

TEACHING DHARMA MEDICINE IN MODERN CONTEXT ACHIEVING HARMONIOUS MENTAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Sharing experience from Indonesia

Willie Japaries, Wijono Sukaputra Agussalim, Aryaprana Nando, Effie Gunawan

*Nalanda Buddhist College of Indonesia

Corresponding Email: japariesw@yahoo.com

Abstract

Health or freedom from diseases is the paramount fortune (*arōgyā paramā lābhā*: Dhṛ 204) is the Buddha's precious reminder to all of us. As in the present era, many people striving for livelihood and for personal enjoyment but neglecting its negative impact on our health. The result is bringing suffering to not only the perpetrators, but also to the society and the environment.

The Buddha has told us many ways to avoid sufferings. Most of us only think about avoiding the mental suffering by meditation. In fact Buddha also teaches us to develop social well-being by practicing the five precepts (*Pancasila*) and ways to prevent diseases and improve health too.

In one occasion, Buddha also says, "Whoever, monks, would tend me, he should tend the sick." (*Vin. I:301-302*). So, it is an obligation for Buddhists to tend the sick. The Buddha also teaches many aspects of health and medicine, from the definition of health, up to the ways to achieve balanced health. Buddha has taught His disciples many ways and modalities to achieve good health, including not eating at night, practicing meditation, chanting, eat moderately, needling, massage, sauna, herbs, aromatherapy, urine therapy, etc,

In this context, we in Indonesia has established the first bachelor degree in Dharma Medicine (*Dharma Usada*) faculty in the Nalanda Buddhist College, located in the capital city of Indonesia, Jakarta. The courses consist of Indonesian traditional medicine, including the theory of Chinese medicine, *Jamu* (Indonesian indigenous

herbal therapy), acupuncture, tuina massage, therapeutic meditation, etc. The students since the first batch are mostly Moslems. As Buddhism is a life-scientific teaching, hence it can be studied by all without any serious hindrance. The graduates will become traditional healthcare practitioners organized by professional organizations regulated by the health ministry of Indonesia. Now, we are opening the postgraduate master degree of the Dharma medicine in our College.

The Dharma Medicine faculty has proved very successful in creating harmony among students coming from diverse religious and social background. Through studying Dharma Medicine the students can have the taste of Dharma that can bring health and harmony to the mental, physical and social development.

We are glad to share this experience to all hoping that the same faculty can be established in other Buddhist universities all over the world for the benefit of all.

Keywords: Dharma medicine, Nalanda Buddhist College, traditional medicine.

1. Introduction

The Buddha has put a great emphasis on the importance of good health. In the Tipitaka we can find many statements regarding health, the definition of good health, the causes of disturbances of good health and various methods to maintain health and alleviate unhealthy conditions (AN I:62, IV:54; Vin. I:198-250, 205, 279; Chikitsa Vidya; S.I:174, S.III:250, D.I:7, etc). Never the less, those teachings regarding healthcare do not pass into the realm of Buddhist institutions world wide, as mostly rely their healthcare to the formal healthcare providers. This situation must change in a worthwhile manner, in order to implement Dharma practices in its full capacity for the benefit of all. We in Indonesia has started to implement it since 2013 and so far has achieved benevolent results to share.

2. Dharma Medicine entry point

In order to usher Dharma Medicine into the existing education system, we have to master the contents of Dharma Medicine so that it can be accepted by the relevant stake holders. The key stakeholders to be advocated are the ministry of education and the ministry of health. To advocate harmony among different ministries

itself is a difficult task. As Dharma medicine is a trans-disciplinary subject, passing through the domain of religious affairs and the domain of healthcare education. It is fortunate that in Indonesia, the ministry of religious affairs especially the directorate general of Buddhist affairs possess the right to open and run religious education, so that Dharma Medicine has been established according to the regulation.

Opening the higher education in Dharma Medicine is one thing, and the right to practice Dharma Medicine in the society is under the auspices of the ministry of health. So that we have to advocate to the ministry of health to allow our graduates to practice Dharma Medicine as a healthcare provider. In this respect, the Dharma Medicine is completely fit to be regarded as traditional medicine, especially the traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) which has been practised and recognised worldwide including in Indonesia.

The Buddhist definition of good health is in complete fit to that of TCM, ie. emphasis on the dynamic balance between the mind and body, Yin (cold) and Yang (hot), as well as between life and environment. Illnesses tend to arise when this delicate equilibrium is upset, and Buddhist theory and practice aim to restore and strengthen this balance.¹ The Buddhist “Middle Way” is in line with the concept of Yin-Yang balance in TCM. The Buddha advocated the middle way of moderation, finding balance between the extremes of sensual indulgence and self-mortification. Maintaining *balance* is considered crucial to attaining physical and mental health, liberation and finally enlightenment.

Buddhism and TCM also converge when it comes to moderation of diet and lifestyle, which is thought to significantly contribute to one’s physical and mental health. An interesting point here is the reverence that is shown in China for Jivaka Komarabhacca, the important Father of Medicine in Thailand, herbal doctor and the

¹ Sokka Gakai International. October 1996. Available from (22nd Feb. 2021): <http://www.purifymind.com/BuddhismHealth.htm>.

personal physician of the Buddha. In the Chinese *Jivaka Suttas* it's written that Jivaka, the "Medicine King," was born with acupuncture needles and herbs in his hand.²

Sakyamuni, also called the Great Healer, had spent nearly four years in instructing Buddhist Medical System, with the aim to relieve the sentient beings from the sufferings of illness and to make it an important tool for disseminating Buddhism.³

Buddha also told us the causation of sickness including the external pathogenic factors like heat, cold, dampness, etc.⁴ Besides, Buddha has taught many ways and modalities to achieve good health, including not eating at night, practicing meditation, chanting, eat moderately, needling, massage, sauna, herbs, aromatherapy, urine therapy, etc.⁵ (AN I:62, IV:54; Vin. I:198-250, 205, 279; Chikitsa Vidya; S.I:174, S.III:250, D.I:7, etc). All those are natural way, using green environment friendly sustainable methods. When practiced accordingly one would achieve sustainable health up to the natural lifespan.

In order to propagate the universal virtue of Dharma medicine to the society, empowerment of the society through education is the key. In the pluralistic (especially in religions) society like Indonesia, one of the most suitable way to propagate the central idea of Dharma is through non-religious approach. We have done it through the faculty of Dharma Usada which teaches Dharma healthcare ie. healthcare depicted from Tipitaka. The bachelor degree faculty was established in 2013 and have gained popularity among Buddhists and non-Buddhists. By this approach, we could simultaneously propagate Dharma approach for the benefit of public health.

² TraditionalBodywork.com. Buddhism and traditional Chinese medicine/TCM. updated 24 April 2020. Available from (22nd Feb. 2021): <https://www.traditionalbodywork.com/buddhism-and-traditional-chinese-medicine-tcm/>.

³ Shaolin Temple (2017). Dhammanussati. Downloaded on January 2019. Available from: http://www.shaolin.org.cn/templates/EN_T_newS_list/index.aspx?nodeid=297&page=ContentPage&contentid=15619.

⁴ Dhammika S (2010). A guide to Buddhism A to Z. The Buddha Dharma Mandala Society, Singapore:27,213,218-219,312-313.

⁵ Loc. cit.

3. Participate in public health problems

As we have known that the main public health problems nowadays are mostly related to man made problems or related to the greediness and negligence of mind. For example, the top 10 causes of death in the society worldwide⁶ is related to cardio-cerebrovascular diseases ie. coronary heart disease and stroke, also metabolic diseases related to diabetes mellitus which are related to intake of unhealthy to much sweet, greasy foods causing atherosclerosis, inflammation of internal organs, and so on. The medical expert advice to prevent and treat them is always emphasizing on diet regulation. For diet regulation, the main obstacle is the mind that craves for tasty but unhealthy foods. So, the way to promote health is by cultivation of mind to control the craving sensation through the practice of meditation.⁷

By practicing meditation, not only one could control his/her craving, but would also achieve more harmonious relationship in the family and in the society, especially when one practices the five or more precepts as well. Many studies have proven the effects of meditation against stress related to various pathologic conditions and also beneficial impacts to social harmony.

Although meditation has been practiced for thousands of years, the meditative technique called the "relaxation response" was pioneered in the U.S. by Harvard doctor Herbert Benson in the 1970s. The technique has gained acceptance by physicians and therapists worldwide as a means of relieving symptoms of conditions ranging from cancer to AIDS.⁸

When our bodies are exposed to a sudden stress or threat, we respond with a characteristic "fight or flight" response. The "adrenaline rush" we experience is a result of

⁶ WHO (2020). 10 top causes of death. Downloaded on 18th February 2021. Available from: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/the-top-10-causes-of-death>.

⁷ Dhammika S (2010). A guide to Buddhism A to Z. The Buddha Dharma Mandala Society, Singapore:27,213,218-219,312-313.

⁸ Mitchell M. Dr Herbert Benson's relaxation response. Posted Mar 29, 2013. Available from (22nd Feb 2021): <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/heart-and-soul-healing/201303/dr-herbert-benson-s-relaxation-response>.

Wikipedia. The relaxation response. Last edited 12 Dec 2020. Available from (22nd Feb 2021): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Relaxation_Response.

the release of the hormones epinephrine(adrenaline) and norepinephrine. They cause an increase in blood pressure and pulse rate, faster breathing, and increased blood flow to the muscles.⁹

The relaxation response is a technique designed to elicit the *opposite* bodily reaction from the "fight or flight" response -- a state of deep relaxation in which our breathing, pulse rate, blood pressure, and metabolism are decreased. Training our bodies on a daily basis to achieve this state of relaxation can lead to enhanced mood, lower blood pressure, improved digestion, and a reduction of everyday stress.¹⁰

The teachings of Buddha reveal the step by step process of changing the state of mind for long lasting happiness. It makes the mind to become more positive and constructive so that the life experiences becomes more satisfactory and helpful for others.¹¹

In order to achieve the goals, we need to introduce it into the curriculum of educational institutions. We have established the first bachelor degree Dharma Usada (Dharma medicine) college in Jakarta since 2013.

4. Support from key stakeholders

As the faculty of Dharma Usada is an integration between Buddhism and health studies, hence in the preparation of the faculty establishment, both ministries ie. ministry of religion and ministry of health of Republic of Indonesia were involved. In the opening ceremony of the faculty, the officials from directorate of traditional medicine Indonesia ministry of health were also present, besides those from health professional organizations.

⁹ Wikipedia. Fight or flight reaction. Last edited 8 Feb. 2021. Available from (22nd Feb 2021): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fight-or-flight_response.

¹⁰ Ratini M (reviewer) (2018). Meditation, stress, and your health. WebMD Medical Reference. Downloaded on January 2019 from: <https://www.webmd.com/balance/guide/meditation-natural-remedy-for-insomnia#2>.

¹¹ Chaudhry P (2015). Buddhism and Social Harmony – A Study of Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre. International Journal of Humanities & Social Science Studies (IJHSSS) A Peer-Reviewed Bi-monthly Bi-lingual Research Journal ISSN: 2349-6959 (Online), ISSN: 2349-6711 (Print) Volume-II, Issue-I, July 2015, Page No. 200-206.



Fig. 1. The opening lecture of Dharma medicine faculty on 9th September 2013, attended by officials from Ministry of Religion and Ministry of Health, as well as traditional medicine organizations representatives.



Fig. 2. The graduation ceremony of the first batch of bachelor in Dharma medicine (Sarjana Kesehatan Dharma) on 14th October 2017.

The first batch of graduates achieved the bachelor degree of Dharma medicine (Sarjana Kesehatan Dharma) on 14th October 2017. The graduates and students come from various religious background, including Moslem, Christian and also Buddhist. It is a symbolism of harmony through teaching of Dharma among various faiths.

All graduates are encouraged to follow ASEAN standard competency certification in traditional Chinese medicine exam organized by competency certification body recognized by Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture and Ministry of Health, so that they would be ready facing the era of globalization and propagate the spirit of harmony in Dharma medicine throughout the region and beyond.

Just recently in January 2021, the Dharma medicine faculty has been accredited by Indonesian Higher Education in Health Accreditation Board (LAMPTKes). So that we are ready to open the post graduate master degree in health (M.Kes)/ Dharma medicine which is now already undergoing serial seminars attended by more than sixty candidate students mainly from nursing profession. So that in the near future the faculty of Darma medicine will flourish widely in Indonesia.

So, from the above description it is obvious that through education of Dharma, especially the Dharma Medicine, we could simultaneously propagate Dharma approach towards sustainable personal health, harmonious human relationship within the goodness of all beings.

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XUANZANG’S SPIRIT: CONTRIBUTING THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN MODERN FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Ven. Dr. Thich Thanh Tam

Abstract

Despite the monumental changes that have transformed Asia during the past century and a half - modernization, globalization, and political and economic revolutions - the power of Xuanzang’s spiritual legacy appears undiminished, but also offers a opportunity to examine the confluence of religion, politics, tradition, and modernity in very specific cultural and historical contexts. *This article mentions the contributing of Xuanzang's spiritual legacy in the national development in China’s foreign relations today, especially in relations with India.*

Keywords: modern scientific light, Xuanzang’s spirit, national development, globalization, China’s foreign relations

1. Introduction

Under modern scientific light, what in Buddhism was once denounced as superstition by Chinese government at the beginning of the twentieth century is now celebrated as cultural heritage at the beginning of the twenty-first. The Chinese government has in recent years begun promoting Xuanzang as an emblematic and exemplary citizen. Party members, in the state-run press, regularly invoke the “spirit of Xuanzang” - a slogan meant to connote the qualities of devotion, bravery, diligence, and self-sacrifice. Like Confucius, in the international sphere, Xuanzang has become the bearer of China’s best intentions. Because he not only endured hardship for the greater good of the nation and worked tirelessly to enrich the intellectual and spiritual life of China but also nurtured international partnerships based on cultural exchange, mutual respect, and mutual enrichment.

For me, Xuanzang's life and literary legacy – one of the most celebrated monks, scholar and translator with his historic pilgrimage from China to India in the seventh century in the history of Asia - have left such a deep imprint on the Buddhist cultures of Asia. Just a few decades after the body of Xuanzang's work¹ had been brought back from obscurity, his long-lost physical remains were also unearthed by Takamori Takasuke on December 23, 1942,² and have been sought by various groups - religious and secular, national and transnational - in the service of sometimes starkly different agendas.

2. Xuanzang's life - one celebrated monk, scholar and translator

Xuanzang was a celebrated Buddhist monk, scholar and Chinese pilgrim to India who translated the sacred scriptures of Buddhism from Sanskrit into Chinese and founded in China the Buddhist Consciousness Only school (Yogācāra). His fame rests mainly on the volume and diversity of his translations of the Buddhist sutras and on the record of his travels in Central Asia and India – Records of the Western Regions of the Great Tang Dynasty - which, with its wealth of detailed and precise data, has been of inestimable value to historians and archaeologists.

Studying Buddhist philosophy but he was soon troubled by numerous discrepancies and contradictions in the texts; but not finding any solution from his masters, in 629 he decided to go to India to study at the fountainhead of Buddhism.

¹ The textual corpus of Yogācāra had been reintroduced to China by the late-Qing-era lay scholar Yang Wenhui (1837–1911), who had retrieved a collection of Yogācāra texts from Japan in the late nineteenth century. During this same period, Xuanzang was also introduced to Europe through translations of his travelogue, Great Tang record of the western regions, first into French by Stanislas Julien in 1857 and then into English by Samuel Beal in 1884. Beal went on to translate Huili's biography of Xuanzang in 1911.

² Takamori Takasuke (d. 1954), a commanding officer of Japanese soldiers stationed in Nanjing, was overseeing the construction of an Inari Shinto shrine just outside the city's southern gate. While excavating the shrine's foundation, his men discovered the crypt of an old Buddhist stupa. Inside a stone sarcophagus they found two nested boxes, the outer of bronze, the inner of silver. The inner box contained one small gold Buddha statue, several bronze and ceramic implements, hundreds of coins, and an offering of wheat grain. A separate copper box enclosed a small shard of bone, grayish brown in color and roughly rectangular in shape. Two inscriptions carved into the walls of the sarcophagus, one dating to the eleventh century, the other to the fourteenth, identified the bone as a skull fragment of the famous Tang-dynasty monk Xuanzang 玄奘 (600?–664). (Jan Kiely and J. Brooks Jessup, 2016, p.143.

He traveled along the Silk Road; survived the Taklamakan Desert and continued through the high and harsh mountains of Tian Shan. Through countries in the Silk Road ruled by powerful leaders who sometimes wanted to keep him in their kingdom rather than allow to travel on, but his intelligence and calm devotion to Buddhism convinced these leaders to help him to reach India, Nepal, and then to Nalanda where he spent many years living with the greatest teachers and thinkers of this time. Xuanzang in India visited all the sacred sites connected with the life of the Buddha and the major portion of his time, however, was spent at the Nalanda monastery where he perfected his knowledge of Sanskrit, Buddhist philosophy, and Indian thought.

After an absence of 16 years, Xuanzang returned to Chang'an, the Tang capital; and the rest of his life was spent in teaching, advising and translating manuscripts. Following his journey, Buddhism became more prevalent and more widely understood in China and subsequently elsewhere in the world. The record of his pilgrimage – the Great Tang record of the western regions - helps us to understand Buddhism and the cultures along the Silk Roads.

3. Unearthed Xuanzang's relic – a spiritual legacy

After returning from India, Xuanzang presided over translation teams at Hongfu Temple and Ci'en Temple, both in the Tang capital of Chang'an³. The final five years of Xuanzang's life were spent at the Yuhua Palace, about forty-five miles north of Chang'an. His body was returned to the capital and buried in the eastern suburbs of Chang'an at a place known as the White Deer Plateau, following his death in 664. Tang emperor Gaozong later had Xuanzang's remains relocated to a site several miles south of the city, near the foot of the Zhongnan Mountains.⁴ The stupa and the temple Xingjiao established, although no one knows for sure, at the grave

³ Modern-day Xi'an.

⁴ Hui-li and Jung-hsi Li, 1995, 338–39. Liu Shufen has argued that Xuanzang was caught up in a series of political purges during the final years of his life. The decision to disinter (and thus desecrate) his remains, she suggests, was part of a larger effort to discredit Xuanzang and disavow his legacy. See Liu Shufen, 2009, 1–97.

may have been destroyed two hundred years later when the infamous rebel Huang Chao besieged and occupied Chang'an from 880 to 883.⁵

According to the inscription carved on the side of the Nanjing sarcophagus in 1027 and a thirteenth-century gazetteer for the city of Nanjing, during Huang Chao's rebellion, Xuanzang's remains were surreptitiously moved from Xingjiao Temple to Zige Temple, a small complex deep in the Zhongnan Mountains. There the relics lay until a monk by the name of Kezheng from Nanjing's Changgan Temple happened upon the dilapidated remains of Zige Temple a century later, in 988. Kezheng reportedly salvaged a piece of Xuanzang's skull, brought it back to Nanjing, and interred it in a stupa on a hill to the east of his monastery.⁶

In Nanjing, Changgan was one of the most prominent Buddhist temples, famous for its towering stupa that purportedly contained a portion of the Buddha's relics distributed by Aśoka.⁷ Xuanzang's reliquary was relocated next to the Meditation Hall on the southern hill of the temple complex in 1386.⁸ The entire temple was razed in the middle of the nineteenth century, when Nanjing served as the capital of the iconoclastic Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, with the exception of the hall standing in front of Xuanzang's stupa. The significance of the site was gradually forgotten until Japanese troops sank their shovels into the southern hill in the winter of 1942.

⁵ The monks and officials affiliated with the modern incarnation of Xingjiao assert that the stupa itself was never destroyed and still contains the nearly complete (minus the skull fragment) remains of Xuanzang. The skull bone, they say, was given to Zige Temple in the ninth century, but the rest of Xuanzang's bones remained undisturbed at Xingjiao Temple. See Fan Yaoting, 1997. For a review of the debates surrounding the early history of Xuanzang's relics, see Huang Yunxi, 2007, 1–31.

⁶ The account of how Xuanzang's relics ended up in Nanjing requires several leaps of faith. There is no reliable evidence that the relics were ever moved from Xingjiao Temple or that the relic obtained by Kezheng in the Zhongnan Mountains came from Xuanzang's skull. The whole story could be based on a series of misunderstandings, or it could be willful fabrication. In a sense, though, the real history of the relic is irrelevant. What matters is that for more than a thousand years, the bone from Nanjing has been venerated as an authentic relic of Xuanzang. Faith can transform even the wildest fiction into fact. No one ever seems to have questioned that the relic enshrined at Changgan Temple had come from the skull of the great Tang monk. (Jan Kiely and J. Brooks Jessup, 2016, 146.)

⁷ This relic, identified as a portion of the Buddha's skull, was unearthed in 2008.

⁸ The name of the temple changed to Tianxi Temple 天禧寺, and then again to Bao'en Temple in 1686.

After so many centuries sealed underground, the relic appears to have grown restless. On December 28, 1943, according to the original inscription for the Little Jiuhua stupa, nearly one month before the relic was to be enshrined in the new stupa, in Nanjing, a relic division ceremony was held and the relic was broken. Two portions remained in Nanjing, and a third was sent to Beijing so that “*the radiance of the numinous bone could illuminate both the north and the south.*”⁹ One of the two relics in Nanjing was interred in the stupa at Little Jiuhua, the other was sent back to Nanjing’s Department of Cultural Relics. The former has remained in its reliquary, but the latter has lived an unsettled existence.

This latter relic was in 1949 moved from the Department of Cultural Relics to the Nanjing Museum, where it was put on display together with ancient bronzes, paintings, and, later, depictions of the evolution of mankind and the ascent of Communism.¹⁰ At the behest of the Nanjing Buddhist Association,¹¹ in 1953, Xuanzang’s relic was relocated to Pilu Temple, which the CCP maintained as a showcase monastery for the benefit of visiting foreign dignitaries. This move followed the founding of the Chinese Buddhist Association (CBA) earlier that same year, with its mission of organizing Buddhists to participate in “movements for the welfare of the mother-land.”¹² In 1963, ten years later, during the relative calm between the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution, the bone was transferred yet again, to Qixia Temple, a historic monastic complex situated in the hills to the northeast of Nanjing. At that time, Qixia, along with other sites in China, Taiwan, and Japan, was preparing to host an international event commemorating the thirteen hundredth anniversary of Xuanzang’s death.¹³ Events in China were staged in part to

⁹ Chu Minyi, *Song sheng ji*, 4–5.

¹⁰ In 1951, a goodwill mission to China from India was shown the relic among the other exhibitions in the Nanjing Museum. See Sunderlal, 1952, 308–9.

¹¹ 南京市佛教界

¹² Holmes Welch, 1972, 21.

¹³ Wang Zhongde, 1999, 68. Commemorations were also staged in Beijing, Xi’an, Taipei, Japan, and India. The events at Beijing’s Fayuan Temple and Xi’an’s Xingjiao Temple were both billed as celebrations of shared Asian culture. Representatives from Cambodia, Ceylon, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, and Vietnam gave speeches in both locations, beneath banners reading “Strengthen the unity of the Asian

demonstrate the continued vitality of Buddhism in the People's Republic of China; the government was eager to discredit rumors that the regime was hostile toward religion and to highlight the Buddhist culture China shared with its political and economic allies.

International concerns about religious repression in China, however, were well founded. Just two years after gala Xuanzang celebrations in Nanjing, Xi'an, and Beijing, in 1966, Mao Zedong launched the Cultural Revolution. Fearing that the relic would be seized or destroyed during the increasingly virulent attacks on Buddhist monasteries, The Nanjing Buddhist Association had the relic moved from Qixia Temple to Nanjing's Cultural Management Board for safekeeping.

The Cultural Revolution lasted until 1976, but in 1973, Xuanzang's relic was taken out of government storage and enshrined at Nanjing's newly restored Linggu Temple - a modest though politically charged temple situated near Xuanzang's stupa on Little Jiuhua Mountain. With the onset of the Cultural Revolution, Linggu had ceased to function as a Buddhist temple; the monks were sent to labor camps, many of the temple's buildings and icons were destroyed, and the local branch of the Revolutionary Committee occupied the structures that remained. But just seven months after the normalization of Sino-Japanese relations, in May 1973, the Japan-China Buddhist Exchange Group¹⁴ was scheduled to tour Buddhist sites in several Chinese cities. Government officials sprang into action and, in the span of fifteen days, shortly before their arrival in Nanjing, restored Linggu to its former status. The Revolutionary Committee was removed and monks were reinstalled. A Ming-dynasty Medicine Buddha statue was sent from Beijing, and sutra cabinets were brought from Pilu Temple. A Memorial Hall for the Chinese monk - Jianzhen¹⁵ - credited with introducing the Vinaya tradition to Japan - was hastily established, and Xuanzang's relic was installed in a new Xuanzang Memorial Hall.¹⁶ Linggu was thus quickly transformed from a headquarters of the Communist

peoples!" and "Develop cultural exchange among all Asian nations!" See *Renmin ribao*, June 28, 1964, and July 6, 1964.

¹⁴ 日中仏教交流懇談会

¹⁵ 鑒真 (J. Ganjin, 688–763.)

¹⁶ Yang Yongquan and Chen Ruixin, 2001, 99–100.

Revolutionary Committee to a kind of Buddhist museum with exhibiting its showcasing the cultural and diplomatic ties between China, Japan, and India.¹⁷

Several other fragments of his skull were making the rounds in Beijing, during the same period that Xuanzang's relic was traveling around Nanjing. The Beijing relic was eventually divided into three more portions. The only fragments of this relic known to still exist in China were, in 1949, sent to Sichuan, on the eve of the Communist takeover of Beijing, and are currently enshrined at Wenshu Temple in the city of Chengdu.¹⁸ A second portion of the Beijing relic appears to have been lost during the Cultural Revolution, although some later Chinese sources claim that in 1952 it was given as a gift to Ceylonese monks.¹⁹ The final portion of the Beijing relic was initially taken to Tianjin but then, in 1957, was sent - or one might say returned - to India.

4. Xuanzang's spiritual legacy - a soft power used in China's foreign relation with India

During Xuanzang's pilgrimage to India he visited several sites where the Buddha's relics were enshrined, including a temple in Haḍḍa where a piece of the Buddha's skull, his *uṣṇīṣa*, was on display. Xuanzang brought with him not only

¹⁷ Linggu's Jianzhen memorial was later relocated, but the Xuanzang Hall remained and was recently renovated and expanded. On its main altar, before a statue of Xuanzang, sits a gilded reliquary filled with skull shards. These, it turns out, are not really Xuanzang's relics but decoys, taken from the exhumed corpse of a monk from Zhenjiang. The real relic is kept hidden and is brought out only on special occasions, but even this represents only one piece of the bone that was brought to Linggu in 1973. The rest of the Linggu relic, as we will see, now resides in Taiwan.

¹⁸ In 1949, Bai Jian, the same man who had brought the relic to Beijing six years earlier, sent three relic fragments, along with an account of their history, to Professor Meng Wentong (1894–1968) of Chengdu's Huaxi University. Bai Longping's handwritten account, The traces of the covert transfer of Tang Sanzang Dharma Master Xuanzang's numinous bone, March 1949, is reproduced in The late Mr. Meng Wentong's Buddhist affinity with Master Xuanzang, <http://hk.plm.org.cn/gnews/20101112/2010112214490.html> (accessed February 27, 2012).

¹⁹ On October 15, a ceremony was held at Beijing's Guangji Temple, and a Ceylonese delegation presented the CBA with a Buddha relic, a palm-leaf sutra, and a cutting from the Bodhi Tree. Xuyun (d. 1959), serving as the honorary president of the CBA, then presented the head of the Sinhalese delegation, the monk Dhammaratana, with a Buddha statue and a miniature silver stupa. Early accounts of this exchange make no mention of the contents of the stupa. See Chinese Buddhist Association, 1956, 176.

hundreds of Buddhist manuscripts but also a cache of one hundred and fifty grains of the Buddha's relics when returned to China. Now, people make pilgrimages to pay homage to Xuanzang's remains – his spiritual legacy,²⁰ thirteen hundred years later. Despite the monumental changes as globalization, modernization, and political and economic revolutions that have transformed Asia during the past century, devout Buddhists continue to venerate the remains of eminent monks as objects imbued with extraordinary powers.

The Chinese government has for now begun promoting Xuanzang as like Confucius, has become the bearer of China's best intentions to enrich the intellectual and spiritual life of China but also nurtured international partnerships based on cultural exchange, mutual respect, and mutual enrichment, just as the PRC is seeking to do. His role, in this telling of Xuanzang's story, as transmitter of Indian Buddhist traditions to China is often overlooked, while his efforts to introduce Chinese culture to India and the rest of Asia are highlighted.²¹ Chinese newspapers, therefore, reminded that Xuanzang was not only a student during his time in India but also a cultural ambassador and a teacher as well; had bested Indian monks in debate and even the elders at Nalanda and regional kings pleaded with him to remain in India. This narrative continues, the translations and commentaries, after returned to China, he produced led to great revivals of Buddhism in Japan, Korea, and Southeast Asia.²²

The PRC's gift of Xuanzang's relic to the government of India was part of a long process of political courtship. The two countries, throughout the 1950s, had been working to strengthen diplomatic and economic ties, and, Zhou Enlai, in June 1954, visited India for the first time to promote the newly agreed upon Five Principles

²⁰ Ever since the death, cremation, and division of the Buddha's remains twenty-five hundred years ago, relics have played a central role in the development of Buddhism. The Indian king Aśoka's legendary distribution of eighty-four thousand Buddha relics and Chinese emperors' veneration of the Buddha's finger bone during the Tang dynasty are some of the best known examples, but there are countless others.

²¹ On efforts to translate the into Sanskrit, see Paul Pelliot, "Autour d'une traduction sanscrite du Tao-tö king," *T'oung-Pao* 13 (1912): 351–430.

²² See also Jan Kiely and J. Brooks Jessup, 2016, 166 – 167.

of Peaceful Coexistence.²³ A Sino-Indian trade agreement, in October of that year, was signed in Beijing and Sino-Indian Friendship Associations were established in both countries. Elaborate CCP sponsored commemorations of traditional Indian culture ensued - the Ajanta cave murals in 1955, the life and work of Kālidāsa in 1956. In addition to demonstrating their respect for India's heritage, officials in Beijing were eager to emphasize the historical roots of the two countries' friendship. Xuanzang served as a ready-made symbol of China's indebtedness to Indian culture while also exemplifying China's native ingenuity and initiative.

Thus, Xuanzang had emerged as a figurehead for Sino-Indian cooperation. Temples associated with his life in Xi'an - Ci'en and Xingjiao Temples - were some of the first Buddhist institutions to be restored by the CCP and were regularly shown to visiting Indian dignitaries. This appears to have been an effective strategy. The leader of an international delegation, the Indian monk Bhadant Anand Kausalyayan (1905–1988), after touring China in 1956, enthused that “*Communists in China do not obstruct the growth or observance of any religion. I think the social conditions in People's Republic of China make it easier for the followers of different faiths - Buddhists, Muslims, Christians and Taoists to observe their precepts.*”²⁴ Reports such as this reflect what has been called the honeymoon period of Sino-Indian relations, when the slogan “Hindi-Chini-bhai-bhai”²⁵ was trumpeted by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and his administration.

It was in this context that, Kausalyayan's eleven-person delegation of Buddhist monks visited China in September and October 1956, and requested permission to enshrine a portion of Xuanzang's remains at Nalanda, the long-defunct Buddhist university in northern India where Xuanzang had studied for several years. Zhou Enlai offered the portion of the Beijing relics that had been enshrined at Tianjin's Dabei Cloister since 1945 and appointed the young fourteenth Dalai Lama

²³ These consisted of mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty, mutual nonaggression, mutual noninterference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence.

²⁴ “Hsuan Tsang's Relics: A Portion May Come to India,” *Times of India*, October 16, 1956.

²⁵ India and China are brothers.

to serve as China's emissary.²⁶ Along with the relic, Zhou Enlai sent copies of Xuanzang's translations, as well as three hundred thousand yuan and blueprints to be used for the construction of a Xuanzang Memorial Hall in traditional Chinese style.²⁷ On January 12, 1957, the relic was presented to Prime Minister Nehru in a ceremony at Nalanda's Mahavihara. Shortly thereafter, however, relations between China and India soured as territorial disputes arose over shared border regions. Thereafter, the joke goes, it was Hindi-Chini-bye-bye.

