

Light of **Buddhism**

Vol. 2 No.1 June 2020 (B. E. 2564) - All Ceylon Buddhist Congress - ISSN 2651-0049

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Cover Story

This photograph taken by C. A. Dhamsiri Ajith depicts the reclining Buddha image at Dambulla Cave Temple. Feel the calm and serene radiance depicted in the beautiful face of the Buddha.

Apologies and gratefulness are extended to the copyright owners or the pictures uploaded from the internet
Writers of the articles are responsible for their views.

Editorial

The first half of the year was the least blissful period experienced during our life time health wise. The attack of Covid 19 virus was very painful not only to us in Sri Lanka but also for the brothers and sisters of the entire world. Thanks to the intelligent, compassionate and timely action of our government backed by the efficient and superb handling of the situation by our unparalleled health and defence forces, the death rate in our island was absolutely minimal and the patients, both local and foreign, were given the best possible care.

As usual, the citizens of Sri Lanka, exemplifying the Buddhist ethics of compassion and generosity, came forward generously supporting all healthcare programmes of the government and the Buddhist organisations like ACBC. They were reminded of the words of the Buddha rehearsed constantly by the Sangha: "Whosoever attends to sick attends to me".

Let's continue to extend our love and compassion to suffering people all over the world and extend as much support as possible to pandemic-hit brothers.

Chandima Wijebandara

Editor-in-chief

Vol. 1 No. 3 May - June 2020 (B. E. 2563)

Publisher

National Publicity Council
All Ceylon Buddhist Congress
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*An ACBC project for helping the readers of
Buddhist Scripture*

The Buddha's words



Sutta Central contains early Buddhist texts, known as the Tipitaka or “Three Baskets”. This is a large collection of teachings attributed to the Buddha or his earliest disciples, who were teaching in India around 2500 years ago. They are regarded as sacred canon in all schools of Buddhism.

There are several Buddhist traditions, and each has passed down a set of scriptures from ancient times. Sutta Central is specially focused on the scriptures of the earliest period of Buddhism, and hosts texts in over thirty languages. We believe this is the largest collection of early Buddhist texts ever made.

Sutta Central hosts the texts in original languages, translations in modern languages, and extensive sets of parallels that show the relationship between them all.

Themes

What are these texts about? The Buddha’s overriding concern was with freedom from suffering. The teachings cover a wide range of topics, including ethics, meditation, family life, renunciation, the nature of wisdom and true understanding, and the path to peace.

The teachings show how to live well so as to be free of suffering. They teach non-violence

and compassion, and emphasize the value of the spiritual over the material. Many discourses discuss meditation, while others are concerned with ethics, or with a rational and clear understanding of the world as perceived. They show the Buddha engaging with people from all walks of life and discussing a diverse range of topics. But he said that all of his words have one taste, the taste of freedom.

While there are plenty of summaries and interpretations of his teaching, there’s nothing quite like encountering it in his own words. The early texts depict the Buddha in a vivid and diverse range of contexts,

speaking with monastics, ascetics, criminals, kings, businessmen, lepers, prostitutes, paupers, wives, skeptics, friends, and enemies. It's not just what he says, but the way he deals with this spectrum of humanity, always with kindness, clarity, dignity, and respect.

Content

Buddhist texts are traditionally classified as the “Three Baskets”, spelled tipitaka in Pali or tripitaka in Sanskrit. These are:

Discourses: Sutta in Pali, sutra in Sanskrit. These are the primary texts, consisting of records of teachings or conversations by the Buddha or his disciples, and arranged by literary style or subject matter.

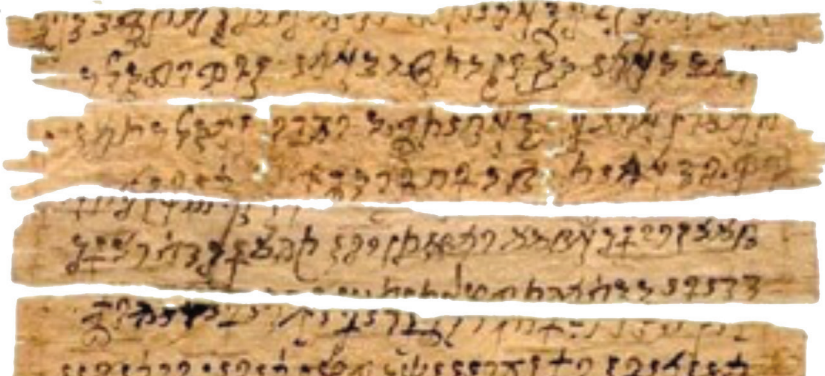
Monastic Law: Vinaya in both Pali and Sanskrit. These contain the famous list of rules for monks and nuns (patimokkha). But they

Each Buddhist tradition has passed down separate collections for well over a thousand years. Yet when we look at the Discourses and the Monastic Law, in all major features, and many minor details, they are similar or identical. Since the 19th century, a series of scholars have noted these correspondences and compiled them.

Most of the early texts have been digitized. For the history of this process, see the article Digital Input of Buddhist Texts by Lewis Lancaster in the Encyclopedia of Buddhism. In addition, translations have been produced in multiple languages, mostly focusing on the better-known texts of the Pali discourses.

Sutta Central draws on this long history to present three main kinds of content.

Original texts: Sutta Central presents the original texts in the



are much more than that, including many details of community life, and a multitude of stories about life in ancient India.

Abhidhamma: Spelled abhidharma in Sanskrit. Abhidhamma texts are systematic summaries and analyses of the teachings drawn from the earlier discourses.

original languages, including:

The Pali canon (or Tipitaka) of the Theravada school. Our text is the Mahasangiti edition of the Sixth Council recension.

The early Agama and Vinaya texts from the Taisho edition of the Chinese canon. For our digital source we rely on CBETA.

A much smaller range of early texts from the Tibetan Kangyur.

Such fragments and chance findings as are available in Sanskrit, Gandhara, and other Indic languages.

Translations: We have gathered translations of early texts in over thirty modern languages. Notable English translations include classic works by Bhikkhu Bodhi, new English translations of Chinese Sanyukta Agama texts by Bhikkhu Analayo, and fresh translations from the Tibetan Upayika by Bhikkhuni Dhammadinna. In addition, we are developing our own sets of new translations, in the belief that complete, accurate, and easy to read modern translations should be freely available for everyone. We have published an entirely new translation of the four Pali nikayas by Bhikkhu Sujato, which is the first complete and consistent English translation of these core texts. And Bhikkhu Brahmali is producing a much-needed modern and accurate translation of the Pali Vinaya.

Parallels: The foundation of SuttaCentral is our sets of parallels. These detail tens of thousands of cases where texts in different collections or languages correspond with each other. The existence of these parallels shows the connections between of the scriptures underlying all Buddhist traditions, a connection that harks back to the Buddha himself.

Relations

Suttas aren't independent entities. They form a vast

interconnected web of teachings. Often the key to understanding one passage lies in a different text. In this way, the Buddhist canons are a little like the internet, with individual pages connected by a web of hidden links.

Most suttas appear in very similar form in more than one collection. We use “parallel” for variant texts that appear to be descended from a common ancestor. Often the texts are so close that this identification is simple. Sometimes, however, there is a less close relationship between two given texts. In such cases we indicate a “resembling parallel”. This doesn’t imply any particular kind of relationship between the resembling parallel and the basic text. It simply suggests that if you are studying the basic text, you might want to look at the resembling parallel, too. For a detailed discussion, see our page on Methodology.

It is no trivial matter to discern what texts should be regarded as parallel. Texts often agree in many details, and disagree in others. When does a text stop being a full parallel and start being a resembling parallel? And when does it become merely a text that bears certain similar features? There are no black and white answers to such questions. Rather, making these identifications draws on the accumulated learning and experience of a succession of scholars. Inevitably there will be disagreements in detail; yet in the main, there is a broad consensus as to what constitutes a parallel. Ultimately, the important point is that these identifications help the student to study and learn from related texts in diverse collections.

Finding Your Way Around

The Buddhist canons have been organized and maintained as highly structured bodies of

literature, and this complex hierarchy can be intimidating. We’ve tried to present our material in a way that will be convenient for both experts and beginners. Let’s review how Buddhist texts are organized. Then we’ll see how this is implemented in SuttaCentral.

How the Tipitaka is organized

We have already mentioned the overarching concept of the Tipitaka. Now let’s look at the sublevels of the structure. For simplicity, we’ll focus mainly on the Pali canon.

Nikayas

The Pali Discourses are grouped in five main nikayas or “divisions”. These are not organized by content, but by literary form. The first two—Long and Middle—are organized by length, the Samyutta or “Linked” division is organized by topic, and the Anguttara or “Numbered” division is organized by numerical sets. These four collections are synoptic; they constitute one largely unified body of text and doctrine, organized mainly for the convenience of the reciters who memorized it.

The fifth nikaya is a rather different kind of collection. The core of it is a set of early texts that are mostly verse. To this was added a series of later texts of very different kinds, showing that this section was considered more open and flexible.

Intermediate levels

The Pali texts have a rather bewildering range of terms for intermediate levels of text structure, corresponding to what we might



call a “part” or a “chapter”. Sometimes these sections are crucial for making sense of a text. For example, the samyutta is used in the Samyutta Nikaya for groups of discourses on the same topic, and the nipata is used in the Anguttara Nikaya for groups of discourses with the same number of items. In the Vinaya, the khandhaka is likewise an essential structural feature. Elsewhere, however, we find structures of less importance, such as the pannasa or group of fifty discourses. Originally these may have helped organize the texts into manuscripts, but these days they are retained for historical purposes.

Vagga

The smallest level of organization is the vagga, usually translated “chapter” but in fact a set of (usually) ten discourses or other texts. Vaggas may gather texts sorted by a meaningful theme. For example, the “Chapter on Kings” of the Middle Discourses contains ten discussions involving kings. In many cases, however, the vagga is merely a structural convention, and is simply named after its first discourse.

Sidebar

The main navigation is through the sidebar, which is available on every page. This lists all the collections with their various subdivisions. You can go directly to a full collection such as a nikaya, or else drill down to the precise group that you want.

Discourses

For the four main nikayas, we’ve grouped the Chinese Agamas

together with their Pali parallels. Note that in the Chinese canon, as well as a main full Agama, there’s usually some extra material; either individually translated suttas, or partial collections.

In the “Minor” section, as well as the eponymous Khuddaka Nikaya in Pali, we include similar material in Chinese and Sanskrit. These are mostly Dhammapada-style texts.

Under “Other” we include the relatively small quantity of material in Tibetan, Sanskrit, and other ancient Indic languages. In many cases, it might be possible to classify this material under one of the five nikayas. However, the identification is complex and uncertain, so we simply leave it here.

Monastic Code

Unlike the Discourses, for the Vinaya texts we almost always have a clear sectarian affiliation. We therefore use this as the primary means of classification.

All the Vinayas have a similar structure.

Bhikkhu and Bhikkhuni Vibhanga: rules for monks and nuns, together with explanations and commentary.

Khandhakas: This section, named and organized somewhat differently in the various versions, deals with monastic procedures and lifestyle.

Supplements: Most Vinayas include some kind of supplement

or summary, such as the Parivara in Pali.

The organization and names of these sections vary, and we follow the sequence found in each text.

Abhidhamma

The relatively few Abhidhamma texts are organized by school and language. Note that abhidhamma is a generic term, and is applied to many later treatises as well. Here we only include canonical texts.

