illness for even a hundred years. But monks, those beings are hard to find in the world who can admit freedom from mental illness even for one moment, save only those in whom the *āsavas* [are] destroyed.⁷

From the above saying of the Buddha, we can say only an *arahant*⁸ has a perfectly healthy mind as he has destroyed all defilements. Beside an *arahant*, as worldlings⁹ we are all mentally sick, but there is of course some dissimilarity between abnormal behavior and mental illness. The word abnormal literally means 'away from the normal'; and, mental illness refers to the mentally-sick or simply-mad. The Pāli term for this is '*ummatta*'. PED defines *ummatta* (*ud+matta*) as "out of one's mind or mad".¹⁰ That means those who are out of mind or mad, behave madly. A Pāli commentator described the nature of mental patients like thus:

⁵ Mental disorder, n.d.

⁶ A IV, 157.

⁷ A V, 157.

⁸ Adopted by the Buddhists as for one who has attained the Summum Bonum of religious aspiration (Nibbāna). See PED s.v. *Arahant*

⁹ 'Worldling', ordinary man, is any layman or monk who is still possessed of all the ten fetters or defilements binding to the round of rebirths, and therefore has not yet reached any of the four or eight stages of holiness. A worldling, may be either a 'blind worldling' who has neither knowledge of, nor interest in the fundamental teaching (the Noble Truths, etc.); or he is a 'Noble worldling', who has such knowledge and earnestly strives to understand and practise the Teaching.

¹⁰ PED s.v. *Ummatta*.

Those who are seized with mental pain, however, tear their hair and thump their breasts and twist and writhe, they throw themselves over cliffs, use the knife, swallow poison, hang themselves with ropes, enter into fires; remorseful and with burning mind, they think on this or that misfortune.¹¹

In the Vinaya piṭaka we find two kinds of mentally-ill persons, namely, one who does not remember aright, and the other who does not come aright.¹² This was with regard to the individuals who forgot or failed to come at proper time and place for the observance and formal acts of the Order (*saṅghakamma*).

Early Buddhism also recognized various types of abnormal behavior. An analysis of Buddhist doctrines gives a clear picture of different types of abnormal behavior among individuals. For instance, Devadatta, Ajātasattu, Aṅgulimāla are the example of [*perceived*] psychopaths; Patācāra and Kisāgotamī are the example of psychotics and so on. In the Jātaka stories too, we find various types of abnormal behavior, as Harischandra describes:

The Bodhisatta, prince of Banaras, is told that in this world there are eight categories of “*ummada*” meaning psychiatric disorders, namely:

1. *kama-ummadaya* (sexual dysfunction)
2. *krodha-ummadaya* (mania)
3. *darshana-ummadaya* (hallucination)
4. *moha-ummadaya* (mental retardation)
5. *yaksha-ummadaya* (possession disorder)
6. *pitta-ummadaya* (melancholia)
7. *sura-ummadaya* (alcohol dependence)
8. *vyasana-ummadaya* (depression)

Of the above, the 5th, 6th and 7th are based on aetiology, where as the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 8th are based on symptoms.¹³ These are some types of the abnormal behavior found in the Buddhist Jātaka stories.

¹¹ Vibh-a I, 126.

¹² Vin III, 163.

¹³ Harischandra (1998, 65-66).

The Causes of Mental Illness

In his first sermon known as “Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta (Turning the Wheel of *Dhamma*)”¹⁴, the Buddha preached the Four Noble Truths in a cyclical order namely, the Noble Truth of suffering (*dukkha ariyasacca*); the Noble Truth of the origin of suffering (*dukkha samudaya ariyasacca*); the Noble Truth of the cessation of suffering (*dukkha nirodha ariyasacca*) and finally, the Noble Truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering (*dukkha nirodhagāminīpaṭipadā ariyasacca*).¹⁵ In the *Visuddhimagga*, Buddhaghosa defines Buddha’s analysis of Four Noble Truths thus, “The truth of suffering is like an illness, the truth of origin is like the cause of the illness, the truth of cessation is like the cure of the illness, and the truth of the path is like the medicine.”¹⁶ Therefore, we can say the first one is pathological, the second is diagnostic, the third is ideal, and the fourth is prescriptive.

In Buddhism, mental and physical illness is considered as *dukkha*. The Pāli word *dukkha* usually is translated into the English as “suffering”. However, in Buddhism, birth, aging, illness, death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair, association with the unloved, separation from the loved, not getting what is wanted are considered as *dukkha*. In short, the five clinging-aggregates are *dukkha*.¹⁷ *Dukkha* is the first of the Four Noble Truths taught by the Buddha and it is one of the three characteristics of life along with *anicca* (impermanence) and *anatta* (no-self).¹⁸

In every person’s life there is some sort of *dukkha*. But sometimes we don’t realize *dukkha* as they are. The Buddha added, “Whatever is felt, is connected with *dukkha* (*yam kiñci vedayitam tam dukkhasmin*).”¹⁹ According to Buddhist-thought, all conditional states of life, are: *dukkha*. It is the truth of existence. *Dukkha* arises from various sources such as stress, interpersonal conflict, depression, confusion, hatred, anger, greed, or behavior problems. Some of our *dukkha* is existential, such as sickness, old age, dying, separation from the beloved one, etc. The Buddha said:

¹⁴ S V, 420.

¹⁵ S V, 420.

¹⁶ *Vism* 586.

¹⁷ S V, 420.

¹⁸ S V, 420.

¹⁹ S IV, 216. 19 *Vin*, II 193. 20

There is no doubt that the worldlings experiences *dukkha*, owing to the defilements (*kilesā*)²⁰, for the enjoyment of worldly happiness. Living beings in the water and on the land search for food, shelter, for their living - by day and by night. Such *dukkha*, more readily allows for defilements to arise.²¹

Therefore, according to Buddhist psychology, all temptations brought about by the defilements are regarded as the cause of mental illness. In most of the Buddhist scholars' and Buddhist psychotherapists' opinion also support the above statement that mental defilements, '*kilesā*', are the causes of mental illness.²² The ten kinds of defilements that cause mental illness are:

1. *Lobha* – greed or attachment,
2. *Dosa* – hatred or ill-will,
3. *Moha* – delusion or ignorance,
4. *Māna* – pride or conceit,
5. *Diṭṭhi* – false views,
6. *Vicikicchā* – skeptical doubt or indecision,
7. *Thina* – sloth,
8. *Uddhacca* – restlessness,
9. *Ahirika* – moral shamelessness,
10. *Anottappa* –moral fearlessness.²³

Among them, *lobha*, *dosa* and *moha* are three taproots. With regard to these root-causes Fulton and Siegel state:

Buddhist psychology describes three “root causes” – greed, hatred, and delusion –that give rise to suffering. The similarity of the first two root-causes to Freud’s instincts is evident: erotic drive = greed and aggressive drive = hatred. Both psychodynamic and mindfulness meditation traditions describe how these forces wreak havoc on mental life, and

²⁰ The defilements (*kilesā*) are so called because they afflict (*kilissanti*) or torment the mind, or because they defile beings by dragging them down to a mentally soiled and depraved condition.

²¹ S I, 3.

²² See Nissanka (1993,2) [Editor’s Comment: clearly, our conference-author is lacking knowledge of the neuro-sciences]

²³ Dh 1229ff. Vism XXII 49, 65.

both suggest ways to understand and address their influence. Where they depart, however, is the ultimate status of these forces.²⁴

The Buddha compared these three taproots with bamboo plant and its fruit. He said, “They appear in one’s mind and destroy his life as like bamboo, reed, and banana plant are destroyed by their fruits.”²⁵ Therefore, we can say that *lobha*, *dosa* and *moha* are the three main defilements which cause mental illness. Moreover, according to Buddhist psychology, ten kinds of fetters (*samyojanā*)²⁶, four kinds of cankers or intoxicants (*āsavā*)²⁷, four kinds of floods (*oghā*)²⁸, four kinds of bonds (*yogā*)²⁹, four kinds of knots (*ganthā*)³⁰, four kinds of clinging (*upādānā*)³¹, six kinds of hindrances (*nivāraṇa*)³², seven kinds of latent dispositions (*anusayā*)³³ can also be considered as the causes of mental illness. Furthermore, eight worldly conditions (*aṭṭhalokadhammā*)³⁴, one’s own *kamma*³⁵ and environment³⁶ also can be considered as the causes of mental illness. Again, with regard to the Dependent Origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*) we can say that ignorance (*avijjā*) is the cause of mental illness and with regard to the Four Noble Truths (*ariyasacca*) *taṇhā* (craving) is the source of mental illness.

Ignorance (*avijjā*) plays a key role in Buddhism. It is the primary cause of all *dukkha*. Buddha defines *avijjā* as absence of knowledge of *dukkha*, absence of knowledge of the cause of *dukkha*, absence of knowledge of the cessation of *dukkha*,

²⁴ Fulton and Siegel (2005, 43).

²⁵ S I, 3.

²⁶ Ten fetters, according to Sutta piṭaka are: the fetters of (1) sense objects, (2) attachment to fine-material existence, (3) attachment to immaterial existence, (4) ill-will or hatred, (5) conceit, (6) wrong views, (7) adherence to rites and ceremonies, (8) doubt, (9) restlessness, (10) ignorance.

²⁷ Four cankers or intoxicants are: the intoxicant of (1) sensual desire, (2) (attachment to) existence, (3) wrong views, (4) ignorance.

²⁸ Four floods are: the flood of (1) sensual desire, (2) (attachment to) existence, (3) wrong views, (4) ignorance.

²⁹ Four bonds are: the bond of (1) sensual desire, (2) (attachment to) existence, (3) wrong views, (4) ignorance.

³⁰ Four knots are: the knots of (1) covetousness, (2) ill-will or hatred, (3) rites and ceremonies, (4) dogmatic belief that “This alone in truth”.

³¹ Four clinging are: the clinging to (1) sense-desire, (2) wrong views, (3) rites and ceremonies, (4) the theory that the soul exists.

³² Six hindrances are: the hindrance of (1) sense-desire, (2) ill-will, (3) sloth and torpor, ill-will, restlessness and worry, (5) doubt, (6) ignorance.

³³ Seven latent dispositions are: the disposition to (1) sense-objects, (2) attachment to existence, (3) ill-will, (4) conceit, (5) wrong views, (6) doubt, (7) ignorance.

³⁴ The eight worldly conditions are: gain (*lābha*) and loss (*alābha*), fame (*yasa*) and defame (*ayasa*), praise (*pasamsā*) and blame (*nindā*), happiness (*sukha*) and pain (*dukkha*).

³⁵ A solid example is Cunda, the pork butcher. In his whole life he slaughtered many animals. Due to this bad kamma he became mad, crawled in his house for seven days, grunting and squealing like a pig and finally died.

³⁶ Alteration in a previously supporting environment.

absence of knowledge of the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*. This is called *avijjā*.³⁷ *Avijjā*, synonym of *moha* (delusion) is the primary root of all evils in the world. It clouds one's mental eyes and preventing him from seeing the true nature of things— impermanence (*anicca*), non-satisfactoriness (*dukkha*) and ego-lessness (*anatta*). *Avijjā* is one of the fifty-two mental states (*cetasikā*) and belongs to '*moha-cetasika*'. This *cetasika* is present in every ordinary person. The Buddha compares *avijjā* as floods (*ogha*)³⁸, as yoke (*yoga*)³⁹, as fetter (*samyojana*)⁴⁰, as obsession (*anusaya*)⁴¹. Due to the *avijjā* we do not see or understand *dukkha*; its cause; its cessation and the way to its cessation. Because of *avijjā* we are holding the wrong conception of 'I', 'my'; taking impermanent as permanent; un-satisfactoriness as happiness and as a result we are wandering in the wheel of existence (*samsāra*).

Craving (*taṇhā*) is the very origin of *dukkha* (mental illness) in the lives of all beings, throughout all their existence.⁴² Corresponding to six-sense objects, there are six classes of craving, namely, craving for forms (*rūpa-taṇhā*), craving for sounds (*sadda-taṇhā*), craving for odours (*gandha-taṇhā*), craving for flavors (*rasa-taṇhā*), craving for tangibles (*phoṭṭhabba-taṇhā*) and craving for mind-objects (*dhamma-taṇhā*).⁴³ With regard to the six kinds of craving, each kind is held to be threefold, according to its mode of occurrence as the craving for sensuality (*kāma-taṇhā*), craving for becoming (*bhava-taṇhā*), craving for non-becoming (*vibhava-taṇhā*).⁴⁴ Among the negative ideas, *kāma* is one of those most repeatedly mentioned and also one of those most categorically condemned. Every individual is driven by this *kāma-taṇhā*. The Buddhist attitude to *kāma* is strongly negative. In the Bhayabherava Sutta⁴⁵, the Buddha narrated *kāma* as a synonym for 'fear', 'suffering', 'illness', 'abscess', 'bond', and 'bog'. In the Alagaddupama Sutta⁴⁶, *kāma* has been likened to skeleton, piece of meat, grass-torch, pit of coals, dream, borrowed goods, of fruits on a tree, butcher's knife and block, snake's head, etc. In the Magandiya Sutta⁴⁷, *kāma* has been compared as painful to the touch, very hot

³⁷ Vibh 180.

³⁸ See Ogha sutta, S V, 59.

³⁹ See Yoga sutta, A II, 10.

⁴⁰ See Samyojana sutta, A V, 17.

⁴¹ See Anusaya sutta, A IV, 9.

⁴² Actually craving is not the only cause for the arising of *dukkha*. There are numerous causes and effects which are interdependent and related to one another in the universe. But craving is to be understood as the proximate cause of *dukkha*.

⁴³ M I, 46.

⁴⁴ Iti 58.

⁴⁵ M I, 16.

⁴⁶ M I, 130.

⁴⁷ M I, 501.

and scorching, etc. In the Potaliya Sutta⁴⁸, the other synonyms of *kāma* found in the scriptures are as follows— *kāma* as canker (*āsava*), *kāma* as craving (*taṇhā*), *kāma* as flood (*ogha*), *kāma* as bond (*yoga*), *kāma* as grasping (*upādāna*), *kāma* as hindrance (*nīvaraṇa*), *kāma* as defilement (*kilesa*), *kāma* as fetter (*saṃyojana*), *kāma* as latent defilement (*anusaya*), and so on.⁴⁹ So, we can see that *kāma* occupies the first place in all kinds of immoral categories.

According to Buddhist philosophy, in the beginning of the world men enjoyed self-delight, the delight arising in their mind. Sensual pleasures came afterwards and became their need; then their crucial need; then appeared as the meaning of human life which controlled men's mental activities. Since then, men's sensual desire turned to be the principal cause. This chief cause has put strong influences on men's thoughts and feelings and brought up men's sensual desire. The more men feel unsatisfied with sensual pleasures and sexual pleasures, the more they thirst for them. For this reason, Lord Buddha said:

Monks, I know of no other single form by which a man's heart is so enslaved as it is by that of a woman. Monks, a woman's form obsesses a man's heart. Monks, I know of no other single sound by which a man's heart is so enslaved as it is by the voice of a woman. Monks, a woman's voice obsesses a man's heart. Monks, I know of no other single scent... savor ... touch by which a man's heart is so enslaved as it is by the scent, savor, and touch of a woman. Monks, the scent, savor and touch of a woman obsess a man's heart. Monks, I know of no other single form, sound, scent, savor and touch by which a woman's heart is so enslaved as it is by the form, sound, scent, savor and touch of a man. Monks, a woman's heart is obsessed by these things.⁵⁰

Early Buddhist chronicles mention many mental case histories which are mostly caused only by *kāma-taṇhā*. *Asātamanta jātaka*⁵¹ tells how a blind and aged woman fell in love with a pupil of her son and planned to kill her own son in order to have unhindered sex. This indicates that ignorance and sense pleasures are the forerunner of such madness. Furthermore, in the *Kaṇavera jātaka*,⁵² *Darīmukha jātaka*,⁵³ *Kuṇāla jātaka*,⁵⁴ and some other *jātaka* stories – these, indicate that various

⁴⁸ M IV, 359.

⁴⁹ S V, 45-49.

⁵⁰ A I, 1.

⁵¹ J I, 61.

⁵² J I, 318.

⁵³ J I, 378.

⁵⁴ J I, 536.

types of mental illness are mainly caused by kāma-taṇhā. In the case of mental patients, their defilements are so clouded by ignorance and overwhelmed by craving that they act abnormally or psychotically which lead them to mental suffering. Therefore, we can say that avijjā and taṇhā are the two leading forces and causes of mental illness.

Buddhist Approach to Mental Health

The Buddha announced the most notable remark: “Whoever, monks, tends to me should also tend to the sick.”⁵⁵ He is known as a supreme physician of human beings; His dhamma is equaled with great healing power. At many occasions he claimed himself as an “Unsurpassable Doctor and Surgeon (anuttaro bhisakko sallakatto).”⁵⁶ The Buddha himself declared that he is compared to a physician who pulls out a poison arrow from a wounded person. The patient at first experiences a worsening of suffering but subsequently the healing process can begin. The Buddha explained this analogy: the wound represents the six inner sense-fields, the poison represents ignorance, the arrow is craving; the surgeon’s knife symbolizes pure insight, the surgeon’s probe represents mindfulness, and the physician and surgeon is the *Tathāgata* himself.⁵⁷

The above saying of the Buddha demonstrates his approach to health as a skilled physician and surgeon; then there is the story of “Kisa Gotamī and mustard seed”⁵⁸, which also illustrates the Buddha as a skilled healer. In the Buddhist scriptures there are several other stories where the Buddha applies his relational-therapy quite successfully. Following the various therapeutic application of the Buddha, not only Kisa-Gotamī but also Patacāra, Aṅgulimāla, and many more individuals not only regained their mental health but also attained Arahatsip.⁵⁹ Birnbaum notes:

The Buddha taught patients according to the severity of the illness. Those with fatal illness received lessons on impermanence, while those who could be cured were taught to meditate on the “seven limbs of enlightenment.”⁶⁰

The Buddha not only focused on changing abnormal behavior, but also of creating insight.

⁵⁵ Vin III, 26.

⁵⁶ Iti 100.

⁵⁷ M III, 44.

⁵⁸ See Gotami sutta S I, 129. Thī X, 1.

⁵⁹ Arahatsip: the highest stage of the Path.

⁶⁰ Birnbaum (1980, 10).

Dhamma, as the Medicine

In psychotherapeutic point of view, Buddhism is entirely a system of psychotherapy. Gomez states: “Buddhism is a therapy, as a way to heal a sick soul - a mind in error or a person in pain.”⁶¹ Deatherage notes:

Buddhism uses both philosophy and direct “therapeutic” intervention to accomplish its goal of enlightenment. Therefore the Buddhist approach establishes logical tenets and then provides a way of personality verifying them. For example, the beginning teachings in Buddhism— the Four Noble Truths, observe that everything is impermanent, including one’s own life, and that the impermanence of the material world is a primary and direct cause of unhappiness (things and people deteriorate and pass away).⁶²

Buddha’s teaching is known as the greatest medicine amongst all medicine. His preaching of the *dhamma* can be compared to the administration of medicine to the sick by a physician. The Buddha said: “One thing only do I teach: *dukkha* and its end to reach.”⁶³ His advice is to know our own *dukkha*. His theory of ‘*paṭiccasamuppāda* (dependent origination)’ simply states *dukkha* occur because it is caused and also, the theory of ‘*kamma* (action, deed)’ reveals why *dukkha* occurs in individual. The Buddhist emphasis on “*anicca* (impermanence)” can also be seen as a potential contribution to the promotion of mental health.

The Buddha was the healer of the supreme illness with which each living being is infected by *dukkha*. His healing powers relate to both mental and physical illnesses and scatters them, as both originate from a common source: *dukkha*. From the time of his enlightenment until his *parinibbāna*⁶⁴, he interpreted various *dhammas* as utmost in pointing out *dukkha* and the way leading to the end of *dukkha*.

Mindfulness Meditation

In Early Buddhism we find different psychotherapeutic approaches used for different types of individuals tormented with mental illness, such as ‘the four foundations of mindfulness meditation (*satipaṭṭhāna bhāvanā*)’, ‘the Four Noble Truths (*caturārya saccā*)’, ‘dependent origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*)’, ‘the characteristics of nature (*tilakkhaṇa*)’ and so on. To train our mind, the Buddha

⁶¹ Gomez (2003).

⁶² Boorstein and Deatherage (1982,20).

⁶³ M I, 22.

⁶⁴ [pari+nibbāna] "complete Nibbāna" in two meanings: 1. complete extinction of khandha life; i.e.: all possibility of such life & its rebirth, final release from (the misery of) rebirth and transmigration, death (after the last life—span of an Arahant). PED s.v. *Parinibbāna*.

prescribed to us: mind-culturing techniques or meditation (*bhāvanā*). From the ancient times *bhāvanā* has been used as a means of transcending *dukkha* and acquiring a healthy distance between ourselves and our thoughts. As almost all types of mental illness are caused by the mental defilements, Buddhism emphasizes us to annihilate those mental defilements by *bhāvanā*. It is a technique that cultures and purifies mind, and finally annihilates the evil roots of mind. In Buddhism, there are generally two types of *bhāvanā* technique, namely, “*samatha bhāvanā*” and “*vipassanā bhāvanā*”. “*Samatha*” means ‘tranquility’, ‘calm’, ‘peaceful state of mind’, etc. It also refers to ‘concentration meditation’. Any objects of awareness, internal or external, may be an object of concentration.⁶⁵ The Visuddhimagga narrates that there are forty kinds of *samatha* meditation or meditation subject (*kammaṭṭhāna*)⁶⁶ which suits one’s temperament (*carita*)⁶⁷. The word “*vipassanā*” means ‘seeing things as they are or seeing in different ways what is happening in our mind and body’. Another term, equivalent to “*vipassanā bhāvanā*” is mindfulness meditation, and this term is widely used in psychological literature. Nyanaponika Thera named this meditation as ‘the heart of Buddhist meditation’ or even ‘the heart of the entire doctrine’ (*dhamma-hadaya*).⁶⁸ In this regard mindfulness is the essence of Buddhist mental health therapy.

The Pāli term of ‘mindfulness’ is ‘*sati*’; the word ‘*sati*’ which is a noun is related to the verb ‘*sarati*’, to remember. Etymologically ‘*sati*’ is derived from the Sanskrit ‘*smṛti*’ means memory, recognition, mindfulness, alertness, remembrance, attentiveness etc. Thich Nhat Hanh interprets *sati*, as: “remembering to come back to the present moment.”⁶⁹ In other place, he states mindfulness as: “Keeping one’s consciousness alive to the present reality.”⁷⁰ Nyanaponika states, “It mostly refers there to the present, as a general mental-term, it carries the meaning of ‘attention’ or ‘awareness’.”⁷¹ With mindfulness one reflects only what is presently happening and in exactly the way it is happening. Therefore, it is: present-time awareness. The definition of *sati* appears in the Abhidhamma text as follows:

⁶⁵ Examples of internal objects of meditation includes words, an image (might be religious), a kinaesthetic feeling (breath) etc. Objects of external concentration might be a flame, a dot, etc.

⁶⁶ Forty kinds of *samatha-bhāvanā* are these: ten kasinas (totalities), ten kinds of foulness, ten recollections, four divine abiding, four immaterial states, one perception, one defining. Vism III, 112.

⁶⁷ ‘Temperament (*carita*)’ means nature or character of a person as revealed by his or her conduct and behaviour. The temperaments of people differ as determined by the *kamma* productive of the rebirth-linking consciousness. Buddhist tradition explained six types of temperament, namely, greedy temperament (*rāga-carita*), hating temperament (*dosa-carita*), deluded temperament (*moha-carita*), faithful temperament (*saddhā-carita*), intelligent temperament (*buddhi-carita*), and speculative temperament (*vitakka-carita*). See discussion in Vism III, 102.

⁶⁸ Nyanaponika (1992, 7).

⁶⁹ Nhat Hanh (1998, 59).

⁷⁰ Nhat Hanh (1987, 11).

⁷¹ Nyanaponika (1992, 10).

The mindfulness which on that occasion is recollecting, calling back to mind; the mindfulness which is remembering, bearing in mind, the opposite of superficiality and of obliviousness; mindfulness as faculty, mindfulness as power, right mindfulness – this is the faculty of mindfulness that there then is.⁷²

The term ‘*sati*’, mindfulness is also known as “*sampajana*” which means ‘clear comprehension’ or ‘seeing the object of meditation thoroughly and all its aspects’. Moreover, it is a ‘choice-less awareness’. In this form of mindfulness meditation one pays attention to ‘whatever momentarily arises in the body and mind.

Mindfulness as a mental quality closely related to attention (*manasikāra*), is a basic function which, according to the Abhidhamma analysis, is present in any kind of mental state.

Therapeutic Mindfulness

The word mindfulness can be described under a therapeutic definition. In mindful- awareness, a practitioner is present and aware for the experience of life. With mindfulness one ‘stays with’ whatever happens as it happens. Thus, mindfulness maintains a sense of connection with changing events. Kabat-Zinn notes, mindfulness is: “paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally.”⁷³ Deatherage gives another therapeutic definition of mindfulness meditation; he defines this, as:

The accurate, continuous registering at the conscious level of all events occurring in the six sensory modes: seeing, hearing, touching, smelling and thinking, without qualitative judgment, evaluation, mental comment or behavioral act.⁷⁴

From the above definitions, it is deemed that when mindfulness is applied in the clinical system or in mental therapy, its definition often includes ‘non-judgment’, ‘letting go’, ‘present moment awareness’, etc. Mindfulness is a way of paying attention non-judgementally; to what goes on in the present moment in our body-mind and the world around us. Mindfulness perceives a thought, a feeling, or a situation, as if or as it is. It is based on observing moment-to-moment experience - the desire, excitements, pleasures, satisfactions, anxieties, frustrations, disappointments, etc. When one is mindful, the attention is focused on the present so judgment cannot

⁷² Dhs14.

⁷³ Kabat-Zinn (1994, 4).

⁷⁴ Deatherage (1975, 19).

be placed. All thoughts are welcomed into the mind equally so that one does not judge the thought or the self for thinking the thought.

Mindfulness is accepting experience as it is, as it appears to be. Acceptance does not mean that one has to like what comes up (painful sensation, stressful memory, etc.), it simply means one is willing to be with it, rather than trying to push it away.

Mindfulness is letting go. Choosing to fix one's attention on one thing is letting go of diversity and moving to its opposite, unity. Generally we cling on to a particular thought or emotional state and we don't let go. However, developing the ability to let go is important in every day life. When one holds on to any experience, whether pleasant or painful or neutral, one hinders one's ability to simply be present in the here and now, without judgment. Letting go is the natural consequence of a willingness to accept things as they are, as they appear to be.

In meditation, 'sati' has an important role to play. During meditation, generally, we put our attention towards the meditation subject. But the nature of the mind is to wander away from our attention, from the object of meditation. Only mindfulness reminds us that our mind is wandering from our main attention or focus; it pulls back our mind in the object of meditation. It is an incomparable means of developing self-awareness or attentiveness.

Buddhism emphasizes us to be our own therapist. Therefore, one way of effectively dealing with mental illness is that of the Buddhists' practice of mindfulness meditation. In the Satipaṭṭhāna sutta Buddha said:

Bhikkhus, this is the direct path for the purification of beings, for the surmounting of sorrow and lamentation, for the disappearance of pain and grief, for attainment of true way, for the realization of *Nibbāna*, namely four foundation of mindfulness.⁷⁵

There are several other discourses in the teaching of the Buddha where it indicates that various forms of illnesses including mental illness can be cured or minimized through mindfulness meditation. For example, once when the elder Kassapa was ill, his pains increasing, the Buddha visited him and said:

⁷⁵ According to the Satipaṭṭhāna sutta, the four applications of mindfulness are: Mindfulness of the body (*kāyānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna*), Mindfulness on the Contemplation of feelings (*vedanānupassanā satipaṭṭhāna*), Mindfulness on the contemplation of consciousness (*cittānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna*), and Mindfulness on the contemplation of mental objects (*dhammānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna*). See M I, 55.

Kassapa, these seven limbs of wisdom⁷⁶ fully expounded by myself, when cultivated and made much of, conduce to full comprehension, to the wisdom, to *Nibbāna*.⁷⁷

One of the seven limbs of wisdom is mindfulness. After receiving and accepting the full teaching of the seven limbs of wisdom, Ven. Kassapa rose up from that sickness. There and then that sickness of the Venerable Kassapa was cured. He regained his physical as well as mental health. Again, when Ven. Girimānanda is in pain, severely ill; the Buddha asked Ven. Ānanda: “Ānanda, if you go to the monk Girimānanda and tell him ten perceptions⁷⁸, it’s possible that when he hears the ten perceptions his illness may be allayed. Then, Ven. Ānanda, having learned these ten perceptions in the Blessed One’s presence, went to Ven. Girimānanda and told them to him. As Ven. Girimānanda heard these ten perceptions, his illness was allayed; and Ven. Girimānanda recovered from his illness. That was how Ven. Girimānanda’s illness was abandoned.⁷⁹ In several other discourses the Buddha included mindfulness meditation as a remedy of illness. So, we can say mindfulness itself is helpful in regaining lost health whether it is physical or mental health.

One of many benefits of mindfulness meditation is that it helps one to develop a greater level of compassion toward oneself and others. Because mental illness like anxiety, stress, grief etc., often leaves behind feelings of shame, guilt, and frustration, this is of particular value. Mindfulness helps one to watch one’s feelings and thoughts. It is an important tool not just for reducing symptoms but for minimizing the effect of mental illness on one’s self-esteem.

Mindfulness cultivates various qualities that are highly suited to establishing a strong therapeutic force. Mindfulness based health interventions have developed over the last fifty years into a method for curing mental illness and present day, mindfulness meditation has been used as a method of psychotherapy. Nissanka, who has promoted mindfulness based Buddhist psychotherapy and who has been treating mental patients for more than forty-five years, states that various mental

⁷⁶ The seven limbs of wisdom refer to seven Enlightenment factors (*bojjhaṅga*). They are: mindfulness (*sati-sambojjhaṅga*), investigation of things or dhammas (*dhammavicaya-sambojjhaṅga*), energy or effort (*vīriya-sambojjhaṅga*), rapture (*pīti-sambojjhaṅga*), tranquility (*passaddhi-sambojjhaṅga*), concentration (*samādhi-sambojjhaṅga*) and equanimity (*upekkhā-sambojjhaṅga*).

⁷⁷ S V, 66.

⁷⁸ The perception of inconstancy, the perception of non-self, the perception of unattractiveness, the perception of drawbacks, the perception of abandoning, the perception of dispassion, the perception of cessation, the perception of distaste for every world, the perception of the undesirability of all fabrications, mindfulness of in-&-out breathing.

⁷⁹ A V, 108.

illnesses including schizophrenia can be and have been cured by this therapeutical method.⁸⁰

According to him, the Buddhist system of psychotherapy is nothing but getting the patient to practice meditation.⁸¹ The purpose of cultivating mindfulness is to help the patient to see and to know the cause of his illness, and this itself is the cure of the illness. This technique helps one to see or realize one's own defilements; to control the defilements; to suppress the defilements; and finally it help one to uproot the defilements. By focusing mindfully in their body and mind, patients learn not just to prevent and tame their anger, but also to transform the consuming fires of greed, hatred and delusion appreciation for the well being of others. Therefore, through this meditation one should carefully examine one's own illness. Many psychologist and patient have found a total cure as a result of regular practice of mindfulness meditation. When this meditation properly carried out and developed, the patient are claimed to regain and develop their mental health.

In mindfulness meditation, if the mental patient able to understand that besides the five aggregates there is no 'I', you; there in no 'self' or 'soul'; all are mirage then he will accept the reality and will not grieve or sorrow for the reality. With a peaceful and calm mind he will face his illness and will try to regain sound health. By practicing mindfulness the patient becomes aware of just how clouded and distorted his awareness of the world (and himself) has become. Jon Kabat-Zinn, who is a founding director of the stress reduction clinic and the center for mindfulness in medicine, health care, and society at the University of Massachusetts Medical School, notes:

Cultivating mindfulness means learning to tap and focus our own wasted energies. In doing so, we learn to calm down enough to enter and dwell in states of deep relaxation. This nourishes and restores body and mind. At the same time it makes it easier for us to see with greater clarity the way we actually live and therefore how to make changes to enhance our health and the quality of life. In addition it helps us to channel our energy more effectively in stressful situations or when we are feeling threatened or helpless. This energy comes from inside us and is therefore always within our reach and potential control.⁸²

⁸⁰ Nissanka (2002, 1).

⁸¹ Nissanka (2002, 6).

⁸² Kabat-Zinn (1990, 11-12).

In the view of Deatherage:

Mindfulness meditation, like any other approach, is most powerful when employed as part of an overall program of psychotherapy designed specifically for the individual patient. It can be a primary, secondary, or supplementary appropriate for the patient.⁸³

Although mindfulness meditation derived from the 2,550-year-old Buddhist tradition; it is only fairly recently that the clinicians and psychologists have started to apply this technique in mental therapy. Several researches on mindfulness meditation have been proved also its effectiveness in mental therapy. Therefore, the clinicians should feel encouraged by the research evidence. Furthermore, there is a possibility for awakening in every moment.

The practice of mindfulness meditation may seem to be very difficult to a patient, but a little awareness with mindfulness will indicate a deeper reality of life. Mindfulness is openness to reality, without distortion. It is a way for both spiritual development and to overcoming mental suffering. Thus, Mindfulness is the specific antidote for mental illness. It is both the cure and the preventive measure.

Conclusion

What we can draw from the forgoing explanation is that every Buddhist approach to mental therapy is included in two methods of therapy: cognitive therapy and behavioral therapy. Mindfulness meditation is one cognitive approach in Buddhism. Even though there are various approaches of Buddhist mental therapy: the ultimate cure lies in meditation, in other words, in mindfulness practice. Unless one reflects with mindfulness, one will not cure completely.

From the Buddhist point of view, becoming free from mental defilements or illness is not under the authority of any god or creator but just lies within oneself. We ourselves are the creator of mental defilements. With regards to this point, the Buddha said:

By oneself, indeed, is evil done; by oneself is one defiled.

By oneself is evil left undone; by oneself, indeed is one purified.

Purity and impurity depend on oneself; no one can purify another.⁸⁴

⁸³ Boorstein and Deatherage (1982, 20).

⁸⁴ Dhp165.

By delivering the above mentioned verse, the Buddha prescribed for us the greatest therapeutic formula. He emphasized, for us: to take refuge in ourselves; and to practice his teachings in order to purify our minds from mental impurities. Again and again, he reminds us that we are all sick, and therefore, we should diligently take the medicine to be healed. It's true that illness cannot be avoided; instead of trying to avoid illness we should understand it so that we will be able to cure it and finally eradicate it. The teaching of the Buddha not only upgrades our health but also completely eradicate the defilements. The complete eradication of defilements refers to final liberation from *dukkha*, which is: *Nibbāna*.

Abbreviation:

A	: Aṅguttara Nikāya
Abhi	: Abhidhamma
Dha	: Dhammapada
Dhs	: Dhammasaṅgaṇi
ed./eds	: edition/editor/editors
Iti	: Itivuttaka
J	: Jātaka
M	: Majjhima Nikāya
PED	: Pāli-English Dictionary
S	: Saṃyutta Nikāya
Thig	: Therīgāthā
tr.	: translation/translated
Vibh	: Vibhaṅga
Vibh-a	: Vibhaṅga-aṭṭhakathā
Vin	: Vinaya
Vism	: Visuddhimagga
vol/vols	: volume/volumes

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A Buddhist Remedy for Global Misery Through Mental Well-being

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Introduction

Misery has been prevailing throughout the world not only these days but also from the time immemorial. In the past, misery in one corner of the world had no or slower impact on the other parts. At present age, with globalization not only do good things travel more easily across the border, bad things do too. It is evident that one can neither flourish nor perish alone, but all will flourish or perish together. It means that global misery requires global response. This paper is a response to global misery from the Buddhist perspective. It tries to analyze global misery and provide a Buddhist remedy for it through mental well-being.

The Buddha

The Buddha lived with ultimate peace in the burning world for the fire of defilements had been totally extinguished by him. Once the Buddha was residing on the grass seat near the cart-road in Ālavī, Prince Hatthālavaka approached and asked the Buddha whether he slept well or not. The Buddha replied in positive. Hatthālavaka with surprise raised the question that how could you sleep well in this condition of uneven place, a seat of thin layer, no enough shelter, windy and snowy? The Buddha answered that man could not sleep happily if he is burnt by fire of defilements, even though sleeping on the luxurious place. But he could sleep happily in any place for he already eradicated all fire of defilements.¹ The Buddha's inner peace always reflects in his outer appearance. Upaka Ājīvaka, at first sight, said to the Buddha that "your reverence, your sense faculties are quite pure, your complexion very bright, and very clear."²

¹ Aṅguttaranikāya, Tikaniṭṭhā, Hatthakasutta, P 137.

² Vinayapitaka, Mahāvaggapāli, P 11

The Dhamma

The Buddha preached the Dhamma with the main purpose to guide beings the way leading to the ultimate peace, which is cessation of suffering. The Buddha left some doctrine untouched that are not related to his purpose. During the life time of the Buddha, some having interested in some of the problems asked the Buddha whether there is the end of the world or not; whether the body and the soul are identical or not; whether the Arahant exist after Parinibbāna or not etc. But the Buddha just kept silence for such questions are stumbling block in the path to liberation.

The Buddha said Mālukiya-putta who asked such questions that “Mālukiya, just as a person who has been shot by arrow smeared with poison and wounded will die if he fail to take any treatment instantly but inquires the person who shoots him; so also you will not be free from Samsaric suffering if you follow monk’s practice only after you get the answer of the problems. Whatever may be the answer of the problem, one thing for sure is that suffering really exists in the world. I preach four noble truths rather than answering these questions for they are not beneficial for the attainment of Nibbāna which is the complete cessation of suffering.”³

Dukkha-Ariya-saccā

Among the four Noble Truths, the first and foremost Truth is Dukkha-ariya-saccā that is really necessary for every Buddhists to understand clearly. Understanding misery does not lie on the experience of life. If the experience is a main thing for it, it will be the physicians who have more experience with misery. It is undeniable fact that there are many people who are happy even at the risk of misery. From the life time of the Buddha until now, most of the people who understand misery and felt disgusted in the human world are the person who had enjoyed sensual pleasures in life. Understating misery seems to be related with profound knowledge and having less attachment in sense pleasures. Certainly, one who dose not delight in sense pleasures and possesses wisdom is most probably to have in-depth understanding the truth of misery if he contemplates on human life without any bias.

The Buddha pointed misery out vividly in his first teaching, which is Dhammacakka pavattana sutta. This discourse gives a brief explanation of the noble truth of misery that “Birth is misery, aging is misery, sickness is misery, death is misery, association with what is dear is misery, separation from what is dear is misery, not to obtain what one wants is misery; in short, the five aggregates affected

³ Majjhimanikāya Vol. 2, Cūḷamālukiya-sutta, P 92.

by clinging are misery”⁴.⁴ Of them, priority is given in his teaching to the fact of life which aging, sickness, death, association with unbeloved ones and separation from beloved ones for it is so obvious in the world that people can understand them easily. No one wants to come across with these facts of life, but unavoidable by any means.

Even though these are really sufferings, there is doubt whether one can live happily without suffering from this fact of life. Being advanced in medical science, health and life-span of human beings are getting improved in the present age. However, the problem of increasing human population is prevailing in many countries. Some scholars maintain that a large number of disable patients is increasing day by day with help of advanced medical treatment to patients who are genetically poor in health.

Suppose people live for one hundred and twenty years with the help of advanced medical science, even if aging, sickness and death are invincible. It is truth that there will be many more miseries in the world of a high population density. No one can proclaim definitely that one, who frees from aging and sickness, will be really happy. Increasing stories of lone senior citizens are read in the news papers. No one can say definitely that one is really happy if lives together with beloved ones, for many marriages end in divorce. And it is difficult to prove that one would be really happy if separated from unbeloved one, for there are many stories re-marriages after their divorce.

Throughout human history, mankind has been suffered a lot by the disasters such as earthquakes, fire, flood, storm etc. Nowadays also, news of being damaged and homeless of many people by earthquakes and other natural disasters are frequently appearing in the newspaper and television. Mankind is in misery not only because of natural disasters but also because of man’s inhumanity to human. Such inhumanity is evidenced by wars, repressions, coercions, terroristic attacks and injustices that have been happening from the time immemorial until now. Thus English scholar Gibbon, writer of History of Rome, wrote that “History is indeed little more than the register of the crimes, follies, and misfortunes of mankind”⁵.⁵ One thing for deep consideration is whether mankind will be in complete happiness even when there are no such natural and man-made disasters.

In the Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta, the Buddha reveals another kind of misery that had been received less attention of people than aging, sickness and death. That is not getting what one wants. There is no doubt that every one has such an experience even though such mental pain is not so obvious like the physical one. The Uparipannāsa Pāli provides a thorough explanation as “what is not to obtain what one wants is misery”? “To being subject to birth there comes the wish: “Oh that

⁴ Vinayapīṭaka, Mahāvaggapāli, P 15.

⁵ Gibbon. *The Decline and Fall of Roman Empire*, Chapter 3.

we were not subject to birth! That birth would not come to us! But this is not to be obtained by wishing, and not to obtain what one wants is misery. To being subject to aging... subject to sickness... subject to death... subject to death... subject to sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair, there comes the wish: 'Oh that we were not subject to sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair! That sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair would not come to us! But this is not to be obtained by wishing, and not to obtain what one wants is misery'.⁶

The world today is dramatically changing from the world of last century. People in this age pay more attention for the well being of the world, having developed their intelligence for they got moral lessons from human history. Science, which is reliable for the progress of human world, is rapidly developing. United Nations is also working for the world peace. Some people point out that these are the sign for the relaxation of global misery.

There is an awful and horrible downturn of global economic systems, which had been formulated and applied to uplift life and living condition of global family. And there are many cases that United Nations ignores for it can not manage to settle conflicts which threaten world peace. Science with its dramatic development does not fulfill global family with its fruits. It is undeniable fact that science on one hand comparatively uplifts the life and living style of human beings. But on the other hand, human beings are living on the verge of impending danger of weapons of mass destruction.

What man desires is not happiness but mere satisfaction, which cannot be sought alone for it comes usually with its unfortunate by-product. Having satisfied with one thing, new thing appears for satisfaction. It is impossible to fulfill many and varied kinds of satisfaction. Moreover, there can be different kinds of satisfactions for beings are different in temperament, view, and environment. One will find his satisfaction at the risk of the other. In the World history, there are many witnessing evidences of dictators who establish his power at the risk of many. In addition, good and bad come in pair. Human beings, clinging to desirable things, are inclined to forget its unfortunate by-product. It can never be expected to get complete happiness by getting what one wants also, for beings live with ever-increasing craving.

Finally the Buddha revealed the most profound misery of life that is five aggregates affected by clinging. As long as one clings to aggregates of one's own or of others, there will surely be endless suffering. For the Buddha and his noble disciples, the clinging to both of aggregates is totally abandoned, so that they are found to be peaceful and happy even amidst misery.

⁶ Majjhimanikāya, Vol 3. P 293.

An Excellent Teaching Method of the Buddha

There is no doubt that the Buddha succeeded in his missionary works. People from all walks of life delighted in his teaching. Countless number of people became his disciples once they listened to his talk. Such a significant success accrues from many reasons such as being decline of Brahmanism in ancient India, revolution in religious way of thinking, attractive personality of the Buddha and his ethical and spiritual attributes. The most important fact is that of the teaching method of the Buddha. A Niganṭha mentions that the Buddha possesses power of persuasion to convince his teaching. In preaching, the Buddha utilized the vocabularies and terms (Bhava, samsara, kamma, anicca, dukkha etc) commonly understood by most of the people, but interpreted in a different way from Brahmanism.

A Buddhist Remedy for Global Misery

In this context of getting out of misery too, the Buddha starts with envy and avarice which is common to and understandable for all. It gradually reaches to the root of the problem. The Buddha said to King of Deities, Sakka that “their mind is so bind with the bonds of envy and avarice that, though they wish to live in peace, they live in misery”.⁷ Herein envy and avarice should be briefly defined. Envy arises at the gains, honor, reverence, affection, salutation, worship accruing to others. It has characteristic of not enduring, or of grumbling at the prosperity of others. Avarice arises regarding dwelling place, family, gains, reputation, and doctrine that belong to oneself. It has characteristic of hiding one’s own prosperity that has been gained and that yet to be gained.