So, plans to construct a Xuanzang Memorial Hall were shelved until the Sino-Indian alliance was revived at the turn of the twenty-first century; Xuanzang's relic was kept in a crystal reliquary at the nearby Patna Museum. It emerged in 2006, "India-China Friendship Year," when, along with several other highly publicized demonstrations of mutual goodwill, efforts to complete the Memorial Hall were stepped up. A group of ten Chinese and Taiwanese monks, in July of that year, carrying a statue of Xuanzang sculpted from Chinese and Taiwanese clay, left Xi'an to spend four months retracing Xuanzang's journey to India for the official inauguration, and to tour the nearly complete Memorial Hall and admire the life-size statue of Xuanzang that stood near its entrance. The plaque on the statue's pedestal clarified Xuanzang's global significance: "*Xuan Zang belongs to a galaxy of world Citizens whose great mission was to interpret, for the good of mankind, sublime volumes of human civilization.*"²⁸ Thus, Xuanzang, it seems, was not necessarily Chinese and not necessarily Buddhist; he was simply one of the world's great intellectuals.

²⁶ The Dalai Lama, together with the Panchen Lama, had already been invited to Patna to attend ceremonies marking the twenty-five hundredth anniversary of the Buddha's birth.

²⁷ The official Chinese account of this series of exchanges is recorded on a stele created under the auspices of the PRC's State Administration for Religious Affairs and erected at Nalanda in 2006. The inscription, together with an English translation, is available online at <http://hk.plm.org.cn/gnews/2008118/200811885817.html> (accessed August 4, 2011).

²⁸ Jan Kiely and J. Brooks Jessup, 2016, 158.

5. Conclusion

For me, the Chinese Communist state was not the only ostensibly secular government engaging in relic diplomacy during this period. The British were sending Buddhist relics to India and Ceylon; the French sent relics to Cambodia; the Ceylonese gave relics to Vietnam and Japan; and the Nepalese offered relics to China. China, in turn, organized a grand tour of its tooth relic to Myanmar in 1955.

These nationalistic deployments of Xuanzang's story stand in an uneasy relationship with attempts to mold Xuanzang into a paradigmatic symbol of a unified, pan-Asian Buddhist culture. Since the end of World War II, the medieval monks have become modern exemplars of Asian solidarity. They have been apotheosized in elaborate public memorials and commemorations designed to highlight points of past cultural unity and generate positive models for future cooperation in Asia.

In short, Xuanzang - as a young monk - defied the Chinese emperor to leave China and study in India. His relics, more than a millennium later, have also traveled abroad, sometimes with the blessing of the Chinese authorities, sometimes without. This paper has surveyed some of the roles Xuanzang's relics have played in China's diplomatic relations with India. In keeping with the focus of this volume, I have centered my discussions on China and omitted other instances of Xuanzang's modern incarnations - the complicated and controversial history of his relics in Japan, his rediscovery in modern India, and the growing fascination with him in the West. There is also much more to be said about the place Xuanzang occupies in modern Chinese political discourse.²⁹

Thieu Long Temple, Vietnam, Pl. 2565

²⁹ On reading the *Journey to the West* as political allegory, see Rudolf G. Wagner, "Monkey King Subdues the White-Bone Demon: A Study in PRC Mythology and the Politics of the Historical Drama," in *The Contemporary Chinese Historical Drama: Four Studies*, 139–235 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

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KOTUHALAMAṄGALAM: A STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO JĀTAKA AṬṬHAKATHĀ

Ms. Megha Bhaurao Mandakini Tayade
Assistant Professor and Ph.D. Pali (Pursuing)
Department of Pali
University of Mumbai
meghabyade@gmail.com
meghaslectures@gmail.com
Contact no: +91 9960737546

Knock on the wood, if you find a penny pick it up, bad news comes in three, wish on the star, black cat crossing your path, broken mirror, 13 is unlucky etc. these are some of the top superstitions across the world and there are many such superstitious beliefs.

kotuhalamāṅgalaṃ means belief in superstitions. **Superstitions** are a type of folklore that relies on mistruths or breeds excuses for explainable events. Defined as "a belief that certain events or things will bring good or bad luck," superstitions aren't anywhere within the realm of provable¹. A superstition is a belief or practice resulting from ignorance, fear of the unknown, trust in magic or chance, or a false conception of causation².

Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā is a text of non-canonical Pāli literature. This literature comprises 547 previous birth stories of the *Buddha* as a *Bodhisatta* in various forms of human, animal, bird, etc., and can be seen performing his duties wisely fulfilling the perfections.

This research paper tries to further investigate various such beliefs with reference to the stories from *jātaka aṭṭhakathā* and will also highlight the scientific Buddhist perspective on all these beliefs along with recommendations given by the bodhisatta.

¹ "Superstitious States - Which US States Are Most Superstitious?," accessed December 29, 2020, <https://www.casino.org/features/superstitious-states/>.

² "Superstition | Definition of Superstition by Merriam-Webster," accessed December 29, 2020, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/superstition>.

Jātaka stories gives us a very detail information about various kind of superstitious beliefs prevalent in ancient India and which are still in practice in today's contemporary world. In this paper below superstitious practices are discussed in details,

- *maṅgalaṃ* (good omen),
- *avamāṅgalaṃ* (bad omen) and some
- *aññaṃ kotuhalamaṅgalaṃ* (other superstitious beliefs)

***maṅgalaṃ* (good Omen)**

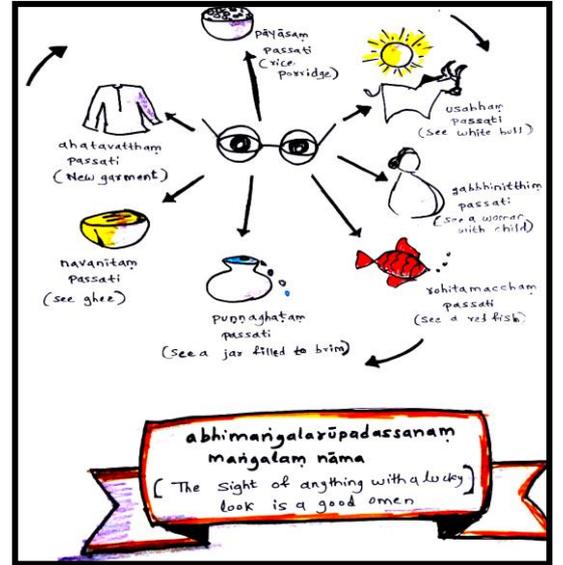
There are three types of good omen as, seeing anything lucky, hearing anything lucky or touching anything auspicious. Below is the list of good omens which are considered as a sign of good luck.

***abhimaṅgalarūpadassanaṃ maṅgalaṃ nāma*³ (the sight of anything with a lucky look is a good omen)**

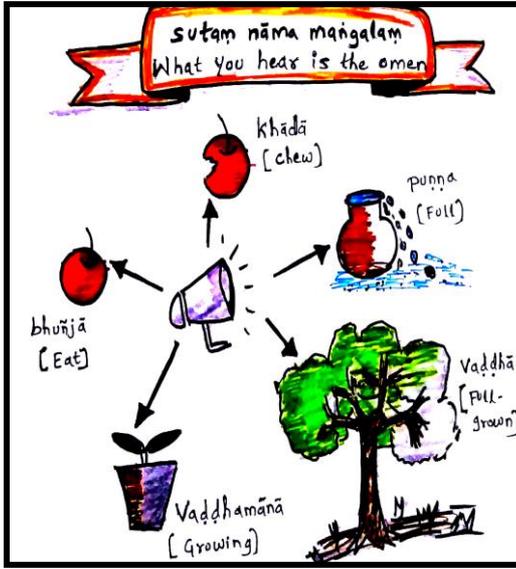
ekacco hi kālasseva uṭṭhāya

sabbasetam usabham vā passati, - suppose a man rise betimes and see a,

- perfectly white bull,
- *gabbhinithiṃ vā* - a woman with child, or
- *rohitamaccham vā* - a red fish, or
- *puṇṇaghaṭam vā* - a jar filled to the brim,
- *navanītam vā gosappiṃ vā* - new-melted ghee of cow's-milk, or
- *ahatavattham vā* - a new unwashen garment,
- or
- *pāyāsam vā passati* - rice porridge,



³ Mahāmaṅgalajātakavaṇṇanā (453)

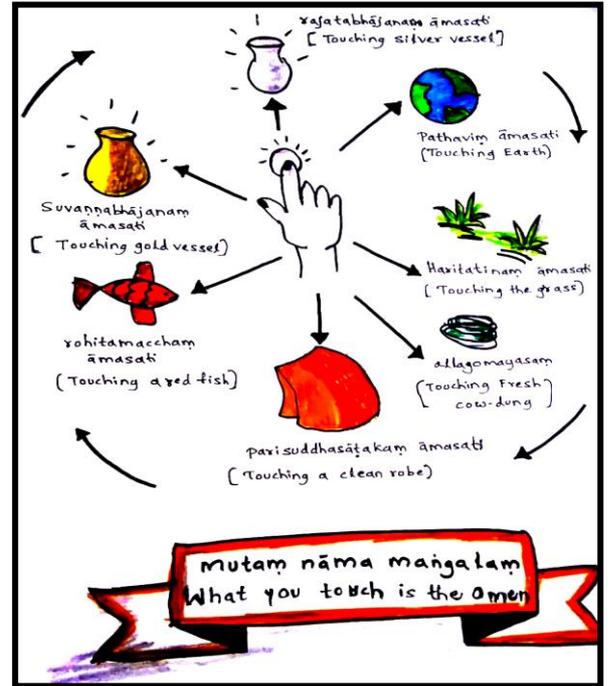


*sutaṃ nāma maṅgalaṃ*⁴ (what you hear)

- *pūrṇā* 'ti vadantānaṃ suṇāti - A man hears people saying "Full"
- 'vaddhā' ti - then he hears "Full-grown" or
- 'vaddhamānā' ti suṇāti, - "Growing," or
- 'bhuñjā' ti - he hears them say "Eat" or
- 'khādā' ti vadantānaṃ suṇāti, - "Chew"

*Mutaṃ nāma maṅgalaṃ*⁵ (What you touch is a good omen)

- *pathaviṃ āmasati*, - touches the earth, or
- *haritatinam* - touches green grass,
- *allagomayasm* - touches fresh cow-dung,
- *parisuddhasātakam* - touches a clean robe,
- *rohitamaccham* - touches a red fish,
- *suvaṇṇarajatabhājanam āmasati* – touches gold or silver food,



⁴ Ibid.,

⁵ Mahāmaṅgalajātakavaṇṇanā (453)

avamaṅgalaṃ (bad Omen)

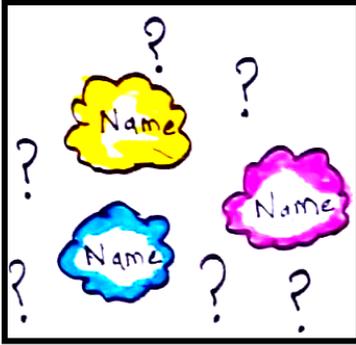
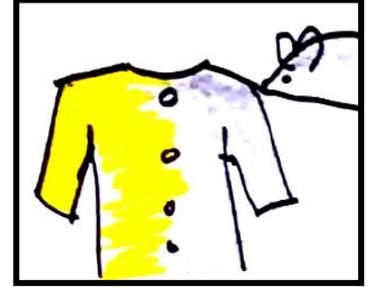
In *jātaka* stories we can find various events which were considered as bad omen or a sign of bad luck. Below are given few narratives of such incidences or practices that were prevalent in ancient India in short and have tried to put forth the superstitious beliefs like certain event, some sight, sound, object etc. can bring bad omen or ill luck which were considered as bad omen.

a) *sāṭakayugaṃ mūsikā khādiṃsu* (Cloth gnawed by the mouse):

*idañhi avamaṅgalaṃ kāḷakaṇṇisadisam puttadhītādīnaṃ vā dāsakammakarādīnaṃ vā nasakkā dātuṃ. yo hi idaṃ gaṇhissati, sabbassa mahāvināso bhavissati*⁶,

"They'll bring ill-luck; such an ill-omened thing is sure to bring a curse. It is out of the question to give them to any of my children or servants; for whosoever has them will bring misfortune on all around him.

These words were said by the *sāṭakalakkhaṇabrāhmaṇaṃ* (the Brahmin skilled in the prognostications which can be drawn from pieces of cloth), when he found that his cloth is been gnawed by the mouse, he starts worrying thinking that if this cloth remains in this house it will bring a great misfortune, this cloth should be taken away and should be thrown away in the charnel ground.



b) *nāmaṃ avamaṅgalaṃ* (bad omen in name)

*“ācariya, mayhaṃ nāmaṃ avamaṅgalaṃ, aññaṃ me nāmaṃ karothā” ti.*⁷

Teacher, my name is not auspicious it gives an idea of wickedness and ill-luck, give me a new name of a respectable character

These words were spoken by a young man whose name was “*Pāpaka*”, who wanted to get rid of his name and thus requested his teacher to change his name.

⁶ Maṅgalajātakavaṇṇanā (87)

⁷ Namāsiddhijātakavannana (97)

(c) *supinalakkhana* (bad omen in Dreams)

*“kuto me ācariyā sukhaṃ, ajjāhaṃ paccūsasamaye
soḷasa mahāsupine passiṃ, somhi tesam diṭṭhakālato
paṭṭhāya bhayappatto”*⁸.

"How could I sleep well, my directors?" answered the king. "For just at daybreak I dreamed sixteen wonderful dreams, and I have been in terror ever since!

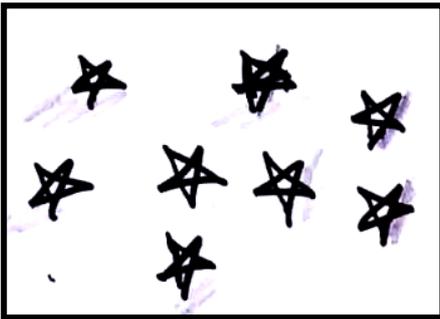
These words are uttered by the King of Kosala, who dreamed sixteen great dreams, and woke up in great fright. He was terrified to death and laid there on his bed. When the king told his dreams to the Brahmins and chaplain. They said, these are evil dreams and they can cause one of three calamities, -harm to your kingdom, to your life, or to your riches.



Other superstitious beliefs

a) *nakkhatalakkhana* : Unfavorable disposition of stars

*“ajja asobhanaṃ nakkhattaṃ, sace karoṭha, mahāvināsaṃ pāpuṇissathā”*ti āha⁹



the stars were not favourable for that day, and that, if they persisted, grave misfortune would be the result

Once a family fixes the marriage of their son, when the family comes back and consults about this ceremony with their family priest. After hearing, the priest said the above words and the family does not go on the marriage day. Father of the bride being felt insulted, gets her daughter married to some other man on the same day.

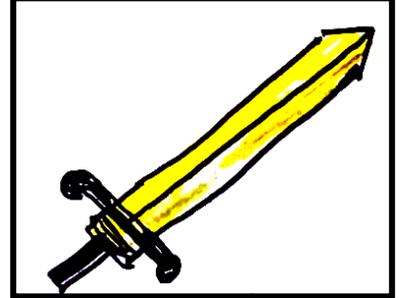
⁸ Mahāsupinajātakavaṇṇanā (77)

⁹ Nakkhatajātakavaṇṇanā (49)

b) *asilakkhana* (Selecting the lucky sword)

*asilakkhaṇapāṭhako brāhmaṇo asīnaṃ āhaṭakāle asiṃ up
asiṅhitvā
asilakkhaṇaṃ udāharati.*¹⁰

There was a brahmin retained by the King of Kosala because of his power of telling whether swords were lucky or not. This brahmin could by merely smelling the sword would tell whether it was a lucky one or not.



c) “*jīvatu, jīvatu,*”*ti* (Custom of saying “long life to you” for the sneeze):

*ekasmiṃhi divase satthā rājakārāme catuparisamajjhe nisīditvā dhammaṃ desento kh
ipi. bhikkhū “jīvatu, bhante bhagavā, jīvatu, sugato”*ti* uccāsaddaṃ mahāsaddaṃ ak
aṃsu*¹¹

One day, when Master sat discoursing with four persons round him, he sneezed. "Long life to the Blessed One, long life to the Buddha!" everyone shouted there.



There are many such *jātaka*'s which talks about various such practices. According to the teachings of Buddha, they are termed as “*micchāditthi*” (wrong view) and “*avijjā*” (ignorance). Bodhisattas reply for such situation is shown in the table given below.

¹⁰ *Asilakkhanajatakavannana* (126)

¹¹ *gaggajātakavaṇṇanā* (155)

Sr.no.	Kotuhalamaṅgalaṃ (Superstition)	Bodhisatta's reply
1	<i>abhimāṅgalarūpadassanaṃ maṅgalaṃ nāma</i> (the sight of anything with a lucky look)	- told the actual omens (blessings)
2	<i>sutaṃ nāma maṅgalaṃ</i> (what you hear is the omen)	- told the actual omens (blessings)
3	<i>mutaṃ nāma maṅgalaṃ</i> (what you touch is the omen)	- told the actual omens (blessings)
4	<i>sāṭakayugaṃ mūsikā khādiṃsu</i> (cloth gnawed by the mouse)	- we have no belief on superstition
5	<i>nāmaṃ avamaṅgalaṃ</i> (bad omen in name)	- a name only served to denote, and did not impute qualities
6	<i>Supinalakkhana</i> (bad omen in Dreams)	- you have nothing to fear from these dreams, you are not the first person to have such dreams
7	<i>Nakkhattalakkhana</i> (unfavorable disposition of stars)	- fool may watch for the lucky days
8	<i>Asilakkhana</i> (selecting the lucky sword)	- world was wrong in thinking things were definitely and absolutely good or bad in all cases alike
9	<i>“jīvatu, jīvatu,”ti</i> (custom of saying “long life to you” for the sneeze)	- "Why, Brothers, if one cry 'Long life!' on hearing a sneeze, does a man live longer or something like that

In these stories Bodhisatta guides people to make them understand the true omens blessings lies in respecting and honouring all the beings which we see, modest towards intelligence, not betraying anyone, having good friends who trust us, having faithful wife equal in age, having children's, all have faith and are virtuous of gentle birth, having a virtuous king who is true believer, also giving drink and food, flowers and garlands, perfumes, ever good, with heart at peace, and spreading joy around and getting a saintly company are true omens blessings¹².

¹² 156. “yassa devā pitaro ca sabbe, sarīsapā sabbabhūtāni cāpi. mettāya niccaṃ apacitāni honti, bhūtesu ve sothhānaṃ tadāhū”ti.
157. “yo sabbalokassa nivātavutti, itthīpumānaṃ sahadārakānaṃ. khantā duruttānamappaṭikūlavādī, adhivāsanaṃ sothhānaṃ tadāhu.
158. “yo nāvajānāti sahāyamatte, sippena kulyāhi dhanena jaccā. rucipaṅṅo atthakāle matimā, sahāyesu ve sothhānaṃ tadāhu.
159. “mittāni ve yassa bhavanti santo, saṃvissatthā avisaṃvādakassa. na mittadubbhī saṃvibhāgī dhanena, mittesu ve sothhānaṃ tadāhu.
160. “yassa bhariyā tulyavayā samaggā, anubbatā dhammakāmā pajātā. koliniyā silavatī patibbatā, dāresu ve sothhānaṃ tadāhu.
161. yassa rājā bhūtapati yasassī, jānāti soceyyaṃ parakkamañca.

As seen from above table is observed that Bodhisatta is very clear about the concept of superstition and is addressing the people in a very practical way. These answers given by the bodhisattas are straight to the point and are truthful advice for all the people who are trapped in this belief of superstition.

Analysis of root cause of Superstition:

As said by Buddha in the *paccupanavattu* (present life story) of *maṅgalajātakavaṇṇanā* that, *rājagahavāsiko kireko brāhmaṇo kotuhalamaṅgaliko tīsu ratanesu appasanno micchādiṭṭhiko aḍḍho* (at Rājagaha dwelt a Brahmin who was superstitious and held false views, not believing in the three Gems.) Here we can find that the reason for belief in superstition is *micchādiṭṭhi* (false view).

What is *micchādiṭṭhiko*¹³? ‘*Micchā viparītato dassanaṃ micchādiṭṭhi*¹⁴’, means to see contradiction in everything. There are two components *micchādiṭṭhi*: ‘*Diṭṭhiyā duve sambhārā vatthuno viparitatā*¹⁵’ means (i) wrong perception of the object and (ii) considering the wrong perception as truth.

Also *gāthā* no. 141 of *khaggavisanasuttaniddeso* talks about wrong view and its origin as given below in illustration 1 and 2. We can see that because of ignorance and lack of right knowledge people are not able to identify right and wrong events happening in their life and thus people tend to fall for wrong beliefs i.e. nothing but *diṭṭhi* or *micchādiṭṭhi* and that keeps on growing and one gets entangled in that and is trapped in his own wrong beliefs becoming hurdle for him leading him on

advejjhatā suhadayaṃ mamanti, rājūsu ve sothhānaṃ tadāhu.

162. “*annañca pānañca dadāti saddho, mālañca gandhañca vilepanañca.*

pasannacitto anumodamāno, saggesu ve sothhānaṃ tadāhu.

163. “*yamariyadhammena punanti vuddhā, ārādhitā samacariyāya santo.*

bhussutā isayo sīlavanto, arahantamajjhe sothhānaṃ tadāhū”ti. —

imā gāthā abhāsi.

164. “*etāni kho sothhānāni loke, viññūppasatthāni sukhudrayāni.*

tānīdha sevetha naro sapañño, - Mahāsupinajātakavaṇṇanā (77)

¹³ “And what, bhikkhus, is wrong view? ‘There is nothing given, nothing offered, nothing sacrificed; no fruit or result of good and bad actions; no this world, no other world; no mother, no father; no beings who are reborn spontaneously; no good and virtuous recluses and brahmins in the world who have realised for themselves by direct knowledge and declare this world and the other world.’ This is wrong view – Mahācattārisaka sutta (MN.117) and translation by Bhikkhu Bodhi

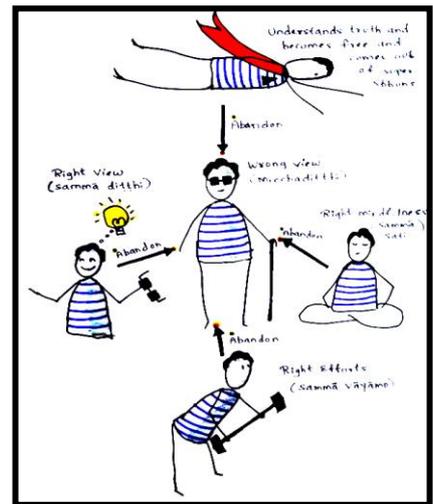
¹⁴ Nv.t

¹⁵ Abhidhammatthasaṅgaho

“One makes an effort to abandon wrong view and to enter upon right view: this is one’s right effort. Mindfully one abandons wrong view, mindfully one enters upon and abides in right view: this is one’s right mindfulness.

Thus these three states run and circle around right view, that is, right view, right effort, and right mindfulness.

Bodhisatta’s view on *Kotuhalamāṅgaḷaṃ* (belief in superstition)



1. Superstition and act of fraud: It is seen in *nakkhatajatakavaṇṇanā* that when the family fix the date of their sons marriage without consulting the family ascetic and just inform him after that. This ascetic feels that they are just doing formality by informing me, and out of anger he tells them that the stars are not favourable for them and can bring destruction during the day of marriage. Being afraid this family does not go during the marriage day and the father of the girl feeling insulted get her daughter married to some other man.

2. Business of superstition: It is seen in *asilakkhanajātakavaṇṇanā* that how this man use to bribe the people for getting their sword selected, he would declare that sword to be lucky from whom he use to receive bribe and for others he would declare them unlucky. Also we get one more example in *mahāsupinajātakavaṇṇanā* when king pasendi tells about his sixteen dream to the brahmins, they recommended him to offer



and the other world.’ This is right view affected by taints, partaking of merit, ripening in the acquisitions. “And what, bhikkhus, is right view that is noble, taintless, supramundane, a factor of the path? The wisdom, the faculty of wisdom, the power of wisdom, the investigation-of-states enlightenment factor, the path factor of right view in one whose mind is noble, whose mind is taintless, who possesses the noble path and is developing the noble path: this is right view that is noble, taintless, supramundane, a factor of the path. – Mahācattārisaka sutta (MN.117) and translation by Bhikkhu Bodhi

animal sacrifice. He then goes to Bodhisatta and narrates everything, to this he replies that, “you have nothing to fear therefrom (*itonidānanampi te bhayaṃ natthi*)”. So here we can see to earn money the brahmins took advantage of king’s fear.

3. Recommendations given by the *Bodhisatta*:

*na mayaṃ kotuhalamaṅgalikā, kotuhalamaṅgalaṃ nāmetaṃ na buddha
accekabuddhabodhisattehi vaṇṇitaṃ, tasmā paṇḍitena nāma kotuhalamaṅgalikena
na bhavitabban*

“We have no belief in superstitions about luck, which are not approved by *Buddhas, Pacceka Buddhas, or Bodhisattas*; and therefore, no wise man ought to be a believer in luck.”

Above statement is taken from *Maṅgalajātakavaṇṇanā* (*jātaka* no. 87), the statement is spoken by the *Bodhisatta* to the Brahmin, in response when he was told to throw away the cloth gnawed by mice, as it shall bring ill-luck and misfortune to the one who uses it. Thus, the above statement is a very strong and a firm statement from the Buddhist perspective, which reflects the ideology of the doctrine of the Buddha. At the end bodhisatta concludes saying,

na hi maṅgale kiñcanamatthi saccaṃ”ti

For in the omens is no truth at all."

*tasmīṃ pana diṭṭhasutamutappabhede maṅgale kiñcanaṃ ekamaṅgalampi saccaṃ
nāma natthi, nibbānameva panaṃkaṃ paramatthasaccanti.*

The omens in what is seen, heard, touched, tasted, smelled, understood by the six senses there is no truth in that at all, *nibbāna* i.e., supreme enlightenment is the one and only one foremost truth.

Conclusion

As we have seen many superstitious practices of ancient Indian which are still there in practice in modern India and also I must say in the entire world. As per the *jātakas* it is very clear that *Buddha, Paccekabuddhas, Bodhisattas* never believed

on superstitious, it is just the mind which is tainted with *michhādiṭṭhi* (false view), *avijjā* (ignorance), *bhaya* (fear) which leads to the wrong path. One has to develop their minds by acquiring *paññā* (right knowledge), and through *sammādiṭṭhi* (right view) should progress in their life spiritually as well as professionally and march towards the path leading to liberation (*nibbāna*) the ultimate goal of human existence.

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LEARNING TO LEARN

Zoltan Cser

director of Dharma Gate Buddhist Church, vice rector of Dharma Gate Buddhist College (Hungary) and PhD student of MCU International Buddhist Studies College (Thailand)

Introduction

If we consider the most relevant issues of our time, one of the most important points is education. With proper education, we could put an end to many problems, starting from polluting our environment, the imbalance of human rights, health problems, and we could continue the list of problems, today there are many, many problematic topics on our globe.

There exist several educational systems in different periods of our life. Primary school, secondary school, university, post-gradual studies. They are preparing us to widen our skills, to get higher role in society and also to develop further education.

From the viewpoint of Buddhism, we can call the above systems “*samsāric education*” because it is considering mainly worldly values, secular ethics, worldly targets, and lay livelihood and so on, and it is based on the view of materialism. Obviously measuring the success is also based on material outcome. As we see from the time of Descartes,¹ when the famous slogan became widespread (“Cogito ergo sum - I think; therefore I am.”) and the Cartesian dualism or Substance dualism became the main philosophical background of science and education, we are in a trap where interdependence (how it is described in the teaching of the Buddha) is hardly could be discovered. According to Cartesian dualism mind and body are two absolutely separate phenomena that is why Physical sciences that focus to investigate material world are clearly separated from Social sciences where the focus is mainly

¹ René Descartes (31 March 1596 – 11 February 1650) in his works *Meditations on First Philosophy* and *Principles of Philosophy* laid down the foundation of his philosophy distinguishing mind, matter and God.

human behaviour and mind. This is a real problem for example for some particular sciences that exist somewhere in between Physical and Social sciences. Like economics, where macroeconomics investigate the broader financial factors hence microeconomics the financial factors of a family or an individual is mainly in focus. Macroeconomics is based on microeconomics, microeconomics is based on psychology but that is beyond or outside the economics. The sentence that is the starting point of any economic study is that economy is based on the interest of the individual or an “I”. But the question of who is the so-called “I” is not defined in the field of economics. If we turn to the Buddhist consideration that the “I” in the absolute sense does not exist, this questions greatly (from the Buddhist viewpoint) the scientific value of the above starting point of economic research.²

Nevertheless today, there are many fields in science where this idea of mind-body duality is questioned and new horizons are starting to open day by day and a new paradigm about reality is forming.

There are countless articles that are dealing with the parallels between science and Buddhism, but in our article we are focusing on another aspect. We can say - based on the above-mentioned examples - that worldly sciences differ from the science that is indicated in the teaching of the Buddha. Both of them are searching, investigating reality but science is measuring mainly with material tools, and called objective consideration while in Buddhism, we are investigating reality by ourselves, by way of hearing, thinking and meditation (Three Wisdom) and we can call it subjective consideration based on living experience. According to sources like *Garland of Views* (Tib: *man ngag lta ba'i phreng ba*³) written by Guru Rinpoche,

² Today there are some alternative ways in Micro- and Macroeconomics, for example there are researchers who are dealing with Buddhist Economics, sustainable economics, green economics and so on. (Clair Brown 2017. *Buddhist Economics: An Enlightened Approach to the Dismal Science*, Bloomsbury Press or we can mention Prayudh Payuttho 1992. *Buddhist Economics*, MCU, Thailand)

³ *Man ngag lta ba'i phreng ba*, by Padmasambhava (VIII c.) A: in SNGA 'GYUR BKA' MAT SCHOS SDE, vol. 'a, published by Si khron bod kyi rig gnas zhib 'jug khang; B: in GDAMS NGAG MDZOD, vol. ka, published at Paro in Bhutan, 1979. (One of the rare texts of the oral tradition ascribed to Padmasambhava; translated in Dowman, *Flight of the Garuda*, Ithaca 1992; Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, Leiden 1988; Italian translation in Baroetto, *L'insegnamento esoterico di Padmasambhava*, Arcidosso 1990.)

Padmasambhava the view of materialism has three groups, one of them is the scientific view.⁴ This approach to reality is lacking the knowledge of karma, lacking the knowledge of real cause and effect and also lacking the knowledge of mind and matter interdependence. On the other hand, Buddhism is based on the proper knowledge of karma. As a conclusion, we could say science is investigating reality objective way but without knowing the law of karma. Buddhism on the other hand approaching reality in a subjective way but with the proper knowledge of karma (according to Buddhism: one is “*samsāric science*” and the other is “*dharmic science*” or one is *lokiya*, the other is *lokuttara*). In our article, the main area of research is to examine how Buddhist education systems can contribute to contemporary science and education.

The origin of the Teaching

We have to answer two main questions in spiritual traditions or religions, when we talk about a Teacher, who gives teachings. What is the source or background of His teaching, this is the first and what is the purpose of His teaching, this is the second. Both of them is very important if we want to understand the characteristic of a teaching or we can say education system given by the particular Teacher. The first one is the source: what is the previous process (learning, practicing) that led to realization or what kind of experience is preceding the time of taking the role as a teacher. This experience or turning point can be manifold: sometimes it is called “experience of God”, travelling in the Universe or into some celestial realm, heaven, or enlightenment, realization, liberation and so on. If we see the life stories of any founder of a religion it is clearly seen that before they started to teach disciples they had a fundamental experience that opened up inner gates, opened up new horizons.

⁴ There are four mundane views according to the Garland of Views: **phyal pa** (literally; flat) those, who are ignoring totally cause and effect, **rgyan 'phen pa** (barhaspatya) those who believe some power of mind, **mu stegs pa** (tīrthika) – eternalist view. The fourth view is **mur thug pa** (extremists), materialistic or nihilistic view where adherents are proving that nothing exists after death. Scientific approach belongs to this. See Namkhai Norbu 2008. *The Precious Vase*, pp. 24-30.

In case of the Buddha, this experience is called enlightenment because the Buddha saw all phenomena without torsion, in the light of unexcelled wisdom. It is called also liberation, because the Buddha liberated from the bondage of karma, from samsara (no more rebirth in samsāra or cyclic existence). Also called *nibbāna* because all the defilement of the mind is purified. It is also called awakening because the Buddha awakened from the dream of ignorance and realized the Truth. When we talk about the qualities of the Buddha we recall His realization that He attained during the process of enlightenment. There are different lists of qualities, one is very well known in every Buddhist traditions:

*Iti pi so bhagavā arahaṃ sammā-sambuddho, vijjā-caraṇa-sampanno sugato lokavidū, anuttaro purisa-damma-sārathi satthā deva-manussānaṃ buddho bhagavā 'ti.*⁵

The above quotation is listing the Nine Qualities of the Buddha or the qualities of enlightenment. There are many explanation connected to each of them. In Mahāyāna traditions for example in one of the works of Asanga (or Maitreya) the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*⁶ there are explanations about the 112 qualities of *Nirmānakāya*, 60 qualities of *Sambhogakāya* and 144 different aspects of *Dharmakāya*. The Three Kāya⁷ teaching is very important in Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna traditions because it expresses the different levels of extraordinary states of a Buddha.