Sutta card list

When you click a link in the sidebar, it opens a list of the corresponding texts, organized as a list of “cards”. Each card contains a complex of information about the relevant text, including references, description, and links to texts and translations. Click on the expander to see the parallels.

A list may be any level of the hierarchy, such as a nikaya, a vagga, etc. You can navigate these at your convenience.

Text pages

You can read the original texts or translations. For original texts, a variety of helpful tools such as dictionary lookup, text-critical highlighting, and so on, is available.

We are moving to a new system based on segmented texts. Not all our texts work this way, but where they do, you can view the text and translation side by side.

PALI TIPITAKA; *an Introduction to* Buddhist Scripture

Dr. Chamindaji Gamage

Even though most of us are used to the Sanskrit form - Tripitaka - the Pali term is Tipitaka. Ti means three and Pitaka means the baskets or the divisions. Sutta, Vinaya, and Abhidhamma are the sections meant by Tipitaka or Tripitaka. Each pitaka contains a vast body of literature. The teachings contained in the Tipitaka are the Buddha's discourses even though a few discourses of senior disciples are also included in it as they were approved by the Buddha. Initially these teachings were transmitted from generation to generation by oral tradition as it was the practice with all other Indian religions. Five centuries after the Buddha's parinirvana, His Tipitaka was written down first time in Sri Lanka.

Initially the Buddha's teachings were called Dhamma and the code of discipline he gave for the monastics was called Vinaya, and higher doctrine. The Buddha nominated no successor and wanted his followers to perform all ecclesiastical acts and duties according to his instruction ("Yo maya Dhammoca Vinayo desito paññatto so va mama

accayena sattha") (Digha Nikaya, xvi., 6.6.1.). Therefore, Dhamma and Vinaya which has come to be better known as Tipitaka now is very important in continuation of Buddhism.

Immediately after the parinibbana of the Buddha the Senior Bhikkhus (Elders of Order) who have attained Arhantship held a Sangha Council. They organized and systematized the words of the Buddha into three divisions or baskets which is called the Tipitaka. One hundred years later the second Sangha Council, and two hundred and thirty-six years later the third Sangha Council were held. Participants of all these Councils were Elders of Order and attained Arhantship. Those Elders finalized and prepared and organized and systematized all the teachings of the Buddha into three divisions viz. Sutta, Vinaya and Abhidhamma. Together they were called Tipitaka.

Arahant Mahinda, the son of Mauryan king Asoka, is credited with the introduction of Buddhism to Sri Lanka. According to Sri Lankan chronicles, Arahant

Mahinda mastered the Buddhist scriptures; three Pitakas, formally rehearsed at the Theravada councils and continued to be orally transmitted by Bhanakas. Those texts were in Pali Language and representative of Theravada. The Western Scholars in their writings use the term 'Pali canon' instead of Tipitaka to refer to Theravada Buddhist Texts.

At present Buddhism has two principal divisions, namely Theravada and Mahayana and these two have some difference of opinion regarding matters in the Dhamma and the Vinaya. However, a Japanese Buddhist scholar wrote about the difference; "When properly examined, the discrimination between Theravada and Mahayana is like a demarcation of flower-beds in the same garden". In accordance with this statement we may conclude that Theravada and Mahayana are two different aspects of the same doctrine and contain no mutual contradictions. Theravada means the school of the Elders, thus they were represented by another name Sthaviravada as well. The term Thera literal means seniority, and these senior disciples

are conservative and follow the tradition. Vada means view or philosophy. Therefore, Theravada means senior disciples who agreed and followed the Dhamma and Vinaya in traditional way as confirmed in the early Councils. The teachings and literature designated in Pali literature are named as Theravada.

It appears that none of the Buddha's teaching were recorded in written form during the Buddha's life time. To preserve the large corpus of texts a proper organization of available manpower was essential. However, according to Warder, there were a few monks who seemed to have known the whole Tipitaka (Warder, 1970). It is recorded in the Theravada school in Sri Lanka, that the monks were organized in groups specializing in each of the Nikayas or Vinaya or Abhidhamma handing these teachings that were memorized down to their pupils and so maintaining an oral tradition. Thus, devoted disciples taught the memorized texts orally from generation to generation.

Max Muller states that the current structure of the Pali Canon took shape in the third century BC, after which it continued to be transmitted orally from generation to generation, as were the Vedas and the early Upanishads. According to the Sri Lankan chronicles, the first time it was written down was in the 1st century BC., in Sri Lanka nearly 500 years after the parinibbana of the Buddha. The Dipavamsa, a Sri Lankan chronicle, states that during the reign of king Walagamba

of Anuradhapura (29–17 BC) the monks who had previously memorized the Tipitaka and its commentaries, wrote them down in books, because of the threat posed by famine and war. The Mahavamsa, another chronicle of Sri Lanka, also refers to the writing of the canon and the commentaries at this time. The chronicle reports there were more than 1000 monks who had attained Arahantship who were involved in this task. The place of the project was undertaken in Aluvihare, Matale in Sri Lanka.

The Buddha was born, raised and educated in north-eastern India where the local language people used was 'Magadhi'. The Buddha delivered most of his sermons in the kingdom of Magadha. Therefore, many scholars believe that original language of Buddhist teachings were Magadhi from which the Pali language is derived. Rhys Davids says that Magadhi language is related to Pali (Pali-English Dictionary). The Sri Lankan Buddhists believe the scriptures were in the Buddha's own dialect which was also the dialect of Magadhan monks who introduced the religion to their country.

Modern scholars are divided into two divisions regarding this origin of Pali language. Oldenberg holds that the home of Pali and the Pali Tipitaka should be looked for to the South of the Vindhya such as kingdom of Kalinga and Andhra. To prove his statement, he gives evidence that the Khandagiri inscription of Ashoka Mahameghavamsa, a language similar to Pali. Oldenberg's view

has not been accepted by all. Many scholars, after their exhaustive study, conclude that the home of literary Pali was at Ujjain around which were inscriptional dialects more akin to Pali than in the East or South. .

Once the Buddha addressing his disciples said "Anujanami bhikkhave sakaya niruttiya Buddhavacanam priyapunitum" ("O! bhikkhus, I permit, to learn the words of Buddha in one's own dialect). This statement carries a great weight in regard to the subject of own dialect. The Buddha does not seem to have believed in a sacred language and adopted very liberal language policy. However, as the Tipitaka brought to Sri Lanka by Mahinda Thero was in Pali, many scholars believe that Theravada school has the oldest and complete version of Tipitaka in Pali in Sri Lanka.

Sutta Pitaka

The Sutta Pitaka means basket of Discourses contained in the five Nikayas (books). Nikaya means a 'group' of texts in which the collections of suttas or discourses are included. The Sutta Pitaka treats a great variety of subjects particularly; the doctrines and philosophy. The central teachings of Buddhism like dependent origination (paticcasamuppada the cause and effect theory), release from suffering, the way of releasing suffering and the way humans behave in their lives in the Mundane world etc. In addition, it covers a variety of fields such as ethics, psychology, epistemology etc.

The doctrine of Buddhism included in the Sutta pitaka is arranged into five Nikayas or books:

- Digha Nikaya
- Majjhima Nikaya
- Samyutta Nikaya
- Anguttara Nikaya
- Khuddaka Nikaya

Khuddaka Nikaya has fifteen parts of little collection which are:

K u d d h a k a p a t h a ,
Dhammapada, Udana, Itivuttaka,
Sutta Nipata, Vimanavatthu,
Petavatthu, Theragatha,
Therigatha, Jataka, Niddesa,
Patisambhidamagga, Apadana,
Buddhavamsa, Cariyapitaka.

In addition to these fifteen books, there are three other books that are included in the Khuddaka Nikaya of the Burmese version. They are named Nettippakarana, Petakopadesa, and Milindapanha.

Vinaya Pitaka

The collection of texts concerning the rules of conduct governing the behavior of the Order is included in the Vinaya Pitaka. The Order represents Bhikkhus (the community of ordained monks) and Bhikkhunis (the community of ordained nuns). These rules embody authoritative injunctions of the Buddha on modes of conduct and restraints on both physical and verbal actions. They deal with transgressions of discipline, and with various categories of restraints and admonitions in accordance with the nature of the offence.



Vinaya pitaka indicates that the Buddhist Order was organized on a democratic basis and a positive outlook.

The Vinaya is generally considered as coordinate with the Dhamma and the Vinaya is within the province of the Dhamma. The Vinaya Pitaka is divided into five parts which are:

- Parajika Pali
- Pacittiya Pali
- Mahavagga Pali
- Cullavagga Pali
- Parivara Pali

Abhidhamma Pitaka

Abhidhamma means the higher Dhamma or higher doctrine. It is a more systematic and scholarly treatment of the topics discussed in the Sutta Pitaka. The roots of the Abhidhamma are seen in the suttas of Sutta Pitaka. Sangiti and Dasuttara suttas of Dighanikaya are good examples. G.C. Pande in his 'Studies in the

Origins of Buddhism' says that Abhidhamma probably grew out of the 'Matikas' which are appeared in the Sutta Pitaka. Further he says that Abhidhamma found in only two schools that are Theravada and Sarvastivada (Pande, 195, p.1). Prof. N. A. Jayawickrama says that there is no parallel Abhidhamma Pitaka in other non-Theravadi Buddhist schools (Jayawickrama, N.A., 2004). According to Theravada tradition, Abhidhamma Pitaka was organized in the first Sangha Council which was held three months after the Buddha's parinirvana. However, it was at the third Sangha Council finalizing the Buddha's teachings systematically into three divisions in which the third division called Abhidhamma Pitaka took place.

The Abhidhamma Pitaka is the collection of books on abstruse philosophy based on psychological ethics. It discusses a variety of themes such as ethics, psychology, epistemology philosophy etc. It explains and analyses mental status clearly, and those explanations are more advanced than modern psychological analyses. The Pali Abhidhamma consists of seven books named; Dhammasangani, Vibhanga, Dhatukatha, Puggalapannatti, Kathavatthu, Yamaka, and Patthana.

Significance of Tipitaka

The contents of Buddhist teachings mainly concern two things namely; 1) the presence of suffering or un-satisfaction and 2) the way of ending it. Throughout his long ministry of forty- five years The Buddha found occasion

to teach what he discovered to his disciples. His range of knowledge, however, was extensive. Once, the Buddha, while walking through a forest, took some leaves into his hand and told the monks that what he had taught was like the leaves in his hand while his knowledge was similar to the leaves in the forest (Samyuttanikaya, V, p.437). This simile indicates his extensive knowledge.

The scholars who have examined the Pali canon have interpreted the thoughts contained in it many dimensions. Using Tipitaka as resource material they have approached Buddhism as presenting a Philosophy, a Religion, a Way of Life, an Ethical system, an Idealism, a Science, and a Culture. In analyzing its philosophy they have offered different views like pessimism, pragmatism, rationalism, empiricism etc.,. Some scholars have interpreted Tipitaka to bring out its aesthetic aspect while some others explore it to find out solutions for environmental crisis and socio-political issues like conflicts at different contexts.