Envy and avarice in turn are grounded in two more fundamental psychological conditions: Beloved beings and things and unbeloved beings and things. When others possess beings or things which we desire for ourselves, envy arises there. Sometimes when others possess beings and things we have no desire for ourselves, we still bears envy in our mind. For the avarice, when we are asked to borrow beings and things we beloved, there arise avarice, thinking that even I myself do not use it, how could I borrow you. Sometimes when others ask us to borrow beings and things we do not desire for ourselves, but still bear avarice in our mind, so that we are not able to extend our helping hands to those who are in need. In this way envy and avarice arise depending on beloved and unbeloved beings and things. To dispel envy and avarice, love and hate on beings and things should firstly be got rid of.

⁷ Dīghanikāya Vol 2. Sakkapanhasutta. P 220.

Beloved and unbeloved beings and things in turn are descended from desire. With unquenchable desire one searches for, acquires, uses, stores sense pleasures and wealth for the future use, and distributes his possessions expecting to get something back in return. Herein desire is a designation for greed. So long as one has greedy mind, there arise love and hate on beings and things. To get rid of love and hate on beings and things, one should eradicate greed.

Greed has the origin of thought. According to Buddhism, thought or thinking is considered to mediate between old perception and new desire. Whenever six bases (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and heart) come into contact with six objects (sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and thought), thought or thinking makes a decision whether it is good or bad, or it is to be desired or not etc. And it makes decision as it is for me and it is for others, and it should be used, it should be kept and so on. In this way, thought originates greed to arise. To eradicate greed, thought or thinking should be subsided.

Thought or thinking has the source of proliferated perception. From the time immemorial, beings perceive as beings (man, woman, animal etc) and things (monastery, car, temple, pagoda etc) that do not actually exist but are proliferated by the unquenchable greed and wrong view. Once beings are influenced by the greed, they are too intoxicated and ignorant to know beings and things as they really are. In this way, greed proliferate perception as beings and things to be loved, to be hated and so on. Thus as long as there is proliferated perception, there arises thought or thinking. To be subsided from the thought or thinking, extended perception should be ceased to exist. In this way, the Buddha leads his disciples to reach the main root of misery, and gives the following remedy for rising global misery.

For the cessation of extended perception, it is essential to pay one's attention at the point of contact between sense organs and sense objects. If one makes relentless effort to keep one's mind at the point of contact, one will see according to one's preference, either contact or feeling, or consciousness that really exists therein. Then one follows them to find the place where they spring up, there one can find one of the material bases born of past action. In this way, one comes to realize that there is only mentality and materiality but no man, woman, animals and things. If one pays a close attention on these mentality and materiality, one will vividly see the arising and passing away of mentality and materiality. It is called one sees the impermanence characteristic of mentality and materiality. Once the characteristic of impermanence appears vividly in his or her mind, the characteristic of un-satisfactoriness will also appear gradually and naturally. Since mentality and materiality are repeatedly changing, one can not find any satisfactory thing therein. Whatever one finds unsatisfactory is because it remains beyond his control, thus one has no ability to command to be like this or like that. In this way, one comes to see the non-self nature of mentality and materiality. With such a deepest understanding of mentality and

materiality, one is said to be on the path to the ultimate salvation from the circle of suffering.

In this way, the teachings of the Buddha, as a long-term project, leads beings from the basis level of enjoying peace and happiness in this life up to the ultimate salvation from the circle of suffering. Even though one does not achieve that ultimate state, one can enjoy peace and happiness, and live in harmony with others in this very life, by fundamentally using two powers to transmute envy and avarice, the root causes of conflict. That is appreciative joy (*muditā*) and generosity (*dāna*). Appreciative joy is the ability to rejoice when we see others being healthy, wealthy, and successful. Generosity is the ability to give one's own possessions as a token of reverence to those who are worthy or as a support to those who are in need. The former is the specific antidote for envy, the latter the antidote for avarice. By the effective use of these antidotes, one can overcome envy and avarice, the obvious causes of misery. And one is sure to live in harmony with others, regardless of race, culture, tradition, and religion.

Although this teaching is enshrined in the TIPITAKA, the Buddhist Canon, the door of this teaching is open to every one, regardless of gender, color, race, association, academy, university and religion like the air is common property for all. It is evident in the historical missionary speech of the Buddha delivered after his first rains retreat to sixty special missionaries that "Monks, let's preach Dhamma for the welfare and happiness of mankind". In this speech, the Buddha emphasized on the matter to convert from misery to happiness: from envy to appreciative joy and from avarice to generosity, and from clinging to aggregates to anti-clinging. Once we all tread on this path, we are sure that there will be no misery, but peace and happiness will prevail in the world. And though this conversion is difficult at the very beginning, the Buddha's words of assurance confirm that it can be done, that it lies within our power to overcome all barriers and to success.

Just as a person, standing in front of the open door of the fully air-conditioned room, feel the taste coolness, so too one who does not attain utter freedom from the round of misery, yet bears appreciative joy and generosity to Buddhism enjoys peace and happiness in this life. The Buddha once uttered a verse in the Dhammapada with the following meaning: "Full of joy and satisfaction, a person who has clarity of mind in Buddhism will attain the Perfect Peace, Happiness, and Cessation of Conditioned things."⁸

⁸ Khuddakanikāya, Dhammapadapāli, Verse No. 381.

Buddhist Pirit Chants For Mental and Physical Well Being - A Scientific Approach

Dr. Chandana Jayaratne¹

1. Introduction

Recent research in medicine, in experimental psychology and what is still called parapsychology has thrown some light on the nature of mind and its position in the world. During the last forty years the conviction has steadily grown among medical men that very many causes of diseases organic as well as functional, are directly caused by mental states. The body becomes ill because the mind controlling it either secretly wants to make it ill, or else because it is in such a state of agitation that it cannot prevent the body from sickening. Whatever its physical nature, resistance to disease is unquestionably correlated with the physiological condition of the patient.

Mind not only makes sick, it also cures. An optimistic patient has more chance of getting well than a patient who is worried and unhappy. The recorded instances of faith healing includes cases in which even organic diseases were cured almost instantaneously. In this connection it is interesting to observe the prevalence, in Buddhist lands, of listening to the recital of the *dharmma* or the doctrine of the Buddha in order to avert illness or danger, to ward off the influence of malignant beings, to obtain protection and deliverance from evil, and to promote health, prosperity, welfare, and well-being. The selected discourses for recital are known as "*paritta suttas*," (discourses for protection).

"*Paritta*" in Pali, "*paritrana*" in Sanskrit and "*pirit*" (pronounced piriṭṭhi) in Sinhala mean principally protection. Paritta suttas describe certain suttas or discourses delivered by the Buddha and regarded as affording protection. This protection is to be obtained by reciting or listening to the *paritta suttas*. The practice of reciting or listening to the *paritta suttas* began very early in the history of Buddhism. The word *paritta*, in this context, was used by the Buddha, for the first time, in a discourse known as *Khandha Paritta* in the *Culla Vagga* of the *Vinaya Pitaka* (vol. ii, p. 109), and also in the *Anguttara Nikaya* under the title "*Ahi (metta) Sutta*" (vol. ii, p. 82). This discourse was recommended by the Buddha as guard or

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protection for the use of the members of the Order. The Buddha in this discourse exhorts the monks to cultivate *metta* or loving-kindness towards all beings.

It is certain that paritta recital produces mental well-being in those who listen to them with intelligence, and have confidence in the truth of the Buddha's words. Such mental well being can help those who are ill to recover, and can also help not only to induce the mental attitude that brings happiness but also to overcome its opposite. From among the 24 parittas described in the Book of Protection (*Pirith Potha in Sinhala*), five parittas: 1) Factors of Enlightenment (Maha Kassapa Thera Bhojjhanga), 2) Factors of Enlightenment (Maha Moggallana Thera Bhojjhanga), 3) Factors of Enlightenment (Maha Cunda Thera Bhojjhanga), 4) Discourse to Girimananda Thera (Girimananda Sutta), 5) Discourse at Isigili (Isigili Sutta) by Buddha is said to be specifically discoursed to cure illnesses.

Originally, in India, those who listened to paritta sayings of the Buddha understood what was recited and the effect on them was correspondingly great. The Buddha himself had paritta recited to him, and he also requested others to recite paritta for his own disciples when they were ill.⁵ This practice of reciting paritta is still in vogue in Buddhist lands. The habit of listening to the recital of paritta suttas among the Westerners too is growing slowly but steadily.

Several factors is said to be combine to contribute towards the efficacy of paritta recitals.

(i). The Power of Truth

Paritta recital is a form of saccakiriya, i.e., an asseveration of truth. Protection results by the power of such asseveration. At the end of the recital of each sutta, the reciters bless the listeners with the words, *etena sacca vajjena sotti te hotu sabbada* which means "by the power of the truth of these words may you ever be well."

(ii). The Power of Virtue

Several discourses of the Book of Protection describe the virtuous life. The starting point in Buddhism is sila (virtue). Standing on the firm ground of sila one should endeavor to achieve a collected mind. If it is true that virtue protects the virtuous, then a person who listens to the recital of paritta suttas intelligently, in a reflective mood, with complete confidence in the Buddha's words, will acquire so virtuous a state of mind as would enable him to dominate any evil influence, and to be protected from all harm.

(iii). The Power of Love

The reciters of the paritta are expected to do so with a heart of love and compassion wishing the listeners and others weal and happiness and protection from all harm.

(iv). The Power of Sound

It is believed that the vibratory sounds produced by the sonorous and mellifluous recital of the paritta suttas in their Pali verses are soothing to the nerves and induce peace and calm of mind; they also bring about harmony to the physical system.

This paper will now describes the results of some scientific experiments conducted in Sri Lanka by the author and a few other scientists in other countries to understand this fourth cause-the power of sound in piritta.

2. Scientific Aspects of Buddhist Pirith Chants

A research study conducted by Ven Madawala Upali Thero and the author in 2002 at the Kanduboda International Meditation Centre in Sri Lanka using the *Cool Edit* and *Band-in-a-Box* computer software packages and a computer connected microphone fitted to a stethoscope end revealed that Pirith sound gives only four notes contrary to the conventional music having 7 notes..

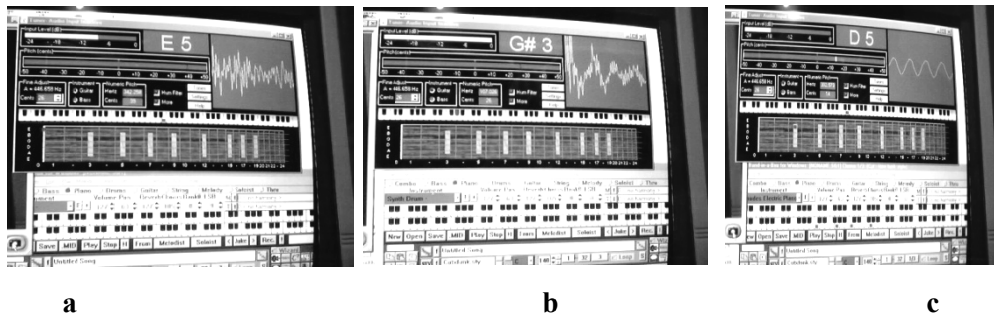


Figure 1. Computer analysis of music and paritta chants using the Cool Edit Program: *a)* wave patterns of normal classical music-*disorganised rough waveforms*, *b)* and *c)* wave patterns of paritta chants – *smooth waveforms*.

As such, seven notes would induce *raga* thoughts in your mind but not so with pirith and it will calm you down. It was also found that the recitation of pirith gives best results when it is chanted at medium speed When the recitations are done

in a hurry or very slowly by dragging the words and sentences like a song, the computer indicated more than 4 notes producing no soothing effect. When subjects are allowed to listen to pirit chants, it was found that within 10 minutes of the commencement of the pirit their heart beat reduces and the heart pulse amplitude halved and they come to an alpha state similar to what you get under a meditative trance.



Figure 2. Computer sound analysis chart indicating the reduction of heart beat and pulse amplitude of a person within 10 minutes after the commencement of listening to pirit chants.

This implies that listening to pirit is good for your heart and also gets the similar benefits that one get under trance condition in meditation. Prolonged listening to a pirit chant done throughout a whole night could thus produce higher benefits similar those of meditation (benefits received at alpha level). Here we limited our research only to study the effect of sound. It was also found that live pirit chants made by priests or laymen produce better results than those of playing back the same pirit chant recorded in some form. Here the sound quality of the speakers affects very much.

3. Brain wave patterns during meditation and /or listening to pirit chants

Brainwaves are the electrical wave patterns generated in every person's brain. These waves vary according to level of consciousness, subconsciousness and unconsciousness and are characterized by four distinct types of brainwaves. Each of these electrical wave patterns have distinctly different ways of perceiving, processing, learning and knowing information (Hoiberg, 1989). All of these brain waves are produced at all times. However, a predominance of a specific desired

brainwave state can be created at will, which allows a person to potentialize his or her capabilities towards achieving human excellence. Brainwave frequencies are described in terms of hertz (Hz), or cycles per second... the four general categories of brainwave frequencies and their main characteristics, are:

- *Beta (β) brainwaves: 14 -34 hertz* - beta brainwaves are characterized by logical, analytical and intellectual thinking, verbal communication and awareness of surroundings.
- *Alpha (α) brainwaves : 7 -14 hertz* - they most commonly occur when we are calm and relaxed, yet mentally alert, they also present at the lower or middle level of trance in meditation. These brainwaves are also present during daydreaming (Jaggi, 1984).
- *Theta (θ) brainwaves: 4 – 7 hertz* -characterized by being deeply relaxed and inwardly focused, they also present at the very deep level of trance in meditation.
- *Delta (δ) brainwaves: 0.5 – 4 Hz* - being extremely relaxed, characterized by sleep.

Left part (left hemisphere) of our brain controls the right side of the body and it also responsible for our logical thinking, interest in mathematics, etc. The right hemisphere of our body controls the left side of our body and is responsible for our artistic abilities, music etc. When we are fully awoken more beta waves are emitted from both the left and right parts of the brain, but there is a grate disparity between the left and the right activity (see Figure 3 b). During sleep, neurons fire with more synchrony than during wakefulness. In the deepest stage of non-REM sleep, the dominate brain wave is called a delta wave. Under meditative trance or listening to pirith chants consciously, the neuron firing rates in the brain are such that both the parts are generating more alpha waves compared to the other waves and moreover both the left and the right brain hemispheric activities become well balanced (see: Figure 3 c).

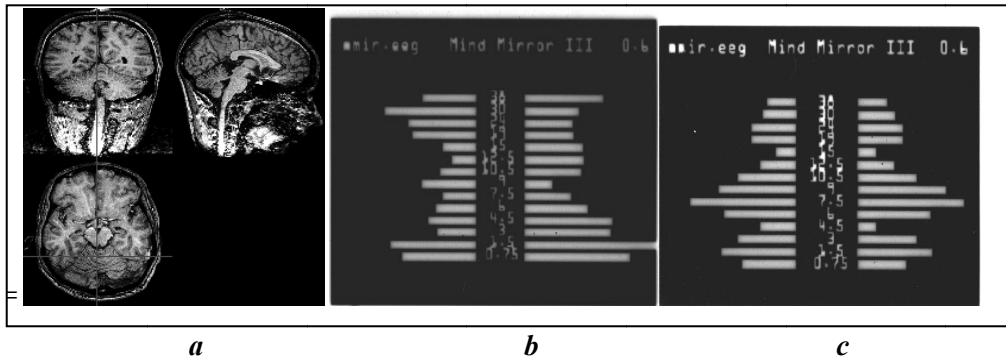


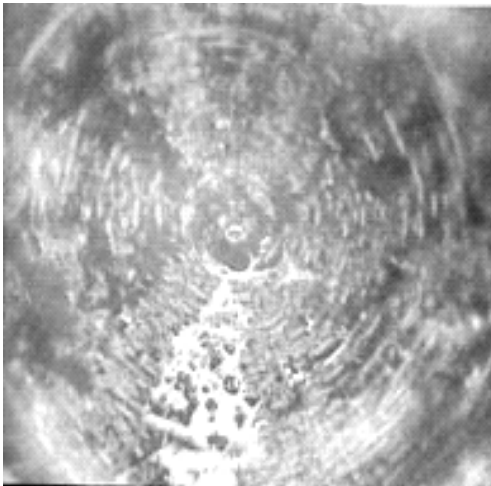
Figure 3. *a.* The human brain-three views, *b.* brain wave histogram for a non-meditator and *c.* brain wave histogram of a meditator in trance with highest activity at alpha level in 7.5 Hz (Histograms are from 0.75 Hz to 38 Hz.).

4. Some benefits of pirit chants made through neuroplasticity of the brain

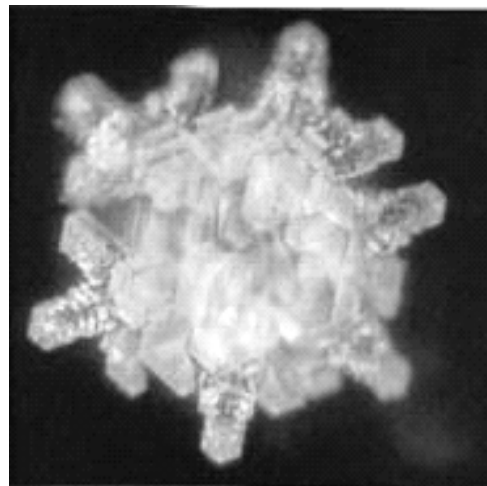
According to latest research on Neuroplasticity, one of the hottest topics in brain science, which refers to the brain's recently discovered ability to change its structure and function, alpha level under meditation or through external sound effects like FFR(frequency following response). Listening to pirthh chanting for periods longer than 10 minutes would bring the human brain into alpha stage - a trance level similar to what one achieved during meditation. As such, listening to Buddhist pirth chanting not only produce a calming effect on mind and increase the body's immune system, it also produces lasting changes in the brain leading to increase the IQ level, learning abilities and problem solving capabilities, sustained positive emotions, gives relief for insomnia, reshapes and expands the mind to foster happiness and cultivate compassion, thicken the brain tissues, increase attention and sensory processing, and increased oxytocin peptide will increase the well-being and sense of trust in social situations (Jayaratne, 2006).

5. Effect of paritta sound on water molecules in the body to cure diseases

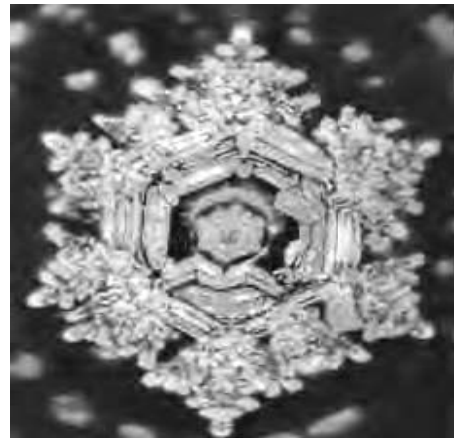
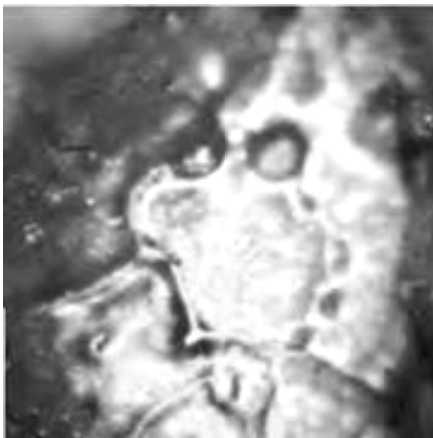
A recent Japanese study conducted by Masaru Emoto(2004) shows that water when exposed to pirth sound for several hours and then freeze produced hexagonal shape ice crystals. Since our body is consisting of about 70% of water, when listen to the pirth, many water molecules in our body become hexagonal aggregates (other wise pentagonal or some other shape). It has been found that such hexagonal water made our body and its cells healthy and disease free.



a. Heavy Metal Ice Crystal



Tibetan Sutra Ice Crystal



b. Fujiwara dam water (Japan) before chanting. Fujiwara dam water (Japan) after chanting.

Figure 4. Water exposed to several hours of paritta chants and freezed shows clear hexagonal shape ice crystals (a) Same water sample - heavy metal produce no clear shape, but the Tibet Buddhist Sutta, (b) Fujiwara Dam Water (Japan) – before and after chanting paritta.



6. Conclusion

These research indicate that chanting and listening to paritta chants produce immediate physical and mental health benefits then and there and it is good for our health, reshapes and expands the mind to foster happiness and cultivate compassion, thicken the brain tissues, increase attention and sensory processing. In the context of Global Recovery, listening to Buddhist pirit chants, or make others to here pirit chants for a period exceeding 10 minutes would be of immensely beneficial to the recovery of deteriorated mental state and health condition of an individual in the modern complex society and the well-being of the society at large.

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Emotional Intelligence based on Buddhist Perspective

*Chantrarat Vongareesawat*¹*

This is a great honor for me to present this paper at the 2010 United Nations Day of Vesak Conference and Celebrations in Bangkok, Thailand. My presentation consists of three parts: (1) Overview of Emotional Intelligence, (2) Emotional Intelligence based on Buddhist Perspective, and (3) Ways to enhance Emotional Intelligence based on Theravāda Buddhism.

Overview of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence (EI) refers specifically to the interplay and cooperation between intelligence and emotions. A result of interaction between intelligence and emotions forms the basis behaviors for human competence in any activity (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004). Obviously, the term of EI was not brought fully into mainstream psychology until the 1990s (Zeidner, Matthews, & Roberts, 2004).

In fact, publications dealing with social intelligence began appearing in 1920 with the work of Edward Thorndike, a professor of educational psychology (Bar-On, 2005). Thorndike's initial insight was to identify aspects of what we now call EI as dimensions of social intelligence. We must bear in mind that at that time, intelligence was thought of in very narrow terms, as Intelligence Quotient or IQ, following the lead of Alfred Binet, French psychologist and inventor of the first usable intelligence test that is a basis of today's IQ test. The EI concept, based on Thorndike's groundbreaking perspective, refers to the ability of humans to understand and act wisely in human relationships (Cherniss & Goleman, 2000). In 1983, Budnik (2003) display and summarized the work of Gardner, Hobbs Professor of Cognition and Education at Harvard Graduate School of Education, who introduced his now-famous model of Multiple Intelligences. The author revealed that according to Gardner's study, there are seven distinct types of intelligence. These types, as he discussed them, are referenced especially to manifest talent in children and are 1) linguistic, 2) logical-mathematical, 3) bodily-kinesthetic (processing knowledge through bodily sensations), 4) spatial capacity (thinking in images and pictures)

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5) musical ability, 6) interpersonal skill (communication), and 7) intrapersonal skills (awareness of one's own feelings and motivations and those of others).

The work and insights of Gardner were especially well presented in Budnik (2003). Subsequent to his breakthrough work in the early year 1980, Gardner revisited and extended the EI model. His findings are presented in his book namely "Frames of Mind." He did not use the term EI in reference to his model but he did address and elaborated existing concepts of interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences.

Interpersonal intelligence, as we have seen and Gardner further specifies, refers to the ability of humans to understand others and to work well in co-operation by organizing groups, negotiating solutions, making personal connections, and engaging in social analysis. *Intrapersonal intelligence* refers to the ability of humans to be self-aware, to recognize one's own feelings, and to use emotions for operating successfully in social behavior (Cherniss & Goleman, 2000; Quebbeman & Rozell, 2002). Since Gardner's initial work, subsequent theorists and researchers have continued to elaborate on his model. A notable example was the work regarding two domains of interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences pursued by Salovey and Mayer, Goleman, Bar-On, and others. They have transformed and renamed two types of social intelligence found in Gardner's model, recasting them in the more accessible concept of EI (Castro, 2005). Since EI has claimed as a key factor to increase the effectiveness at work, to support a potential for promotion, to encourage a personal growth, and to enhance the objectives of career development (Cherniss, Boyatzis, & Elias, 2000). Therefore, a term of EI has become increasingly prominent in recent years, starting in the early year 1990. It has been studied as the subject of much descriptive and clinical research that intends to predict, to explain, and to examine the role of EI in various domains of human competencies. Nowadays, EI has been widely recognized as a valuable concept in Western psychology.

In the Western context, not only organizations and business have become interested in encouraging and promoting EI for their employees' potential, customer satisfaction, and increasing workplace productivity (Meyer, Fletcher, & Parker, 2004), but also educators, managers, and health care professionals have become interested in the potential of EI for extending and developing personal competencies (Cadman & Brewer, 2001; Freshman & Rubino, 2002; McQueen, 2004). Currently, EI becomes increasingly popular as a measure for identifying potentially effective leaders and it may use as a tool in developing effective leadership skills (George, 2000; Jooste, 2004; Maccalupo, 2002). In response to this situation, the study of Bar-on (2005) offered three major conceptual models of EI classified by Spielberger: (1) the Salovey-Mayer model, (2) the Goleman model, and (3) the Bar-On model. All of these models are also characterized in the Encyclopedia of Applied Psychology.

In order to understand each of three EI models, the author reviewed briefly the literature in each well-known model for more understanding, as follows:

The Salovey-Mayer Model. In 1990, Peter Salovey, Yale psychologist, and John Mayer, a University of New Hampshire psychologist, collaborated to synthesize the concept of EI as we now know it. They carefully distinguished EI abilities from social traits or talents. In effect, they corrected Gardner's ambitious grouping. *They defined EI as human abilities such as the capacity to know one's own emotions, to manage emotions, to be self-motivating, to recognize and respond to emotions in others, and to handle interpersonal relationships.* They developed their EI model based on an understanding of cognitive intelligence that focused on specific mental aptitudes for perceiving and regulating feelings. They emphasized that EI can be learned, be developed in individuals over time, and be measured through an ability test (Akerjordet & Severinsson, 2004; Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 2000; Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004). Starting in the late 1990, continuing into the present decade, Salovey and Mayer have worked to evaluate and refine EI model into four dimensions of mental processes including: (1) *perceiving or identifying emotions*, (2) *using emotions to facilitate thought*, (3) *understanding emotions*, and (4) *managing emotions* (Cherniss & Goleman, 2000; Quebbeman & Rozell, 2002; Vitello-Cicciu, 2003).

The Goleman Model. Daniel Goleman (1995), a well-known psychologist, the author of the best-seller book "Emotional Intelligence Why it can matter more than IQ", defined EI as any desirable feature of non-cognitive intelligence. He hypothesized that EI can be learned and improved with experience and age. Goleman emphasized that EI plays a critical role in life outcomes and accounts for success at home, school, and workplace. EI is a key to establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships and the capacity of individuals to be effective team members. In the workplace, EI builds the employees' technical skills and intelligence quotient for their jobs at all levels (Goleman, 1995). Goleman formulated his EI model based on the theory of performance and also drew on the concept of EI that had been elaborated by Gardner and later, Salovey and Mayer. Goleman's new model of EI consisted of five domains, specified below (Goleman, 1995): (1) *knowing one's emotions or self-awareness*, (2) *managing emotions*, (3) *recognizing emotions in others or empathy*, (4) *motivating oneself*, and (5) *handling relationships or social skills*. Then, other researcher have used these same domains and found them to be useful as a conceptual framework (Akerjordet & Severinsson, 2004; Freshwater & Stickley, 2004; McQueen, 2004; Schutte et al., 2001; Vitello-Cicciu, 2003).

The Bar-On model. Reuven Bar-On, an Israeli psychologist at the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston, developed EI assessment as a measurement of well-being, working with this concept since the time he was a doctoral student.

Bar-On has defined EI as *an array of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills*. He has emphasized that *EI influences one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures contributed to emotion management* (Bar-On, 2005). Bar-On was the first to propose the term “emotional quotient” (EQ), in 1988. The terms EI and EQ are used interchangeably. He placed EI in the context of personality theory, specifically, the model of well-being. According to Bar-On's model, *EI is an integration of a number of intrapersonal and interpersonal competencies, skills, and facilitators that combine to form effective human behavior*. He sub-categorized EI into five major competencies and fifteen sub-component variables that can be improved through training and remedial programs (Cherniss & Goleman, 2000; Dulewicz, Higgs, & Slaski, 2003; Palmer, Manocha, Gignac, & Stough, 2003; Zeidner, Matthews, & Roberts, 2004). Bar-On's five EI competencies and their respective sub-components are briefly presented as follows: (1) *Intrapersonal skills* consisting of emotional self-awareness, assertiveness, self-regard, self-actualization, and independence. (2) *Interpersonal skills* consisting of empathy, interpersonal relationship, and social responsibility. (3) *Adaptability* consisting of problem solving, reality testing, and flexibility. (4) *Stress management* consisting of stress tolerance and impulse control. (5) *General mood* consisting of happiness and optimism.

As reviewed previously, EI concepts based on Western psychological perspective are very useful to apply and establish in many professional competencies in individuals and organizations. Although the employing EI concepts from western could increase EI competency among Thai people but scientific knowledge of EI in Western countries such as programs or EI measurements could not well-designed for assessment and enhancement EI among Thai people since there are cultural sensitivity and differences. Regarding about 92 percent of Thai people are Buddhist (Chandra-ngarm, 2003) and Buddhism has long studied on the psyche and has gained great knowledge on the nature of mind and mental development that such are closely interrelated to EI (Disayavanish, 2006; Ratanakul, 2002). Therefore, it could be advantage for Thai people to take part in increasing and applying EI based on Buddhist perspective.

Emotional Intelligence based on Buddhist Perspective

Thai scholars and monks provide many Thai terms of EI based on Theravāda Buddhist concepts such as “Pre-cha-cher-g-aron”, “Je-ta-ko-sol”, or “Chaow-aron” (Pannitamai, 2002; Phra Dhammapitaka, 1999; Phra Rajavaramuni, 1999). Those terms are used as interchangeable terms of EI in Thailand. Currently, the EI concept is being studied and developed based on Thai “local wisdom” (*bhumi-panya*) perspective. Its definition is also related to the Buddha's Teaching: being with good thought, good action, and good speech (Chulacharitta, 2005).

The Venerable Dr. Phra Dhammapitaka or Bhikkhu Prayudh Payutto (as cited in Department of Mental Health [DMH], 2000), the first ex-chairman of the University Council of the World Buddhist University, has, in 1999, declared that the definition of EI, based on the Theravāda Buddhist perspective, is *the result of human action controlled by wisdom*. Importantly, the wise mind comes from the individuals who practice their mind, as a matter of effort, by following the “Threefold Training” or “the Noble Eightfold Path” and *performing actions with a wise mind*.

The Venerable Dr. Phra Dhammakosajarn, previously known as Phra Rajavaramuni (Phramaha Prayoon Mererk), the Rector of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Thailand, has determined and elaborated on the meaning of EI based on Buddhist principle in 1999. *EI person refers to a person who has and uses a wise mind to manage their emotions in oneself with wise decision making and good performance in thought, action, and speech with mindfulness of self and others* (Phra Rajavaramuni, 1999). He suggests the way to enhance EI that is the employment of “General mental factors” to support “Beautiful mental factors and the decrease of “Unwholesome mental factors” in individuals mind. A wise mind in individuals can be developed and practiced through the Threefold Training of the Buddha Teachings. This training is a process of mind development which consists of three trainings in higher morality (*sīla*), in mentality (*samādhi*), and in higher wisdom (*paññā*). The way to develop a higher wisdom is a practicing of insight meditation based on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness (*Satipatthāna*). After individuals have continuously developed their emotions and practiced mindfulness following the “Threefold Training”, the practitioners will become wise and will experience feelings, have thoughts, and manifest acts with a wise mind. This leads to a life which in every moment is characterized by happiness and harmony of life anytime and anywhere without harm to oneself or others as long as their life continues (Phra Rajavaramuni, 1999).

Disayavanish, an emeritus professor of psychiatry at Maharaj Nakorn Chiangmai Hospital, who has practiced Insight Meditation for more than 25 years, has defined EI based on Theravāda Buddhism that *EI is a process of using bare attention to the external stimuli that arise through the six sense organs, namely the eyes, the ears, the nose, the tongue, the body, and the mind*. The persons with EI can acknowledge their own emotions, feelings, needs, thought, and imagination of oneself and others. In addition, such persons can effectively control and manage their emotions through the development of mindfulness (*sati*) and clear comprehension (*sampajañña*). Therefore, the development of EI in this aspect is in accordance with the practice of insight meditation (*vipassanā*) meditation based on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness (*satipatthāna*) (Disayavanish, 2006).

Pannitamai (2002) revealed that EI is quite related to the Buddha’s Teachings. He stated that an *EI person is the one who use emotions to promote*

intellect and to behave oneself in accordance with accepted norms. Individuals can integrate an analytic reflection or *Yonisomanasikāra* for their correct perceptions, interpretation, and reaction to any situation with thorough, clear comprehension (*Sampajañña*). He also stated that the EI concept has a relationship with the Five Aggregates in Theravāda Buddhism as aforementioned.

Chulacharittare, a retired surgical physician who has practiced Theravāda Buddhist Meditation more than 20 years, claimed that EI based on the local wisdom perspective refers to *abilities that a person has for regulating thoughts, speech, and action in a positive way and being with a happy mind* (Chulacharitta, 2005).

Currently, a group of scholars from the Behavioral Science Research Institute, Srinakharinwirot University [SWU] in Bangkok has developed the first instrument of EI based on Theravāda Buddhist Principles for Thai university students. This tool is beneficial in measuring the level of EI competencies among Thai students in order to detect and improve their EI competencies before they graduate. The researchers determined and categorized *the three competencies of EI for Thai adolescents based on the Threefold Training*, including: (1) *Having happiness in oneself* refers to personal characteristics, including having loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, self-control, good mental health, good emotions, self-confidence, optimism, and flexibility. (2) *Involvement in good relations with others* refers to interpersonal relationships characteristics, including being sincere, generous, forgiving, unity, empathy, gratitude, and human respect. And, (3) *Having work success* refers to team work characteristics, including having honesty, vision, being punctual, work planning, perseverance, being appropriately assertive, exhibiting collaborative working behavior, job satisfaction, listening to other opinions, not being selfish, and showing inquisitive learning behavior (Intasuwan, Chuawanlee, Sucaromana, & Choochom, 2003).

Remarkably, in 2000, the Department of Mental Health [DMH], Ministry of Public Health in Thailand became interested in the EI concepts from the western psychologists. Although the DMH administrators have agreed that EI can predict the achievement in individuals and in increasing individual's motivation and professional competency as regards the existing research findings; they have more concern that Thai people should have special elements of EI competencies. They are concerned to promote people being more emotionally mature, being a good person, and living with life satisfaction and a happy mind more than using EI elements for career promotion and individuals accomplishment. Then, the team researcher of DMH conceptualized the EI concept for Thai people that such derived from mental health standpoint and Buddhist philosophy. The researchers of DMH developed "the Thai Emotional Intelligence Screening Test for the Thai population aged 12 to 60 years" in 2000. This is a famous EI tool in Thailand which has been used for assessment the EI among various groups of Thai adulthood. The EI elements as measured in this

screening test portrayed the desirable behaviors in *three main concepts*: virtue, competence, and happiness. Firstly, “Virtue” refers to a personal ability to have self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social responsibility. Secondly, “Competence” refers to a personal ability to know oneself and self-motivation, having decision making and problem solving, and creating interpersonal relations. Lastly, “Happiness” refers to a personal ability to living with self-esteem, life satisfaction, and happiness mind (DMH, 2000).

Way to enhance EI Based on Theravāda Buddhism

Many scholars determined that EI can be developed in individuals throughout their life. It is quite clear that since people need a happier life and better success in their workplace, the experts claim that EI can make positive changes so that the various ways for EI development emerged (Smith, 2000; Texas Department of State Health Services, 2004). As has been established by the literature review, there are coincided points of EI concepts and the programs amongst the Western researchers. Firstly, they agree that self-awareness or self-understanding is a cornerstone of EI. The literature confirmed that people with EI are able to manage their own emotions and empathize with others’ feelings. Moreover, they are able to handle interpersonal relationships and direct themselves for career success. The agreeable recommendation of EI development is to improve self-awareness at the primary step for further reproduction of other EI competencies, including emotional management, empathy, social skill, and self-motivation. It could be considered that self-awareness or self-understanding powerfully impacts upon people with EI.

In other cultural frames of reference, in *Theravāda Buddhism*, self-awareness has recognized in term of having mindfulness and clear comprehension. Obviously, the Buddha provides the direct way for mental development among lay people. According to Theravāda Buddhism, lay persons who have trained mind will have mindfulness (*sati*) and clear comprehension (*sampajañña*) on their emotions first. Then, they are able to empathize with others feelings without employing unhealthy mechanisms, such as: repression or denial for self-adaptation or avoidance from negative feelings, as Sigmund Freud mentioned.

In a review of research on EI and Theravāda Buddhist perspective, Vipassanā Meditation or insight meditation is valuable in an increasing EI level (Phramaha Sawai Khaisungnoen, 2004; Meesaen, 2000, 2008; Karnpungton & Bantengsook, 2003). In developing an individual’s mind to increase EI by improving self-awareness, the directly recommended way is insight meditation practice. In the process of basic learning and developing EI by practicing insight meditation, the individuals are encouraged to follow the “Threefold Training” or “the Noble

Eightfold Path” that is the practical method of mental development (*bhāvanā*) or EI development.

The Threefold Training consists of (1) training in higher morality (*sīla*), (2) Training in higher mentality (*samādhi*), and (3) Training in higher wisdom (*paññā*). Training in higher morality (*sīla*) corresponds to having *right speech*, *right action*, and *right livelihood*. It refers to the human ability to have and exhibit productive behavior that positively affects others. Next, training in higher mentality (*samādhi*) refers to the human ability to have a happy life that emerges when anyone consistently practices and maintains *right effort*, *right mindfulness*, and *right concentration*. And, training in higher wisdom (*paññā*) refers to the human ability to have an accurate understanding of oneself and others by cultivating *right view* and *right thought* through the practice of insight meditation (Chanchamnong, 2003; Chulacharitta, 2005; Disayavanish, 2000; DMH, 2000; Payutto, 2003; Phra Rajavaramuni, 1999).

Insight meditation practice based on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness is the only way to purify individual mind, to overcome sorrows and lamentation, to overcome pain and grief, to reach the Noble Path, and to realize *nibbāna* (Venerable U Silananda, 1990). This practice cultivates self-understanding or self-awareness and promotes EI among lay people. In practicing insight meditation, the practitioners must investigate and contemplate on all various mental impressions or contact (*phassa*) that arise in the ‘body’ and the ‘mind’, both ‘in the internal world’ and ‘in the external world.’ A term of ‘*in the internal world*’ means, here: the ‘body’ and the ‘mind’ into the practitioners themselves; whereas ‘*in the external world*’, means: the ‘body’ and the ‘mind’ in others people. On the whole, there are four matters of the objects of meditation which are already exist within human body, including body (*kāya*), feelings (*vedanā*), mind (*citta*), and mental objects (*dhamma*). These four objects of meditation are important to the practitioners to contemplate on and to enhance EI competency throughout a practice of insight meditation. The relationship between the Four Foundations of Mindfulness and EI are described below.

In the contemplation of the ‘body’ (*Kāyānupassanā Satipaṭṭhāna*), the practitioners contemplate on or keep themselves mindful of the body in the body only. They must do it energetically, clearly comprehending and mindful to watch whatever is in the body. This part focuses on the contemplation of four main postures (*Iriyāpatha Pabba*), minor postures in everyday life (*Sampajañña Pabba*), and the abdominal movement while breathing (*Dhātumanasikāra Pabba*). For instance, while we are walking, we must be mindful of as it is. The practitioners should practice walking meditation by being aware of stepping. When they make a left step, note it as ‘left.’ When they make a right step, note it as ‘right.’ In this way, in the beginning of the practice the practitioners must use labeling or mental noting

such as ‘left, right, left, right’, to help the mind focus on the object of meditation attentively and precisely. When the practitioners’ experiences are in an advance stage, labeling or mental noting may be dropped because the mindfulness has become sharp and powerful (Venerable Chanmyay Sayadaw, 2002).

It is not an easy thing to keep the mind on the object of meditation. ‘Right Effort’ (*sammā-vāyāma*) is a requirement for the practice of meditation in term of *Sammappadhāna*. That such effort refers to the four essential efforts to sustain the good deeds: the effort to prevent (*samvara-padhāna*), the effort to overcome (*pahāna-padhāna*), the effort to develop (*bhāvanā-padhāna*), and the effort to maintain (*anurakkhanā-padhāna*) (Payutto, 2003). Without effort the practitioners cannot keep their minds on the object of meditation in the ‘body’ and cannot meditate continuously to see the nature of mind and body (Venerable U Sīlānanda, 1990). When the practitioners have mindfulness, together with effort, the mind stays with the object of meditation for some time, that is what we call: ‘concentration.’ Therefore, when the practitioners have mindfulness, concomitantly, they will achieve concentration. Only when they have developed insight meditation, will they have wisdom and the understanding of the nature of all things which is the Three Common Characteristics (*Trilakhaṇa*) or the Law of Change. Conventionally, the practitioners contemplate on their ‘body’ and ‘mind’ as the object of mindfulness while practicing meditation as regards Five Aggregates (*Pañca-khandhas*). They can see clearly that they are the same as all existences which are bound by the same law of nature. The more the practitioners understand themselves that all conditioned states are always changeable (*aniccatā*), sufferable (*dukkhatā*), and egoless (*anattatā*), the better they can really understand others. They can improve themselves in knowing their own feelings and thoughts as well as understand other feelings when they practice in the stage of contemplation of the feelings. As a result, the practitioners will have clear comprehension of all existences both in themselves and in others. This is a way of EI development by means of practicing insight meditation. The Buddhist approach goes further than the use of reasons on rational intellectual for increasing self-awareness or self-understanding.

At this time, a term of ‘contemplating internally’ means the practitioners contemplate or keep themselves mindful of their own in-breaths and out-breaths. When they keep their mind on their own breathing, they are said to be ‘*contemplating the body in the body internally*.’ On the other hand, when the practitioners have gained some practices in keeping their mind on their own breaths, occasionally, they may think of other people’s breaths as well. For example, if one practitioner is thinking that “just as my breaths have a beginning and an end, appear and disappear, so the breaths of other people do the same.” In this way, it means the practitioner contemplates on the breaths of other people. In doing this, we are said to be

‘*contemplating the body in the body externally.*’ Hence, it does not mean that one practitioner looks at other people and contemplates their breathing. However, when one contemplates on other people’s breaths, one should be mindful of them too. Sometimes, the practitioner contemplates on their own breathing, then, contemplates on the breathing of other people, and then contemplates on one own breathing again. That such contemplation, the practitioners go back and forth between their breathing and breathing of others. When they do like that they are said to be ‘*contemplating the body in the body internally and externally*’, it doesn’t mean that the practitioner should look at their own breathing and others breathing (Venerable U Sīlānanda, 1990).

As said by Venerable U Sīlānanda (1990), there are two kinds of *Vipassanā*: ‘*direct vipassanā*’ and ‘*inferential vipassanā.*’ For example, you practice *direct vipassanā* on your own going, sitting, standing, and lying down, but when meditating on the going, and so on, of other people: you practice *inferential vipassanā* such as to contemplate that “while my going is impermanent so is that going of another also impermanent.” Therefore, it can be summarized that the Four Foundations of Mindfulness promotes and concurrently cultivates these aspects in lay people to have self-understanding and empathy. Moreover, this method teaches us that all of us have the same existences that have the ‘body’ and the ‘mind’ which stays on the same law of change. Therefore, the insight practitioner who practices insight meditation would be able to destroy mistaken ideas of beauty, happiness, permanent, and view of self (Venerable U Sīlānanda, 1990).

Next, the step of contemplation of the feelings in the feelings (*Vedanānupassana Satipaṭṭhāna*), the practitioners should not experience any feelings with attachment. All feelings have to be noted. They must be aware and mindful of any worldly feelings which are connected with things you come across in your life: sights, sounds, smells, tastes, odors, thoughts, and things you think you possess. When the practitioners take note of them when they arise, the practitioners will come to see their rising and fading away. The practitioners can recognize the beginning, the ending factors of the feeling or both factors so that they will not cling to them. Without clinging, the practitioners can achieve the realization of the impermanent (Venerable U Sīlānanda, 1990). This step is very important for enhancing EI in individuals while acknowledging their own emotions, feelings, needs, thought, or imagination of oneself. Then, practitioner can effectively control and manage their emotions with mindfulness and clear comprehension.