Enlightenment preceded by discovering the Middle Path, this is one of the key factor of the whole teachings of the Buddha. Without entering the Middle Path it is not possible to attain liberation from cyclic existence. To discover the middle the

⁵ The Buddha in *Mahānāma Sutta* (AN.6.10) lists six recollections. The first one is recollecting the Buddha (Buddhānussati) and we can find the quotation primarily there. In the Pāli texts there are around 140 occurrences of the above sentence, and is widely used as part of recitation. In *Visuddhimagga* we find also the same quotation for the practice of Buddhānussati.

⁶ One of the five books attributed to Maitreya, the next Buddha. Asanga received these teachings in the Tushita Heaven directly from Maitreya.

⁷ The Three Body of the Buddha is actually derives from the Three Gates. Enlightened body, enlightened speech and enlightened mind. In the tantric system, a Yogi is practicing visualization of the mandala of Three Body; the form of the Buddhas, the mantra as the speech and the symbol or seed syllable as the enlightened mind aspect.

Buddha first experienced the two extremes of livelihood: royal way of life, indulgence in sensory pleasures and six years of asceticism where the sensory pleasures were totally blocked. Reading the biography of the Buddha we can have clear understanding of the qualities of His learning, practice and realization.

If we would like to understand better the Buddhist education systems, it is important to see that the Buddha started His spiritual journey because He wanted to put an end to old age, sickness and death. This means that the starting point of His teaching is not something abstract, not something in celestial realms but such an experience that is true for everybody. The starting point is a down to earth experience, experience of suffering, limitation, lack of physical, emotional and mental satisfaction. That is why the process of education in Buddhism is based on presence and alertness,⁸ based on experiencing reality as it is.

Before the Buddha started to teach, He was hesitating if there are proper vessels or disciples to train or not. It is interesting to read the Buddha's own words when He was talking about His enlightenment. We can find two proclamations, one is right after His realization expressing what is attained, the joy of enlightenment:

Verse 153: *"I, who have been seeking the builder of this house (body), failing to attain Enlightenment which would enable me to find him, have wandered through innumerable births in samsara. To be born again and again is, indeed, dukkha!"*

Verse 154: *"Oh house-builder! You are seen, you shall build no house (for me) again. All your rafters are broken, your roof-tree is destroyed. My mind has reached the unconditioned (i.e., nibbāna); the end of craving (arahatta phala) has been attained."*⁹

⁸ Pāli: sati and sampajañña

⁹ From *Dhammapada* verse 153-154. According to Theravada traditions these are the first utterances, exclamations (udāna) after enlightenment.

The second one is when the Buddha was contemplating about how to teach. This is an expression of how difficult to reach enlightenment:¹⁰

“Enough now with teaching what only with difficulty I reached. This Dhamma is not easily realized by those overcome with aversion & passion. What is abstruse, subtle, deep, hard to see, going against the flow— those delighting in passion, cloaked in the mass of darkness, won’t see.”¹¹

Finally, the Buddha decided to teach.¹² Teaching Dharma has a crucial meaning not just because it is the same as teaching the Path or teaching what reality is, but Dharma is also one of the Triple Gem one of the precious object of Refuge. According to the first teaching of the Buddha reality can be perceived in four levels: first level and the second level belongs to the law of karma. The First Noble Truth is the teaching of the effect, which is the three kinds of sufferings.¹³ The second is the cause. The cause is primarily the three kinds of cravings.¹⁴ The root of craving is ignorance. According to this clear causality, if we would like to eliminate the effect, we have to eliminate the cause, the root that is ignorance. One of the main factor to eliminate ignorance is - like in any field where there is lack knowledge - to **learn and**

¹⁰ We can find these sentences in those suttas where the Buddha was talking about the story of His enlightenment and how Brahmā Sahampati requested Him to teach. In addition, there is a sutta about the Buddha and the previous six Tathāgatas realization (*Āyācana Sutta* (SN 6:1), and *Ariya Pariyesanā Sutta* (MN 26) and the previous Buddhas we find in *Mahā Padāna Sutta* (DN 14).

¹¹ In Pāli: Kicchena me adhigatam̐ halam̐ dāni pakāsituṃ, Rāgadosaparetehi nāyaṃ Dhammo susambudho. Paṭisotagāmiṃ nipuṇaṃ gambhīraṃ duddasaṃ aṇuṃ. Rāgarattā dakkhanti tamokkhandhena āvuṭā.’ ti

¹² Interesting to note that in Mahāyāna tradition in one of the two main biographical sources, in *Lalitavistara Sūtra* (the other one is *Buddhacarita*) we find that the first proclamation by the Buddha after His enlightenment was almost the same as in *Āyācana Sutta*:

“The ambrosial Dharma I obtained is profound, immaculate, luminous, and unconditioned. Even if I explain it, no one will understand. I think I shall remain silent in the forest. That which is free from words cannot be understood through words, likewise, the nature of phenomena is like space, totally free of the movements of mind and intellect.”

¹³ suffering of suffering, suffering of changing and all-composite suffering (*dukkha dukkha, vipariṇāma dukkha, saṅkhāra dukkha* in *Dukkha Sutta* (SN 45.165))

¹⁴ sensual craving, craving for existence, craving for non-existence (*kāma taṇhā, bhava taṇhā, vibhava taṇhā*)

educating ourselves. There can be many levels of teaching and learning, as we will see in case of Buddhism. Teaching and learning is not just giving information then learning it (make it interior) and giving back during examinations (how we see in modern education), but it can be a way to fully eliminate the causes of limitations, suffering and attain liberation, happiness and wisdom. Nevertheless, to achieve this goal we need special methods of learning, special methods of education.

Even in the Western world if we look back into history, education belonged to religious institutes, so there were no difference between worldly and religious knowledge (till the point when science lost its religious base). All the main Universities belonged to one of the branches of Christianity. Even in the time of Descartes his philosophy was deeply considering God and the nature of creation but his works planted the seeds for a new paradigm, where science lost spirituality, lost subjectivity and became totally objective, even mind became an object of investigation by electronic measuring instruments.

The purpose of Teaching

As we saw in the previous chapter, the base for Buddhist education is the knowledge of karma, when we have clear understanding of the effects of our previous deeds. The effect, where we live is called cyclic existence, where the main experiences are suffering, lack of content, lack of satisfaction. Cyclic existence (*saṃsāra*) is a place (*kāma loka*, *rūpa loka*, *arūpa loka*), a place of constant changing and also the container of different beings (six loka beings: devas, asuras, humans, animals, pretas, and hell beings). However, cyclic existence is actually not else but the different states of mind. That is why for example *rūpa loka* and *arūpa loka* is connected to *rūpa-* and *arūpa-jhāna*, different states of meditation. Therefore, when we talk about the effect we have to see the whole existence with the eye of wisdom.¹⁵

The second aspect of karma is the knowledge of the causes. It is not just an intellectual understanding but the real causes can be discovered just by serious meditation. Considering the basic teachings of the Buddha, usually we recall His first

¹⁵ *saṃsāra* as space, time, beings, and confused states of mind

sermon, what is laid down in the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*. However, if we investigate to whom the Buddha delivered His first teaching, we find that they were originally the five astrologers in the Court who were following the Buddha into the homeless life; they were His personal attendance in all that six years of austerities and practices. They did the same as the Buddha, they abandoned worldly life and they were very well trained in meditation as well. It is not by chance that this teaching is called “Noble Truth”, where Noble Truth (*ariya sacca*) means truth or reality that can be discovered by only *ariya* beings, high level of beings who entered the Middle Path.

To enter the path of Dharma seeing clearly the effect and the cause (karma) is crucial.

The third and fourth levels of reality are belonging to Dharma and we can understand the real purpose of Buddhist training, Buddhist education by the Noble Truth of Cessation and the Noble Truth of the Path. The Third Noble Truth is about cessation (*nirodha*)¹⁶ where the causes of suffering, the different levels of obscuration are diminished, purified, transformed. The fourth level of reality is the Path of cessation that is the Eightfold Noble Path. So according to the two “Dharma truths” the real purpose of teaching is to eliminate the causes of suffering and manifest enlightenment through the path (one is eliminating the obstacles of enlightenment, the second is developing enlightenment on the Middle Path according to Mahāyāna traditions).¹⁷ In the first sermon, the purpose of training is well established according to the four levels of reality or truth: to *understand* the condition called suffering, to *eliminate* the causes, *experience* cessation and *develop* the Path.¹⁸

From the above viewpoint, we can understand that learning is not just a kind of information output-input process but rather developing different capacities of

¹⁶ five *nirodha*, *pahāna* or *vimutti*:

- *vikkhambhana* overcoming by repression
- *tadanga* overcoming by opposite
- *samuccheda* overcoming by destroying
- *patipassaddhi* overcoming by tranquillization
- *nissarana* overcoming by escape

(*Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines*, by Nyanatiloka Mahathera p.228)

¹⁷ eliminating *akusala* dhammas and developing *kusala* dhammas

¹⁸ *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta* (SN.56.11)

understanding, restraining, experiencing and developing. That is why concerning the purpose of education in Buddhism we can say that learning how to learn is more important than the information what we learn, or the same way: the capacity to learn from our experience or learning from ourselves is crucial on the Buddhist Path. The required capacities and the way of learning (from ourselves, from our experiences) is clearly stated in the last teaching of the Buddha. In *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* (DN 16):

“So Ānanda, be your own island, your own refuge, with no other refuge. Let the teaching be your island and your refuge, with no other refuge. And how does a person do this? It’s when a person meditates by observing an aspect of the body—keen, aware, and mindful,¹⁹ rid of desire and aversion for the world. They meditate observing an aspect of feelings ... mind ... principles—keen, aware, and mindful, rid of desire and aversion for the world. That’s how a disciple is their own island, their own refuge, with no other refuge. That’s how the teaching is their island and their refuge, with no other refuge.

Whether now or after I have passed, any who shall live as their own island, their own refuge, with no other refuge; with the teaching as their island and their refuge, with no other refuge—those disciples of mine who want to train shall be among the best of the best.”²⁰

In western scientific methods, *information* and *objectivity* are the leading factors but in Buddhist education, **learning to learn** and **subjectivity** are highlighted instead, although the aim to understand reality is similar. When we practice according to *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* (MN 10) we are not focusing on what we see or what we think, but instead the focus is on the process of seeing, on the process of thinking. Not information is important but the way how information is perceived, this aspect is very essential considering the Buddhist way of learning. Traditionally the

¹⁹ key terms of training: atāpi, sampajāno and satima (keen, aware and mindful)

²⁰ Translated by Bhikkhu Sujato, the key terms are: attadīpa, attasaraṇā, dhammadīpa as a fruit of the practice and the four sati (kāya, vedanā, citta and dhamma) as the method.

Bodhipakkhiyādhammā or the 37 factors of enlightenment²¹ are the capacities that a practitioner should develop on the Path of liberation. Among them, the most important ones are *sati*, *sampajañña*, the Five Faculties²² and the Seven Factors of Awakening.²³

These capacities can be rendered into two main categories: method (*upāya*) and wisdom (*paññā*). The same way we can divide the Buddhist education models into **method oriented** and **wisdom oriented** systems.

Summary

Learning to learn according to the teachings of the Buddha is more important than the object of learning itself. It invokes different capacities that we need on the Path of Liberation. Listing the qualities, we need: openness, logic, intelligence, discipline, concentration, wisdom, clear comprehension, mind training, altruistic behaviour, respect, clear vision, going beyond duality and we could continue. All these qualities can be developed by the precious education methods given by the Buddha. It is crucial to use these methods in contemporary education as well, this way, not just integrating some information about the world and the human beings but giving possibility to live in a better world and live as a better human being.

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²¹ „Katame ca te, bhikkhave, dhammā mayā abhiññā desitā, ye vo sādhuḥkaṃ uggahetvā āsevitabbā bhāvetabbā bahulīkātabbā, yathayidaṃ brahmacariyaṃ addhaniyaṃ assa ciratṭhitikaṃ, tadassa bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya lokānukampāya atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussānaṃ. Seyyathidaṃ—cattāro satipaṭṭhānā, cattāro sammappadhānā, cattāro iddhipādā, pañcīndriyāni, pañca balāni, satta bojjhaṅgā, ariyo atṭhaṅgiko maggo.” (*Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*)

²² pañcīndriya: according to Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche these five are the most important factors to develop on the Path (faith, effort, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom)

²³ satta bojjhaṅga: they are the most important capacities to enter the Path of Wisdom (mindfulness, investigation, effort, joy, tranquillity, concentration, equanimity)

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 Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta (SN 56.11)
 Dhammapada (Khuddaka Nikāya)
 Dukkata Sutta (SN 45.165)
 Mahānāma Sutta (AN 6.10)
 Mahā Padāna Sutta (DN 14)
 Mahāparinibbāna Sutta (DN 16)
 Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta (MN 10)
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**BUDDHIST RITUALS FOR MENTAL AND SOCIAL
WELLBEING; AN ANALYSIS OF *BODHI-PŪJA*
RITUAL IN THE SRI LANKAN
BUDDHIST TRADITION**

Vishanka Gunawardana

*(B.A. in Psychology, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka / Master's in HRM, University of
Colombo, Sri Lanka)*

Psychological Counselor, Sri Lanka Navy
gunawardanavishanka@gmail.com

Abstract

Based on the growing evidence, scholars acknowledge that Buddhism integrates with modern science, primarily at two levels, i.e. study on the mind, and epistemology of physics. Buddhist explanation in reference to mind is one of the prominent studies even in the modern era with the aid of science. Derived from these academic studies, concern for mental and social well-being is the most common practice in Buddhism. Mainly the practices are twofold; homage through practice (*prathipaththi pūja*), and homage by offering material things (*āmisā pūja*). “*Bodhi Pūja*” or as defined as ‘the veneration of the *Bodhi (Bo)* tree’ is one of the most popular rituals among Sri Lankan Buddhists which belongs to *āmisā pūja*. The *Bo* trees are worshipped by the Buddhist people to obtain the blessing with the belief of the supernatural power of the tree. As the study finds out, this practice involves both individual and group worship, which eventually leads to the mental and social well-being of the Buddhist society. Therefore, the main purpose of this study was to analyze *Bodhi pūja* ritual to find its contributions to the mental and social wellbeing of society. As the available literary sources attested, a deep study on mental and social wellbeing on *Bodhi pūja* ritual has not been done even though there are few studies superficially examine its psychological and anthropological aspects. Therefore, this study intends to find out mental and social well-being affecting devotees of *Bodhi pūja* on two main aspects, i.e. (i) personal well-being, and (ii) social well-

being. The qualitative method (participant observation and the semi-structured interview method) has used for the primary data collection. 20 respondents were interviewed without interrupting their engagement in the activity. Secondary data of the study were collected by referring to primary and secondary library sources. The mental well-being by practising the ritual is studied under emotional development, as a healing method, finding options for issues, overcoming negative impacts, and gaining confidence/strength. This process can be attributed to mindfulness and behavioural modification. Social well-being is achieved through group worship of the Bodhi and it brings positive outcomes such as enhancing family support, social support system, sharing system, and new social relationships. Thus, it is evident that significant factors that affect mental and social well-being can be observed in the process of the *Bodhi pūja* ritual.

Keywords: *Bodhi Pūja Ritual, Buddhism, Mental Well-being, Social Well-being, Sri Lankan Buddhist Tradition*

Introduction

Religious beliefs have brought ritual practices to civilizations. Rituals play a vital role in human life specially to overcome the crisis, and to gain health and prosperity. "*Bodhi Pūja*" is one of the most popular rituals among Sri Lankan Buddhists. The term *Bodhi Pūja* can be defined as the veneration of the *Bodhi* tree. Buddhist people are placing a Buddha statue and offerings near the *Bo* trees even at the road sideways or middle of the junctions. This is a quite common practice among Sri Lankan Buddhist. *Bodhi Pūja* ritual includes formalities such as bathing the *Bo* tree with scented water, offering flowers, herbal drinks, milk rice, betel leaves and coins, hanging flags on the tree, lighting oil lamps and chanting stanzas.

According to the *Mahawamsa*, the Sri Lankan history of *Bodhi pūja* dated back to King Devanampiyatissa's era (250-210 BC). According to scholars, there are many reasons behind *the Bodhi pūja* ritual among Sri Lankan Buddhists. Amarasekara (2004), states that Buddhists have a tendency to believe *in Bodhi pūja* as a prevention method of various diseases and misfortunes as well as a mode to gain strength for facing challenges and difficulties. (pp.330). Ven. Chandawimala (1978) holds a

similar opinion that people have a close connection with the *Bo* tree, simply because they believe that it can bring them prosperity, wellbeing and long life. (pp.21). The same idea can be found in stanzas chanted (both in Sinhala and Pali) at the *Bodhi pūja*.

"The Bodhi tree that helped the Buddha of the three worlds to attain omniscience; the tree that protected the Bodhisattva from the enemies known as the moral defilements (*klesa*) . . . this *Bô* tree, descended from the glorious Great Bodhi of India, which protected the Lord Buddha; may it banish all our sufferings and sorrows, the ill effects of planets, the evil eye and evil mouth, illnesses and the machinations of enemies; and may it fulfill our wishes and give us boundless wealth." (Gombrich and Obeyesekere, 2006.)

When considering the above opinions and observations, the main intention behind *Bodhi pūja* is to wish for well-being. On the superficial level, this ritual seems to perform for the salvation of personal and domestic problems, but there are significant philosophical and psychological factors that can be observed in the hidden layers of the ritual.

In fact, there are different views and approaches to study rituals. Some scholars study rituals from a sociological, anthropological and psychoanalytic perspective. Jayatilaka (2012) examines the rites and rituals among Sri Lankan Buddhists which they perform during their illnesses, calamities and deaths in her article "An Anthropological Study on the Rituals Pertaining to Life Crisis Events among Sri Lankan Buddhists". Sri Lankan Buddhists gain relief and comfort from rituals such as *Bodhi pūja*, *Deva kannalu*, *Bara hara veema*, *Bali thovil*, chanting *seth kawi* etc. by believing that they involve supernatural powers, intervention of gods, and miracles. Power of *pirith* chanting, reciting benedictory verses and *Bodhi puja* lay in the basic level of their beliefs.

By using 45 veterans as the sample, Wickrama and De Zoysa (2011) has examined how depressive symptoms can be reduced by engaging in Buddhist religious activities, the cultural activity of horoscope reading and with the support of family and friends. *Bodhi pūja* ritual has given specific attention in the study as a "religious activity often conducted for the emotional and devotional needs of an

individual in association with a stressful event." Hence, the touch of psychological effect can be found in this study, but it has not been studied deeply by concerning only the *Bodhi pūja* since their objectives of the study are otherwise.

As the available literary sources attested, a deep study on the psychological impact on *Bodhi pūja* ritual has not been done even though there are few studies superficially examine its psychological, anthropological and psychoanalytic aspects. Therefore, this study intends to find out psychological factors affecting devotees of *Bodhi pūja* under two main aspects, i.e. (i) personal well-being, and (ii) social well-being. Western psychological therapies and theories are existing in the Sri Lankan rituals as invisible factors and performing these rituals bring the same results unconsciously to the devotees.

Methodology

The participant observation and the semi-structured interview method were used as the tools of primary data collection. The sample was chosen randomly. Accordingly, 20 respondents were interviewed without interrupting their engagement in the activity. This sample consists of Buddhist monks, men and women belong to different age categories, i.e. 50-60, 40-50, 30-40 and 20-30. Questions related to eight main topics of the study were asked at the interviews and interview time was limited due to the barrier of not possessing a free mind of the respondents to engage in a research-related activity. The study was conducted at Gatambe Temple and Temple of the Tooth in Kandy. These places possess two popular *Bo* trees, i.e. *Gatambe Bodhi* and *Wel Bodhi* respectively. Secondary data of the study were collected by referring to primary and secondary library sources.

Results

Tables 01 and 02 summarize the details of the 20 respondents in the two locations, i.e. Gatambe (*Gatambe Bodhi*) and Temple of the Tooth (*Wel Bodhi*) of the study.

Table 1: Details of Respondents in Gatambe (*Gatambe Bodhi*)

Category	Age Range	Gender		Total Respondents
		Male	Female	
Buddhist Monk	50 and above	01		01
Devotees	50 and above	01	02	03
	40 – 50	01	02	03
	30 - 40	01	01	02
	20 – 30	-	01	01
Total				10

Table 2: Details of Respondents in Temple of the Tooth (*Wel Bodhi*)

Category	Age Range	Gender		Total Respondents
		Male	Female	
Buddhist Monk	30 - 40	01		01
Devotees	50 and above	01	02	03
	40 – 50	01	02	03
	30 - 40	-	02	02
	20 – 30	-	01	01
Total				10

Data in Tables 01 and 02 indicate the gender and age formation of the respondents under study. The majority who perform *the Bodhi pūja* ritual are females above 40 years of age. Generally, there is a less tendency to perform *Bodhi pūja* ritual by young people.

Table 3: Reasons of the respondents to participate in the *Bodhi puja* ritual

Reasons	No. of Respondents
Misfortunes (as guided by the Astrologists)	05
Diseases	07
The well-being of Children/Parents/Family Members	03
Economic Prosperity	01
Exams and Jobs	02
Total	18*

*Two monks were not included in this table as they are the ones who conduct *Bodhi pūja*.

Table 03 reveals that the majority of the respondents engage in *Bodhi pūja* due to misfortunes and to wishing a speedy recovery for diseases. For these purposes, the devotees follow a chain of *pūja* for 7 days or 14 days or 21 days continuously. Some of the *Bodhi pūja* rituals of this category are motivated by the guidance of astrologers. 03 out of 18 respondents performed the *Bodhi pūja* to wish the well-being of their Children/Parents/Family Members. Young people tend to engage in the ritual to gain economic prosperity and to be successful in exams and job interviews.

Discussion

Religious rituals are playing an important role in enhancing both mental and social wellbeing. The religious belief system of a particular community has a direct impact on the ritual process. It connects people for their own salvation and encourages the social relationships which affect human wellbeing. Therefore, wellbeing is an essential need as a person or as a society. Wellbeing is a keyword in the WHO definition of health and it is defined as “a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (WHO; 2006). The Buddhist philosophy also has its own definition for well-being as follows;

“Ārogyaparamālābhā: Health is the highest gain

Santutṭhiparamaṃ dhanam: Contentment is the greatest wealth

Vissāsaparamāñāti: The trusty is the best kinsmen

Nibbānaparamaṃ sukham: Nibbāna is the highest bliss” (Dhammapada Verse 204)¹ Galmangoda (2010) interprets the above Buddhist concept on well-being as follows;

“Health is the highest gain - physical well-being

Contentment is the greatest wealth - mental well-being

The trusty is the best kinsmen - social well-being

Nibbāna is the highest bliss - spiritual well-being”

According to above both WHO and Buddhist definitions, the concept of well-being can be identified under two main aspects i.e. (i) mental well-being, and (ii) social well-being. Growing evidence has shown that the Sri Lankan Buddhist *Bodhi pūja* Ritual is designed to fulfill these two aspects of well-being.

Mental Wellbeing

Mental wellbeing is an essential aspect of people’s wellbeing. It is helping people to feel happy and satisfied, work effectively, and deal properly with other people in the society. According to Behere et al. (2013), hundreds of epidemiological studies have shown that religiousness remains an important aspect of human life and it has a positive association with good mental health. Therefore, people engage with different type of activities to maintain good mental health wellbeing and religious activities can be recognized as an important one among them. As George et al. (2013) explain Religious rituals are an important part of religion because they allow believers to express and reaffirm their belief systems. Sri Lankan *Bodhi pūja* ritual is also conducted by Buddhists believing its supernatural power. The mental well-being aspect of the *Bodhi pūja* ritual can be discussed with four themes such as emotional development, used as a healing method, finding options for issues and gaining

¹ Dhammapada, <https://www.tipitaka.net/tipitaka/dhp/verseload.php?verse=204>

confidence/strength. Cognitive behaviour therapy and mindfulness are the hidden psychological layers that devotees unconsciously practice in the whole *Bodhi pūja* process.

Environment and biology are powerful factors that cause tendencies to feel certain emotions (Stevens, 2020). In modern society, people are suffering from various types of problems such as physical and mental diseases, family issues, economic problems, interpersonal conflicts, unemployment and some other issues. These problems may lead to the negative emotional status of people. Quoting Robert Plutchik's (1980) theory of Wheel of Emotions, Mead (2021), shows eight basic emotions such as joy, trust, fear, surprise, sadness, anticipation, anger and disgust. Among both positive and negative emotions, the results of negative emotions can affect mental and physical wellbeing. Religion is one of the effective ways to cope with emotional issues and influence emotional development. Religion can influence multiple points in the process of emotion regulation, including setting emotional goals and influencing intrinsic and extrinsic emotion regulation. (Vishkin, et.al. 2014). According to Kariyawasam (1995) to satisfy people's devotional and emotional needs, they required a system of outward acts, communally shared, and in popular Buddhism consisting of the rituals and ceremonies are important.

The study results clearly show that the *Bodhi pūja* ritual is directly connected with devotees' emotional wellbeing. According to the respondents, astrologers lead people to engage in *Bodhi pūja*. As stated in the Buddhist teachings, the reason behind all sufferings is bad *kamma*. As they believe, conducting *Bodhi pūja* help them to eliminate bad *kamma* through collecting good merits with the blessing of the *Bodhi* tree. According to the responses given by the two Buddhist monks among participants of the study, each activity that associate the *Bodhi pūja* ritual has a meaning, i.e. to make devotees aware of the reality of life. One of the main doctrines of Buddhist philosophy is the impermanence of the materialistic world. As Wijesinghe (2013) stated as bellow;

“Buddhist philosophy explains that all phenomena in the universe are impermanent (*anicca*), bound to be unsatisfactory (*dukkha*), and devoid of a self (*anatta*). The idea of a self is an imaginary belief without corresponding reality,

and it produces thoughts such as "me" and "mine" that in turn cause most of the trouble that exists in the world.”²

Therefore some religious activities of Buddhism are purposefully designed to remind this basic principle.

“Any offering of flowers before a Buddha image is normally accompanied by a Pali language stanza that naturally almost everyone knows by heart. It means: I make offering to the Buddha with this flower, and by this merit may there be release. Just as this flower fades, so my body goes towards destruction”.³

Similarly, offerings are made at the *Bodhi pūja* and thus it reminds the impermanence of life. People who are suffering from different problems eventually lead to emotional issues and the above type of wishes in *Bodhi pūja* are helping them to release them. The understanding of the reality of life can eventually lead to emotional regulation as well.

Religion is an organized, community-based system of beliefs, while spirituality resides within the individual and what they personally believe. Both religion and spirituality can have a positive impact on mental health (Greenstein, 2016). Religious ritual is a spiritual belief system and it has rooted in religious beliefs. Individual benefits of religious rituals included greater spiritual growth, happier daily life, more focus and direction, and better personal behaviour (Rachel 2009). As per the responses of all participants in the study, they suffer due to various types of diseases and domestic problems such as family issues, drug/alcohol addiction, economic crises, unemployment, day to day life challenges, and lack of confidence and mental strength. These factors cause negative mental impacts like depression, anxiety, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and stress. *Bodhi pūja* ritual helps the devotees to overcome the tension caused by these issues and the study results show that the ritual is a healing method for people to overcome negative mental issues. Wickrama and De Zoysa (2011) have stated as follows;

² Wijesinghe (2013) Role of Buddhist Spiritual Practice in the Lives and Health of Buddhist Nuns Living with a Chronic Illness in Sri Lanka, Pp 24

³ Gombrich R. and Obeysekere G, Buddhism Transformed: religious change in Sri Lanka.

“Bodhipuja is a Buddhist ritual- a religious activity often conducted for the emotional and devotional needs of an individual in association with stressful event. Bodhipuja has been shown to ease the transition of war veterans into civilian life and has helped to give them a sense of physical and emotional healing.”

It is evident that the ritual process has helped people as a healing method. It happens through looking at life from a new perspective. De Silva (2013) has stated the impact of *Bodhi pūja* ritual to protect the mental health as bellow;

“Local Sri Lankan beliefs, Knowledge, and practices were used in protecting mental health through rituals and performances, such as *pirith*, meditation, *Bodhi pūja*, wows, spirits, exorcism, *tovil*, charms and amulets, *adi veil* and *hetme* ritual.”⁴

People who participate in *Bodhi pūja* are sometimes obtaining different opinions, solutions for their problems. For example, one of the respondents of the study got to know how to send her drug-addicted son to a rehabilitation centre from another participant of the *Bodhi pūja*. This shows some characteristics of psycho-education⁵ of western psychotherapy.

According to the responses of the Buddhist monks among participants, the role of a Buddhist monk is very important in a *Bodhi pūja* because he has a vital role similar to a therapist in western psychotherapy. He always wishes for the well-being of devotees and leads them to focus on their objectives. The devotees can meet the Buddhist monk and discuss their issues with him. This relationship has been affected to overcome many issues of the devotees.

As participant responses regarding their feeling towards the results of the *Bodhi pūja* ritual, it is clear that there is a considerable change (that they feel) at the end of *Bodhi pūja* ritual. Although they had a sorrowful and complex mindset at the

⁴ De Silva, N, Sri Lanka’s Traditional Knowledge and Traditional Cultural Expressions of Health and Wellbeing: History, present status and the Need for Safeguarding.

⁵ Psychoeducation (PE) is defined as an intervention with systematic, structured, and didactic knowledge transfer for an illness and its treatment, integrating emotional and motivational aspects to enable patients to cope with the illness and to improve its treatment adherence and efficacy. Ekhtiari et al (2017)

beginning, they have felt a positive feeling at the end. It clearly shows that the *Bodhi pūja* is affected to overcome the negative impacts of devotees and release the sorrowful and tense minds.

All the participants revealed that they have a strong belief in the *Bodhi* tree which can obtain a great blessing to overcome their obstacles and purify them spiritually. Some of them stated that, when there are difficulties in life, it is good to engage in religious activities even though there are no particular solutions. *Bodhi pūja* ritual and related activities lead them to release tension and obtain salvation.

Observation proved that there is a strong belief in the supernatural power of the Bodhi tree in the Sri Lankan Buddhist community. Some participants revealed that some Buddhist devotees have used the quotes based on the blessings of the *Bodhi* trees to appear in passenger transportation services as well as in private vehicles. According to some participants, keeping a leaf of the sacred *Bo* trees brings them luck, safety and blessings. Hence, it is evident that people have faith in the power and the blessing of the *Bodhi* tree.

Some Buddhist stories reveal the psychological background behind recovering devotees after *Bodhi pūja*. For example, the story of theri Sela. She has expected a miracle from the Bodhi tree in previous birth and thus she encountered a miracle one day. Then she held a *Bodhi pūja* out of the strong faith aroused by the miracle. Eventually, from its merits she attained *Nibbana*. Commenting on the story, Ven. Rerukane Chandawaimala thero states that a tree cannot perform miracles or feel the expectations of a woman. That may have happened due to the phantasm which has arisen from her great faith. But that great faith and offerings eventually lead her to attain *nibbana*. (Ven. Rerukane Chandawaimala, pp. 55-59).

Based on the above story, strong belief and faith lead the devotees to find salvation from themselves. As discussed in the mental health and well-being, devotees unconsciously make a behavioural modification. They use the *Bodhi* tree as an object to reflect their modifications. Therefore, the recovery and solution are affected by their own beliefs and faith.