World View of Tipitaka

All these different views regarding the content of Tipitaka imply a broader philosophy of the universe and man's place in it. Whether grand or simple each of these theories contains some ideas pertaining to a world view. The Buddha's first Discourse explained the Four Noble Truths in which he included the framework of a certain World View in conformity with the rest of his teaching. The world is described as follows: "As

far as these suns and moons revolve, shedding their light in space, so far extends the thousand-fold universe. In it there are thousands of suns, thousands of moons, thousands of inhabited worlds of varying sorts...thousands of heavenly worlds of varying grades. This is the thousands-fold Minor-World-system. Thousands of times the size of the thousands-fold Minor-World-system is the twice-a-thousand Middling-World-system. Thousands of times the size of the Middling World system is the thrice-a-thousand Great Universe." (Anguttaranikaya, I, p.227-28). This shows that Pali Tipitaka texts are aware of a huge cosmos and the conception of the world found in them goes far beyond the geocentric and heliocentric theories. Modern science describes the universe through these theories. Prof. K. N. Jayatilake states that the early Buddhist theory can be compared with the theory of galaxies now commonly upheld (Jayatilaka, K. N., Facets of Buddhism wheel publications, pp.1-16)

Considering the man's place in the universe Buddhism describes

that man is a psychophysical unit. Birth as a human being is said to be a rare event. In the Sutta pitaka the individual is analyzed in four ways: i. Mind and Matter, ii. Aggregates, iii. Elements, vi. Sense bases. There are four main concepts elucidation which will give a picture of the general characteristics of the Buddhist World View. These are i. Impermanence, ii. Suffering, iii. Soullessness and vi. Conditionality. All these are said to be the usual features that are universally obtained all over.

The Tipitaka consists of ideas belong to varieties of subjects. One who carefully examines the Tipitaka may able to find it as an encyclopedia originated in 6th century BC in India yet still presenting knowledge useful for even 21st century man. The teachings of the Tipitaka provides a practical and balanced view of life. It gives them the necessary impetus for reaching the highest goal attainable in the world. The message of Tipitaka points out the path to complete freedom from the shackles of superstition, wrong understanding, discontent and conflict. It enlightens society convincing that men can no longer be servile and they have to be free and governed by love and sympathy and the voluntary restraints of righteousness. The Tipitaka teachings will train men to be careful about their actions and impart serenity to the human mass. The kinship of blood, or race, or language, is feeble in comparison with the kinship or noble ideas in action, which spreads wide the spirit of a genuine civilization.



B UDDHIST
P ERSPECTIVES

Buddhism: As I see it.

Chameeliya Ramanayaka
(B.C.S London, Beautician)



Buddhism can be described as a religion where the truths of this universe and its existence are explained in a lucid manner. The manner in which the Buddha explained the dynamics of the human mind, and the fact that the entire universe has come into existence based on the elements of fire, soil, water, and matter, cannot be proven otherwise by science or the biggest critics of Buddhism.

It is demonstrably conspicuous that, the dharma preached by the Buddha for over forty-five years would undoubtedly contribute towards the betterment of this life as well as the next. The most resounding of this teaching, teach the world that it's the norm for anything in the universe to be impermanent. Furthermore, Lord Buddha has explained that any entity would come into existence, prevail for some time, and then disappear. This is the nature of the universe. Therefore, Buddha further goes onto to elaborate that, the very source of suffering is our inclination to be attached to impermanent things in life. Notwithstanding this clear teaching, it is palpable that people inevitably dwell in attachments leading to suffering. Therefore, despite his teachings, there needs to be deeper understanding of his teachings for humans to be free from all cravings.

The uppermost goal of the Buddha was to free the humans from sins and direct them towards nirvana. There are several steps

to be adhered in order to attain the full bliss of nirvana. The first ever gateway for such attainment is the adherence to the precepts of Buddhism. As we all contemplate the ways of achieving world peace, the real answer lies in adherence to such precepts. This indeed is the most practical way of getting closer to the elusive world peace.

Additionally, there are many ways of using the history and character of Buddha for the benefit of human development. The wife of prince Siddhartha, Yasodhara, has been a character that has been idealized in the Sinhala Buddhist culture in numerous ways. The significance given to her demonstrates the place of women in the said culture. Her sacrifices and patience are praised by many Sinhala literary works. She was patient and understanding of the aspirations of prince Siddhartha, thereby abstaining from being an obstacle in his endeavors. Further, Visaka upasikawa has also gained a significant role in Sinhala literature, due to her praiseworthy devotion to Lord Buddha and her contributions towards Buddhism.

When perusing the Buddhist scripts, it is said that the Buddha had to make many sacrifices in his past lives and commit for Buddhahood, to be enlightened. His tenacity, commitment, patience, and wisdom are all positive contributions to the whole world. We as human beings, are constantly exposed to many challenges in this world. Many are

experiencing depression, setbacks, and feelings of regret in their daily lives. However, the character of the Buddha is one of the most practical ways of understanding the true nature of life itself.

There is no other religion or spiritual teaching that focuses on the human mind than Buddhism. The creation of the mind, its existence and the ultimate nonexistence are accurately described in Buddhism. The concept of the human soul, as believed in many religious tenets, has been debunked in Buddhism. The belief in the soul can be attributed to the misconceptions about the human mind and the body. In Buddhism, it is preached as the illusion of the mind coupled with the cravings of human beings that leads to the belief of the human soul.

Buddhism can be explained as the most refined religion to be in existence in the world. Its teachings are not limited to the spiritual realms, and have also found its way into modern science. Modern psychologists are utilizing the teaching and techniques of Buddhism to treat numerous mental ailments. Therefore, undoubtedly, Buddhism has a place in the modern day and age as a religion that does not collide with the discoveries of science.

Buddhism Beyond Religious Extremism.

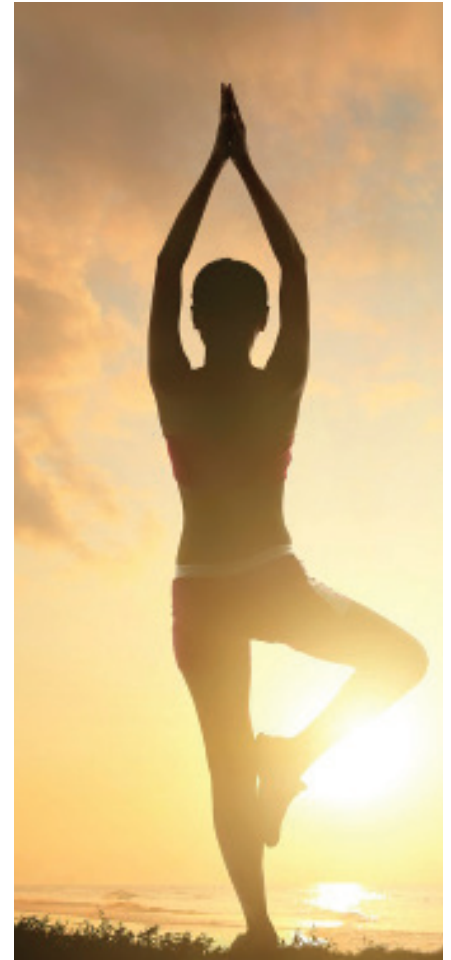
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There is hardly any need of definition or description of religious extremism as we, the people of 21st century, are not only witnesses, but also victims of the absolutely unpleasant religious extremism, violence and terrorism, at different levels of course. Across the times and around the globe, people have experienced disastrous effects of it. The Problem, however, is that tendency to embrace extremism does not seem to decrease even with much sophistication in science and ideologies. Some people, forgetting all other priorities in life, increasingly devote themselves to extremism and put very survival of mankind into danger. Fundamentalists of some religions have adopted an aggressive affirmation of one's own beliefs coupled with a proselytizing zeal. Ardent followers of some religions claim that they would not stop until their goal of converting the entire human population into their religion. Since not just one but many groups are there equipped with such determination, the entire globe is threatened with imminent cruel wars, ironically,

mainly among so-called peace-loving religions. The theme of this conference makes us examine the Buddhist stand on this burning issue.

The Buddha was not unfamiliar with religious fanaticism and dogmatic beliefs among Indians of his time. He had to encounter various religious extremists, but was able to converse with them in civilized manner. There, of course, were fierce argumentations, mud-slinging and distortion of other religions by some aggressive religionists. Every one of them was adamantly claiming that his religious dogma was the only right one and all other views were wrong. Atmosphere of the assembly halls and resting places provided by people for religionists of the day was very unpleasant. According to a description given in the Udana the debates at assembly halls were not at all friendly. It says: "They lived quarrelsome, noisy, disputatious, abusing each other with words that pierced like javelins, maintaining 'this is the truth that is not the truth'." It looks like that, instead of sober



logical and systematic attempts at establishing the validity of one's stand; they were at verbal warfare aiming only at emerging as victorious.

The conditions were so intolerably noisy with fierce arguments and unpleasant quarrels that the Buddha was initially avoiding such places. However, later he visited such places and introduced a new culture of meaningful dialogue and debate. The Sutta Pitaka reports how the Buddha managed to create a positive and cordial environment beyond extremism.

The Buddha never intended to make his followers frown at

alternative teachings. Religion needs not be a divisive factor for people. The Buddha showed, by example, how to behave towards other religionists. There were many occasions he made friendly visits to monasteries of other religionists. Being convinced that the Buddha is extending his good will to them, in response, they also cordially welcomed him and even allowed him to deliver sermons at their assemblies. The impact of his approach was such that they even confessed that they could improve their religions with the teachings of the Buddha. For instance, when the Buddha visited Paribbajaka Vacchagotta at his Lotus Monastery the latter welcomed him stating: “Come in Venerable Sir, Welcome Sir, It is a long time

since you have visited us. The seat is ready, please sit down, Sir.” Cula Sakuludayi, when the Buddha visited him, said: “When you visit us Sir, both me and my followers wait anxiously thinking that if the Buddha says something we will listen well to him”. Aggisala of Bharadvajagotta (M.I.501), residence of Potthapada (M.II.28) are two more places he visited and was welcomed with affection. This kind of warm welcome was not limited to the Buddha. It was extended to the monks (M.I.83) as well. Even learned Buddhist laymen were also received with much love (eg. Sandhana D.III.37, Pancakangika Thapati M.II.23).

How is it that the Buddha attracted such goodwill from other

religionists? The nature of his philosophy had no possibility for extremism. Buddhist philosophy was not a closed revelation from a particular God or a special divinity. The Buddha did not claim that Truth is a monopoly of Buddhism, it is open for any person to achieve with right effort. It is a discovery or a realisation; a discovery humanly possible that needs no external sanctification or justification. The truth (Dhamma) could be realised by everyone for himself. The Buddha, on the other hand, did not believe in distributing ready-made transcendental wisdom for everyone. He wanted people to get at the Dhamma by themselves (*paccattam veditabbo*). When someone presented a theory, the Buddha would naturally ask



him “Do you know and see this yourself?” Dogmatic acceptance and blind faith are never encouraged.

Some religions are not tolerant of criticism and consider them to be blasphemous. Yet Buddhism can take criticism neutrally and subject them for critical and logical scrutiny. In the Brahmajala Sutta, for instance, the Buddha advised monks: “If others speak against me, or against the Dhamma or the Sangha, you should not on that account either have a grudge against them or suffer heaviness of heart or feel ill-will. If you on that account should be angry and hurt, that would become a danger to your own selves.” And he asked the monks, if they felt angry and displeased on such an occasion would they, then, be able to judge how far that speech was good or bad. The monks replied that they would not be able to make a right judgment. Thus, it appears evident that the Buddha demanded an unbiased critical attitude to be cultivated by the monks towards statements or religio-philosophic matters.

