

Buddhism and Suicide: Right Attitude towards Death

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Introduction

In the year of 2008, just before I would left Japan for Myanmar, a friend living in Tokyo half-laughingly unfolded a startling fact: “I lose someone around me in suicide every three months. My friends were concerned that I might be next.” Numerous Japanese take their own lives in various ways such as; jumping in front of trains, finding companions on Japanese “suicide” websites to commit group-suicide, creating and the use of poisonous gas, and so forth.² Mortality associated with suicide is global issue and an increasing source of concern, especially, in Japan where its suicide figures are rising, topping most Asian countries. This paper aims to acknowledge the pressing problem of suicide from a Buddhist perspective. With wisdom (paññā) designed to awaken the Right View (sammā-di□□hi) related to the subtheme, a conclusion is drawn from a correct understanding towards death. Interdisciplinary study is explored through the combination of my studies on Buddhist culture in Japan and my degree study on Theravāda Buddhism in Myanmar currently. The first phase begins with clarification on the causal factors of the Japanese suicides case. It analyses the relationship between the Japanese philosophy on death referring to Yukio Mishima and what Mahāyana Buddhism such as Zen and the Bodhisatta Path play an influential part on death. It eventually highlights the difference behind the various motives of death.

For the exploration in Buddhist perspective for the solution, the second phase is to examine Pā□i Canons of Theravāda Buddhism. It traces how death and suicide are interpreted in Tipi□aka consisting of Sutta, Vinaya, and Abhidhamma. It reveals that the Buddha never approved of the taking of life, including one’s own life. How to treat death in the right way requires a clear conception of suffering (dukkha) and the law of kamma. Simultaneously, the right attitude towards death will nurture wisdom that is well-supported by mindfulness (sati) within us. The practice of those principles have indubitable efficacy in all the social cases including suicide prevention not only of Japan but worldwide because worldly problems usually arise from the uncontrolled desire and dissatisfaction. Conclusion is led by classifying the four aspects; the two reflections of both non-Buddhist (social) perspective and Buddhist perspective, and the other two motives of suicide.

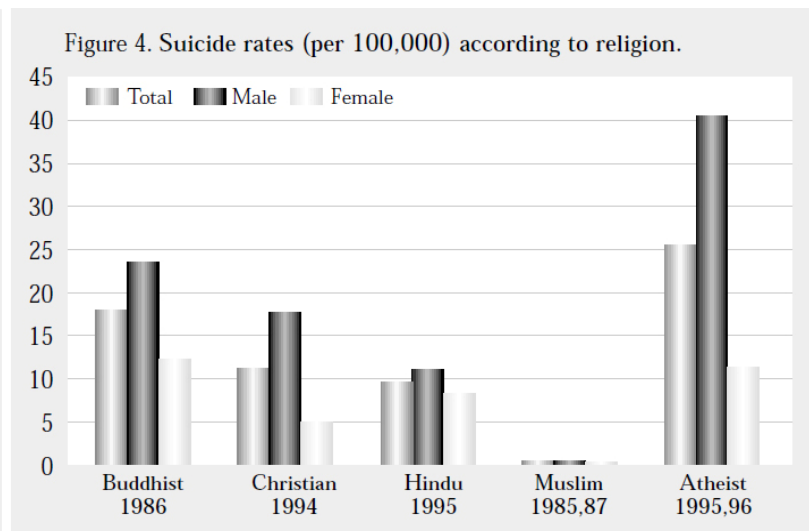
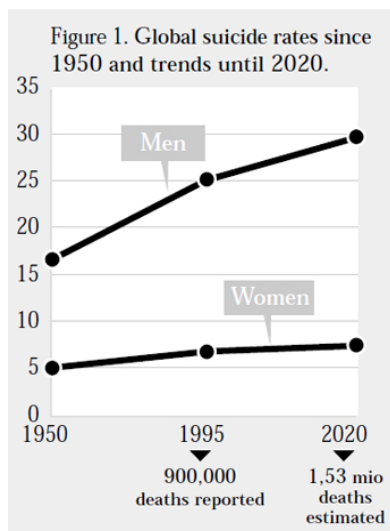
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² Leo Lewis, Japan gripped by suicide epidemic, Times Online, June 19, 2008, <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/asia/article4170649.ece>