Today, one of the very popular and effective psychotherapies is Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy. According to many psychologists, mindfulness leads people to overcome day to day issues as well as cure mental diseases. The American Psychological Association defines mindfulness as "A moment to moment awareness of one's experience without judgment"⁶. Many studies have shown that Buddhist mindfulness teaching has influenced western psychotherapies. Wickrama and De Zoysa (2011) have stated as follows;

“Moreover the Buddhist practice of mindfulness meditation has had an influence on the third wave of CBT with the advent of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (Hayes, Stroschal & Wilson, 1999), Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (Linen & Dimeff, 2001) and Mindfulness-Based Therapy (Segal, Williams & Teasdale, 2002) which draws heavily from the Buddhist practice of mindfulness meditation. In these therapies, the use of this type of meditation has at its ultimate aim the alleviation of Psychological wellbeing (Kabat-Zinn, 1990; Segal, Williams & Teasdale, 2002).”⁷

In Western Psychology, mindfulness-based therapies help people to overcome day to day issues and challenges while Buddhist mindfulness helps people to obtain great enlightenment by a deep understanding of it. The study results show that devotees can develop their concentration ability by performing *Bodhi pūja* and relevant activities. The majority of participants revealed that, at the initial stage of performing *Bodhi pūja*, their mentality was complicated and less concentrated. As a result of performing *Bodhi pūja* for few days, they could overcome their mental instability to a certain degree. The calm and quiet environment of the shrine was also helpful for the devotees to enhance their mindfulness. Many factors regarding mindfulness based on *Bodhi pūja* are revealed by the participative observation. The devotees' very first task is to clean the ritual area and necessary *pūja* equipment. Buddhists believe that the devotees must be careful not to harm the roots of the *Bodhi*

⁶ Moore C. What is Mindfulness? Definition + Benefits (Incl. Psychology). *Positive Psychology.com*.

⁷ Wickrama T, and de Zoysa P, Mental Health and the Role of Cultural and Religious Support in the Assistance of Disabled Veterans in Sri Lanka.

tree when they clean the ground. That is the first task for the devotees to enhance their concentration. The devotees are advised to engage with the ritual by focusing on the moment and their objective or wish. One of the main activities is the circumambulation of the *Bodhi* tree with a water pot. Admittedly, this activity leads the devotees to enhance their concentration. Every offer of the ritual is offered with full concentration and devotion. There is a symbolic meaning for each offering that devotees must focus. For example offering of flowers as follows;

*“Like these flowers may my mind be pure;
May these flowers make me aware of the body (as impermanent);
May these flowers become an offering for the Sage,
And like these flowers may my mind bloom to nirvana.”*⁸

According to the above stanza of the offering of the flowers, devotees relies that the body is impermanent just as flowers. The body is decaying day by day just as flower withered. Therefore, these offerings enhance the concentration as well as understanding the reality.

Meditation is also a part of the *Bodhi pūja* ritual, mainly the loving-kindness meditation (*Meththa Bhavana*) is used when performing the ritual. The primary aim of this is to cultivate benevolence as well as gaining mindfulness and developing concentration. The entire *Bodhi pūja* process is a mindfulness practice.

Factors such as a simple lifestyle that devoid of a materialistic world even for a few moments may have resulted in the mental well-being of the devotees. The new liberal economic system led people to be in a competitive and materialistic lifestyle. Therefore people suffer due to dissatisfaction and anomy. Quoting Tim Kasser, De Angelis (n.d) states “People with strong materialistic values appear to have goal orientation that may lead to poorer wellbeing”⁹

⁸ Gombrich R. and Obeysekere G, Buddhism Transformed: religious change in Sri Lanka. Bodhi-Pūjā = worship of the Bodhi tree

⁹ De Angelis T, Consumerism and its discontents.

By the participative observation, the process of this ritual was observed. Devotees should prepare a very simple and less materialistic manner to participate in *Bodhi pūja*. The process requires simplicity from both physical and spiritual aspects. The entire period of *Bodhi pūja* helped the devotees to get a break from their general lifestyle and implement the behavioural modification. It eventually led them to understand the importance of simplicity instead of stressful materialistic life. This process can be recognized as Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT). *Bodhi pūja* also has affected the behaviour changes of devotees by changing their thinking patterns. Some scholars have shown that the similarities between Buddhist practices and CBT. By quoting Fernando, 2004, Wickrama and De Zoysa state; "Some Buddhist practices are similar to western Psychotherapeutic methods, such as the cognitive behavioural methods that have been shown to be effective in reducing the Psychological ramifications of trauma"¹⁰ Hence, as evident in the analysis of the study, the *Bodhi pūja* ritual has a strong mental health and wellbeing background which is focused by Western Psychology.

Social well-being

Social wellbeing also an essential aspect of people's wellbeing. Religious rituals have a huge impact on the social wellbeing. According to Vishkin, et al. (2014), most religions involve regular communal meetings that afford people the opportunity to engage in social interactions on a regular basis. Further, he explains some examples such as Christians go to church on Sundays, Muslims go to the mosque on Fridays, and Jews meet in the synagogue on Saturdays. In Sri Lankan Buddhist culture, there is no specific day to visit and gather in the temple but, full moon *poya* day is very important for the Buddhist community. *Bodhi pūja* ritual is conducted on *poya* day as well as every other day according to the requirement of the participants. These all religious communal practices bring social well-being. According to Galmangoda (2010),

¹⁰ Wickrama T, and de Zoysa P, Mental Health and the Role of Cultural and Religious Support in the Assistance of Disabled Veterans in Sri Lanka.

“All these traditional functions related to almost all religions in the world involve the harmonious gathering of people which essentially leads to social well-being in any given country.”¹¹

As Vishkin, et al. (2014) describe, the regular religious communal meetings help social well-being, *the Bodhi puja* ritual is also an effective ritual process that shows a regular communal meeting aspect towards the social well-being of the Sri Lankan Buddhist community. The social well-being of the *Bodhi pūja* ritual can be discussed with four themes such as enhancing family support, social support system, sharing system, and new social relationships.

Bodhi pūja group worship which is very similar to group therapy in western psychology is the hidden psychological layer that devotees unconsciously practice in the communal *Bodhi pūja* process. Group therapy is a form of therapeutic method that possesses a collective effort to overcome negative mental impacts and diseases. This is very popular among Western mental health professionals. American Psychological Association defines it as "Depending on the nature of your problem group therapy can be an ideal choice for addressing your concerns and making positive changes in your life. It can involve one or more Psychologists who lead a group of roughly five to 15 participants."¹² Similar features of western group therapy can be identified in the Buddhist *Bodhi puja* ritual. Buddhist monks among the participants stated that two types of *Bodhi pūja*, i.e. devotees can conduct *Bodhi pūja* independently and they also can participate as a group for *Bodhi pūja* which is conducted by a Buddhist monk.

According to the study results, a peaceful and collaborative family environment is produced by the Buddhist *Bodhi pūja* ritual and it eventually leads to a peaceful and collaborative environment. Chudhuri (n.d) explains that the family has been described as the smallest identifiable social unit. In many human societies, the family performs biological as well as social reproduction for the survival and continuation of society. Therefore the well-being of the family means the well-being

¹¹ Galmangoda, S. (2010) Asian Concepts and Practices of Mental Culture as an Approach to Global Recovery through Mental Well-Being, pp 24.

¹² **Psychotherapy: Understanding group therapy, American Psychological Association.**

of the society. According to the respondents of the study, they were performing *Bodhi pūja* to obtain the blessing for avoiding misfortune and diseases, the well-being of the members of the family, obtain the blessing for exams and job interviews. According to the Buddhist culture, a difficulty or a special event of a member of a family means something for the whole family. Therefore, all the family members concern it and make a collaborative effort. As Rachel et al. (2009) mentioned Familial benefits of religious rituals include strengthened relationships, more family togetherness and unity, increased communication, less contention and more kindness, better parenting. Respondents revealed that considerable positive changes have made by the *Bodhi pūja* such as developing family bond, love, caring and affection towards each other, reducing the loneliness in front of difficulties, and gained strength and confidence. The positive changes respondents gained through the *Bodhi pūja* ritual are affected to a better society since the family is the smallest and fundamental unity in the society.

Another specific advantage of the *Bodhi pūja* ritual towards social well-being is that participants can be obtained a great social support system. Quoting Wood's perspective, Koole et. al (2017) explain that religious rituals can be seen as psychological exercises that strengthen people's capacity for self-control. Moreover, religious rituals may enhance people's social standing, by providing public displays of willpower and commitment to the group. According to the respondents, they had felt more security when performing as a group. Although devotees have different objectives, they chant stanzas together. Kariyawasam (1995) has mentioned the collaborative process of group worship as follows;

“Collective worship of the Buddha is generally performed in a public place of worship so that anyone who wishes may participate: in a temple before the shrine room, at a *dageba*, a *Bodhi* tree, or any other such place. The devotees stand in a row in front of the place of worship and pass the items of offering from hand to hand towards the shrine room, *dageba*, or the *Bodhi* tree (...) All the participants in a common act of merit.” (12)¹³

¹³ Kariyawasa, A.G.S., *Buddhist Ceremonies and Rituals of Sri Lanka*.

The Buddhist monks among the participants revealed that some people conduct *Bodhi pūja* as a group or as whole villages, to obtain the blessing in common purpose. For examples; diseases, obtain the blessing for soldiers, obtain the blessing for children who have national exams. They further revealed that the Buddhist community is gathered especially in every *poya* days (Full moon days) since it has a religious value. Palliyaguru (2010) states that “The *poya* day is a normal occasion on which *pinkama* (meritorious acts) and *pujava* (religious offerings) are held at the temples”.¹⁴

People can obtain psychological support which eventually affects health by belonging to a group. It is observed that there was a group behaviour in the *Bodhi pūja* process and it has provided social-psychological advantages such as social cohesion, the sense of belonging to a caring group, continuity in relationships with friends and family and other support groups. According to the details given by the participants, it can be identified that the *Bodhi pūja* group worship helps people to overcome stress, suffering and sorrow, the impact of anxiety and other negative emotions. According to Behere et al. (2013), epidemiological studies have shown that religiousness remains an important aspect of human life and it usually has a positive association with good mental health. Kariyawasm, (2010) also describes that in the old days, folk rituals and religious rituals satisfied the needs of the society. Every aspect of the ritual had significance and symbolic meaning for society. Hence, it is evident that the *Bodhi pūja* group worship is influential to social well-being by its group behavioural processes.

Compassion and loving-kindness are great concepts in Buddhism and people can help each other in their worse situations by applying these concepts in their lives. According to Buddhism, understanding others' difficulties is important as same as understanding own self. Daley (2020) quotes Dalai Lama as follows,

“According to Buddhism, compassion is an aspiration, a state of mind, wanting others to be free from suffering. It’s not passive—it’s not empathy

¹⁴ Palliyaguru, C. (2010) The Country Situation in Using Ethics and Rituals from Ancient Stages: Beliefs, Observances and Practices in Sri Lanka, pp 100

alone—but rather an empathetic altruism that actively strives to free others from suffering (...)¹⁵

According to the above quote, the Buddhism can be recognized as great teaching which focused the empathy towards others as same as the empathetic intervention towards people who are suffering from different type of issues as defined by the western psychology. Therefore, these great concepts can be seen in some Buddhist rituals like *Bodhi pūja*. Two types of advantages can be seen in the *Bodhi pūja* ritual i.e. they can share the sufferings with each other to relieve the pain and secondly they sometimes obtain some opinions, solutions for their problems.

It can be observed that the process of group worship includes collaborative activities such as cleaning the shrine place and sharing offering items. The whole process includes collective activities. Wijesinghe (2013) explains that the method of offering as follows,

“In communal worship of the Buddha (usually on the full-moon day), the devotees stand in a row or a circle near the worship area and pass from hand to hand the items to be offered (flowers, food, incense, etc.) until these offerings reach the shrine room, dagaba, or the bodhi-tree. In some temples, a sonorous bell (gantara) is rung throughout the entire ritual process. A monk or a nun occupies the head of the line”.¹⁶

This collaborative process has hidden advantages. Everybody is performing the same ritual but, with different objectives. When someone is suffering at a loss or facing a challenging circumstance, there are a lot of ways that can impact them positively in Buddhist society. When observing the *Bodhi pūja* process carefully, it can be identified that people get together during the ritual and everyone shows empathy for others. It increases interpersonal harmony as well as community bond.

¹⁵ Daley, R (2020) Buddhist Wisdom & Empathy: How to Be There for Others, *The Tattooed Buddha*

¹⁶ Wijesinghe (2013) Role of Buddhist Spiritual Practice in the Lives and Health of Buddhist Nuns Living with a Chronic Illness in Sri Lanka, Pp 28.

People who perform *Bodhi pūja* sometimes obtain other opinions, solutions for their problems. Some participants revealed that they could have found some solutions and opinions from both core participants and Buddhist monks. Buddhist monks among the participants also revealed that there is a tradition in the Buddhist community to visit the Buddhist monks after performing religious activities. At that time the laypeople discuss their difficulties and with Buddhist monks and they are also giving the blessing by a different type of activities such as binding *pirith nool*, (holy thread) giving *pirith wathura*, (holy water) and, chanting blessing stanzas. These activities are helping them to be strong and confident. All these processes eventually lead to the well-being of society and to make a strong community.

According to the London Mental Health Foundation (2016), people require the support of others to survive and from childhood, we are dependent on others such as parents, siblings, relatives, and other people in the society. But, social relationships are constantly changing in the 21st century due to some reasons such as competitive lifestyle, the decline of human qualities, and mobile technology and social media. Therefore, belonging to the social world by making social relationships is necessary for human beings and people should value their relationships as well as develop new relationships throughout life. According to Fallowfield (2015), people are social by nature and they require them. That's what makes social wellbeing an integral element of human overall wellbeing.

According to many scholars, religious activities are playing an important role in making social relationships and social cohesion. Eleanor (2018) explains that those who partake in collective religious rituals together have a higher probability of having a supportive relationship than those who do not. Sri Lankan *Bodhi pūja* ritual also one of the group rituals and people tend to make new relationships as well as renew their family and social bonds. In some instances, during the period (7 days, 14 days, and 21 days) the same group of people regularly meets to perform *Bodhi pūja*. According to the elderly participants, this period is very special for them because they can obtain support from family members and other participants who engage in the *Bodhi pūja* ritual. They further revealed that spending time with loved ones and hang

out with same age people is making them happy rather than spending time for a long time at homes.

Another observation of the study was that people who performed the *Bodhi pūja* rituals dress and behave in the same way since everyone participated to obtain a blessing for their different type of issues. In that sense, no one can predominate at the shrine place and everyone is helpless in front of their different type of issues. Sharing offering items and chanting stanzas together also can create equality among devotees. This fact is a reflection of equality which was the great teaching of Lord Buddha.

*“None is by birth a Brahmin,
Non is by birth an outcast.
By deed one becomes Brahmin,
By deed one becomes an outcast”¹⁷*

According to the above Buddhist teaching, people can make new relationships without considering any background of others. These teachings, their practical usage in the ritual environment can buildup social and communal harmony and it is eventually led to developing the society.

In modern era, many forms of mental and physical health resources are available to support health wellbeing of the people. Systematic processes are also there to enhance social relationships and social wellbeing. But, the interventions of them are not equally accessible in every country. Especially the developing countries have a huge unavailability these modern knowledge and resources. In that sense, religious ritual processes are playing an important role to enhance both mental and social wellbeing aspects of these societies.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the *Bodhi pūja* ritual has a strong psychosocial background as indicated by the results of the study. Devotees gain advantages of mental wellbeing such as emotional development, used as a healing method, finding options for

¹⁷ Aggikabardvaja (Vasala) Sutta.

issues, overcoming negative impacts, and gaining confidence/strength. This similar to western psychological mindfulness-based cognitive behavioural therapy. Social well-being is achieved through group worship which shows group psychotherapeutic characteristics of the *Bodhi pūja* ritual and many positive outcomes such as enhancing family support, social support system, sharing system, and new social relationships can be identified. According to the analysis, western psychological treatments mental and social wellbeing that are practising even today can be seen in the Buddhist *Bodhi Pūja* ritual. Hence, it is important to identify traditional knowledge, values and essence of the primitive rituals and religious practices over western concepts. Even though these are invisible psychological concepts, people use them unconsciously for their salvation from hazards.

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MODERN SCIENCE & BUDDHISM

Sunil Kamble

M.Phil (Pāli)

Department of Pali

University of Mumbai

sunilkamble@hotmail.com

Abstract

Buddhism was born in India and spread to other countries. Buddhism is considered as one of the major religions in the world. Religions are generally associated with omnipotent God, his divine commands and transmigration of soul. Science on the other hand disagree with religions on these grounds. Buddhism stands differently in this regard.

Great scientist of this century Einstein was of the opinion to reconcile the conflict between religion and Science. According to him “Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind”¹ Einstein emphasized the need of rationality in the religion and scientists to have feeling of Cosmic religion whose potential according to him lies in Buddhism.²

Great Indian Sociologist Dr. B. R. Ambedkar highlighted the rational qualities of Buddhism in his book ‘The Buddha and His Dhamma’.³ Dr. Ambedkar is credited with revival of Buddhism in India.

This paper takes overall review of relations between Science and Buddhism. It investigates weather they are friendly, or they are in conflict; they support each other or does science breaks down the foundations of Buddhism. For this purpose, special reference is taken to the inventions and discoveries of Science in past

¹ Einstein, Albert 1954; Ideas and Opinions, New York Crown (p 46)

² Einstein, Albert 1954; Ideas and Opinions, New York Crown (p 36- 52)

³ Ambedkar,Dr. B.R. 1956 – The Buddha And His Dhamma, 1997 edition, Nagpur, Buddha Bhoomi Publication, , p226-309, 283

two centuries. Buddhism is taken in the limited scope of the teachings of the Buddha as found in Tipitaka – the Pali canon of Theravada tradition.

What is science?

Science is the pursuit and application of knowledge and understanding of the natural and social world following a systematic methodology based on evidence.⁴

Science is the exploration of the nature and truth of the existences and phenomena in the universe. It is characterized by being logical, based on reasoning, supported by evidence and free of dogma. The explored knowledge is presented in simple and understandable format. Systematic methodology, now known as ‘scientific methodology’, is adopted for exploration.

The knowledge so explored is applied to gain ease, comfort, luxury, wealth, and power.

What is Buddhism?

Buddhism is guidelines given by the Buddha for the welfare and benefit of the mankind. It includes the statements of the universal laws of nature to which every human existence is subjected to. It exposes the knowledge of nature and the manner in which to use this knowledge for leading a happy and peaceful life. The main goal of Buddhism is to end sufferings from the human life which amounts to resolving the problems and issues that add to stress and suffering of the human. Buddhism did not hold the responsibility to relieve any one of his suffering instead acquires the role of guide giving guaranteed result when one acts accordingly. Thus, Buddhism holds person himself responsible for his own welfare – the whole control given to person himself. It says – ‘attā hi attano nātho’⁵ meaning you are maker of your own future.

The teachings of Buddhism are those which are searched and derived from the natural sources using the scientific methodology. The laws of nature discovered and stated meet the principles and characteristics of science. They have been used by

⁴ <https://sciencecouncil.org/about-science/our-definition-of-science/> 28/12/2020

⁵ 160. Dhammapada

large number of people and proved their usefulness. Their applications to the social development have been not only remarkable but they form the basic fundamentals of the ideal society even in modern time.⁶

Is there conflict between Science and Buddhism?

The conflict between science and religion is on the grounds of – belief without reasoning and investigation or questioning.

Buddhism did not approve acceptance of its tenets without investigation or examination. It openly invites people to test the tenets for their quality of benefit giver.⁷ It provides arguments as questions that could suggest the criteria for the test. These criteria are in accordance with the characteristics of science.

Another matter of conflict between Science and religion is the belief in creator of the universe. A superpower or his messengers who intervenes in every body's life and can be bribed to get benefits.

Buddhism has no place for creator of the universe. Buddhism install a principle of series of causes and effects for the events to happen.⁸ It does not name any person or god as creator. Gods referred to in Buddhism are beings enjoying fruits of good deeds in different abode which is completely a psychological abode.

Buddhist principles imply beginning less universe which is also implied by the new discoveries of astronomical science as expanding universe.⁹ The Big bang theory does not state that it emerged from nothing but reasons that the great mass condensed to smaller volume blasted beginning the expansion of the universe.¹⁰

⁶ Ambedkar, Dr. B.R. 1956 – The Buddha And His Dhamma, 1997 edition, Nagpur, Buddha Bhoomi Publication, (p226-309, 283)

⁷ Kesamuttisuttaṃ AN 3.66

⁸ Paṭiccasamuppāda, Vinaya Piṭaka, Mahāvagga

⁹ Hawking Stephen 2006 The Theory of Everything, Jaico, Mumbai p 18

¹⁰ Hawking Stephen 2006 The Theory of Everything, Jaico, Mumbai p 30

Buddhism recommends giving up rituals and dogmas.¹¹ It promotes practical application of its tenets to reap real benefits and not the imaginative satisfaction.¹²

It does not promise benefits on prayer but guarantees when acted upon the directions and guidance.

Its fundamental principle of impermanence denies absoluteness which is proved by the invention of theory of relativity.¹³

The principle of non-self denies the existence and migration of soul the stand taken by science.¹⁴

The Buddha does not claim any divinity for himself not for anyone else. He did not give infallibility and divinity to his words. He invites to test his teachings for its usefulness and benefits. The repeatability of the teachings satisfies the condition of being scientific.¹⁵

Does science and Buddhism have something common?

The most common factor between science and Buddhism is the fundamental principle of universal causation.

Another common factor is test for trueness.

Belief is based on knowledge and not on revelation or commandments or divinity.

A practitioner of Buddhism is therefore is expected to act as a man of science who practices rationality, experimentation, test and believe on that which is known through experience to be true.

¹¹ Sīlabbataparāmāsaṃ pahātum (AN 10.76)

¹² Yo dhammaṃ passati so maṃ passati (SN 22.87)

¹³ Sabbe saṃkhaṛa aniccati (277. Dhammapada)

¹⁴ Sabbe dhammā anattāti (279. Dhammapada)

¹⁵ Thousands have earned enlightenment under his guidance

Non-absoluteness of every existence is another common factor which science has discovered and accepted lately.¹⁶

What is difference between Buddhism and science?

Science is non-emotional knowledge, Buddhism is not.

Science aim is to explore and expose knowledge of nature and invent its use. Its scope ends here. The utilization of the knowledge achieved for benefit or destruction of mankind is not the subject of science. It is the aim and goal of Buddhism to use the knowledge gained to use for the welfare and benefit of mankind. The ethical teachings of Buddhism provide strong volition for that.

Science approach towards mind is limited by physical existence. It treats mind as brain connected by nervous system. Buddhism does not have such limited approach. Buddhism encompass the non-physical existence of mind and its functions. (not to be taken as spirituality associated with soul or divinity).

Neuroscience depends on brain and nervous system for functions of mind which is the physical connection between five sense organs and the brain which is the physical seat of mind. It has been in advanced stage of development. Buddhism has no contrary to this advanced knowledge. However, Buddhism is more relevant in expanding its functions to the sixth sense organ the mind. The functions of perception, sensation/experience, memory, volition, logic, decision making, reaction and response to stimulation, desire etc. are performed by non-physical mind. The science of functions of human mind is the subject of Buddhism which it deals in totality. Psychology as a science deals it only with the behavioral issues generalized and based on statistical inputs.

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), Psychologist, put forward the concept of sub-conscious mind to distinguish between the conscious actions and automatic actions of mind. Sub conscious mind has impressions that influence the volition of the person and the effect seen in his behavioral pattern.

¹⁶ Relativeness of mass, energy, space and time discarded their absoluteness.

Buddhism does not recognize sub conscious mind but according to Buddhism “saṃkhāra” one of the aggregates of mind does carry the impressions of all previous actions, responses and perceptions of the person and influence the volition.

Normal behavior according to science is general responses given by large number of populations as gathered under statistical data. It has no concern with the ethics or morality. Buddhism introduces the ethical or moral characteristics to all actions physical, vocal or mental and to its volition as well.

Meditation: meditation is the field science do not venture in. Focusing of mind and hypnotism are related but are not been recognized as meditation.

Meditation is the important tool that Buddhism recommend to bring out controlled changes in the functioning of mind with the aim to achieve end of suffering from the life of the person. The Special type of meditational practices – Samath & Vipassana as taught by the Buddha are the tools and instruments to lead to the insight of the person to know himself ‘as he is’ – his true existence and position in this universe, his true relation with the universe that he lives in. The experience of the Universal laws of nature such as a) law of cause-and-effect b) law of interdependent existence c) Law of impermanence d) Law of anatta e) four noble truths concerning his life.

Discoveries of Modern Science and Buddhism

Physics:

Relativeness of the physical entities of mass, energy, space and time is in agreement with the principle of non-absolute (Impermanence) of Buddhism. mass energy equivalence, dual nature of light, Heisenberg uncertainty principle have nothing that goes against Buddhism.

Chemistry:

Atomic and molecular nature of materials and their chemical reactions. Generation of large amount of heat from inter molecular friction. Nuclear fusion and fission converting mass into energy. These have nothing that goes against Buddhism.

Biology:

Darwin's theory of evolution is in agreement with Buddhist principle of interdependent existence. Investigation into the structures of DNA and its use in disease curing practice too have nothing against Buddhism.

Environmental Science: a) Pollution b) Carbon effect c) Global warming

Buddhism advises middle path. Using of natural resources to the minimum of requirement. Excessive use to imbalance the nature harming to the species is not the praised in Buddhism. Restrained behavior with regards to use of ahār (food) and other requirements for sustenance of life recommended. Greed of wealth and other materialistic gains are not ethically good as per the Buddhism. Restrained behavior with regards to nature is the need of the day.

Astronomy:

a) impact of gravitation of astronomical bodies and light. B) Impact of gravitation on space and time. C) motion of astronomical bodies d) expanding universe e) possibility of black hole – condensed mass with infinite gravitational pull to attract even light as district particles of micro mass. F) Big bang theory is not in any disagreement with teachings and principles of Buddhism.

Impact of Scientific discovery on foundations of Buddhism

Following are the foundations of Buddhism:

- a) ethical behavior
- b) paṭiccasamuppāda
- c) law of impermanence
- d) law of anatta
- e) law of interdependent existence
- f) four noble truths

The scientific discoveries have not proved anything in disagreement with these foundations of Buddhism. The new discoveries have been providing supporting evidence in principle.

Impact of scientific discoveries and Buddhism on Social life

Scientific Discoveries has added and continue to add to the knowledge of the world. The discoveries have been very useful in providing ease of work, comfort and luxury. Many discoveries have boosted the industry and economy. Science has been proved as boon to the mankind but its use for power struggle and destruction is also the fact of history taking away millions of lives. Its contribution to the pollution of environment causing severe damage to the natural balance is resulting in the biggest damage to the world.

Science does not teach ethics. Ethics are out of purview of science. For Buddhism ethics is fundamental. The impact of ethical and moral behavior is very beneficial in the social life.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar used Buddhism to establish equality and fraternity in the caste ridden unequal society in India. According to him “Dhamma is Social; it is fundamentally and essentially so.”¹⁷ By ‘dhamma’ he is referring to Buddhism.

Buddhism does not obstruct the exploration and search of knowledge and truth rather it promotes the same. Therefore, Buddhism is very friendly with science. With its ethical foundation Buddhism can help science deliver the best for the mankind.

Conclusion:

Science and Buddhism are not in conflict with each other. Acting together, they can deliver the best for the mankind.

Buddhism can easily reconcile with science realizing the dream of Einstein.

¹⁷ Ambedkar, Dr. B.R. 1956 – The Buddha And His Dhamma, 1997 edition, Nagpur, Buddha Bhoomi Publication, (p316)

ACTIVE KARUṆĀ

Author: Mrs Melinda Irtl Földiné

Assistant Professor at Dharma Gate Buddhist College, Hungary

Foreword

This writing aims to share some ideas and personal observations about the needs of practical approaches of karuṇā (compassion) here and now, what could nourish the heartfelt scientific activism, especially within the Noble Sangha. Intentionally, I would not use highly sophisticated phrases to express the importance of this subject. The simple reason is: it maintains the balance between practice and theory as per the subject requirements.

Background

Compassion and compassionate actions are not specifically related to religious activities and privilege for any human race, nation, specific group members, or others. It is some inherent nature of any sentient being that, as anyone can sense (see, hear, feel) the suffering of others, we all have an instinct response to it. Compassion has becoming more and more important in the field of education, politics, economy and science.¹ Many articles and journal papers are available on this topic, and several institutes and organisations emphasise their social and individual values.² We can say that compassion is an essential, basic competence that must develop irrespectively of age, sex, profession. It has the most significant and incredible force and power to be the hearth for corruption-free politics (change politics for good, for the collective well-being and happiness); for student-centred-learning in the field of education; for gentle, and patient health care systems; tolerant,

¹ <https://www.compassioneducationalliance.org/>
<https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/topic/compassion/definition>
<https://www.compassionateactionnetwork.org/science-of-compassion>
<https://www.compassioninpolitics.com/>

² Pubmed search for the key-word „compassionate” gives 1945 results:
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=compassionate&filter=simsearch2.ffrft>

loyal, non-aggressive defence, military and police forces. Deep-rooted compassion based on insight and realisation about the truth of suffering, supports individuals to have the courage to get involved actively to help others; meanwhile, someone would be able to stay calm and internally grounded even in the emotional storms and be able to shift others' perspectives.

Buddhist Approaches

Humanity and other sentient beings face multiple sufferings in more visible, tangible forms in our present era than before. Pandemic phenomena related to Covid-19 and multiple “side effects” on individuals, society, economics and many other aspects are just one form of this. Therefore, it is a must for an engaged Buddhist to maintain some kind of peace and harmony even during the challenging time if someone has been taken refuge in the Triple Gem. Not only for the peace of mind for himself but for the sake of others as well. This fundamental peace and harmony are not only based on saddhā (faith, trust, fidelity) and taking refuge provides not only shelter to us during “samsaric storms” and situations but also could bring insight by developing sensitivity and compassion.

What about others who have not taken this refuge formally? In fact, there are more and more lay-people from the secular population in the West (they are not lay-Buddhist) who can benefit from the Buddha Dhamma directly or indirectly. How is it possible? In many ways, but most commonly, they get some support or help from Dhamma practitioners when they are in need. There is a circular and spiral “evolutional” process and progress due to the active compassionate social activity; as the more we do, the more we establish peace and harmony within and around us. Sometimes it is enough to turn entire life orientation when people benefit from the good deeds of others, and they realise it happens only due to non-differentiated radiation of compassion by unknown Buddhist practitioner. Good examples are always great transformative tools, even according to neuroscience (i.e. the mechanism of mirror neurons in learning processes).

Doing good for others includes educating people. Even if someone far away from any Buddhist teacher, it is possible to get in touch with Dhamma. Nowadays,

people get involved in contemplative practices by media (television, radio and other online platforms), public events related to any new age movements, spiritually oriented festivals and other forums knowingly or unknowingly. We could say there is no corner of this world where we cannot find at least some advertisements on yoga, meditation or Mindfulness courses where compassion is being taught. Scientists also get access to more and more information and inspiration on this subject by the media. As the subject is already in the media, it is evident that professionals and monks should work together to screen the low-standard sources and be active in public platforms to educate people properly and spread valuable information based on compassion (offering simple and helpful topics always).

Meditation and contemplative practices became extremely popular due to the positive biological, neurological, psychological effects on human beings; therefore, it has also become a market item for some people in the business sector. Richard J. Davidson and Daniel Goleman (2017)³ have created some new paradigm and typology about the “deep path” (traditional, complex spiritual or religious forms of practices) and “wide path” (a less intensive practice that can reach more people), so it is easier to understand these directions and trends nowadays. Of course, somebody might have valid critics about some “wide path” methods. However, it is also worth thinking that they could act as a gateway for the traditional lineages later on, as someone develops mental health, sensitivity, responsibility and attention with time.

Simple Buddhist ethics (*sīla*, *veramaṇī*) and the core teachings behind (Four Noble Truth and The Eightfold Path) are becoming real refuge in day-to-day life for those who are open to listening, thinking, and applying. Essential teachings and their meaningful application could give us strong support and clear orientation in every moment. It could act as an instant *remedy* since it could provide immediate problem-solving methods not only for monks or lay-Buddhist but also for those whose life, livelihood, health, safety are depending on other’s compassionate attitude (i.e. physically or mentally ill, poor, vulnerable ones). That is why psychology, cognitive

³ R. Davidson and D. Goleman: *Altered Traits. Science Reveals How Meditation Changes Your Mind, Brain, and Body*. Avery Publishing, USA, 2017. p.3-4.

science, sociology, environmental and other sciences are getting more interested in the alternative solutions based on Buddhist approaches.

There are some fundamental doctrines of early Buddhism which remain common to all Buddhism, including the cattāri ariyasaccāni (The Four Noble Truths) and the ariya atṭhaṅgika magga (Noble Eightfold Path). Compassion is also one of the core teachings and one of the common evidence for all Buddhist schools. The source of this is the teachings about the Four Immeasurables (appamaññā, which literally has no measure). In addition, many textual references are available from the Pali Canon on brahmavihārās⁴ or sublime attitudes⁵, i.e. mettā, karuṇā, muditā, upekkhā (loving-kindness, compassion, joy and equanimity). However, they have slightly different importance in the Theravāda tradition than in the Mahāyāna as they are considered as objects of meditation, “side effects” of the contemplation on The Four Noble Truth or any other types of meditation (samatha or vipassanā); pre-requisites for the bodhisattvahood.