Not only that the Buddhists are ready to take criticism openly, they are ready to accept and even accommodate wholesome truths of other religions as well. Once, a former founder of a religion, who had become a deity after his death, approached the Buddha at night and uttered some gathas he used to teach his followers. The next morning the Buddha informed the monks of the incident and advised the monks to learn those gathas as

they contain wholesome teachings. This is a unique example of religious tolerance which definitely stands above religious extremism. Referring to some sages (munayo) who had comprehended the nature of their desires and eliminated them, crossing over the waves of samsaric existence, the Buddha says, “I do not declare that all these religious men are sunk in repeated birth and decay.” That means they had achieved nibbana.

At dialogues with followers of other religions, the Buddha would give them a fair hearing. He never hurried to debate, but was ready to have friendly sharing. He would cordially ask them “Please tell me what your teachings are” and they express their surprise at such polite and open mindedness. (D.III.40) He had even suggested “Let us talk about the things we may agree upon rather than things we might disagree” (eg. D.II.124)

One might wonder then, how did the Buddha account for philosophical differences among religions? This question was asked by Sakka, the lord of gods, from the Buddha and the answer given was: “Manifold is the world, Lord of gods. In this many-spherical world, whichever sphere the beings touch or find, that they stick to and use (as truth), saying ‘this only is true, the rest is false’. Thus, there is no agreement among religious people on theories, morality, will and goal.” (D.II.282) This statement is very important as it reveals the basic philosophical foundation of the Buddhist attitude to the multiplicity of religious teachings.

The Buddha’s recognition of the genuine nature of other teachers search for truth is fairly obvious here. He recognizes the multi-dimensional aspect of the world and the possibility of a Truth-seeker getting at one aspect only and forming a view on the basis of it. This is based on meditational-experiential grounds and not on speculation. So, there is no attempt here to belittle other religions but rather a call for further insight. It is a recognition of other teachings, however imperfect they may be, as born out of real glimpses of reality and genuine attempts to get at the Truth. Hajime Nakamura writes: “Buddhism has attempted to arrive at the truth, not by excluding its opposites as falsehood, but by including them as another form of the same truth.” Even a layman who is highly interested in getting at some aspects of Truth might be able to obtain some glimpses of it depending on his capabilities and maturity.

The Buddha’s communication culture also prevented the Buddhist from being aggressive against other religions. The Buddha did not condemn teachers of other religions. Once, two materialistic Brahmins asked the Buddha: “Who was the honest one between Purana Kassapa and Nigantha Nataputta in their claims to omniscience?” The Buddha instructed them to put aside the question and listen to what the Buddha had to tell them. (A.IV.429). The Buddha maintained that whoever, with ill-fashioned wit, condemns lust-free sages of other sects receives great demerit. (A.III.372) This



to other teachings with open, yet critical mind. He advised “You should train yourself thus: whatever doctrine I shall hear connected with what is good (kusala = wholesome) to this I shall listen attentively, investigate objectively, reflect upon deeply and upon this concentrate wholeheartedly.”

With all this exemplary magnanimity, tolerance and broadmindedness shown by the Buddha to other religions, there was no way for Buddhists to condemn or become aggressive against other religions. The Buddhists have a proud history of respecting, admiring and supporting other religions. When Dutch Christians were harassing the Catholics, who were converted by Portuguese from Buddhism, it was the Buddhists who gave them protection and even offered a piece of land to build a church near the Tooth Relic Temple. A recent example is the church next to the Kalutara Bodhi tree. The church actually was built in a land adjoining to the Bodhi premises during the colonial period. When the Bodhi has grown into a highly popular shrine with a huge Stupa and a preaching hall etc, the incumbent Farther of the church visited Sir Cyril de Soysa, the trustee of the Bodhi shrine, to inform that they were willing to give back the land to Bodhi and move out from the premises. Sir Cyril insisted that the church should be their as it would facilitate mutual admiration and friendship between the Buddhists and Christians. Such is the Buddhist attitude that clearly stands against extremism.

magnanimity and sincere open mindedness was unprecedented in the history of religions. No other founder of religion has been so genuine in accepting and admiring positively achievements of saints of another religion.

The Buddha's broadmindedness is epitomized in the way he admired the good aspects of other religions and the positive attitude shown in evaluating them. He has, for instance, observed that Nighanthanaputta had upheld moral efficacy (kammavadi), and in admiration of this right attitude, exempted Jains who come as candidate for ordination from subjecting to probation - annatitthiya parivasa.

The broadminded friendly attitude and unprejudiced way adopted by the Buddha in discussing

knotty religious and philosophical problems has made him popular and loved by the practitioners of other faiths. Some of them were even of the habit of coming to the Buddha to settle their own disputes related to the matters of their faiths. For instance, when Vasettha and Bharadvaja, two Brahmin youth, had problem in their own faith, they came to the Buddha for obtaining a better insight. The reason why the Buddha was so sought after for dialogue and clarification of important points even by the non-Buddhists was his erudition, broadmindedness and perfect knowledge of other faiths. And as he was a sympathetic listener, harnessing no prejudices against other faiths. Therefore, he was treated with friendship and was considered approachable. In his broad attitude the Buddha encouraged his followers to listen

Some Reflections on the Buddhist Meditation

Chandrani Wijesuriya

Meditation is the highest of three-fold discipline in the Buddhist programme of liberation of samsaric suffering. It is a mental and physical course of action a person may pursue in order to become fully enlightened. Although it is an age-old practice of the mankind, there is a growing interest in it even among the highly sophisticated people of the 21st century, including the scientists and philosophers. It is reported that even the president of United States. Bill Clinton, having obtained guidance from a Buddhist monk, is practicing Buddhist meditation to overcome the stress.

Meditation is not a monopoly of any particular religious tradition. It is a natural part of the human experience and is even used as a therapy for promoting good health and mental development. Successful meditation brings great happiness- mental calm

not judging, not thinking, just being aware, living each moment at peace. In the most general definition, meditation is a way of taking control of the mind so that it becomes peaceful and focused.

Buddhist Meditation involves developing the mind while calming and controlling the body. Buddhists are reflecting on mind and body not as two separate absolute entities and try to avoid any attachment to them as if they are their unchanging and permanent possessions. Meditating results in convincing them that the body and the mind are interrelated and dependently arisen relative phenomena so unnecessary attachments to conditioned things gets reduced and life becomes cool and happy. Endless rushing about mind is a waste of energy and it increases meaningless problems. We get used to looking at everything in a matured way.

Archeological and textual evidence tell us that men have meditated even five millennia before today. It is in our blood, or rather, in our genes. You might have noticed that even babies meditate. It is utterly difficult to draw their attention back when they seem to have got into a trance like mind-set. So never think that meditation is artificial or going against ourselves. It is-as some western writers say-rather like going home. It is a search for our real nature. As people have experimented with meditation all throughout their civilization, there are a number of methods of meditation which have been developed and used for a long time and have been shown to work in different ways. People have meditated on their own ways to achieve their set goals.

Buddhists meditate on their own in relaxed solitary places or in groups at purpose-built meditation halls (like Zendo in Japan or



retreats in Theravada countries). Group meditation has the benefit of reminding a person that he is both part of a larger Buddhist community, and part of the larger community of beings of every species.

Ancient Buddhist scripture like Dhammapada suggest that the mental states we experience are the key to everything in our lives (Mano pubbangama Dhamma). For instance, if we are driven by craving or hatred, we will experience the world very differently from the way we experience it when we are motivated by generosity, love or kindness.

Buddhist meditation is an invitation to turn one's awareness

away from meaningless and unskillful activities that usually waste our valuable time and effort. Meditation makes us reflect before action and be selective in our actions. For Buddhists, the realm of meditation comprises mental states such as calm, concentration and one-pointedness (which comprises the six forces: hearing, pondering, mindfulness, awareness, effort and intimacy). The practice of meditation is consciously employing particular techniques that encourage these states to arise.

Classical Buddhist meditation taught by our meditation masters makes us use our own breathing as the object of concentration. We may just sit and concentrate on our in and

out breathing; not doing anything to alter the way they breathe just 'following' the breathing and 'becoming one' with the breathing. It is instructed not to think: "I am breathing". When a person thinks that way they separate themselves from the breathing and start thinking of themselves as separate and permanent souls. The aim of breathing or anapana meditation is just to be aware of breathing. Some beginner meditators prefer to count breaths, trying to count up to ten without any distraction at all, and then returning back to one. This helps them to note when they get distracted and go back to counting refusing to be distracted.

Anapana, however, is all in our meditation practice; nor does meditation have to involve

keeping still all the time; walking meditation is another popular technique. The gradual programme given in the Satipatthana sutta leads us from samadhi to insight or vipassana meditation – the surest way to enlightenment. Samadhi Meditation clarifies and concentrates the mind in preparation for the third training: developing wisdom (prajna). It is important to note that samadhi and vipassana are the second and third items in the three-fold training and, therefore, necessary ingredients in the Noble practice. The final goal of all Buddhist practice is to understand the true nature of our lives and experience and attain Enlightenment.

The highly recommended complete course of meditation is Satipatthana. It is increasingly becoming popular among Westerners as the practice of mindfulness. They have been very much selective in emphasize the mindfulness aspect as an essential part of stress management. At Massachusetts University in US, there is a ten months course called Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction totally based on the Buddhist practice of Satipatthana. However, their interest is limited to the secular goal of stress reduction and not on Enlightenment. and means becoming more fully aware of what one is experiencing in all aspects of one's life. In recent years there has been growing interest in using meditation and mindfulness in palliative care, particularly learning to cope with chronic pain and preventing relapse into depression. In some countries the

hospital authorities have permitted Buddhist meditation masters to help patients with meditation.

However, in the traditional Buddhist countries the emphasis is not on mundane applications. They consider it as a necessarily a religious practice and emphasize on spiritual heights. The most common and basic object of concentrative meditation is to focus on the naturally calming physical process of the breath.

For lay people, in addition to anapanasati, the Buddhist monks almost always recommend 'development of loving kindness' meditation (metta bhavana) as a very useful practice. This helps the people to develop an attitude of loving kindness which will make him a non-aggressive, peace-loving and understanding social being, timely and vital need of the 'dog-bite-dog' modern world.

One may begin by wishing himself to be happy and loving person as mot of our aggressive and hateful behaviour springs from self-hate. If you do not become a friend to yourself you cannot dream of becoming a friend anyone else. In the second stage you think of your family and good friends. Feeling of love, you develop metta towards them. In the third stage metta is directed towards someone you do not particularly like or dislike. In the fourth stage it is directed towards someone you actually dislike. Eventually, you radiate metta for evryone people at once - yourself, your family and friends, the neutral persons

and the enemies. This involves feeling of love from your heart to everyone in the world, to all beings everywhere. Karaniya Metta Sutta has it in these beautiful way: "As a mother would risk even her life to protect her her only child, so should one cultivate a limitless love with regard to all beings. With goodwill for all living beings in the entire universe cultivate a limitless heart." (Metta Sutta)

At the Vipassana or Reflective contemplation the meditator repeatedly turns his attention to a theme but being open to whatever arises from the experience. Reflective practices in Buddhism include meditations on impermanence and interconnectedness of all dependently arisen things as well as faith enhancing practices such as meditation on the qualities of the Buddha.