1. Suicide as a Social Problem

1-(1) Global Suicide Issue

Suicide or self-destruction statistics have been compiled in the data bank of the World Health Organization (WHO) since 1950. According to its data analysis for the year 2020, the number of deliberate deaths worldwide is currently estimated at 1.53 million.³ The increase in the global suicide rate has been a cautioning phenomenon. Its statistics from around the world show different patterns in some groups. The predominance of suicide rates is consistently found in males over females and under the 44 years age group. In a comparison of religious denomination, the rate of Buddhist countries is distinctly higher than that of Muslim and Christian countries, excluding Atheist.⁴ In addition, the WHO especially notes the remarkable specificity of Japan, in Asian Buddhist countries:



(C) World Health Organization

Émile Durkheim, the French founder of modern sociology, well-known for his study *On Suicide*, examined a correlative balance between individual and society: “Every society is predisposed to supply a given number of voluntary deaths.”⁵ That observation led him to argue that when the collective order of society is disturbed by a growth in either impoverishment or excessive wealth, such sudden transformation has an aggravating influence on suicide, that is to say, it is why industrial or economic or financial crises drive more people to kill themselves. Durkheim also acknowledges the preventive action of religion on suicide to some extent, not because of prohibition but because of communal values.⁶ His exploration was limited only to monotheistic faiths such as Christianity and Judaism. Suicide is subject to disapproval (as a sacrilegious act) because it is contrary to the sacrosanct character of the religious compact between practitioners

³ José Manoel Bertolote, and Alexandra Feischmann: A Global perspective in the epidemiology of suicide (WHO), 2002

⁴ http://www.who.int/mental_health/prevention/suicide/evolution/en/index.html

⁵ Émile Durkheim, *On Suicide* (London, Penguin Classics), 2006, p28

⁶ *Ibid*, p.177

and God. Such supremacy derives from the ideas of transcendence and the moral obligations before God. Therefore, Durkheim denies that religion has such sufficient authority for modern worldly activities.

Can the present ineffectiveness of religion be also applied to Buddhism which directs people more towards the observation of actions in a self-reflective way? Or can Buddhism exercise an appropriate control of conscience to prevent renouncing life? Buddhism never encourages suicide, however, its rates in the Japanese society are climbing. Thus our first task is to analyze what has affected Japanese society and what has been associated with its inherited culture, religion, and tradition. There must be sought certain reasons that steers the Japanese to justify suicidal acts.

1-(2) Suicide in Japanese society

As previously noted in the report of the WHO, suicides soaring in Japan have been a nationally observed subject. The male:female ratio is typical of that of the global pattern as male rates of suicide outnumber female.⁷ However, the total rate (per 100,000) 23.8% is distinctly high among the other Mahāyāna Buddhist countries.⁸ Population Survey Report shows the increasing annual transition of suicide victims since the Metropolitan Police Department of Japan began keeping records in 1947. According to its statistic of Japan for the year 2009, suicide total rose to 32,845, equating to nearly 26 suicides per 100,000 people.⁹ The main reasons follow: physical illness 47%, economy and life 25%, and family 12%.¹⁰ In any case, the Asian economic crisis in the late 1990 has precipitated a longer-term recession, restructuring, unemployment, loss of savings and so on.