Aspirations and the practical application of The Four Immeasurables (especially mettā and karuṇā) have taken shape in Engaged Buddhism's concept. Still, it is not evident for some monasteries, forest sanghas or other Buddhist communities why to follow the updates of scientific research projects and why to be courageous to implement new rules within the daily routine of a particular sangha and how it deepens our chance to abide in the four appamaññā. A straightforward example related to Engaged Buddhism and Green Dharma could be the topic of being compassionate through eating habits. Directly speaking, it means it is the time when there is no need to have meaningless arguments about the connection between vegan/vegetarian diet and non-violent attitude. It is very nice to see that many of the Buddhist Centre in the USA and Europe intentionally follow the non-violent attitude of eating habits. His Holiness The 14th Dalai Lama or the 17th Karmapa and other prominent Buddhist persons give public talks and online teachings endlessly

⁴ lit. abodes of brahma (divine abodes, divine dwellings)

⁵ SN 42.8, SN 46.54, AN 10.208, AN 3.65., AN 4.125, AN 5.27, AN 8.63, AN 11.17, MN 7, MN 52, DN 13, DN 17 and other later texts such as Visuddhimagga, Bodhisattvācāryavatāra etc.

nowadays about the importance of this subject in the term of environmental pollution and global warming. There are many Buddhist communities all over Asia who are already more aware of these facts proved by scientific findings and take active steps to encourage others to be active in the practical implementation of karuṇā. In terms of changing eating habits, we could contemplate the novel interpretation of some passage in the Vinaya Piṭaka as well. Some tradition says it is allowed to eat meat if the animal was not killed because of us; however, it gives for a question: What about if we are aware and know it well that it is harmful to the environment, it might be harmful to us (because of the hormones and other chemicals, antibiotics given to animals)⁶. If we say it is ok, then we might break one of the fundamental precepts, i.e. to be truthful.

Over the past century, more and more Buddhist lineages, monastic and lay-Buddhist communities, and organisations have started to help others in need. Several social activities are led by monks, including food distribution, offering shelter for orphans and other homeless people, establishing health care centres, hospitals, free school for low-income families, and educating self-supporting communities in remote places. These activities definitely change the lives of thousands of people and bring happiness and joy to their life. But, in my view, compassionate actions would be even more effective in a particular country if all Buddhists would work and make action plans together.

These compassionate actions obviously do not depend on kāla, deśa (sanskrit: time and place, region) and it is not the only evidence of Mahāyāna Buddhism related to the Bodhisattva vows who devote his life to help others to get enlightenment. It might be interesting for future studies to list how Theravāda, Mahāyāna, Zen, Vajrayāna and Dzogchen lineages would offer different methods and also how they rank compassion to unfold the concept of brahmavihārās, what kind of footsteps they are taking to get self-realisation. However, it is also interesting to see

⁶ <https://www.cowspiracy.com/>

how they present and practice compassion in their day-to-day life for “actual or practical realisation”.⁷

Compassionate Communication

Firstly, the way of expression below tries to be as simple as it is possible, to be a direct example for “active karuṇā” or better to say: “to be an active performance of karuṇā in written form”. This gesture of being rather simple than overemphasising on scientific proof could be considered as *a radical act of a natural mind* from the point of the *Dzogchen* tradition or a kind of *ZEN movement as momentary art of expression*, to indicate that karuṇā is simple universal teaching what should direct even the scientific activities. Compassionate attitude is far beyond even that question of what Buddhist lineage or yāna we have taken to examine the meaning and the practical approaches of it in the present era.⁸ When we think on what exactly mean compassionate communication, we might reflect first on the Eightfold Noble Path (especially on sammā vāc, righteous speech) and the fourth precept (musāvāda veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi). We can recall all the related suggestion given by the suttas (avoid lying, gossip, harsh, rude words or meaningless conversation) to avoid harmful actions by speech and communication. These are important basic points, but it is not granted to perform active karuṇā if we focus only on what we should avoid or try to be honest. Compassionate communication is based on expanded empathy or better to say “to feel others” and to have energy and courage for dynamic response any time, by knowing exactly when to speak and how. We should understand how to decrease suffering and increase happiness by communication. It seems inconsistent, but: compassionate communication could be definite, dynamic speech; pleasant, sweet and kind; sharp or *flesh cutting* and could be complete silence depending on various situations. Silence is a gentle, compassionate way to interact. Apart from the Buddhist content, we have several experiences from our daily routine

⁷ One of the most popular and strong practices is the Green Tārā sādhana, which is precisely meant for realizing and expanding our active, limitless compassionate nature in every moment in our lives.

⁸ It might be worth re-interpreting the concept of *eka-yāna* in this gesture of expression.

about compassionate communication. Parents should be strict and straight with their children to support their physical and mental health; meanwhile, a doctor should think twice about how and when to communicate with a cancer patient and family members to support the health progress. A scientist should also be wise when and how to share new findings not to get involved in any harmful situation (as it has happened many times in history - Copernicus, Galilei). There is no exact, final prescription about what to do as things are interdependent and impermanent (*Panta rhei*), but regular Mindfulness practice (*satipaṭṭhāna*) would be our root foundation for acting appropriately at the very momentum.

Secondly, it is essential to emphasise that science could be a great support to build a bridge and *channels for communication* between East-West, Tradition-Modernity, Philosophy-Science for better understanding of the worldly phenomenon (like functions and meaning of life, mind, consciousness, cognition). However, suppose the compassionate attitude is inactive or dormant in a scientist or any professionals⁹. In that case, there is a risk of being overcomplicated with terminus technicus in their communication and they might develop pride and arrogance, especially towards those who do not have the same scientific vocabulary that a particular scientist has. Many people even feel ashamed and feel inferior to others in such a situation, which means they experience *akusala cetasika* due to lack of understanding on that subject or simply because somebody makes them feel they do not know anything.

As Buddhists, we should never forget that it is always our responsibility to speak and communicate according to the audience's actual mental state, knowledge and acquirements. It is also a common observation that it is easier to share and explain anything for those who have deeper understanding and insight on something (actually they can share it most simply); meanwhile, there are lots of confusion, inadequacy or inconsequential phrases in case of others who have limited or one-sided knowledge.

⁹ Any secular or any religious people, philosophers, monks, nuns are also professionals in this content.

Sākyamuni Buddha was a real profound example of his compassionate teaching as many suttas prove that he was always able to use appropriate words, phrases and metaphors well-timed to help others gain insight. As we see, communication could act as a kind of upāya (skilful method) for enlightenment and could also be a direct representation of compassion if we can feel and resonate with others during any kind of verbal interaction.

No doubt, science has its own language and we have to be open for dialogues and the sake of smooth and fruitful interactions; we all have to expand our scientific vocabulary due to the same active compassionate attitude. The simplest example could be any social workers. If they devote their lives to support others, such as migrants or poor people in a remote area in a foreign country, it is a must to learn their language first. The same applies to any science, including Buddhist philosophy. Dhamma could be shared easily with anyone from the scientific fields if we are ready to understand the way of communication by others. Sometimes, a specific word in Latin or any local language can be the medium, and in other cases, communication could happen throughout numbers, tables, graphs or symbols. Nevertheless, first, we have to learn all of these forms or at least be familiar with them, to be able to be active in compassionate communication with others.

Science and Dhamma

Science, especially psychology or neuroscience, has many spiritual benefits as it could also help to re-arrange or shape new frames for the Dhamma, highlight its mechanism and potential what we can utilise for the benefit of humankind, so all would be granted by open dialogues. Promising and valuable clinical research records make Dhamma more visible and more attractive for humanity, as we can see the example of Mind and Life Institute, The Healthy Minds or Greater Good Science Centre. Thousands of scientists have already committed to cultivating well-being and relieving suffering through a scientific understanding of the mind, life, and the

interaction between human beings and the environment¹⁰. They work on specific scientific research for a kinder, wiser and more compassionate world and society. However, it is not the appropriate time to write thousands of doctoral theses, publish millions of journals on this topic for all of us and seek scientific evidence, statistics or references to prove the relevance of the theory on active compassionate actions. No doubt, we should be grateful for those who do it with enthusiasm because they spread the message in written form; however, it is even more significant if scientists and monks can afford time and energy not only to study, research and speak about compassion but put more effort to apply it in their daily practice. Karuṇā could definitely be an active force, a useful catalyser for right-actions (including body, speech and mind aspects) at macro and micro level, in case of individual or group initiatives, in the short- or long term scientific projects as well. It has great potential even if we are just supporting others from the “backstage” or becoming the main actor for any changes.

We all have different facilities, financial backgrounds and opportunities to do something for others. We might have a different way to serve others: mother, teacher, doctor, friend, neighbour, classmate, colleague, politician, social activist living in a society or as a fully ordained monk from a monastery, but **WE ALL HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO DO SOMETHING ACTIVELY!**

Some suggestion about compassionate action in practice:

- let your comfort zone behind and stand up from your meditation cushion to put compassion in action
- make your life not only meaningful but also useful, for the sake of all beings
- never hesitate to do good for others
- never miss to warn or stop anyone who is about to harm himself or others
- never get involved in any harmful actions or situations
- be compassionate with human beings, animals, plants and all kinds of living being

¹⁰ <http://www.ecodharma.com/> , <https://dharmanet.org/coursesM/37/ecology0.htm> , <https://www.mindandlife.org/insights/topics/compassion-and-empathy/> , <https://centerhealthyminds.org/>

- be vegetarian or vegan
- lead as simple life as possible to decrease your eco-foot-print
- get involved in any types of scientific project which works on the well-being of others
- study Dhamma and science parallel; have diligence and enthusiasm in learning processes
- keep it in your mind that any study should be based on compassion as removing avijja is the most important factor to lessen suffering for others and for us
- teach Dhamma for those who are suffering and ready to learn how to change their perspectives (use any platform what are available¹¹)
- be active, creative and open-minded to help plan or design any scientific research out of compassion decrease or eliminate suffering
- help plan or design scientific research in which all steps and protocols are based on compassionate motivation (including: hypothesis, research methods, sampling methods, data management, working with people involved in the projects)
- be a good example for others with your deeds, words and thoughts to encourage them to overcome difficulties
- improve your communication skills to find the most compassionate way to communicate.

Conclusion

Wars, violence, starvation, migration, global warming or recently the issue of Covid-19 and its psychological, political and economic effects also provide us with an opportunity to understand how important it is to implement the precious Dharma teachings (i.e. The Four Immeasurables) actively in the ocean of samsaric-misery. It

¹¹ We all are aware of how the personal connection between teacher and disciple needed. However, we also could face separation due to lock-downs during a pandemic, so online teachings became a life-saving facility sometimes for people suffering from mental illnesses. Therefore, we should be open and flexible related to any platforms in the future as well if it supports others' well-being.

became clear how important it is to maintain the interaction with the society to stay on the middle path (*majjima paṭipadā*) for even Buddhist monks. Society needs more and more active novices, monks and nuns who do not only study suttas and abhidhamma and stay isolated in monastic environment but start to get involved in different social activities, humanitarian or environment-saving projects. Alternatively, they teach as many people as possible about the dukkha samudaya and niruddha, or at least some breath observation or simple samatha meditation, as they have gained clear insight about the Noble Truths on sufferings through the practice of samatha and vipassana.

Forms of *active compassion* are innumerable as they change along with the changing situations. It should always be a dynamic response to the individual's needs or society at any particular momentum. One key for the proper dynamic response in the term of science is to realise the differences between the current problems in Asia or the West. Different countries, regions, or communities have to emphasise sustainability, sustainable livelihood, maternal or child care, education, disability rehabilitation, how to treat addictions, how to prevent violence or abuse according to their needs. We all have to be very honest with others and ourselves to unfold the root cause of any of these issues mentioned above. There is no country without some or many of these burdens. We all have to take responsibility for every action we do for others or even if we miss doing something good for others. Therefore, it is necessary to consider how Buddhist communities could cooperate more effectively with science for social development in Asia and the West and apply *karuṇā* as a universal direction for peace, freedom, equanimity, and happiness.

It is much easier to live a harmonious and peaceful life if someone could abide in the state of compassion, or we might say someone could constantly maintain that compassionate quality of the mind. Therefore, be humanitarian and radiate compassion towards all. Do not do it only to exert the highest moral principle called *ahimsā*, but to prevent the unwholesome deeds and their results (i.e. suffering, sorrow) because *kamma*, is the only “properties” that we possess in our life.¹²

¹² As Ven. Sayadaw Upandit (1992) pointed in his book.

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RELEVANCE OF THERAVADA BUDDHISM IN THE AGE OF MODERN SCIENCES AND ITS ROLE IN MENTAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Dr. Lalan Kumar Jha
Dept. of Pali
Nava Nalanda Mahavihara

Human behaviour started becoming hostile towards nature and during 06 B.C.E. human being developed a habit of destroying it. Slowly-slowly natural and other artefacts which were based on nature started to be downgraded. It was the time of the Buddha and the nature was at its full bloom and effects of destroying nature were not so intense. Though indiscriminate killing of animals in the name of yagna was there and the Buddha opposed it and instead He suggested yagna of ghee and oil etc.

Up to fourth century Common Era Churches in Europe were in so control that scientific discoveries were disheartened. In the beginning Christianity was very adamant against scientific discoveries but slowly-slowly it became open and friendly to science. About this a scholar says that- “The major denominations of Christianity have become more lenient and tolerant. But for centuries they waged a fierce war against the very attitude of the scientists who endeavoured to find out the true nature of the world and of man, by means of reason and experiments not by consulting an ancient book compiled by seers and mystics on the basis of intuitions and revelations.”¹ Most of the religions believe in supernatural power and nothing happens without the mercy of God. But scientific discoveries were possible not believing in faith and supernormal power. Elaborating this the same author describes that- “Whatever progress has been made in the Western world in science and technology, was made not because of faith and belief in the

¹ *Buddhism & Science*, Introduction, P. 2

supernatural, but largely by rejecting it or being indifferent to it.”² It is this indifferent and rejecting attitude by scientists some people started rejecting religious values and ultimately humanity suffered.

Slowly-slowly scientific discoveries started gaining ground. New discoveries came to the fore front and most of the people started tilting towards science and scientific discoveries. Needless to say that in different countries overcoming obstacles created from vested interests of religious institutions, science traversed a long journey.

It was in this background that great debates started during nineteenth and up to mid of the twentieth century C.E. between religion and science. Humanism which was central point of all the religions became subservient and gradually moving forward its pinnacle came to this notion whether one follows any religion or not human values should not be diminished. It is in this context that views of some scholars regarding science and religion become necessary to discuss here.

Any religion which is not able to solve the problems of human beings become redundant and is not given any kind of due respect by men of its own society. In the same way if science and its discoveries are not suitable for solving problems of humanity then it is rejected by men.

Now it can be thought whether science or religion what for these two is important? Answer to this question can be said as for humanity or for betterment of living beings. Human beings are the most sensible and the most consumable of resources being at top of Pyramid. Therefore, moral law suggests that it should be the most responsible beings on this earth as it consumes most of the natural resources. Therefore, humanism is relevant and important factor for present day life. It was a dominant factor of the twentieth – century and would remain in this twentieth-first century too. The unprecedented and unmindful advantage of science and technology has undermined human interest in various ways. The present pandemic of Covid-19 is also one of its

² Ibid.

effects. That is why intelligentsia, environmentalists and other concerned experts turn to religious wisdom and its different aspects which ultimately aim at welfare of living beings.

A question can be asked whether this humanism and well-beings of beings should be inspired by science or by religion.

Philosopher president of India Dr. Radhakrishnan has answered this question in his own way and according to him “There is no conflict between religion and a reasonable humanism because when the humanist admits the intimateness of the values, he is implicitly accepting the spiritual view of the universe.”³

Some scholars think solution of this conflict lies in the resolution between science and religion. According to the suggestion of Julian Huxley- “The only way in the present split between religion and science could be mended would be through the acceptance by science of the fact and value of religion as an organ of evolving man and the acceptance by the religion that religions must evolve if they are not to become extinct or at best into out dated living fossils struggling to survive in a new and alien environment.”⁴

Commenting on Humanism, religion and science Wazir singh says that “Humanism is not different from religion or a set of beliefs supported by an emotional attitude. People hold on to a dogma in spite of intellectual evidence conflicting with their faith, because faith makes a powerful appeal to their passion.”⁵

According to a scholar solution lies between synergy between the two. He says that science and technology has created havoc but pure sciences have helped in pursuit of

³ *An Idealist View of life*, P. 56; Also used by the author of this article in the Philosophical Quest, vol-iv, Part-II, year 2015, Pub. by Impression Publication, Patna, P. 13.

⁴ *Humanist Frame*, (Introduction) P. I ; Also used by the author of this article in the Philosophical Quest, vol-iv, part II, year 2015, Pub. by Impression Publication, Patna, P. 13

⁵ *Humanism of Guru Nanak: A Philosophical Inquiry*, P. 52 ; Also used by the author of this article in the Philosophical Quest, vol-iv, part II, year 2015, Pub. by Impression Publication, Patna, P. 13.

seeking truth. According to him-“Modern environmental and ecological problems may be making for the unpopularity of technology, or rather over – technology, especially in advanced countries; but pure science, with its passion for truth and human welfare, will always remain as one of the noblest pursuits of man; and our country, which has nurtured this love and pursuit of truth in the fields of physical sciences, religion, and philosophy in the past, must continue to nurture it in all fields in the modern age.”⁶

Some scholars boast science and eulogize its achievement while others insist on religions and its different aspects of binding humanity. Quoting this a scholar says that “We do not generally speak about religion and science in the same or amiable context. In fact, science and religion are, rightly or wrongly, still being considered as opposite poles”.⁷

As it has been told above that there had been great debate on religion and science during eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth century and so as a result now combination of these two are said as the solution of various problems. A scholar says that “The subjects of science and religion are getting more and more important to man in the modern age. They are two great disciplines which, in the light of Indian wisdom, reveal that, when relied on separately, can be counterproductive in the long run, but when combined harmoniously, can bring about an all-round expression of human genius and total fulfilment.”⁸

Any religion which consists of universal values, its attitude towards universe is real not believing in supernatural or any kind of myths and which believes in capacity of human being to progress and is full with ethics and morality can fulfil aspiration of humanism. These qualities are in Theravada Buddhism and it can solve problems of humanity.

⁶ *Science and Religion*, P. 11.

⁷ *Buddhism & Science*, Foreword by Kurt F. Leidecker , P. IX.

⁸ *Science and religion*, P. 12.

Every religion can claim this position and be boasting of solving problems of the society. But which religion is universally acceptable to human being, which does not use brutal force to spread it and teachings of which is always open for testing and verification etc. that religion truly can help in this age of science to humanity. For all these qualities teachings of the Buddha is suitable to do good for the society.

Supporting all these ideas a scholar says that” Religion for the man of today must be supported by reason; it must be in conformity with what we know to be facts; and where it goes beyond mere facts it must have sufficient logical probability to invite our investigation to higher levels.”⁹

A scholar says that Buddhism applies the same methods as scientists are using. He says that “We can fairly say, then that Buddhism deals in the same knowledge as science- that which is humanly accessible.”¹⁰

Pointing towards experience as tools of Buddhism the same author says that “Since its raw material for study is experience, it may be termed as science of experience.”¹¹

The same author further says that –“It would need to be recognise that it is Buddhism, and not psychology, which is the science of experience and that Prince Siddhartha was the founder and father of this science, and not Wundt or Freud. Moreover, Prince Siddhartha’s discovery of a radical cure for mental disorganization is sufficient, even without his other contributions, to make him the greatest figure in science, and the greatest it is ever likely to have.”¹² He further terms Psychology as only a recent extension of Buddhism.

Seeing the scientific discoveries and uses of Artificial Intelligence it can be said that a day will come when science will create a sentient being equal to man. Even

⁹ . *Buddhism and the Age of Sciences*, P. 19.

¹⁰ *Buddhism and Science*, the article by Gerald Du Pre “Buddhism and Science”, P. 93.

¹¹ *Ibid.* P. 95.

¹² *Op. cit.* 95-96.

then need of a religion would be there. A scholar says that even in this condition there is a religion which will not be affected. He narrates, “Even if science succeeds in generation of living organisms in a test-tube, or even in creating a sentient being equal to man, the truth of Buddhism is not in the least affected by it. The reason for this is that no matter how life may come into being, whether by any of the birth –processes or by artificial means, it is past kamma which supplies the life continuum, and it can operate in this manner wherever the constituents necessary for a living organism come together. There cannot be any achievement of science, no matter how revolutionary, that will ever contradict the teachings of Buddhism.”¹³

Teachings of the Buddha are relevant in this age of modern Sciences. Relevancy of Buddhism is so enormous that it can be characterised as the religion of the age of sciences.

Science believes in facts and religion believes in reality. For reaching a fact or any conclusion tests, retests and experiments after experiments are performed. For all these science does not believe in mere statements and opposes blind faiths. For ascertaining reality saints, sages and other genuine truth seekers spend nights after nights and days after days behind it.

The Buddha asked his monks to examine, criticise and analyse his teachings and if there was any substance in it which could help them only then accept otherwise they can reject. The Buddha used to say that do not believe in any saying because it was coming from the tradition or was written in a text but advised his disciples to see for themselves and directed his disciples to oppose blind faith.¹⁴ If nibbāna is summum bonum of Buddhism then reliance on this personal experience is Magna Carta of Buddhism.

¹³ *Buddhism and the Age of Sciences*, P.38.

¹⁴ *Kalāma Sutta, Saṃyuttanikāyo*, P. 45-48.

Here it is important to say that in the time of present crisis which religion is suitable to liberate the society. A great scholar from Thailand narrates that the West has given two great things e.g. capitalism and communism. According to him both of these two ideologies object and are dangerous to religion and more that they develop, the weaker religion becomes.¹⁵ He considers Theravada Buddhism as a religion in a time of Crisis.

According to a scholar time is beginning less in the Buddhist Cosmology. He says that “Universes arise and pass away in an endless succession, obedient to the cosmic law of cause and effect, and that, in several periods of the each world cycle; certain highly advanced beings attain supreme enlightenment and Omniscience.”¹⁶ Such a person becomes the Buddha. The process in which it happens is an endless one and it strictly follows cosmic law of cause and effect. He teaches people for eradication of their sufferings. It is not easy to take birth of such a person.

In the Dhammapada it is said that it is very difficult to take birth of human being. To remain alive is also very difficult. Hearing of good laws (*saddhamma*) is also very difficult and to take birth of the Buddhas are extremely very difficult.¹⁷ Such persons does not discriminate in his teachings even his enemies. Their teachings are for the betterment and happiness for all (*bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya*).

Buddhism for Mental Development

It is said that science alone cannot eradicate diseases and bodily and mental suffering from the human beings. Nature does not accept false laws or false values in human life. Life needs truth and value system in which every being can adjust and can guide to posterity. For all these we need restraint and curtailment of desires. The Buddha says that even if gold coins rain from the sky all the desire of the human beings

¹⁵ *Socially Engaged Buddhism*, P.171.

¹⁶ *Buddhism and the Age of Science*, P.2.

¹⁷ *The Dhammapada*, V. 182 , P. 225.

cannot be fulfilled.¹⁸ So beauty of life remains in restraining of desires. The wise man understanding it that it gives little pleasure and are painful. He does not find pleasures even in divine pursuits and is devoted to the destruction of cravings.¹⁹

The Tripitaka is full of teachings of self- restrain and curtailment of desires. As a noble man discards the worldly life and become the member of the samgha he or she has to take a vow of ten precepts technically known as *Dasa sikkhāpadāni*.²⁰ These are exclusively for monks and nuns. If a house-holder becomes pious and has great faith in the teachings of the Buddha he also accepts first – five precepts and it is known as *pañcasīla*. If he or she i.e. *upāsaka* (male devotee) and *upāsikā* (female devotee) further becomes pious then he or she accepts three more precepts and it is known as *aṭṭhasīla*. The rest two are only for monks and nuns. All these are parts of observance of morality (*sīla*). The Buddhist way of life teaches curtailment of desires. That is why Buddhist Countries have fared well during the time of Covid-19 pandemic and casualties are less than any other countries. For every action and before taking meal at the house of devotees monks are preaching and devotees hear it attentively. In this way devotees become disciplined.

Whether it is spiritual progress or worldly progress or material progress concentration of mind seems to be pertinent. For all these ethical principles and discipline are utmost important for monks or nuns and laymen. For concentration or mental development meditation is necessary which is known in the Theravada Buddhism as *Bhāvanā* or meditation. It is of two types e.g. *Samatha bhāvanā* i.e. cultivation of mental tranquillity evenness and equilibrium or mind restrain and *Vipassanā bhāvanā* or Insight meditation which is directed towards true nature of reality.

Not only this but also for refraining from the false views and doing away with immoral roots etc. the Theravada Buddhism teaches *Samatha* and *Vipassana*. For mental

¹⁸ Ibid. v. 186; P. 231.

¹⁹ Ibid. v. 187; p. 232.

²⁰ *The Khuddaka-pāṭho*, PP. 5-7.

peace and for decreasing mind related problems like tension, hyper tension, migraine and psycho-somatic diseases Vipassanā meditation is a practical methods which can be accepted or rejected on trial and error basis.

In Theravada Buddhism Bonds (*saṃyojana*), Fetters or obstacles (*nīvaraṇa*), False Views (*micchā diṭṭhi*) etc. are can be characterised as kilesa. Among all these obstacles (*nīvaraṇa*) are very important and are very difficult to tame or control. If these are controlled others are rather easy to tame with. These are Desire for sensual pleasure (*kāmacchanda*), Ill will (*vyāpāda*), Sloth and torpor (*thīna middha*), Worry and flurry (*uddhacca-kukkucca*) and Doubts (*vicikicchā*).²¹ When a mendicant sits for meditation all these impurities act like obstacles in his way and hamper the concentration. These obstacles do not allow mind to be concentrated. The Buddha has mentioned five factors of *jhāna* by which all the above five are overcome. These are Initial Application of mind (*vitakka*), Sustained application of mind (*vicāra*), Joy (*pīti*), Happiness (*sukha*) and One pointedness (*ekaggatā*).²² As for example Sloth and Torpor is controlled by Initial application of mind (*vitakka*), and Doubts (*vicikicchā*) is overcome by Sustained application of mind (*vicāra*). In the same way Ill-will (*vyāpāda*) is overcome by Joy (*pīti*) and Wary and flurry (*uddhacca-kukkucca*) by Happiness (*sukha*). The last one i.e. Desire for sensual pleasure (*kāmacchanda*) is controlled by Concentration (*samādhi*).It is mentioned in the text in the following way.²³

Vitakko thīnamiddhassa vicikicchāya vicāro I
Pīti cāpi vyāpādassa sukhaṃ uddhaccakukkucaṃ I
Samādhi kāmacchandassa paṭipakkho ti peṭake II

After this a mendicant ponders over Five-fold clinging to existence (*pañca upādāna khandhā*). These five are Form (*rūpa*), Feelings (*vedanā*), Perception (*saññā*),

²¹ *The Mahāsatipaṭṭhānasutta*, PP. 222.

²² *Ibid.* Also in the *A Manual of Abhidhamma*, PP-50-52.

²³ *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaho*, P. 66.

Volition (*saṃkhāra*) and Consciousness (*Viññāna*).²⁴ A mendicant becomes arising and disappearance of all the five factors of existence. It is followed by pondering over six internal and six external senses. These are Eye (*cakkhu*), Ear (*sota*), Nose (*ghāṇa*), Tongue (*jivhā*), body(*kaya*) and mind (*mana*). All these are known as internal sense organs. These six have corresponding six objects which are called as external sense organs e.g. Form object (*rūpa*), audible object (*sadda*), Odorous object (*gandha*), Sapid object (*rasa*), Tangible object (*phoṭabba*) and Ideational object (*dhamma*). After becoming aware of these senses and their objects and interdependence the mendicant ponders over seven Factors of enlightenment (*Satta bojjhaṅga*). These are Enlightenment –factor of mindfulness (*sati sambojjhaṅga*), Enlightenment –factor of Investigation of States (*dhammavicaya smambojjhaṅga*), Enlightenment factor of Energy (*viriya sambojjhaṅga*), Enlightenment –factor of delight (*Pīti- sambojjhaṅga*), Enlightenment –factor of Tranquility (*passaddhi sambojjhaṅga*), Enlightenment factor of Concentration (*samādhi-sambojjhaṅga*), and Enlightenment factor of Equanimity (*upekkhā sambojjhaṅga*).²⁵ A mendicant knows at first that whether all these factors are present or absent in him. After these he exerts for the unarisen all these factors come to arise and how these factors can be developed.²⁶ From here the mendicant proceeds for knowing and comprehending Noble truths. When he realises Truth then he proceeds for Noble Eight Fold path. In fact all these are part of Satipaṭṭhāna sutta in which awareness and mindfulness are elaborated through four kinds which are Mindfulness regarding body (*kāyānupassanā*), Mindfulness regarding mind (*cittānupassanā*), Mindfulness pertaining to Feelings (*vedanānupassanā*) and Mindfulness pertaining to *Dhamma* preached by the Buddha (*dhammānupassanā*).²⁷ All these can be said or termed as the process of mental development.

²⁴ *The Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta.*, PP. 223-224.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *The Long Discourses of the Buddha*, P. 338.

²⁷ *The Mahātipaṭṭhāna sutta*, PP. 214-236.

After overcoming all these mendicant gets his mind concentrated. This way is also known as path of purification. It has a graded path of morality (*sīla*), concentration (*Samādhi*) and wisdom (*pañña*). This path is so trusted and tested that thousands of monk followed this path and became *arahata*. Even about the Buddha it is said that the illustrious Gautam the Buddha comprehended Virtue (*sīla*), Concentration (*samādhi*), Wisdom (*paññā*) and incomparable emancipation (*anuttarā vimutti*) in succession.²⁸

For mind restrain love towards living beings is generated by mendicant or a practioner as a primary importance. He purifies his mind by generating love and compassion for all leaving beings.

Social Development

Regarding Social Development it can be said that various problems like caste systems, untouchability, poor conditions of women, environment and ecology and eradication of drugs menace etc. can be found in the teachings of the Buddha. As several rivers join the Ocean and lose their tastes and has only one taste i.e. taste of salt so people from different castes and creeds joined the Saṃgha and had only one aim i.e. aim of liberation.²⁹ Theory of action was prevalent in the society in which the Buddha was sprung up. But it was the Buddha who said that nothing happens in this world without any cause. The theory of kamma taught that no one is regulator of one's fate but a person is master of his own destiny.

The Buddha had taught about a cosmopolitan society with the concept of *brahmavihāra*³⁰ i.e. sublime way faring of life which has Universal Friendliness (*mettā*), Universal Compassion (*karuṇā*), Universal Joy (*muditā*) and Universal Equanimity (*upekkhā*) as its constituent part.

²⁸ The *Vimuttimaggā*: A Critical Study, P. (Introductio) P. xxix by the author himself. In fact the author has taken it from *the Vimuttimaggā and Visuddhimaggā : A Comparative Study* P. 1.

²⁹ *The Cullavaggapāḷi*, P. 396 “*Seyyathāpi, bhikkhave, mahāsamuddo ekaraso loṇaraso, evameva kho, bhikkhave, ayaṃ dhammavinayo ekaraso vimuttirasō*”I.

³⁰ *Metta suttam of the Sutta-Nipāta*, PP. 20-21.

Social development can consist of various aspects like worldly progress, spiritual progress, development of women, percolation of education in every section of the society, cultural progress etc.

Causes of worldly progress according to the Buddha have been elaborated as four. These are-³¹

1. The achievement of persistent effort (*utthānasampadā*)
2. The achievement of wariness (*ārakkhasampadā*)
3. Good friendship (*klyānamittatā*)
4. Balanced livelihood (*samajīvikatā*)

The achievement of persistent effort has been explained by the Buddha to be skilful and not to be lazy in one's own profession. One should be able to manage his job.

The achievement of wariness is well protection of what a person has got the treasures. He should guard in this way that thieves do not steal, fire does not burn, water does not carry away and his heirs should not be ill-desposed.

Good friendship is about mixing with the people where he lives, to converse with people around and to believe in morality, charity and wisdom.

Balanced livelihood suggests about spending of money according to the income. Here the Buddha says that if income is amassed with wrong livelihood then it meets debauchery, drunkenness, indulgence in gambling and intimacy and companionship with evil-doers.³²

In the same way like above the Buddha has explained four causes of spiritual progress as follows.³³

1. Achievement of faith (*saddhāsampadā*)
2. Achievement of virtue (*sīlasampadā*)

³¹ *A Manual of Buddhism*, PP. 168-169.