Within its Buddhist context, meditation is a vital component of its path to spiritual awakening. In the UK, as in many other western countries, there are many Buddhist centers and independent teachers offering meditation classes and courses. There are also many books, tapes, CDs and websites devoted to the subject. However, the general advice is that it helps to meditate with others and to have teachers who can help you with issues that arise along the way. It also helps to go on retreat with other meditators, when you can focus on meditation more fully and share you experiences with fellow meditators to avoid pitfalls.



IKEBANA: The Meditation of Flower Arrangement

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The Japanese art of flower arranging known as Ikebana (flower kept alive). (生け花 or いけばな) also known as Kado 花道, the “Way of the Flowers”, is a traditional Japanese art based on Buddhist values. Ikebana is a floral art tradition started 1300 years ago. Its cultural beginning as ‘kuge’ and “shogan” - floral offerings to Buddha. It began in the 6th century when Buddhism came to Japan. The first written account dates back to the 10th century in the “Kokin Waka shu”....”in a receptacle, place a flowering branch of plum tree...” In these arrangements both the flowers and the branches were made to point toward heaven as an indication of faith.

Japan discovered the Chinese art of flower arrangement in the early seventh century. Beginning during the Tang dynasty, and then spread throughout the Eastern continent this culture was brought to Japan by the Japanese ambassadors of Buddhism. The custom of floral offerings - Kuge - to altars and Buddhist stupa became very popular among the Buddhists. The ambassador Ono no Imoko, who later took his vows becoming famous as the priest Senmu was the first Japanese to codify floral art, turning the exuberant Confucian style to Buddhist sobriety and minimalism, the classic principles



still found today in many Japanese bouquets. He specified that the floral offerings to the Buddha must include three flowers: a tall one, and two short ones. We can see here the origin of the first vertical composition, named tatebana, who later gave origin to the rikka and the shokai styles. However, Senmu arranged flowers in different manners, i.e. by piling a plate or a basket. This second composition is the prototype of the style called moribana. Ike-no-bo (literally: the hut near the pond) was the little house where Senmu retired to carry out his Buddhist meditation and teach his knowledge about the art of flowers. His pupils brought his work to completion and created the school that bears his name. From the XII century, the Buddhist rites were celebrated also in private houses; floral composition moved from temples to homes and extended from religious ceremonies

to commoners' celebrations. The codification of this art continued, and was further elaborated.

The oldest text in this respect – the Sendenshō – gathered rules from numerous sources, collected by Ikenobo School. It provided 53 arrangements suitable for various circumstances of life: a marriage, a maturity ceremony of a boy, the departure of a warrior, and so on. Other texts proposed different rules: the Mon'ami Densho explained how to arrange flowers and objects in the tokonoma (alcove) or around, while the Senno Kuden was the first manual for setting all possible variants of a unique landscape, the legendary Mount Meru cited in Buddhist texts and symbol of the whole universe. However, in ikebana, though a mere technique, a spiritual expression of the practitioner is also essential. It could be shin, that is strict, imposing, traditional, symmetrical, or so: light, spontaneous, asymmetrical, unexpected, or gyo, somewhere between the one and the other.

There are many schools but most popular are Ikenobo, Ohara and Sogetsu. There are also different styles depending on the school and the plants and vase used. Tatebana (Vertical flowers) in the Muromachi era was regarded the first style that could be called

Ikebana. It was arranged in a high narrow vase. A more sophisticated style of flower arrangement, called Rikka (standing flowers), appeared in the fifteenth century.

By the 17th century Rokkaido Temple in Kyoto had become the recognized masters. Ikenobo is the oldest school of Ikebana, founded by Buddhist priest Ikenobo. Senkei in the 15th century. He is thought to have created the rikka (standing flowers) style. The rikka style reflects the magnificence of nature and its display. This style was developed as a Buddhist expression of the beauty of nature, with seven branches representing hills, water falls, valleys and so on arranged in a formalised way. Among the priests and aristocrats, this style became more and more formalised until, in the late 17th century, the growing merchant class developed a simple style, called Seika or Shoka. Shoka uses only three main branches, known as ten (heaven), Chi (earth) and Jin (man) and is designed to show the beauty of the plant itself.

Another old form of Ikebana is nageire. It is a more simple style of flower arrangement. According to this style, flowers are arranged in a vase as naturally as possible, no matter what materials are used. Because of its association with the tea ceremony, This style is called cha bana.

The most significant changes in the history of Ikebana took place during the 15th century, when the moromachi Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa (1436-1490) ruled

Japan. During this period that the rules of Ikebana were simplified so that people of all classes could enjoy the art.

The Japanese believe Ikebana speaks directly to the heart of the creator and the viewer. It is sculpture that breathes and expresses stability and the spirit of nature, a link to the whole universe. There are generally three principal parts to the Ikebana arrangement: 'shin' - the main stem representing man (yoh); 'soe' - representing heaven (yoh); and 'tai' - representing earth (in) the positive (yoh)

Ikebana is in many respects seasonal; it depends on the availability of various organic materials plus certain arrangements are favoured for seasons and festive occasions. For instance, a summer arrangement may evoke 'coolness' - materials in season may be complemented by cool colours, water side plants and a simple uncluttered style. And different materials symbolise different aspects of nature, e.g. bamboo represents integrity as it does not bend. Arrangement includes branches, leaves, flower buds, wildflowers, roots, seedpods, moss, fruits etc..

Containers may include shallow broad vases, tall elegant vases, bamboo, baskets, and water trays etc... The history of Ikebana is marked by a constant oscillation between these two poles, formal classicism (shin) and freedom (so). Composition represents a state of mind and wants to arouse it in the spectator. An important

concept here is: the furyu implies simplicity, discretion and love for natural beauty, without ostentation. The furyu turns away from the exhibitionism and obvious serenity. Zen played an important role in the development of this spirit. However, this power, since the origins of this art, is difficult to achieve and maintain. At the end of the XVI century, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, the lord and patron, paranoid and artist, gave to his floral masters the opportunity to be as grandiose and pompous as he wished. Thus, during a ceremony in honour of the Great Buddha of Nara, the compositions reached thirteen feet in height. The master Sen no Rikyu, who was on intimate terms with Hideyoshi, took part in such megalomania by producing the monumental rikka to adorn his palace. However, the master reacted by creating the chabana (literally "tea flowers"), a simple arrangement, and an example of the spirit for which the Japanese use a very special name: the wabi. Wabi means minimalist refinement, rustic elegance, nobility without sophistication, beauty reduced or rather brought back to its essential simplicity. That is just what a single flower, perfectly arranged in a soberly decorated vase, can express. Sen no Rikyu is credited with the creation of nageire. One day, he was having a rest with Hideyoshi in the garden, and the latter asked him to compose a bouquet. Thus, Sen no Rikyu cut some iris with his knife, tied the flowers to the weapon and sent them in a bucket. The anecdote tells us that the assistants raved about the masterpiece,

and that's how the style nageire (literally, "thrown in") was born. During the XVII century, policy change affected the evolution of ikebana (and all Japanese arts) which had previously undergone the influence of Zen Buddhism, grown in strength since its introduction in the XII century. Under the Tokugawa shogun and its leadership, Confucianism supplanted Zen. The Tokugawa encouraged it as the philosophical basis of their authority, while they relegated nobility to Kyoto, distracting them with cultural activities that politically put them in the shade. The floral art entered the court rivalries and intrigues and at this point was given the official name of ikebana.

The name was chosen at first by the shogunate to name one school's style, Ikenobo, but soon the number of competitors arose and other schools were founded. The shogunate schematized their techniques, establishing the hereditary system (iemoto) still applied today. This period was marked by a decline in intuition and spontaneity, typical characteristics of the old nageire style, and a gradual consolidation of increasingly complex rikka. In 1673 were published *Rikka Arrangements of the Ikenobo School of Rokkaku-do* and his students, in 1683 appeared the *Encyclopaedia Rikka*, and in 1688 the *Accepted Styles of Rikka*.

Finally, *Hundred Arrangements in Vases for the Four Seasons* came out, which read "without observing the rules, the flowers cannot be seen as a good

backdrop for the tokonoma". Lack of masters, too many rules, and the snobbery of a class of idle aristocrats trying to enhance fruitless exhibitions brought to the severe times that could represent ikebana in the XVII century. However, a new merchant class was emerging and gradually was becoming interested in floral art: it marked the beginning of a democratization of this art. Democratization took place in the XVIII century.

It concerned both social class and gender. The floral art, hitherto reserved to men, was taught by women along with music and tea ceremony. This led to a relaxation of rules in the rikka and a revival of nageire, therefore to the birth of a popular new style which was a mixture of the two, the shoka. This simple, asymmetrical three-branched style is composed following a Trinity figure. The number of students practicing ikebana increased significantly in the XVIII century, schools multiplied, flowers entered the houses and covered the kimono and the screens as they never had. There was a strong reaction to aristocratic snobbery and new upper classes' lack of sobriety. A group of artists who sought in ikebana nothing but a futile activity of decoration brought a new breath. They were scholars – bunjin –, who appreciated models that Japan had inherited from China and wished to resume Chinese aesthetics precepts in the arts (poetry, painting, floral arrangement...). They launched an inspiring style called bunjin ike, breaking with excessive codification, and pursuing

spontaneity, naturalness and Chinese refinement. In 1854, the U.S. Commander Perry broke the isolationist bolt which kept Japan shut and forced it to open to trade and western culture influence. The political and artistic consequences of this event were countless.

As far as ikebana was concerned, the introduction of new species of flowers inspired a master, Unshin Ohara who, incidentally, also meant to restore ancient traditional patterns such as moribana and landscape composition, and later founded his own school. Other masters such as Nishikawa tried themselves to root more deeply the new sense of freedom and revive the spirit of wabi. Around 1920, a new trend appeared as well as a new free-styled floral arrangement: the jiyubana (or jiyuka). Rejecting the Buddhist original reference and the traditional stereotypes, the young revolutionaries such as Nakayama, Okubo, Shigemori, published in 1930 a manifesto entitled "Proclamation of the New Style of Arrangement", in which they attempted to put a distance between themselves and the floral artists of the past. Their motto was: "Take ikebana out of tokonoma!" As a consequence, the brand new Sogetsu School was founded by Sofu Teshigahara. Then other schools appeared, so that in 1966 the Association of ikebana in Japan included more than 130 schools. Thus, around 1930, the three most eminent schools that dominate even now the world of Japanese ikebana – Ikenobo, Ohara and Sogetsu – were already