Discussing the trend in runaway suicide statistics, a primary cause is considered as depression caused by failure and social pressures, which upsets the Japanese concept of harmonious balanced life.¹¹ José M. Bertolote, from the Department of Mental Health, of the WHO, gives a sharp analysis on Japan's suicide tendency: "In Japan, suicide is likely to be part of culture. The immediate cause is due to overwork, joblessness, and bullies, and so forth. Suicide, however, is regarded there as an ethical standard to preserve one's honor and to take responsibility by suicide."¹² In the context, despite of the fact that the motivation for suicide is merely escapism and pessimism, the mind-set of Japanese on it is apparently neutral, even more, meets with understanding, if not approval. Although suicide is deplored as a traumatic experience for the bereaved people, it still has overtones of prestige which is heroic and honorable death in the Japanese society. This possibly makes suicide acceptable as: atonement for failure, avoidance of shame, symbol of valiance and fame, or as a noble self-sacrifice.

⁷ Suicide estimates: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, 2004

⁸ Suicide and Suicide Prevention in Asia (WHO), 2008, p17

⁹ http://www8.cao.go.jp/jisatsutaisaku/whitepaper/w-2010/html/gaiyou/s1_01.html

¹⁰ http://www8.cao.go.jp/jisatsutaisaku/whitepaper/w-2010/html/gaiyou/s1_07.html

¹¹ Andrew Chambers, Japan: ending the culture of the 'honourable' suicide, Guardian, 3 August 2010,

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2010/aug/03/japan-honourable-suicide-rate>

¹² José M. Bertolote, Report on suicide from resident officers of each country (Tokyo, The Mainichi Newspapers), 2 October, 2004

2. Japanese Philosophy of Death

2-(1) Aesthetics of Ideal Death

What we examine how the Japanese has accepted suicide is to decode Japanese culture and its religious context. There is a particular aesthetics of death. One example is a proverb “*Bijin Hakumei*” metaphrased as “beauty is short-lived.” Its presumed English counterpart is: “Whom the gods love die young” and, “Beauty and luck seldom go together”. The former, however, is different from the latter in terms of its admirable and positive tendency towards dying young. Early mortality is evaluated as a fatal fortune or dramatic privilege only for the select beauties, rather than as a tragedy. The other is: “To die *Isagi-yoku*”, is one of ideal thoughts for the Japanese. It means: “leaving no regrets”, “with a clear conscience”, “like a brave man”, “with no reluctance”, “in full possession of mind”, and so on.¹³ The Japanese hate to meet a death lingeringly but rather sacrifice their lives willingly when any worthy occasion arises. This action is not precisely matched with escapism or any suicides categorized by Durkheim.

One of its famous representatives is the death of Yukio Mishima (1925-1970), a famed Japanese writer considered as a candidate for the Nobel Prize in Literature three times. He wrote not only novels, poems, literary essays, but plays for traditional theater dramas such as Kabuki and Noh. He was also an actor, singer and director of plays and films. He was a prolific and versatile writer likened to Jean Cocteau from France. What was astonishingly symbolic was that Mishima killed himself in the ritual way of *samurai* (warrior): *seppuku*, committing disembowelment (cutting open his stomach) by sword and arranging for his attendant to behead him. Though his death has yet been a matter of debate, his peculiar fascination with death had been *a priori* the orientation towards his ideology. He espoused *bushido* (*samurai* ethic) and declared in life: “my only ever-fadeless book would be *Hagakure*.”¹⁴ *Hagakure* is a moral code and action philosophy for *samurai* written in the eighteenth century. It literally means: “In the Shadow of Leaves”, or “Hidden by the leaves.” Mishima acclaims the book: “Voluntary death emerges from one’s own volition. The willing suicide does not represent defeat such as a suicide in western ways, but ‘the selectable act’, and ‘free action.’” He also added: “We are neither able to choose our own moment of death, nor to be forced when to die.”¹⁵ Here, it should not be confused as suicide is recommendable in any event. Instead, that context claims that we have the will of self-determination to unhesitatingly confront the moment of death, for there is by no means melancholic or disappointed mental orientation.