Then, the contemplation of the mind (*Cittanupassana Satipaṭṭhāna*), as regards a work of mental conditions refers to *consciousness* and *mental factors*. Since ‘mental factors’ arise together with the ‘consciousness’ and modify the consciousness then the practitioners must contemplate on whenever they arise in

the mind in order to see its impermanence (Venerable U Sīlānanda, 1990). During the contemplation of ‘consciousness’, one consciousness is the object of another. They can not arise at the same moment. The consciousness which is the object of meditation, arouse just a little bit later; however, you can call them present, because there is a very small difference in time when you contemplate on ‘consciousness.’ When the practitioners observe ‘consciousness’ in this way, they will come to see that there is consciousness only and no person or being that is its agent. The practitioners will also acknowledge that since it arises and fades away every moment, it is impermanent. Finally, when we see its impermanence, we won’t cling to it through craving or wrong view. As a result, when there is no clinging there can be no formation of *kamma* and we will be able to achieve freedom from suffering (Venerable U Sīlānanda, 1990).

Finally, the contemplation of the *dhamma* (*Dhammanupassana Satipaṭṭhāna*) is the observation of material and mental objects with mindfulness. The word ‘*dhamma*’ is sometimes translated as ‘mental objects.’ This is neither accurate nor concise, because the objects of meditation mentioned in this section belong to both the mental and the material group. In fact, the ‘five hindrances’ are mental objects. The ‘five objects of clinging’ or ‘five aggregates’ are material and mental objects. The ‘six internal and the six external sense-based’ are material and mental objects. The ‘seven factors of enlightenment’ are mental objects. And, the Four Noble Truths’ consists of both material and mental objects. This section cultivates the wise reflections on five discourses which enable the practitioners can enhance the goal of liberation. The importance in this discourse is to understand the arising and stopping of or retreating from suffering (Venerable U Sīlānanda, 1990).

In conclusion, when we practice insight meditation based on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, we can expect many good results for personal benefit and career achievement. The practitioners will improve their self-awareness as well as develop empathy at the same time. When they have more self-awareness they can improve interpersonal relationships with others. Obviously, they also practice the extension of loving-kindness both to themselves and to others before and after practicing the program. This Buddhist ways help the practitioners have a wholesome mind which leads to motivate their minds to conduct the wholesomeness actions in advance. Concurrently, when the practitioners are practicing insight meditation their latent defilements tend to decrease and their unwholesome mental factors will be reduced as well. This process leads the practitioners to attain a state of *virtue*, regarding EI based on DMH’s definition. Moreover, the effort that is developed in the practice can be applied and used in everyday life. The participants who have well trained mind could be able to develop the “power” (*bala* or *indriya*) to accomplish their own duties and challenges tasks. This is compatible with a state of competence of EI person. Simultaneously, the more lay people purify their mind, the better they

enhance a state of genuine happiness which is higher than a state of happiness as DMH defined for EI person in Thailand based on Buddhist perspectives.

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Buddhist Meditation and Mind-Body Connection: Relevance of *Path of Purification (Visuddhimagga)* for Global Well-Being

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Introduction:

Two key features characterize the 21st century: extraordinary advancement in technology, science, medicine, and industry; and a fast-paced global culture that focuses on materialism. Yet despite these amazing progresses, the world we experience around us continues to be a troubled place, with rising conflicts, violence, economic and political crises, and breakdown of social values. For the individual, the life of material comfort often comes with a price—hectic schedules, mental stress, highly competitive environment, and a general sense of dissatisfaction, especially with the desire to constantly wanting more and doing more, be it professional ambition, financial stability, or simply material gains. Ironically, this becomes the root cause to a lack of happiness and contentment in his or her state of mental and spiritual well-being. As a result, stress-related conditions like anxiety, negative emotions, and restlessness occur, and affect every aspect of one's life. More significantly, these mental conditions slowly eat away at our bodies, and have been identified as the prime factors for many physical problems, such as high-blood pressure, heart disease, chronic fatigue, ulcers, migraines, and insomnia.

The search for true happiness for body and mind therefore appears the one constant goal for humanity through the millennia. And in this context, the profound truths of human condition that Shakyamuni Buddha taught more than 2500 years ago continue to have significance in today's multi-cultural, interconnected world. Foundational Buddhist ideas of impermanence (*anitya*), suffering (*dukkha*), and non-self (*anatman*) are even more relevant than ever before. We can hence ask: can Buddhist practices of moral discipline (*shila*), meditation (*samadhi*), wisdom (*prajna*), and compassion (*karuna*) offer solutions to global crises of the 21st century? If so, in what ways? The paper will focus specifically on the Buddhist understanding the mind and Buddhist meditation as an aspect of global recovery in the pursuit of happiness, mental and spiritual well-being.

Let us define this global crisis as it relates to the mind, in which Buddhist ideas are so profoundly pertinent.

Mental Well-Being: A Global Crisis

In the 21st century, mental health crisis can be considered a silent killer in the world, since those afflicted often suffer in alone, afraid of social stigma, while anxiety, fears and negative emotions eat away at the inner self. With the motto “No health without mental health,” WHO has declared 10 October as World Mental Health Day to show the urgency of this problem and to bring awareness of the approximately 450 million people worldwide that are affected some aspect of mental health problem.¹ Depression and stress are seen as the most critical mental health problems, which will affect most people to some degree, at least once in their life, regardless of age, gender, economic background, religion, culture, or ethnicity. Depression causes the self and world to be viewed in a negative way, and impacts not just the individual suffering this mental state, but also family members and friends. Depression is often untreated and ignored, or in the context of developed countries, individuals with depression may solely depend on medication, as a first-choice treatment, regardless of the root cause.

Worldwide statistics of mental health crises are shocking: 19% of population in Africa; in North America 1 out of every 4 individuals suffer from depression (25%), while Europe tails at 20% of the population. Studies have similarly found that 10% of the world’s population even affects children under the age of 10 years.

United Kingdom’s Mental Health Foundation in its April 2009 report stated that fear, anxiety, and stress were the causes for mental health disorders, and these same individuals had higher risks of developing other health issues as well.² The study also stated that 60% of those surveyed felt that the increased fear had a direct correlation to view of the world: today world was a more dangerous place. The same report states that 1 out of 7 people will be affected by depression or anxiety disorders, that is 7.2 million of UK population. Among the reasons for anxiety and fear cited by the study are loss of community and family, loss of security (jobs, economy), and overall economic climate. Aside from the more personal issues, global issues, such as terrorism, climate change, natural disasters, are also contributing factors to anxiety and depression.³

United States National Institute of Mental Health states that currently 26.2% (57.7 million) of Americans suffer from some form of mental disorder. Specifically, depression is one of the key mental disorders in the US, affecting about 9.5 percent of Americans (20.9 million).

¹ http://www.who.int/topics/mental_health/en/index.html. Accessed March 2010.

² <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/the-numbers-count-mental-disorders-in-america/index.shtml#Intro> (Accessed March 2009).

³ “In the face of fear,” *UK Mental Health Foundation*. April 2009.

Stress and depression also lead to suicide. In the US, over 33,000 people in the US commit suicide each year and is the fourth leading cause of death.⁴ The recent economic crisis and severe recession resulted in loss of jobs, stock and investments fell, and thousands worldwide lost their homes to foreclosure. In these contexts, there is a direct correlation between economic recession and suicide. The UK has one of the highest rates of self-harm in Europe, at 400 per 100,000 population, and suicide was the most common cause of death in men under the age of 35.⁵ Yet, as a silent disease, we do not talk about the effects of mental stress until it has outwardly manifested itself through physical disease, destructive emotion, or violence.

Recent studies by WHO have reported that Asia is the most at risk, given the social stigma of mental health issues and lack of health resources. By 2020 depression will be the leading cause of disability in Asia, even higher health risk than cancer.⁶ In Japan, among the world's most developed nations, suicide and depression is on the rise, including a unique social phenomenon called *hikikomori* (social withdrawal) resulting from mental stress. This is found in all age groups, but most often with men (71%). Studies in Japan estimates that one in every 40 Japanese household is affected by this disorder, totaling 1 million youths. As the leading cause of death for people under 30 in Japan, over 30,000 committed suicide just in 2009.

Given these alarming numbers, it is clear the issues of mental disorders are directly related for violence, negative emotions and sentiments at a personal level, for the individual. The collective accumulations of the negative energy will impact communities, nations, and ultimately the world. In this context, what are some of the global trends that we see to combat these issues, both from the perspective of popular solutions and treatments that are derived from Buddhist meditational practices?

Meditation as Global Phenomena: Healing the Mind and Body

An internet search for “meditation centers” “meditation courses” generates more than 2 million hits worldwide. Similarly the growing number of “yoga” and “meditation” magazines and books obviously suggest that the most fundamental antidote to the stress of the modern lifestyle is mental relaxation and meditation. Similarly, a quick look at the books related to stress management, relaxation, and psychology will make my point even clearer—Buddhist practices, ideas, and terms have now reached popular readership. Here are, for instance, few titles: *Mindfulness*

⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) : www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars.

⁵ <http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/information/mental-health-overview/statistics/>. Accessed March 2009.

⁶ Hannah Beech, “Hidden Away” Cover Story, *Time Asia*, Vol 162. No. 18. November 3, 2003.

For Teens: Meditation Practices To Reduce Stress And Promote Well-Being (2009); *The Mindful Brain: Reflection and Attunement in the Cultivation of Well-Being* (2007); *Mindfulness of Breathing: Managing Pain, Illness, and Stress with Guided Mindfulness Meditation* (2005), *Meditation: The Buddhist Way of Tranquility and Insight* (2004); *The 12-Step Buddhist: Enhance Recovery from Any Addiction* (2009), *Healing Power of Loving Kindness* (2009); *Meditation for Relaxation: Simple Meditations for Everyday Life Derived from the Buddhist Tradition* (2007); *Body Scan: Managing Pain, Illness, & Stress with Guided Mindfulness Meditation* (2005). These titles indicate the significant application of Buddhist meditation to promote mental health globally.

Specifically, techniques and practices of Buddhist meditation are critically applicable for the current global crises. In fact, many of the Buddhist practices are now not regarded simply as a religious practice based on a specific doctrinal ideology, but rather, Buddhist meditation is now synonymous to a *practical* application for mental well-being that will benefit all of humanity, regardless of one's own religious creed. Indeed, influential Buddhist teachers, such as His Holiness 14th Dalai Lama, Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh, and Vipassana Acharya S.N. Goenka, have made significant impact especially in the West to disseminate the aspects of Buddhist philosophy and meditation practices as solutions to our world in crises. Here, the dialogue becomes the engagement of Buddhist ideas with the human condition. For instance, H.H. Dalai Lama's best-sellers have included *Art of Happiness in a Troubled World* (2009), *An Open Heart: Practicing Compassion in Everyday Life* (2001), *Healing Anger: The Power of Patience from a Buddhist Perspective* (1997), *Ethics for the New Millennium* (2001). Thich Nhat Hanh's philosophy of engaged Buddhism is found in his books, such as *Happiness: Essential Mindfulness Practices* (2009), *Taming the Tiger Within: Meditations on Transforming Difficult Emotions* (2005), *Living Without Stress or Fear: Essential Teachings on the True Source of Happiness*, (2008), *Answers from the Heart: Compassionate and Practical Responses to Life's Burning Questions* (2009). All these are aimed at the popular readership in providing solutions through self-transformation and positive thought. Similarly, as a lay practitioner, Satya Narayan Goenka, who studied under the notable Burmese *vipassana* teacher, Sayagyi U Ba Khin (1899-1971), has disseminated Buddhist *vipassana* meditation practice to a worldwide audience, emphasizing non-sectarian practices accessible all faiths. Through the establishment of numerous Vipassana Meditation Centers, together with his 10-day meditation retreat training package, Buddhist meditation have become mainstream in that this practice is even taken to prisons, including Europe and the US. Likewise, American Buddhist practitioners of *vipassana* meditation, such as Jack Kornfield, Sharon Salsberg, Tara Brach, and Joseph Goldstein, have been influential for bringing Buddhist meditation in the West, to a general audience. The overwhelming interest and popularity of these practices stems from the answer to the question: how do we attain happiness? The Buddhist

solution is through training and purifying the mind, and through intense concentration as the product of meditation (*samadhi*). For this, we must first understand the Buddhist notion of the mind.

Foremost Position of the Mind in Buddhism

Mano pubbangama dhamma - mano-settha mano-maya
Manasa ce padutthena - bhasati va karoti va
Tato nam dukkham anveti - cakkam va vahato padam.

Preceded by mind are phenomena - led by the mind, formed by the mind.
If with mind polluted – one speaks or acts,
Then suffering follows, as a wheel follows the hoof of the ox.

Mano pubbangama dhamma - mano-settha mano-maya
Manasa ce pasannena - bhasati va karoti va
Tato nam sukham anveti - chaya va anapayini.

Preceded by mind are phenomena - led by the mind, formed by the mind.
If with mind pure – one speaks or acts,
Then happiness follows, as an ever-present shadow.⁷

The premise of global recovery through mental well-being in this paper begins with the Buddhist understanding that the mind is all the source of all things. In the above quote from the first chapter of the Twin Verses (Yamaka Vaggo) of the *Dhammapada*, Shakyamuni Buddha explains that all phenomena is the mind, and its association with positive and negative thoughts similarly result in those very actions. Here, the mind is the foremost element of all human action and phenomena (*mano puggamadharma*), that the mind is the chief or most excellent of element (*mano-settha*) and all elements are constructions of the mind (*mano-maya*). In other words, all phenomena and human actions—mental, physical, and verbal—therefore arise first on one’s consciousness. Thus, *Buddhism recognizes that every action, whether negative or positive, are essentially the phenomena of the mind. By cultivating the mind of clarity and purity, free from all hindrances, one can abide in the state of ultimate happiness.* Hence, global recovery of mental well-being begins with realizing the transformative nature of the mind and developing purified mental states through contemplative meditation, free of hindrances and defilements.

⁷ As quoted in Glenn Wallis, tr. *The Dhammapada* (New York: Random House, Inc. 2007), 20.

The early Buddhist texts, such as the *Pabhassara Sutta* of the *Anguttara Nikaya* 1:49-51 states: “Luminous, monks, is the mind. And it is defiled by incoming defilements. Luminous, monks, is the mind. And it is freed from incoming defilements....The well-instructed disciple of the noble one discerns as it actually is (*yatha-bhutam*), which is why I tell you that—for the well-instructed disciple of the noble ones—there is the development of the mind.”⁸ In the Buddhist understanding, the mind, which was intrinsically pure, becomes endowed with defilements, conditionally contaminated with the surrounding environment. The defilements can be removed through specific practices of purification, as the “development of the mind.” The state of mind when the defilements are removed is called *visuddhi* (purification). The way/methods that leads the mind to the original state removing all the defilements is called hence *Visuddhimagga* (Path of Purification), and the key method is the practice of meditation.

Buddhist texts use several specific terms to describe the general English word “meditation,” and these subtle nuances suggest the complexity of this practice. Some of these include *bhavana* (development “making be”), *citta visuddhi* (mind-purification), *samatha* (calming the mind), *samadhi* (meditation), *dhyana* (concentration), *ekaggata* (one-pointed concentration), *sati patthana* (mindfulness) and *vispasanna* (insight). The goal of meditation, however, is to develop and experience a state of consciousness that is complete awareness, or ‘awakening,’ realize the cessation of all desires, and understand the ultimate truth. Hence, as exemplified by Shakyamuni Buddha himself, cultivating the mind to get rid of negativity, hindrances, and karmic defilements is the key goal the Buddhist dharma. This is achieved through the disciplines of training the mind and developing one-pointedness and mindfulness as aspects of ‘meditation.’ Although principally instructed for the monastic community, the early Pāli texts demonstrate that it is critical even for lay followers.

***Visuddhimagga* “The Path of Purification” and Buddhist Meditation**

Visuddhimagga (*VM*), an important Pāli commentarial text written by Buddhaghosa (ca. 5th century CE), is one of the authoritative and influential source for Buddhist meditation practices.⁹ The *VM* builds on earlier texts, such as Upatissa’s *Vimuttimaggā* (Path of Freedom), which was essentially a compendium of the Buddha’s teachings on meditation. The *VM* provides a systematic compilation of

⁸ As quoted in Thanissaro Bhikkhu, tr. *Anguttara Nikaya*. (Sati Center for Buddhist Studies, 2003), 1.

⁹ The English translation is referenced from Bhikkhu Nanamoli, tr. *The Path of Purification (Visuddhimagga)* by *Bhandantacariya Buddhaghosa*, 5th ed., (Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society, 1975). For Pali text, see Rhys Davids, ed. *The Visuddhi-Magga of Buddhaghosa*. (London: The Pali Text Society, 1975).

meditational techniques, results and benefits describing deeply psychological understanding of the meditational experience, and ultimately relating these practices to foundational Buddhist ideas (Four Noble Truths, dependent origination, five aggregates, etc). As a “path” or “method,” (*magga*), the text describes the process of meditation through a compendium of 40 meditation subjects aimed at concentration meditation techniques (III.5). These include 10 *kasinas* (totalities) meditations; 10 impurity (*asubha*) meditations; 10 recollection (*anussatiyo*) meditations; 4 divine abiding (*brahmavihara*) meditations, meditation of the 4 immaterial states (*aruppa*), one meditation on perception (*sanna/sajna*) and one meditation on defining (*vavatthana*).¹⁰ For our purposes, the elaborations of meditation (*samadhi*) is found from Chapters 3 Kammattana-Gahana-Niddesa to Chapter 11 Samadhi-Niddesa are directly relevant to this paper. Buddhism addresses two major aspects of meditation, as different mental skills, modes of function and qualities of consciousness. These are distinguished as calm-abiding or tranquility (*samatha*) meditation and insight (*vipassana*) meditation, which cultivate insight awareness for the attainment of wisdom and knowledge. The *VM* also defines the term “meditation/concentration” or *samadhi* as one-pointed concentration as the “centering (*adhana*) of consciousness and consciousness-concomitant evenly (*samam*) and rightly (*samma*) on a single object.”¹¹ Through insight meditation (*vipassana*), the meditator uses concentration to gain complete awareness until he or she has attained the clarity of reality, or the ultimate truth. The *VM* recommends that both meditations should be experienced in order to achieve insight, to understand the impermanence of all phenomena conditioned by the mind, and hence they are not worthy of our attachments.

Buddhist meditation’s application as a solution to mental crises can be rationalized through its deep awareness of human psychology. Specifically, Chapter 3 comments on importance of selecting the appropriate meditation among the forty techniques to suit the meditator’s personality.

“... approach the good friend (*kalyanamitta*), the giver of a meditation subject, and he should apprehend from among the forty meditation subjects one that suits his own temperament have been expounded in detail in all their aspects.”¹²

Furthermore, what is significant here is that the text explicitly describes meditation as the causal factor of bliss or happiness.¹³ For example, in describing *samatha* it is experiencing the state in which the mind and body is at rest, in a state of

¹⁰ *VM*, III:104.

¹¹ *VM*, III:4 p.85.

¹² *VM*, III:133.

¹³ *VM*, III.5, p.86.

tranquility. This one-pointed meditation focuses on some subject, and excludes all thoughts from the consciousness. The result is a state of *rapture* or *happiness*, which lasts until the meditator ends the sitting. The *VM* acknowledges that this attainment is a deeply altered state resulting in “applied thought, sustained thought, happiness, bliss, and concentration, following suppression of the hindrances.”¹⁴ Thus, the text very clearly describes the results and effects of the purified mind as the cultivation of happiness (*piti*), tranquility (*passadhi*), and bliss (*sukha*). (*VM*, XX, 106). And this mental state of happiness is also associated with the bliss of enlightenment.¹⁵ The *VM* describes a meditative state of profound stillness and concentration called *jhana* which leads to the experiences of intense joy, through the removal of the five hindrances (*pañca nīvarana*), which are the negative states that are obstacles to meditation.

Highlighting on the four stages of concentration (*jhana*) as *rupa jhana*, the *VM* elaborates on the types of happiness and bliss: “It [*jhana*] refreshes (*pinayati*), thus it is happiness (*piti*). It has the characteristics of endearing (*sampiyana*). Its function is to refresh the body and the mind; or its function is to pervade (thrill with rapture). It is manifested as elation. But it is five kinds as minor happiness, momentary happiness, showering happiness, uplifting happiness, and pervading (rapturous) happiness.” (*VM* IV: 94). The text further explains that the experiencing of the state of bliss also affects not only mental states but also *physical* states: “It thoroughly (*sutthu*) devours (*khadati*), consumes (*khanati*) bodily and mental afflictions, thus it is bliss (*sukha*). (*VM*, IV: 98). Therefore, in Buddhism, there is a direct mind-body connection in the practice of meditation. In fact, the *VM* consistently uses the terms, happiness and bliss (*pitisukham*) as a unified entity for attaining the state of consciousness or enlightenment, just as Dharma and Discipline (*dhammavinaya*) as understood as a single entity. (*VM*, IV: 101). The *VM* consistently describes the path of mental purification are mindfulness (*satipatthana*) of the body (*kayasati*), feelings (*vedansati*), consciousness (*cittasati*), and phenomena of objects (*dhammasati*). Thus, through these altered states of consciousness, the path of purification (*visuddhi magga*) of the mind occurs. It is precisely in this aspect of healing the mind and body that Buddhist meditation can have an impact on global recovery.

¹⁴ *VM*, III:23, p.89.

¹⁵ *VM*, IV:83, p.79.

Engaged Buddhism: Applications of Buddhist Meditation in the Global Context

So now the questions arise: how do these technical aspects of Buddhist meditation translate into practical terms, and what can Buddhism offer to the world, specifically in the context of the global mental crises? First, the Buddhist theories of mind and meditation techniques are based on the premise that the mind has the ability to *transform* and alter our perceptions of self and the world, through the cultivation of loving-kindness, compassion, joy and equanimity that arise from meditation. Second, these mental transformations affect our consciousness as well as our physical body. It is in this mind-body connection that Buddhist ideas and practices have been most influential—especially in scientific and medical community. However, this knowledge needs to be brought out in the open even more to the masses, so that benefits of Buddhist meditation practices can be seen as effective solutions of global recovery.

The mind-body connection, once considered a contradictory in Western sciences, is now a major paradigm in the medical field. There has been significant interest to understand what physically goes on in the human mind, and how these states of consciousness through meditation create the self-transformation and sense of well-being. The Mind and Life Institute in the US, for instance, has been dedicated to exploring the relationship between science and Buddhism, specifically in its investigation of the mind-body connection.¹⁶ In a series of conference and dialogues, the Institute has brought together leading neurobiologist, psychologists, cognitive scientists as well as Buddhist teachers, scholars, and philosophers. H.H. 14th Dalai Lama has been very influential in this venture, especially in bringing awareness of how Buddhist practices can be beneficial to the world community. The science and Buddhism dialogues have explored the social psychology of altruism and compassion, dreams, death, dying, and negative emotions, and in 2009, focused on the aspect of Education: how do we educate people to be compassionate, ethical, and engaged citizens of the world.

Their most significant studies on meditation measured brain pattern of Buddhist practitioners, using MRI and EEG data of six meditative states: a visualization, one-pointed concentration, meditation generating compassion, meditations on devotion, on fearlessness, and what was called “open state.”¹⁷ For the first time ever, scientists were able to identify the distinct changes in the brain, resulting from meditation, but what was most astounding was the data for the meditations on loving-kindness (*metta*) and compassion (*karuna*). Brain activity

¹⁶ <http://www.mindandlife.org>.

¹⁷ Daniel Goleman, *Destructive Emotions: A Scientific Dialogue with the Dalai Lama* (New York: Random House, 2003), 5.

increased significantly in the area of the brain that was associated with happiness, tranquility and well-being. The study demonstrated that meditation greatly strengthened emotional stability and enhanced positive thought and mood. Here, science proves the results of Buddhist meditation.

The most direct relationship between scientific investigation and Buddhist ideas was evidence in the data related to compassion and loving-kindness meditation. The *VM* states that meditation develops the intensification of Four Divine Abidings (*brahmavihara*), that is loving-kindness, compassion, altruistic joy or gladness, and equanimity. (*VM*, IX: 1 and IV: 114). This aspect of the benefits of meditation was verified in the brain-waves of Buddhist monks, who had undergone many years of solitary retreat and practiced one-pointed meditation as well as visualization. Scientific data gleaned showed clear increase in equanimity, resulting in calmness, radiance, and a general disposition of happiness. “Owing to equanimity the mind is liberated from many sorts of defilements; then the understanding faculty is outstanding as understanding due to liberation. (IV: 118). Therefore, Buddhist meditation is critically important to heal both the mind and body, as a holistic approach.

Increasingly, Buddhist meditation techniques are being incorporated as alternative treatments of stress-management and depression, however, it is still not instituted in as systematic manner to the masses. For example, Vanderbilt University has established Prevention of Depression Project called Teens Achieving Mastery over Stress that is focused on combating the destructive emotion of depression and suicide among teens through the use of meditation and visualization.¹⁸

To a certain degree, the scientific community and Buddhist sangha have come together to combat this global crises of mental well-being through meditative healing. More than just well-being, meditation’s benefits include healing of the physical body. A number of integrative health practices in the West use Buddhist notions of mindfulness and mind-body connection. More recently, a relatively new area of mind-body medicine called Psycho-neuro-immunology (PNI), explores the influence of the mind on the body and immune system, and uses meditation and visualization as part of their treatment therapies.

Perhaps the most influential is O. Carl Simonton’s “whole-body” approach to cancer and the mind-body connection, and influenced millions in the US.¹⁹ In 10-year study, he found that the radiation therapy treatment was much more effective with those who had a more positive outlook, and concluded that the mind must influence the immune system. At the Simonton Cancer Counseling and

¹⁸ http://www.jbcc.harvard.edu/about/faculty/w_beardslee.htm

¹⁹ Time Magazine, “Alternative Medicine/Guided Imagery: Mind Over Malignancies. April 16, 2001. <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,999711,00.html>.

Research Center, he introduced alternative treatment like visualization, awareness meditation, and positive thinking, to slow down the negative effects of cancer. Similarly, medical institutions have integrated Buddhism meditative techniques as alternative therapies of mental health have in Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) established by Kabat-Zinn at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center, to cope with stress, pain, and sickness, especially HIV and cancer. Similarly, Harvard Medical School Professor Herbert Benson's study investigated the effects of Buddhist meditation on the mind and body, and how physical healing is result from the practice of Buddhist meditation and concentration. He states: "There's another reality we can tap into that's unaffected by our emotions, by our everyday world. Buddhists believe this state of mind can be achieved by doing good for others and by meditation... we can uncover capacities that will help us to better treat stress-related illnesses."²⁰ As an expression of engaged Buddhism, Buddhist teachers similarly have integrated the holistic approach of the training and purification of mind through meditation for the laity. For instance, the renowned Thai Bhikkhu Buddhadasa's commentarial text on the meditative practice of *Anapanasati* (Meditation of Breathing) made it also accessible to the laity and general interested audiences.²¹

Conclusion

Indeed, Buddhist ideas of the 5th century *Visuddhimagga* is as relevant today, as it was 2000 years ago. More importantly, given the global crisis of mental well-being, there is unquestionable evidence of Buddhist meditation that would benefit the world. There is a critical need to disseminate these practices of self-transformation to the global communities that will enable all to cultivate qualities of compassion, loving-kindness, and equanimity. Ultimately, this will be a powerful solution of global recovery to bring harmony, peace, and mutual understanding. I would suggest the need of a viable model of a contemporary "visuddhi-magga" focusing on the social needs of the world community, as a solution for *global recovery of the 21st century world condition in search of happiness, compassion, and empathy. To implement this new visuddhi-magga should begin through mainstream education with the coordination of experienced Buddhist meditation masters, scholars, and education authorities. In this way, happiness will give rise to mental and physical well-being, and this mental stability from the negativity to positive thoughts will heal our body and mind. Thus, this new*

²⁰ Cromie, William J. (2002) *Research: Meditation changes temperatures: Mind controls body in extreme experiments*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Gazette, 18 April 2002.

²¹ Buddhadasa Bhikkhu, *Anapanasati (Mindfulness of Breathing)*. Tr. Bhikku Nagasena (Thailand: Sublime Life Mission, 1976).

visuddhi-magga for global recovery based on Buddhist meditation will transform our mind, our self, families, communities, and then our entire world.

The Isan Forest Meditation Tradition: a Praxis of Mental Well-Being Vis-À-Vis Global Recovery

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Introduction:

Isan or the Northeast of Thailand has been the home of 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 (*sammā saṅkappa*), an essential factor leading to wisdom as incorporated in the Noble Eightfold Path (*ariya-atthāṅgika-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 Thet, Luangpho Chah, Luangpoo Sao, 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

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 as *luangpoo* (venerable grandfather), *luangpho* (venerable father), or *ajahn* (variously spelt as *ajarn*, *ajan*, *achaan* and meaning respected teacher).

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.

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 (*sammā vācā*), right livelihood (*sammā ājīva*) and right action (*sammā kammanta*) are the ethical codes of the Noble Eightfold Path on the foundational base of which right effort (*sammā vāyāma*), right concentration (*sammā samādhi*), right mindfulness (*sammā sati*), right understanding (*sammā ditthi*)

and right thought (*sammā saṅkappa*) 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 (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*) and non-substantiality (*anattā*) and the Law of Dependent Origination (*paticcasamuppāda*)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

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.

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*).

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 effects consequent on good or bad deeds. In other words, a wholesome action (*kusala kamma*) begets good results and an evil or unwholesome action (*akusala kamma*) 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.

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

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 *saṅkhāra*, 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. Luangpho Chah 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 Luangpho Chah 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 objectification 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 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 Luangpho Chah 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

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

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

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 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

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.

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, 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 *thudanga* practice geared their deconstructive endeavors 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 Luangpho Chah uses are thought provoking. In all his dhamma talks there are some extremely 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

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

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 Luangpho Chah's deconstruction from Derrida's deconstruction as centered upon word game is an unwillingness to indulge in prolix and convoluted wordplay. For Luangpho Chah, 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 Luangpho Chah's philosophy is that the deconstructive tool through which Luangpho Chah seeks to dispose of all self/ego arising positions helps lead to enlightenment beyond language and conceptuality. Luangpho Chah'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 suggests 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

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

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 *Derridean aporia* 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 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 contingency 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

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.

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,

¹³ Mahasi Sayadaw. (1996). *The Great Discourse on Not Self (Anattālakkhana Sutta)*. Bangkok: Buddhadhamma Foundation.

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 fetishization of all sense objects that has given rise to both mental and environmental pollution.

Anattā is put into practice through the deconstructive mantra of 'Let Go' of the forest tradition

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. Luangpho Chah 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 Luangpho Chah, "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 Luangpho Chah, 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 unmanageable. 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 (*rūpakhandha*), sensation (*vedanākkhandha*), perception (*saññākkhandha*), mental formations (*samkhārakkhandha*) and consciousness (*viññānakkhandha*) – 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 (*rūpatanhā*), craving for sound (*sadda-tanhā*), craving for smell (*gandha-tanhā*), craving for taste (*rasa-tanhā*), craving for physical contact (*phothhabba-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.

●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.

¹⁴ Payutto, P.A. (1994). *Buddhist Economics*. Bangkok: The National Identity Board, p. 33.

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 (*dīthupādāna*), 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 Luangpho Chah 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 felled 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. Luangpho Chah 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.

Dealing Depression with Cognitive Therapy and Mindfulness

Guangji (Jiang Yongchao)

Introduction:

Depression is not a modern problem, but its history goes back to the beginning of human civilization; as the Buddha says: life is suffering. Living with stress was experienced in this very life by every man even in ancient time. But today, depression is becoming a big factor influencing the well being of modern mankind. In the West many people have been involved with dealing this problem, both the medical professors and therapists, and the patients or clients. In this small article I will address the Buddhist point of view on this issue and how western psychotherapists integrate Buddhist mindfulness meditation into their theory of psychotherapy, especially theories from Dr. A. T. Beck.

Part I - What is depression?

Commonly defined, depression is “mental illness by which a person experiences deep, unshakable sadness and diminished interest in nearly all activities”.¹ Depression can also denote the temporary sadness, loneliness, bluesy feelings, etc. These result in our responses to any kind of change such as being worried about losing jobs, facing financial problems, worrying about seriously illnesses; marital and divorce issues, etc. As an illness, higher depression can be classified into some kinds: first is the bipolar disorder, by which the patient’s mood swings back and forth between depression and mania. The bipolar disorder is also called manic-depressive illness. The second is seasonal affective disorder, this kind of disorder is suffered by depression, only happening in some seasons. Third is dysthymia, which makes people feel depressed with low self-esteem, and it is very difficult to focus mind when doing something. As with mental health professional’s customs in the West, any of the above forms of depressions are used with the term: “clinical depression” - to refer them.

In general sense, ordinary depression might not create an extreme psychological problem; but, if the depression reaches higher levels, it becomes severe depression. Severe depression is called a major depression which is properly:

¹ See the “*depression*” on Microsoft Encarta 2006.

the psychological illness. “Major depression is a disabling condition which adversely affects a person's family, work or school life, sleeping and eating habits, and general health. In the United States, approximately 3.4% of people with major depression commit suicide, and up to 60% of people who commit suicide have depression or another mood disorder.”² Undoubtedly, major depression is a big issue in modern society, carelessness with it, is a biggest cost-loss. So anyone who gets this problem should go to see a psychiatrist or psycho-therapist.

It is clear to us that in any situation in life, with any issues in life, if we can not respond to them in a proper way, there will be some depression arising in our life and this naturally impairs our ability to function in a social context.

Part II - How does Buddhism look at depression?

Actually, in Buddhist teachings there is no particular word that corresponds to medical-depression, but there are many systematic terms in Buddhism that can be rendered as psychological terms, and by which we can know how Buddhism thinks about depression in human minds.

Both Mahayana and Theravada forms of Buddhism, when they represent the negative side of human psychologies, many terms are applied, such as: *anuśaya*³; *pariyavasthāna*⁴; *nivaraṇāni*⁵; *saṃyoga*⁶; *bandhana*⁷; *āsrava*⁸; *upādāna*⁹ and *kilesa*, so on.

For instance, the “*kilesa*” which are commonly used in both Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism, they include the following: (1) greed (*lobha*), (2) hate (*dosa*), (3) delusion (*moha*), (4) conceit (*māna*), (5) speculative views (*diṭṭhi*), (6) skeptical doubt (*vicikicchā*), (7) mental torpor (*thīna*), (8) restlessness (*uddhacca*); (9) shamelessness (*ahirika*), (10) lack of moral dread or unconscientiousness (*anottappa*).¹⁰

²See *Wikipedia Encyclopedia* on the internet under: “*Major depressive disorder*”.

³ 隨 隨 Bad tendency, evil inclination, especially refers to evil inclinations lying within one's mind which do not manifest in one's present behavior.

⁴ 纏 To catch, capture, seize, can be interpreted synonymously with the term "affliction".

⁵ 蓋 To cover, hide and conceal; obscuring the function of wisdom.

⁶ 結 Tie up, join together, link which means afflictions or defilement, binds and fetters sentient beings; referring to the 'ten fetters'.

⁷ 縛 Binding, bonds, fetters.

⁸ 漏 To let leak, reveal, omit which is based on ignorance and is therefore *samsāric*, defiled, contaminated.

⁹ 取 Attachment, the mental desiring and grasping (*anupādāna*).

¹⁰ Buddhist Dictionary by Nyanatiloka Mahathera

Kilesa is defined as: defilement(s), afflictions, and evil passion or carnal desire. It is said they are: mind-defiling, unwholesome qualities of the human mind and behaviors. All of the thoughts, words, actions and emotions which arise and cease based on ignorance and desire – these keep human beings trapped in the cycle of birth and death, and which result in the suffering to man.¹¹

In Buddhist perspective, *Kilesa* is categorized as the second truth “*The Cause*” among the four noble truths. They are all negative and evil components of human’s behaviors and thought; it is origination of the distress and suffering with human living. The *kilesa* can be embodied by concerning it with knowledge, ideas, feelings, emotions, willing. Anyhow, whatever the *kilesa* arising, it leads the person to fidget, disharmony, discomfort and restlessness. Among the *kilesa*, the greed, hate and delusion are the most basic causes of the all the psychological problems and that is why all the negative psychological terms in Buddhism can be classified into this three groups: group of the greed; group of the hatred; group of the delusion.

For instance: craving, defilement, desire, miserliness, dissimulation, arrogance, restlessness which are belonged to the group of greed. For instance: belligerence, resentment, anxiety and pride are sorted into the group of hated. For instance: views, doubt, non-faith, lethargy, forgetfulness, non-introspection and wrong thinking are belonged into the group of delusion.

The *Wikipedia Encyclopedia* gives an explanation: “in early Buddhist texts the *kilesas* generally referred to mental states which temporarily cloud the mind and manifest in unskillful actions. Over time, the *kilesas*, and in particular: the “Three Poisons” of greed, hatred, and delusion, came to be seen as the very roots of samsaric existence.”

As sentient beings, everyone has been dying with those kinds of defilements, time and time again, from life to life, in spite of a persons personality tendencies or personality features - but this does not mean anyone can just easily become free from *kilesa*. With those *kilesas*’, theories that regard the psychological system of a man: anyone who take their thoughts and behaviors into particular area in which they are enthusiastic on, if they cannot reflect upon their life with rational thinking and proper behaviors, and any kind of the *kilesas* which might bring the negative psychological result - like the depression to them.

From this above discussion, we can see that Buddhism shows doctrines of psychological significance to man, and this is certainly opposite from what is meant by modern western psychotherapy, especially cognitive psychotherapy.

¹¹ See the *Kilesa* in “Combined Digital Dictionaries of Buddhism”

Part III - Dealing Mindfully with Depression:

In the present, this has become popular in the West, which is mostly combined with psychotherapy or psychiatry. This tendency of theoretical transformation (it is a very fashionable change), gets the biggest feedback in eastern Buddhist countries, like Sri Lanka.

In the West, some sixty years ago, there was a noticeable process in the evolvement of psychotherapy or mental healing - western psychologists and psychotherapists looked at Buddhist philosophy as psychological treatment, and some of them who were attracted to this eastern mental-culture transferred themselves to become Buddhists who practice meditation regularly in their daily lives. With this understanding and without any degree of negative sense, Buddhism can, not only be considered as a religion, philosophy and science first, but secondly: it is important to learn, to know what Buddhist psychology is. Additionally, is there any useful thought that could be adopted into western psychology or mental therapy? Therefore, sixty years has passed, from their study of Buddhism: many theories of Buddhist teachings have enlighten and sharpened their minds. Finally, they accepted that Buddhist psychology and meditation can be a new way to deal with depression or other psychological issues.

Therefore, today we are able to find many books, usually titled, with the following keywords: “*mindfulness and psychotherapy*” or “*Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy*”¹², for example. It is surely to admit, today, that the Buddhist psychology and meditation is widely used to deal the depression and mental disturbance in west.

Part IV – Theories of Beck:

Among these modern psychotherapeutic figures: Dr. Aaron T. Beck¹³ is the most senior in cognitive therapy. He is considered to be the founder of mindfulness-cognitive therapy which is integrated with the Buddhist psychology and meditation (mindfulness). His important and popular book is: *Cognitive Therapy of Depression*.

¹² Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for Depression: A New Approach to Preventing Relapse by Zindel V. Segal, Mark G. Williams, and John D. Teasdale; New York, Guilford Press, 2001.

¹³ Aaron T. Beck, M.D., is the President of the non-profit Beck Institute for Cognitive Therapy and Research, and University Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania.

Judith S. Beck¹⁴ who wrote an article about Dr. Aaron T. Beck's significant contributions, named: *Cognitive Therapy Today*, in which she clearly represented the cognitive therapy of Dr. Aaron T. Beck, and how Dr. Aaron T. Beck links Buddhist ideas to cognitive therapy. In her article she said: the goals of all psychotherapeutic activities (cognitive and mindfulness) are to reach the state of serenity, peace of mind, relief of suffering. With this purpose, Dr. Aaron T. Beck claimed that the processes of psychotherapy are designed into three steps¹⁵:

- First step is to know the causes of mental distress: He thought that distress (depression) was aroused by egocentric biases which led to excessive or inappropriate anger, envy, craving, and the false beliefs. These are the same as Buddhist theories: self-centric and the three poisons: greed, hatred and delusion. Dr. Aaron T. Beck said, usually, the egocentric biases were always reinforced by underlying self-defeating, self-unsatisfied, and self-unfulfilled tendencies. Naturally, by this psychological power, one who rolls himself toward a direction where or to what he was going to attach - those biases or unbalanced thoughts, are fixed in one's mind; this person seems to feel downthrown wherever his involvement is. With these practices, from time to time, he attaches negative meanings to every event as habits sink deeper into underlying unconsciousness, and finally, it becomes a kind of automatic thought.
- Second step is about methods of how to deal the depression: basically, these are borrowed from Buddhist meditation. The core thinking is the special way of mindfulness or called analyzing-meditation as well. This step is also divided into many sub-categories, they are as follows:

1), to focus on the immediate (here and now), it means that the client should tune his mind on, towards looking at the here and now. Here, in place, the client is just doing; and now is the time when the client is just living with himself. This is the practice regarding the power of concentration and uniting puzzling thoughts, dispelling the massive thought which has been pressing clients.

2), the client is suggested to adjust his mind by targeting the biased thinking through these ways: a) introspection; b) reflectiveness; c) perspective-taking; d) identification of "toxic" beliefs; e) distancing; f) constructive experience; g) nurturing "positive beliefs".¹⁶

¹⁴ Judith S. Beck, Ph.D., is the Director of the Beck Institute for Cognitive Therapy and Research in suburban Philadelphia and Clinical Associate Professor of Psychology in Psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania. She received her doctorate from the University of Pennsylvania in 1983.

¹⁵ Judith S. Beck, Ph.D.: *Cognitive Therapy Today*
<http://www.gedachtenuitpluizen.nl/nieuwsbrieven/Fall05.pdf>

¹⁶ Same above.



The “introspection” is contemplation of one’s own thoughts, feelings, and sensations and doing self-examination. The “reflection” is intuitively to look one’s own body and mind as the objective target without emotional involvement. The “perspective-taking”, encourages people to refine or choose their thinking which is positive. And then, which kinds of thoughts are wholesome or unwholesome, this is worked by “identification of ‘toxic’ beliefs”. To be far or isolated from the personal emotion increases traumatic thought involvement - client is to calm the mood down to keep a distance from the previous experience. When the mind is peaceful and body is composed, confidence is present; the client can “reconstruct his experience” in a new style. After these, the final process is to continue “nurturing ‘positive-beliefs’”, and keep mindfulness in practices.

3) using imagery: this seems like a day-dream, such as imaging a clear sky, flickering sea, beautiful mountains and smooth plains, by which one client would be cooling their mind on love and friendly objects without the disturbance in mood and harmful impulses.

4), the client would have the power of mind to separate the distress from the pains and distresses. This means that the distress has no connection with pains, the distresses are no-response by body and mind, and which has no-effective result to the client any longer.

5), is to summarize the mindfulness training. Mindfulness (*Satipaṭṭhāna*) in Buddhism has four portions¹⁷, which is contemplation on the body, feeling; consciousness and mind-objects.

- The third step is the values of theory, it includes: 1) importance of acceptance, compassion, knowledge, understanding; 2) altruism and not egoism; 3) universalism and not groupism: “we are one with all humankind”; 4) science and superstitions; 5) self-responsibility.

This section tells us: that the right view of depression is being mindful, using proper attention, that makes us know and accept our problems; and again, avoiding egocentric thinking; and non-self helps us to be free from self-bondage – and not believing in mysterious things but through rational thinking, we can be independent when facing questions. Self-responses make us work with conditions in life reasonably, and this is the only way to solve an entire disturbance. All explanations above are outline of instructions in A. T. Beck’s theory of cognitive psychotherapy.

¹⁷ Mindfulness include: 1) the contemplation of the body (*kāyanupassanā*); 2) seeing the all feelings (*vedanānupassanā*); 3) clearly perceives and understands any state of consciousness or mind (*cittānupassanā*); 4) Concerning the mind-objects (*dhammānupassanā*).