³² *Op. cit. Dīghajānu sutta*, PP. 110-111.

³³ *A Manual of Buddhism* PP. 171-172.

3. Achievement of charity (*cāgāsampadā*)
4. Achievement of wisdom (*paññāsampadā*)

The achievement of faith is to believe in the enlightenment of the Tathāgata, Omniscience of the Buddha and His incomparable strength of training individual.

Abstaining from killing, stealing, lying and intoxicating drink etc. are explained as achievement of virtue.

Living at home with a heart free from stain of avarice, devotion in charity, taking delight in charity and becoming open-mindedness etc. are said as achievement of charity.

To be endowed with wisdom and leading such life that leads to the complete destruction of suffering is explained as achievement of wisdom.³⁴

As far as development of women is concerned it can be said that the Buddha gave woman the right of priesthood about two thousand five hundred and fifty six years before which right was given by Christianity about ninety-nineties(1990's). It is well known fact that several monks excelled in different section of the Dhamma. As for examples in the Divine eyes ven. Anuruddho was supereme. In the answering the Dhamma instantly ven. Aṅgīsa was ahead among monks. In preaching the Dhamma ven. Puṇṇa excelled others and in preaching the Dhamma giving various similes Ven. Kumara Kassapa was ahead among monks. The text narrates it as follows.³⁵

Divvacakkhumhi anuruddho, aṅgīso paṭibhānavā I

Puṇṇo ca dhammakathikānaṃ, citrakathī kumarakassapo II

It was the effects of the teachings of the Buddha that even nuns excelled in different sections of the Dhamma among their fellow nuns. During the time of Vedic age woman competed men in different aspects of learnings but what the Buddha did was in an organised form in India. As for example Mahāpajāpati Gotamī was expert in

³⁴ Op. cit. *Dīghajānu sutta*, PP. 111-112.

³⁵ *The Dīpavaṃsa*, P. 54.

delighting of the Dhamma. Nun Khemā surpassed other nuns in wisdom. It is well known fact that Upāli therā was expert in Vinaya in the same way Paṭācārā excelled among nuns. In supernormal power (*iddhi*) Uppal Vṇṇā became supreme.³⁶ In the same way some nuns excelled in some other section of the Dhamma. The entire Cūḷavedalla sutta is said to be preached by the nun Dhammadinna.³⁷ It was the effect of the Buddha's teachings that woman also rejoiced the dhamma and took delight in it. Some pupil doubted in the capacity of woman to get liberation. But Somā nun says that womanhood is not an obstacle in getting emancipation if the mind is well cultivated and concentrated. Knowledge flows like stream if anyone sees the Dhamma and realises its true nature. The text explains it as follows.³⁸

Itthibhāvo kiṃ kayirā, cittamhi susamāhite I
Ñānamhi vattamānamhi, sammā dhammaṃ vipassato II

The saṃgha and its formation can be said as the model of social order. It was a democratic order in which every member had equal rights.³⁹ The system of the Saṃgha was that when monks and nuns were invited for *dāna* as food, monks and nuns used to preach before taking meal. This method percolated education up to masses. In the modern terminology of literacy rate is difficult to say but India and areas around realms of Indian Ocean was far ahead in comparison to that of modern West when they were wandering naked.

Culture is a term which consists of way of life, style of dressing, rearing of animals, education, customs and rituals etc. It has vast meanings and it influences various spheres of life. The appearance of the Buddha shaped Indian Culture in such a way that it ameliorated condition of Indian society and where ever it spread.

³⁶ *The Aṅguttaranikāyo*, I part. P. 35; Also quoted by the author *Modernity of India: A Critical Perspectives*, P.151.

³⁷ *The Majjhimanikāyo*, PP. 416-424.

³⁸ *The Saṃyuttanikāyo*, P. 152.

³⁹ *Buddhist Social and Moral Education*, P. 49.

Beautiful Human sculptures were made by the Mathura School of Art and Gandhara School of art of the Buddha, the Mahavīra and Kaniska. In India Ajanta and Ellora gave art of carving stone in such a height that it attracts tourists till date.⁴⁰

Conclusively it can be said that the Buddhism shaped India and its places of its spread in a nice way. In the name of religious fight there is no instance of mass destruction in propagation of Buddhism. Where ever it went it took elements of local culture and local culture was also influenced by it.

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⁴⁰ *The Ancient India*, P. 110

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INVESTIGATING BUDDHIST-INDIC WISDOM FOR PSYCHOSOMATIC HEALTH WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SCHIZOPHRENIA

Pratik Sagar,

Research Scholar,

Department of Indian painting,

School of Language, Literature, and Art,

Sanchi University of Buddhist-Indic Studies, Madhya Pradesh, India

One's life circumstances can bring into a condition of elongated depression, inactivity, lack of motivation and a rigid self-centered worldview. This article would dive into looking at mental symptoms associated with cognition based illnesses especially those that are congruent with activities of neurotransmitters and brain chemicals, for example schizophrenia. Further, this paper would look into the framework by which psychiatric disorders are understood traditionally by Indian psyche, and would trace ancient ways employed to tackle with such issues and also attempt to address analogous methodologies in today's behavioural sciences. The moral philosophy of Buddhism and its psychology presents a doctrine of salvation from maladies of suffering through liberation from cycle of karmic debts through ritual practices like meditation, moral-code (*vinaya*) and dietary disciplines. These methods help discipline the behavioural discrepancies through practice of *dhamma*. In one of the types of schizophrenia, the sufferer encounters 'morbid silence' and preoccupies extensively with fantasies of his own inner world or in Jungian sense, his psyche's '*archetypes*'. However, for a Buddhist healer such schizophrenic is nothing but an 'unrealized' *yogi*, or an undisciplined thinker drowning and unable to retract or disengage from communicating with accidentally awakened archetypes of his deeper 'self'. This study places its focus on tracing human-universals embedded in cultural codes of conducts and practices like for example *dhamma* especially from Tibetan and Jungian perspectives to find answers to some of the

pertinent questions concerning disturbances in the mind and personhood, and its related effect on the family life and social functioning. This paper will further investigate elements of Buddhist art of *mandala* making and visualizing as a therapeutic procedure for achieving holistic health and harmonious communities.

Keywords: Schizophrenia, archetypes, psyche, *Dhamma*, Jung, Tibetan Buddhism, Indic, *prajna*, *prajna*, *vinaya*, *metta*, *mandala*, *citta*, *manas*, *vijnana*, *alayavijnana*, mind, self, spiritual emergence, Medicine Buddha, Buddhist cosmology, Enteric Nervous System, microbea, gut-flora, *chakra*-system, r-lung, *sowa-rigpa*, Healing, Human biofield, biophotons, Tibetan medicine, *Ayurveda*, Tantric Buddhism, Pain body, Shadow self, Depth psychology, Buddhist psychology, Yoga psychology, Creative Arts Therapy

Psychological Attitudes of the East and the West

Western psychology is largely confined to two dimensions- the physical and the social and both of which are fully available to waking consciousness. The sub-disciplines within western psychology dealing with physical dimension are Genetics, neurophysiology and ‘the cognitive sciences whereas the various offshoots of psychoanalysis viz. social constructivism and cross-cultural psychology are concerned with tracing out psychological factors affecting societies. And as *Fabrega* had proclaimed that: “*Anyone seeking to understand the wide range of human problems involving emotional and behavioural disaffection- that one can gloss as conditions of psychiatric interest- in a comprehensive way has to take into account how such problems were configured, understood, and handled in other eras by means of institutions governed by differing regimes of knowledge and practice*”¹, it becomes evident to vigilant around how psychological makeup of mankind has developed over centuries into what it priorities today. A widespread tendency (of psychology) is in favor of physical dimension of psychological studies then its capacity for social influence and the same could be said for the field of consciousness studies which takes for granted the existence of physical

¹ Fabrega, pp. 390

reality while the ontological ‘reality’ and subjective experience are held open for scientific discussion as ‘*epiphenomenal products of material processes*’². Epistemologically, however for scientific enquiry into human psychology -only the ordinary ‘waking’ consciousness is considered valid research objectives; besides, the overt preference for the objective research method. However, claimants³exclaimed here: “*Obviously all this is simplification and there are exceptions to this pattern- one could, for example, think of phenomenology- but still, (with) a strong physicalist bias, an absolute faith in the ordinary waking consciousness and a total reliance on objective methods are so much part of mainstream psychology that amongst psychologists, they are commonly considered indispensable elements of the scientific method.*”⁴

Indian intellectual position on the other hand is ‘ontological’ or fundamentally concerned with ‘spirit’ and not with ‘matter’; or more precisely faithful to the concept of ‘*sat-chit-ananda*’ --the indivisible unity of absolute existence, consciousness and delight.”⁵. Indian traditions specifically considers non-physical existences to be ‘*ontologically as real, or even more real than the physical world*’ and operating on different levels and are non-perceptible. Western science too agrees upon the existence of non-perceptible physical energies and substances yet it is within the Indian psyche that these ‘epistemologically’ non-real existences of inner worlds are conceived as ‘*intermediate planes of conscious existence (accessible) between the absolute, silent consciousness of the transcendent and the apparent unconsciousness of matter*’⁶. Likewise, Indian philosophy (epistemologically) estimates that there are higher levels of sources of knowledge and a possibility of apprehending ‘this’ truth directly through intuition. In fact, acquiring objective knowledge based on senses (alone) is considered *avidya* (ignorance) and thereby, a preference had been given to already extant ‘inner knowledge’ or *vidya*. This attitude to knowledge generation and evaluation is vital for

² Foundations and applications of Indian Psychology, Intro, pp. xi-xxvii

³ R.M. Matthijs Cornellison; Girishwar Mishra; Sunnet Varma

⁴ Foundations and applications of Indian Psychology, Intro, pp. xi-xxvii

⁵ *ibid*

⁶ *ibid*

establishing a mutual ground between the western and Indian philosophical baselines. Additionally, this difference of looking at the subject of philosophy consecutively impacts why and how psychology gets utilized.

While matter based attitude (of the west) observes outer behavior and measurable neural activities; consequently considering non-physical activities as illusionary, and para-psychological phenomena as ‘anomalous’. The Indian tradition’s mental attitude for ‘spiritual pursuit’ stands in affinity with European scientific approach i.e. ancient Indian approach towards understanding the functioning of mind and modern scientific attitude of psychology are complimentary to each other: *‘Indian psychology has dealt with most areas in which mainstream psychology is interested, and in many of them it has something unique to add.’* For example, Indian concept of *ahamkara* “stands in somewhere between the western concepts of ego and selfconcept”, furthermore, subtle and even *non-egoic* center of consciousness is proposed in the *Indic* system of knowledge. Buddhist scholars expounds *‘how consciousness can exist (even) without any centre whatsoever’*. Likewise, Western school of ‘depth psychology’ reminds about the earlier Indic discussions and enquiry around problems involving mystical, metaphysical ‘dark unconscious’ lying beneath the surface of waking consciousness, and likewise, Indians came up with ideas like subtle *koshas* or layers of consciousness⁷, *cittabhumi* (mental planes of existence), *alayavijnana* (storehouse consciousness) and so on.

Mind in Indian system of thought

In order to understand the mental *dis-ease* or disturbance, it is noteworthy to highlight how the idea of mind is discussed with different terminologies, in the Indian system, so as to exemplify the associated qualities of mind and its functioning. Each aspect of the multifold Indian mind performs specific *dharma*- an unfailing fulfillment of mental operation enabling a functioning psychic-system in its full spectrum. And each of these work-field (or aspects) of the mind-*dharma* is elaborated by various Indian school

⁷ *ibid.*

of thoughts. Indication to this is scattered throughout the Indian canons where different terms for mind reveal sides to this complex called 'mind'. Since, the influence of one school over other in the evolutionary process of philosophical refinement is inevitable, thereby, a holistic understanding of mind is necessary to include the inter-subjective peculiarities amongst the instituted schools of thought especially when '*For India, the influence of religion in understanding psychiatric phenomena is incalculable*'. Moreover, as Fabrega emphasizes, "*Religion can affect the health of mind, body, and 'soul' because it constitutes a powerful form of psychological influence on human physiological function as exemplified in the so-called placebo response.*"⁸

"The mind is a mental entity which is many billions times more superior than the brain, which is a material organ. The mind creates all human beings, all living beings, all nations, all kinds of literature and civilization, and the fate and fortune of all living beings. The mind is indeed the most powerful mental entity that can elevate man to the highest level".⁹ In general, the mind in Indian view is not confined to the brain and skull but rather, if we use western terminology to explain it, the entire nervous system with brain as its main power house and its various neural network has, adamantly adds the Indian psychology, a subtle-network behind its operation and which acts as a 'medium' between the physical-network of nerves-fibers-muscles and the 'sensible' information and data that activates or triggers this 'medium' to consecutively command the 'nervous-system' and the related network. The nature of this 'medium' called mind is explored further in details, in the following discussion, and all its components and qualities are rigorously analyzed with reference to various schools of indic-philosophy. Various terms that make us understand mind in Indian thought are *nama-rupa* (mind-matter), *citta* (activity of mental-factors), *manas* (clear insight or cognition), *buddhi* (intellect), *kosha* (mental-sheath), *ahamkara* (ego-self), and *purush-prakriti* etc. It would not be an exaggeration if one assumes that the Indian thought considers the entire universe

⁸ Fabrega, pp. 44

⁹ Tin Mon, Kamma the real creator, pp. 111

as the mind itself, however, this ‘mental-universe’ illustrated as a ‘*mandala*’ -a psycho-diagram depicting the entire structure and functioning of the psychic-energy, in wholeness: ‘*Universal reality exists in the form of nama and rupa only*’ (Tin Mon, 2007).

For Buddhists, mind i.e. the combination of consciousness and mental factors, remains in a mental stream. Consciousness and mental factors are collectively called ‘*nama*’ (or mental entities); whereas, matter and energy are collectively called ‘*rupa*’ (or material entities).¹⁰ Thus, a so-called being, in its subtle form, is composed of mental entities (*nama*) and material entities (*rupa*). In *Abhidhamma*, ‘*nama*’ denotes both consciousness (*vinnana*¹¹) and mental States (*cetasika*)¹², and ‘*rupa*’ connotes both fundamental units of matter¹³ as well as material change. Further, a so-called being, in its gross form, is determined to be composed of five-aggregates (*panca-khanda*)- ***Rupa*** (*matter*), ***Vedana*** (*feeling*), ***Sanna*** (*perception*), ***Sankara*** (*mental States*) and ***Vinnana***’.¹⁴

In Buddhist scholastics, when the ‘so-called being’ is looked at, divided into two of its constituent parts ‘*nama-rupa*’, it is referred to in English as ‘mind’. While, when a human being is spoken of as a complex of five-aggregates (*panca-khanda*); the term *vinnana* (consciousness) determines the mind more like a stream of thought. However, the term *citta* is invariably employed while referring to different classes of consciousness according to the plane in which it is experienced.¹⁵ In ordinary sense of mind (in isolated cases) both terms *citta* and *mana* are frequently used. As such in *Abhidhamma*, there is no distinction made between mind and consciousness. However as per *Yogachara* school of Buddhism, ‘mind’ is determined as consisting of ‘eight

¹⁰ Tin Mon, pp. 109-112

¹¹ ‘vinnan’ (consciousness) is the receptacle of the mental properties

¹² *cetasika* are fifty two in number: ‘*vedana*’ (feeling), ‘*sanna*’ (perception), and other fifty are collectively called ‘*sankhara*’ (mental states)

¹³ There are 28 species of matter

¹⁴ Narada Thera, *A manual of Abhidhamma being AbhidhammatthaSangaha of Bhadana Anuruddhacariya*, , pp. 7

¹⁵ *ibid*, pp. 8

consciousnesses' and all phenomena in the universe are considered, to be the mirror images imprinted to our mind through these eight consciousnesses. *Yogachara* theory revises consciousness into two: *manovijnana* and *manas*. *Manas* is the unintercepted mind and is responsible for 'the genesis of the idea of personhood, the essence of a person'¹⁶. Its function is cognition or deliberation. *Manas* is attached to *alayavijnana*¹⁷ and regards it as the inner self.¹⁸

It is noteworthy here to emphasize that whether called consciousness or mind, it has to be understood as a continuous stream, consisting of arising and passing mental-units (*citta-khanda*) in this way, the mind (consciousness and mental factors) dissolve soon after they have arisen (following the law of impermanence or *anicca*) but they leave their properties in the mental stream. These properties are conveyed from one mind to the next i.e. they stay in the mental stream. Since, both mental entities and material entities are impermanent as they arise and dissolve very rapidly and incessantly. Consequently, all living beings and inanimate things are impermanent too. While narrow vision of impermanence brings *dukkha* (unsatisfactoriness), the realization of impermanence of self in *jhana* meditation is on contrary turns out to be a healing truth. The truth about self as a fleeting stream of 'no-self' is called *anatta* stating that 'no living being has a permanent self characteristic'.

Buddhism interprets everything in the world as the manifestation of our mind. Mind can defy or purify one. It is bitterest enemy and greatest friend of oneself. Greed, anger, and ignorance are the most dreadful defilements (*klesha*) that defile, debase and burn the mind. And are the root causes of all evil actions. They are to be therefore, suppressed by the opposite 'moral roots'- greedlessness (*alobha*), hatelessness (*adosha*), and wisdom (*amoha* or *panna* or *vijja*). "When we can develop the highest wisdom called the Fourfold path –wisdom by insight meditation, we can eradicate all defilements from

¹⁶ Tao Jiang, *Yogachara Buddhism and Modern psychology*, pp. 58

¹⁷ It is the storehouse consciousness, which travels from one life into another; it is ever changing but homogenous. It is the eighth consciousness in *Yogachara* system.

¹⁸ *ibid.* pp. 59

*our minds and can enjoy the unique bliss of eternal peace and happiness (nibbana) right away.*¹⁹

While the Buddhist school focuses on the mind-phenomenon of an individual called human being; the *samkhya* and *vedantic* school of thought, seek to elaborate upon the universal-self (the collective-individual or an arch-self) called the cosmic-man (*lok-purusha*). And the relation between individual-mind and cosmic-mind can be seen as that of an experiencer-self (observer) and the experienced collective (or the observed cosmic-self), in which the observing self is a mere fragment of an over-arching ‘whole’. From another point of view (*vedantic* perspective) individual (self) is a fragment (or *atman*) of the arch-mind identified as *sat-chit-ananda* or *Brahman*. Allegorically speaking, the Sun if reflected in multiple water bodies are not counted as numerous Suns; likewise, in the allegory of Tibetan *mandala* diagram- its central point refers to individual ‘self’ in its cosmic manifestation (as wholeness) and the rest of the entire diagram within the circumference of the *mandala*-circle denotes a projection of the self-center (or central Sun) in its capacity of an illuminating agency, while the remaining elements of the mandala comprises a psychic-structure, and all their component reminds an aspect of the psyche. Thereby reaffirming and further elaborating the *Upanishadic* vision that -‘Self’²⁰ is the central sun of our mental universe illuminating its subjects, as it shines on them.

Buddhist and Yoga Psychology

Psychological classification of Buddhism corresponds to psychological division of all mental functions into intellect, emotion, and volition.²¹ “*The doctrine of the Buddha clearly accommodates the interlacing of the ethical and psychological aspects of behaviour where the development of virtue is not a mere blind adherence to rules but development of certain type of skill (Kushala) for cultivation of good habits and*

¹⁹ Tin Mon, pp121

²⁰ As per Brahadaranayaka Upanishad- Self or the *atma* is realized by the mind, ‘*Atma within the individual being is the enjoyer of inner experience, the data for which is brought through indriyas (sense) and manas (mind)*’.

²¹ Yamakami Sogen, Systems of Buddhist Thought, pp. 6

continuous self analysis."²² Thereby, psychotherapy from Buddhist perspective basically suggests noting the arising of *akushal citta* and surpassing the factors (associated with potential for enacting *akushala karma*) by not acting with bad intentions. This is achieved by observing the arising and passing of bad (*akusala*) mental concomitants/ factors through divulging in meditation to harvest *sheel, prajna, Samadhi* and utilize thus acquired *metta* (Loving-Kindness) and *karuna* (Compassion) for psycho-somatic healing. The doctrine of Dependent origination (or dependent co-arising) thoroughly explains of each stage that leads to piling up of unattended *karmic* garbage by wrongly responding (reacting) to daily life situation, under the influence of *akushala citta*. Understanding the premises and operations of 'cause and effect' as elaborated by the Buddha and employing insight-meditation (*vipassana*) technique to cultivate a vigilance to psychic activity of human mind in entirety, and moderating unhindered and habitual (and impulsive) reaction to *dukkha* (daily sorrows of ordinary life) that drags one further into the unattended patterns of regeneration of *akushala-citta* (unwholesome consciousness) comprising of negative mental material getting used, habitually and unchecked, for forming and continuing into future negative karmic-cycle. Therefore, the teaching of *dhamma*, particularly the lessons about nourishing the positive mental qualities is a way forward into an illumined consciousness. *Dhamma* mind does not only surpasses mental deformations but becomes more than an ordinary mind, and capable to catalyze healing of other people's *kleshas* (mind overpowered with *dukkha*) as and when it shines on them- through *metta, karuna* and *prajna*²³. *Yamakami* elaborates this healing process further: "As the Medical Science has four departments, viz., Disease, Cause of Disease, removal of Disease and Remedy, even so this branch of knowledge (meaning *dhamma*) has *samsara, cause of samsara, emancipation and means conducing to Emancipation.*" Moreover, "These Four Noble Truths are nothing else but the cardinal articles of Indian

²² Padmasiri de Silva, 2014, pp. 12

²³ Loving-kindness, compassion, and wisdom

medical science applied to spiritual healing, exactly as they are in the Yoga Philosophy."²⁴

Indian Medical System and Dharma Medicine

By the 6th century B.C. medical schools (teaching *Ayurveda*) were established in India at Taxila and Kashi. The science of long-living or *Ayurveda* gives ample knowledge on personality-types and mental diseases; it has also adopted the pre-existing system of *bhuta-vidya* (science of spirit) into its fold of treatments and remedies to illnesses affecting mankind. Fabrega's comments on *Ayurveda* are noteworthy here, "*In Ayurveda, psychiatric suffering, constructed in terms of experience, emotion and behavior, resembled what psychiatrists of today still have to appreciate, understand, and handle*"²⁵. In *Ayurveda*, notes Venkoba, personality is understood as having multiple dimensions viz. intellectual, social, spiritual and moral.²⁶ The *Ayurvedic* authors *Charaka* and *Susruta* talks about *anahata—chakra* as the prime seat of the mind functioning, while *Bhela* places mind at the *ajna-chakra*. Interestingly, *Charaka* considered *heart-chakra* as the cross point of physical and psychological activities, for *Susruta heart-chakra* is the center of sensations, consciousness, and mind, but for *Bhela*, it is *manas (cognition)* located at *ajna-chakra*, which is the highest of all senses, whereas *citta* (faculty of control over feelings) is at the heart.

In *Ayurveda* human maladies are classified into exogenous, endogenous and psychic. Endogenous type is to be understood by *tridosha* theory. *Tridosha- vatta (wind), kapha (phlegm), and pitta (bile)* are the basis for etiology, pathology, diagnosis and therapeutics. When these three humors exist in equilibrium of right proportions, they support well-being and good health but when there is a disturbance in their quantity and distribution, they result in disease. *Charaka* recognized human system as psycho-somatic

²⁴ From Vyasa's commentary on 15th Aphorism of the second book of Patanjali's *Yogasutra* called *Parinamtaapsanskara*. Quoted by Yamakami Sogen, *Systems of Buddhist Thought*, pp. 72

²⁵ Fabrega, pp. 391

²⁶ Venkoba Rao, *Mind in Indian Philosophy*, pp.115

in which mind and body correspond to each other. While *tridosha* are somatic in nature, *rajas-guna dosha* and *tamas-guna doshas* are mental in nature and produces psychological dis-ease. Whenever *tridosha* or *tri-guna* equilibrium is disturbed, it eventually impacts the heart-center (*anahata-chakra*) and obstructs the channels by which mind normally operates. Thus understanding is affected resulting into causing *unmaad* (insanity in mind). In case of *tridoshonmaad*, that is when all three humours are agitated- no curing back is possible; as per *Charaka*. Based on the symptoms, *unmada* is associated with mental disease by Indian psychology- schizophrenia is associated with *vattanmaad*, mania with *pittonmad*, and depression with *kaphonmaad*. A question arises here, whether *schizophrenia* could be cured with *Ayurvedic* prescription for *vattanamada* complemented with adapting a modality for reversing the aggravated conditions of desires, aversions or unrealistic assumptions associated with schizophrenia by inducing ‘opposite’ passions in the mind using other Indian healing sciences.

Emerging need to understand *jivanu*, *microbea*, ENT and *Chakra* system for Holistic Health

Recent discoveries in modern medical science talks about a ‘second brain’ near the gut-area- the Enteric Nervous System (ENT) and intestinal *microbea* or gut-flora has been claimed for holding new possibilities in mental health. Jain concepts on *Jivanu* encrypted throughout its literature shall be deciphered to contribute into the growing science of *microbea* and gut-flora for mental health. Once, *vattanmaad* is diagnosed (in a mental patient) and *ayurvedic* remedies to balance the *vatta* (humoural wind) are administered, a theoretical possibility for curing schizophrenia appears feasible. It is noteworthy to mention here that *ayurveda* has long associated stomach (gut) health with mental conditions; and mental health is considered hereditary (*kshetriya*) too. The Role of *Ayurvedic tridosha* and its effect on *microbea* and consequently on both, the second brain (Enteric Nervous system) and the yogic mind-body (five-sheaths or *panchakosha* + *chakra*-body) might also reveal secrets to resolve the psychotic episodes and redesign a discipline to yield positive mindset. Obtaining *tridosha* equilibrium for a healthy

microbea and gut health shall be analyzed from the Jain perspective on *Jivanu* (microorganisms). Tracing any lost remnants on nature of *microbea* in *Prakrit* Jain texts alongside *Aurvedic* lessons in an holistic approach including entire *indic* wisdom could envision a decent modality and adaptive dietary possibilities to cop up even with other emerging new variants of mental difficulties.

Tibetan Medical Science differentiates psychosis based upon its observable characteristic features: 1) fear and paranoia, 2) aggression, and 3) depression and withdrawal. From the perspective of *Sowa-rigpa* (Tibetan medical science) '*psychological factors can disturb the life wind (srog-rlung) and cause insanity*', mental or emotional strain causes winds to increase and disturbs the consciousness, and causes mental instability. Inability to face the fact of 'impermanence' of life can be devastating which if resisted and not embraced may cause schizophrenic tendency.²⁷ Wind, 'life wind' or 'heart wind' is caused by '*worry, strain, overwork, sorrow, anger, sudden shock or fear etc. and manifests psychologically in its early stages as over-sensitivity, anxiety, and emotional instability*'.²⁸ The cure is likewise lies in the control of breath which controls the mind, a key central aspect of yogic practice.²⁹ Another peculiar feature to Tibetan Buddhism is the role of creative imagination for accessing self healing potentials of the mind. The practice of Medicine Buddha visualization and meditation ascribes to this method for generating self esteem and confidence through transforming the self image via. '*Transforming the harmful energy of psychological complexes and negativities into the beneficial energy of positive and inspiring mental images and symbols*'.³⁰

The knowledge on various facets of mind in Indian system of thought provides layers upon layers of philosophical insight about its structure, nature and quality and their functioning, purpose and limitations. The mind and its various manifestations like- being

²⁷ Terry Clifford, pp. 138

²⁸ *ibid*, pp. 135

²⁹ *ibid*, pp. 132

³⁰ Dr. Lopsang Rpagay, *The Tibetan Book of healing*, pp.187

a home to personality, self (as the center of identification)³¹, consciousness (*vinnana*), intellect (*buddhi*), psyche³² etc. presents a complex of mental activities of ‘cognition’ making sense of data-information that it encounters, conceive and reflect as understanding, perception and memory. Another preposition into the structure of mind is found in the concept of *pancha-kosha* (Five mental-sheaths) which appears in *Taittrreya Upanishad*. Venkoba had associated *koshas* to ‘personalities with several dimensions and layers’ and Upanishadic ‘self’ as ‘a spiritual component of personality’.³³

It is not an exaggeration to say that the elixir of Indian philosophical findings about matter concerning the mind and its effect on human behavior has culminated itself into the Yoga discipline from which the inner science re-emerges and dives back into. Through yogic practice (*abhyasa*) and *vairagya* (practice of detachment) an individual’s ego-center (*ahamkaar*) could be identified and his ‘*manas*³⁴ or *citta* can be clarified of *vrittis* (defilements)’³⁵. With *yoga* the philosophical findings of *Samkhya* (and later *Vedanta*) are modeled into a practice of disciplines to achieve psychosomatic health³⁶. In later periods, *Vedantic*, *Samkhyic*, *Buddhist*, and *Jain* philosophies and their specific rituals of preserving these traditions got reformulated and eventually absorbed into *Vajrayana* teachings of esoteric *Tibetan Buddhism* along with other foreign influences³⁷ and furthered the psychological aid to mankind.

Buddhist practitioners over the ages had attempted to answer the problems of specific periods, geographies, and cultural atmosphere to meet the demands of *dhamma* seekers. The overtly artistic appearance of *Tibetan Buddhism* oftentimes appear opposite

³¹ “Know that the self is like the lord of the chariot and the body is his chariot. Know that the intellect is the charioteer and the mind the reins” -*Katthopnishad*

³² Buddhist cosmos deals with aspects to psychic makeup

³³ Venkoba (1978), pp. 111

³⁴ This term is used in Vedantic vocabulary. The psychological faculty of man is attributed (by *Vedic* scholarship) to a principle (of natural order or *rita*) called ‘*manas*’.

³⁵ The practice of *yoga* causes ‘*cittavritti nirodha*’ i.e. blocking or restraining of the mental defilements.

³⁶ *Yoga* philosophy devices a meticulous restrain (*yama*) and discipline (*niyama*) to *Samkhyan* findings habituated into the personality.