2-(2) Zen and the Samurai

Our next question might be if the *samurai* ethic disposed the Japanese to appreciate that attitude towards death. In fact, though the author of

¹³ Daisetsu T. Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture* (Princeton, Princeton University Press), 1970, p.84

¹⁴ Yukio Mishima, Introduction to *Hagakure* (Tokyo, Shinchosha), 1967, pp.8-9

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p.42, p.91

Hagakure, Tsunetomo Yamamoto does not give favorable consideration to the direct relationship of Zen Buddhism and the warrior, he himself became a Buddhist priest after having retiring from warrior-hood. Zen and *Samurai* had been closely related from the beginning of history of the samurai. How have they included one another? Due exploration is necessary.

The fundamental attitude of Zen towards intellect, however, is more practical in our daily life. Daisetsu T. Suzuki, a Japanese Zen scholar detects what is quite characteristic of Zen: “there is something of the Zen method of training, which consists in personally experiencing the truth whatever this may be, and not appealing to intellectual or systemic theorization.”¹⁶ Zen was historically introduced into Japan in the thirteenth century, in *Kamakura* period where the *Hōjō* of military class had started governing. Due to their sincere encouragement, Zen came to be firmly established and began to spread its moral and spiritual influence among the warrior classes until the eighteenth century. Great *Samurai* are generally ascetics or stoics which mean to have an iron will. Zen must supply some rational reasons of settlement. Indeed, they discovered a great deal of attractive and congenial spirit in Zen.

One is to offer vitality which is indispensable for the warrior. A sort of the most important Zen disciplines is to achieve mindful concentration towards the simple object in meditation. Zen priests instructed that whatever worldly affairs should be taken up as occasions for one’s inner reflection. That inclination was in resonance with the virile spirit of warriors. The samurai’s profession is to crush the enemy. He ought to be single-minded with only one object in view and go straightforward without looking backward.

The other is rejection of life as an object of special craving. Death is the more pressing problem for the samurai, for fighting was fraught with death in feudal days. The deadly moment is predictable for no one. Thus, the essential and vital consideration is the determination to be ready to face death and go beyond life and death. *Hagakure* emphasizes this state of mind not to be troubled with death at any moment: “The way of Samurai is found in death. When it comes to either/or, there is only the quick choice of death. ...This is the substance of the Way of the Samurai.”¹⁷ “The Way of the Samurai is, morning after morning, the practice of death... imagining the most sightly way of dying, and putting one’s mind firmly in death.”¹⁸ “Meditation on inevitable death should be performed daily. Every day when one’s body and mind are at peace, one should meditate upon being ripped apart by arrow, rifles... dying of disease or committing seppuku at the death of one’s master.”¹⁹

In the words of Theravāda Buddhism, the warriors seemed to especially focus on the practice of sati (mindfulness) and maraānussati (reflection on death) through Zen. Here in essence, Zen cultivated the philosophy of death among the warrior classes. And led by their influence, it apparently penetrated even among the masses.

¹⁶ Daisetsu T. Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture* (Tokyo, Kodansha International), 2005, p18

¹⁷ Tsunetomo Yamamoto, *Hagakure* (Tokyo, Kodansha International), 1979, p. 23

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 79

¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 172

2-(3) Compassionate Death of Bodhisatta

There is another ethical virtue for the voluntary death which is developed by Buddhism in Japan, which is the sacrifice out of spirit of Mahāyāna compassion (Karuṇā). Although martyrdom had dangerously abused in during the world wars, this morality of selflessness has been exercised great influence in Japanese cultural life over the ages. Mahāyāna eminently emphasises compassion as a gist to aid in maturing one's own wisdom.