Buddhism and Social Integration

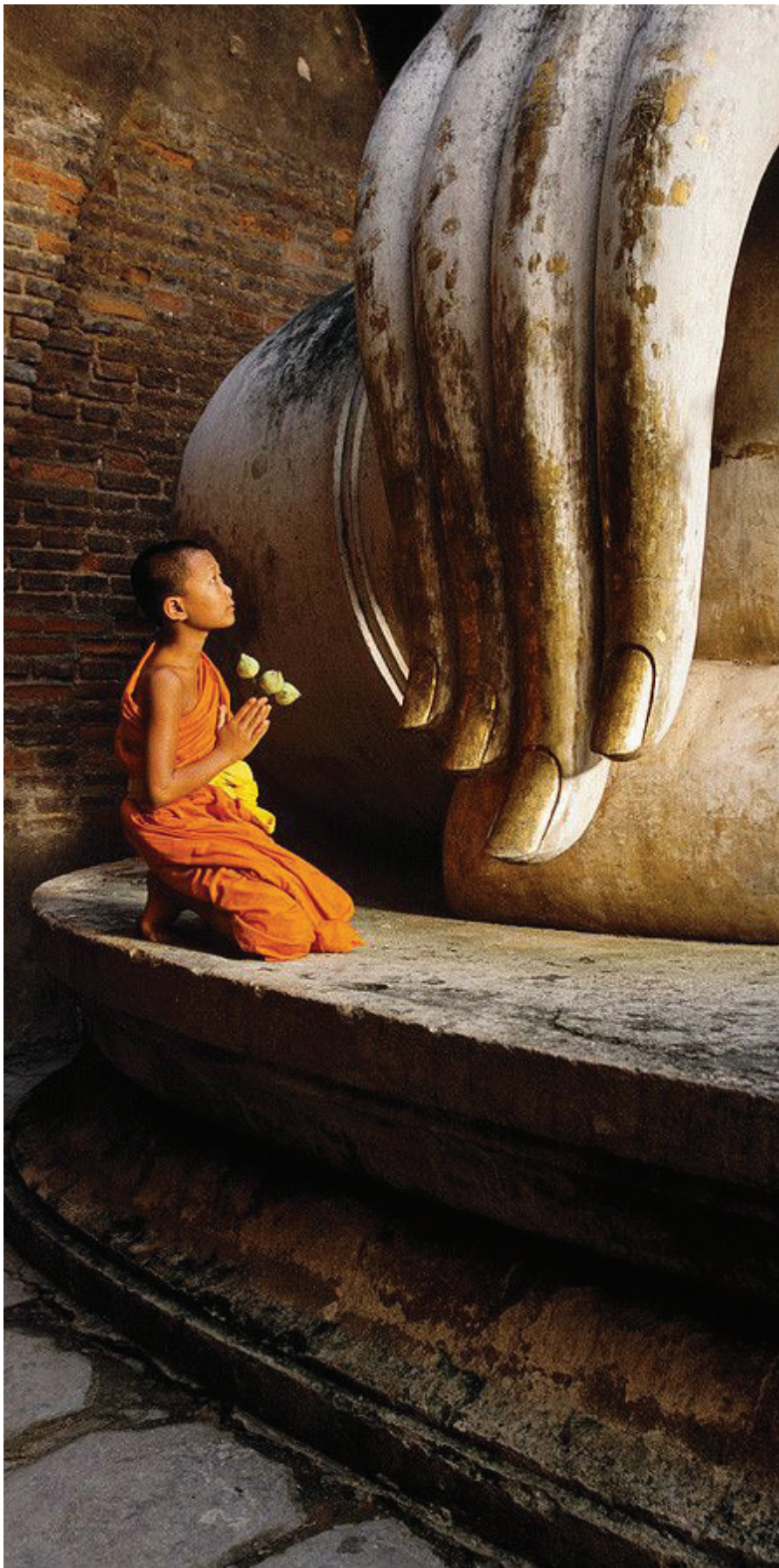
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Social integration is a modern sociological concept which aims at a creation of a society for all based on non-discrimination, tolerance, respect for diversity, equality of

opportunity, solidarity, security and participation of all people irrespective of race, class, age, ethnicity, cultural background, political and religious beliefs and

other differences. Though we do not find a concept known as social integration in Buddhist teaching, there is no doubt that the Buddha has presented a



social philosophy more than two thousand five hundred years ago which, is conducive to bring out a human society which has the characteristics of a society that the modern concept of social integration is looking for.

As far as Buddhism is concerned in its social context, it is quite evident that the prime aim of Buddhism is to show the path leading to the elimination of social suffering of the mankind. It is the view of Buddhism that the life is full of suffering not only because of the suffering inherited by birth, but also because of the social miseries created by the man himself in his social life. Buddhism also holds that when the factors leading to social suffering are removed from the society, such a society can provide a peaceful environment where people can live happily acquiring necessary requisites for them to be happy. When people achieve the social happiness, it is easy for them to work for their spiritual peace which enables them to acquire everlasting peace and happiness.

When we take Buddhist social teachings as a whole, it represents really a movement of social integration. The Buddha has presented a series of social virtues through his teaching pertaining to social aspect which, enable people to create a peaceful and harmonious society where all its members can come together harmoniously and work for their own benefit. The Buddha was well aware of the fact that all men equally are desire of happiness

and repugnant to unhappiness. Desire for pleasure or happiness (sukhakama) and desire to avoid pain or unhappiness (dukkha-patikkula) can be considered as the internal driving forces or inborn instincts shared by all human beings which necessitate them to have communal life that surpasses the external boundaries. There is no doubt that Buddhist social philosophy is based on the man's instinctive desire of happiness and aversion to unhappiness.

The Buddha found out several social factors that are detrimental to harmonious life of people and encouraged people to avoid such destructive factors showing the way how to do it and, the Buddha further new that avoiding such factors alone would not bring out the social integration in the proper way unless people would not follow some social virtues through which all people can be bound together with the sincerity and earnestness. Hence, the Buddha has vehemently criticized the factors leading to disintegration and recommended some social virtues which are necessarily leading to the integration of a society.

Buddhism recognizes three main factors that lead to different social conflicts characterized by discrimination, intolerance, insecurity, unequal opportunity and non-participation of people together in social progress. These reflect stubbornly sticking to viewpoints, religious intolerance, and social stratification based on birth. The Buddha anticipated possible dangerous repercussions

from these factors in regard to social integrity, and hence criticized them in relation to their showing of vanity and futility.

Striking to Viewpoints

Holding on to a viewpoint as the only truth and rejecting all others as false seems to be the root cause of divisions emerging in numerous fields and issues in the world. This trend works against integrity among people. The emergence and prevalence of different kinds of fundamentalism such as those of religion, race, nationality, ethnicity, or political ideology - which are strong destructive forces that cause social disintegration - can be attributed to excessive attachment to viewpoints. Holding to viewpoints necessarily creates unrest among people. One who rigidly adheres to a viewpoint is not ready to give it up even though one comes to realize that one's viewpoint is wrong. Furthermore, one causes others to accept it even by force. Among people of such nature, it is inevitable that conflicts arise which cause the breach of peace in society. This was nicely illustrated by the Buddha in the Magandiya-sutta in the Sutta-nipata as follows:

“Saññañca ditthiñca ye
aggahesum-te ghattayanta
vicaranti loka”

[Those who grasp concept and view roam the world offending each other.]

Without adhering to certain methods accepted blindly by different divisions or sections of

society in order to find what is right or wrong or what is good or bad, the Buddha has shown a practical method in the Kalama-sutta through which conclusions acceptable to all the people can be drawn. One of the reasons for division in a society can be attributed to dogmatic viewpoints. People usually hang on to these dogmas as they think that they are justifiable by the criteria they accept, though without any discriminative knowledge. If the people are open minded and are ready to accept their own conscience and experience as criteria to assess of good or bad and right and wrong, they would be able to free themselves from most such bigoted views and thereby they can live in harmony. This is the most important lesson given in the Kalama-sutta.

In the Kalama sutta discourse the Buddha suggests that one must exercise one's own experience to know whether something is rooted in greed, malice or illusion on the one hand or, vice versa on the other. This can be followed by anyone irrespective of distinction born out of one's own religion, culture, custom, race or any other factor which leads to one's separation from others. Without adhering to external methods, anyone can introspectively look into their own inner mental tendencies in order to clearly demonstrate whether something is good or bad. The nature of the impact of something based on such mental tendencies on one's life, and also on the lives of others, can easily determine whether it is good or bad. Such a

determination should, of course, be a result of free inquiry devoid of prejudices.

The Buddha was well aware of the danger of exclusivism which damages the equilibrium of society. As the religious master who devotedly advocated the importance of peaceful co-existence of human society, the Buddha made an attempt, whenever he had the opportunity, to severely criticize such exclusiveness that existed during his day. The Aatthaka-vagga of the Suttanipata provides ample evidence of such criticisms levelled by the Buddha against those who upheld exclusiveness. Two examples: (1) The Culaviyuha-sutta says: "What one asserted to be true and real, others say is meaningless and false. Thus they enter into dispute and debate". And (2) the Mahaviyuha sutta says: "Each one asserts that one's own view is perfect, and that the belief of the other person is inferior. Thus they enter into dispute. They judge their own conclusions to be true."

Religious Intolerance

Enslavement to a religion or religious faith gives rise to religious intolerance which destructively affects the wellbeing of a multi-religious society. It seems that a religious extremist thinks that all members of society should accept the religion that the extremist prefers. Really, it is a kind of mania - from which most religious people suffer - to seek pleasure by increasing the number of members in their own religion. This mentality of religiously-afflicted people is

not limited only to contemporary society. Religious competition for increasing members to their religions has prevailed throughout history. Examples of this can be found in the Buddhist scriptures. The way religious leaders engaged in competition to recruit followers during the time of the Buddha is quite evident from a statement made by a well-known millionaire, Upali, who was the chief devotee of Nigantha-nataputta, Master of the Jaina religion. Upali once met the Buddha in order to defeat him in a debate, but at the end of the debate he had to accept defeat as he failed to counter the questions raised by the Buddha, and finally he requested the Buddha to accept him as a lay disciple accepting refuge until his life ends. Then the Buddha cautioned him not to be in haste to make such a drastic decision: "Do not be in a hurry to become a disciple of mine, without further investigation. "Now, householder, make a proper investigation. Proper investigation

is right in the case of well-known men like yours".

In this context Upali's response to the Buddha gives a proper picture of other religious teachers of the day with regard to their attitude towards accepting followers. Upali said:

For if, revered sir, members of other sects had secured me as a disciple, they would have paraded a banner all round Nalanda, saying 'the householder Upali has joined our disciple-hood'. But then the Lord spoke to me thus: 'Now householder, make a proper investigation'.

This episode clearly indicates the difference between the attitudes of the Buddha and other religious teachers towards increasing the number of converts. The advice given by the Buddha to undertake proper investigation into the real nature of religion when one is going to be converted to a religion is noteworthy for anyone to consider before finally deciding to accept another religion.

This is quite relevant even for the present because the religious right has become an important issue. It is evident that some religious groups use various means to convert people of other religions without giving them an opportunity to obtain a proper understanding about the path they are asked to accept. The Buddha was really unique in this respect, for he never showed even a slight interest in converting people of other religions to his own with the





intention of increasing the number of followers. It is a human right that anyone has the right to accept and follow any religion according to one's own wish. Forced, coerced or unethical conversion is not at all acceptable. To be acceptable, conversion should be effected through conviction. This has to be carried out by educating people about the faith to which they are expected to be converted. Forced, coerced or induced conversion, exploiting poverty, ignorance, or tempting by offering material benefits etc. are utterly deplorable

Social Stratification

Whatever social system that brings forth divisions in society based on birth, class, race, status or power is detrimental to integrity in a society without which social happiness becomes a mere dream. Such divisions in society are detrimental to equal enjoyment of societal privileges by all members. And is commonly known as social stratification. Social stratification is a consequence manifested by the existence of social groups which are unequal in terms of status, power or privilege. (As Chris Barker has

observed, "When differences lead to greater status, power or privilege for some groups over the other, it is called social stratification". Barker, Chris. *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice*. (London: Sage). p 436.)