³⁷ Primarily Chinese, Kasmiri, and Nepalese

to early phases of *Buddhism* but on careful inspection shows the *Theravada* principles at its center, however the ritual practices instituted originally to keep oneself determined to the right path had transmuted immensely over the ages. The teachings of *Abhidhamma* (from early *Buddhism*) itself reflects the Buddha's ability to adapt his teaching aptitude as per the personality of his counsel seekers. The role of mind in developing perspective on life in general, mannerism and habits, interests and dislikes is reflected throughout the early Buddhist canons. His teachings on impermanence (*anicca*) or 'impermanence of phenomenon' (*Kshanikvaad*), interdependency of one aspect of life over other for its sustenance- dependent co-arising (or dependent origination) (*pattichasamuttapad*), and *anatta* doctrine are in themselves capable to relax any rigid mind and provide healing to the suffering being. *Buddhist* explanation of *citta* (thinking mind) and its concomitants (*cetasika*), their arising and interdependence provides anyone stuck in their minds to realize firstly, their mind's capacity and its probable effectiveness in facilitating them to come out of any crisis on their own. Buddhism also lays precise techniques to obtain liberation of mind through right-effort. *Buddhist eightfold-path* and 'Four Noble Truths' is a testimony to one man's discovery into his own mind to release sufferings from the minds of the men. In the words of Fabrega 'the 'Four Noble Truths at the core of Buddhist doctrine incorporate what resembles a medical paradigm including, in particular, the nature of and how to alleviate the essential malady (human suffering stemming from psychological attachments).'³⁸

Man even after knowing the fact called *dukkha* – in the sense of a 'pre-conditioned limitations' that work against 'one's capacity to fully perform', yet due to the lack of right knowledge of *dhamma* and *samsara* or due to its inability to- accurately 'perceive' and thereby attempt to alter or modify 'the causes' behind him feeling limited elevates his *dukkha* further. Buddha clearly illumined the cause of *dukkha*; reemphasizing that *karuna* (compassion) and *prajna* (wisdom) clears the way to liberation (*nibbana*) from *dukkha* and *samsara* by overcoming *akushala-citta* and

³⁸ Fabrega, pp. 257

transforming limitations into new milestones. *Akusala-citta* comprises of immoral mental factors – *moha*/ ignorance (of true nature of sense objects); greed (*lobha*); and anger/hatred (*dosha*) which causes aversion or ill-will. These three ‘evil-roots’ are behind all the evil actions in the world. Buddhist ethics clearly expounds how evil-roots causes *ditthi* (wrong view), *mana* (conceit/ pride); *ahirika* (moral shamelessness); and *anottappa* (moral fearlessness).³⁹

Creating Mental Bridges between East and West

Today in the west the accepted scope of psychiatry is broadening. “*Given that medical and psychiatric phenomena are human universals as are ideas, social practices and institutions about them, one can propose that comparative study provides an opportunity for viewing such phenomena in terms of change and transformation.*”⁴⁰ Moving beyond biomechanical functions of the brain as the main center of cognitive activities, *transmissive* theory of consciousness aligns with eastern perspective on consciousness that it operates independent of physical senses and is mediated by them while we are alive. From this point of view both brain and psyche appear as tools in the hand of consciousness to which they eventually serve- “*Our deepening understanding of brain, mind and consciousness leaves us no option but to expand the neurobiology of psychosis to incorporate the concept of consciousness; its nature, levels, dimensions and dynamics, and the impact this function plays in the development of challenging, abnormal states of mind.*”⁴¹

Carl Jung, Robert Assagioli, Ken Wilber and Stanislav Grof etc. had furthered the scope of psychology incorporating in it psychic insights from the east adding a *transpersonal* dimension to psychology. ‘*At the root of the transpersonal perspective is the idea that there is a deep level of subjectivity or pure spirit that infuses all matter and*

³⁹ Tin Mon, pp. 107

⁴⁰ Fabrega, pp. 29

⁴¹ Dr. Nicki Crowley, pp.1

every event'.⁴² This universal archetype -*subjectivity* is been derived at from different schools of thought into *Brahman* (in *Vedanta*), *Shunya* (in *Mahayana*), *Buddha-mind* (in *Vajrayana*), *Tao* (In *Taoism*), and *Primordial-spirit/ Primordial-Buddha* etc. (in *Tantra*), each ascribing to 'it' an absolute status. Transpersonal philosophy attempts to bring closer western psychological (Jung, Humanistic, Existential) and philosophical (Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Kant, Kierkegaard) parallels with phenomenological observations of inner subjective experience from the east. And instead of pathologizing inner-experiences that go beyond accepted 'normal' in the west, it searches instead for any possibility for a deeper relevance and purpose. (Crowley, 2005)

Cultural psyche: Persona of a 'normal' mind

The influence of culture in shaping experience and behavior in a person (in its subject) is undeniable. *Fabrega* comments about how ignorant we are about '*how psychiatry functions as an institution of society*'⁴³ and thereby suggests: "*Any model of how psychiatric conditions are produced has to accord a central place to that symbols and meanings play in shaping them*"⁴⁴. He also reminds to keep in consideration clash of values and world view with advent of modernization upon personal identity, social and spiritual identity. Most importantly, reminds *Fabrega*, regarding the 'conception of personhood' from disarticulation of newly framed modern vocabulary, its deviation from earlier/ pre-modern ideas about 'normal' and 'distress'- "*The distress of a psychiatric condition, which featured conflicts devolving from relations of everyday life, and manifested as psychological and bodily dysfunctions, in one way or another, bore the imprint of transgressions surrounding norms, values, obligations, and spiritual pursuits inherent in everyday life*".⁴⁵ Moreover he adds, "*Hallmark of psychiatric conditions involve symptoms like anxiety, depression, obsessive ruminations and psychosis, as well*

⁴² *ibid*, pp. 2

⁴³ *Fabrega*, pp. 389

⁴⁴ *ibid*, pp 38

⁴⁵ *Fabrega*, pp. 392-394

as, manifestation of psychological distress all of which are realized or expressed not as discrete abnormalities of pathology or malfunction (raw signs and symptoms) but in cultural attires about self and social reality”⁴⁶. Furthermore, Crowley reminds quoting Redwood D (1995), “There exist spontaneous non-ordinary states of consciousness, (NOSC) that would in the West be seen and treated as psychosis, and treated mostly by suppressive medication. But if we use the observations from the study of non-ordinary states, and also from other spiritual traditions, they should really be treated as crises of transformation, or crises of spiritual opening. Something that should really be supported rather than suppressed” Crowley claims, “If properly understood and properly supported, they are actually conducive to healing and transformation”.⁴⁷ However, it is necessary to first differentiate a pathological psychotic illness from an altered state of consciousness secretly holding healing potential while resembling a mystical state. Such a demarcation would require qualitative analysis of altered mental states from transpersonal perspective.⁴⁸

The concept of ‘Spiritual Emergence’ seeks to demarcate between altered-state of consciousness into psychotic (pathologic) and mystic (psychedelic) conditions. Such a segregation requires looking into consciousness as expandable and any altered-state is then to be separated into either, psychotic -when it is malignantly regressive, dysfunctional, non-productive; or into a mystical state which is ‘adaptively regressive’ preceding spiritual growth- these include, as per David Lukoff, ‘shamanic crisis, the awakening of Kundalini, episodes of unitive consciousness (‘peak experiences’), psychological renewal and individuation, the crisis of psychic opening, past life experiences, near death experiences and possessions states’.⁴⁹ It is here emphasized that as always is the case with human psyche- there are no distinct boundaries. However, for the purpose of contrasting a psychotic regression with an adaptive one, eastern

⁴⁶ Horacio Fabrega Jr., pp 87-88

⁴⁷ quoted by Dr. Nicki Crowley, pp1-2

⁴⁸ ibid pp. 5

⁴⁹ ibid, pp. 6

knowledge of mental stages/planes/layers, and dimensions of consciousness could prove to be crucial. And as discussed earlier too, Indian philosophy delves into the interaction between mind and consciousness. “*The oldest Buddhist sources represent the universe in terms of cakkavaala (or Skt:chakravaala), a single circular world system surrounded by mountain of iron (chakravala) from which its name is derived. Above the circular surface is a series of four meditations (dhyana) or ‘meditation realms’ as they are generally designated. The successive divisions of meditation realms into seventeen heavens mark the progress of the shravaka or arhat, the Buddhist saint. Detachment from all the meditation realms through the practice of meditation eventuates in the extinction of nirvana*”⁵⁰. Kloetzli, further elaborates, “*As such, it is apparent that the mathematical cosmologies of Buddhism represent a critique of the mind’s apprehension of reality and of the mind’s ability to analyze reality; to divide it without end and to aggregate it into unities.*” These developments of cosmological analyses (of reality) were developed in two traditions- one looked into the eternity of time, while the other into infinity of space ‘*as fundamental cosmological realities*’. And ‘*both strands analyze the universe in terms of its relationship to the mind*’. In Saahasra-cosmology (of Theravada tradition) ‘Time’ is classified, on one extreme into infinities or aeon (*kalpa*) and at the other into infinitesimals ‘instant’ (*kshana*). Likewise, the space as infinite (*akasha*), and infinitesimal (*paramaanu*) is looked into in the *asankhyeya* cosmology (of Mahayana tradition’s *Pure Land* sect). The former places their philosophical basis in *atmashunyata* and the later in *dharmashunyata* along with *atmashunyata* (or emptiness of the self).⁵¹ Likewise, when we quest for the operations of mind in the *yoga* school of thought, the *yogic*’s insight into *psychic-centers* or *chakras* seems to illustrate rigorous analysis of mind itself with similes, metaphors and symbolism. The flow of consciousness is the psychic-energy aspect of the mind (*mana, buddhi, chitta, ahamkara*) in Yoga-philosophy. In Eastern medicine, psychic centers (*chakras*) are energy vortices that draw vital-life-force (*prana, chi*) inward from a universal source. In this way they (*chakra*’s) become

⁵⁰ W. Randolph Kloetzli, *Buddhist Cosmology*, pp 3

⁵¹ *ibid*, pp. 136-137

interfaces between the physical and subtle realms. “*Psychologically, the chakras can be related to archetypes - comprehensive themes around which life evolves and representing discrete stages of consciousness that facilitate spiritual growth throughout life*”⁵².

Curing Schizophrenia: Shifting from distress to *Buddhanature*⁵³

Psychosis in the sense of an umbrella term denotes two types of disorders: Schizophrenia and Manic Depression (Bipolar disorder). Schizophrenia is the most severe type of psychosis which causes hallucinations (auditory, visual or tactile), disordered thought processes involving fixed, irrational beliefs or delusions like persecution or grandiosity. ‘*Schizophrenics are also likely to suffer from anhedonia, which is the inability to experience pleasure, as well as flatness of affect, which is a severely limited ability to express emotion*’.⁵⁴ The anti-psychiatry movement of 1960’s, claimed that ‘*psychiatric patients are individuals not ascribing to the same conventional belief system, or consensus shared and agreed upon by most people in any culture*’. R. D. Laing argued that ‘*strange behaviour and seemingly confused speech of people undergoing a psychotic episode was ultimately understandable as an attempt to communicate distress, often in situations where this was not otherwise permitted*’.⁵⁵ There is a type of schizophrenia, in which those afflicted enters into a ‘morbid silence’- a turning inwards into fantasies and preoccupation with inner world's ‘archetypes’. It is psychotic experience of a shattered psyche, and although it is similar to a *yogic* experience and to the LSD induced altered experiences of ‘internally directed ventures’ and reaching up to the ‘myth symbols’ at the deepest depth which are universal and thereby biologically determined.⁵⁶

⁵² Dr. Nicki Crowley, pp. 6

⁵³ inert potential for *nibbana* attainment

⁵⁴ Bob Chisholm, 2013

⁵⁵ Dr. Nicki Crowley, pp.5

⁵⁶ Schizophrenia – the inward journey, Joseph Campbell, ‘*Myths to live by*’, pp. 84-95

The expansion of number of *cetasika* at various stages of *jnana*⁵⁷ realization i.e. different 'planes of *citta*' (or *cittabhumi*) results into (or is experienced as) conversing with 'beings' from such dimensions as is noted for Gautama Buddha in Buddhist (*Mahayana*) canons. The experience of past life *karma* narratives by the Buddha (experienced during the meditational trances) are also mentioned at various times within Buddhist literature. What if such realizations (of past life) are in fact deconstructed (by the Buddha during meditative contemplation) from the daily interactions and life experiences that are brought along with *jnana* stages? Likewise, could the various levels of heaven and hells or *lokas* that are mentioned in Buddhist canons and explicated through mandala diagrams should be studied as 'archetype kingdoms' or *vibrational universes* attuned to certain mind wavelength. '*The most enlightened Buddhists have never accepted them (lokas) as objective existences apart from mankind. They have regarded them merely as the indications of the various stages of mental and moral development acquired by human beings through the practice of dhyana (Jnana) or ecstatic meditation*'.⁵⁸ In fact, in the days of Buddha all Indian schools stressed upon meditating for final goal of acquiring a life in a celestial region⁵⁹.

Carl Jung has called the inner-world - a 'collective unconscious' in his depth psychology. While, a *Yogi* is able to cross through this inner world efficiently; an ordinary person sinks into this inner world's chatter and threats. To a yogi, this inner world is reflected in the outer world (the visible outside world) where these archetypes operate through people (as if possessing them) to perform the various 'philosophical tasks' (or daily life interactions). *Doloris Canon* calls people around in our usual life as 'karmic actors', since it is through them that we are able to negotiate with our *karmic* debts, and molds the formation of our future *karma*. The daily communication between the people which sometimes may act as archetypes or arch-karmic actors based upon the

⁵⁷ *jhana* is the state of meditative absorption in which the mind remains fixed on the meditation sign for hours.

⁵⁸ Yamakami Sogen, *System of Buddhist Thoughts*, pp. 75-76,

⁵⁹ *ibid*, pp. 76,

karmic needs or in other words, depending upon the personal karmic prototype/plan on ‘road to karmic- destination’⁶⁰. These interactions in waking, dreaming and wisdom realms defines and could alter our beliefs, personality and our idea about our self, consequently thus, our purpose in life. And anything or anyone obstructing to our now renewed passion or rewired focus might appear an *arch-nemesis*. Our pre-determined interactions could be perceived as occurring under the influence of variant inter-related archetypes causing different possibilities (destinies), affecting decision making, obstructing or deviating from otherwise a usual course. Since, an arch-idea’s interaction with another arch-symbol or persona; place; or event leave traces upon the ‘individual-self’ in combinations of information, such interferences cannot be taken lightly.

To a realized ‘*Yogi*’, these archetype-people (or awakened symbols) might appear as mediums to enact the ‘Law of *Karma*’, and such encounters merely as factors that keep the wheel of ‘*Karmic cycle*’ in perpetual motion with which their practice of *yoga* (*yama-niyama*) respond without reacting. Belonging to a cultural tradition that does not taboo experiencing altered states of consciousness impacts the recovering from the strange mental hallucinations in a positive manner. In fact, a cultural capital of familiar stories of yogic experiences provides strength and guidance to surpass the phase of hallucinations as temporary and as eventually reward giving experience. Since as *Fabrega* puts it, “*Psychiatric conditions by definition incorporate the spheres of social and psychological behavior in a special and significant way and its manifestation usually compromise and can undermine an individual’s stability in the order of its life. One can thus assume that a system of medicine and healing that depends heavily on cultural meanings that key into an individual’s understanding of the world and seeks to harmonize its place with traditional values will prove especially relevant and in many instances efficacious.*”⁶¹ That is why, for anyone experiencing strange out of the norm sensory experiences, starting with an external aid followed with eastern techniques of self

⁶⁰ In other words, ‘the road of destiny’

⁶¹ *Fabrega*, pp. 387

training could prove to be therapeutic. An external psychiatric support⁶², can comprise methods such as - *‘Normalization, Grounding, Reduction of environmental and interpersonal stimulation, Temporary discontinuation of spiritual practices, Encouragement of creative therapies (art, music, writing, poetry, dance), Creation of a therapeutic encounter/transpersonal psychotherapy, Consideration for specific bodywork, Evaluate for medication’*. Apart from this, alternative methods to gain better self-control like *Dhamma* practice of cultivating wholesome actions (*kushala chitta*) to aid *Karmic* healing that is, *Dhammic* manipulation of old *karma* and practice of *mindfulness* in production of new *karma*, (by refuse in triple gem) should be effective too: *“Karmic mental disease implies a specific link with destiny, a ripening of the seeds sown by former actions. For such karmic diseases there is no medicine except Dharma; nothing else is effective in counteracting negative karma. This is true for somatic as well as psychiatric disorders.”*⁶³ A therapeutic intervention involves removal of symptoms to restore the earlier moderate state of functioning. It is achieved through motivating into finding personal revaluation and selflessness as the meaning in life or selfless service is accepted as the core identity of oneself. Becoming aware of one’s emotional burden, stuck emotions and its release and reconstruction of strong character and its defense are basic healing modalities which could help one reprogram into a new mental paradigm.

Transpersonal transformation: Towards a paradigm shift

From a transpersonal position, a schizophrenic is an unrealized yogi, or an undisciplined thinker that gets drowned, unable to retract. They are simply unaware of themselves being manipulated by their circumstances, which are caused by their unconscious intentions, decisions and actions. Some suggest the treatment of mute schizophrenia is by offering him/her and aid to return from his inner fantasy. If the patient could respond and determine by themselves for receiving healing / or decide to get back to the regular/ordinary world; Mindfulness based psychotherapy, Karmic

⁶² as suggested by Dr. Nicki Crowley (after adapting from David Lukoff)

⁶³ Terry Clifford, pp. 137

healing, Reiki and Subliminal messages, Tibetan bowl-attunement and in general, *mantra* chanting for *chakra* alignment, guided meditation, Sun-gazing and early morning *yoga-asana*, can work wonders. Moreover, invoking the memories of nostalgic good moments from childhood and other reminders of good time like birthday celebration pictures, family outings, picnics etcetera should be reminded, for an example, they can be framed and displayed in the living area for them. Although, whether destructive aspect of schizophrenia gets cured by 'Creative arts' or by manipulating the creative aspect of "induced schizophrenia" (like in the case of LSD experience) is to be proven efficient and therefore, concerns about attempting 'ritual' negotiations with 'archetype-personalities' remains suspicious in the western medical modality. Whether, Tibetan rituals or Tantric rites, *mandala* rituals etcetera does establish a platform or dimension to deal with accidentally awakened 'Archetypes' with help of deliberately evoked arch-deities? Requires a 'scientific' enquiry. More research is perhaps the need of the hour on rituals designated to heal (or pacify) an invading spirit (from a family of an archetypes) allegedly causing 'mental illness' or disturbance. Are *demons* (dissociated divinities) that allegedly possesses people are but in fact archetypical-ideas gripping tightly onto the minds of heavy thinkers (like pupil with overactive Crown Chakra). Which are rectified or replaced from the infected mind through evocations of divine *bodhisattvas* via chanting (repeating) their teachings and visualizing their emanations as themselves or replaced through 'positive ones' imagined as thoughts by the meditator. Should these methods be counted as another kind of psychological aid and treatment? To dispel off dark 'Archetypes' of negative thought patterns *Shaman* practices and ritual events had been reprogramming the minds for ages. An outstanding healing method in Tantric Buddhism requires one to first get acquainted with the emotional state of the patient. After knowing the prominent feeling appropriate focus (object) of meditation is then traced. In case of excessive desire, focus of meditation should be change and impermanence. For anger and feeling of aggression, the object of meditation should be love and patience; in case of confusion and bewilderment, the object of meditation is 'cause and effect', and to deal with the discursive emotions and distractions, one should

practice upon breath by counting exhalations and inhalations. Once the intention for self-healing is established and the need for physical healing is accepted, it is then broadened to include the psyche and further, the thus achieved merit is shared with the entire world, imagining healing for all that is sick and suffering with Loving-kindness and Compassion, this is the projection of *metta*. The visualized image of universal health is then personified into an ideal person- a universal healer and is identified as the Medicine Buddha. Practice of visualization meditation on Medicine Buddha and chanting the Medicine Buddha mantra⁶⁴ with intentions to endow healing powers from the universal healing-source is applied and projected to the needy with firm conviction. Any merit that is gained from this practice is shared with all beings in the universe with gratefulness.

Depth psychology too holds promising ideas on negotiating with dark areas of one's psyche. The Jungian concept of a 'Shadow aspect of the self' entices looking at anyone seemingly influenced with 'wrong views' and to cause harm, or as 'possessed' with unchecked negative thought patterns and holding back unexpressed emotions, unattended biases and suppressed desires. Even when the very subtle life-force *prana* or *chi* shifts out of place, then the consciousness which the person experiences feels 'wrong' or 'alien' which could give rise to the sense of being possessed by an outside force. In *Ayurvedic* texts, the concept of possession particularly *unmada* and exogenous disease causing spirits, is evaluated by *Mitchell Weiss* with respect to *Freudian* and other psychoanalytical discussions.⁶⁵ The 'mind' in *Ayurveda* is studied by *Ramachandra Rao* (1999), *Frawley* (1998), and *Venkoba Rao* (2000). Some Indian scholars locate *Freudian* unconscious at *muladhara* (root *chakra*) and thereby rebalancing it might hold some remedial knowledge. Since, *psychic-centers* act as reservoir of past memories/ karmic debts (N.C. Panda, 2009) hence; *chakra* attunement shall be rigorously scientifically tested for its soothing effect on past-life traumas as claimed by the Yoga school. Life force energy become stuck at specific *chakras* and is reflected in the mind resulting

⁶⁴ THAYATHA OM BEKAZAI MAHA BEKAZAI RANZE SAMUGATHE SO HA

⁶⁵ Frederick M. Smith, Deity and spirit Possession in South Asia, pp. 479

sometimes into hallucinations and unexplained fear. The area of chakra attunement is been explored through studying the impact of Tuning fork, Schuman resonance, and Sound therapy etc. on Human biofield- hypothetically composed of biophotons.⁶⁶

Demonic possession in Tibetan medical system is said to enter through the *psychic-channels* and reside in heart-center (which for them is the seat of the mind, specifically where it coincides with central channel) and takes over the consciousness, precisely how emotions take over the mind. Mental disease to them is blockage at the heart center.⁶⁷ The *Echart Toll's* conception of 'pain-body' is another factor which anyone with the intentions to heal schizophrenia shall look deeply into. Overtly expanded victim mindset usually humbly originates from desire for attention and hidden craving for disproportionate demands of care and expectations. These emotions keep one attached to its own pain-body- '*obsesive and continuous mulling over of the causes of one's emotional pain, a sad love affair or loss of position, for example, are understood to produce a clinically disturbed consciousness, neurosis and psychosis*'.⁶⁸

Another key factor for devising mental health discipline is identifying the Placebo effect and its role in dragging out the drowning schizophrenic from the ocean of the thoughts within its own mind. Placebo response is an important factor in therapeutics that merits intensive scientific investigation.⁶⁹ However, it is certain that the creations within once own mind is to be dealt with in the mind itself. To schizophrenic, the allegedly imaginary characters from his own head come alive and appear in the outer world, in the day to day life interactions or during conversation with people. These backdrop characters as Doloris Canon call them, act out the Karmic occurrences through the 'karmic actors' or people around us. Regarding Buddha's realization of the mental-universe and its psychic mechanism, Tin Mon writes, "*When he contemplated the true*

⁶⁶ Eileen day McKusick, *Tuning The Human Biofield- Healing with Vibrational Sound Therapy*, Healing arts Press, Canada

⁶⁷ Terry Clifford, pp. 135-136

⁶⁸ *ibid*, pp. 138

⁶⁹ Richard Kradin, *The Placebo Response and the Power of Unconscious healing*, pp.

nature of all beings living in one hundred thousand crore universe and belonging to three passages of time (past, present, and future), he came to know full well that, no matter how numerous humans, deities, brahmas and woeful beings were in each universe, they could be reduced to twelve factors of Doctrine of dependent arising as the ultimate realities: ignorance and kamma formations (past factor as cause); consciousness, mental factors and kamma born matter, sense bases, contact and feeling (present factor as effect), craving, clinging and kamma formations (present factors as cause); birth, ageing and death (future factors as effect)".⁷⁰ Within such a case, Buddha's teachings on Karma (Pali: kamma) and its transmutation can provide an opportunity to negotiate Mindfully (and) with Loving Kindness. "By undertaking meditation on mindfulness of breathing or earth kasina, water kasina, etc., one can develop four levels of fine-material wholesome consciousness or jhana consciousness" (Tin Mon). One has to be thus remain Mindful and stick close to Buddhist precepts and various other techniques of self-discipline and constrains, supportive of mental health which can help a person to shift from nether worlds and on towards planes of higher consciousness (celestial realms), 'In performing the meritorious deeds, if one wishes for a human existence, one will become a human being; if one wishes for a celestial existence, one shall become a celestial being'. Karma creates men to be different from each other: "... all the thirty-one planes of existence and their inhabitants are naturally created by the mind through its kamma property. The fate and fortune of each individual is also determined by his mind through his actions and his kammass".⁷¹

Similarly, the *philosophy of Vajrayana* should be deeply studied and deconstructing the ritualistic imbibing of mandala-deities (*vajrasattva*) in esoteric practices, which are called in to replace archetypes (of the unresolved karmic debts) must spiritually transform a regressed mind. Teachings of *Dhamma* and *Mahayana* concept of cultivating the imbued *Buddha-nature* should be evaluated as legitimate process of

⁷⁰ Dr. Meh Tin Mon, *Kamma- The Real creator*, pp. 247

⁷¹ Tin Mon, *Kamma the real creator*, pp. 227

healing the archetypes residing in deep corners of the psychic-universe of an eternal mind, birth after birth. If the *Mandala* visualization (of *Vajrayana* Buddhism) and deity-yoga is taken as reference guide for devising an escape from schizophrenia through designing daily rituals and habit breaking as initial steps for changing the condition of illness, further through understanding ‘archetypes’ and adopting comprehensive behavioral and cognitive time-table to sooth the unstable and unattended deep psychic blocks and involuntary thought patterns, could also yield positive results. The power of healing with Medicine Buddha practice is deeply rooted in Tibetan Buddhism. This self healing modality encourages to create a new self-image by ‘*transforming the harmful energy of psychological complexes and negativities into the beneficial energy of positive and inspiring mental images and symbols*’.⁷²

Conclusion

The concept of spiritual emergence seeks to expand the arena of psychiatry by reconsidering and redefining negative (psychotic) and positive (psychedelic) potentials of experience of altered states of consciousness especially those which does not fit into the accepted guidelines of healthy functioning mind. The regression of mind should be understood from the various position like functioning, qualities, purpose, hidden-potentials of brain like *neuroplasticity*; and role of *ecstatic* (or tranquil) states of experiences that are retained in mental-memory which mind tends to associate with. Modern science is already legitimizing eastern notions on mind and spirit. In well established and thoroughly practiced sources of eastern wisdom, mind is taken as phenomenally objective while spirit is treated as the subjective aspects of the universal consciousness. The science of *chakras* and its disciplined awakening prepares the individual consciousness (*citta*) to become aware with the mental concomitants and modifications to pacify any dis-ease and ill-nesses using still much uncovered mystical potentials of the mind itself. Indic Sciences can avail greater perception on our world of

⁷² Dr. Lopsang Rapgay, *The Tibetan Book of Healing*, pp. 187

phenomena and can help in expansion of human consciousness; consecutively with better awareness mankind would respond to regular life challenges in more harmonious and healing manner. In other words, reprogramming of one's course of life with change of habits, breaking monotony, replacing irrational self-absorption by adopting 'living in the moment' attitude can potentially provide necessary thrust to awaited global paradigm shift into universal health and tranquility. Some guidance into 'collective healing' of the planet could easily be traced from living traditions of the eastern spirituality. Buddhist psychotherapy clearly outlines behavioural psychiatry of Buddha, who as a counsellor shown the right attitude of responding to diverse human problems-emotional, mental, and spiritual; and his method (of compassion and loving-kindness) does not merely soothes but seeks to eradicate taboos associated with human suffering or any discrepancies embedded in cultures in any ways in general. The Buddhist story of *pattachara* is a testimony to his *Dhamma*. Buddha's teachings reflect and recall 'seekers' towards diverse methods and ways to identify irrational thoughts, false views and delusions. While, yogic emphasis on selflessness and detachment compliments and confirms Buddhist methods, an encouragement to shed ego-center was ever present in *Vedantic* worldview in which an individual man's relation to the universal-self is comparable to how a man looks standing in front of the vast ocean. Any false view associated with schizophrenia, of grandeur or fear of persecution and irrational self importance or judgmental attitude gets shaken up in the light of Indian wisdom. If the distress calls of a 'psychotic' patient are reviewed with *Dhamma* wisdom and root-cause are identified, the proper context in which the problem first arises is traced, the 'attachments' which triggers or aggravates the symptoms are located, *ayurvedic tridosha* disbalance is established and a diagnosis is prepared; a course of recovery thus, could possibly be designed in accordance with medical advancements in the west. Recovery shall be supported with dietary supplements, distraction from usual routine, change of habit patterns, sympathy and encouragement in finding fresh interests and meaning to life. The principles of *yoga* and *ayurveda*, idealizing the Buddha and Buddhist values of *metta* and *karuna*, can help reduce impulsive reacting and can surely help cultivate *kushala-citta* (wholesome mind)

as it has for millions of the others earlier. Another, potential remedy is found through engaging in creative arts. Creative outlet can help bring out unexpressed and ignored inner experiences- '*The language of symbol and metaphor can help integrate that which can never be fully verbalized*'.⁷³

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THE ROLE OF BHIKKHU SANGHA IN BULTICULTURAL MULTICULTURAL HARMONY IN YOGYAKARATA, INDONESIA¹

Suharno²

Abstract

The background of this research is that Buddhists are part of a plural society that needs to understand multiculturalism. Buddhists also need to have morality (*sila*) in society. Sangha monks have a strategic position in building multicultural harmony and Buddhist morality (*sila*). This study aims to describe the strategy of the Bhikkhu sangha in building multicultural harmony and Buddhist morality (*sila*), inhibiting factors and supporting the Bhikkhu sangha in building harmony and Buddhist morality (*sila*), and the Bhikkhu Sangha's strategy in overcoming challenges to building multicultural harmony and Buddhist morality (*sila*) in Yogyakarta.

This research is descriptive qualitative research with a phenomenological approach, which is a study that describes objects related to the role of the Bhikkhu sangha in fostering harmony of multicultural life and Buddhist morality (*sila*) in Yogyakarta.

The results of this study are the strategies carried out by the Sangha Bhikhu in fostering multicultural harmony and morality with an emotional approach to Buddhists. The factors inhibiting the Bhikkhu Sangha in fostering Buddhists are the small number of Sangha Bhikkhus, the low majority of Buddhists' education and the economic level of the Buddhists who are still low. Supporting factors are the younger generation who are increasingly open to the importance of education, and Buddhists

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² Lecture of Raden Wijaya Buddhist College, Wonogiri, Central Java, Indonesia.

who are very respectful of the Sangha Bhikkhu. Efforts made by the Bhikkhu sangha in overcoming obstacles to fostering multicultural harmony and Buddhist precepts in Yogyakarta are exemplary and empowering the economic community.

Keywords: *Sangha Bhikkhu, Multicultural, sila*

Introduction

Indonesia is a multicultural country. Indonesia has diverse and broad socio-cultural and geographical aspects. Indonesia's population consists of 300 ethnic groups who speak nearly 200 different languages. In addition, it also adheres to various religions and beliefs such as Islam, Catholicism, Protestant Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and various kinds of believers. Indonesia is the largest multicultural country in Southeast Asia. This fact is a challenge for the Indonesian people to be able to maintain national unity and integrity.

Building harmony in a multicultural society in Indonesia is not easy. Diversity can cause various kinds of problems, such as those currently facing the Indonesian nation, corruption, collusion, nepotism, political hostility, poverty, violence, separatism, environmental destruction, and loss of humanity. The emergence of various horizontal conflicts and demands for independence from multiple regions shows that the Indonesian nation is facing the danger of national disintegration that threatens the unity of Indonesia. All elements of society must have the same goal to realize national unity and integrity. Religious leaders have a very important and strategic position in building harmony in multicultural life in Indonesia.

Religious life is an inseparable part of social life. The emergence of various inter-religious problems stems from unstable socio-political conditions and the phenomenon of narrow spiritual understanding. Then these problems are accommodated by personal and group interests, thus making complex problems.

Awareness of religious communities towards multiculturalism is a force to build inter-religious social society. Buddhism upholds the efforts of harmonious inter-religious social life. This harmony has been proven by the Buddha when Upali requested to be his follower. Even though Upali became a follower of the Buddha, he still had to respect and respect and help his former teacher. Such is the great tolerance

of Buddhism towards other religions. King Ashoka has carried out a harmonious inter-religious social life. Ashoka was a very famous Buddhist king because he practiced the teachings of love and compassion. Ashoka builds and interfaith colonial society as written in Ashoka's decree, which reads: "Whoever praises his own religion and demeans other religions, will only humiliate and bury his own religion."

The essence of building an interfaith social society in the Buddhist perspective is to emphasize that everyone must carry out their respective obligations and responsibilities according to their social position based on moral principles. Only then will one attain prosperity, prosperity, and happiness in society. On the other hand, people who do not carry out their duties and responsibilities in the community do not deserve to be recognized or respected for their social position.

The Special Region of Yogyakarta is one of the provinces as a miniature of Indonesia, consisting of various religions, beliefs, ethnicities, and races. The Special Region of Yogyakarta has an area of one municipality and four districts. Gunungkidul Regency is one of the districts that have various religions and beliefs. Each sub-district in Gunungkidul Regency consists of multiple faiths. Buddhist residents are found in Wonosari City, Semin District, and Panggang District (<https://kependudukan.jogjaproprov.go.id>).

The diversity that exists in Gunungkidul can be both a strength and a weakness. Lack of multicultural understanding can cause various problems in the Gunungkidul community. All elements of society must play an active role in building the harmony of multicultural life. The government, community leaders, religious leaders must synergize and play an active role in creating the harmony of religious communities. Living in harmony in diversity cannot be separated from spirituality. Wise character and full of concern for others are the pulses of spirituality in building harmony. In this case, religious figures have a central role. Sangha monks as Buddhist figures have an important role in building multicultural understanding for Buddhists.

This study aims to describe the strategy of the Bhikkhu sangha in building multicultural harmony and Buddhist morality (*sila*), inhibiting factors and supporting the Bhikkhu sangha in building harmony and Buddhist morality (*sila*), and the

Bhikkhu Sangha's strategy in overcoming challenges to building multicultural harmony and Buddhist morality (*sila*) in Yogyakarta.

Literature Review

1. *Bhikkhu Sangha*

Bhikkhu Sangha or Sangha monks are also called Samannas. A samanna is an individual who has practiced the samanna vinaya and freed himself from all forms of worldly attachment and is aware and understands absolute freedom, which leads to a happy life (*Sn.220; It.10*). Samanna (Sanskrit: sramanna) is a masculine form that means ascetic (Supandi, 1993:170). Philosophically, an ascetic is an individual who removed defilement or a state that leads to the removal of defilements (*Vism. 80*). Samanna is an individual who is trained in the precepts and vinaya, does everything mindfully, disciplined in practice. Samanna is the heir to the Dhamma and the preserver of the Dhamma. While in Savatthi, Jeta's forest, the Buddha, Anāpindika's garden, voluntarily declared to the monks, be my heir in the Dhamma, not material heirs. Life as a samanna reflects efforts towards the practice of Dhamma for mental progress. The Buddha recommends that the pattern of life for students to become heirs of the Dhamma is to support few desires, be content, and remove all mental defilements (*M.I.13*).