Jātaka Tales narrate the long path of Bodhisatta (Buddha-to-be) to perfect the Buddhahood and they are highly acclaimed moral fables. Unexceptionally also in Japan, Sasapaṭṭitajātaka (Sasa-jātaka)²⁰ has popularly captivated the affection of Japanese. In this story, the Bodhisatta as a young hare tried to sacrifice himself falling into the fire in order to offer his roasted flesh to a Brahmin. Originated from this tale, *Tamamushi no Zushi*, a miniature shrine which is a historically valuable Buddhist art craft of the seventh century illustrates the pictures of the story *Shashin Shiko zu* in which a prince jumps down from a cliff in order to devote his life to starving tiger mother and her cubs.²¹



Left: *Tamamushi no Zushi*, Right: *Shashin Shiko zu*

If the voluntary death is to save others or to dedicate themselves to superior things, the actions of these Japanese are prone to be approved, yet charitably. Moreover, it is seen as a practice of the noble altruism, far from self-centeredness. It is defined as a glorious and benevolent self-sacrifice developed by the Bodhisatta Path from the Mahāyāna perspective. The sequent observation confirms that the irresolute and hesitant death is not ideal to the Japanese, but rather they prefer the mindful readiness for death when they think it is worthy. Such a determined will to the moment of death as “*Isagi-yoku*” as explained above, is seen influenced by the Japanese

²⁰ Khuddaka Nikāya Jātakapāṭi, Catukkanipāto, 316; Sasapaṭṭitajātaka

²¹ <http://www.eonet.ne.jp/~kotonara/houryuji.htm>

philosophy of death such as the death of Samurai and the sacrifice of Bodhisatta in Buddhism. However, it is a fundamental error to confuse these two deaths with the current problem of most suicides in Japan. The latter is motivated by despair and hopelessness. There seem to be imperceptibly glorification or misinterpretation towards all kinds of suicide in order to justify it. Different from the *Samurai* days, the time to fight in the battlefield has gone. And as well, the worthy occasion to devote your life such as the case of Bodhisatta must be prudentially discriminated if it is a real decisive moment or not.

3. Suicide from the Theravada Buddhist perspective

3-(1) Consideration in the Theravada principles

On the contrary, how does the Theravāda Buddhist define the case of suicide? In Myanmar, for example, they are generally afraid that one suicidal deed will result in five hundred suicides repeated in one's future rebirths. It is not merely one of groundless folk beliefs but has a substantial reason connected to the Buddhist texts. Matakabhatta-jātaka²², unlike the compassionate mortal practice of Bodhisatta, instead it warns of the kammic fruition of evil deeds. The story is: a Brahmin in his past time had killed a goat to be offered at a ritual. Due to the retribution of even the single evil deed, he had to be reborn as a goat and had his head cut off five hundred times.²³ That makes suicide interpreted as an unwholesome action (akusala kamma) equated with the taking of life (pānāñipāta).

The Buddhist precepts (Vinaya) also validate the relationship between suicide and murder. Admittedly, murder is listed as the third defeat (pārājika) of the heaviest rules from the community of monks; permanent expulsion.²⁴ In the context, monks in revulsion killed themselves and requested another to kill them because they had misunderstood the Buddha's instruction on the foulness of the body (asubha-bhāvanā). In fact, the Buddha's intention was to incite them to eradicate special craving of the body as an attractive and worthy object. After, the Buddha emphatically forbade killing any human beings, including oneself. Strange to say, though the Buddha presumably had predicted this catastrophic event, he isolated himself in their vicinity for fourteen days without admonishing them beforehand. The commentaries provide his utterance about the definite reason:

*Kammavipāko nāma na sakkā kenaci pañibāhituñ.*²⁵
No one can avoid the production of kammic fruition.