Accordingly, we can know how cognitive therapy has been based on Buddhist psychology and mindfulness meditation.¹⁸

Part V – Westerners Borrowing Buddhism:

However, in the present time, westerners borrow Buddhist thoughts for integration with western psychotherapy – this is not a new thing. Many western psychologists and therapists have been concerned in this area for more than twenty years. Therefore, many schools and theories can be found. Below are some selected-original quotations that might be helpful to demonstrate how westerners look at Buddhist psychology, especially, Buddhist meditation and the theory of mindfulness:

- “Keeping one’s consciousness alive to the present time” -(*Thich Naht Hanh, 1976*).
- “Mindfulness is simply the knack of noticing without comment whatever is happening in your experience” -(*Guy Claxton 1990*).
- “The non-judgmental observation of the ongoing stream of internal and external stimuli as they arise” -(*Ruth Baer 2003*).
- “In mindfulness we learn to awaken from unconsciousness absorption in thoughts and feelings” -(*Germer 2005*).
- “By learning to set aside discursive thinking, and to see products of cognition as events with no special reality, we become familiar with the tendency of our minds to build imaginary scenarios, which are inhabited as if they are real” - (*Falton, 2005*).
- “What mindfulness is about: being present to our experience however distressing or upsetting it may be; brings us closer to difficulties but becoming caught up in our reactions to difficulties; It is slow, gentle coming to grips with who we are; settling in to our current experience in a relaxed, alert, open-hearted way.”¹⁹

Throughout these quotations, we can get some sense that the role of mindfulness it allows us to be aware. “Freely observe what we perceive and

¹⁸ See the above 16.

¹⁹ *Mindfulness* by Tony Bates. Dr Tony Bates is founding director of Headstrong – The National Centre for Youth Mental Health in Ireland. Headstrong is an independent charity committed to championing the mental health needs of young people and to working with communities to design and implement comprehensive systems of care and support for all young people.

<http://www.google.com/search?q=Mindfulness+by+Tony+Bates+&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&aq=t> &
<http://www.spiritualcareconference.com/section/31>

experience without needing to change, justify or repress it”²⁰ Based on this thinking, we would find deeper meanings; that: “mindfulness increase awareness of the circuitous nature of the mind as expounded in the Buddha’s teachings of dependent origination or inter-relatedness and *kamma*. Additionally, mindfulness and emotions as they arise, and [*the exercise of*] labeling them objectively (anger as anger; pain as pain), we uncover strengths and weakness that have hitherto remained covered and [*we*] learn to deal with them. The practice of just labeling, acknowledging and experiencing the feeling without necessarily having to express it has significant therapeutic benefits”²¹. (*Khong, 2005*)

These quotations are enough to show how mindfulness is used in psychotherapy, and we consent that mindfulness is being incorporated with psycho-therapy to perform a significant role today. It has been leading many clients towards settling their lives with what is happening in the present time with new psychological problems, and this integrated theory is useful to help them reconstruct new lives as well.

Conclusion:

Finally, the conclusion is thus, Buddhism is the oldest religion in the world, and Cognitive Therapy is a new form of psychotherapy. Both of them are dedicated to the pursuit of the deepest knowledge of human capacity, for growth and happiness of life. Secondly, they are all rooted in this ideal: that man through intentional action, and learning the conditions in life, practicing life in a reasonable way – this leads man to fulfill human understanding and peaceful living with confidence and happiness.

²⁰ *The Buddha’s influence in the therapy room* by Belinda siew luan khong.

http://www.hakomiinstitute.com/Forum/Issue18/4_HF_Buddha_in_the_therapyroom.pdf

http://en.scientificcommons.org/belinda_siew_luan_khong

²¹ *Same as 20.*

Reference:

Aaron T. Beck, M.D., is the President of the non-profit Beck Institute for Cognitive Therapy and Research, and University Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania.

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Right Concentration and Mental Well-Being

*Bhikkhuni Dr. Hue Lien*¹

Importance of Right Concentration

Mental well-being is the most important factor to make the society peaceful, to cause the family happiness, and oneself comfortable. According to Buddhism, mental well-being can be attained and maintained for ever by practicing right concentration. The Buddha himself declares the meditation to be a kind of mental well-being in this present life and the next.²

Right concentration (*sammāsamādhi*), the final factor of the path means firmly establishing one-pointed attention of the mind (*cittassekaggatā* or *ekaggatā*)³ or focusing the mind on a single mental object, not being scattered but stable and tranquil. The concentration of mind is carried out with unfailing effort. This concentration of mind which precedes the attainment of meditations (*jhāna*), according to the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta*,⁴ is the result of a process of continuous development, starting with moral virtue (*sīlakkhandha*) and proceeding toward restraint of sense faculties (*indriyaṣaṃvara*) and mental and intellectual alertness (*satisampajañña*). This development enables the meditator to effect, an inward purity, and to cleanse his mind of the five obstacles or hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*).

To attain the four meditations, the first task is to detach the mind from sensual and unwholesome dispositions. This mentions the exclusion of the five hindrances (*pañca-nīvaraṇāni*).⁵ This is done by right mindfulness.⁶

When someone realizes that these five hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*), which defile the mind and weaken the intellect,⁷ have been got rid of and are no more within

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² A. IV. 453f; GS. IV. 298.

³ M. I. 301; MLS. I. 363; Trung I. 660.

⁴ D. I. 71; DB. I. 82; Trööðong I. 136.

⁵ Referring to the five hindrances (*pañca nīvaraṇāni*) the Buddha teaches that: “Monks, there are these five hindrances which cause blindness, loss of sight and ignorance; which obstruct insight, consort with pain and conduce not to Nibbāna.” See S. V. 97; KS. V. 81; Tööng V. 155.

⁶ D. II. 300; DB. II. 335; Trööðong II. 197.

⁷ M. I. 181.

him, then gladness (*pāmojjaṃ*) springs up⁸ and to gladness joy (*pīti*) arises. His state becomes at ease, then he is filled with a sense of peace (*passambhāti*), and in that peace his heart is stayed.⁹ At this moment, he, “aloof from sensuality, aloof from evil states, enters on the first trance, which is accompanied by thought directed and sustained, born of solitude, easeful and zestful, and abides therein.”¹⁰ Thus, his mind reaches a state of concentration called the first meditation, in which five hindrances are abandoned, and five meditation factors are possessed.¹¹ The five meditation factors are initial application of thought (*vitakka*), sustained application of thought (*vicāra*), zest or joy (*pīti*), ease or rapture (*sukha*), and one-pointedness (*ekaggatā*) of mind.¹²

Attaining the fourth meditation is considered as the attainment of the freedom of mind, which has neither pain nor pleasure.¹³

The rising from one meditation to another is denoted by the progressive exclusion of meditation factors as below:

1) First meditation comprises five elements, namely, initial application of thought (*vitakka*), sustained application of thought (*vicāra*), rapture or joy (*pīti*), bliss or happiness (*sukha*), and one-pointed attention (*ekaggatā*).

2) Second meditation (*dutiya-jhāna*) embraces joy (*pīti*), happiness (*sukha*), and one-pointed attention (*ekaggatā*). Initial application of thought (*vitakka*) and sustained application of thought (*vicāra*) are eliminated.

3) Third meditation (*tatiya-jhāna*) involves happiness (*sukha*), and one-pointed attention (*ekaggatā*). The first three factors, initial application of thought (*vitakka*), sustained application of thought (*vicāra*) and rapture or joy (*pīti*) are absent.

4) Fourth meditation (*catuttha-jhāna*) includes indifference (*upekkhā*) and one-pointed attention (*ekaggatā*), and eliminates the four factors, namely, initial application of thought (*vitakka*), sustained application of thought (*vicāra*), rapture or joy (*pīti*) and bliss or happiness (*sukha*),

⁸ The gladness arisen from putting away of the five hindrances is compared to freedom from debt, getting rid of disease, being out of jail, a free man, and secure. See D. I. 73; DB. I. 84; Tröðøng I. 138.

⁹ D. I. 73; DB. I. 84; Tröðøng I. 139.

¹⁰ S. V. 9; KS. V. 9; Tōng V. 21f. “Vivicc’eva kāmehi vivicca akusalehi dhammehi savitakkam savicāram vivekajam pītisukham pañhamam jhānam upasampajja viharati.” See also D. I. 73, II. 313; DB. I. 84, II. 345; Tröðøng I. 139, II. 214.

¹¹ M. I. 294; MLS. I. 354; Trung I. 646.

¹² M. I. 294; MLS. I. 354; Trung I. 646. Vide also M. III. 25; MLS. III. 78; Trung III. 154.

¹³ M. I. 296; MLS. I. 357; Trung I. 650.

Right Concentration as Calm (*samatha*) and Insight (*vipassanā*)

Concentration occupies the highest place since through concentration that enlightenment and *nibbāna* are attained. This method of concentration is based upon the Buddha's personal experience of mental development, and as it is reported he used it for his own attainment of enlightenment.

Concentration that is one-pointedness (*cittakaggatā*) of mind is divided into two inter-related systems, namely, calm (*samatha*), and insight (*vipassanā*).¹⁴ Calm (*samatha*) has the function of focusing the mind on one good object to exclude all others and bad ones and to calm the mind. Such a good object is known as one of the objects of the four foundations of mindfulness in right mindfulness, which also is called the distinguishing marks of concentration. The development of the calm (*samatha*) along with its cultivation is supported by the four right efforts.¹⁵ In this stage, it is clearly seen that the three factors such as right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration operate in integrating each other.

It is clear to see that calm (*samatha*) and insight (*vipassanā*) occur simultaneously.¹⁶ They combine with each other to destroy all bad tendencies¹⁷ for calming the mind and to investigate every thing.

All this points out that calm (*samatha*) and insight (*vipassanā*) are not other than right concentration (*sammā-samādhi*) and right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*) respectively, both cannot be separated. Without calm (*samatha*), no insight (*vipassanā*) can be developed. Without insight (*vipassanā*), no calm (*samatha*) can be developed.¹⁸ The combination of both in practice conduces to the freedom (*vimutti*), freedom of mind (*cetovimutti*) and freedom through insight (*paññāvimutti*).

¹⁴ D. III. 273; DB. III. 251; Tröoøng II. 655. The word *vipassanā* includes *vi+passanā*. The word *passati* is to see and the prefix 'vi' stands for special or particular.

¹⁵ M. I. 301; MLS. I. 363; Trung I. 660: The text mentions: "What is concentration, what are the distinguishing marks of concentration, what are the requisites for concentration, what is the development of concentration? Whatever is one-pointedness of mind, this is concentration; the four arousings of mindfulness are the distinguishing marks of concentration; the four right efforts are the requisites for concentration; whatever is the practice, the development, the increase of these very things, this is herein the development of concentration."

¹⁶ M. III. 289; MLS. III. 338; Trung III. 646.

¹⁷ A. I. 100; GS. I. 85f; Taêng I. 179: The Buddha teaches: "Monks, for the full comprehension of lust... for the utter destruction, abandoning, ending, decay, fading out, giving up and renunciation... For the full comprehension of anger, delusion, hate, hypocrisy and spite, envy and grudging, deceit and treachery, obstinacy and impetuosity, pride and overweening pride, mental intoxication and negligence... two conditions must be cultivated. What two? "Calm and insight."

¹⁸ Dh. 372: "There is no concentration to him who lacks wisdom, nor is there wisdom to him who lacks concentration. In whom are both concentration and wisdom. He, indeed, is in the presence of Nibbāna: Natthi jhāna apaññassa, paññā natthi ajhāyato, yamhi jhānaṃ ca paññaṇ ca sa ve nibbāna santike."

Concentration on the Signlessness (*animitta-samādhī*)

Concentration on the signless is to contemplate that every object is impermanent,¹⁹ subject to destruction,²⁰ because of its non-existence after having been. It is in the state of rise and fall,²¹ of change, of temporariness, and of denying permanence.²²

When whosoever has faith in considering all component things as impermanent,²³ and pays no attention to any signs, abiding in the signless mental concentration (*animitto cetosamādhī*, vôã töòùng taâm ñònħ),²⁴ such a one reaches the freedom of mind that is signless (*animitto cetovimokkha*).²⁵ Then all conditioned things present themselves to him in their true nature of dissolution. He attains the faculty of faith (*saddhindriya*), and he is liberated as he enters the path to Stream-winning (*sotāpattimagga*). At the moment of his entrance to the path to stream winning (*sotāpattimagga*), he is called a Faith-Devotee (*saddhānusārī*),²⁶ one of the seven noble disciples, and in the remaining seven stages of perfection, he is called Faith-Liberated (*saddhāvimutta*).²⁷

The signless mental concentration (*animitto cetosamādhī*, vôã töòùng taâm ñònħ) is a developed state of mind, reached through constant training of the mind (*bhāvanā*), in which all signs are eliminated. In this state of mind all mental obsessions are absent and the mind is inclined towards insight (*vipassanā*), seeing

¹⁹ Buddhaghosa identifies the signless liberation with the contemplation of impermanence (*aniccānupassanā*: PP. xxi, 73, p. 769; n. 34; TTD. III, 349).

²⁰ D. II, 156; DB. II, 173; Trööøng I, 665: This is the Buddha's last word: "Decay is inherent in all component things. Work out your salvation with diligence."

²¹ D. II, 144; DB. II, 159; Trööøng I, 649: The Buddha says to Ānanda: "Have I not already, on former occasions, told you that it is in the very nature of all things most near and dear unto us that we must divide ourselves from them, leave them, sever ourselves from them? How, then, Ānanda, can this be possible; whereas anything whatever born, brought into being, and organized, contains within itself the inherent necessity of dissolution; how, then, can this be possible, that such a being should not be dissolved? No such condition can exist!" Vide also at M. I, 380; MLS. II, 45; Trung II, 96: "Whatever is of the nature to arise, all that is of the nature to stop."

²² PP. 746; TTD. III, 309f.

²³ S. III, 225; KS. III, 177; Tööøng III, 369.

²⁴ A. IV, 78; GS. IV, 45; Taêng III, 385: A description is given of how Mahāmoggallāna entered on and abode in the signless mental concentration (*animitto cetosamādhī*, vôã töòùng taâm ñònħ) with the assistance of the Buddha.

²⁵ M. I. 298; MLS. I. 359; Trung I, 652: "A monk, by paying no attention to any signs, entering on the concentration of mind that is signless, abides therein. This is called the freedom of mind that is signless." See also at S. IV. 296; KS. IV. 205; Tööøng IV. 465f: "Without thought of all signs, reaches and abides in that tranquility of heart that is signless."

²⁶ S. III, 225; KS. III, 177; Tööøng III, 369.

²⁷ PP. xxi, 89, p. 774; TT D. III, 358.

things in their true perspective (*yathābhāta-nāṇa*).²⁸

Concentration on the Desirelessness (*appaṇihita-samādhi*)

Concentration on the desireless (*appaṇihita-samādhi*) is to contemplate that every phenomenal existence is suffering (*dukkha*).²⁹ It is suffering for four reasons, which are in the sense of burning, of being hard to bear, of being the basis for pain, and of opposing pleasure.³⁰ It is suffering because “what is impermanent is suffering.”³¹ It involves understanding all things that exist as giving rise to suffering, due to the conflict generated through their continually changing nature. If the emergence is from the painful, then he acquires the concentration faculty (*samādhi-indriya*) because he has great tranquility, he is liberated by the desireless liberation (*appaṇihitavimokkha*), and among holy ones, he is the Body-Witness (*Kāyasakkhī*). If he has a formless meditation (*arūpa-jhāna*) as the basis for his insight, he becomes the Both-way Liberated One (*Ubhatobhāgavimutta*).³²

From the above consideration, these three kinds of concentration can be understood as expressing the contemplations of the three characteristics (*tilakkhaṇa*), namely, impermanence (*aniccatā*), suffering (*dukkhatā*) and non-self (*anattatā*). These are the three aspects of realization of the true nature of all phenomena.³³ This realization thus never arises in separation; it always goes with each other, and they are also called the three gateways to liberation (P. *tīni vimokkhamukhāni*, S. *trīṇi vimokṣa-mukhāni*).³⁴

Benefits of Right Concentration

The practice and development of concentration brings about various benefits as below:

²⁸ EB. I. 676.

²⁹ Buddhaghosa identifies the desireless liberation with the contemplation of pain (*dukkhānupassanā*: PP. xxi, 73, p. 769; n. 34; TTD. III, 349).

³⁰ PP. xxi, p. 746, note 3; TTD. III, 310.

³¹ S. III, 22; KS. III, 21; Tōṅg III, 47.

³² PP. xxi, 89, p. 774; TTD. III, 358.

³³ S. III, 28; KS. III, 28 ; Tōṅg III, 59.

³⁴ The three gateways to liberation (P. *tīni vimokkhamukhāni*, S. *trīṇi vimokṣa-mukhāni*) are the gateway to void liberation (P. *suññata-vimokkha-mukha*, S. *śūnyatā-vimokṣa-mukha*), the gateway to signless liberation (P. *animitta-vimokkha-mukha*, S. *animitta-vimokṣa-mukha*), and the gateway to desireless liberation (P. *appaṇihita-vimokkha-mukha*, S. *appaṇihita-vimokṣa-mukha*). See PP. xxi, 66, p. 766 and 70, p. 768; TTD. III, p. 344, 347.

i) Abidings in ease (*sukha*) here-now in the discipline for a noble person.³⁵ Meditations (*jhāna*) are of benefit not only prior to final attainment, as a foundation for insight, but maintain their benefit even afterwards as well. The Buddha himself declares the meditation to be a kind of *nibbāna* in this present life.³⁶

ii) Knowing things as they really are and no grasping them.³⁷ This can solve the problem of life and its repeated cycle of birth and death, by the total annihilation of all greed (*lobha*), aversion (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*).

iii) Attaining knowledge of the modes of supernormal power (*iddhividhañāṇa*). From the fourth form meditation onward, the concentrated mind is “pure, translucent, cultured, devoid of evil, supple, ready to act, firm, and imperturbable.”³⁸ This is the basis for attaining various kinds of supernormal powers (*abhiññā*).³⁹ On the other hand, the Buddha says that he preaches only the teachings that are beneficial (*attha-saṃhita*), the foundation of a divine life (*ādi-brahmacariyaka*), and conduce to repulsion (*ekanta-nibbidā*), to cessation of desires (*nirodha*), to peace (*upasama*), to super-knowledge (*abhiññā*), to enlightenment (*sambodhi*), and *nibbāna*.⁴⁰

Among the kinds of supernormal knowledge (*abhiññā*), the last form of knowledge is the most important and essential. Wisdom (*paññā*) has the destruction of cankers (*āsavakkhaya*) as its object.⁴¹ The attainment of the destruction of cankers (*āsava*) is considered to be freedom (*nibbāna*).

³⁵ M. I. 40-42; MLS. I. 52f; Trung I. 98-100. See also S. III. 169; KS. III. 144; Tōông III. 300.

³⁶ A. IV. 453f; GS. IV. 298; Taêng IV. 221.

³⁷ S. III. 13-15; KS. III. 15f; Tōông III. 31-34.

³⁸ D. I. 76; DB. I. 86; Trồông I. 142.

³⁹ The development of meditation concentration provides for the meditators the benefits of various supernormal powers whenever he directs and inclines his mind to the kinds of supernormal power, hence the Buddha says: “With his mind subtle, pliant, boundless concentration is well made become; and with boundless concentration well made become, he bends the mind to the realization by psychic knowledge and acquires the ability of an eyewitness in every case, whatever the range may be.” See A. IV. 420; GS. IV. 283; Taêng IV. 172. Vide also M. III. 96; MLS. III. 136; Trung III. 278 and A. I. 254; GS. I. 233; Taêng I. 461.

⁴⁰ D. III. 173; DB. III. 128; Trồông II. 469. Vide also S. II. 223; KS. II. 151; Tōông II. 348.

⁴¹ D. III. 230; DB. III. 221; Trồông II. 595.

Abbreviations

- A. Anguttara Nikāya, 6 vols, ed. R. Morris, E. Hardy, C. A. F. Rhys Davids. (London: PTS, 1885-1910).
- D. Dīgha Nikāya, 3 vols, ed. T. W. Rhys David and J. E. Carpenter, (London: PTS, 1890-1911)
- DB Dialogues of the Buddha, Part I-III, tr. from the Pāli of the Dīgha Nikāya by T.W. Rhys Davids and C.A.F. Rhys Davids. Part I (London: PTS, 1992, 1st Ed. 1899); Part II, (London: PTS, 1989, 1st Ed. 1910); Part III, (London: PTS, 1995, 1st Ed. 1921).
- Dhp. Dhammapada, ed. K. R. Norman and O. Von Hinuber. (London: PTS, 1931). Reference is to verse number.
- Ed. Edition, Edited by.
- GS. The Book of the Gradual Sayings, 5 vols., (translation of the Anguttara Nikāya); vol. I-II, tr. by F.L. Woodward (London: PTS, 1989-92, 1st Ed. 1932-3); vol. III-V, tr. by E.M. Hare (London: PTS, 1988-94, 1st Ed. 1934-6).
- KS. The Book of the Kindred Sayings or Grouped Suttas, 5 vols. (Translation of the Samyutta Nikāya); vol. I-II, tr. by Mrs. Rhys Davids, Assisted by S. Sumangala Thera and F.L. Woodward (London: PTS, 1993-4, 1st Ed. 1917-22); vols. III-V, tr. by F. L. Woodward, ed. by Mrs. Rhys Davids. (London: PTS, 1992-4, 1st Ed. 1925-30).
- M. Majjhima Nikāya, 4 vols., ed. V. Trenckner, R. Chalmers, Mrs. Rhys Davids. (London: PTS, 1888-1925).
- MLS. The Collection of the Middle Length Sayings, 3 vols., (translation of the Majjhima Nikāya) by. I. B. Horner. (London: PTS, 1993-5, 1st Ed. 1954-9).
- P. Pāli
- PTS. Pāli Text Society.
- S. Samyutta Nikāya, 5 vols, ed. L. Feuer and Mrs. C. A. F. Rhys Davids (London: PTS, 1884-1925).
- (S) Sanskrit.
- Tāng A Vietnamese translation of Anguttara Nikāya by Most Ven. Thich Minh Chau.
- Tr Translated.

- Trung A Vietnamese translation of Majjhima Nikāya by Most Ven. Thich Minh Chau.
- Trùng. A Vietnamese translation of Dīgha Nikāya by Most Ven. Thich Minh Chau.
- Tương A Vietnamese translation of Samyutta Nikāya) by Most Ven. Thich Minh Chau.

Global Recovery through Mental Well-Being By Practicing Seon (Zen) Meditation

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I. Introduction

It is known that this century is an age of knowledge based society as well as age of culture and advanced technology, or IT, BT and etc. However, we see that most mass-media report more about economy and sports than culture and religions. Ordinary peoples have been more concerning about their physical well-being with material supports than mental well-being with spiritual practices. We could recognize that the living conditions of these days are much better than the past, but feeling happiness is not improving, or depriving. In general, most people possess and consume much material things, but they could not satisfy it and want more without limitation. It may be said that most people lost their original nature of humanity, because they have run to way of living by the physical instinct without spiritual wisdom. It is known that the modern materialism and capitalism have been mainly initiated and spread by the Western civilization. Nowadays, global situation in terms of humanism shows that most human beings lost their peace and mental well-beings due to materialistic trends. We should recover humane community in global and personal humanity in individual through mental wellbeing.

General use of the word ‘well-being’ usually relates to health; for instance, a ‘Well-being Clinic’ or ‘Well-being Food’ in terms of the medical focus. In philosophical aspect, well-being may refer to how well a person's life is going for that person. One's well-being is what is good for one: the allied words such as welfare, which covers how a person is faring, or happiness; happiness is often used, in ordinary life, to refer to a state of a person's feeling of contentment. It is possible to speak of the happiness of a person's life related with subjective interest. Happiness is usually understood in terms of satisfaction. Therefore, the people's well-being as consisting in the satisfaction of preferences or desires - the content of which, could be revealed by their interests. This made possible the ranking of preferences, the development of utility functions for individuals, and methods for assessing the value of preference-satisfaction, the more interest-fulfillment in a life the better. However, constituents of well-being are their perfecting human nature. If it is part of human nature to acquire a something, for example, then one should claim that the thing is a constituent of well-being.

Mental well-being here means health and happiness in mind or spirit and refers to contrast with physical well-being that means health and strength in body. According to Buddhist understanding, our mind is originally perfect, bright, clear, peaceful, and humane. However, most people have been disturbed and troubled peaceful mind with defilements and delusions. To recover peace, happiness, brightness and compassion in one's mind, Buddhist meditation practice is the best way in my knowledge and experience. Buddhist meditation practice has been taught and transmitted from Shakyamuni Buddha and his descendant patriarchal masters to the present around the world. Through the meditation, one could purify and cultivate one's mind and attain enlightenment. The enlightened mind has no defilements and ignorance but peace and wisdom. Among many ways of meditation practice, Seon (Chan/Zen) has been known as one of the best and fast way to attain enlightenment in East Asia. It is only depends on one's mind in terms of one's resolution or determination to practice no matter what one's social status and faith traditions. Seon refer to concentration and contemplation on the critical and ultimate question to get the real answer from seeing the nature of one's mind intuitively.

In this paper, I, as a practitioner and teacher of Seon, will introduce the Seon with its background and way to practice from my study and experiences to the readers for the well-being of them and recovering global community of humane world where peace and happiness should prevail through.

II. Seon Meditation Practice

Seon, a meditation practice, is to attain Enlightenment or Nirvana, a peaceful state of well-being. Thus it must address not only for the individual but also for the communal needs of the global society. However, there is a lack of the previous research for reference related to the topic, because it seems to be known that as its characteristic of Seon which emphasizes practice through an intuitive meditation. Therefore, I am supposed to write in this paper mainly based on my own experience and research related with the subject. I will review the characteristics of Seon and then its relevance to mental well-being.

1. Concept of Seon

The term “Seon” is the Korean pronunciation of the Chinese character “Chan” which was a shortened transliteration of the Sanskrit sound dhyāna. It has been known in English as “Zen” from the Japanese pronunciation of Chinese Chan since the Japanese introduced it to the West first. In this context, the mental or spiritual practice refers to Buddhist meditation, a way of concentration or contemplation on a certain point in order to become such a state of mind as samādhi. Through this practice, one can make one’s mind calm, clear, and bright. From that

state of mind one can see one's own nature, or 'Buddha nature,' which might translate as to the attainment of Awakening or Enlightenment, as well as the completion of wisdom and freedom from transmigration. Seon, sometimes refers to practicing meditation, or Seon tradition and school, depending on the situation or context. In Seon tradition, its origin has been known as the meditation of Siddharta just before he attained Enlightenment and became Shakyamuni Buddha. Therefore, Seon is recognized as the best way of practice to attain Buddhahood. It is noticeable that the Dharma lineage of Chinese and Korea was started from Shakyamuni Buddha.

In East Asia, the Patriarchal tradition of Buddhist meditation has been flowering, and the Ganhwa-seon has especially bloomed in Korea. The Patriarchal tradition of Chan and Seon refers to those enlightened Patriarchal Masters of Chan who had directly shown their originally perfect nature and transmitted it to their disciples. This tradition had developed in China since Bodhidharma, the First Patriarch in China, until it was established and transmitted to the Second, and so on to the Sixth Patriarch Huineng (638-713) who was known as the Patriarch of the Southern school. Most Patriarchal Masters in Korea received transmission from Chinese Patriarchal Masters. Ganhwa-seon refers to of the method of contemplating on a Hwadu, a critical question or words of the Buddha and Patriarchs, to attain complete and sudden enlightenment. For instance, one practitioner asked Chan Master Dongshan Shouchu (910-990), "What is the Buddha?" and the Master replied "Three pounds of flax." A practitioner, who cannot understand it, tries to know the intention or mind of the Master by using the question as a tool of concentration himself. "Why did the Master say 'Three pounds of flax'?" In this case, "Three pounds of flax" is a Hwadu. When practitioners eventually got a correct answer through the Hwadu, they could be recognized as Buddha, seeing the nature of oneself and the world. It is known that the Ganhwa-seon or Hwadu-seon was developed and spread by Dahui (1089-1163) of the Linchi School. In Korea, Seon Master Bojo Jinul (1158-1210) emphasized the merit of the Ganhwa-seon through his book about it titled Ganhwagyeoleuiron ("Thesis on Seeing the Hwadu and Doubting It"), and his disciple Seon Master Jingak Hye-shim (1178-1234) promoted it through what is named Sonmunyeomsong (Raising the Hymns in Seon Tradition). In the end of Goryo period, Seon Master Taego Bou (1301-1381) refreshed and settled the tradition which has maintained to the present.

2. Characteristic and Tradition of the Seon

The characteristics and tradition of the Seon School have been known as the following phrases: Without standing on the letters, beyond the Doctrine, there has been a special transmission – direct pointing to the human mind, seeing one's true nature as attaining Buddhahood. Those words teach practitioners that they should not attach to the words, but use them as Upaya, or skillful means. It is important to notice

that a well known Seon proverb says that “One should not see only the finger pointing at it, but the moon to which it is pointing” in terms of the ultimate purpose and communication. We ought to pay attention to the message of the moon, and should not attach to the words as the finger pointing it out.

The Seon tradition originated from Shakyamuni Buddha about 2,500 years ago and was introduced and transmitted to China by Bodhidharma in the sixth century. It grew up as the Chan School (Order or Sect) in the ninth century and later become known as the Patriarchal Chan that was transmitted to Korea by Korean masters and named Josaseon, the Patriarchal Seon. This tradition of the Patriarchal Seon has taken a serious view of the Dharma transmission between master and disciple. It has been believed to this day that the first Mind-Dharma Transmission carried out from Shakyamuni Buddha to Mahakashyapa at Vulture Peak where the Buddha held up a flower, and then only Mahakashyapa, out of many disciples, understood the Buddha’s message and smiled. Mahakashyapa transmitted his Mind-Dharma to Ananda and the transmission followed thus until Bodhidharma came to China and transmitted his Mind-Dharma to Huike (487-593), then giving transmission to Huineng. Doeui of Silla received transmission of the Mind-Dharma from Xitang (735-814) who was the disciple of Mazu (709-788), the second generation of Huineng. Therefore, it has been said that Mahakashyapa is the First Patriarch and Bodhidharma is the 28th Patriarch in India, but Bodhidharma is the First Patriarch of China, then Huike is the Second Patriarch and Huineng is the Sixth Patriarch of China. In the same context, Doeui is the First Patriarch in Korea and he is recognized and revered as the Founding Patriarch of the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism which emphasizes the meditation practice. Doeui and his Dharma heirs founded Gajisanmun (Gaji Mountain Seon School), one of the Gusanseonmun (Nine Mountain Seon Schools). Since the Gusanseonmun was established in the end of the Silla and the beginning of Goryo periods, the Korean Seon has developed and eventually the Nine Mountain lineages unified into one as the Jogye Order by Seon Master Taego (1301-1382) at the end of the Goryo. During the Joseon period, the Seon tradition has been kept by many eminent Seon masters and practitioners, including Seon Masters Cheongher Hyujeong (1520-1604) and Buhyu Seonsu (1543-1615) in the middle of Korean Buddhist history, and Seon Masters Gyeongher Seongu (1846-1912) and Yongseong Jinjong (1864-1940) at the end. Therefore, it can be said that the Dharma tradition of Patriarchal Seon has been continuously transmitted to the Jogye Order to the present.

3. Seon Enlightenment

“If one conquers the hwadu and is awakened, it is like waking from a dream ... That world, like space, is boundless and limitless. All the things that exist in it are equal, lacking superior or inferior, valued and despised, intimate and estranged, right

and wrong. There is only a world of no oppositions or troubles, and no strife. Moreover, all existences being united into one, to do something for another is to do it for oneself, and to do something for oneself is to do it for another. If one is enlightened, one is independent, autonomous, voluntary and positive, and for oneself and for others there is limitless benevolence, and in all favorable and contrary realms one becomes a person of great freedom who is independent and free. These dynamic phenomena cannot be explained with words and cannot be expressed in writing. It is the same principle as the person themselves having to drink the water themselves and only then do they know if it is hot or cold. That being so, enlightenment does not mean that there is a separate world. It is only the characteristic of life that one obviously lives here and now...the enlightened correctly handle all things ceaselessly with a mind that has nothing to do, a mind that is at leisure.”¹

The above citation is a kind of statement about Seon Enlightenment, regarding what is Enlightenment and what the world of Enlightenment is about, which is based on the records of Chan Masters Yuanwu (1063-1125) and Dahui (1089-1163). As we see in the statement, “It is the same principle as the person themselves having to drink the water themselves and only then do they know if it is hot or cold,” certain persons who have drunk the water of enlightenment could properly communicate with each other through their common experiences without explanation. The enlightened being is able to see the reality through their spiritual eyes and enjoy limitless freedom from delusion and defilement. Agreeing with the point, “These dynamic phenomena cannot be explained with words and cannot be expressed in writing,” as premised, we should talk about the subject briefly in common sense. As we might imagine, the statement says that “If one conquers the hwadu and is awakened, it is like waking from a dream.” It indicates that the enlightened state recovers the original nature of normality from ignorance and defilement. Moreover, for the enlightened, “all existences [are] united into one,” and the enlightened one “becomes a person of great freedom.” From these observations, we can assume that the state of an enlightened being is to become one with others and the world or universe without any dichotomous discrimination, and attain a peaceful and harmonious world where there are no conflicts and suffering.

The traditional concept of enlightenment indicates that the three aspects such as Enlightenment of self, others, and complete with practice. It means that proper Enlightenment is related not only to one’s individual self, but also to others, and society and the world. Therefore, one’s Enlightenment should be concerned with and oriented to the people of society and the world. It is worthy of further note that as stated that “the enlightened correctly handle all things ceaselessly with a mind that

¹ Hwadu-seon part in www.koreanbuddhism.net of JOKB

has nothing to do, a mind that is at leisure,” and show “the characteristic of life that one obviously lives here and now.” We should know that an enlightened being does not enjoy the state oneself, but shares it with others in the society like oneself. The enlightened one could seem like a Bodhisattva who is working or living for people through wisdom and compassion, appearing as a compassionate social teacher or a selfless public servant. Ordinary people could not see or know the spiritual state of the enlightened being, but observe or feel the action and living of that person. We could not properly understand the state of enlightenment of Shakyamuni, but appreciate, even a small part of, his compassionate teaching and living for all sentient beings.

Here, let us reexamine the statement of enlightenment in our context through some remarkable Seon Masters in Korea as actual examples. It is known that Seon Master Cheongher was a restorer and reviver of Buddhism, as well as of the Korean Seon tradition, in the Joseon period in Korea. Let me introduce his gatha of Enlightenment: Having properly sat for ten years and concentrated on my mind-nature, I attained generosity as even birds of deep forests are not frightened of me. Since the rainstorm was impetuous at pine pond last night, the fish produced a horn and the crane cried three times. This shows his state of mind after attaining enlightenment. From the gatha we can understand that Seon Master Cheongheo had practiced Seon through sitting meditation, focusing on his mind, in the mountain where he became one with nature, including with the birds of the deep forest and fish in the pond. Since he attained Enlightenment, he spent the rest of his life serving the people of the country, including a military engagement defending against a Japanese invasion, as well as teaching his disciples and practitioners nationwide. He also left some books about Seon for practitioners, as well as others such as Samgaguigam (The Spiritual Mirror for the Three Religions --Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism) for religious people. It can be said that Seon Master Cheongheo showed his life as an ideal Seon practitioner who practiced Patriarchal Seon and attained enlightenment, then served people of the country as a Mahayana Bodhisattva.

Seon Master Gyeongheo's gatha of his Enlightenment is, “Having heard someone's words about [the cow] with no nostrils, I have suddenly realized that the Three Thousand [worlds] are my home. On the road under Mt. Yeonam in June, a free man is singing the great peace.” It is known that The Master Gyeongheo was a great scholar and lecturer of Buddhist scriptures at Donghaksa monastery. He took a trip to visit his master and encountered the disaster of cholera on his way. He realized himself that he had no power to overcome the fundamental problem of life and death. Having returned from the trip he entered a room and closed the door to practice Seon with a Hwadu: Before the matters of donkey disappear, the matters of horse already appeared. What does it mean? One day, while he was meditating on his

Hwadu, people began talking about the story of a cow that had no nostril. When he heard the story, the Master suddenly had a breakthrough to the Hwadu and attained Enlightenment. From this he received unlimited freedom and peace as a wandering ascetic who has no problems in life. The gatha shows how Gyeongheo felt about the occasion. Since then, he spent the rest of his life teaching Seon at monasteries such as Hain Temple at Mt. Gaya and Mahayeon at Mt. Geumgang. In his last years of life, Master Gyeongheo stayed in Hamgyeong Province where he, as a traditional teacher, taught youths at a Confucian school. He showed the non-dual life of an enlightened person who returned to the world and served people with compassionate skillful means.

Now I am supposed to confess my experience because I feel obligation that I should not only talk about textual and the other's experiences, but also my own story as testimony to the subject. I had two experiences similar to the statement cited above, in the aptly called "Yongmaengjeongjin (A Brave Seon Meditation Practice)," in the 1970 Winter Retreat at Hain Monastery and the 1976 Winter Retreat at Inwoljeongsa Hermitage on Mt. Jogye. To mention the background in brief, I had started Seon practice at Hain Monastery in 1969, when I was attendant to the Bangjang (Spiritual Patriarchal Master of the monastic complex), Most Venerable Seongcheol, and from him I received a Hwadu after 3,000 prostrations in front of an image of the Buddha. The Hwadu was "Masmageun (Three Pound of Flax)." In the next year, during my second year of seminary studying Chan Scriptures, I participated in the Yongmaengjeongjin for commemorating the Day of Buddha's Enlightenment. At the beginning of that event, I thought to follow Siddharta, who meditated, but had not eaten and slept for a week before he attained enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree in Bodhgaya on the Eighth of December of the lunar calendar, according to the East Asian tradition. In spite of concerns and pressure of the abbot and participants of the event, I kept my resolution for the period of practice. However, in the morning of the Buddha's Enlightenment Day, it was snowing and I had felt the "peak experience." From common sense, it seemed that my body and mind were so tired and groggy since I had not taken any food and sleep, but I only sat and walked in concentration on the Hwadu for a week from the first day to the eighth day of the December. Contrary to normal expectations, I was full of joy and feelings of lightness and bodily ease - refreshed and renewed. Therefore, I visited Bangjangsil, the Square of the Spiritual Patriarchal Master, and met the Most Venerable Goam, the Supreme Patriarch of the Jogye Order, and asked for him to check on my state. He asked me, "Tell me a phrase." I replied prostrating to him, "To open the mouth would be mistaken, to move the tongue would be a lie." Then he said, "Practiced hard, great! That's right as suchness." he positively confirmed.

In the 1976 Winter Retreat, I practiced Seon at a hermitage near the top of Mt. Jogye. In the early morning, when I saw a candle moving in the wind from crack

in the wall, I had a breakthrough and experienced the suchness of the moment. It was like awakening from a dream, and my mind was like limitless space, peace, and freedom - as well as all seen objects as one. A gatha came out from the state of my mind: "For the last eight years, the 'Three Pounds of Flax' have always been with me. It was troublesome when I had to carry that on me. Now I'm no problem, but so joyful since I met Dongshan Chu in the morning." It was about eight years since I received the Hwadu from Seon Master Seongcheol. I had continuously concentrated on the Hwadu and felt it was so heavy to carry on everywhere and all the time. But in the morning, suddenly, I apprehended or matched the mind or intention of Chan Master Dongshan Shouchu at the moment of the candle moving in the wind. It seems like I encountered him at that moment, having wandered around in search of him for eight years. It was really wonderful, like having electric brightness in a dark space. I composed a gatha to celebrate the situation: "True Nature is so delicate, not to be talked and thought about. The moonlight Dharma Realm is without obstacles. Wandering around the ancient patriarchal garden of Mt. Jogye, I'm singing joyfully the Song out of Kalpa." I was so moved by the reality of the teachings of the Buddha and Patriarchs which have no falseness or vanity, but blessings so wonderful and successful – as if dropping one's load after a long and hard mountain climb. Since then I would like to use the first words of the first two lines of the gatha as a Dharma title for myself, "True Moon," or in Korean, "Jinwol." In fact, I received confirmation from my master, the Most Venerable Supreme Patriarch Goam, after reporting this and asking for him to check on my attainment. At one time, Seon Master Goam had been a member of the Presidential Advisory Committee for National Policy and taken Dharma missionary trips overseas despite being in his eighties. In 1987, I had a spiritual transmission from him, "Dharma is changeless over time, but ceaselessly remains luminous. The Samyaksambuddha has adjusted to be right with time and space. You should be a good spiritual leader for the world as a master of upaya." Such a consequence of practice and the checking process has been traditionally managed privately as a matter between master and disciple. I would say that the traditional way may be maintained forever, no matter how it's dependent phenomenal appearance.

Social Transmission of Seon Enlightenment

Through the above citations of texts and examples, we can understand the dynamic and influence of Seon Enlightenment. According to the sociocultural environment and situation of practitioners, their expression and influence of Enlightenment were different, but there was a basic commonality among them. In order to appreciate the process and effect of Seon practice and Enlightenment, I will introduce the pictures of Kuon, of Northern Sung China, who it is believed painted the world famous Ten Ox-herding Pictures. It is the image which has been

transmitted through the lineage to show the process and socialization of the spiritual journey of Enlightenment, symbolizing our mind as an ox.

It seems that the Ten Ox-herding Pictures were the visual expression of Chan thoughts to directly appeal to people, and a developmental process of Chan culture in general. History shows that the Chan School was prosperous in the Tang Dynasty, and philosophically systemized in the Sung Dynasty. This contributed to the development of Chan Hymns as well as traditional literature, and eventually to Ganhwachan. Although his dates of birth and death were not known, according to the related sources, Kuoan was a disciple of Chan Master Disui (?-1135), who was a disciple of Wuzu Fayan (1024-1194) and to be the twelfth Dharma generation from Chan Master Linchi - the founding patriarch of the Linchi School. From this we can understand that in the Dharma lineage, Kuoan was a nephew to Chan Master Yuanwu, who composed the Piyenlu (or Blue Cliff Records), one of the most famous pieces of Chan literature of the Hymns and Evaluation. Kuoan was also cousin to Dahui, who was known as the advocator of Ganwhachan. Therefore, it could be appreciated that the Ten Ox-herding Pictures of Kuoan, pictorially expressed as the essence of that era, helped Ganhwachan flourish and to be a model and reference for Chan practitioners.

The contents of the Ten Ox-herding Pictures are: ① Searching for the Ox, ② Finding Traces of the Ox, ③ Seeing the Ox, ④ Catching the Ox, ⑤ Taming the Ox, ⑥ Riding the Ox Home, ⑦ Forgetting the Ox, ⑧ Transcending the Ox, ⑨ Returning to the Source, ⑩ Entering the Marketplace. The Ox symbolizes the practitioner's seeking goal, hidden or forgotten nature of mind, Buddha Nature, Dharma Nature, Truth, Real Self, Original Body, Original Face, and so on, as well as the Self as Shepherd. These pictures show the way of practice to attain Enlightenment and save unknowing people from suffering in society through the recovery of their original and non-dual nature which had been confused and divided into subject and object. It could be said that the process does not have to be fixed in the ten pictures, but regardless, depicts the basic stages of practice, enlightenment, and serving the world. We should pay attention to the last picture among the series in that Chan or Seon practitioners should keep closely in mind that the completion of practice does not stop at Enlightenment – but rather, going into society to serve the people.²

² Jinwol, "Seon Enlightenment and Ecological Awareness" in the Collection of Articles, Dongguk University, 2006.

III. Conclusion

From the above, we can point out that to attain Enlightenment of Seon practice is to recover reality of nature and the well-being of humanity and community. Seon is opened for everyone, beyond denominational differences, in terms of mental well-being, as well as peace and happiness of mind, offering not only for the individual but also for the social way of spiritual practice without any discrimination. Everyone could and should be a Bodhisattva who practices the meditation practice and lives for enlightening oneself and others for well-being of all beings through Wisdom and Compassion of Buddha Dharma.

Buddhism and Modernity Strategies for a Healthy Mind

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Introduction

Buddhism encountered modernity when it first came to the West in the 20th century, and modernity first encountered Buddhism when Western models of development and technology came to the East. Modernity has brought profound changes in the way the world lives, and though some of these changes are undoubtedly good, they are also the cause of one of the worst crises the world has ever had to face.