When such a system exists in a society, the higher group gets the opportunity to enjoy all the social privileges while the lower group suffers from being deprived of most of them. This results in many social problems such as poverty, physical as well as psychological ill-health, theft and crimes etc., which can be considered as stumbling blocks to the progress and development of a society. Moreover, this situation also goes against social justice principles which "provide a way of assigning rights and duties in the basic institutions of society and ... define the appropriate distribution of benefits and burdens of social cooperation". (John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* 1971. P. 4).

Buddhism, of course, is a religion which severely criticizes social stratification based on discrimination of higher and

lower groups of citizens, and tries its best to socialize the principle of social justice. Indian society at the time of the Buddha was under a system of social stratification based on the caste system which originated from race prejudice held by early migrant Aryans who dominated the original inhabitants of India and established their own social hierarchy backed up by their religion. Race prejudice was born in the mind of the Aryans as there were characteristics that distinguished them from the original inhabitants. The Vedas, the sacred scriptures of the Aryans, refers to particular characteristics that made Aryans different from indigenous people, i.e. Indus Valley people. Terms used to name such distinguishing characteristics include kala-varnah (dark skinned), anasih (noseless), Sisinadevah (phallus worshipers), and ayajvan (non-sacrificers). Colour was the most distinguishable feature. The indigenous people were black in complexion, and the Aryans who were of fair complexion treated the conquered aboriginal race as inferior to themselves.

Though at the beginning the division between Aryans and non-Aryan in India emerged out of colour difference (varna-bheda), it later evolved into a caste system which consisted of four castes - Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Kshudra. This was due to the attempt by the Brahmanas' (priestly class) to maintain their supremacy in society with their religious power. In a real sense, this caste system developed into stratification when the Brahmanas introduced and ascribed duties (Swa-dharma) to each social group. There is no doubt that they established this system of castes, with duties related to each cast in the society, by means of assigning divine origin to it. It seems that the Brahmins - considered as the religious authority - ascribed divine creation to this social system in order to get the highest positions in society.

The Buddha as a religious master showed great concern about social integrity, which is immensely instrumental to both individual and social wellbeing. Hence he took all possible steps to demonstrate the harmfulness of this anti-social system of social stratification based on birth, which gave rise to numerous ills and conflicts in contemporary Indian society. As an initial step in the right direction he opened the doors of his dispensation to all members of the society. Being a very liberal teacher the Buddha did not lay down conditions based on caste distinctions as pre-conditions for admission into his Order. Taking into account the stranglehold the caste system had at that time, the

Buddha's "public call" to all to enter into his Order undoubtedly appears to be a revolutionary step.

There is no secrecy, selectiveness or any discrimination behind this public appeal. Instead, he bravely openly expressed that all members of the four castes irrespective of their name and clan (nama-gotta) could become recluses claiming that they are the recluses of Sakhyaputra (samana sakhyaputtiya). This designation given to them can also be considered as a very brave step taken by the Buddha against the prevailing system of social stratification. The Buddhist community of the Sangha consisted of monks who entered into the Buddhist Order from all four castes. The Buddha is believed to have been born in the Sakya clan, well-known among the Khattiyas. Yet, the openness of the Buddha regarding the caste issue is evident from his adopting a new designation - "Sakyaputtiya" - to identify his disciples.

Noteworthy contribution by Buddhism to wipe out social discrimination is seen in the successful attempt taken by Buddhism to make people understand the futility and irrationality of their claim to superiority on the very flimsy ground of birth. Buddhism put forward different reasonable and logical arguments against the caste system. Referring to Buddhist arguments leveled against the Brahmanic system of social stratification, the Venerable Dr. Petegama Gnanarama points out that "The arguments that Buddhism brings forth against caste

are so forceful and valid that they can be applied in toto to the racial and tribal claims of superiority in the context of the modern world" (An Approach to Buddhist Social Philosophy, (Singapore: Hong Siew Noi Foundation, Second Edition, 2005. P.126). Arguments adduced by the Buddha against social stratification based on the birth of a person are very pertinent even today to debunk the misconception that among human beings there are different species; and to affirm the sameness of all human beings on biological grounds. The Buddha's thesis in this respect is that every human being is equal in relation to humanity or, in other words, that no one is superior to another in humanity.

We have already discussed the destructive factors that lead to disintegration among humankind as Buddhism has anticipated. A characteristic of Buddhism is that it not only criticizes the corruptive factors but also points out the ways and methods through which people can achieve their desired purpose. In this respect, Buddhist introduction of the concepts of four ways of hospitality (catu sangaha-vatthu), four cardinal virtues (cattaro Brahmavihira), and interpersonal relationships based on family ties can be considered as the constructive contribution made by Buddhism towards social integrity in society.

As a mother would risk her life to protect her child, her only child, even so should one cultivate a limitless heart with regard to all beings".

The Buddhist Concept Of Development

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“Tha h a g a t h a p p a v e d i t o
D h a m m a V i n a y o V i v a t o V i r o c a t h i
N a P a t i c c h a n n o”

According to this saying the doctrines and rules preached by the Buddha shine only unveiled and not closed. This means that they are open for critical examination and not to be accepted dogmatically and uncritically. Buddhism has come to us as an anthropocentric religion. The teachings of Buddhism are for critical and open-minded people to learn and practice.

“P a ñ ñ a v a n t h a s s a y a m
B h i k k h a v e D h a m m o N a y a m
D h a m m o D u p p a ñ ñ a s s a”

In this religion we find teachings related to the development of spiritual and material life of people. They are addressed to wise people who have both eyes – to see the success of this world and the next world as well.

Buddhist concept of
development addressed to wise

People guides people on the wisdom way for affluence and fame. For instance, the Buddha has instructed thus:

“Utthanavato satimato -
Sucikammassa nisamma karino

Saññatassaca dhamma jivino
- Appamattassa yasobhi vaddhati”

If someone has the qualities of effort, awareness, purity in action and carefulness in management, restraint, righteousness and is proactive his glory develops. The Buddha adds:

“Saddho sila sampanno -
Yassa bhoga samappitha

Yam padesam bhajati - Tattha
tattheva pujito”

If someone has rational faith or saddha, virtuous, glory and wealth wherever he goes he gets respect from others. According to these teachings the good life depends on their attempts. However development is a concept people understand in many ways. Some people used to think it is mainly an economic phenomenon. When a country (or an individual as the case may be) is financially successful, affluent in material terms it meant development to many people. Thus many secular ideologists encourage getting affluence competitively. Consequently, the more powerful and shrewd have engaged in ruthless pursuit of wealth. However it seems that this lopsided definition is being increasingly rejected, at least conceptually, by more perceptive people. Buddhist economic

teachings aren't guiding to fulfill unlimited desires, but limited desires without attachment. This implies successful mundane life with good economic management for the benefit of supra mundane life.

“Ithi Kho Bhikkhava
Daliddiyampi Dukkham
Lokasmim Kamabhogino”

Simply it means that poverty is suffering for mundane or lay life. According to that there is a way to make mundane or lay life happy. There are many teachings in Buddhist philosophy relevant to this goal. They elaborate the founding principles of economic success and the characteristics of balanced life. As examples, these discourses could be emphasized:

Vyagapajja Sutta In Sanyutta
Nikaya,

Rasiya Sutta In Sanyutta
Nikaya,

Anana Sutta In Anguttara
Nikaya,

Sigalaka Sutta In Digha
Nikaya,

Pattakamma Sutta in
Anguttara Nikaya etc.

All those discourses contain guidelines for comfortable mundane life with happiness. Rasiya sutta, for instance, explains the Buddhist perspective on earning and consumption. The guidelines given can be categorized as thus:

Earning and Consumption

Production Earning wealth
righteous way without violence

Consumption Be happy and
content Distribution devide wealth
and do merits as well

Consumption philosophy Not
entangled, not confused, aware
of the dangers and guided by the
wisdom of renunciation.

“Dhammena Bhoge Pariyeseti,
Asahasenati, Imina Pathamena
Thanena Pasamso, Attanam
Sukheti Pineti. Imina Dutiyena
Thanena Pasamso, Samvibhajati
Puññani Karototi, Imina Tatiyena
Thanena Pasamso, Teca Bhoge
Agathito Amucchito Anajjhapanno
adinava Dassavi Nissarana Pañño
Paribhuñjati, Imina Catutthena
Thanena Pasamso, Ayam Gamini
Kamabhogi Imehi Catuhi Thanehi
Pasamso”

If a layman could organize his economic affairs well according to this discourse it is very pleasant achievement. It is claimed in the Kama Bhogi sutta that if one follows this economic plan and lives conducts his life he is great and superior.

“Aggo ca Settho ca pamokkho
ca uttamo ca pavarocati”

Buddhism is not against acquiring wealth and live happily and socially without creating trouble or harm to others.

Now the trend is to view development as a multi-dimensional process involving reorganization and reorientation of

entire economic and social system. It is a process of improving the quality of all human lives with three equally important aspects:

1. Raising people's living levels, i.e. Incomes and consumption, levels of food, medical services, education through relevant growth processes.

2. Creating condition conducive to the growth of people's self-esteem through the establishment of social, political and economic systems and institution which promote human dignity and respect.

3. Increasing people's freedom to choose by expanding the range of their choice variable, e.g. varieties of goods and services.

Presently there is much interest in the alternative view of sustainable development, defined as development that is likely to achieve lasting satisfaction of human needs and improvement of the quality of life and encompasses.

- Help for the very poorest who are left with no option but to destroy their environment to survive.

- Idea of self – reliant development with natural resources contains.

- Cost effective development using different economic criteria to the traditional – I .e. development should not degrade development.

- Important issues of health control, appropriate technologies,

food self – reliance, clean water and shelter for all.

- People centered activities are necessary – human beings are the resources in the concept.

Forming a concept of development in the light of Buddhist teachings need to be guided by its middle path philosophy. It has to be a balance between mundane and supra mundane goals envisaged in Buddhism .However there has arisen an initial problem of some writers questioning the one to one terminological compatibility between modern developmental thought and Buddhism. They have argued that there is no such a concept in Buddhism. Some even argued that generating development consciousness is not possible by Buddhism among its practitioners. One should not jump into such consciousness simply because the concept of development is a recent development in the western thought. There is no shortage sermons that deal with material and spiritual progress of man in the Buddhist scripture and there are terms directly implying development more effectively than western thinking.

It is a fallacious notion to hold that Buddhism is promoting only spiritual development .Buddhism holds that it is practically impossible to think of spiritual development to arise in an economically and social miserable context . The Buddha has openly recognized the importance of materially wholesome conditions conducive for spiritual cultivations. He has said:

“Monks there are these five unfavorable times for (spiritual) striving. What five? Herein a monk is old A monk is ill ... there is famine ... fear is about perils of robbers, and the country folk mountain their carts and drive away ... again the monks the order is rent, then there is reviling ... accusation

Monks, there are these five favorable times for spiritual striving. What five? Herein monk is young ... a monk has health and wellbeing ... there is no famine and crops are good, food is easy to get... men dwell in friendly fellowship together ... again monks the order dwells in friendly fellowship together

Poverty, in fact, was never glorified by the Buddha. He even claimed that it was suffering for lay people. On the other hand, having rightfully earned wealth is one form of happiness. Happiness of having rightfully earned wealth provides the happiness of consumption, happiness of not getting indebted and happiness of guilt free life. He made economic concerns of people stand on a correct footing and live a successful life. “Poverty and getting indebted are woeful” the Buddha said. Poverty is seen as one of major causes of crime. The Buddha encouraged people to get rich live a successful life. He made economic concerns of people stand on a correct footing and gave a new meaning to affluence. The Buddha did not condemn riches but associated with many rich people of the day. He enlightened them of good things in life and made them humanitarian, religious and positive member of society.