Those monks had made living in hunting before monkhood. Due to the past evil deeds of killing, that incident unavoidably destroyed their lives. It connotes that, though results of past action (kamma) are consistently interacting with each present action by a doer, certain type of kamma is

²² Khuddaka Nikāya, Jātaka-pāñi, Catukkanipāto, 18; Matakabhattajātaka

²³ E.B.Cowel, The Jātaka or Stories of the Buddha's Former Births; Book 1 (Oxford, The Pali Text Society), 1995

²⁴ Vinaya, III-73

²⁵ Vinaya Pārājikakaññā-a-aññakathā, II-398

unchangeable. By way of function (kicca) of kamma, it is categorized as destructive (upacchedaka) kamma in the four types of kamma (cattāri kammāni).²⁶ It drives strongly terminative power to cut off the ripening of other supportive kamma. Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha describes the fourfold advent of death.²⁷ According to its classification, upacchedaka-maraṇa corresponds the death due to the intervention of destructive kamma, such as a death due to car-accident or suicide. In this case, even though one has been originally destined a long-life, destructive kamma destroys such fortune and suddenly generates a premature death. The Cūḍakammavibhaṅga-sutta illustrates how the action of killing can ripen the result of the destructive kamma.²⁸ This discourse systematically clarifies the outcome by the law of kamma together with inferiority and superiority among human life. The Buddha's explication is: beings are the heirs of their actions. One who cruelly takes life of beings, even having been reborn as a human being, due to the evil action is short-lived. The rebirth in human world is brought as a result of wholesome productive kamma. Nevertheless, destructive kamma brought by killing in the past eradicates one's opportunity of a normal human life-span.

3-(2) Wisdom awakening the truths

Suicide does not necessarily rest on the fatal kammic result in all cases. We worldlings can never determine accurately how and what prior Kamma has given rise to the outcome, but only the Buddha and certain sages who possess psychic powers can do it. Kamma means one's action or volition. The ownership of action is not haphazard but either mental or physical or verbal action takes place by self-decision from moment to moment. The penetrative understanding of Kamma and its law evokes the Right View (Sammā-diṅghi); the forerunner of the Noble Eightfold Path which is the path to the ultimate liberation of suffering. The Right View examines the distinction of action into the wholesome or unwholesome, and what should be done or not. Wholesome action is to spiritually benefit both oneself and others as well as unwholesome to damage both, which the Buddha selected ten actions of each. Wholesome actions have potential to bear good results and unwholesome actions to bear bad results.

The mental factor of Right View is wisdom (paññā). The training of wisdom enables us to eventually see things as they really are. It is very important to grasp full understanding of the Truths of the universe as unclouded by the Buddha: the Four Noble Truths. Life is subject to suffering (dukkha) because our life is not perfect and permanent. Suffering arises because of craving (taṇhā) for durable happiness. No one desires to confront disagreeable changes. Thus someone in an unbearable situation might abandon his/her life in the hope of something more relieving after death. However, this state of mind is simply to escape: in Buddhist terms, craving for annihilation (vibhavataṇhā)²⁹ enumerated as one of the three forms of craving. That action never leads to the real solution of the