According to a recent report by the World Health Organization (WHO), within the next 20 years more people will be affected by depression than by any other health problem. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), because of the global financial crisis the number of people who suffer from hunger increased by 100 million in 2009, reaching a record high of one billion. Furthermore, in the area of global warming and climate change the news is not good to say the least. Unless something is done urgently, humankind may reach a point of no return bringing devastating consequences in its wake.

From a Buddhist perspective it is clear that one of the problems of modernity is the gap that exists between material progress and ethics. This explains why, even though there have been positive advances in many areas of science and technology, many of these advances are not within the reach of a substantial part of the human race.

This paper is divided into four parts: (I) Definitions, where I will examine the meanings of Buddhism and Modernity; (II) Problems, where I will briefly point out some of the most serious problems humankind is facing in the 21st century; (III) Strategies, where I will explore several strategies based on the Buddha's teachings for coping with the problems of modernity and for keeping a healthy mind; and (IV) Final Considerations, where I will sum up the paper's main points and

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include some reflections which are based on the principle of comparing oneself with others.¹

I. Definitions

The Buddha-Dhamma, the Teaching of the Buddha, the name by which Buddhism² has been known since the time of its founder, will be 2553³ years old in May 2010. As the term “modernity” can have many meanings and refer to different time periods, it must be precisely defined. For the purpose of this paper, the term “modernity” will be used to refer to the actual conditions of a large part of the world characterized by the changes brought about by science, technology, globalization and a paradigm of civilization based on the pursuit of material well-being. Just as the benefits of this paradigm are unquestionable, so too are the problems generated by human actions carried out within this paradigm, problems which affect not only the world as a planet but also humans (and other beings), both on an individual and social level.

I would like to state from the beginning that it is not my intention to make either an apology for, or a criticism of modernity or its underlying paradigm. It is my intention to analyze reality as it is and to determine its main problems, both mental and material, that afflict human beings, and try to pose solutions for them, if they can be found, based on the Teaching of the Buddha.

“The Wheel of Dhamma”⁴ is a term used in the oldest Buddhist scriptures to describe the dynamic aspect of what the Buddha taught. It makes reference to the fact that once this “Wheel of Dhamma” has been set into motion there does not exist anybody or anything that can stop it.⁵ It seems that this wheel has brought the Buddha-Dhamma to modernity.⁶ This being the case, it is good to bear in mind the Buddha's instructions which come to us from another place and time far removed from our own, and were given to his first sixty enlightened disciples: “Go forth, O bhikkhus, for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, benefit, and happiness of gods⁷ and men.

¹ “Sabbe tasanti daṇḍassa, sabbe bhāyanti maccuno; Attānam upamam katvā, na haneyya na ghātaye. Dhammapada verse 129.

² The word “Buddhism” was coined in the 19th century.

³ Counted from the death of the Buddha.

⁴ “Dhammacakka.” See Vin. iii 17. All references are to the Sixth Buddhist Council Edition in Pāli Myanmar script.

⁵ See Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta. Vin. iii 17.

⁶ In truth it is thanks to the efforts of the Monastic Order (Sangha) and others who throughout the centuries have kept the Buddha's teachings extant.

⁷ Gods or *devas* are beings of the sense-sphere plane, a higher plane than that of human beings.

Let not two go by one way. Preach, O Bhikkhus, the Dhamma, excellent in its beginning, excellent in the middle, excellent in the end, both in the spirit and in the letter. Proclaim the Holy Life, altogether perfect and pure.”⁸

II. Problems

According to a recent report⁹ by the World Health Organization (WHO), within the next 20 years more people will be suffering from depression than any other health problem. In this same report it is stated that around 20% of the world's children and adolescents have mental disorders or problems, and that every year about 800000 people commit suicide, 86% of them in low and middle income countries.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), because of the global financial crisis the number of people suffering from hunger increased by 100 million in 2009, reaching a record high of one billion people,¹⁰ and this number refers to only one aspect of what is called “poverty”. The World Bank definition of poverty is lack of shelter, not having access to a doctor or medical treatment when sick, being unemployed, fearing the future, living day to day, losing a child due to contaminated water, feelings of powerlessness and a lack of political representation and freedoms, among other things.¹¹

Among the indicators used by the World Bank to measure poverty is income or consumption; the daily minimum income or consumption needed to meet basic needs. This minimum income or consumption is defined as the “poverty line”. Although this poverty line is established at between \$1.25 and \$2.5 per day, according to this parameter there are around 1.5 billion people living in poverty world-wide. Statistics also show that approximately 80% of the world population survive on less than \$10 a day.¹² In Mexico, the country where I now reside, there are more than 50 million people living in poverty, which is more than half of the population.¹³

⁸ Vin. iii 27-28. Translation by Venerable Nārada Mahāthera.

⁹ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/8230549.stm>.

¹⁰ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/8109698.stm>.

¹¹ <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTPOVERTY/EXTPA/0,,contentMDK:20153855~menuPK:435040~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:430367,00.html>.

¹² <http://www.globalissues.org/article/26/poverty-facts-and-stats#src1>.

¹³ <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2009/08/20/index.php?section=economia&article=024n1eco>.

In another order of things, in regard to environment and global warming the Secretary-General of the United Nations Ban Ki-moon on September 2, 2009, issued the following call for urgent action on climate change from the polar ice rim on September 2, 2009: “Unless we fight climate change, unless we stop this trend, we’ll have devastating consequences for humanity”.¹⁴

I have selected data from three relevant areas of mental health, food and the environment, as these take into account both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of an individual’s life. As human beings belong to the sense-sphere plane of existence, they derive their happiness from the satisfaction obtained through the five senses and experiences of the mind. According to Buddhism, any indicator of welfare and happiness should take into account the material and mental components of the individual.

While statistics show significant material deficiencies in the less-developed and developing countries, they also reveal an alarming rise in mental problems in the developed world.¹⁵ Apart from this, it has also become apparent that the current paradigm of economic development, of trying to bring the economic development and material welfare of the developed countries to the rest of the world, now seems incompatible with environmental preservation and the ecological balance of the planet. It is evident that humankind has found itself at a dead-end.

And the nature of these problems is such that the relationship between cause and effect and the inter-connection between the parts is not always clear. The fact that what an individual does in one place has repercussions in other places is not always evident. Actions that on an individual level are apparently harmless, on a global level could be quite harmful. A few examples of this are: cutting down a tree, waste water, buying certain kinds of goods, arms production, the cultivation of certain plants... The nature of these problems is such that in order to become mindful of them we need to have access to information and knowledge, and to correct these problems we do not only need access to information and knowledge, but also concrete actions in a different direction need to be taken.

Each of the given statistics and facts are like photographs, discrete snapshots that capture and reveal distressing facets of a reality that is inexorably dynamic, a reality that is continuously changing and unfolding. Whether we are aware of it or not, every second that passes in every corner of the world something is happening, something is unfolding. Every new birth, every new death and everything in between that makes up the lives of sentient beings, from fleeting moments of happiness to transient moments of pain and despair, these experiences are incessantly moving,

¹⁴ <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=31917&Cr=climate+change&Cr1=>

¹⁵ For Mental illnesses in the United States see this article <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/5111202/>.

unfolding and being experienced from moment to moment, whether these beings are aware of what is happening or not.

Even though there has been terrible periods in the recent history of mankind, the two World Wars of the 20th century for example, at the present point in time there seems to be a conjunction of circumstances which indicate that mankind is approaching a critical point of no return. Such is the gravity of the situation. It is of the utmost importance that we become mindful of this situation and that we generate a much-needed sense of urgency in order to change this course that is leading us to the abyss.

III. Strategies

For all practical purposes these strategies can be classified in four groups: (1) a strategy of abstention, (2) a strategy of elimination, (3) a strategy of development, and (4) a strategy of knowledge.

1. Strategy of Abstention

The strategy of abstention consists in abstaining from doing any kind of physical or verbal action which may cause suffering to other beings. To understand that the Other is one's equal is the starting point of this strategy. It would be interesting to mention here that in Buddhism the concept of equality does not refer to a hypothetical equality before a god or the law. Equality in Buddhism is based on the simple fact that nobody wants to suffer and that everybody wants to be happy. An understanding of this is the starting point of this first strategy.

In the Pāli Canon the strategy of abstention is called “sikkhāpada,” a limb or a part of training, and “sīla,” virtue or morality. This corresponds to the Five Precepts which are: (1) abstaining from taking life, (2) abstaining from taking what is not given, (3) abstaining from sexual misconduct, (4) abstaining from false speech, and (5) abstaining from alcohol and intoxicating drugs. These Five Precepts are universal norms of ethics and our human condition depends on their observance. It would be pertinent to add here that this strategy of abstention calls for an immediate observance and this is unavoidable if an individual is to adjust to the principle of equality previously mentioned.

In regards to the aforementioned problems of modernity, this strategy would help to decrease what is called “preventable or avoidable suffering”, that is to say, the suffering that human beings cause to themselves and other beings. It would also help to foster a social order with less violence and cruelty, a social order where virtues such as honesty, respect and trust prevail.

2. *Strategy of Elimination*

The strategy of elimination falls into two categories: (1) wrong views and (2) unwholesome mental states. In spite of the fact that in Buddhist literature wrong views are included in unwholesome mental states, in this paper they are considered as belonging to a distinct category, because quite often these wrong views are the conditions that allow the existence and persistence of certain mental defilements. However, wrong view is not only this, it is also what motivates and activates unwholesome actions rooted in hatred (and other roots besides) which go on to generate violence and suffering.

The underlying principle of the strategy of elimination is that any belief which an individual may inherit, adopt, or acquire is considered as a wrong belief if it has the potentiality to generate actions which cause suffering to other beings. Such is the quantity and variety of these wrong views that the Buddha refers to them in the Texts with such titles as “thicket of views”,¹⁶ “wilderness of views”,¹⁷ and so on.

The strategy of elimination with regard to the two mentioned categories, wrong views and unwholesome mental states, first requires the task of inspection, an analysis of the mental continuum, past and present, in order to determine what must be eliminated. In other words, in order to clean the house first we need to determine what interferes, what is useless, what is beneficial and what causes problems; all the baggage of inherited, adopted, or acquired things, which by their mere existence in our mental continuum do not lead to either the social or the individual good. A good dose of wisdom and courage is needed in order to implement this strategy.

This strategy, apart from acting as a support for the other strategies, also permits the elimination of certain kinds of wrong views, the kinds of wrong views which bring into being actions which harm both the environment and the individual. Considering natural resources and the non-human species of this planet as mere commodities,¹⁸ as things that are exclusively at the service of humans for whichever purpose whatsoever, is an example of the wrong view underlying the current paradigms of production and consumption which are gradually destroying the environment and contributing to the deterioration of the quality of life on this planet. Just as in the past certain wrong views were the basis for the various models

¹⁶ “Dit̄thigahana”. See Dhs. §1007.

¹⁷ “Dit̄thikantāra”. See Dhs. §1007.

¹⁸ That is, only articles to be exchanged without considering other aspects. The economic term “externality” is used to indicate the effect which a certain transaction may have for others who do not directly participate in it.

of slavery,¹⁹ so too, in the present certain kinds of wrong views²⁰ are used to justify the existence of unsustainable models of economic development. At the social, ideological and religious levels these wrong views are often the cause of intolerance, discrimination, violence, etc.

3. Strategy of Development

In contrast to the two previous strategies, the strategy of development consists of the deliberate cultivation of good qualities. This strategy is based on the fact that a mind which is slow in doing good delights in evil. “Make haste in doing good; check your mind from evil; for the mind of him who is slow in doing meritorious actions delights in evil”.²¹

In the Basket of Discourses it is possible to find those qualities or virtues which a person should develop. The Maṅgala Sutta,²² the Discourse on Blessings, gives a list of 38 “maṅgalas” which should be developed, and the Mettā Sutta,²³ the Discourse on Loving-kindness, contains a list of 15 qualities which a person seeking his or her own welfare should develop.

Although some people are naturally endowed with good qualities or virtues, the mere existence of these in one’s present lifetime is the result of cultivation in past lives. This is also the case of the Perfections (pāramī) which the Buddha developed over a very many lifetimes in order to become a Buddha.

Some of the qualities which should be developed are generosity, loving-kindness, compassion, contentment, patience, effort, gratitude and humility. The cultivation of each of these qualities helps the mind to mature in the right direction and they also counteract their opposite, negative tendencies. We find some of these virtues and their opposites in verse 223 of the Dhammapada: “Conquer anger by love. Conquer evil by good. Conquer stingy by giving. Conquer a liar by truth.”²⁴

¹⁹ For a Biblical justification of slavery see the following article:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christianity_and_slavery

²⁰ Genesis 1:28. “God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.’”

²¹ Dhammapada verse 116. Translation by Venerable Nārada Mahāthera.

²² Khp. 3.

²³ Khp. 10-11.

²⁴ Translation by Venerable Nārada Mahāthera.

It is said that patience is the best virtue,²⁵ while gratitude is very difficult to find in the world.²⁶ In regards to contentment, the quality of being satisfied with what one has, the Buddha says that this is the greatest wealth.²⁷

Learning each of these virtues, both why they are considered virtues and what their opposites are, is a necessary task in order that their cultivation may be accompanied by wisdom.

This strategy will instill virtue and help to mitigate some of the negative aspects of modernity, thus bringing their benefits to an increasing number of people. The gradual cultivation of heart and mind through generosity and the divine abidings of loving-kindness and compassion will make a much healthier and more equitable system of social relationships possible, therefore helping to extend the solidarity usually found within the family circle to the social level.

4. Strategy of Knowledge

The strategy of knowledge consists of the practice of insight meditation (*vipassanā*) so one may see reality as it is. The existence of mental defilements at the latent and manifestation levels functions like a veil that distorts our perception and prevents us from seeing reality correctly. According to the Buddha, reality, which is made up of all conditioned phenomena, has three universal characteristics: impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and selflessness. When our perception of reality is distorted by mental defilements our bodily, verbal, and mental actions are improper, uncontrolled and harmful.

The starting point for the strategy of knowledge is the systematic cultivation of the mental faculty²⁸ known as *sati* or mindfulness in English. As a matter of fact, five faculties come into play when one practices insight meditation, these being (1) faith or confidence, (2) effort or energy, (3) mindfulness, (4) concentration, and (4) wisdom. As mindfulness has a regulatory function and is always needed, when referring to insight meditation teachers will often talk of the cultivation, development or establishment of mindfulness. The reason for this is that only when one has cultivated mindfulness -and its functions as a protector of the mind- is it possible, through the harmonic development of concentration and wisdom, to see the three previously mentioned universal characteristics through the mind door. Therefore, for the purposes of this paper, when talking about the strategy of knowledge we first mention the cultivation of mindfulness, as it is here that the path to insight or seeing reality as it really is actually begins.

²⁵ Dh. verse 184.

²⁶ A. ii 149.

²⁷ “Santutthiparamam dhanam” (Dh. verse 204).

²⁸ “Indriya.” See D. ii 100.

The Buddha in the Great Discourse on the Establishments of Mindfulness²⁹ talks of the cultivation of mindfulness in regard to all the body postures, whether sitting, standing, walking or lying down. Furthermore the cultivation of mindfulness should not only be extended to all the activities one does while awake, such as speaking, eating, looking, washing, etc., but also to the different mental states which may arise in the present moment. When mindfulness is systematically developed in this way it becomes the protector, the guardian of the mind, because it prevents mental defilements from arising. The following verse from the Dhammapada³⁰ makes reference to this protective function: “Even as rain does not penetrate a well-thatched house, so does lust not penetrate a well-developed mind.” The “well-developed mind” is the mind developed by the practice of mindfulness, and “lust” includes all mental defilements. When mindfulness has been completely developed it becomes a “power”³¹ in the sense that it cannot be shaken by distraction,³² its opposite

When mindfulness has been developed and the mind is protected from mental defilements, it is possible to see reality as it really is. This is the goal of the strategy of knowledge. When this is achieved one discards delusion and deceit. Referring back to the Buddha’s instructions to his first sixty enlightened disciples, it is those beings with little dust in their eyes in this end time, in modernity, who will understand his Teaching. Thus, the Wheel of Dhamma keeps turning.

IV. Final Considerations

Although these strategies should first be implemented at the individual level, it is only when a critical mass of people implement them that it will be possible to revert the current course of humankind. Therefore, we should follow the advice of the Buddha in relation to these strategies when He says that the three aspects are (1) to establish oneself, (2) to exhort others and (3) to spread the teaching.³³ First it is

²⁹ Mahāsatipatthāna Sutta. See D. ii 231 and M. i 70.

³⁰ Verse 14. Translation by Venerable Nārada Mahāthera.

³¹ “Bala.” See D. ii 100.

³² “Avikkhepa.”

³³ These three aspects are explained by Buddha in regard to each of the Five Precepts. Here they are applied to each of the four strategies. “In this matter the noble disciple reflects: ‘Here am I, fond of my life, not wanting to die, fond of pleasure and averse from pain. Suppose someone should deprive me of my life, it would not be a thing pleasing or delightful to me. If I, in my turn, were to deprive of his life one fond of life, not wanting to die, one fond of pleasure and averse from pain, it would not be a thing pleasing or delightful to him. For that state which is not pleasant or delightful to me must be not pleasant or delightful to another: and a state undear and unpleasing to me, how could I inflict that upon another?’ As a result of such reflection he himself abstains from taking the life of creatures and he encourages others so to abstain, and speaks in praise of so abstaining.” S. iii 308. Venerable Bhikkhu Bodhi’s translation.

necessary to practice and thus establish oneself in these strategies. Secondly, once having established oneself one should exhort others to implement them. Thirdly, one should spread these strategies by explaining them and pointing out their benefits.

Even if it is possible to practice each of these strategies separately and get good results, it should be noted that they are interconnected and are based on a mental attitude called “Right View” or “Right Understanding.” In its initial phase “Right Understanding” is called “Right View” or “Right Belief”, that is, the belief that each being is the owner of his or her deeds.

From the Buddhist perspective it is obvious that one of the greatest problems of modernity is the gap which exists between knowledge and ethics. This helps to explain why, even though there have been many positive scientific and technological advances, these are out of the reach of a substantial part of humankind. This also explains why there is a proliferation of weapons and more and more sophisticated technologies capable of destroying humankind. There are so many examples of this apparent in our daily lives that it seems to be the distinctive hallmark of modernity.

The gradual implementation of these strategies will result in an individual who has a healthier mind and is less egotistical, therefore having a greater capacity to comprehend his or her own reality and the environment. It is this kind of individual, less and less common in our world nowadays, who will be able to find the path³⁴ which leads to the dawn of a new civilization.

³⁴ Both to find the path for himself and to help others find the path.

Emptiness Strategy – Application of Buddhism in Global Recovery

Ng Fung (Kyra) Yuen

Introduction

The Chinese translated version of the Mahā-prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra (Heart Sūtra) by Master Xuanzang (玄奘) has only 260 characters.¹ It is the shortest Buddhist sūtra collected in the Tripiṭaka. However, it contains the most important core part of the six hundred volumes of the earliest and most influential prajñāpāramitā literature in Mahāyāna Buddhism. The prajñāpāramitā literature, which focused on wisdom as the sixth and culminating pāramitā (perfection) that human beings (living bodhisattva-s) must master en route to full Buddhahood. This paper aims to provide a brief descriptive account of the meaning of the Heart Sūtra. The importance of emptiness concept (śūnyatā) in the philosophy of Buddhism is highlighted. Several key Buddhist notions including: six pāramitās, eighteen realms, four noble truths, five skandhas, twelve links of dependent origination as well as personal development and enlightenment will be examined. Finally, discussion is made on the relevance of these key notions to global recovery through nurturing human's mental well-being.

The notion of emptiness in Buddhism

“Void is the world...because it is void of a self and anything belonging to a self... eye... visible object... seeing-consciousness... eye-contact... pleasant feeling, unpleasant feeling or indifferent feeling which arises owing to eye-contact is void of the self or of what belongs to the self.”

--*Samyutta Nikāya*

¹ Over the past thousands of years, the Heart Sūtra has been translated for twenty-one times which includes versions of Chinese translation, Sanskrit transliteration with Chinese annotation and Sanskrit-Chinese word-to-word transliteration by different eminent masters in China. Among them, Xuanzang's translation is the most popular and influential. Hence, elaboration on the content of the Heart Sūtra in this paper is based on Xuanzang's version. Appendix I and II are the full texts of Xuanzang's version in Chinese and English translation respectively. For details of different translation versions of the Heart Sūtra, cf. to Guangchang Fang. *Bore xinjing yizhu jicheng* (般若心經譯注集成). (Fo xue ming zhu cong kan. Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, c1994), 3-13.

The early Buddhist discourses often refer to a fundamental truth that that everything happens due to causes and conditions (*hetu-pratyaya*). The Buddha explained these causes and conditions as the doctrine of Dependent Origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*). It is the central philosophy of Buddhism. The doctrine of Dependent Origination can be viewed on two levels: (1) a brief idea of the conditioned relationship that life and thing happen relatively and interdependently, which refers to the Buddha's thesis regarding the conditioned genesis of things and phenomenal processes (both mental and material), sometimes referred to the general principle – the 'law of conditionality'² that all phenomena arise as the result of conditions and cease when those conditions change; and (2) the whole existence and continuity of life and its cessation are explained in a detailed formula which is called the 'twelve linked causal formula.'³

The relationship between the 'law of conditionality' and the 'twelve-linked causal formula' to the effect that the two can be interpreted as concurrent, and yet to distinct these two-tier components of Dependent Origination – the 'law of

² The 'law of conditionality' is phrased as: "When this exists, that exists (*iasmim sati, idam hoti*). When this arises, that arises (*imassa uppada, idam uppajjati*). When this is not, that is not (*imasim asati, idam na hoti*). When this ceases, that ceases (*imassa nirodha, idam nirujjhanti*)." Here I have used the English translation in Gunaratna (1982). As not all English translations for this 'law of conditionality' are the same and some can be quite incomprehensible, such as that provided in Asanga Tilakaratne's article 'Dependent Co-origination: The Buddhist Approach to Reality,'

(<http://www.beyondthenet.net/SLABS/articles/Dependent.pdf>), accessed on Dec 20, 2009: "When this is, this is. From the arising of this, this arises. When this [*sic*] is not present, this is not present. With the cessation of this, this ceases." It should also be noted that in Karunadasa's article '*The Buddhist Critique of Sassatavada and Ucchedavada: The Key to a proper Understanding of the Origin and the Doctrines of early Buddhism*,' the term 'causal principle' is used to referred to the 'law of conditionality.'

³ The formula reads as: "conditioned by non-knowing (*avidyā*) is embodied conditioning (*saṃkhāra*); conditioned by embodied conditioning (*saṃkhāra*) is consciousness (*viññāna*); conditioned by consciousness (*viññāna*) is mind-and-matter (*nāma-rūpa*); conditioned by mind-and-matter (*nāma-rūpa*) are the six sense-bases (*āyayana*); conditioned by the six sense-bases (*āyayana*) is sensory contact (*sparsā*); conditioned by sensory contact (*sparsā*) are three initial interpretive modes of experience (pleasure, pain and neutral) (*vedanā*); conditioned by three initial interpretive modes of experience (pleasure, pain and neutral) (*vedanā*) is desire or thirst (*trṣṇha*); conditioned by desire or thirst (*trṣṇha*) is appropriation (*upādāna*); conditioned by appropriation (*upādāna*) is impetus, impulse or motivation (*bhāva*); conditioned by impetus, impulse or motivation (*bhāva*) is birth (*jāti*); conditioned by birth (*jāti*) are sickness, old age and death (*māraṇa*). In this way, this whole great heap of suffering originates." The Sanskrit terms in brackets corresponding to the English terms are added by me. The English translation is from Dan Lusthaus, *Buddhist Phenomenology*, (London and New York: Routledge, rpt., c2002), 52-67. This interpretation finds its basis on a number of occasions at which the Buddha elaborated on what Dependent Origination meant. On one occasion, when the Buddha was on his way into town for alms from *Rajagaha*, he was stopped by an ascetic called Kassapa, who was so eager to know the answers to a number of questions about the causes of suffering from the Buddha that he requested the Buddha to give him the answers before going for alms. Too kind to decline Kassapa's request, the Buddha stopped to give Kassapa his view of how suffering originated and the way it ceased. (John S Strong, *The Experience of Buddhism: Sources and Interpretations*, [Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company, c1995], 100.) On another occasion, when the Buddha was dwelling at Savatthi, he explained to the monks around him what Dependent Origination was largely in accordance with the twelve-linked causal formula (*Samyutta Nikaya*, XII, 2).

conditionality’ is often used to precede the ‘twelve-linked causal formula’ as a general outline. The latter, more frequently encountered, is mostly expressed on description regarding as the practical manifestation of the principle of Dependent Origination, showing as it does how the natural process follows the general principle.⁴ To thoroughly understand Dependent Origination, one has to understand three aspects: (1) everything in this world is interdependent, therefore, nothing is permanent;⁵ (2) everything in this world is interrelated, therefore, nothing is independent;⁶ and (3) everything in this world is relative, therefore, nothing is absolute;⁷ that means all phenomena are empty (*śūnya*) – momentary (*kṣaṇika*) in nature.

Emptiness and mind function

“All that we are is the result of what we have thought:

it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts.”

--Dhammapada

Basically, the Buddha’s teaching is on suffering – how it rises and ceases by the doctrine of Dependent Origination. The doctrine demonstrates the truth of all things in nature as having the characteristics of impermanence, suffering and non-self, and as faring according to cause and effect. In order to explain the way for cessation from suffering, the Buddha explains and analyzes each factor of the ‘twelve links of causal formula’ in a reversed order.⁸ In other words, the ‘twelve links of

⁴ Ryuei Michael McCormick, “On Dependent Origination,” Ryuei.net

(<http://nichirenscoffehouse.net/Ryuei/depen-orig.html>) Accessed on Dec 14, 2008

⁵ “What is called ‘*śūnya*,’ that the real *dharma* of impermanent, non-constant, no non-changing (所言「空」者，無常、無恆、無不變易真實法故。)” *Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra* (T30n1579, 764, a29-b1)

⁶ In *Madhyamaka Sāstra*, Nāgārjuna claims that “*Whatever is dependently co-arisen, that is explained to be emptiness. That, being a prajñapti-upādāya (dependent designation), is itself the middle way.* (眾因緣生法，我說即是無，亦為是假名，亦是中道義。)” (T30n1564, 33, b11-12). Note: “*prajñapti*” means designation, metaphoric name for a complex set of processes – the name itself has no single thing to which it refers. “*upādāya*” means a cause, a basis, or a presupposition.

⁷ In *Śūnyatāsaptati*, Nāgārjuna says, “*By seeing...phenomena arising from cause and conditions...eliminate the whole network of wrong views...(then) abandon attachment, closed mindedness and hatred and thereby attain nirvāṇa.*” (David, R. Komito, *Nāgārjuna’s “Seventy Stanzas” – A Buddhist Psychology of Emptiness*, [New York: Snow Lion, 1987], 95) In *Madhyamaka Sāstra*, Nāgārjuna continues saying that “*The reality of nirvāṇa and the world, the realms of the two are no slightest difference.* (涅槃之實際，及與世間際，如是二際者，無毫釐差別。)” (*Madhyamaka Sāstra* [T30n1564, 36, a10-11]) According to these views, the world is simply a process, things are but events. This is what is meant by *śūnyatā*, the emptiness of all *dharma*. Thus, the world is not reality, but it is a realm of relativity

⁸ The reversed order as: (1) *Sickness, old age and death (māraṇa)* – old age means ‘decay, decrepitude, breaking up, over-ripeness of faculties: the skin, shrinkage of life-span’ and sickness and death refer to

Dependent Origination' is a causal formula explaining the origination of suffering of 'sickness, old age and death (*māraṇa*)' under the condition of 'birth (*jāti*)', which in turn originates under the condition of 'impetus, impulse or motivation (*bhāva*)', and so on. In this reversed way, the doctrine of Dependent Origination reveals the link/wheel of life by the interrelations between causes, conditions, and results (因果, *hetu-pratyaya-phala*) as well as the operation of cognition that how sentient beings' minds build meaning.

McConnell claims, the underlying insight of the Dependent Origination is that "things are not what they seem."⁹ Why? As stated in the twelve-linked causal formula, "conditioned by *modes of experience (vedanā)* is *desire (tṛṣṇha)*" and "conditioned by *sensory contact (sparśa)* is *modes of experience*," we can know that the process of cognition starts from *sensory contact*.¹⁰ The conjunction of these three factors implies that the *sensory contact* is only a bare sensory experience, which is empty in nature to any subjective inclinations.¹¹ Hence, *consciousness (vijñāna)*, *mind-and-matter (nāma-rūpa)*, and the *six sense-bases (āyayana)* are the three major conditioning elements that constitute cognition, while the *sensory contact* refers to

"falling or decease, separation, disappearance, mortality or dying, accomplishment of time: separation of component factors, laying down of the carcass"; (2) Birth (*jāti*) – "continuous birth, descent, reproduction, appearance of component factors, acquiring of sense-spheres"; (3) impetus, impulse or motivation (*bhāva*) – motivation in *karma*-[world], *rūpa*-[world] and *arūpa*-[world]; (4) Appropriation (*upādāna*) – four appropriation for "desires, opinion, rule and ritual, soul-theory"; (5) Desire or thirst (*tṛṣṇha*) – desire for "things seen, heard, odours, tastes, tangible, ideas"; (6) Three initial interpretive modes of experience (*vedanā*) – feeling of "pleasure, pain or neutral" that is born of the six groups of contact; (7) Sensory contact (*sparśa*) – it includes the six groups of eye-contact, ear-contact, nose-contact, tongue-contact, body-contact and mind-contact; (8) The six sense-bases (*āyayana*) – the sense of eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind; (9) Mind-and-matter (*nāma-rūpa*) – 'Mind (*nāma*)' refers to "feeling, perception, will, contact, work of mind," and shape is the 'matter (*rūpa*)' that derives from the four great elements (*mahābhūta*) of earth, water, fire, and wind (or air) which represents solid, liquid, heat, and motion respectively; (10) Consciousness (*vijñāna*) – six groups of consciousness of eye, ear, smell, taste, touch, and mind; (11) Embodied conditionings (*samkhāra*) – the karmic constituents derive from deed, speech and mind activities; and (12) Non-knowing (*avidyā*) – "nescience concerning ill, its rise, its cessation and concerning the way going to the cessation of ill." *Samyutta-Nikāya*, ii , 3

⁹ John A McConnell. *Mindful Meditation: A handbook for Buddhist peacemakers*, (Dehiwala: Buddhist Cultural Centre, Sri Lanka, c2001), 25.

¹⁰ The *sensory contact* is the meeting point of the *six sense-bases*, *mind-and-matter*, and *consciousness*. The distinction between *sensory contact* and *sense object* is that the former is 'actually' perceived while the latter can 'potentially' be perceived. (*Majjhima-Nikāya*, i, 111; *Samyutta-Nikāya*, iv, 32). Boisvert (1997:51) elaborates the principle difference between *sensory contact* and *mode of experience* as "the former is the mere perception of external stimuli – a perception devoid of any subjective interpretation; the latter, however, has a definite subjective content, for it must either be pleasant, unpleasant or neutral."

¹¹ The operation of the *sensory contact* happens depending on the activities of cognition faculties (the six sense-bases/organs). Hence, the twelve linked causal formula says that "conditioned by the *six sense-bases* is *sensory contact*." But, the *six sense-bases* cannot compose a process of cognition independently without the help of sensory contact, it also relies on *consciousness* to discriminate and reflect the *mind-and-matter* of the cognitive/sensed object. McConnell (2001:25) describes, "Far from being things in themselves 'out there,' they are the result of processes in which sensory and mental data are compounded to create the 'sensed objects' which then appear 'real.'"

the point of commencement at the moment of the three conditioning elements meeting together.¹² However, this kind of cognition is only a delusion since it is fundamentally bonded by the presupposed power of concocting – ‘embodied conditionings (*saṃkhāra*),’ as well as, the lacking of self-awareness – ‘non-knowing (*avidyā*).’¹³ Under this circumstance, the objective counterpart is a ‘non-proper view’ that what we experience is there ‘in itself,’ the world is to be ‘out there’ independent of us, as well as the self is to be equally ‘real.’¹⁴ Obviously, the reversed understanding on the twelve-linked causal formula reveals the function of mind, which is a way that transcends laity to become a deity¹⁵ – an ‘arahant,’ who bursts delusion’s net without craving’s seeing and uproots the conceit of ‘I’.¹⁶

Main theme of the Heart *Sūtra*

*“Matter does not differ from emptiness,
emptiness does not differ from matter.
matter is emptiness, emptiness is matter”*

--Mahā-prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra

The Heart *Sūtra* is very, very interesting. In order to elaborate the function of emptiness, it starts by showing the relative (opposite) world that “*matter is emptiness, emptiness is matter.*” Then, it shows the absolute world by saying “*no matter, no emptiness.*” Finally, the *sūtra* states a very important world of completeness of “*anuttara samyak sambodhi*” – truth, just as it is: “*matter is matter, emptiness is emptiness.*” In this way, one understands that emptiness is neither denying the existence of phenomena, nor a form of nihilism. In fact, it is a way to nurture our mind and to revolute our lives. Here comes up two questions:

¹² Yinshun. *Wei shi xue tan yuan* 唯識學探源, (Taipei : Zheng wen chu ban she , c1974), 25

¹³ “What is ignorance, and how far is one ignorant? Herein, brother, the untaught many folk know not body, know not the arising of body, know not the ceasing of body know not the way going to the ceasing of body...know not consciousness, nor the ceasing of consciousness, nor the way going to the ceasing of consciousness.” (*Khanda-vagga in Samyutta-Nikāya*, iii, 161)

¹⁴ The Buddha says, “Herein, Brethren, the untaught many-folk who discern not those of the Ariyans...regard body as the self, self as possessed of body, body as being in the self, self as being in the body...so also as to feeling, perception, and the other factors...This is the view: it has come to him to think ‘I am.’...Touched by feeling born of contact with ignorance, there comes to the untaught many folk (the view), ‘I am...I am this...Things will be.’” (*Khanda-vagga in Samyutta-Nikāya*, iii, 47)

¹⁵ Ui Hakuju 宇井伯壽. ‘Yindu fojiao sixiang shi 印度佛教思想史,’ collected in Yin-hai (tr.) *Zhong Yin fojiao sixiang shi* 中印佛教思想史, (Xinzhu : Wu liang shou chu ban she, c1987), 130

¹⁶ *Khanda-vagga in Samyutta-Nikāya*, iii, 82

The first question: How the notion of emptiness nurtures our mind? The Heart *Sūtra* shows the key of emptiness strategy in three ways: (1) To let go our ego by “perceiving all five *skandhas*¹⁷ are empty” that “matter (*rūpa*) does not differ

¹⁷ *Skandha* is a Sanskrit word which means ‘a troop,’ ‘multitude,’ ‘aggregate,’ etc. Boisvert (1997:17) states that ‘the number of meanings associated with the term *skandha* is striking both in the pre-Buddhist and Buddhist literatures, however, the most important usage of the term in the early Buddhist canons is in the sense of the five aggregates (*pañcaskandha*). The *Sāmyutta-Nikāya* (i, 135) mentions that “for just as, when the parts are rightly set, the word ‘chariot’ arise [in our minds], so doth our usage covenant to say: ‘a being’ when the aggregate are there.” Also, the *Sāmyutta-Nikāya* (iii, 58-61) records that the Buddha analyses on five *skandhas* as the falsehood of ‘I’ and the way to cease it. The five *skandha*-s are:

(1) *rūpa* (corporeality/matter) – Karunadasa (1967:38) any impermanent physical or material substance/matter that occupies space (external/objective matter), as well as, *dharmāyatana-rūpa* (elements constituting mental object – internal/subjective matter). Boisvert (1997:48) elaborates the importance of the classification on internal (subjective) and external (objective) matter. He says that internal (subjective) matter refers to material reality (including the five sense organs) existing independently of the potential perception of it, while the ‘external (objective) matter’ takes in order to be apprehended by the senses. Therefore, this twofold division can be expressed as: (a) the five sense organs and the four primary great elements; as well as, (b) the six sense objects. Since the ‘subjective’ aspect of matter is constituted by the six sense objects, the term ‘subjective’ in the sense is any external matter that can potentially be perceived by, and affect (*rūppati*), the individual. When relating to the twelve linked causal formula, the *rūpa-skandha* is corresponded to the factors of ‘*nāma-rūpa*,’ ‘*āyayana*’ and ‘*sparśa*’ which serves as ‘object of cognition (*ālambana*) on the notion of *jñāna*.

(2) *vedanā* (modes of experience/feeling) – the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (i, 293): explains the meaning of *vedanā* as “it is called ‘feeling’ because one ‘feels.’” the *Yamaka* (17): when referring *vedanā-skandha* to the twelve linked causal formula, there is no distinction between *vedanā-skandha* and *vedanā* as a member of the doctrine of Dependent Origination; thus, *Dīgha-Nikāya* (ii, 58): *vedanā-skandha* is the result of *jñāna* (after the commencement of *sparśa*) which is a condition for craving.

(3) *saṃjñā* (recognition/ideations) – in early Buddhism, this term has many meanings which includes: (a) Nyanatiloka (1970:164): “one of the seven mental factors (*cetasika*) that are inseparably bound up with all consciousness (*cetanā*, in Sanskrit),” (b) the *Anguttara-Nikāya* (iii, 413-4): sixfold recognition of the six (physical and mental) sense objects, (c) *Sāmyutta-Nikāya* (iii, 87): recognition of distinctive marks of sense objects, and (d) Thera (1965:68): memory function if the distinctive marks of a sense object are repeatedly recognized. The *Sāmyutta-Nikāya* (iii, 87): whenever something is sensed, it is also recognized. Boisvert (1997:88) explains that *saṃjñā* always accompanies and follows *vedanā*, but depending on the particular orientation of the *saṃjñā* – (a) may generate craving, or (b) start cultivating wisdom. Thus, the *Anguttara-Nikāya* (iii, 413-4) mentions that *saṃjñā* is a faculty leading to concept formation, so that whatever is conceptualized has previously been ‘*saññanized*.’

(4) *saṃskāra* (embodied conditionings) – both Horner (*Pali-English Dictionary* [c1954, i], xxiv) and Madanayake (1978:2) points out that the term ‘*saṃskāra*’ is regarded as one of the most difficult terms in Buddhist metaphysics and its actual meaning remains obscure nowadays. If studied in an etymological way, Johansson (1979:48) and Boisvert (1997:105) have defined it as a ‘compounding creation.’ For the term ‘compounding’ implies a continuous producing force of making/creating/generating that ‘*saṃskāra* (as a producing force) generates other *saṃskāra* (conditioned phenomena), viz. the links of desire, appropriation and impulse/motivation.

(5) *vijñāna* (consciousness) – ‘deliberated cognition’ – both Buddhadasa (1988:73) and Harvey (1990:49-50) named *vijñāna* as ‘distinctive knowing’ and ‘discriminative consciousness,’ respectively. Also, Jayatilleke (2004:435) remarks that *vijñāna* is not *jñāna* but similar to it as it is one of the elements constituting *jñāna*. Yao (2005:69) summarizes the difference between these two words as: (a) *jñāna* is an associate of *vijñāna*, but not vice versa – the *Apidamo fazhi lun* (T27n1545, 229, a2): “Awarenesses are associates of consciousnesses. But consciousnesses are not associates of awareness. (諸智皆識相應。非諸識皆智相應。)”); (b) the *Apidamo da piposha lun* (T27n1545, 44, c19-20): “*jñāna* refers to all mental activities/associates (*caitta*) while *vijñāna* refers to both the mind (*citta*) and

from emptiness, emptiness does not differ from matter; that which is matter is emptiness that which is emptiness is matter. The same is true of feelings (*vedanā*), perceptions (*sañjñā*), impulses (*saṅskāra*), consciousness (*vijñāna*).” (2) To understand the nature of emptiness that “all *dharmas*¹⁸ are marked with emptiness; they do not appear or disappear, are not tainted or pure, do not increase or decrease.” (3) To eliminate the cognitive hindrances (所知障, *jñeya-āvaraṇa*), the Heart *Sūtra* claims, “in emptiness [there is] no matter, no feelings, [no] perceptions, [no] impulses, [no] consciousness (emptiness of five *skandhas*); no eyes, no ears, no nose, no tongue, no body, no mind; no color, no sound, no smell, no taste, no touch, no object of mind (emptiness of twelve *āyatana*);¹⁹ no realm of eyes, and so forth until no realm of mind consciousness (emptiness of eighteen *dhātu*);²⁰ no ignorance and also no extinction of it, and so forth until no old age and death and also no extinction of them (emptiness of twelve links of causal formula); no suffering, no origination, no stopping, no path (emptiness of Four Noble Truth);²¹ no cognition, also no attainment with nothing to attain.”²²

mental activities/associates (*caitta*) (謂若說智則總顯諸心所法。若說識則顯心心所法)”; and (c) *jñāna* is fundamentally an undefiled *dharma*, while *vijñāna* is a defiled one – the *Apidamo da piposha lun* (T27n1545, 44, c7-8): “*jñāna* is the foundation of all undefiled things, and *vijñāna* is the foundation of all defiled things (一切清淨品中智為根本。一切雜染品中識為根本。).”

¹⁸ In an ontological sense *dharma* have five important philosophical meanings: (1) “a transcendental reality which is real in absolute truth and in the ultimate sense”; (2) “the order of law of the universe, immanent, eternal, uncreated”; (3) “a truly real event, things as seen when *dharma* is taken as norm. A *dharmic* fact, or the objective truth”; (4) “objective data whether *dharmically* true or untrue, mental object or mental percepts, i.e. the object or supports of mind which is reckoned as the sixth sense-organ,” and (5) “characteristic, quality, property, attribute. This meaning also pertains to the use of *dharma* as an adjective (*-dharma*, *-dharmin*), where *-dharma* can also be render as ‘subject to,’ ‘following the law of,’ ‘essentially (*eidēs*),’ ‘destined to be,’ ‘being constituted,’ ‘having the inherent quality (as based on natural law or the rational constitution of the universe).” Edward Conze, *Buddhist Thought in India*, (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., c1962), 92-93

¹⁹ The *Visuddhimagga* (xv, 10) explains the term ‘*āyatana*’ ‘*āya-dvāra*,’ literally “the door of coming into existence,” or “the door of arrival.” Conze (1962:108) elaborates that ‘*āya*’ means ‘rise’ or ‘source,’ the term ‘door’ implies the meaning of ‘cause’ or ‘means.’ Monier (2003:148) translates ‘*āyatana*’ as the twelve ‘sense fields,’ which is classified into two sides, inner and outer, of *āyatana* (seats). The inner seats contain the five sense organs (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body) and *manas* (mind), while the qualities (visibles, audible, smells, taste, touchables, and mind-object/*dharma*) perceived by the six inner *āyatana* are considered as the outer *āyatana*. Mental events take place when the inner and outer *āyatana* conjunct together. Therefore, all *vedanā-s* and *sañjñā-s* are only the manifestation in the bondage of sense organs and sense objects which accompany in contact (*sparśa*) of any act of consciousness (*vijñāna*) to arise.

²⁰ Monier (2003:513) mentions that *dhātu*, from the root √*dhā*, means to ‘put, place or set’; and Nyanatiloka (1970:48) translates *dhātu* as ‘elements’ which are the ultimate constituents of a whole. When referring to sensorium as the conditions or foundations in the process of cognition (*jñāna*), *dhātu* normally refers to the eighteen physical and mental elements, i.e. the six sense organs (*indriya*), the six sense objects (*viśaya*) and the corresponding six sense consciousnesses (*vijñāna*). The *Samyutta-Nikāya* (iv, 15) names this cognitive sensorium of *indriya-viśaya-vijñāna* as ‘all-inclusive’ in Buddhism since it describes and accounts for the nature of phenomena, viz. the causes of all *dharmas*.