The Buddhist term for development is Samadhi. Vuddhi and vepullata are also terms used to explain the concept of development. The Buddha has stated that there are two types of vuddhis and vepullatas; that of material things (amisa) and that of virtues or knowledge (Dhamma). The significant difference of the Buddhist concept from the classical western concept of development is that the Buddhist samiddhi is a balance of material and spiritual success which is achieved only through righteous means. Moreover, it contains exactly what sustainable development envisages. To illustrate this, the life goals declared by a Buddhist millionaire and approved by the Buddha can be quoted Anathapindika, an exemplary Buddhist laymen told the Buddha that he always wished.

1. To acquire wealth by lawful means and to be a rich persons.

2. To live happily with relatives and teachers, and to be of good reputation.

3. To live a long life.

4. To be reborn in heaven.

These goals show a balanced view of successful life. They aim at beautiful and enjoyable achievements both here and hereafter. They do not show any immoral tendency even when taking about economic success. And no ascetic or unnecessarily austere tendencies are seen either. The Buddha commenting on these goals, added that the theory could be achieved only by people who satisfy four moral values, namely rational faith (Saddha), virtue (sila), generosity (caga), and wisdom (pañña). These goals and means to achieve them are all set in a social setting. The benefits of the wealth achieved are to be shared, if at all to bring any happiness to the individual.

According to the Buddhist teachings it is a degenerative and deplorable practice to consume wealth selfishly neglecting ones relatives who suffer poverty. One chives fame of being a good person also within a social setting. His moral happy life here will result in his rebirth in a heavenly realm. Thus the life goals presented in the above conversation seems to bring Buddhism closer to the concept of sustainable development.

In another context, he a Buddha identifies a longer list of “desirable of the world” for lay people. He enlists

Wealth
Health
Noble life
Learning
Dhamma
Beauty
Virtue
Friends and
wisdom

as the life goals of laymen. One may clearly observe here that the Buddhist lay life envisioned by the Buddha is not similar to the life of a monk. Laymen are not renunciates and they have to achieve their spiritual goals within their social environment. Therefore, these goals outline effectively the nature of the Buddhist lay life. Laymen who form the majority in the Buddhist community are given practical goals to strive for. Nevertheless, all these goals are to be achieved only by righteous means. Thus it is clear that it is natural and rational for a lay Buddhist to have developmental goals such as affluence, good social relationships, fame, good health, longevity and to be born in heaven as a result of his moral life. This sufficiently defines the content of the Buddhist concept of development at individual level. Buddhist socio-economic and political philosophy sets the social aspect of development. Striving to materialize these goals is the Buddhist laymen contribute to sustainable development.

The modern sustainable development theorists may find that the Buddha's view of development is in hundred percent agreements with their concept. For instance the Buddha's vision of the economic success will raise the standard of living of people. And his socio-political ideals are compatible with any attempt of promoting self-esteem of people too. The Buddha's broad views of multi-faceted education and encouragement in enterprise etc. will definitely increase the varieties of goods and services which, in

effect, increase choices of people. With his emphasis on recycling, reuse and non-pollution the environment and the entire world system will also be benefited. Moreover, his ethics of middle path will discourage exploitation of resources and control uncontrolled consumption.

The Buddha has not only defined development but also has recommended ways of achieving it. He has given guidance to achieve sufficient economic success through skillful and humanitarian means. There are encouraging stories told by the Buddha on how some people became rich without even having a cent to invest except for their intelligence. The main thing that a poor person has to realize is that poverty, as everything else, is impermanent, and therefore, can be changed. He should never passively accept his poverty ascribing it to kamma or fate. He must realize that in his personality there are elements called *Arabbha dhatu* (element of initiation) and *parakkama dhatu* (element of strength). With such confidence one has to use his intelligence and available resources to wrestle against poverty. The Buddha says, if one possesses the following four endowments one can become economically successful.

1. Industriousness (*utthana sampada*)
2. Watchfulness and conservation (*Arakkha sampada*)
3. Good friends (*kalyana mittata*)
4. Balance livelihood (*samajivikata*)

If one has these at hand, wealth accrues to him as the beehive of industrious bees or anthill of white ants. Modern management gurus may realize that these are not religious morals that make a person passive to his poverty and suffer blaming his past kamma or fate. These will not only motivate a person but remind him what sort of resources he has to think of as well. Ethics in suttas like *karaniyametta* insist on characteristics like courage, honesty, listening, restraint, resilience and compassion. The Buddha has instructed that people should repair and reuse and not destroy resources.

There are four methods to protect wealth and heritages mentioned at the *Anguthara nikaya Kula sutta*. They are

- Provide for exhausted wealth.
“*Nattham Gavessathi*”
- Repair decayed wealth.
“*Cinnam Patisam Karothi*”
- Know the limit consumption.
“*Parimitha Paribhujanta Honthi*”
- Appoint a moral person to manage wealth.
“*Silavantham Iththim Va Purisam Va adhipacce Thapethi*”

One may wonder how religious values could be incorporated with development thinking without disturbing the ambitious and aggressive competition in the business world.

This argument is based on the wrong assumption that what is happening in the business world right now is perfectly healthy. Recent financial crises have shown that things have gone out of control and human greed uncontrolled has created chaos in the world. So the necessity of values is increasingly recognized.

“We should bring a human-based value philosophy to a value neutral economic culture,” says Lloyd M. Field. Modern economic cannot offer any insight in this as it has accepted from the beginning that value cannot solve the problem. Adam Smith, the father of modern has admitted that man is incapable of restraining his own passions. He argued the competition will reduce disruptive effect of blind obedience to one's own passions. He was only thinking keeping price levels down of commodities and not on the benefit of culture and quality of human life. History has proven that value free economic has failed curbing exploration and selfish men have manipulated business world to their gain and disaster of others. Buddhist development thought seems relevant in this regard. It has provided a way of life based on values derived from a rational and scientific inquiry into reality. Therefore, Buddhist economics or, to be more accurate, Buddhist economic philosophy, should be able to integrate right view with right livelihood emphasizing the importance of living happy and successful life in a social context. The Buddhist

concept of middle way avoids the extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification and helps people to generate desirable social consciousness replacing ignorance with knowledge, greed with generosity.

Buddhist development ideology may bring back sense into this greed ridden, mismanaged crazy world of business. Says Glen Alexandrine: what then can be Buddhist economist say personally to a strategic planner? Be idealistic. To be moral, ethical, selfless and giving may take more effort but it can also be good business. Be rational; keep account and calculate. But recognize that no matter how much of a system you take into account there is a greater part that is left out; you are human with many jobs to do and you can do but a percentage of each one.” Buddhist economics incorporates the values of middle path, compassion and balanced life into the pursuit of economic activity. It reminds us to observe reality in its totality; not to be led solely by our materialist paradigms and prejudices.

Buddhism aims at escalating people's self-esteem by suggesting better socio-political programmers. In the caste ridden feudalistic Indian society the Buddha affirmed that every human being is born with ‘human dignity’ which is beyond all social conventions of caste and class. He even argued against gender inequalities existed owing to religious misnomers

and male chauvinism. Buddhist political thought was probably the earliest expression of democracy even though the Buddha had to move mostly with power hungry monarchs. , Buddhism presented the first ever theory of contractual origin of political institutions which implies the significance of people's consent. And the Buddha's social philosophy has given a new humanistic meaning and the fragrance of mutual love to the network of social relations. Every man was given a responsible role within his family and the world at large.

The Buddha has taken care to encourage the rulers on welfare of people as their duty. Suttas like Kutadanta and Cakkavatti sinhanada have insisted that people's welfare was a responsibility of the government. It was the Buddhist king Asoka who established health care for men even animals at the state expense. In India and Thailand some Buddhist kings made it a norm to make themselves available for any citizen to have direct access. A Buddhist Jataka story implies that even dogs may depend on the king for their justified rights and for collective bargaining.

Buddhism has enriched its development philosophy with encouraging universal education. Education should not be class or gender selective. The Buddha has made it a duty of a monk to function as a teacher to make knowledge available for lay people.



So the monks all over Asia have made the monasteries seats of learning, increasing the literacy rate of Buddhist countries. The main characteristic of Buddhist learning, was freedom of enquiry, a rather unusual feature in a religion. Werner Heisenberg, a pioneer physical scientist, has noted it to be the main reason for scientific and technological advancement of Japanese people.

Dhamma is an essential ingredient in the Buddhist formula of development. For no reason whatsoever man should expect development through unrighteous means. It is said in Dhammapada “one should not wish for prosperity thorough unrighteous means.” One’s life must be guided by five precept and eightfold path. His social relationships are explain in 12 types of relationship in a six direction model in Sigalovada sutta.

1. <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/sltip/Ap-I-utf8.html>
2. *Anguththara nikaya. Gahapathi vaggaya. Anuruddha sutta. Page 146. Buddha jayanthi mudranaya.*
3. *Dhammapadha pali. Appamada vagga. 24 gatha. Page 30. Buddha jayanthi mudranaya.*
4. *Dhammapadha pali. Pakinnaka vagga. 303 gatha page 100. Buddha jayanthi mudranaya.*
5. *Marxist view of development emphasized mode of production-elements and activities necessary to produce and reproduce real, material life.*
6. *Angutthara nikaya. Dhammika vaggaya. Ina sutta, 118 page, Buddha jayanthi mudranaya.*
7. *Samyutta nikaya, gamini samyuththaya. Rasiya sutta, page 604, Buddha jayanthi mudranaya.*
8. *Anguttara nikaya, upali vaggaya. Kamabhogi sutta, page 326, Buddha jayanthi mudranaya.*
9. *Todaro ‘s three objectives of development*
10. *Anguttara nikaya.III.65F; Anguttara nikaya III. 103. PTS*
11. *Anguttara nikaya III.350” Daliddiyam Bhikkhave dukkham lokasmim gihino kamabhogino ”*
12. *Anguttara nikaya III.352. PTS*
13. *Diga nikaya.III.68. PTS*
14. *Anguttara nikaya.I.94. PTS*
15. *Anguttara nikaya.II.66. PTS*
16. *Anguttara nikaya.VI35. PTS*
17. *Anguththara nikaya. Abhiñña vaggaya. Kula sutta. Page 478. Buddha jayanthi mudranaya.*
18. *Lloyd M .Field. business and the Buddha (2007 Boston)p.5*
19. *Dhammapada verse. 84 “Na iccheiya adhammena samiddhimattano”. PTS*

Some recent activities of the All Ceylon Buddhist Congress

•Initiating the programme of converting Sinhala Maha Vidyalaya (High School) into a pirivena to provide Sinhala medium education.

•Siri Seelalankara primary pirivena, attached to Siri Vivekarama Temple of Wellawadiya, Kalkuda in Batticalo District was declared open by Hon Anuradha Yahampath, the Governor of Eastern Province on the invitation

of the Batticalo Branch of All Ceylon Buddhist Congress and the Buddhist Brotherhood.

•Bestowing of the first house built and laying of the foundation stone for the second house to be constructed.

•Opening ceremony of Siri Seelalankara primary pirivena, Kalkuda in Batticalo District





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