²⁶ Majjhima aṅṅhakathā, Uparipaṅṅāsa-aṅṅhakathā, V-12

²⁷ Abhidhammasaṅgaha, 5; Vīthimuttapariccheda, 89

²⁸ Majjhima Nikāya, Saṅgāyatanavagga, III-202

²⁹ Khuddakanikāya. Paṅṅisamvidāmaggapāṅṅi, II-147

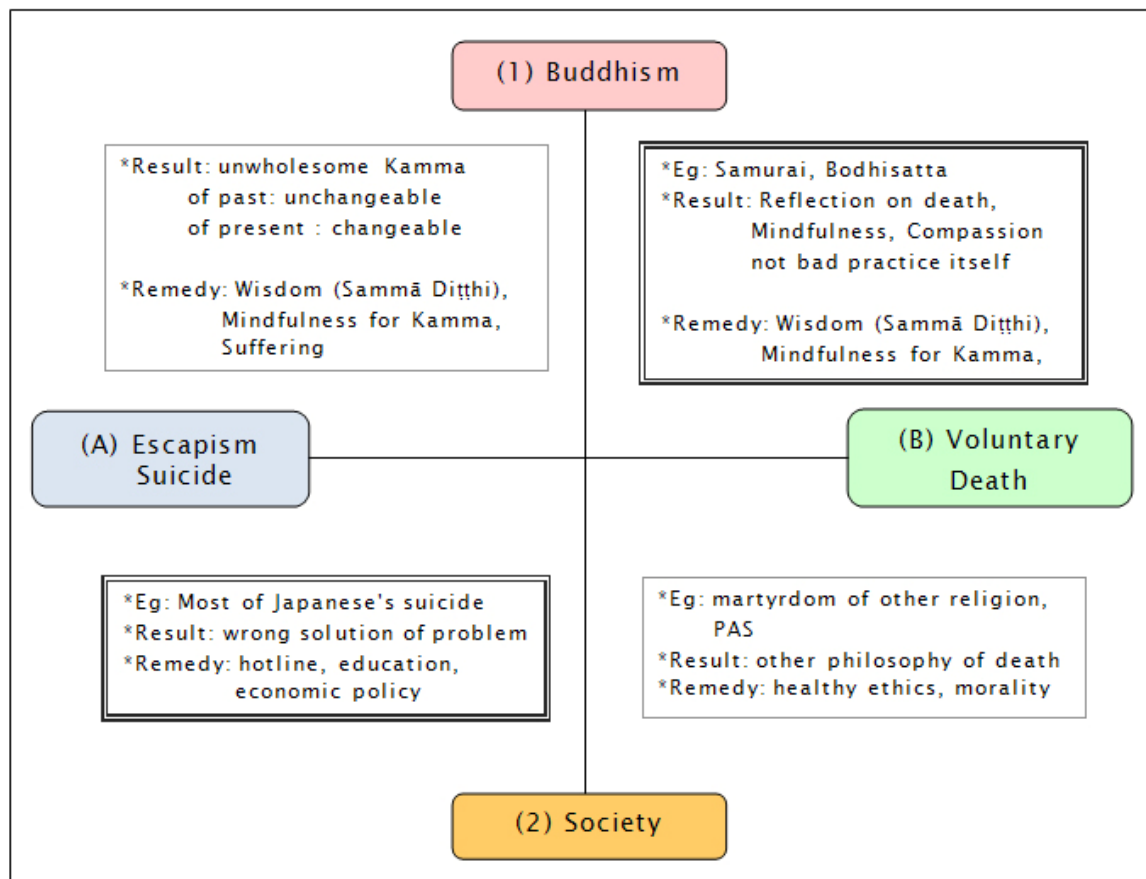
problem. Instead it, ignoring the problem only makes it worse, generating future suffering kamma which impels one into the more intolerable transition of rebirth. As declared Peter Harvey: “an attempt escape from suffering of life, suicide is, according to Buddhist principles, totally ineffective.”³⁰ One inevitably has to accept suffering (dukkha) with understanding and whatever changes are brought along with it. With the development of this wisdom, mindfulness (sati) helps monitor and be objectively aware of the state of mind, moment to moment before each action.

Hence our task in life is to cultivate better actions and to prevent any unwholesome actions. From this point, the mind must be liberated from the misconception of the life and its problems. Now three key factors are established: (1) how to improve the right view or wisdom of kamma and its result, (2) how to accept suffering, (3) how to solve the problem with support of mindfulness. Wisdom provides the power of investigation for problem solving. In suicide, the main reasons are problems of illness, economy and life caused by depression. Each is brought due to past or present evil deeds by the law of kamma. Having acknowledged it with the wisdom, what one can do first is simply to accept it. In the case of mortality and physical health, one must realize that no one can avoid any of the four inescapable sufferings: life, aging, sickness, and death. In the case of unemployment, the wise reaction is to clarify mindfully the reason why one has lost a job. If skill and certificate are the lacks, those achievements are required. If one’s business is not successful, try to consider if it is prosperous for both oneself and others. Also wisdom is synonymous with the proper knowledge. It is necessary to enhance professional knowledge for success of business. One should assess oneself objectively and make effort.