²¹ The notion of Four Noble Truths is one of the major teachings in Buddhism. The Four Noble Truths are: (1) *dukkha* – dis-satisfaction / dis-harmonize; (2) *samudaya* – the arising or origin of *dukkha*; (3)

The second question is how to apply the emptiness strategy in daily life? The Heart *Sūtra* described wisdom (*prajñā*) as the non-conceptual realization that not just the self, but the very *dharmas* that constitute the person and the world are intrinsically empty. Since all material and mental phenomena are dependently co-arising, they are neither permanent nor ever non-changing. Throughout our lives, we are continually faced with many opportunity and crisis, gain and loss, success and failure, etc. It seems that life is like a roller coaster that goes up and down. In the sense of emptiness, however, there is no absolute “up” or “down.” Due to all incidents are results of various causes and conditions which are far beyond our control, one must lead a life apprehensive of takeoffs and downturns. Hence, the Heart *Sūtra* teaches us the non-attachment to “I,” “mine” and “me.” To live without attachment is the way to free from suffering or distress, in the meantime, to attain tranquility and happiness with “no hindrance in mind.” By understanding the theory of dependent co-arising, we treasure and make use of all cause and conditions in a better way.

Moreover, the Heart *Sūtra* stresses that once a sentient being realizes the notion of emptiness; he can deliver others from suffering and distress by “practicing deeply the *prajñāpāramitā*.”²³ The teaching of “improving oneself (*svārtha*) and bringing benefit to others (*parārtha*)” – *bodhisattva* idea – is the highest wisdom of

nirodha – the cessation of *dukkha*; and (4) *mārga* – the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*. Walpola Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught*, (London: Gordon Fraser Gallery, c1978), 16.

²² Buddhists emphasize that cognition is not by understanding, elaboration or explanation. Instead, Buddhist concern is an intuitive way to seize the nature of cognition, as well as, the sensed/cognized object (*viśaya*). Cognition is neither speculative operation to approach reality nor from the dualistic perspective of ‘subject’ versus ‘object’ to explain noumena or phenomena. The way that the Buddhist studies ‘reality’ is by taking cognizance of mental process, which differs from Western philosophers, for example, Aristotle (384 BCE – 322 BCE) and Descartes (1596 CE – 1650 CE) who assume the independence of the mental (subject) from the physical (object). (Kaisa Puhakka. *Knowledge and Reality: A Comparative Study of Quine and Some Buddhist Logicians*, [Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, c1975], 93). Actually, the case is neither inner nor outer – just causes and conditions (*hetu-pratyaya*). In Buddhism, this kind of understanding is named as *prajñā*. “In the Sarvāstivāda system, the term ‘*prajñā*’ is the faculty of understanding which has different modes of operation according to which it receives the different appellations – *jñāna* (knowledge), *dr̥ṣṭi* (view), *kṣānti* (receptivity), etc. Moreover, unlike in other schools such as the Theravāda, *prajñā* may be skillful, unskillful, proper or right (*samyāñc*), false or wrong (*mithyā*), with-outflow or outflow-free; etc. At the highest level, *prajñā* represents the Buddha’s perfect wisdom.” Details of various modes of operation of *prajñā* can refer to K.L. Dhammajoti, *Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma* [Hong Kong: Centre of Buddhist Studies, HKU, c2007a], 317-326; and *Abhidharma Doctrines and Controversies on Perception*, [Hong Kong: Centre of Buddhist Studies, HKU, c2007b], 55-60).

²³ The *prajñāpāramitā* is one of the six *pāramitās* that *bodhisattvas* cultivate merits. The six *pāramitās* are: (1) generosity (*dāna*); (2) upholding precept (*sīla*); (3) effort (*vīrya*); (4) endurance (*kṣānti*); (5) contemplation (*dhyāna*); and (6) wisdom (*prajñā*). Actually, ‘*pāramitās*’ is a Sanskrit word which means ‘gone to the opposite shore,’ ‘complete attainment’ or ‘perfection.’ The practice of the six *pāramitās* is the six methods to deliver us to the enlightened side – the way to be a *Bodhisattva*. In the *Śūraṅgama Sūtra*, the Buddha said that the six *pāramitās* is the respective act of beings. It is a completeness of attaining the Buddhahood. Thus, human beings must perfect such skillful methods (*upāya*) of the six *pāramitās*, but does so while bearing in mind their emptiness.

emptiness in Māhayāna Buddhism. Hence, the Heart *Sūtra* mentions that “all Buddhas in the Three Worlds” attain truth, “*anuttara samyak sambodhi*,”²⁴ by “depending on *prajñāpāramitā*.” Actually, truth is nothing special. It is our ordinary life. What we need to do is just do what we should do. When we do a business plan, we think. When we are on duty, we work. When lunch break comes, we eat. This is what Master Seung Sahn named as “doing correct things at correct moment.”²⁵ Most important at all, as Zen Master Dogen said, “When walking, just walk. When sitting just sit. Above all, don’t wobble.”²⁶ This is a very important characteristic that everybody should have in dealing with daily life tasks.

The relevance of emptiness strategy to global recovery

Little boy to the electrician: “What exactly is electricity?”

“I really do not know, son. But I can make it give you light.”

-- Anthony de Mello

The main theme of the Heart *Sūtra* is to direct us the way to liberate from suffering and help others. It reveals a key strategy, emptiness, for us to handle adversity – an effective way to overcome difficulties and regain happiness. According to the Heart *Sūtra*; the emptiness strategy has four steps: (1) understanding that life is “suffering and distress” (*dukkha*), (2) knowing that the creation of “perverted view” by attachment is the origin of “suffering and distress” (*samudaya*), (3) believing that “all suffering and distress” can be “saved” and “is able to relieve” (*nirodha*), and (4) realizing emptiness is the way to unbind suffering (*mārga*). In this section, we are going to discuss how the emptiness strategy responses to the global financial crisis and/or recovery, the hottest global issues recently.

²⁴ The “*anuttarā-samyak-sambodhi*” is a Sanskrit phrase meaning “unexcelled perfect enlightening,” which means the “truth.” “*Anuttarā*” means “unsurpassed;” “*samyak*” means “correct,” and “*sambodhi*” means “enlightenment.” Digital Dictionary of Buddhism online, A. Charles Muller (ed.), “*anuttarā-samyak-sambodhi*” (<[http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?96.xml+id\('b963f-8028-591a-7f85-4e09-85d0-4e09-83e9-63d0'\)](http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?96.xml+id('b963f-8028-591a-7f85-4e09-85d0-4e09-83e9-63d0')>)>) accessed February 25, 2010.

²⁵ As we have discussed before that there is nothing to attain. “When attaining this point of nothing, our mind is empty, and clear like a mirror: if a flower appears before the mirror, there is only a flower; red comes, there is only red. In this stage, we must find *nirvāṇa*’s function in the world. Since *nirvāṇa* means attaining emptiness, this means nothing to attain, ‘*anuttarā-samyak-sambodhi*’ means using the experience of emptiness to attain truth. With an empty mind, reflect this world, just as it is.” Seung Sahn, *The Compass of Zen*, (Boston: Shambhala, c1997), 137

²⁶ Heinrich Dumoulin, *A History of Zen Buddhism*. (New York: Pantheon Books, c1963), 159

- First step – understanding that life is “suffering and distress” (*dukkha*)

First, we have to clarify what is “global financial crisis”? The term “financial crisis” normally refers to a variety of situations in which some financial institutions or assets suddenly lose a large part of their value. Over the centuries, most financial crises were associated with banking panics, stock market crashes, bursting of some financial bubbles, currency crises, as well as sovereign defaults.²⁷ The global financial crisis at the present time is an economic downturn due to the shortfall of liquidity of banking system in the United States. It triggers the collapse of large financial institutions and falling in stock markets around the world. In order to stabilize the economic market, governments have to bail out of banks with national reserve funds. These series of unprecedented events have reoriented the system of global financial. Many economists named it as “Financial Tsunami” and regard it as the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression last century.²⁸

The next question is how to relate the First Noble Truth to global financial crisis / recovery? For the First Noble Truth, the Buddha claims that everything in this world is “impermanent, *dukkha* and subject to change.”²⁹ The Buddha examines life and enjoyment of sense-pleasures in three aspects: (1) attraction / enjoyment (*assāda*), (2) evil consequence / danger / un-satisfactoriness (*ādīnava*), and (3) freedom or liberation (*nissaraṇa*).³⁰ When analyzing incidents of financial crises, we can understand that there is always a continuous “economic flourishing” before the downturn happens. That is, when the economic is good, we are happy to enjoy the pleasure and satisfaction derived from it. This is enjoyment. This is a fact of experience. However, once the situation changes (bursting of economic bubbles), we are deprived of this enjoyment. We become sad, may become unreasonable and unbalanced, or may even behave foolishly. This is the evil side of the event. Anyway, it is also a fact of experience. On the contrary, if we have no attachment (become empty) to the situations; that is freedom, a liberation. From this it is an example that phenomena are experience of pleasure, sorrow or freedom. This is *dukkha* – a realistic and objective way that the First Noble Truth accounts for life.

- Second step – knowing that the creation of “perverted view” by attachment is the origin of “suffering and distress” (*samudaya*)

²⁷ For details, cf. to Charles Poor Kindleberger. *Manias, Panics, and Crashes: A History of Financial Crises*. (New York: Basic Books, c1978)

²⁸ “Three Top Economists Agree 2009 Worst Financial Crisis Since Great Depression; Risks Increase if Right Steps are Not Taken” (posted on 2009-2-13). *Business Wire News*, accessed on February 20, 2010 (<http://www.businesswire.com/portal/site/home/permalink/?ndmViewId=news_view&newsId=20090213005161&newsLang=en>)

²⁹ *Mahādukkhakkhandha-sutta, Majjhima-Nikāya*, i, 90

³⁰ *Majjhima-Nikāya*, i, 85; *Samyutta-Nikāya*, iii, 27

Now, let us examine what causes global financial crisis. Although many economists have suggested theories on causes and solutions of financial crises over the centuries, there is little consensus. Unfortunately, financial crises are still regularly reoccurred around the world. Why? Economics is the social science that studies production, distribution and consumption of goods and services. It is defined as "...the science which studies human behavior as a relationship between ends and scarce means which have alternative uses." The term scarcity, from economical perspective, refers to "available resources are insufficient to satisfy all wants and needs."³¹

Economic problem happens whenever the presence of scarcity or lack of available resources. When dealing with the causes of financial crises, based on the scope of studies, most economists are focus on material data – "resources." Their aim is to sort out the best way for reallocating resources in order to "satisfy all wants and needs." The ultimate concern is to meet human beings' desires (*samudaya*), certainly, they never find the right solution as desire can never been fulfilled. To "satisfy all wants and needs," from Buddhist perspective, only reinforce "perverted view" of attachment to sense-pleasures, wealth and power, ideas and ideals, views, opinions, theories, conceptions and beliefs. In fact, desire is the immediate cause of dissatisfaction and the root cause of any crises around the world. It could not be the remedy for recovery.

- Third step – believing that "all suffering and distress" can be "saved" and "is able to relieve" (*nirodha*)

A problem is regarded as a problem because we do not find out the solution. Once the solution is found, it is no longer regarded as a problem. The notion of emptiness is not just a theory. In fact, it is life liberation – freedom from suffering (*nirodha*). The *Yogācārabhūmi-sāstra* says, "What is the meaning of practicing the notion of emptiness? It is said that here does not have something, correct contemplation (如實觀, *yathābhūta-darśana*) it as emptiness. If here has something remaining, just notice that it exists."³² Through practice of correct contemplation; we can understand the truth and reconstruct our life by eliminating the causes of defilement (*tanhakkhaya*) and cultivating wholesome causes.

³¹ Lionel Robbins, *An Essay on the Nature and Significance of Economic Science*, (London: Macmillan, c1945), 16. (PDF) (<<http://mises.org/books/robbinessay2.pdf>>), accessed on February 21, 2010.

³² "修習空性。其義云何。謂於此處彼非有故。正觀為空。若於此處所餘有故。如實知有。"
Yogācārabhūmi-sāstra (T30n1579, 812, b20-22)

- Fourth step – realizing emptiness is the way to unbind suffering (*mārga*)

As mentioned above, the twelve-linked causal formula is about the law of causality in the death and rebirth cycle. Phenomena arise simply due to the presence of certain causes and conditions. The function is cyclically continuous in nature. Every process of the twelve links changes with our mind changes, the cycle can be break in any point. Although “prevention is better than cure,” it is difficult to predict or estimate any possible causes of crises, the external factors. However, we can nurture our wisdom to manage our mind by practicing emptiness (*mārga*). For those who are mindful can know what is going on and know how to face any (social, economical, political, etc.) crises happened, as well as, to make better judgments and decisions for recovery (correct contemplation). It is a way leading to unbind suffering. Avoiding two extreme experiences of sense-pleasure enjoyment and sorrow, the Buddha named it as the “Middle Path (*madhyama-pratipatti*)” that gives vision and knowledge, which leads to calm, insight, enlightenment.³³ Under this condition, we can steer our own life. Lives can growth and the world can also be improved. Due to the emptiness casual condition, lives and the world can ever be changing; have space for further development; can eliminate any impurities and aggregate wholesome things; leave behind the erroneous and return to the reality (*prajñāpāramitā*); live beyond the laity and liberate from suffering; finally, attain self-nature (*anuttara samyak saṅbodhi*) and become Buddhas (*gate gate paragate parasamgate bodhisattva*). This is the great function of emptiness. Thus, the notion of emptiness in Buddhism is an active, positive and progressive strategy towards life.

Conclusion

The Buddhist perspective to material wealth is neither evil nor bad. The Buddha recognizes the importance of basic material wealth for personal happiness, as well as, spiritual progress. He says, “Hunger is the worst of diseases...if one knows this truly, that is *nirvana*, the highest happiness.”³⁴ Nowadays, global recovery is a major topic around the world. Facing the “Financial Tsunami,” it is a perfect time for us to re-evaluate the value of economy. Neither economical prosperity nor industrial improvement brings us spiritual enjoyment if there is no contentment in life or scarcity of spiritual treasures. Economy does not solely refer to material wealth.

³³ The Middle Path (*madhyama-pratipatti*) is generally referred to as the Noble Eightfold Path (*ārya-astāngika-mārga*), because it is composed of eight categories: (1) right understanding (*samyak-drsti*), right thought (*samyak-saṅkalpa*), (3) right speech (*samyak-vāc*), (4) right action (*samyak-karmānta*), (5) right livelihood (*samyak-ājīva*), (6) right effort (*samyak-vyāyāma*), (7) right mindfulness (*samyak-smṛti*), and (8) right concentration (*samyak-smṛti*).

³⁴ F. Max Müller, *The Dhammapada* (Sacred Books Of The East, Vol. X). Oxford University Press, 1881, from “WikiSource” at (<[http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Dhammapada_\(Muller\)](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Dhammapada_(Muller))>), assessed on Feb 22, 2010



Instead, it should include health, peace, harmony, wisdom, compassionate, etc. Beyond searching for material wealth, we should aware the importance of pleasant state of mind and spiritual contentment. Hence, the ultimate way for global recovery is to develop a harmonized society with balance of wealth/resources by means of mental well-beings of diligence, honesty, ethics, wisdom, and compassionate.

In short, the core philosophy of Buddhism relates to the realization of emptiness in terms of impermanence (*anitya*) and non-self (*anātman*). The former is based on the theory of Dependent Origination, while the latter is based on the theory of the five aggregates (*skhandhas*). In other word, there is no everlasting and unchanging substance or entity called “I.” This is basic understanding of emptiness. The Heart *Sūtra* elaborates this idea very thoroughly and deeply. We all know that the idea of emptiness can apply to our daily life. Anyhow, this paper is the first attempt to discuss the possibility of applying the emptiness theory to global recovery through nurturing human’s mental well-being and how Buddhist notions benefit our live and change our mindset for the better. For those who are interested in this topic, of course, further research work should be carried on.

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Appendix I

《般若波羅蜜多心經》 唐三藏法師玄奘譯

觀自在菩薩行深般若波羅蜜多時，照見五蘊皆空，度一切苦厄。

舍利子！色不異空，空不異色；色即是空，空即是色。受、想、行、識，亦復如是

舍利子！是諸法空相，不生不滅，不垢不淨，不增不減。是故，空中無色，無受、想、行、識；無眼、耳、鼻、舌、身、意；無色、聲、香、味、觸、法；無眼界，乃至無意識界；無無明亦無無明盡，乃至無老死亦無老死盡；無苦、集、滅、道；無智，亦無得。

以無所得故，菩提薩埵依般若波羅蜜多故，心無罣礙；無罣礙故，無有恐怖，遠離顛倒夢想，究竟涅槃。三世諸佛依般若波羅蜜多故，得阿耨多羅三藐三菩提。

故知般若波羅蜜多，是大神咒，是大明咒，是無上咒，是無等等咒，能除一切苦真實不虛，故說般若波羅蜜多咒。即說咒曰：揭帝 揭帝 般羅揭帝 般羅僧揭帝 菩提 僧莎訶

般若波羅蜜多心經 (T08n0251, 848, c4-23)

Appendix II

The *Māha prajñāpāramitā* Heart Sūtra

Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva, when practicing deeply the *prajñāpāramitā*, perceives that all five *skandhas* are empty and saves [sentient beings] from all suffering and distress.

Śāriputra, matter does not differ from emptiness, emptiness does not differ from matter; that which is matter is emptiness, that which is emptiness is matter. The same is true of feelings, perceptions, impulses, consciousness.

Śāriputra, all *dharmas* are marked with emptiness; they do not appear or disappear, are not tainted or pure, do not increase or decrease. Therefore, in emptiness [there is] no matter, no feelings, [no] perceptions, [no] impulses, [no] consciousness; no eyes, no ears, no nose, no tongue, no body, no mind; no color, no sound, no smell, no taste, no touch, no object of mind; no realm of eyes, and so forth until no realm of mind consciousness; no ignorance and also no extinction of it, and so forth until no old age and death and also no extinction of them; no suffering, no origination, no stopping, no path; no cognition, also no attainment.

With nothing to attain, *Bodhisattva(s)* depend(s) on *prajñāpāramitā* and the mind is no hindrance; without any hindrance [there is] no fears exist. Far apart from every perverted view one dwells in *nirvāṇa*. In the three worlds, all *Buddhas* depend on *prajñāpāramitā* and attain *anuttara samyak sambodhi*.

Therefore know that *prajñāpāramitā* is the great transcendent *mantra*, is the great bright *mantra*, is the utmost *mantra*, is the supreme *mantra*; which is able to relieve all suffering and is true, not false. Thus, proclaims [it as] the *prajñāpāramitā mantra*, proclaim the *mantra* which says: *gate gate paragate parasamgate bodhisattva*.

Mental Balance and Four Dimensions of Well-Being: A Buddhist Perspective

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The exclusive focus on pathology that had so much dominated our discipline results in a model of human being, in which we try to repair damage rather than promote positive mental health... -M. Seligman, former President American Psychological Society

Prelude:

The diagnosis and treatment of mental diseases in the West has mainly been focused on pathology and it is only recently that there has been a growing interest in positive mental health. The development of research in the areas of mindfulness-based therapies, as well as the impact of meditation practice on the brain have created a new wave of interest in Buddhist perspectives on mental health. This paper will focus attention on the *conative*, *attentive*, *affective* and *cognitive* dimensions of mental *well-being* and *balance*. But the central focus would be on emotional/affective well-being. Also, in exploring a Buddhist perspective on mental balance, I shall bring out the place of equanimity (*upekkhā*) in number of contexts ranging from the four sublime abodes to the seven factors of enlightenment. Regarding, striking the ‘right balance’: the Buddha tells Ven. Sona, in the way that one strikes the right balance in playing strings on a lute, neither too taut nor too loose, over-roused persistence leads to restlessness, overly slack persistence leads to lassitude (Simile of the Lute, A viii, 130). Following this musical analogy, I shall explore different contexts of the principle of balance in the teachings of the Buddha.

On the conative/motivational level, we are driven by the drive for stimulus driven pleasures (*kāma-taṇhā*) and a strong egoistic orientation (*bhava-taṇhā*) and grasping things which do not bring us contentment and harmony in our lives. We fixate on obsessive addictions that bring pleasures of the moment discounting long lasting future rewards—and thus develop an apathetic loss of motivation for lasting well-being. Among alcoholic and gambling addicts, it has become evident, that many of them, while knowing that the net result of their addictions would be disastrous to their mental and physical health, they “knowingly court disaster” (de Silva, 2008, 60-81). They do not take charge of their lives, they have lost their

will power and their cognitive powers are clouded by immediate pleasures. Negative emotions of anger, frustration, guilt, anxiety, tension, depression, boredom, and apprehension induce clients to relapses. Cultivating a good attentional/mindfulness stance could keep away addicts from the temptations of a stimulus (a close by bar), but they have lost these skills. Educating addicts back to normality, as I have accomplished in a case study, calls for a rejuvenation of the conative/motivational, cognitive, affective and attentional skills in the client. In a recent analysis of the psychological foundations of well-being and happiness, it has been observed: “Human beings are powerfully driven by systems of desire, which become attached to material possessions and social status. The gap between these desires and what the world can yield is an enduring source of frustration” (Nettle, 2005). As the Buddha observed, “To wish for something and not get it is suffering” (*yam p’icchaṃ na labhati tam pi dukkhaṃ*, DII, 305). Some desires which cannot be obtained may be given up; but the others that are insatiable despite their continual feeding, break down on boredom and emptiness. Soren Kierkegaard the Danish philosopher describes the life of a pure pleasure lover or in the words of the Buddha, the adherence to the *kamāsukhalikkānuyoga*, and describes how it collapses in total dissonance and emptiness (de Silva, 2007, pp. 84-110). A qualitatively different kind of enlightened emptiness for the person who relinquishes desires and pretentious life styles has been described by William James: “To give up pretensions is, as a ‘blessed, a relief’, as to get them gratified. There is a strange lightness in the heart when one’s nothingness in a particular area is accepted in good faith” (James, 2005). Buddhism advocates voluntary simplicity and the skilful management of needs and it is the life that is “simple in means but rich in ends” (Devall, 1990). The Buddha also makes an important distinction between the *householder’s equanimity* and the *renunciation equanimity*: there are thirty six emotions composed of six kinds of household joy and six kinds of renunciation joy; six kinds of household grief and six kinds of renunciation grief; six kinds of household equanimity and six kinds of renunciation equanimity (M III, 216-213). This analysis helps us to contextualize the use of the term ‘equanimity’.

On the positive side, we need to develop positive attentional factors: mindfulness is sustained, voluntary attention continuously focused on a familiar object without forgetfulness or distraction; we can also develop meta-attention, the ability to monitor states of mind recognizing states like excitement, apathy, boredom and depression. And this in turn would help us to develop a reality-based range of desires and aspirations, contributing to balance and well-being. But the central focus of this paper would be on ‘emotional well-being’.

At the cognitive level, Buddhism focuses attention on thought patterns and negative emotions (*vitakkasanthāṇa sutta*), and there is a valuable analysis on the feelings-emotions linkage, if we examine the description of feelings in

the *Salāyatanavibhanga sutta* and *Bahavedanīya sutta*. Secondly, the *suttas* refer to healthy and unhealthy methods of managing emotions, and I have developed these perspectives in my clinical practice as a counselor: taking precautions through restraint, abandoning them once they have emerged; not leaving them to emerge in the future; developing and stabilizing positive emotions; remedying negative emotions by antidotes like loving kindness, compassion and equanimity; transforming for example, anger into patience and endurance and seeing negative emotions as ‘constructions’ through the cognitive mode of ‘insight’. I also make a special effort to explain and describe to the clients, unhealthy techniques of unconscious repression, avoidance, deception and disguise (*vanchaka dhamma*) and rationalization, for instance in moral anger. The Buddha also refers to certain ascetics who consciously and deliberately use deceitful and hypocritical behavior (*mayāvin*), and conceals the good deeds of others (D iii, 45, 246). This is compared with the monks whose character and moral habits are without rupture, dwells openly among his fellow-disciples, causing affection, regard, concord and harmony.

At the level of personal suffering (*dukkha*), we consider negative emotions as ‘afflictive’; at the level of morality (*sīla*) there is a focus on negative emotions as defilements, accepting responsibility for them, but at the level of *vipassanā*, “we change gears” and see them as *dhamma*, detaching from personal identification, neither good nor bad, neither mine nor yours--emerging and passing away. These subtle shifts enhance our attempts to reach mental/physical well-being, balance and equipoise. I also use the *four foundations of mindfulness*: application of mindfulness of body, feelings, mind and mental formations and contemplation of the *dhamma* as a resource for managing emotions. While I have greatly benefitted from a recent study of mental balance and well-being by Wallace and Shapiro (Wallace and Shapiro, 2006), my focus is more on the affective/emotional dimensions of well-being, enriched by the close study of the *sutta* literature in early Buddhism and my personal practice as a counselor.

Happiness & Well-Being:

The concept of well-being implies the notion of achieving a relatively enduring form of happiness. It has been observed: “A Buddhist term for such happiness is *sukha*, which may be defined in this context as a state of flourishing that arises from mental balance and insight into the nature of reality. Rather than a fleeting emotion or mood aroused by sensory and conceptual stimuli, *sukha* is an enduring trait that arises in a mind in a state of equilibrium and entails a conceptually unstructured and unfiltered awareness of the nature of reality.” (Ekman, Davidson, Ricard and Wallace, (2005, 59). Such *sukha* is described as *nirāmisā sukha*. Buddhist contemplatives claim that through sustained training they

have experienced such *nirāmisā sukha*. As we move through the spectrum from such devoted practitioners to lay people who have made a compromise with life but yet practicing the Buddhist path, we need to speak of a ‘relatively enduring’ form of happiness.

We begin with skilful understanding and realizing that unskillful actions lead to unhappy results and skilful actions lead to happy results. Thus the choices we make may lead to happiness or unhappiness. For those who were excessively fixated on future lives, in a celebrated ‘wager argument’, the Buddha said that even if there is no future life, engaging in wholesome activities would bring happiness here and now, and a clear conscience. Along with the four noble truths, which examines the nature of unhappiness and dissatisfaction, the causes, its ending and the path for achieving happiness, the Buddha offers the framework for skilful living. *Dukkha* is not just suffering but at a deeper level a vulnerability to suffering and pain emerging out of a basic misapprehension of reality. It is of interest to note that the word ‘*dukkha*’ in the folk language of the time of the Buddha also referred to a cart wheel that was not moving properly, it has lost the balance. The Buddhist path involves a radical transformation of consciousness. During the last two decades there has been some bridge building between Buddhism and western psychology, as well as the development of mindfulness-based therapeutic traditions. Thus western psychology which was earlier focused mainly on pathology has taken a new direction in attempting to understand pathways for cultivating positive mental health. The present article is written against the backdrop of this emerging positive psychology blending the practice of Buddhist experiential insights and western scientific investigation.

It appears that the semantics of happiness involves a gradation or certain levels (Nettle, 2005,18): (a) the most immediate and direct sense of happiness involves an emotion or feeling like pleasure or joy; (b) when people say they are happy it does not mean that they are literally joyful or experiencing pleasure all the time, but by reflection on the balance sheet of pleasures and pains, they feel the balance to be positive over a long period, and thus it is a hybrid of emotion and judgment; (c) some argue that human well-being involves more than level two happiness, and concepts like personal growth, purpose, self-directedness color our sense of well-being (Ryf, 1989). With the positive psychology movement, happiness and wellbeing have been used in the third sense. Also we come across the view that unhappiness is not merely an objective condition but rather conditioned by wrong perspectives, which Buddhism describes with the term *diṭṭhi*: examples would be both the way of pure sensuality and that of extreme asceticism, which the Buddha rejected, thus his middle-path also provides another dimension of the concept of ‘balance’, the balance in perspectives.

Basically, all four dimensions are interconnected:

Conative balance precedes the other three in the process of cultivating mental well-being, because this factor is what allows people set intentions, goals and priorities. In effect, conative processes set the course for the cultivation of the other three mental balances... attention is a necessary skill for achieving the final two factors, cognitive and affective balance. Without the ability to sustain attention, it is difficult to closely examine people's moment-to-moment cognitive and affective processes. Cognitive and affective balance... can most effectively be achieved on the prior cultivation of conative and attentional balance. (Wallace and Shapiro, 2006, 693).

As they suggest these dimensions do not occur in a strict linear procession, and as I have observed elsewhere, these dimensions may be understood in terms of the five aggregates, and in a deeper sense all aggregates color all states of consciousness and experience (de Silva, 2005, 18). All components are interconnected, and it is "both a whole composed of parts and a part composing larger wholes".

Emotional Balance & Well-Being in the Buddhist Tradition:

Now that I have looked at the semantics of the concepts of happiness and wellbeing, as well as the contextual usages of the conative, attentive, affective and cognitive dimensions of our experience, I shall mainly look at the concept of emotional balance, where it is in *deficit* and *excess*, and where we find the balance. The term 'equanimity' is used in two basic senses in the suttas: a neutral feeling in the absence of pleasure and pain, and an attitude of even-mindedness in the face of every sort of experience, whether it is pleasurable or painful, loss or gain, praise or blame.

Loss and gain, disrepute and fame, blame and praise, pain and pleasure are the eight vicissitudes of life (A 8, 153).

Out of the varieties of equanimity in Buddhist practice, the most well known is equanimity as a sublime state (*brahmavihāra*). Contemplations on loving kindness (*mettā*), compassion (*karunā*), appreciative joy (*mudita*) and equanimity (*upekkhā*) may be described as sublime states (Nyanaponika, 1993; Aronson, 1980). The reference to equanimity in the context of the eight vicissitudes of life is a celebrated reference which cuts across the meditative and roller-coaster of routine life. As equanimity (*upekkhā*) is a sublime state directly related to emotional

balance, I shall give it some importance in the analysis of the different kinds of even-mindedness.

Aronson, following the ten distinct meanings of equanimity in *Buddhaghosa's Path of Purification* selects six important facets of the concept.

1. The feeling of equanimity (*upekkhā vedanā*). It is the experience of neither pain nor pleasure.
2. Even-minded equanimity (*tatra-majjhāttā-upekkhā*): its function is to prevent deficiency and excess, and to inhibit partiality. It is manifested as neutrality. It should be regarded as looking at the mind and its co-risen mental factors, like a charioteer who looks on with equanimity, on thoroughbreds progressing evenly. Such wholesome attitudes observe the balance of other attitudes present. Such equanimity is present in all wholesome states of mind and their absence in non-virtuous minds indicates an absence of balance and the presence of agitation. There is a graphic description of agitation as a contrast to an evenly balanced mind: "It has the characteristic of disquiet, like water whipped by the wind. Its function is unsteadiness, like a flag whipped by the wind. It is manifested as turmoil, like ashes flung up by pelting with stones. Its proximate cause is unwise attention to mental disquiet. It should be regarded as distraction of consciousness" (Vis. XIV, 165).

There are different forms of even-mindedness: (3) equanimity of purity, (4) sublime attitude equanimity, (5) the limb of enlightenment equanimity and (6) six limbed equanimity.

3. Equanimity of purity (*parisudhi-upekkhā*) is the equanimity associated with the fourth absorption. In the first three absorptions, even-mindedness is needed to balance four factors, initial application (*vitakka*), sustained application of the mind (*vicāra*), pleasurable interest (*pīti*) and bliss (*sukha*). In the first three absorptions, the crescent moon of even-mindedness, like a crescent moon during day time is not clear, as it is overpowered by the limb of absorption, and because it is without the assistance of its ally, the feeling of equanimity, whereas the fourth absorption is unique because even-minded equanimity is followed by the feeling of equanimity.
4. The sublime attitude of equanimity to which we have already referred, is a combination of even-mindedness and other mental factors, which makes the neutrality to friend and foe possible. It is this quality that makes it different from the other sublime states of loving kindness, compassion and appreciative joy. Loving kindness has as its distant enemy hatred, but its close enemy is attachment, if loving kindness is directed to the opposite sex,

due care is necessary. In the same way, compassion and sadness need to be differentiated. Compassion is wishing that others be free but not to get drenched in misery. Living at a time with the emergence of the tsunami, bushfires, earth quakes and floods, there is always a need to contextualize our compassion, to equalize, strengthen and universalize, make it even among a dear person, neutral person and a hostile person. In such context equanimity is able to add a valuable direction to other sublime states. In perceiving the success of others too, there has to be even mindedness, without over doing it, without a natural flow, or a reaction formation to one's own failure. Equanimity itself has its own pitfalls, degenerating into blank indifference. Kind of equanimity needed has to be rooted in vigilant presence of mind, not dullness, and with practice it would have a natural flow. Also equanimity has to be rooted in 'insight', specially an understanding of actions, thoughts and words in the context of *kamma* and the natural vicissitudes of life. Nyanaponika Thero says that equanimity is the crown and culmination of the other three sublime states.

5. In the limb of enlightenment equanimity: the seven factors of awakening are mindfulness (*sati*), investigation (*dhammavicaya*), bodily and mental persistence (*viriya*), rapture (*pīti*), bodily and mental serenity (*passaddhi*), concentration (*samādhi*) and equanimity (*upekkhā*). When all the six factors (prior to equanimity) are working in harmony that would be an important dimension of equanimity.
6. Six limbed equanimity (*chaḷaṅga upekkhā*) refers to the maintaining of purity regarding any desires aroused by the six senses.

Metaphors of Equanimity:

“Just as when people throw what is clean or unclean on the earth—feces, urine, saliva, pus, or blood—the earth is not horrified, humiliated or disgusted by it; in the same way, when you are developing meditation in tune with the earth, agreeable and disagreeable sensory impressions that have arisen will not stay in charge of your mind” (M I, 422).

“Just as when people wash what is clean or unclean in water—feces, urine, saliva, pus or blood—the water is not horrified, humiliated or disgusted by it; in the same way, when you are developing meditation in tune with water, agreeable and disagreeable sensory impressions that have arisen will not stay in charge of your mind” (M I, 422).

“Just as when fire burns what is clean or unclean—feces, urine, saliva, pus or blood—it is not horrified, humiliated or disgusted by it; in the same way when you are developing meditation in tune with fire, agreeable

and disagreeable sensory impressions that have arisen will not stay in charge of your mind” (M I, 422).

“Just as when the wind blows what is clean or unclean—feces, urine, saliva, pus, blood—the wind is not horrified or disgusted by it; in the same way, when you are developing meditation in tune with wind, agreeable and disagreeable sensory impressions that have arisen will not stay in charge of your mind (M I, 422).

These four meditations on the four elements were given to Rahula, in order to dispel Rahula’s attachment to the body, and the *sutta* is known as the *Mahārāhulovāda sutta*.

The Musical Analogy:

The musical analogy to which I referred to in the beginning of this paper, embodied in the Buddha’s advice to Sona reverberates in many other contexts in the *suttas*, as one of the finest ways of considering the Buddhist ethical and meditative path as one of developing the right, appropriate and contextual skills. In the advice to Sona, discussing the five faculties (*sati indriya*), the Buddha says that whether one undertakes worldly ends or that of the dhamma, qualities of desire, persistence, intent and discrimination need to be skillfully balanced with concentration and right exertion. In the seven links of enlightenment, instead of trying to find a balance within each factor, there is an interesting focus on different factors to balance each specific hindrance: qualities like persistence and rapture to deal with the sluggish mind states and the more calming ones like serenity, concentration, and equanimity to counteract restless mental and bodily states. Mindfulness is the only factor that is consistent, always present. This is supplemented by another metaphor which looks more like a medical metaphor for dieting: starving unskillful states of sensual desire, ill will, sloth and drowsiness, restlessness and anxiety and doubt; corresponding feeding factors are unattractiveness of sensuality; release of loving kindness, compassion, appreciative joy and equanimity; exertion and striving; stillness of awareness; trust and confidence in the dhamma.

In this line of thinking, even though the seven links of awakening are given in a linear form, they interact in many ways and there is an interesting ‘contextuality’ that binds them together. It is said that when the mind is sluggish, that is a wrong time to develop serenity, concentration and equanimity. If a man wanting to make a small fire blaze up, and used wet grass, wet cow dung and wet sticks, give it a spray of water and smother with dust, the planned fire would not blaze up. In the same

way, when the mind is sluggish, it is the right time to develop analysis of qualities, persistence and rapture as factors of awakening. This is like a man wanting to blaze up a small fire, use dry grass, dry cow dung, dry sticks and blow on it with his mouth and not smother it with dust. It is also said that when the mind is restless, it is the wrong time to use qualities of investigation, persistence and rapture as factors of awakening, but rather the right time to use serenity, concentration and equanimity as factors of awakening. The principle of balance is well embedded in the instructions given by the Buddha to develop the links of awakening.

I shall conclude this focus on metaphors of balance by one of the most graphic metaphors used by the Buddha, the metaphor of the acrobats, which in fact illuminates a way of resolving the dichotomy between working for one's own interest and that of others, another principle of a balanced life. A bamboo acrobat, having erected a bamboo pole requests his assistant, Medakathālika (Frying Pan) to climb the bamboo pole and stand on his shoulders, and then tells his assistant, "Now watch after me and I will look after you". Then the assistant says, "that is not enough, you watch after yourself, and I will watch after myself". The Buddha draws an important insight from this story, that it is a two way process: "Protecting oneself, bhikkhus, one protects others; protecting others, one protects oneself"(S V, 169).

Moral Excellence and Emotional Balance:

The Greek philosopher Aristotle is well known for his concept of the 'golden mean' in ethics: "I have said enough to show that moral excellence is a mean, and I have shown in what sense it is so. It is, namely a mean between two forms of badness, one of excess and the other of defect, and is so described because it aims at hitting the mean point in feelings and in actions. This makes virtue hard of achievement, because finding the middle point is never easy" (Aristotle, 1959, 73). On the basis of this analysis Aristotle makes a case for anger in certain contexts: "Anger may be produced by a variety of causes, but, however that may be, it is the man who is angry on the right occasion and at the right moment and for the right length of time who wins our commendation" (Aristotle, 1959, 127-128). He says tameness is a kind of cowardice and it is a deficiency and the excess is to display anger in the wrong context and in the wrong manner. He condemns people who lose their temper on anything. It has been shown in another study, "In contrast to Aristotelian Ethics, Buddhism rejects the notion that all emotions are healthy as long as they are not excessive or in appropriate to the time and place. Rather, Buddhism maintains that some mental states are afflictive regardless of their degree or the context in which they arise" (Ekman, et al, 2005, 60). The roots of greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*) are basically toxic. I have discussed elsewhere a Buddhist critique of what Aristotle referred to as 'righteous indignation' (de Silva,

2002, 63-80). Whatever the Buddha recommends as wholesome and balanced emotions, they have wholesome roots. As an example in discussing a sustainable ethic there is a whole sermon by the Buddha on saving and it said that living within one's means is striking a mean between miserliness and extravagance (A iv, 28). There is a whole philosophy of contentment in Buddhism that gives the essence of a balanced life. What is most striking in Buddhist ethics is the rich tapestry of moral skills which accommodates different contexts and illustrates a strong link between Buddhist moral psychology and ethics.

1. Virtues of conscientiousness: veracity, truthfulness and righteousness.
2. Virtues of benevolence: loving kindness, compassion, appreciative joy and equanimity.
3. Virtues of self-restraint: self-control, abstinence, contentment, patience, celibacy, chastity.

In a very deep sense the Buddhist perspective on ethics is strikingly different from its western counterpart. The first level is the *transgressional* level where we deal with the preservation of precepts, codes of conduct and strict morality; the second level is the *obsessional* level manifested in the five hindrances of sensual desires, ill-will, torpor and languor, restlessness and worry and skeptical doubts: tranquility meditation may help us to calm down such hindrances but they are not radically removed, and this can only be done through insight meditation which deals with *deeper proclivities (anusaya)* and there is a cessation of such phenomena at the *latent level*, only by the development of insight (*vipassanā*). I owe this analysis to Venerable Dhammajiva, (presented at a meditation retreat, January, 2010) and in terms of this analysis, Buddhism goes much beyond the transgressional level at the centre of western ethics. Though Aristotle had some conception of character development, the framework of Buddhist ethics and beyond is greatly different from Aristotelian ethics. The Greeks were dominated by the image of 'reason' as the charioteer and the passions as unruly horses, where as Buddhism, while accepting the value of rationality up to a point, considers 'mindfulness' more effective and superior to rationality. I have elsewhere, discussed the domination of this metaphor in western thought (de Silva, 2005, 166).

Other Contexts for the Analysis of Emotions, Balance and Well-being:

There are other important contexts for looking at emotional harmony: the body-mind harmony (*kāya-citta passaddhi*). Buddhism does not accept a dualism of the mind and body or a monistic view (whether it is the materialistic or the idealistic type). Within this framework, the discourses of the Buddha makes relative distinctions between the 'physical' and the 'mental', as for instance when

the discourses refer to feelings as having a mental and physical aspect. Buddhism offers the interaction of the body and mind within well defined practical contexts, but discourages people to pursue questions regarding the ultimate metaphysical status of mind or body, as such a question was left aside by the Buddha as an undetermined question. Mind and body are compared to “two bundles of reeds, supporting each other’, and if one is drawn out, the other falls down”(S II, 114). I have examined this issue in detail elsewhere (de Silva, 2005, 142-152). In contexts of the meditation, and within the progress of the seven factors of awakening/enlightenment, the fifth factor is *passaddhi*, calming of body and mind and a characteristic feature of this experience is to silence and calm the mind from agitation. “Its function is to extract or suppress the heat of the mind which arises due to restlessness, dissipation or remorse. When the mind is assaulted by these harmful states, it becomes hot, as if on fire. Tranquility of mind extinguishes the heat and replaces it with the characteristic of coolness and ease” (Pandita, 1991. 147). The non-agitation of mind and body is a manifestation of *passaddhi*.

The balancing of different skills on the meditative path is often mentioned. For example in looking at the second factor of enlightenment, investigation, it is said that the balancing of the factors of the faculties of faith, wisdom, mindfulness, energy and concentration is necessary. In fact, four of these factors, wisdom and faith, effort and concentration are treated as pairs, and there is a need to maintain an ‘equilibrium’ of the pairs.

The body-mind relationship plays an important role in mindfulness-based therapies, especially in the management of emotions and addictions. The body-centered psychotherapist C. Caldwell, in a work entitled, *Getting Our Bodies Back* presents an admirable case for the innate capacity of the whole body-mind for healing.

We threaten our lives when we introduce large amounts of toxins into our bodies. We damage our lives when we practice addictions that cause long term illness or break the fabric of our families and societies. We limit ourselves when we fail to grow, when we keep ourselves sedated or distracted, when we fail to contribute to others. We promote life when we commit to our happiness and the happiness of others. Moving from life threatening to life-promoting actions is a tremendous step (Caldwell, 1996, 51).

As Buddhism has a holistic perspective on mind-body harmony, I have been able to appreciate Caldwell’s insights regarding the reclamation of the body in addictions in my personal practice. A recent ground breaking study, *The Molecules of Emotions* by Candace Pert, makes an important and innovative discovery in relation to

the body-mind relationship. She changed the accepted view that the brain directs the flow of molecules, to the new standpoint that the flow of chemicals arises simultaneously from several systems: the immune system, the nervous, endocrine and gastrointestinal systems. Thus the body came to be considered as a 'second brain'. The Buddhist emphasis on the mindfulness of the body, along with the mindfulness of feelings and thoughts acquires new meaning in the context of Candace work, and she recognized the value of Buddhist mindfulness practice. Those people using faulty coping procedures with the routine pressures in life, in taking to addictions disturbs the harmony of the body and mind.

The Impact of the Mind on the Body:

In the way that neglect of the body impinges on the mind and the balance is lost in addictions, there has been considerable research that proves the point that 'states of mind may affect our health'. Studying emotions are very useful in this context as all basic emotions like anger-hostility, fear-anxiety, sadness-depression and more positively joy, loving kindness, calm involve both the body and mind, and in more detailed analysis of the five aggregates: cognition, feeling, volition, consciousness and the body. Recent discoveries indicate that afflictive/negative emotions make the body sick and the non-afflictive positive emotions promotes health and mind and body harmony (Goleman, 1997, 33-46) : "It is only in the past twenty years that Western physicians, biologists, and psychologists have begun to comprehend the interrelationship between emotional states and mental and physical well-being. Buddhist thinkers, however, have been aware of the mind's healing capacity for more than two thousand years" (Goleman, 1997, 1). In general, emotional well-being indicates a harmony of the body and mind.