4. Conclusion: The Four Aspects of Suicides

The Theravāda Buddhist perspective proves a possible antidote on the entire issue of suicides. However, as the tendency of suicide is also intertwined with society, there is no singular answer for individuals. Its strategy also needs to be provided from the diverse dimensions of social activities and non-religious motives so that it is applicable globally in our daily lives in a practical way. Therefore, the results are shown in the diagram underneath. The four directions indicate their respective situations and solutions. The two vertical axes represent the approach from: (1) Buddhism or (2) Society; the horizontal axes tell the motivation of killing oneself: (A) by escapism or (B) voluntary death. I shall conclude explicating the four directions as follows.

³⁰ Peter Harvey, *An Introduction to Buddhist Ethics* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press), 2000, p.286



(1)-A: Suicide as escapism from the Buddhist perspective

It is caused by either a result of past unwholesome action or present unwholesome one. In the former case, though it is irreversibly destined, no one can justify it. For suicide by such wrong self-judgment is evidently evil action, sequent suffering will befall the doer after in the round of rebirth. In the latter case, it is a doubtlessly careless action caused by lack of clear knowledge: blindness of the law of Kamma and suffering. Therefore, its precaution is to enhance wisdom and mindfulness in the Buddhist way to analyze where is the cause of the problem.

(1)-B: Suicide as the voluntary death from the Buddhist perspective:

Its appropriate cases are the death of samurai and Bodhisatta. The former is related to mindful meditative training and the latter to compassion; and both are quite similar in attitude to the Reflection of Death. It is not blamable to apply those Buddhist factors in one's everyday life. Also we possibly can say that we ourselves have the right to end our lives. However, we must be aware to ensure that there is no agitated state of mind, even subtle at the moment of death. Or its evil result will lead to a bad rebirth next time. Furthermore, the final aim of meditating on the reflection of death is not simply to observe the death objectively, but to value one's life. Human life is a good result of the past karmas and is a precious opportunity to accumulate wholesome kamma for future results. We should wisely make our lives more meaningful until we die. Therefore, it is essential to observe the mind with wisdom and mindfulness.

(2)-A: Suicide as escapism from the social perspective:

It contains most of suicide issues in the current Japanese society. They cut off their mortal thread not due to any Buddhist faith, but to unendurable social problems. It is decisively wrong solution. Of course the Buddhist wisdom can steer them towards positive orientation of the mind. In addition to it, for practical suicide prevention, the society is responsible to stabilize the support by the government and the private organizations, for example: unemployment policy, hotlines, counseling service, proper educational programs, and so forth.

(2)-B: Suicide as the voluntary death from the social perspective:

Its examples are martyrdom for other religion and PAS (Physician Assisted Suicide). Buddhist should not give shallow criticism towards other religions and their philosophies on death. It is more progressive to cooperate on an interfaith basis on common problems. PAS, this modern subject has received much controversy due to the administering of “death” by medical personnel. Death, especially an act of suicide will in any situation brings deep grief to friends and family. The person who wishes to resort to PAS will need to discuss his/her wish for death with those around them in hope for their great understanding.

As a conclusion, the dissemination of the right attitude towards death in the Buddhist way can contribute to the prevention of suicides. Our view toward life is usually susceptible to conventional measures and other standards. On the contrary, right view in the teachings of the Buddha cultivates a penetrating insight to see the true nature of suffering. Guided by this Buddhist wisdom, observation of the mind with mindfulness is essentially equated with reflection of one’s own life. We can take any occasion as a practice of meditative mindfulness. Meditation or practicing mindfulness will bring about more clarity in many social problems that one will encounter throughout one’s life. It is significant for Buddhist to diffuse this wisdom towards others, despite whatever religion they follow.

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