Buddhism, Medicine and Traditional Āyurveda: The Humoral Theory of Imbalance:

The subject of imbalance has also been associated with the imbalance of the four humors in the early history of medicine, especially Greek medicine and in the Āyurveda tradition in India, which later found its roots in Sri Lanka. In the Greek tradition, the four humors were identified as black bile, yellow bile, phlegm and blood and they were also linked to temperamental differences. There has been some interesting discussion of similarities between the Buddhist and the ayurvedic perspectives on imbalance of the humors: "afflictions due to bile, phlegm, wind, springing from conflict of humors" in the context of the *Girimānanda sutta* delivered by the Buddha. Venerable Girimānanda was gravely ill and the Buddha requests Venerable Ananda to communicate to Venerable Girimānanda the contents of this

sutta, the ten perceptions and then he will be immediately cured: the perceptions of impermanence, non-self, foulness, danger, abandoning, dispassion, cessation, disenchantment, impermanence of all formations and mindfulness of breathing.

“The body is the source of much pain and many dangers; for all sorts of ailments arise in the body... and afflictions due to bile, due to phlegm, due to wind, springs from conflict of humors, produced by change of climate, by unaccustomed activity, by violence, by *kamma* results; and heat, hunger, thirst, excrement and urine” (A10, 196). In Theravada Buddhist countries, this *sutta* has acquired the status of a protective discourse (*paritta*). It is interesting to note that traditional Indian ayurvedic medicine had a kind of philosophical basis in the *Sāṃkhya* philosophy which enunciated three principles of life-energy: *satva* reflected in phlegm, *rajas* in bile and *tames* in wind or air. Medicine has to be designed to bring back their original equilibrium. An elaboration of this theme and a broader case for developing a medicine inspired by Buddhism and ayurveda is the subject of a book by Gunapala Dharmasiri (Dharmasiri, 1997). The book raises certain controversial issues regarding western medicine but is a useful guide for understanding the interface between Buddhism and āyurveda.

A conversation between the Dalai Lama and Paul Ekman on the subject of “Emotional Balance” gives some good insight, for being cautious in applying the humoral theory for explaining emotional imbalance. A very scholarly monk at the monastery was considered to be subject to, “what we call an imbalance of winds, something like the beginning of a nervous breakdown, a form of anxiety and depression. I wondered whether the imbalance had been because of the kitchen of the monastery completely vegetarian for seven years. The monk said, “No, that is okay”, the more immediate trigger was a very intense meditation on death and impermanence” (Dalai Lama and Ekman, 2008, 79-80). The Dalai Lama comments that the monk’s meditation practice had a very narrow focus, and he should not just limit his meditation to impermanence and death, but also focus on the preciousness of human life and the opportunities it provides for the monk. This also indicates that in spiritual practice one should not focus on one aspect of experience at the expense of other facets. When the Buddha prescribed certain forms of meditation he had a very good grasp of the context and the personality of the meditator.

Neurology and Emotional Balance: ‘Accelerator’ and ‘Brakes’ functions of the Brain:

I shall conclude this study by briefly citing the fact that according to current research in neurology, “The balance between emotion arousal and its regulation is often conceptualized as the relationship between the *subcortical limbic amygdala* and the *prefrontal cortex*” (Goleman, 1996). Following this observation Daniel J. Siegal



confirms that mindful awareness directly influence the ‘non-reactivity of consciousness’ by altering the connections between the prefrontal cortex and the limbic zones. (Siegal, 2007, 212). Thus the pre-frontal area is able both to assess the state of arousal as well as modulate their firing. “Here we see that the integrative prefrontal areas can coordinate and balance limbic firing so that life can have meaning and emotional richness, but not excessive firing, where life becomes chaotic, or too little, where life becomes dulled and depressing. In fact, in teaching meditation, parallel concepts are addressed as excitement and dullness” (Siegal, 2007, 212). Even for early practices of meditation, there is an important focus on the balance between chaos/excitement and dullness/rigidity. The two facets of the autonomic nervous system, the sympathetic for excitability and parasympathetic for calming function either to activate or inhibit the system. Siegal also says that a further development would be the ability to pause before an action and consider the various options that are most appropriate before we respond, which is “response flexibility”. Experienced meditators develop the ideal *affective style*, the capacity to regulate negative emotions, and resilience in maintaining high levels of positive affect and well-being in the face of adversity.

Abbreviations:

- A *Anguttara Nikāya, Gradual Sayings*
D *Dīgha Nikāya, Further Dialogues*
M *Majjhima Nikāya, Middle Length Sayings*
S *Samyutta Nikāya, Kindred Sayings*

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Vitakkasaṅḥānasutta: A Buddhist Way of Overcoming Automatic Thoughts

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1. Introduction

Automatic Thoughts are spontaneous ideas that arise in the mind of an individual depending upon the particular frame of reference such as personality, life-style, world view etc., that he possesses. According to Beck this inner belief-structure is always dependent upon the individual's past experience, learnings, etc. The distressful emotions are result of his maladaptive thoughts.

In Buddhism the Distracting or Automatic Thoughts are explained to be connected with greed (*lobha*), hate (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*). A mind filled with these three unwholesome roots of evil is considered as 'lower mind' just as Beck considers it 'lower level' of thinking. A mind always functions depending on the contact between the sense faculties and their corresponding objects. An individual reacts when coming into contact with external sense objects according to his feeling towards the object. And his emotional reaction and intellectual understanding of it does not just depend on his past experiences (of this life) but his experiences of numerous past lives which is termed as *saṅkhāra* in Buddhism.

Being influenced with *saṅkhāra* we perceive everything with a subjective attitude due to which we gradually become the victim of the Automatic Thoughts. And this results into excessive emotional imbalance such as depression, anxiety, obsession, madness, helplessness, etc. Thus not only we ourselves suffer due to that, but everyone and everything around us becomes affected.

Beck in his therapy uses skillful questioning to help clients discover for themselves the irrational base for their troublesome emotional responses. The Buddha in various discourses presents more than one method to overcome such a state of mind. However, the present study is directed to reveal a Buddhist way of overcoming Automatic Thoughts in light of the *Vitakkasaṅḥāna Sutta* of the Majjhima Nikāya. The *sutta* interestingly mentions five alternative methods with appropriate examples; following which, one not only overcomes the Automatic Thoughts but becomes 'a master of the courses of thoughts' – (*vitakkapariyāvasī*). The five methods of overcoming Automatic Thoughts are: 1) directing mind to wholesome sign, 2) reflecting on the danger on such thoughts, 3) neglecting or forgetting the Automatic Thoughts, 4) stilling the thought formation of Automatic

Thoughts, and 5) with teeth pressing tongue against the roof of mouth. Thus each time the individual overcomes Automatic Thoughts his mind becomes “steadied, internally quieted, brought to singleness, and concentrated”. And thus finally he makes an end to all suffering. I believe this discourse has a practical appeal to the modern society and would be an important addition to the field of Psychotherapy.

2. General Remark

The theory of Automatic Thoughts was first introduced by Aaron Temkin Beck in his discussion of Cognitive Therapy in 1960.¹ But we find in the 6th century B.C. the Buddha was speaking of a similar concept namely ‘thought conception’ or ‘distracting thoughts’ (*vitakka*)² associated with ‘conceptual proliferation’ (*papañca*)³ with deep analysis and providing the ways to overcome such a state of mind.

However, in our present study of the way to overcome automatic thoughts, we shall focus our attention mainly on the *Vitakkasaṅṭhānasutta* of the Majjhima Nikāya. The sutta was delivered by the Buddha to a group of spiritually committed monks at Anāthapiṇḍika’s monastery in Jeta’s Grove in Sāvattī. In the sutta the Buddha addressed the monks, saying: five things should be reflected on from time to time, by the bhikkhu who is intent on attaining higher consciousness⁴. The commentary to the *sutta* gives details about what is higher consciousness and why a *bhikkhu* should reflect on the five things to upgrade himself into the higher consciousness. It explains: the consciousness that is not higher, is the consciousness connected with evil or unwholesome roots. The thoughts that arise in such a mind are distracting or automatic thoughts which have harmful consequences to the person in whom the thoughts arise and to the things and beings around him. The final aim of the *sutta*, as is usually the case with the Buddhist discourses, is to lead the follower from his suffering state of being to the absolute happiness and peace.

The present study intends to show that although the sutta was delivered by the Buddha to a group of spiritually committed monks who intend on higher consciousness, it could well be used for anyone who wishes to get rid of distracting or automatic thoughts.

In my discussion I shall focus on the following points, namely, (1) how Buddhism defines the automatic thoughts and explains of its origin and

¹ Nelson-Jones, Rechar (2001): *Theory and Practice of Counselling & Therapy* (3rd Edition), Continuum, London, p. 330.

² I. B. Horner (1954), [tr.] *Majjhimanikāya I*, PTS, London, p. 119.

³ *Ibid.* pp. 111-112.

⁴ Ven. Nyanamoli Thera (1977 reprint), *A Treasury of the Buddha’s Words*, Volume II, edited and arranged by Phra Khantipalo, Mahāmakut Rājavidyalaya Press, Bangkok, p.103.

types, (2) the process or functions of automatic thoughts and (3) the effects of automatic thoughts and reasons for developing the higher consciousness and (4) finally the *Vitakkasaṅṭhāna*-way of overcoming automatic thoughts. From time to time I shall also present Beck's ideas not to compare but to broaden our knowledge on the subject.

3. Automatic Thoughts: Definition and Types

As the senses come in contact with sense-objects there is always some kind of thoughts that haunt one's mind. They are automatic, spontaneous, unavoidable, and often without following a proper sequence or order. These are what we refer as 'Automatic Thoughts'. Based on the different degrees of sensations, one's thoughts or thinking process also get influenced. The Buddha explicitly addresses this relationship between thought process and sensations when he says: "Everything that arises in the mind is accompanied by sensations".⁵ The subconscious mind is always responding to them by justifying in positive or negative terms. Beck refers this instance of justification and automatic thinking as "internal conversations that communicate self-blame or self-criticism."⁶ Some of these go unnoticed by the conscious mind while some get deeply rooted. Consequently, these deep rooted automatic thoughts when they express to the conscious mind become responsible for further positive or negative thoughts and activities. "In psychological disorders, automatic thoughts are often distorted, extreme, or otherwise inaccurate."⁷ An example from Beck's work would illustrate this point better. One of his clients describes the situation of mind possessed by automatic thoughts as follows: "I must weep myself to death. I cannot live. I have failed. So it would be better if I had not been born...I am the most inferior person in the world. I am a subhuman."⁸

The close connection between '*vitakka*' and '*vicāra*' (thought conception and discursive thought) corresponds to the concept of Automatic Thoughts. These two terms together convey the "verbal functions (*vacī saṃkhāra*) of the mind, the so called 'inner-speech'."⁹ In spite of certain differences in connotations *vitakka* and *vicāra* are interchangeably used. Therefore, in the *sutta* of our concern we see *vitakka*, without *vicāra*, used to connote automatic thought or thought conception. In this instance *vitakka* includes the functions of *vicāra* too in its scope. With regard

⁵ Aṅguttaranikāya, Mūlakasutta, VIII.ix. 3(83). Referred from the Chaṭṭhasaṅghāyana CD-Rom (CSCD).

⁶ Richard S. Sharf (2004), Theories of Psychotherapy and Counselling: Concepts and Cases, Thomson Learning, Inc., USA, p.358.

⁷ *ibid.* p.361

⁸ A. T. Beck (1967), Depression: Causes and Treatment, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, p.38.

⁹ Nyanatiloka (1970), *Buddhist Dictionary: Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines*, BPS, Kandy, p.205.

to the use of the term it has been remarked as follows: “In the *suttas* the word *vitakka* is often used in the loose sense of thought, but in the *Abhidhamma* it is used in a precise technical sense to mean the mental factor that mounts or directs the mind on to the object – (*so hi ārammane cittaṃ āropeti*).”¹⁰

According to the *Visuddhimagga*¹¹ there are three types of *vitakka*-s:

1. *kusala-vitakka* – wholesome thought-conception or automatic thought
2. *akusala-vitakka* – unwholesome thought-conception, and
3. *upekkha-vitakka* – neutral thought conception

From this classification it is clear that, according to Buddhism not all automatic thoughts are bad. The positivity or the negativity of the automatic thoughts are not based on one’s convictions about what one is capable of or not; but, on the wholesomeness or the unwholesomeness of the thoughts. This is to be justified by observing whether the thoughts contain any defilement or in any way accompanied by evil desires, hatred, and delusion. Thus the second type of automatic thoughts is further classified as follows:

1. *kāma-vitakka*, automatic thoughts connected with sexuality or sensuality
2. *byāpāda-vitakka*, connected with ill-will, and
3. *vihimsā-vitakka* connected with violent attitudes and actions¹²

The factor *akusala-vitakka* can be compared with Beck’s negative automatic thoughts.

4. Automatic Thoughts: Its Process or Functions

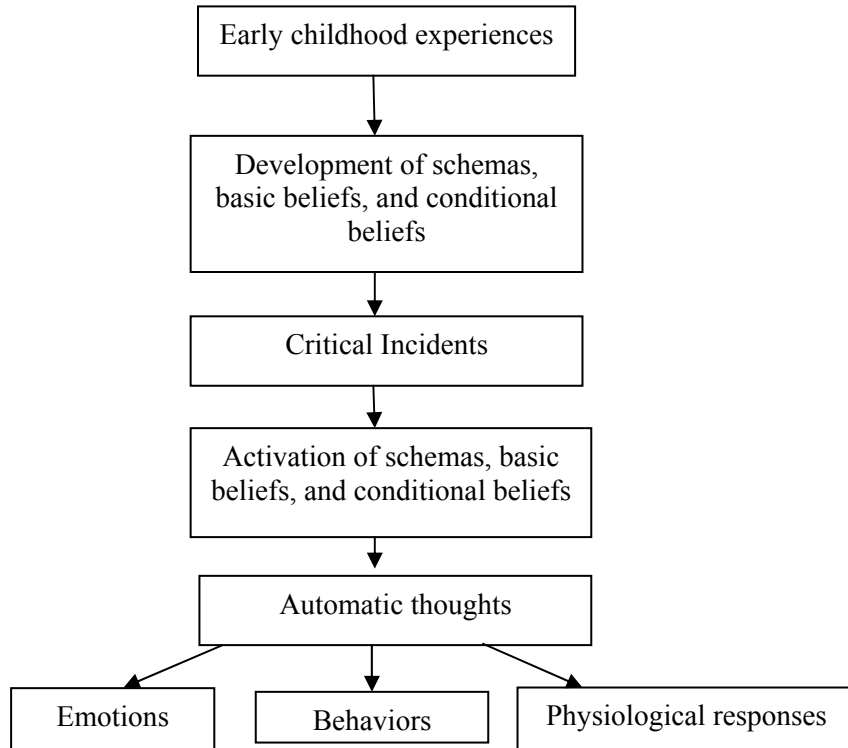
Beck relates the process of automatic thoughts as beginning from early childhood experiences. Appreciation or blame - that children receive at childhood lead them to certain positive or negative beliefs about themselves. These belief structures are linked with automatic thoughts in various stages of life. The whole process has been explained by Beck in a model known as ‘the cognitive developmental model’¹³ as follows:

¹⁰ Bhikkhu Bodhi (ed. and tr.). A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma: *The Abhidhammattha Saṅgaha of Acariya Anuruddha*, p.56.

¹¹ Nyanatiloka (1970), op. cit. p.205.

¹² These three *vitakkas* are to be abandoned by the effort of overcoming (*pahānapadhānam*) – [D. III, p. 226] and should be replaced by *nekkhamma-vitakka*, *avyāpāda-vitakka*, and *avihimsā-vitakka* – [A. I, 275-76; II,76; III,429].

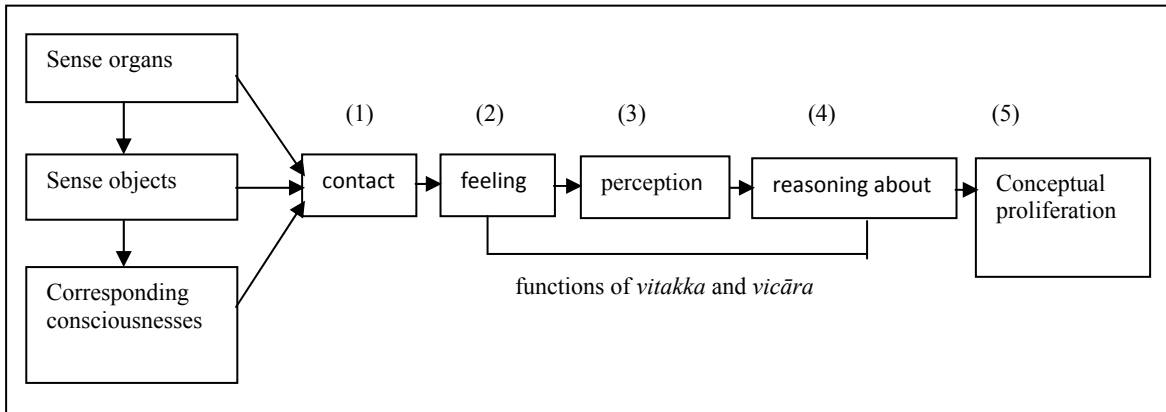
¹³ Richard S. Sharf (2004), op. cit. p.362.



According to Buddhist analysis *vitakka* or automatic thought is a part of the perceptual process of beings. It has been already indicated above that senses coming in contact with sense objects generate certain thoughts, which we refer to as automatic thoughts. Therefore, major factors related in this process are senses (e.g.: eye or *cakkhu*), sense-objects (e.g.: form or *rūpa*), and sense-consciousness (e.g.: eye-consciousness or *cakkhuvīññāna*). They together generate certain sensations (*vedanā*) that one passes over to the faculty of perception (*sañjānāti*), and reasons about (*vitakketi*) and then diversifies or proliferates (*papañceti*).¹⁴

The whole process has been summarized in the chart below for reasons of comparison with Beck’s ‘Cognitive Developmental Model’

¹⁴ This analysis is dealt with details in the Madhupiṇḍikasutta of the Majjhimanikāya



Buddhism shows a close relationship between automatic thoughts or thought conception (*vitakka*) and differentiation of thought or conceptual proliferation (*papañca*). Accordingly: “Whatever man conceives (*vitakketi*) that he differentiates; and what he differentiates, by reason thereof ideas and considerations of differentiations (*papañca-saññā-sankhā*) arise in him.”¹⁵ In this process, what were at the beginning, simple and spontaneous automatic thoughts, take complex shapes. The function of what has been referred to as conceptual proliferation has been categorized into three main divisions, as:

1. Involving desire (*tanhā*) - This includes desires of various types. These have been recognized as desires pertaining to sensuality (*kāmatanḥā*); craving for or grasping to existence, not wanting to die (*bhavatanḥā*) whereas death is inevitable; and, desire to annihilate this existence due to frustrations and such negative attitudes (*vibhavatanḥā*). Most desires are related to one or the other of these three factors. Their consequences also differ based on the intensity of the desires.
2. Rigidity or wrongness of views (*ditṭhi*) regarding what one believes as perfect. In spite of the fact that, people undergo a process of socialization in different institutional systems, certain views and beliefs of individuals are formed based on their own sensory experiences and interpretations through internal communication systems, referred to as *vacīsankhāra*. These views are sometimes very much contradictory to what and how individuals are expected to think. As long as they may be related to any of the three desires above and defined in egoistic terms – Buddhism regards them as wrong views.

¹⁵ Nyanatiloka (1970), *Buddhist Dictionary: Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines*, BPS, Kandy, p.123.

3. Conceits or complexes (*māna*) – This factor may be the most frequently related to automatic thoughts. Most of these automatic thoughts are defined in terms of one’s perception about oneself in relation to others. As a result one may sometimes feel superior to others (*seyyamāna* or *ati-māna*), equal to others (*sadisamāna*), or inferior to others (*hīnamāna*). These are directly corresponding to the three types of complexes in Psychology. The first two types of conceits exalt one from what one really is, while the last one undermines one’s capabilities and consequently causes depressions. All of them give a distorted view of the situation, not the reality.

It is clear from the above discussion that the process of arising automatic thoughts is a very natural one. However, due to the fact that general people are not equipped with the proper training to interpret these automatic thoughts they involve them with their likings and dislikings that continue to build thought complexes (*saṅkhāra*-s). The consequences of these thought-complexes, as we shall see in the next paragraph, are manifold.

5. Effects or Consequences of Automatic Thoughts:

From the above discussion it is clear that the automatic thoughts are not necessarily positive or negative. They arise in mind without any deliberate efforts depending on certain causes and conditions. The inability to comprehend the conditional arising of these one undergoes certain emotional, ethical or moral, and behavioral degradations. Observing the cases of his clients Beck observed that “they often predicted failure of themselves and made negative interpretations where positive ones would have been more appropriate.”¹⁶

The positive automatic thoughts may strengthen an individual’s confidence about oneself, but, the negative one’s would yield negative, and sometimes, destructive emotions and behaviors which may bring disharmony to themselves and to the society. They may be victims of depressions, general anxiety, disorders, and substance abuse and etc., psychological problems.

Since the discourse was addressed to *bhikkhus* or monks who renounced household lives for the attainment of Nibbāna - the Buddha related the whole discussion to that very objective. However automatic thoughts have far reaching effects in everyday life. Automatic thoughts become harmful when one gets caught up by wrong or distorted views about oneself in particular and about the external world in general. For example, one has preconceived high hopes or expectations about achieving great results, but, the automatic thoughts keep interrupting in various

¹⁶ Richard S. Sharf (2004), op. cit. p.358

ways; such as: by making one skeptic about one's hopes and capabilities or by giving different objects of concentration other than what one actually needs or wants. In case of monks, their central objective is related to the attainment of Nibbāna; but, the automatic thoughts give them various other objects in order to divert the attention away. One who gets caught up in the trap roams about in these automatic thoughts. But, when one realizes that one is diverted from the central objective one becomes depressed, disgusted and frustrated. Therefore, it is necessary to be free from automatic thoughts, particularly the negative ones, for attaining peace of mind and harmonious social interaction.

6. Is There a Freedom: A Traditional Case

Given the fact that automatic thoughts are spontaneous, arise without any notice and function without following a proper order or discipline, yielding unexpected or unpleasant results, one wonders whether there is freedom from these. Buddha specifically mentions that one suffers from automatic thoughts when there is no wise attention (*yoniso manasikāra*) about what is going on within and outside the mind. But, one who is well trained and mindful becomes aware of the senses coming in contact with sense objects and interprets them objectively without being exalted or depressed. This fact is well described by the traditional example of Ven. Nāgasamāla.¹⁷ Here when Ven. Nāgasamāla saw a beautifully dressed young girl dancing to the accompaniment of music, unlike the general people who would enjoy the sight, he regarded it to be a trap thrown by Māra; and thus taking it as an object of meditation, he attained Arahathship. From this example, we understand that if he had not perceived the object with wise attention he would have fallen into *vitakka*, *vicāra* and ultimately *papañca*.

Spiritually committed monks who tend to develop their consciousness to higher levels, are advised by the Buddha to follow the five *Vitakkasanthāna*, ways to overcome their automatic thoughts or *vitakka*. The same advice is practicable by any person who suffers from negative automatic thoughts.

7. The *Vitakkasanthāna* - ways to overcome Automatic Thoughts:

In order to be free from automatic thoughts the Buddha had given five 'help yourself' tips. Each of these will be illustrated with an example. The five methods of overcoming automatic thoughts are given below, serially:

¹⁷ Malalasekhara, G. P. *Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names*, New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1983. See Nāgasamāla.

1. **Thought replacement:** As in the case of Venerable Nāgasamāla when there is an instance of negative or unwholesome automatic thought (*akusalavitakka*) one replaces it with a good or positive thought (*kusalavitakka*).
2. **Thought-scrutiny:** Scrutinizing the nature and negative aspects of these thoughts as they are “unwholesome, they are reprehensive, they result in suffering.”
3. **Ignoring or Non-attention to the Thoughts:** without being affected by the automatic thoughts one needs to ignore them and pay no attention so that they will subside automatically in the same way as they came.
4. **Resettlement of Thoughts:** one questions within one’s mind about the thoughts that have arisen. “What is the cause of this unskillful thought? What is its condition? By what reason has it arisen? Thinking thus, the source of the unskillful thoughts and the source of the source should be reflected on by the *yogin*”.
5. **Forcible Suppression:** if none of the above four works, one has to divert one’s attention to different objects by force. The example given for this in the *sutta* is: “with his teeth clenched and his tongue pressed against the roof of his mouth he should beat down, constrain and crush mind with mind.”¹⁸

When automatic thoughts haunt in the mind one should try any of these methods to overcome them. The last one has to be practiced if none of the others work out. Thus, when a monk (*bhikkhu*) or someone overcomes the negative automatic thoughts, one is then called: “a master of the courses of thought.” He will (then) think whatever thought he wishes to think and he will not think any thought that he does not wish to think. He has served craving, flung off the fetters, and with the complete penetration of conceit he has made an end of suffering.”

8. Conclusion:

We have seen that Beck was very much concerned about Automatic thoughts. He used cognitive therapy and Beck Depression Inventory, discovered by him, to treat patients who are victims of automatic thoughts. The methods include interviews; self-monitoring, thought sampling, scales and questionnaires etc.¹⁹ Cognitive therapists who follow Aaron Beck have been researching on these aspects and developing the literature and concepts greatly. However, the Buddhist analysis of the nature, function, and methods of automatic thoughts as discussed above, has

¹⁸ Ven. Nyanamoli Thera (1977 reprint), op. cit.p.105.

¹⁹ Richard S. Sharf (2004), see pp.357-399 for a clear understanding of cognitive therapy.



come down to us from the words of the Buddha. For more than a period of two millennia there were no additions or editions to what the Buddha said, except the fact that in the fifth century A.D., the *suttas* were commented on by Venerable Buddhaghosa. These commentaries only illustrate the Buddha's teachings grammatically, and giving examples for better comprehension - without changing any of the words of the Buddha. Yet, the analysis and methods discussed above can contribute a lot to present discussions on automatic thoughts. This is of great practical significance.

The Buddhist analysis of automatic thoughts has an ethical and soteriological dimension. In any given situation the automatic thoughts are connected with desire (*lobha*), hate (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*). Therefore they are evil and unwholesome. The aim of this analysis is to lift beings from lower levels of thinking to higher consciousness (*adhicitta*). One pursues the higher mind because it is blissful as opposed to the mind overcome by negative automatic thoughts characterized by anxiety and suffering. In this way practicing the path recommended by the Buddha one attains the stage of supreme intellectual, moral, and spiritual purity.

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Asian Concepts and Practices of Mental Culture as an Approach to Global Recovery through Mental Well-being

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The concepts and practices of mental well-being in Asian countries are closely related to the religious and philosophical traditions. It should be stated at the very outset that those concepts and practices of mental well-being are necessarily connected with other aspects such as physical well-being, environmental factors and cultural features. So we cannot speak about mere mental well-being irrespective of such other factors. To prove this fact I will quote two stanzas one from the Dhammapada, a famous text of the Buddhist canon and the other from the Suśrutasaṃhitā, a well-known primary source of Āyurveda

Buddhist definition of Well-being:

- Ārogyaparamā lābhā: Health is the highest gain - * physical well-being
- Santuṭṭhiparamaṃ dhanam: Contentment is the greatest wealth - * mental well-being
- Vissāsaparamā ñāti: The trusty are the best kinsmen - * social well-being
- Nibbānaparamaṃ sukham: Nibbāṇa is the highest bliss - * spiritual well-being¹

Samadoṣasamāgniśca

samadhātumalakriyāh

prasannātmendriyamanāh

svastha ityabhidhīyate²

If someone possesses balanced humors (air, bile and phlegm), normal digestive power, perfect tissues, timely evacuation of feces, urine and sweat, and joyful-soul, sense-faculties and mind, he is called a healthy person.

¹ Dhammapada, Ven. Narada, Taiwan, 1993, p. 177

² Svasthavṛttasamuccaya, Dr. Rajesvara Datta Sastri, Benaris, India, 1976, p.2

Definitions of Mind:

In most of the Asian traditions mind is given a prominent place in the analysis of human personality. Some general definitions and interpretations of mind are given below:

- Mind is one of the six sense-faculties of a human being.³
- Mind is the forerunner of all states.
- Mind is chief; mind-made are they.
- People act guided by mind.⁴
- Mind is an aggregate and it is a process but not an eternal or permanent entity.⁵
- Citta, mano and viññāṇa are synonyms but refer to the common nature of mind, a sense –faculty and resultant consciousness respectively.
- Mind never arises independently. It is always connected with other sense-faculties.⁶

The interaction between mind and matter:

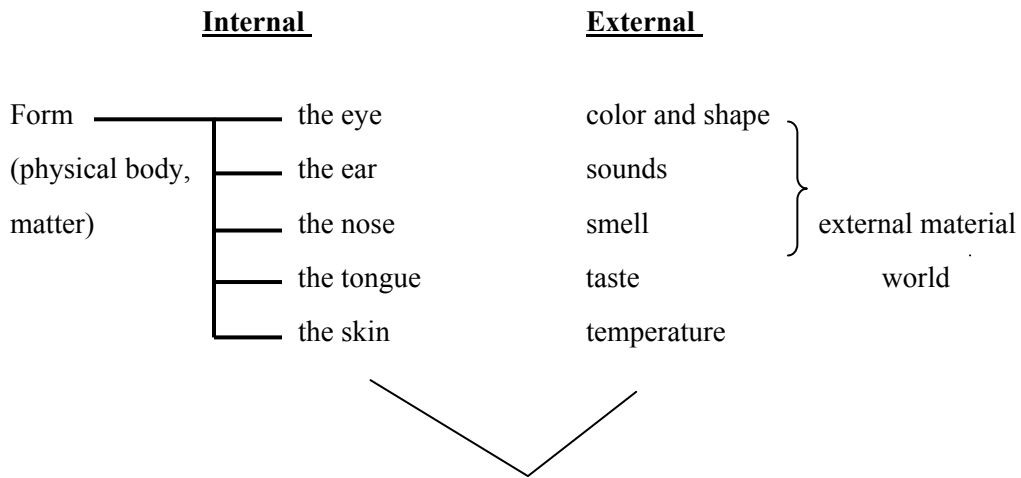
Although mind is considered as a major limb of human personality it functions as a process depending on sense-data. The senses or sense-faculties receive data from the external material world around us. Depending on sense-data the mind builds up the human personality, soul, self or I-ness through the mental functions that can be identified as feelings, perceptions, reflections and dispositions or conceptualization. This interaction between senses and sense-data and the related mental process will be clarified by the following diagram:

³ Saṃyuttanikāya, iv, Pāli Text Society (PTS), London, pp.2-3

⁴ Dhammapada, op.cit., p.1

⁵ Saṃyuttanikāya, iii, PTS, p.25

⁶ The Path of Purification, tr. Bhikkhu Ñānamoli, Colombo, 1956, pp.479-546



Mental awareness (consciousness)



	Component	Translation	Definition examples
↓	Vedanā:	Feelings	happy, unhappy, indifferent
	Saññā:	Perceptions (memory)	e.g.: good person, beautiful house, bad person
	Vitakka:	Reflection on memories	e.g.: I am a Buddhist, I am a Christian, I am a Sri Lankan, I am a Capitalist
	Saṅkhāra:	Dispositions	Totality of the above.
	Viññāna:	Consciousness	e.g.: I, Self, Personality, Individual, Being. ⁷

1. Matter: = six senses = the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue, the skin – internal. The Six sense-objects = the visible sounds, smell, taste, temperature = the world of experience – external.
2. The sensations or feelings: arise as a result of the contact between the senses and sense-objects. In the process of creating sensations, the consciousness is also essentially involved. The awareness of the senses regarding their respective objects in contact is called consciousness and it is one aspect of the fifth group in the analysis of five aggregates.

⁷ Sumanapala Galmangoda, *Early Buddhist Philosophy and Social Concepts*, Singapore, 2001, p.8

3. The sensations play an important role as a mental food which is required every moment of life for its survival. Edible food, sensations, volitional formations and consciousness strengthened by volitional formations (surviving consciousness = rebirth = linking consciousness = gandhabba) are the essential foods for the survival of beings. Three kinds of food out of the above four are mental or spiritual. So, the sensations that arise in connection with the sense-objects should be continued all the time. Due to the impermanent nature of the things (objects) the sense-objects cannot generate desired sensations all the time. Therefore, the human beings are given an ability to keep those objects as memories or perceptions. Perceptions form the third aggregate. The perceptions stored up in the memory become the objects of consciousness time to time and as a result of reflection over them the sensations are created continuously.
4. The perceptions confirmed in the memory as a result of constant reflection over them become volitional formations (dispositions = karmic forces) which provide a good foundation for the survival of consciousness. These dispositions or karmic forces can be introduced as concepts.

The concepts play a very important role in determining the type of human behavior. Although we are the builders of concepts, once they are built, we are always guided by those concepts: in regard to the visible, sound, smell, taste and temperature – the human behavior is determined by the concepts which are built by themselves. In that sense, human beings are not independent but slaves of the concepts. The concepts are not real and they are constructed depending on the sense-data. The ability of perceiving things of the senses is extremely limited and therefore the sensations, memories and dispositions created on sense-data are always partial and biased. So, the human behavior unlike that of the animals is always artificial but not natural.

The final result of the interaction between mind and matter is the origination of various concepts regarding the world of experience. One's personality constitutes of the totality of such concepts. So the human beings behave in the society guided by those concepts. The desire of a person means the attachment to concepts.

**Sāṅkappaṛāgo purisassa kāmo⁸*

**saññañca diṭṭhiñca*

Ye aggahesum

Te ghaṭṭayantā

Vicaranti loka⁹

Those who have grasped perceptions (memories) and views (concepts) live with conflicts in the world.

Further, it should be emphasized here that the concepts while playing a major role in human personality they also become an essential food for the survival of beings. There are four kinds of nutriments for the nourishment of personality. Out of the four three are mental foods.

It becomes more meaningful when pay attention to the analysis of human personality into five aggregates. Out of the five aggregates four factors refer to mentality and only one factor is related to the physical body.

This analysis of human personality clearly indicates the importance of mental health for the well-being of people.

The concepts are grasped by people through desire and hate. Likes and dislikes are basic mental features of human beings which are useful for their survival. They are developed upto the level of greed and hate unknowingly as they have no limits. Further the achievements by desire create conceit and failure to achieve creates mental distortion. Thus there are four main aspects of mental imbalance:

- i. Greed (lobha)
- ii. Hate (dosa)
- iii. Conceit (māna)
- iv. Mental Distortion (moha)¹⁰

Concepts whether good or bad are very useful instruments to guide the behavior of people. At the initial stage we have to agree with their concepts and should change, replace or eliminate them gradually. Mental well-being and imbalance of people mostly depends on the agreement or disagreement among the concepts. Concepts manifest in human activities- verbal, physical and mental.

⁸ Saṃyuttanikāya, I, Pali Text Society (PTS), London, p.22

⁹ Suttanipāta (Māgandiyasutta), Buddha Jayanti Tripitaka Series, Colombo, p. 268

¹⁰ Udānapāli, Meghiyasutta, Tr. Ven. W. Somalokatisa, Colombo, pp. 45-49

And they are mostly reflected in rites, rituals and ceremonies related to cultural and religious traditions.

The gradual path to change, replace or eliminate concepts is threefold.

- i. Sīla: morality (behavioral)
- ii. Samādhi: concentration (psychological)
- iii. Paññā: wisdom (cognitive)¹¹

And these three stages are recommended for achieving the expected results in three levels:

- i. tadaṅga: temporarily
- ii. vikkhambhana: periodically
- iii. samuccheda: completely¹²

Unless the first two stages are completed the final result cannot be achieved.

Concepts can be changed to maintain mental well-being by following various methods. Methods should be planned and determined with reference to various cultural, religious and environmental factors of different countries.

One of the most successful methods of establishing the mental well-being of people is the theory of assimilation. According to the theory we can utilize various religious and cultural beliefs, rites, ceremonies and practices on a psychological basis, such as: meditation; pilgrimage; āyurveda; recitation; astrology; memorization; palmistry; postures; devil dancing; worshipping; music; fasting; monastic functions; chanting; observances; story-telling; singing, etc.

Some examples of *Methods of Meditation*, are given below:

i. Mental Well-Being

Buddhist meditation is constituted with three steps called behavioral training, mental training and developing the cognitive faculty. These three steps should be followed concurrently in order to get success in Buddhist meditation because they are mutually inter-dependent factors. Together with the first two steps the following four methods can be followed in order to balance the four main imbalances of human personality mentioned previously.

¹¹ Dīghanikāya, III, PTS, p.219

¹² Visuddhimagga, PTS, p.110

Mental Imbalances	Methods of Meditation
Greed (lobha):	Concentration of foulness of physical body. Thirty-two parts of the body are recommended for this method.
Hate (dosa):	Compassion meditation. Development of friendly attitude to all, treating those who are suffering, blessing those who are fortunate and the development of indifferent attitude of mind.
Conceit (māna):	Concentrating on the impermanent nature of all mental and physical things
Mental Distortion (moha):	Concentration on in-and-out breathing with clear attention ¹³

*By following these methods mental well-being of people can be confirmed.

ii. Physical Well-being

According to Āyurveda all physical problems arise due to the imbalance of the three humors: vāta (air), pitta (bile) and semha (phlegm). These three humours are related to the three main mental disorders of human personality:

1. greed: phlegm
2. hate: bile
3. delusion: air ¹⁴

So, the methods of meditation recommended to reduce greed, hate and delusion namely concentrating on foulness of body, developing friendly attitude towards others and concentrating on in-and-out breathing can be applied to promote physical well-being.

iii. Social well-being

Chanting, Pilgrimage, Worshipping, Devil dancing, Monastic functions, story-telling and singing... all these traditional functions related to almost all religions in the world involve harmonious gathering of people which essentially leads to social well-being in any given country.

iv. Spiritual Well-being

All human beings suffer when faced with one reality called impermanence. ¹⁵ This universal truth brings the effects birth, decay, illness and death. Throughout the

¹³ Udānapāli, op. cit, pp. 45-49

¹⁴ Path of Purification, op. cit, p. 104

¹⁵ Visuddhimagga, PTS, p.649

human history people have tried in various ways to find solutions to these inevitable problems. Among those attempts, the satisfactory solutions will promote the spiritual well-being of people. Buddhism recommends that we should understand the reality of the world: impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and essencelessness by developing insight through the methods of insight meditation which mainly includes the following:

- a) Insight into the analysis of the world of experience. E.g. five aggregates mentioned earlier. By this insight one can eliminate eternalist views of the existence.
- b) Insight into the dependent nature of the world or the synthetic aspect of the existence: e.g. cause and effect theory
- c) By this insight one can eliminate nihilistic views of the existence.
- d) By eliminating eternalist and nihilistic views (greed and hate) one's mind becomes calm and quiet and he will be able to understand the reality of birth, decay, illness and death and to be indifferent to such challengers. This is the best way for promoting spiritual well-being among the people.

Fatigue and Psychospirituality of Multi-Sensory Leisure

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This pilot-study has highlighted psychospirituality, a dimension of well-being, in three case studies with or without fatigue secondary to chronic conditions (FSCC). A rationale of this study was that fatigue management in multi-sensory leisure may improve self-efficacy, an indicator of psychospiritual well-being, in those case studies. The FSCC is the least well-managed symptom in relation with reducing well-being (Sharpe & Wilks, 2002). Aaronson et al. (1999, p. 46) defined the FSCC as “the awareness of a decreased capacity for physical and/or mental activity due to an imbalance in the availability, utilization and/or restoration of resources needed to perform activity.” This definition has shown the resources or environments prepared for individual and purposeful activities of daily livings, particularly in leisure which is defined as a free time at non-working or life-sustaining activities (Leitner and Leither, 2004). Moreover, an effective resource of leisure has been reviewed that it should be consisted of multi-sensory environment, activity choices of interest, and individual participation. This statement is based on the self-determination theory (SDT) (Deci and Ryan, 1985; Ryan and Deci, 2000) focusing on the degree of motivation related to psychospiritual learning, performance, and experience of human. Coleman and Iso-Ahola (1993) also agreed with the SDT that leisure activities designed in various forms of self-determination and social participation may reduce life stress of the individuals.

Life-stress is accumulated when people have experienced FSCC, such as: cancer or rheumatoid arthritis. Many health professionals use the self-management model of chronic care in people with FSCC by giving medication and therapeutic activities, teaching coping skills with depression or other emotional consequence, and changing the client’s self-efficacy or confidence of performance (Corbin & Strauss, 1988 cited in Lorig & Holman, 2003). Importantly, the confident behavior of the individuals is intrinsically expressed in self-determination and life choices of satisfaction (Hammell, 2001). While the individuals are living with chronic conditions (e.g., hypertension, heart disease, cancer) their confident behaviors need different connections of spiritual/mental well-being and religious commitment (Hassed, 2000). Fitchett, Brady, Hernandez, & Cella (2002) found a positive effect of religious beliefs on spiritual well-being of people with cancer, but the sense of spiritual well-being may be explained in an abstract dimension toward health

benefits. This study also mentioned gaps of connection among the self-management upon chronic conditions, the religious beliefs (institutional practice) and the measurable spirituality (meaningfulness of life experience). In order to fill those gaps, Kang (2003) reviewed many conceptual frameworks in various fields including occupational therapy, occupational science, behavioral medicine, and religious studies.

A model of psychospiritual integration or PSI (Kang, 2003, p. 97) is created in order to articulate personal performance of life activities, community, environment, and spirituality (self-observation of the nature and organized feeling based on the Buddhist 'enlightenment' or *samma sambodhi*). This model has reported that the human organizes meaningful behaviors by physical and psychosocial components in leisure and non-leisure activities. The human has goal-directed consciousness through leisure experiences in various forms of sensation and perception (Csikszentmihalyi, 1993) which I would name as multi-sensory leisure. This consciousness could be qualitatively expressed into six components of spiritual behaviors: becoming, meaning, being, centeredness, connectedness, and transcendence (Kang, 2003). However, those PSI components may explain the psychospirituality of multi-sensory leisure for people experiencing self-management of FSCC.

Therefore, this study aimed to understand fatigue and psychospirituality of multi-sensory leisure by using a single-subject design over 5-week course, 2 hours per session -1 session a week (modified fatigue management course which is originated by Packer, Brink, & Sauriol, 1995 and its previous studies). The course contents include fatigue in daily lives, banking energy, body communication, activity schedule, and balancing activity domains combined with client's feedback. The researcher made a small group discussion with three volunteers: a client with cancer (A), a client with rheumatoid arthritis (B), and a client preferred Buddhist and spiritual health (C). The fatigue impact scale or FIS (Fisk, Ritvo, Ross, Haase, Marrie, & Schlech, 1994) was used in order to differentiate the participants' fatigue experiences. The perceptions of multi-sensory leisure and a rating scale of self-efficacy (an indicator of psychospirituality scored from 1 to 10) were qualitatively interviewed among three volunteers with and without FSCC. Content analysis was conducted using the PSI model (Kang, 2003) as the occupational therapy perspective and the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism (Rahula, 1997; Ekman, Davidson, Ricard, & Wallace, 2005).

Report

Qualitative View of Participants:

Client A said “This program had improved my understanding in activity plans, body communication, energy conservation, and resting. My physical fatigue was reduced by reviewing those strategies prior to performing every activities of daily living. This program could also increase my self-efficacy in fighting with the impacts of cancer from now and forever.”

Client B said “I myself could analyze many activity patterns into an appropriate way of livings. Banking energy was kept in my mind in order to plan doing something.”

Client C said “This program had focused on physical preparation, which could be done in parallel to mind practice using Buddhist principles. This seemed to be a health promotion of well-being assisting our consciousness in realizing the relationships of body and mind.”

The Occupational Therapy Perspective:

Client A had FSCC caused by cancer for 2 years. He perceived a feeling of decreased physical fatigue, performing life activities with no lacking of energy. His scores of self-efficacy at pre- and post-fatigue management course increased from 5 to 8 out of 10.

Client B had FSCC caused by rheumatoid arthritis for 7 years. She perceived a feeling of decreased mental fatigue, performing life activities with no emotional disturbance. Her scores of self-efficacy at pre- and post-fatigue management course increased from 4 to 7 out of 10.

Client C had no FSCC, but she was divorced and depressed for 10 years. She has performed life activities using the Buddhist practices, but she sometimes has headache and fragmental sleep after spending cognitive works. She perceived a feeling of decreased cognitive fatigue, performing life activities with flexible thought and appropriate rest. Her scores of self-efficacy at pre- and post-fatigue management course increased from 6 to 8 out of 10.

The Buddhist Perspectives:

Explicit and tacit knowledge of the participant seems to be alternative pleasures for the client A in practicing fatigue-released actions. Dynamic thought of self-management shifts in between suffering (*dukkha*) with cancer and deep sense of well-being (*sukha*) while performing physical activities in adequate banking of energy.

Emotions influence the client B's thoughts and actions while suffering (*dukkha*) with rheumatoid arthritis and its impact of fatigue on mental activities. The client B realized the nature of happiness (*sukha*) in a mental state of reality which consists of motivational training (self-practice of relaxed sensations and compassion), conceptual awareness (self-understanding of interpersonal environment), and balanced mindfulness (self-recognition of emotional and cognitive performance).

Interpersonal environment and dynamic thought assists the client C's connection of a specific trait of happiness (*sukha*) and an unpleasant feeling (*dukkha*) while performing non-stopped cognitive activities. Insight of multi-sensory (aesthetic and intellectual stimuli) and conceptual awareness of the nature could be a result of sustained training of physical and mental status.

Discussion

This study found an understanding of psychospirituality and multi-sensory leisure in three case studies with and without FSCC. Self-determination upon the functional impacts after FSCC was interviewed in three dimensions: physical, mental, and cognitive fatigue. Scores of self-efficacy at pre- and post-fatigue management over 5 weeks were positively changed among three participants. The structured contents were undertaken using the modified course of fatigue management in combination with knowledge sharing on the feeling of multi-sensory environment (internal and external process) toward life situations and choices of leisure participation. In occupational therapy points of view, all participants need an organized thought prior to initiate choices of interest (via attitude, motivation, and inspiration) and then they would have a sense of controllable participation in leisure activities. Moreover, they have been feeling a complexity of consciousness which may be explained in terms of Buddhism related health and well-being (Rahula, 1997; Kang, 2003; Ekman, Davidson, Ricard, & Wallace, 2005). This explanation could be clustered as an understanding of psychospirituality through fatigue and multi-sensory experience.

To translate a complexity of consciousness for all participants, fatigue management in multi-sensory leisure has increased self-efficacy in daily lives. The feeling of decreased fatigue could be demonstrated after the participants had learned and practiced the structured contents: fatigue in daily lives, banking energy, body communication, activity schedule, and balancing activity. Their experiences due to the functional impact of fatigue could be generalized using multi-sensory leisure (e.g., observation in life tasks, rehearsal of fatigued tasks, awareness of body and mind, concentration of task analysis, understanding of planned effort, and correctness of life situations).

The psychospirituality of multi-sensory leisure has also developed coping skills for people with or without FSCC in a combination of six components of spiritual behaviors (Kang, 2003) as follows: ‘*Becoming*’ shows a flow of life experience while doing skillful activities within a sense of self, independence, and emotional interests. ‘*Meaning*’ processes personal, purposeful, and meaningful activities of daily living. ‘*Being*’ forms an intrinsic environment of non-doing activities into possibilities of creativity, intuition, and love. ‘*Centeredness*’ involves clear understanding and well-being of life capacity. ‘*Connectedness*’ builds intra- and interpersonal relationships around the life activities and environments. ‘*Transcendence*’ drives inner thought of happiness and outer range of ultimate experience of being.

All participants have gained an adaptive experience of life activities: decreased impact of fatigue and increased level of self-efficacy. Their components of psychospirituality have been actively improved the mental/spiritual well-being under the different managements of fatigue and multi-sensory leisure. An overall mechanism of the better spiritual well-being for people with and without FSCC could be linked with the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism (Rahula, 1997) as follows: suffering and insubstantiality (*dukkha*), existing desire and arising of *dukkha*, eliminating of *dukkha*, and right ways of leading to Nirvana. As mentioned earlier, three case studies could understand the psychospirituality of multi-sensory leisure and the self-management strategies for a better alleviation of FSCC leading to mental/spiritual well-being. The participants firstly developed the eight ways of leading to Nirvana: right understanding, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration (Rahula, 1997) in living with or without FSCC. Then, they secondly gained the insight of natural reality: mindfulness, awareness, vigilance, and observation (Rahula, 1997; Ekman, Davidson, Ricard, & Wallace, 2005) in better mental/spiritual well-being.

Conclusion

Psychospirituality of multi-sensory leisure could be measured in term of self-efficacy. The scores of self-efficacy were positively changed in three participants who had come across the 5-week course for fatigue management. This preliminary evidence of fatigue and psychospirituality of multi-sensory leisure has discussed in order to complete a useful connection of mental well-being and spiritual experience. Increased sample size and experimental design is required for further study. Various implications of fatigue management in multi-sensory leisure may be used in a wider population with FSCC. The knowledge gained from this study may be shared not only amongst interdisciplinary teamwork, but also with Buddhist professionals.

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Global Recovery through Qualities of Buddhist Well-Being

Bhikkhuni Thich Nu Tinh Van

Buddhism is not a religion for men just to follow; but one to learn, to understand, to practice, and to gain experience. When men come to know the Buddha's teaching and perhaps practice it to some extent, sometimes they wish to make the Dhamma their direction in life or their guide through life. At that time, their thoughts turn to becoming a Buddhist.

The Buddhist way of education leads one to transcendental ideals by making one try to surpass oneself constantly so that one may incorporate oneself into life in its totality. The ultimate goal is to lead one to become a Buddhist Well-Being.

Buddhists practice the Noble Path in order to realize what is at first, believed. In this way belief is not divorced from practice, therefore they take refuge in, or go for guidance to the Triple Gem; because they see therein, the marks of supreme and fearless Truth.

Being a Buddhist Well-being is meant to convey; in addition, the idea of knowing and understanding. We may now define it as a conscious act of will directed towards liberation, based upon knowledge and inspired by faith (*saddhā*), or briefly a conscious act of determination, understanding and devotion. The one who is a Buddhist Well-Being, by right wisdom and insight perceives the Four Noble Truths. Having come to this Refuge one is free from all suffering. There are two types of refuge (i) confidence in the law of kamma and its fruits; (ii) confidence in the Noble Truths.

The first one means that one understands that wholesome intentional actions produce the fruit of happiness, good opportunities, intelligence, health and so on, while unwholesome intentional actions produce the fruit at mental and physical sufferings as well as obstructions of many kinds. If one really understands that the Dhamma is comprised of the actual stages of insight and the enactment of that insight in a concrete world of relations that one oneself has to realize as it were. It is in this sense that the Dhamma provides us with the real refuge, the way out of *Dukkha*. This is Buddhist well-being.

The second one is related to the Noble Truths. One already knows something of one's own *dukkha*; the cause of *dukkha*; the cessation of *dukkha* and the path leading to the cessation of *dukkha*. Thus the Dhamma in which one seeks

refuge is intimately related to one's own lives, it is a dynamic pattern of existence to commit oneself to actualize. However, one also takes refuge in the verbal and written instructions given by the Buddha and his disciples that describe from personal experience how to realize the Dhamma.

Through the instructions, one gains the knowledge necessary for one's own practice. They are considered as part of the Dhamma refuge. In other words, the Dhamma, and also the Buddha, are really Refuges to be sought within and not in exterior manifestations, though the latter may be and usually are very helpful aids for the real Refuge or the Buddhist Well Being.

Dhammas towards Recovery – a Lesson:

Possess the Five Precepts (pañcasīla): For our own happiness as well as for others, Lord Buddha advises us to observe certain rules of training. The five precepts (sīla) constitute the minimum moral obligation or the basic category for Buddhist leadership. Practicing sīla, one returns to one's own basic goodness, the original state of normalcy, unperturbed and unmodified. Thus, sīla is to train in preserving one's true nature, not allowing it to be modified or overpowered by negative forces as anger, greed, and ill-will. The Buddhist Well Being is advised to fulfil three basic conditions:

- To avoid evil (sabba pāpassa akaraṇaṃ) is to keep the body pure by not destroying any lives, stealing or committing adultery.
- To be good (kusalassa upasampadā) is to keep the speech pure by not engaging in improper talks.
- To purify the mind (saccitta pariyodapanam) is to keep the mind pure by removing all greed, anger and false judgement.

The five precepts are stated as follows:

1. Pāṇātipātā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi - (I undertake the rule of training to refrain from killing living beings): Observing this precept one sees others' suffering as one's own and endeavors to do what one can by helping alleviate their problems. Personally, one cultivates love and compassion; socially, one develops an altruistic spirit for the welfare of others.
2. Adinnādānā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi - (I undertake the rule of training to refrain from taking what is not given): This precept signifies respect for others' rights to possess wealth and property. Observing this precept, one refrains from earning one's livelihood through wrongful means, such as by stealing or cheating. This precept also implies the cultivation of generosity,

which on a personal level helps to free one from attachment and selfishness, and on a social level contributes to friendly co-operation in the community.

3. Kāmesu micchācārā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi - (I undertake the rule of training to refrain from wrong conduct in sexual relations): This precept teaches one to respect one's own spouse as well as those of others. It also encourages the practice of self-restraint, which is of utmost importance in spiritual training. Generally speaking, marriage must be recognized as a respectable and honorable state. Breaking up any loving relationship will bear very heavy fruits for the one who does it. To achieve complete observance of the precept, one must desist from the five forms of self-indulgence (i) visible object (ii) sound or audible object (iii) odor object (iv) taste object (v) tangible object, both directly and indirectly.
4. Musāvādā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi (I undertake the rule of training to refrain from false speech): The Buddha taught that one should speak the truth that is useful and conducive to the Dhamma, should avoid which is useless to cause unwholesome kamma to oneself and others. Practicing this precept helps to preserve one's credibility, trustworthiness as well as honor.
5. Surā-meraya-majja-pamādatthānā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi: (I undertake the rule of training to refrain from intoxicants such as liquors, etc., causing carelessness): This precept covers all intoxicants, including narcotics that alter the state of consciousness and are physiologically addictive. Drinking intoxicants causes carelessness that is the opposite of mindfulness and wisdom, these twin qualities when cultivated brighten up the mind. In modern society, drinking intoxicants is not part of the Buddhist culture, although it seems to have become a widespread phenomenon. Those who advocate drinking as a factor for promoting friendship forget to take account of the reality that so many friendships have been drowned in those intoxicants. Truly speaking, friendship founded on compassion and mutual understanding is much more desirable than which is based on alcohol. This fifth precept is very important, when it is broken, a person is likely to act rashly and without due consideration or forethought. Otherwise, the other four precepts can be broken, too. Breaking of these precepts causes ruin or disadvantages such as: a loss of wealth, quarrels, a poor state of health, a source of disgrace, shamelessness and a weakened intelligence...

These are the five precepts of training by which one attains a good rebirth, by which one possesses wealth of the ordinary sort or of the Dhamma, by which one goes to the cool Peace of Nibbāna; therefore these Precepts should be kept in purity.¹

Thus, the whole of the Buddha's teaching is based on one's growth that is when mindfulness is present, the five precepts can be kept easily. It makes meditation successful and then wisdom can arise and a practicing-observer sees things as they really are.

Practice and see the advantages of Kusala: Since life means movement and action, Buddhism recognizes a life as a source for all action which rejects evil, is bound to be good and positive. Once wrong and evil deeds have been abandoned, it becomes more natural to do well. Indeed, Buddhism treats the principle of right and wrong most meticulously and most comprehensively. One may do good deeds either in positive or negative ways, and good deeds may either produce good kamma (kusala kamma) or bad kamma (akusala kamma) or be entirely free from kamma (abyākata kamma). If one practices good deeds actively and energetically, one is said to be working in a positive way; if one refrains from doing evils, one is said to be doing good in the negative way.

Doing good, the first and foremost thing is to realize the true meaning of good and evil, before one chooses what to do. After discerning good and evil correctly, it is necessary to have a good understanding of the fundamental truth of equality. In a general way, we believe that life can stand between one and the consequences of one's action, it is like a rotten mango seed will never result in being a healthy mango tree with healthy and sweet fruits. So, it is we ourselves who make human beings, shaping our future. It is in the power that lies in us, to make ourselves happy or unhappy.

The well-known Kesaputta Sutta (the Kālāma Sutta), states that the Buddha exhorted the inhabitants (Kālāmas) of this small town in the Kingdom of Kosala², as follows:

Do not be led by reports, traditions, or hearsay. Do not be led by the authority of religious texts, nor by mere logic or inference, nor by considering appearances, nor by speculative opinion, nor by seeming possibilities, nor because one's own teacher has said so. Oh Kālāmas, when you know for yourselves certain things which are wrong, unwholesome, bad, then give them up; when you know for yourselves that certain things are right, wholesome, good, then accept them, follow them.'

¹ Dīghanikāya. III., Sigalovada sutta.

² Aṅguttanikāya. (the fifth sutta in the Maha Vagga of the Tika Nipata)., para 66.

Thus, abandoning all evil deeds and doing only wholesome deeds, one can escape from unhappy consequences and look forward to a better future.

Yathā'pi puppharāsimhā, kayirā mālā guṇe bahū.

Evam jātena maccena, kattabbaṃ kusalaṃ bahum.

As from a heap of flowers many a garland is made,

even so many good deeds should be done by one born a mortal.

(Dh. 53)

Purify mind in order to reject the Kilesas: Each of us must practice responsibility for the world. Responsibility is a measure of our awakening to our true nature. We must come to the ethical level of that truth. Moral self-protection will safeguard others, individuals and society against our own unrestrained passions and selfish impulses.

The Buddha like a good physician, having seen the suffering of mankind which is the first Noble Truth realized by him, proceeds to the second Noble Truth, the cause of suffering. Suffering is the result of a wrong attitude towards the world and our experiences in it. Thus he advises one to establish the threefold good conduct in deed, word, and thought in order to reject the three poisons or the three unwholesome roots. At the same time, he shows to the world by His own example: how man, simple as he may be, with many endeavors can develop and work out his salvation himself. The importance of happiness can only come about when one lives in harmony with the natural laws, which bring one health, success, contentment, tranquility as well as peace of mind.

Aneka jāti saṃsāraṃ, sandhāvissaṃ anibbisam

Gahakāra kaṃ gavesanto, dukkhā jāti punappunam.

Through many a birth I wandered in saṃsāra, seeking, but not finding,

the builder of the house. Sorrowful is it to be born again and again.

(Dh. 153)

Gahakāra ka diṭṭho'si, puna gehaṃ na kāhasi

Sabbā te phāsukā bhaggā, gahakūtaṃ visaṅkhitam

Visaṅkhāragataṃ cittaṃ, taṅhānaṃ khayam ajjhagā.

O house-builder! Thou art seen. Thou shalt build no house again.

All thy rafters are broken. Thy ridge-pole is shattered.

My mind has attained the unconditioned. Achieved is the end of craving.

(Dh. 154)

Don't worry - Take it easy: Worry and fear are quite natural in every human life. If one feels fearful and worried, one is miserable. In contrast, if one is miserable, one is worried and fearful. In case, one must overcome them by one's own human efforts, correctly directed with determination and patience.

One should, furthermore, try to purify oneself with proper understanding as well as attain perfection. For example, when things happen, one should have the courage to bear and find out where the cause lies in. The danger of refusing to face the truths of life (such as old age or death...), is made too late and one get more suffering in the long run. That is why through realizing the nature of life that is based upon facts, one can make up one's mind and subdue misery.

It is clear to say that one of the means whereby one can find real peace and happiness is to cultivate his heart to forget about attā (self) in order to be of service and use to humanity. Actually, looking at life one notices how it is changing, continually moving between contacts. These mighty waves of emotion carry one up; fling one down, and no sooner one is in the power of a new wave again and again...

Thus, the currents of life are always streaming in one direction. One must adapt oneself to this flow of life and consider it as a reward when one finds complete harmony; that is: take it easy. How nice it would be if one could maintain one's smiling face in spite of all the difficulties confronting one. Knowing the purpose of life is growth, progress from ignorance to enlightenment and from unhappiness to happiness as the Buddha's teachings state, it can be tested and verified by one's own personal experiences.

If one lives in accordance with the natural law, leads a righteous way of life, purifies the atmosphere through the merits of one's virtues and radiates one's loving-kindness towards other living beings, one can change the atmosphere by bringing about better results, because the human life provides the opportunity for acquiring the virtues of goodness as well as wisdom which are the prerequisites to the highest happiness.

See things as they are: To see things as they really are means to see them consistently in the light of the three characteristics (ti-lakkhaṇa). These three basic facts were first formulated over 2,500 years ago by the Buddha, who was rightly called 'The Knower of the World (lokavidū)'.

Of these three, anicca and anattā apply directly to inanimate existence as well as to the animate, for every concrete entity by its very nature undergoes change and is devoid of substance. Dukkha is of course only an experience of the animate to all conditioned things.

The Buddha teaches that life can be correctly understood only if these three basic facts are understood. Actually, this understanding must take place, not only logically, but in confrontation with one's own experience. On the mundane level, the clear comprehension of anicca, dukkha and anattā will give one a saner outlook on life. It will free one from unrealistic expectations, bestow a courageous acceptance of suffering and failure; and from this point of view it will protect one against the lure of deluded assumptions and beliefs.

With growing clarity, all internal or external things will be seen in their true nature. Insight-wisdom, which is the ultimate liberating factor in Buddhism, consists in just the experiential understanding, applied to both one's own bodily and mental processes, as well as deepened and matured in meditation. By seeing thus, detachment will grow, bringing greater freedom from egoistic clinging and culminating in Nibbāna, mind's final liberation from all defilements.

Positive listening to relieve the suffering of others: Nowadays, the terms positive and negative are very much in practice. According to general conception, positive means striving, bold, going forward and discontented in contrast. Negative means indolent, timid, retreating and discontented.

Positive listening is very crucial. Instead of finding out the cause, one should listen with the willingness to relieve the suffering of other person, not to judge or argue with him at all. One should not use flattery to win the heart of other, should not exalt oneself to win his admiration, should not hide his defects or vainly exhibit his virtues. One should listen with all one's attention, what is praiseworthy one praises without malice, what is blameworthy one blames judiciously. For instance, when one hears something that is not true, one continues listening deeply and keeps listening only, so that other can express his pain as well as release his tensions. It is said to correct his perception after sometime only when he has a good chance. Again in another case, even the truth one does not always utter - because one honors the word of others as one honors one's own. By chance, should such an utterance not be conducive to the good and happiness of others, one remains silent. If any truth seems beneficial to others, one utters it, even though detrimental to oneself it may be.

Positive listening can carry on one's spiritual cultivation vigorously with a positive heart. Developing a good heart, one naturally finds some inner peace. Without cultivating a good heart, one will never find pure peace. And what does constitute a positive heart? A positive heart has beneficial intentions towards others, such as: compassion, loving-kindness, generosity, tolerance and moral discipline, etc.

Furthermore, the heart wishing to gain concentration or to realize emptiness, or the heart, which wishes to attain Enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings, is a positive heart. The positive heart has great power to solve other's problem because it gives happiness to oneself and also produces happiness for others. 'May we, having crossed, lead others across; ourselves free set others free; ourselves comforted give comfort to others; ourselves released give release to others. May this come to pass for the welfare and happiness of the multitude, out of compassion for the world, for the sake of the great multitude, and for the welfare and happiness of gods and men'.³

Train individuals for developing community as well as society: Each individual is a member of the family. He is also a social human-being. So, a person, a social being has to think of the well-being of other fellow beings even for the sake of his own interest. To build one's character is to have self-respect and self-affirmation. By virtue or well-training, one becomes a noble citizen of one's nation; by the same qualities one also becomes a noble citizen of the globe.

Community life is inter-being: One must always keep open the channel of communication with others for mutual understanding. It is said that 'positive listening' is an essential principle of community life; because: each being of this world directly or indirectly has to depend on someone else. In fact, each individual has his own responsibility to resolve his own problem, but not to do it at the cost of others' happiness. A community of a particular place has to think of all the citizens belonging to the same community and residing in another neighboring state for the protection of their present as well as future generations.

The Mettā Sutta is one of the most popular teachings: it forms an important part of the Paritta (protection). It states that everyone needs to practice respect, tolerance and dedication in order to maintain social purification and racial harmony in the community. The Buddha advised seekers towards attaining a harmonious social life and to a Supreme Bliss of life - by cultivating the most from living a life (Brahma-vihāras). Thus, there has to be harmony and reconciliation; if people around us are suffering, we will not of course be happy at all.

In addition, Buddhism refers to four cardinal principles of social life (saṅgahavathu),⁴ bases of sympathy, acts of doing favors, principles of service, virtues making for group integration and leadership. These principles consist of:

- *Dāna*: giving, generosity, charity. It stresses the equitable distribution of wealth and a society free from exploitation.
- *Piyavācā*: kindly speech, convincing speech. It brings happiness to people.

³ J. J. Jones, Mahavastu, III., p. 134.

⁴ Aṅguttanikāya. II., p. 253

- *Atthacariyā*: useful conduct, rendering services, life of service, doing good. It helps in material prosperity and social well-being of people.
- *Samānattatā*: even and equal treatment, equality consisting in impartiality, participation and behaving oneself properly in all circumstances. It is non-distinction on the basis of caste, creed or parentage.

A society or a nation in itself becomes good or bad because members are recognized as a common family with a unified purpose, which relates to its internal and external affairs as determined by the leaders of that society or nation. By the practice of Brahma-vihāras along with Saṅgahavatthu, the practitioner becomes dearer to other members of his family or community as well as society.

Finally, on the understanding that all sentient beings are fundamentally of one entity and equal with one another; we can realize that as long as one makes no distinction between oneself and others, therefore, to liberate others is equal to liberating oneself and to help others is same as helping oneself. In such case, Buddhism is a religion that is taking an active part in serving humanity and it is giving its services unconditionally.

As a rule, correct judgment is also very important because it takes a man of integrity and ability to handle a great and successful job. The character aspect, deals with: education, technical skill and wisdom - traditionally, there are two categories of mundane wisdom, given: 'Hearing wisdom' and 'Thinking wisdom'. The first is the accumulation of raw facts through learning while the second is the relating of them together to form new knowledge. In this way, two aspects of mental activity are developed memory and intellectual effort. Both of these combine in worldly wisdom, whatever school one supports, is primarily to appreciate the necessity of doing something about one's life and only those who make right judgment may be successful in their great accomplishments.

At last, from knowledge which gives courage, and from culture which gives patience, we can acquire perseverance. Thus, knowledge and culture are two components of great responsibilities without fear, whereas one exerts great effort without fail. Only by patience, one may remove various Kilesas in one's way and free oneself from craving as well as selfish desires, one finally would make good progress in walking through the Path of Enlightenment.

The Buddhist Concept of Conflict Resolution (An Approach to Global Recovery through Mental Well-Being)

Dr. Wasanatha Priyadarshana

Introduction

Thouless, of the famous psychologists at Cambridge University, scrutinizing the first sermon preached by the Buddha, says: that the methodology adopted thereof is very similar to the methodology frequently adopted in the teaching of modern bacteriology. He further emphasizes that the scientific basis and the therapeutic values which existed in early Buddhism can be used as a system of psychotherapy in treating modern problematic behaviors and mental disorders. (see: Thouless-1990) Dr. Padmal De Silva a Senior Lecture in Psychology at the University of London has also highly recommended early Buddhism as a cognitive and behavioral Psychotherapy. (see: Maurits G.T.-2006)

It is very obvious that due to the modern economic environment that gives priority to liberal economic policies leading to advanced technologies manifold abnormal behavioral problems and mental disorders are rapidly increasing. Consequently these abnormal behaviors and mental problems are caused by either psychological or psychological factors. On the other hand, the various spiritual healing systems which prescribe treatments for problematic behaviors and mental problems are being introduced to modern society without formal and systematized approaches and codes of ethics. The psychotherapeutic systems based on different Buddhist schools have been introduced to the modern society with many titles. But, the so called new inventions that come into being as Buddhist Psychotherapy are not formalized according to systematized therapeutic approaches and codes of ethics. Therefore, the objective of this article is to reveal the systematic and scientific basis of early Buddhist Psychotherapy that can be adopted in prescribing treatments for resolving internal and external conflicts.

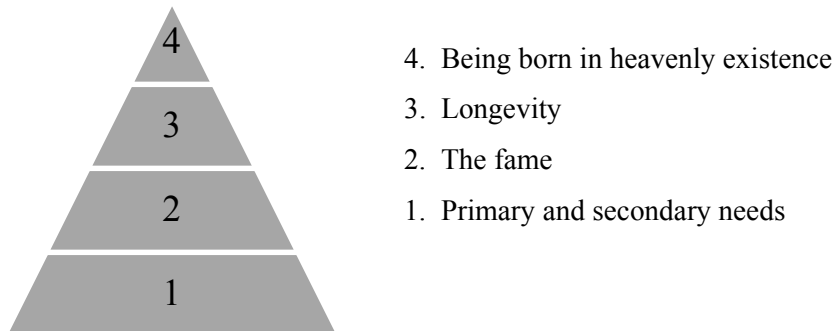
The Psychology of Conflicts

The ultimate aim of Buddhism is the realization of Nibbana which is the everlasting end of all physical and mental sufferings. The realization of Nibbana is the result of the ultimate attainment in developing the human mind to its optimum

level. On the other hand Buddhism accepts the interdependence between body and the mind (*nāmarupapaccayā vinñanam*). This interdependence gives priority to mind as the forerunner (*manopubbamgamā dhammā*). According to Buddhism there are some physical illnesses possessed caused by mental abnormalities and simultaneously physical well-being of the individual is dependant on the restoration of mental well-being. The *Bhesajakkhandaka* of the *Vinayapitaka* can be designated as the manual of treatments for physical illnesses.

As demonstrated in early Buddhist Psychology, almost all problematic behaviors and mental disorders arise due to the noxious trio: *lobha* (desire), *dosa* (hatred), and *moha* (infatuation). The comprehensive more advanced analysis of defilements of Buddhist Psychology is ten fetters (*Dasasamyojana*). Buddhist commentarial expositions reveal that all worldlings are deranged (*Ummattakāviyahiputhujanā*). But it is discussed in depth in the analysis of ten fetters, that not only worldlings but the spiritual beings except the *Arahants* are also deranged by defilements. Although, the concept of *Lobha* is defined in Buddhist ethical context as a defilement, but in the context of Buddhist Psychology, it has been discussed as the first intrinsic motivational power that leads human beings to fulfill their needs. For this reason it is shown that the concept of *lobha* plays dual aspects as negative and positive.

Several instances can be drawn from a Buddhist point of view how *lobha* functions as a positive force. There is a description of a monk who has reached a certain level of mental development who could attain first *Jhana* (trance) but could not realize the destruction of the influxes, because of his desire for the doctrine, and by his delight in the doctrine and by destroying the five fetters binding him to this world he was reborn in a spiritual world (A.V.343). Desire for the doctrine will, therefore, lead to a good result. The desire is also explained in the *Pattakamma Sutta* as an intrinsic force that leads human beings to the establishment of four needs required in this world and hereafter.



Hierarchical form of needs mentioned in Pattakamma Sutta

The above mentioned instances so far emphasize how desire becomes the most positive force in buddhist psychology. It is abundantly clear from various buddhist suttas that many synonyms exist for the term *lobha*; namely, *kāmachchanda*, *chanda* (impulse), *rāga* (excitement) *nandi* (enjoyment) *tanhā* (thirst), *sineha* (love) *pipāsā* (thirst), *parilāha* (consuming passion), *lobha* (greed), *mucchā* (swoon or confused state of mind). When the concept desire is comprehensively analyzed in depth it shows us three kinds of facets, namely *kāmatanhā* (craving for sense gratification) *bhavatanhā* (craving for self preservation) and *vibhavatanhā* (craving for self annihilation). *Kāmatanhā* plays a very significant role in buddhist psychology as one of the indispensable attributes of bliss and happiness to be enjoyed as a reward of virtue in this world as well as in the next or in the other worlds. The pleasures of heavenly existence are greater than the earthly ones (S.V. 409), but to the wise even these are unsatisfactory, since there exist symptoms of ignorance that lead to rebirth. *Kāma* is characterized by evanescence, and transience. (A.11,177). The term *kāmatanha* is discussed in the buddhist literature with another two facets as *kilesa kāma* (subjective sensuality) and *vattakāmaa* (objective sensuality). As far as the term *kilesa kāma* is concerned, it refers to factors like *kāma chanda* (impulse) *kāma rāga* (excitement) *kāma sankappa* (thought) *kāma nandi* (enjoyment) *kāma sineha* (love) *kāma parilaha* (consuming passion) *kāma muccha* (confused state of mind) etc. Apart from these, the term like *kāma-tanhā* (craving, canker of sexuality) also designates the nature of *kilesa-kāma*. The second facet of *kāmatanhā* is *vattukama* which means the objective sexuality.

According to the expositions of *Niddesa Kāmasutta*, the objective sexuality refers to pleasant forms, sounds, smells, taste and touch. On the other hand it refers to objects like, clothes, servant, goats, pigs, fields and lands. When the individual is able to satisfy his sexuality to some extent the next psychological response that comes into being is the self-preservation. The psychological basis of this self preservation exits on the concept of ego instinct. In this very life, the individual tries his best to fulfill all his needs, according to his aspirations. Due to the ego instinct, the individual is led by the concepts of I, my, myself and mine. The false concept of egoism finally leads the individual to dogmas like self-preservation, self continuity (personal immortality) self assertion (power), self display and self-respect. The human being led by egoism is unable to understand the nature.

According to the Buddhist psychology the individual who fails to understand the nature of this world (as it really is) can not grasp problems that arise in this present life. The second aspect is avenge. This characteristic of the individual is formed by the influence of *vibhavatanha* (self-annihilation). These are well documented as follows. “She who under the sway of anger becomes ugly; he cannot

sleep in comfort; his mind is constantly disturbed, when a person is overwhelmed by anger, he does not know what is right and wrong and is unable to understand even what is beneficial to himself. When anger becomes most intense one loses all sense of discrimination and does not hesitate to kill even his own kith and kin or in the end, even himself (A.I.V, p98). In the analysis of noxious trio (*lobha, dosa, moha*) the nature of self annihilation is well described under the term of *dosa*. The paramount importance in this concept which is to be understood is its next result, which comes into being as *moha* due to the self annihilation (*vibhavatanha*). Various terms have been used to signify *moha* as ignorance (*avijjā*) nescience, and as unknowing, ignorance or *moha* is defined as not knowing the four truths, namely suffering, cause of suffering, cessation of suffering and the path leading to its cessation (S XII, 4). As ignorance is the cause of all life-affirming actions of all evil and suffering; therefore it stands first in the formula of dependent origination (*paticca samuppāda*).

As far as the above mentioned explanation based on the Buddhist psychopathology is concerned the buddhist analysis of the root cause of all problematic behaviors and mental abnormalities is *moha* (delusion) combines with *lobha* (desire) and *dosa* (hatred).

Many instances which discuss the origin of various problematic behaviors and mental illnesses have been mentioned in the Buddhist canon. “One who is endowed with strong desires in his character (it is same with hatred and illusion) experiences the perpetual suffering and dejection that are borne of desire (A.II 149)”. “He who is overwhelmed by desire plans his harm and others, and the harm of both, he performs immoral acts in deed, word and thought, he cannot understand, as it really is his own profit, that of others, or that of both. Desire is the cause of blindness, of not seeing, of not knowing, of loss of understanding: it is associated with trouble and does not lead to *nibbāna*. (A, I, 216)”. One deceived by delusion then it is very clear from those expositions how noxious trio functions as the root causes of problematic behaviors and mental illnesses.

Character analysis as Healthy and Unhealthy

Theravada Buddhism describes the various personality characteristics from birth to death and personality development strategies. The Buddhist Personality development strategies are more comprehensive and so their abstract form is mentioned according to the Buddhist commentarial expositions. The entire life span is of ten periods. They are as follows:



- The period of childhood (*manda*) (1-10)
- The period of adolescence (*kiddha*) (1-20)
- The period of adulthood (*vanna*) (20-30)
- The period of the establishment of mundane life (*bala*) (30-40)
- The period of wisdom (*pañña*) (40-50)
- The period of physical decay (*hāyanu*) (50-60)
- The period of distortion of physical body (*pabbāra*) (60-70)
- The period of having crooked body (*vaṅka*) (70-80)
- The period of mental distortion (*mohamula*) (80-90)
- The period of occurring the death (*sayana*) (90-100)

In order to obtain a clear understanding of the various problematic behaviors and mental problems, the Buddhist psychotherapist must get a comprehensive knowledge of these periods and characteristics. Taking into consideration the dispositional nature of individuals the *Visuddhimagga* (Path of Purification) also singles out six characters and their relevant characteristic traits. This particular analysis makes easier for the Buddhist Psychotherapist to understand the psychopathology of each problematic behaviors and mental disorders. The significant hypothesis of Buddhist psychology is that all behavioral actions are the results of volitions. So the comprehensive knowledge of the Buddhist character analysis is of utmost importance in diagnosing and prescribing the treatment plan for resolving internal conflict caused by noxious-trio (desire, hatred, delusion).

Problematic behaviors and Psychiatric Disorders

Venerable Rerukane Chandawimala who researched Buddhist teaching of defilements, singles out them as one thousand five hundred. When these defilements are analyzed with Buddhist Psychological view-point, many problematic behaviors and Psychiatric disorders can be seen functioning along with these defilements. According to my research all abnormal behaviors and Psychiatric disorders can be enumerated as more than 1500 as reflected in early Buddhist teachings. It is very difficult to mention all abnormal behaviors and Psychiatric disorder this type of concise essay.

Internal conflicts possessed by the Raga -charitha (desire character)

- *Māya*: Hallucinatory habits
- *Sātheya*: Fraudulent tactics
- *Māna*: Pride in all actions
- *Pāpicchatā*: delight in sinful actions
- *Mahicchata*: unlimited desires
- *Asantutthita*: unsatisfactoriness
- *Siṅga*: Deep rooted defilements in every actions
- *Cāpalya*: vacillation in duties
- *Anottappa*: Not fearing of any sinful actions
- *Ahirika*: Shamefulness in any sinful action
- *Mado*: infatuated mood in any function
- *Pamāda*: Unconscious mind

It is of great importance to note here that the above mentioned Psychiatric disorders can be divided again into many forms. For instance, the mental disorder named “*Mado*” is of 28 categories.

Internal conflicts possessed by the Moha -charitha (deluded character)

- *Thinamiddha*: Sloth and torpor in physical and mental performances
- *Uddhacca*: Restlessness
- *Kukkuccha* : Scrupulousness, remorselessness, uneasiness of conscience after forming actions
- *Vicikicchā*: Skeptical doubts
- *Duppatinissayata*: Dogmatism

Internal conflicts possessed by the Dosa-charitha (hatred character)

- *Kodo*: Provocativeness in day to day life actions
- *Upanaha*: Hatred
- *Makkhi*: Covering others good qualities

- *Phalasa*: Comparing one's good qualities with himself
- *Issā*: Intolerance of other wealth
- *Macchariya*: Hiding his wealth from the others

Modification Strategies

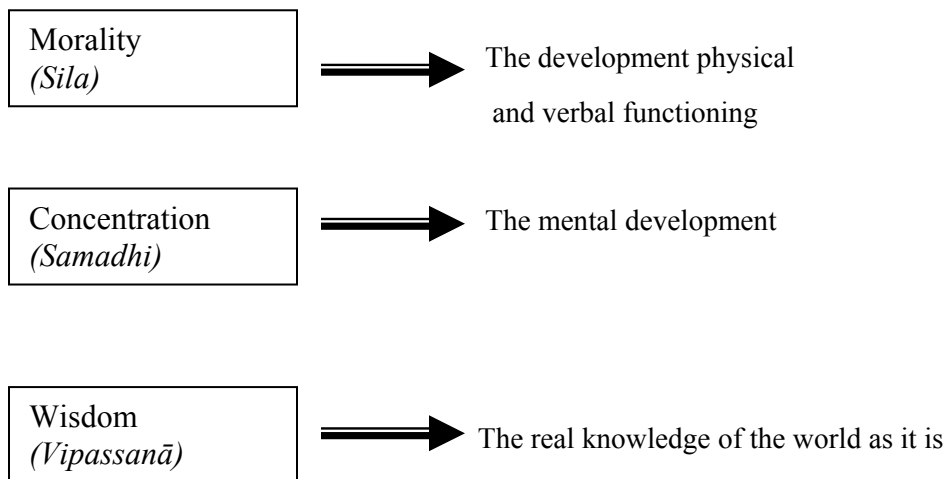
According to Buddhist Psychology, all kind of wholesome and unwholesome actions occur due to volition (*cetanāham bhikkhave kamman vadami*, A. VI, 63). Volition is based on six types of conditions or roots (*mula*), namely: desire, (*lobha*) hatred (*dosa*) delusion (*moha*) unselfishness (*alobha*), hatelessness (*adosa*, *metta*, good, will), and non-deludness (*amoha*, *pañña*, knowledge). The first three roots are the basis of unwholesome actions and the second three roots are the basis of wholesome actions. It is of great importance to mention here that due to the interaction between mind (*nāma*) and body (*rūpa*), each faculty can induce the function of the other faculty. But in the final analysis the transformation of the mind by eradication unwholesome roots is mentioned as the everlasting solution for all these sufferings.

Grasping the realization is based on a process that must be practiced for certain period. And on the other hand the process of the realization of *Nibbāna* is described as *Samuccheda pahāna* (overcoming full destruction). Until the individual reaches the final position or *samuccheda pahāna*, Buddhism suggests other four strategies based on behavioral modification for the resolution of behavioral and mental problems. The strategies adapted by Buddhism to resolution of problematic behaviors and psychiatric disorders have been designated as *Phahana* (overcoming). The five strategies including cognitive modifications can be mentioned as the following.

- *Vikkhambhana –pahāna* (overcoming by repression)
- *Tadanga –pahāna* (overcoming by the opposite)
- *Patipassaddhi-pahāna* (overcoming by tranquillization)
- *Nissarana-pahāna* (overcoming by escape)
- *Samuccheda-pahāna* (overcoming by escape)

Behavioral Modification Strategies

The path that leads to *Nibbāna* is described as *atthandika-magga* (Noble Eightfold Path) based on *trisikkha* (Threefold Training) namely morality (*sila*) concentration (*samadhi*) and wisdom (*pañña*). The entire Buddhist behavioral modification starts from morality (the good conduct of physical and verbal functioning). The good conduct of physical and verbal functioning will lead to acquire the concentration (mental development) which is activated as the function of wisdom (the real knowledge of the word as it is)



The Thought Stopping Theories

In this theory the person is advised to recollect incompatible thoughts against unwholesome thoughts associated with *lobha* (desire) *dosa* (hatred) and *moha* (infatuation). For instance the lustlessness, loving kindness and charity are to be promoted respectively instead of *lobha*, *dosa* and *moha*. The strategy used in this module is compared to what the carpenter uses to pull out a coarse, peg with a fine one. With the intent of promoting wholesome thoughts, the *metta* (loving kindness) is recommended. According to Buddhist Psychology this strategy is based on *tadanga-pahāna* (overcoming by the opposite)

Reflecting on Harmful Consequences

When the first approach fails to stop unwanted thoughts associated with unwholesome roots, the client is advised to adopt the second strategy. If unwanted



thoughts still keep arising the client is to reflect on the perils and disadvantages of those thoughts. It is of great significance to note here that the notions of *ambalatthikārāhuluvada* and *Adhipateyya Sutta*:

- Reflecting on the harmfulness of the unwholesome thoughts towards the individual.
- Reflecting on the harmfulness of the unwholesome thoughts towards the others (society)
- Reflecting on the harmfulness of the unwholesome thoughts towards the individual and others. (society)

By distraction

If unwholesome thoughts still keep arising, the client is advised to avoid from unwholesome thought related to unwholesome roots which are conducive to problematic behaviors and psychiatric disorders. For the purpose of distracting, the several activities are advocated in *Vitakkasantana Sutta* as recalling of a doctrinal passage, which one has learned, concentrating on actual concrete objects, and engaging in some unrelated Physical activities.

By Stopping of the Causes of the Target Thought

When the first, the second, and the third fail to overcome the unwholesome thoughts, then the client is advised to remove or stop causes of the target thought. The strategy is explained here with an analogy of a man walking briskly who asks himself “Why am I walking briskly” then reflects on his walking and stop and stands; then reflects on his standing and sits on and go on.

By using the Entire Physical and Mental Strength

When the above mentioned strategies fail, then the client is asked to use his entire physical and mental strength to overcome unwholesome thought which are associated by unwholesome roots leading various maladaptive behaviors and psychiatric disorders. Further this strategy is explained with an analogy of a strong man holding and restraining a weaker man “One is to use the “effort of one part of the mind to control the other.

By Restraining from Unwanted Physical Actions

According to the account in *jatā sutta*, the mankind is suffering from internal and external problems (*antho jata bahi jata*). The strategies of resolving so called problems are advocated as the development of *sila* (good conduct) *samadhi* (concentration) and *pañña* (insight). The various codes of morality advocated by the Buddha are to be practiced with the aim of getting free from unwholesome and unwanted actions. And on the other hand so called moralities can be considered as the primal behavioral modifications. But unwholesome actions still keep arising the following strategies can be adopted.

- **The Blind strategy:** One is advocated to behave as a blind man in front of sceneries which are conducive to increase maladaptive behaviors.
- **The Deaf strategy:** when one who overhears unwanted sound is advocated to behave as deaf man in case of getting free from maladaptive behaviors.
- **The foolish Strategy:** In this strategy the individual is advised not to involve in unnecessary and irrelevant problems. Although he/her is capable enough to engage in such problems.
- **The weak strategy:** Although one who possesses with good physical strength is asked not to engage in unwanted actions which are conducive to problematic behaviors, but to behave as a weak man.
- **The Dead strategy:** When the foregoing strategies fail, one is advised to behave as a dead man in front of unwanted circumstances causing maladaptive behaviors.

Consuming Strategies

This strategy is two fold. According to Buddhist Psychology, when human beings fail to satisfy their primal and secondary needs, the various kinds of external conflicts arise. And on the other hand the worldlings intrinsically live unsatisfactorily. Therefore one is advised to satisfy his/her primary and secondary needs within an ethical and moral context. The strategies of the fulfillment of so called needs are explained in the Buddhist economics and management theories. Therefore, this theory, the techniques of consuming is used as the primal application of resolving conflicts. As the most advanced techniques the term ‘consuming’, can be used, in order to desensitize the learned behavior activating as the root cause of the maladaptive behaviors. With the aim of desensitization of the learned behavior, the client is asked to follow these techniques:

- Face the situation without fear (*na paritassati*)
- Remove the desire with unwholesome actions (*agathito*)

- Face the situation with consciousness (*amucchito*)
- Be free from passion (*anajjhāpañña*)
- See the perils (*adinavadassāvi*) of the unwholesome thoughts
- Try to understand the things as they are (*Pañña*)

Avoidance Strategies

In this strategy, the client is provided with sufficient knowledge of the root cause of his/her maladaptive behavior and is advised to avoid circumstances or things that reinforce the relevant root cause. According to a very significant account of the *Visuddhimagga* the avoidance or the escape from such circumstances or things is mentioned as *nissaranapahāna* (overcoming by escape). The *Subbāsava Sutta* gives a comprehensive account of the circumstances or things that must be avoided by the individual).

Cognitive approaches:

Individuals who have not listened to the doctrine preached by the Buddha are known as *Puthujjana* (worldling, ordinary man) (*assutavaputhujjano*). Buddhist philosophical explanations further illustrate the characteristics of a *pujijjana* as one who is still possessed of all the 10 fetters (*sanyojana*) binding to the cycle of rebirth and therefore has not yet reached any of the stages of holiness (*ariyapuggala*). According to commentarial expositions, there are two kinds of worldlings namely an outsider (non-Buddhist) and worldlings inside the Buddha's Dispensation (*Sasanika*). The first one has no the knowledge of the four Noble truths (*Saccanulomika-nana*). The second one is defined in Buddhism with several analysis as blind worldings (*andhaputhujjana*) and noble worldling (*kalyana puthujjana*). *Andhaputhujjana* professes Buddhism but has neither knowledge of, nor interest in the fundamental teachings of Buddhism. *Kalyannaputhujjana* is more capable enough to understand, practice the teachings and has more knowledge than the first one. According to the final analysis of Buddhism not only worldlings, except the *Arahath* and other spiritual beings, but also those who have already entered the path that leads to *nibbana* are entangled with subtle defilements. The strategy that is to be used to eradicate all defilements is "Meditation", which is of twofold as *Samatha* (tranquility) and *Vipassana* (insight)

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