2. **Harmoni**

In the context of social life, harmony is defined as a mutual understanding of differences and similarities. In the context of social life, everyone is directly or indirectly related to each other. Whatever is done, for better or worse, affects society and nature around us as a whole. So, if you want to be happy, not for yourself, but the whole community, happy together because the law of dependence binds the universe. Such a view produces a social, moral principle, which sees the interests of others in their interests. People who practice these moral-social principles are called 'good and worthy people' (*M.I.341*).

The Buddha said there are six kinds of ways of life that lead to harmony (*sarāṇiyadhamma*), which can be used as an effort to build interfaith social society, namely:

- a. Spreading love in the form of deeds to others, whether they are present or not (mettakaya kamma).
- b. Spread love in the form of speech to others, whether they are present or not (mettavaci kamma).
- c. Spreading love in the form of thoughts to others, whether they are present or not (mettamano kamma).
- d. Providing opportunities for religious leaders to enjoy the benefits obtained in the right way and not using what they have earned themselves.
- e. Always maintain the sanctity of morality when communicating with leaders and do not do anything that hurts their feelings.
- f. Living in harmony together and not fighting because of differences of opinion and views (*D.III.245*).

3. Multikultural

Multiculturalism views society as having a generally accepted culture in a community whose pattern is like a mosaic. The mosaic includes all the cultures of the smaller societies that make up the creation of the larger society. In the context of social life, people must present multicultural understanding to expand the discourse of human thought. Multiculturalism can also be interpreted as a plurality of cultures and religions. Ideally, cultural pluralism or multiculturalism means rejection of bigotry, racism, and inclusive acceptance of diversity. Multiculturalism is a belief which states that ethnic and cultural groups can coexist peacefully in the principle of co-existence, which is characterized by a willingness to respect other cultures (Sparrigan, 2003: 17).

Diversity is often mentioned in different terms. Yusri (2008: 1) reveals that three words are often used to describe a society consisting of other religions, races, languages, and cultures, namely plurality, diversity, and multicultural. All represent the same thing, namely the state of being more than one or plural. Farida Hanum and Setya Raharja (2011: 114) explain that diversity affects human behavior, attitudes, and mindsets so that humans have usage, folkways, mores, and even customs that are different from each other. If people cannot understand properly, they will be very prone to encounters, resulting in conflict.

4. *Sila*

Sila or morality in Buddhism can be referred to as regulating (*Sīlana*) that is coordinating (*Samadhana*), supporting (*upadhāra*), but also as a basis (*ādhāra*) because it serves as the basis for good states. The precepts in the Patisambhida are said to be Intentions (*Cetana*), i.e., one's will to avoid evil deeds or one who carries out the obligation to practice self-control to abstain from killing living beings, and so on. As a mental pattern (*Cetasika*), *Sila* is a state that turns away from within a person who avoids killing living beings and so on, includes three kinds of conditions that have no greed, no ill will, and right view. *Sila* as Control (*Samvara*) that is as a control in five ways, namely; (1) Control over the monastic order (*Pātimokkha*); restraint with mindfulness (*Sati*); (3) Control with Knowledge (*Ñāna*); (4) Control with Patience (*Khanti*); (5) Control with passion (*Viriya*).

Gotama Buddha explained to the gharavasas (households) about the benefits and advantages of observing the precepts, as follows: 1) *Sila* causes one to have a lot of wealth, 2) It will spread a good name and fame widely, 3) One attends every meeting without fear or hesitation because they realize that they will not be blamed or accused by many, 4) When going to die, his heart is peaceful, 5) Will be reborn in heaven or the realm of happiness (*D.II.86*).

Methods

This research is descriptive qualitative research, namely research that describes the object of the role of Bhikkhu sangha in fostering the harmony of multicultural life and Buddhist morality (*sila*) in Yogyakarta. This study uses a phenomenological approach. The research was conducted in Gunungkidul Regency, Yogyakarta. The population in this study were Sangha monks and Buddhists in Gunungkidul Regency. This study uses purposive sampling. Data collection techniques used in this study are interviews, observation, and documentation. The validity of the data uses source triangulation.

The data analysis technique used in this research is descriptive qualitative data analysis using Miles and Huberman's steps. There are three main components of

the analysis process: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions and verification.

Results and Discussion

1. Forms of religious harmony in Gunungkidul, Yogyakarta

Bhikkhu Sasanabodhi is a very pluralist Bhikkhu, which is also embedded and awakened by his students. Bhikkhu Badrapalo is a disciple of Bhikkhu Sasanabodhi and is currently appointed head of the Jinadharama Sradha Monastery in Wonosari. This monastery is the center of Buddhist development in Gunungkidul. These understandings and pluralist forms can be seen directly from the various activities carried out by the Sangha Bhikkhu in the Gunungkidul area. Multiple forms of harmony in multicultural in Gunungkidul include:

a. Iftar together in Vihara

Bhikkhu Sasanabodhi is the originator of the iftar together activity at the Jinadharama Sradha Vihara during the fasting month. This activity shows that respect for other religions is not limited by anything, even a place. Iftar together at the Vihara is a clear proof of the form of harmony in multiculturalism in Gunungkidul. Sangha monks in Gunungkidul often receive invitations to break the fast together at Islamic boarding schools and assemblies of Muslims. Bhikkhu Badrapalo said that even though the monk did not eat in the afternoon, he would go if there were an invitation to iftar together. The essence was not a matter of eating but the importance of tolerance.

b. Diversity School

The Diversity School is a form of interfaith activity pioneered by interfaith leaders in Gunungkidul. The diversity school structure is a live-in interfaith dialogue conducted by religious leaders and young people from various religions in Gunungkidul. This activity is carried out in turns in places of worship of each religion. The purpose of this activity is to foster a sense of brotherhood between beliefs.

c. Assisting the organizing committee for religious holidays

Buddhists also show tolerance when there are celebrations for other religious holidays. Buddhist youth in Gunungkidul are always directly involved in helping the committee for other religious holidays. For example, during the Eid prayer, the young Buddhists play a role as parking attendants, security, and helping prepare equipment before and after the implementation of worship.

d. Interreligious Dialogue

The implementation of this interfaith dialogue involves figures from each religion. Interreligious dialogue is usually held during religious holidays or national days. Traditionally held during Eid al-Fitr, interfaith dialogues are held at mosques or Islamic boarding schools, at churches at Christmas, at temples during Nyepi, at Viharas at Vesak. The place and time of the interfaith dialogue are based on the agreement of the religious leaders. Apart from religious holidays, interfaith dialogues are also held at certain times according to the agreement.

2. Bhikkhu sangha strategy in fostering multicultural harmony and Buddhist precepts

a. Psychological approach between Sangha monks and Buddhists

One of the monk's duties is to propagate the teachings of the Buddha by teaching them to the people. Sangha monks are heirs of the Dhamma and preservers of the Dhamma. In general, Buddhists feel that there is a great distance between them and the Sangha Bhikkhus. Sometimes people even feel awkward when they meet monks. The people are confused about reacting to the monk because there is no emotional closeness between devotees and monks. Based on these experiences and events, it is necessary to approach the people and the monks. A monk keeps the precepts and Vinaya but does not limit his communication with the people. Sangha monks always carry out this approach to Buddhists in Gunungkidul. With closeness, what is taught by a monk will be easily accepted by Buddhists.

b. Direct assistance to Buddhist activities

As the Advisor for the Indonesian Buddhayana Council (MBI) of Gunungkidul Regency and the Gunadharama Foundation, Bhikkhu sangha always supervises and assists the activities held. The assistance provided is that before

implementing activities, the Assembly or Foundation consults with the Sangha first. The short, medium and long-term programs prepared by the Gunungkidul Regency Indonesian Buddhist Council (MBI) are examined first by the Sangha Bhikkhu. Sangha, as the advisor, has the right to provide input to the assembly in the preparation of the work program.

3. The inhibiting and supporting factors of the Sangha Bhikkhu in fostering multicultural harmony and Buddhist precepts

Bhikkhu Sangha's inhibiting factors in fostering multicultural harmony and Buddhist precepts in the Gunungkidul Regency are:

a. Limited number of monks in the sangha

The number of Sangha monks in Indonesia is very small compared to Buddhists. The small number of Bhikkhus reached to many Buddhist activities makes it impossible for the Sangha Bhikkhu in Gunungkidul to only focus on cultivating the people in Gunungkidul but to become Buddhist mentors in other areas in need. It is one of the obstacles in the formation of Buddhists.

b. The majority of the people's education level and the economy are still low

Economics cannot be separated from household life. The low economy had an impact on the education of Buddhists. There is still a view that education will only cost money, so it is better to work than continue school. The majority of people's education in Gunungkidul is still relatively low. There are still many people who only graduate from elementary school. It is very influential on the mindset of the people, so it takes patience to nurture Buddhists in Gunungkidul.

Bhikkhu Sangha's supporting factors in fostering multicultural harmony and Buddhist precepts in the Gunungkidul Regency are:

a. The younger generation of Buddhists who are increasingly open to the importance of education

The majority of Buddhists in Gunungkidul have low education, but over time there has been a small number of young people thinking about the

importance of education. Some young Buddhists in Gunungkidul have a passion for continuing their education up to higher education. Several generations of highly educated young people help the Sangha monks in nurturing Buddhists, for example, teaching Sunday schools and fostering Buddhist youth. It is one of the supporters of the formation carried out by the Sangha Bhikkhu.

b. Buddhists have great respect for the Sangha

Gunungkidul Buddhists have great respect for the Sangha Bhikkhu so that the Sangha Bhikkhu feels comfortable living in Gunungkidul. With the friendliness of the Buddhists in Gunungkidul, the Sangha monks feel comfortable practicing training. It is one of the supporters of the sangha monks in carrying out an activity.

4. Efforts are being made to overcome the obstacles to the Sangha monks fostering multicultural harmony and Buddhist precepts

a. Acting directly on the development of the people and giving an example

Exemplary is the main key of the monk sangha in cultivating Buddhists. The words that the people listen to, but what the sangha does is also a lesson for the people. Bhikkhu Badrapalo said that this life as a Samana should be heir to the Dhamma, meaning that everything done by mind, speech, body is based on Dhamma or truth. So, it is proper for the sangha to be an example for the people.

Bhikkhu sangha must be a solid individual and not easily influenced by anything seen, heard, and felt. Dissatisfaction does not destroy a reliable individual because a blow cannot beat a trustworthy individual. A strong individual eliminates dissatisfaction. A strong individual has power resistant to dismay. Contemplating using a residence is only to protect oneself from heat, cold and protect from the disturbance of wild animals, to avoid heat and cold to live the holy life perfectly. The monk who can realize this and is satisfied with the four basic needs, happiness, will always accompany him wherever the monk resides (Vin.I.46).

b. Economic Empowerment

Economics cannot be separated from household life. When living life as a householder, there is a family economic responsibility. Building an established economy does not conflict with religious spirituality. Buddhism teaches the middle way and is in no way hostile to material welfare. Spiritual well-being is not the opposite of material well-being. It is not wealth that is a barrier to achieving liberation, but attachment to that wealth creates an obstacle. Economic problems also interfere with religious activities in Gunungkidul, so economic empowerment also needs to be built. Bhikkhu Badrapalo made a sangha coaching program informing the basic foundation of the people's economy by farming vegetables, processing coffee, and making batik in collaboration with various parties. The cooperation carried out by the Sangha monks with economic actors, for example, bringing in batik teachers to teach young Buddhists to make batik and bringing in agricultural experts to teach Buddhists about farming.

Conclusion

The strategy taken by the Sangha Bhikkhu in fostering the precepts and harmony of multicultural life is to approach psychologically with the people and direct assistance to the activities of Buddhists. There are several supporting and inhibiting factors in the development of the people. The inhibiting factors are the limited number of monks in the sangha. The majority of people's education is still low, and the people's economic level is not yet established. Supporting factors are the younger generation, who are increasingly open to the importance of education, and Buddhists who have great respect for the Sangha Bhikkhu. Efforts made to overcome the obstacles to Bhikkhu sangha in fostering multicultural harmony and Buddhist precepts in Gunungkidul Regency are direct actions in promoting, exemplary, and building the people's economy.

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Curriculum Vitae

Name : Suharno
Place and Date of Birth : Kulon Progo, 01 December 1988
Nationality : Indonesia
Affiliation : Raden Wijaya Buddhist College, Wonogiri,
Central Java, Indonesia
Profession : Lecture
Home Address : Bulusulur, Wonogiri, Central Java
Email : suharno@radenwijaya.ac.id
Phone : +6281234070327
Educational Background : Dharmacarya, Postgraduate of Smaratungga
Buddhist College, Boyolali, Central Java, Indonesia



THE CONTRIBUTION OF BUDDHISTS VALUES AND PRACTICES TO POST COVID-19 FUTURES¹

JOSÉ ANTONIO RODRÍGUEZ DÍAZ²

The future, as we know from the Buddhist teachings, is always the result of past and present forces put in movement by past and present actions. According to the Law of Karma, our present and past actions enter into the grid of forces and trends in constant interaction producing new systems of interrelations defining futures. This very act of writing these lines will have some effect both at the personal level (mine and of those of you that read them) and at the social level (through the impact of these lines in the grid of interrelations creating society. Therefore, we, me writing it and you reading it, are now creating futures.

By the same rule, the values and actions of Buddhist people in the world enter in that system of interrelations creating future societies. They enter by creating a cultural specific pattern of visions and practices which transcends the physical space of countries and regions. Values and actions of Buddhist people are crucial since they address key elements related to the current COVID-19 pandemic.

The global COVID-19 pandemic has generated such magnitude of disruption that it creates an opportunity to take advantage of the reconstruction processes and to think about building better futures. It offers us the opportunity to collectively reflect on the probable, possible and preferable social futures and thus begin the path of building

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² **José Antonio Rodríguez Díaz** is Professor of Sociology at the School of Economics and Business of the University of Barcelona, Spain. (jarodriguez@ub.edu; pepadri@gmail.com).

better and more desirable societies. It also offers us an opportunity to reflect on the contribution of Buddhists to those futures.

I start reviewing our views of the future and the types of futures, then look at the pandemic from the perspective of those futures, and end analyzing the contributions of Buddhist values and practices towards better presents and futures.

thinking futures and covid-19

The most surprising thing when thinking about the meaning of the future is realizing that the future does not exist. In fact, when it becomes so, it is no longer future, it is present. Hence, thinking about the future is nothing more than a way of focusing on the present, and we focus on the present to build futures. However, although the future does not exist, there are elements that will constitute it, ingredients and seeds of the future. And, like everything in the life of this planet, the future is the result of a complex system of causal forces in constant interaction. And our actions are also part of such system. Hence, individual and collective action are creators of futures.

As a result, the future is open, it is not unique or predetermined, and therefore there may be alternative possible futures. The idea that the future does not exist yet leads us to the idea that the future is changeable. If it doesn't exist, it has yet to be created. And if it has to be created, then we could help shape it.

A certain knowledge of the future is essential for survival and adaptation in constantly changing societies like ours, and to build certain futures (desirable), to avoid other futures (not desirable) and not leave them to chance (or in the hands of others). It is also a way of "empowering" citizens, and "empowering" society to act in the present, building Tomorrow. The future represents opportunities since it is contingent and, therefore, alternative futures are possible. What will happen will depend on many things, including what we decide to do. The future is not set in stone.

Professor Wendell Bell (a sociologist founder of futures studies) introduced a classical approach defining futures in the plural with three main types: probable, possible and preferable futures. Probable futures are those that we think can occur with high probability, based on current causal forces and trends, they are largely continuation

of the present. Possible futures are all those thinkable and imaginable futures that we believe could happen in a somewhat more distant future. And the preferable futures are those that we like and think "should" happen, or that we want to foster.

The study of **probable futures** focuses on the questions: what would be the most likely future of a specific phenomenon in a specific period of time and under certain conditions? What will the future be like if things continue as they are today? As present conditions change, this type of future must be constantly rethought. Furthermore, changes in the ingredients of causation systems and in human actions change those highly probable futures.

During these months of pandemic, predictions about the future after the effects of the coronavirus have multiplied. Obviously, many with the best intentions, to help us move into the future that they say awaits us. Many of the predictions are possibly attempts to define the future, to shut it down, to make it inevitable. They seem to want to convince us that this is the future and it will be, and therefore we must accept it and adapt to it. "Nothing will be the same" and "The new normality" have become the new "mantra" of this pandemic. They have become the dominant discourses (Rodríguez, 2020).

In addition to the numbers, curves and lines of those infected and killed by COVID-19, the media also provide us with news, analysis, and forecasts predominantly about the near probable future in economic and political terms (GDP falls, closures of companies and sectors, massive job losses, slow recovery, tensions between countries, tensions between parties, territorial closures, increase in vulnerable populations, etc).

All of this could create an image of an unstoppable dystopian future, generate fear and paralyze the social capacity to act. But it is precisely the knowledge of these predictions that would allow them to be changed. Each of these predictions can generate forces to enhance or stop them or to transform them. The probable, the future so far more closed, is now more open than ever. New forces, new events, new (or old) ideas and ways of doing things are emerging, transforming our present and creating new probable futures.

But since the future is open, there may be many alternative **possible futures**. The avenue of possible futures implies thinking of present and future problems as opportunities and of obstacles and limitations as something that can be overcome. This means looking at the present in an innovative way and realizing that the current possibilities of the future are achievable. This is where human creativity has led us to imagine and think about future realities.

One of the most used instruments to think about possible futures are scenarios. Scenarios are narrative descriptions (stories with internal consistency) about possible themes or developments in the future. Alternative scenarios are built in order to conceptualize alternative futures and clarify the possible consequences of current decisions. A scenario is simply a set of events that we imagine happening in the future. A scenario begins when we ask ourselves what would happen if something or several things happened. There are multiple ways to build scenarios. The most widely used models are double-entry scenarios (where the crossing of two trends or uncertainties produces four scenarios), and those with four typical combinations (positive change, negative change, no change, and unknown change).

For example, given the great changes and uncertainties created in the political, economic, social and technological areas, Honey (2020) presents four scenarios for the world after the COVID-19 crisis. They are the result of combining possibilities in those four areas. The "Star-Treck" scenario depicts a world with a consolidated international community and where there is full global cooperation to address global problems. The "New Humanity" scenario is the result of the epidemic reminding us that sometimes underpaid and undervalued people are now the most important. And that leads to a reconsideration of values. The "Orbanization" scenario defines a world full of borders and border controls, xenophobia, and authoritarianism reinforcing social isolation. And the scenario of "Hyper-capitalism" draws a world where the wealth of a few has increased, the workforce is replaced by technology and artificial intelligence. Two of them are optimistic and show a positive evolution of the species and two of them are pessimistic and show a world in decline. The challenge is finding ways to make the positives workable and avoid the negatives.

The most interesting dimension of the scenarios is that they are type possibilities, and therefore it would be strange if they exactly took such different forms. But it helps us to think about these possibilities, and about the possibility that different scenarios dominate in different parts of the planet (in some with more success and in

others with less), or that elements belonging to different scenarios are mixed in new scenarios, etc. They open the way to multiple possibilities.

These multiple scenarios allow us to visualize the best and most desirable ones and also give us clues on how to walk towards them and how to avoid the undesirable ones. **Preferable futures** involve evaluating the desirability of alternative futures and prioritizing ethical foundations (values). Thinking about preferable futures leads us to have to worry about the nature of a good life and society.

Looking into the values and opinions of Buddhists collected in the World Values Survey (WVS) we can see how they set their path to better futures. A first overall analysis of their value system shows clear positions towards harmonious relations. They are opposed, as most non Buddhist, to war (more than two thirds of them) and do not justify violence against others at all (a value of 1,95 in a scale from 1 to 10). In fact, they value Altruism and Tolerance as good qualities to teach children and stand out believing most people can be trusted (more than one third of Buddhist) along with the belief that it is important to progress towards a more human society in which wealth could be shared better (Table 1). That is the essence of their view of better societies and futures.

Buddhist highly value close social relations: for the majority (91%) family is very important and almost half (42%) consider friends as also very important in their lives. Moreover, their proximity to others is not limited to people but rather extended to all sentient beings represented by their high concern for the environment. One fourth of the Buddhists (double percentage than the general and non-Buddhist people) believe the deterioration of the **environment to be the most serious problem** nowadays. They also favor, a bit more than the general and non-Buddhist people, **environmental protection over economic development**.

We better understand the role of Buddhist people system of values when comparing them with the average Non-Buddhist, and total Global population. Although globally many of the values among these population groups are quite similar, Buddhists stand out for a slightly higher social orientation. Their greater social openness and future orientation is especially notable. Their highest level of believing that the majority of people can be trusted and considering that the environment is the biggest problem today are two central axes that characterize them and define their social agenda. Two key values to advance harmonious relationships between people, and societies, and with the environment. (Rodríguez, 2019).

Contributing to better futures

Once we have seen, and thought about, probable futures, along with images and values that shape possible and preferable futures, we are faced with the challenge of building futures through individual and collective action.

Using the information from the WVS survey we look at the actions taken by Buddhist people in their path towards better futures and that could be very useful to deal with two of the most important challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic: social relations and the environment. In this respect, it is important to note that Buddhists also stand out for a high level of social activity, above the averages of global and non-Buddhist populations, with actions towards the well-being and happiness of others and also the environment (Table 2). This higher level of social action coincides with higher levels of membership in civil and environmental organizations. This points to the socially organized character of their action towards others, it is the result of collaboration with others. Furthermore, participation in social organizations also increases trust and ties, facilitating broader and more harmonious relationships. These indicators of social activity point to their important role towards better and more harmonious and sustainable present and future societies.

In Conclusion: for the benefit of all beings

The COVID-19 pandemic shows us the serious consequences of our way of relating (with each other and) with nature and the environment. A non-harmonious relationship with our environment, of abuse, exploitation, death. The pandemic also shows us that we are weak and that we are closely related to our environment in a causal way. Wounds to the environment lead to wounds in humans.

And at the same time, the pandemic offers us a great opportunity to think and create new future paths. In fact, we are already creating them. It is a great opportunity to do better, to avoid practices and actions that have led us to disaster, to the current crisis. The probable, the future so far more closed, is now more open than ever. New forces, new events, new (or old) ideas and ways of doing things are emerging, transforming our present and creating new probable futures. And the wide range of possibilities offered by possible futures is further expanded by incorporating ideas, possibilities and desires

that arise from this crisis. And obviously the preferable futures strengthen their presence.

We are in the historical moment where these new social goals are being created, those new preferable futures towards which we want to go. Perhaps it is the historic moment for Buddhism and Buddhists to assume a leadership role based on their value systems and actions and practices aimed at ending the suffering of all beings (human and non-human) by creating harmonious and happy societies. This base of ideals, values and actions are already present. They are the seeds of futures.

As we have seen, Buddhist values and practices provide an image of proximity and care for others and an orientation and desire for harmony with people and the environment. They differentiate from non-Buddhist by the overall stronger Buddhist belief that most people can be trusted, their higher levels of social involvement and activity and also their leading role in views and actions towards a sustainable planet. All seems to indicate that Buddhist people, even though they represent only about 8% to 10% of all the world population, are making a difference with their strong orientation towards the wellbeing of other and the environment. They are setting and walking a good path for better futures.

The values and actions of Buddhist populations paint an alternative image of possible and preferable futures that keeps open the possibility of futures different from some of the catastrophic images created in recent months and that often lead to inaction. We have looked at probable futures and the seeds of possible and preferable futures. How they are configured in the coming months and years will also depend on us. The main challenge is to realize that we are creating a future in the present, with our ideas, thoughts and actions. And after that, take additional steps and consciously create desired futures, our futures and those of our loved ones, and the futures of all beings on the planet.

Sarveshman Svastir Bhavatu (Peace Mantra)

Sarvesham Svastir Bhavatu: May there be happiness in all

Sarvesham Shantir bhavatu: May there be peace in all

Sarvesham Purnam bhavatu: May there be completeness in all

Sarvesham Mangalam bhavatu: May there be success in all

Tina Turner: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6XP-f7wPM0A>

TABLE 1.
VALUES FOR BETTER FUTURES

WVS6 2015	All buddhist	NON Buddhist	Global Population
VALUES			
Sometimes war is necessary for justice %	36,2	35,3	35,3
Violence against other people justifiable (scale: from 1- to 10+)	1,95	1,97	1,97
Most serious problem: environment %	26,2	12,3	12,9
Environment vs. Economic growth %	51,3	50,9	50,9

Quality Altruism in Children Important (%)	36,0	33,4	33,5
Quality Tolerance in Children Important (%)	64,2	68,5	68,3
Most People Can Be Trusted (%)	34,8	24,6	25,1
Towards more human society	19,4	16,8	16,9
Wealth For All (scale: 1- to 10+)	6,74	6,3	6,3
Family Very Important (%)	90,7	91,4	91,4
Friends Very Important (%)	42,2	46,7	46,7
N	3876	86310	90167

TABLE 2. ACTIONS FOR BETTER FUTURES

WVS6 2015	All buddhist	NON Buddhists	Global Population
ACTIONS			
# Civil Organizations: Member	1,97	1,69	1,71
# Civil Organizations: Active	0,83	0,72	0,73
Do something good for society (scale: 1+ to 6-)	2,93	2,46	2,48
Care for others (scale: 1+ to 6-)	2,89	2,36	2,40
Care for environment (scale: 1+ to 6-)	2,80	2,51	2,52
Give \$ to ecological organization	17,9	12,9	13,1
Member Environmental Organization %	13,1	10,9	11,0
Active Environmental Organization %	4,9	3,5	3,6
Social Closure (- to +)	3,32	3,45	3,45

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For the benefit of all beings !!! V4.1 (March 30, 2021)

BUDDHIST PILGRIMAGE: A STUDY OF INTEGRATION FOR THE WELL-BEING OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Rahul Ravi Rao

Visiting Faculty, M.Phil. (Pali) Dept.
of Pali, University of Mumbai

Introduction

Pilgrimage comes under the study of social sciences; an overall umbrella of modern sciences has they are segregated in to three sections, it is essential in understanding the integration of Buddhistic studies.

Pilgrimage is actually a special way for physically walking on the path, trodden by the Buddha in the past and taken as an inspiration from the sacred places and the teachings to keep walking on the path diligently by a person who is termed as a pilgrim. Thus Pilgrim and Pilgrimage is an essential factor on the path of Dhamma, to study the social and mental development happening in the personality of human nature in the context of society.

“A pilgrimage is a journey to a sacred place motivated by religious devotion. Although the term may be applied to a meditative search for new spiritual experiences, prolonged wanderings, or travel to a place of nostalgic meaning for an individual, here the word refers to the physical journey to a distant site regarded as holy.”¹

*Pujarahe pujayato buddhe yadi va savake
pāncaśamatikkante tinnasokapariddave.
Te tadise pujayato nibbute akutobhaye
na sakka punnam saḥkhatum iMettāmapī kenaci.*²

“Paying homage to those who are worthy: To Buddha’s or their disciples who have defeated desire and crossed the stream of grief and lamentation, paying homage to them will lead to emancipation and fearlessness. These merits cannot be measured.” (Dhammapad, 195-6)³

¹ The Geography of Buddhist Pilgrimage in Asia by Robert Stoddar, pg 2, Geography Faculty Publications, University of Nebraska - Lincoln

² Dhammapad, 195-6 verse

Through Pali Tipitaka Literature we come across two thousand, six hundred years ago, the „Wheel of Dhamma“ was put forth in motion through the teachings of the Buddha in the Deer Park at Sarnath *Isipatana*. A group of ascetic companion“s *Pancavaggiya*, the Enlightened One preached the middle path by proclaiming *Cattari Ariyasaccani*: (i) *idam dukkham*, the existence of pain; (ii) *ayam dukkha samudayo*, the root of pain; (iii) *ayam dukkha nirodha*, the cessation of pain; (iv) *ayam dukkha nirodha gamini patipada*, and the path that leads out of pain. In order to remove the causes of pain -(suffering) the Buddha further prescribed a mutually supportive Noble Eightfold path (*Ariya Atthangika Magga*): *Samma Ditthi* (Right View), *Samma Sankappa* (Right thought), *Samma Vaacaa* (Right speech), *Samma Kammanta* (Right action), *Samma Aajiva* (Right livelihood), *Samma Vayama* (Right effort), *Samma Sati* (Right mindfulness) and *Samma Samadhi* (Right Concentration). These early discourses gave birth to a monastic tradition which flourished across places and today, Buddhism is still the world“s greatest religions of all time.

Tipitaka Canonical Literature

Buddha has given plenty of messages related to pilgrimage through different Sutta in the Pali Literature and this study of social sciences can be incorporated from the perspective of modern sciences. Samevejaniya Sutta has information related to the four major Buddhist sites of pilgrimage from Anguttara Nikaya. Mahapadāna Sutta throws light on the great discourse of lineage of previous Buddha sacred places from Digha Nikaya. Ariyapariyesana Sutta discusses about the places connected with the Buddha and his journey from Majjhima Nikaya. Nidānakatha has information about the life of Buddha or biography and places and its journey can be traced out through this important text.

“caratha, bhikkhave, cārikaṃ bahujana hitāya bahujana sukhāya lokānu kampāya atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussānaṃ; mā ekena dve agamittha; desetha, bhikkhave, dhammaṃ ādikalyāṇaṃ majjhekalyāṇaṃ pariyosānakalyāṇaṃ sāttaṃ sabyañjanaṃ kevala paripuṇṇaṃ parisuddhaṃ brahmacariyaṃ pakāsetha. Sattā aparajakkhajātikā, assavanatā dhammassa parihāyanti, bhavissanti dhammassa aññātāro.”⁴

³ Kory Goldberg and Michelle Decary, *Along the Buddhist Path: The Meditator’s Companion to the Sacred Sites in India and Nepal*, New Age Books, New Delhi, 2015,pg.82.

⁴ *Dutiya Mārapāsa Sutta, Saṃyutta Nikāya, IV (I).5*

Wherever the *Cetiya* has been constructed on the relics of Buddha, In the *Majjhima Desa* where he preached Dhamma for almost 45 years of his lifetime and later *Cetiya* were built and venerated by Noble Sangha it is called *CetiyaCārikā*. Buddha informed shrines of three types (*cetiya*) which are mentioned in the *Sutta*: Shrine for a relic of the body (*saririka cetiya*), Shrine for a relic of use or wear (*paribhogika cetiya*), and Shrine for a relic of memorial (*uddesika cetiya*).

As we venture into the historical perspectives of Buddhist pilgrimage, which is also termed as *DhammaCārikā* from Pali canonical. We need to trace the origin from the 6th century BCE till 21st century CE, when was it first spoken or coined down by Buddha himself; it dates the record from the *MahāParinibbāna Sutta*. There has been a scientific reason why Buddha emphasis on *DhammaCārikā*, when he uttered about the four places directly, connected to his life. If we understand them appropriately in a simple manner one by one this will be helpful and also provide lot of insight.

This would essentially be useful for walking on the path diligently and completing the Buddhist pilgrimage in a good spirit. Literature records from Pali Tipitaka mentioning the importance or giving description of pilgrimage sites by Buddha during his lifetime and how they transformed in many centuries for 2600 years in India. Pilgrimage simply means to walk on the footsteps as shown by Buddha and which leads towards the historical events occurred in the course of time.

This four places as quoted by **Buddha** in the *MahāParinibbāna Sutta* while interacting with Venerable Ananda, as

"Pubbe bhante disāsu vassaṃ vutthā bhikkhū āgacchanti tathāgataṃ dassanāya. Te mayaṃ labhāma manobhāvanīye bhikkhū dassanāya labhāma payirupāsānāya, bhagavato pana mayaṃ bhante accayena na labhissāma manobhāvanīye bhikkhu dassanāya na labhissāma payirupāsānāyā"ti.

"Formerly, Buddha, on leaving their quarters after the rains, the bhikkhus would set forth to see the Tathagata, and to us there was the gain and benefit of receiving and associating with those very revered bhikkhus who came to have audience with the Blessed One and to wait upon him. But, Lord, after the Blessed One has gone, we shall no longer have that gain and benefit."⁵

⁵ <https://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/dn/dn.16.1-6.vaji.html>

As mentioned in the *Samvejanīyasuttaṃ*

Cattārimāni bhikkhave saddhassa kulaputtassa dassanīyāni samvejanīyāni ḥānāni. Katamāni cattāri? Idha tathāgato jātoti bhikkhave saddhassa kulaputtassa dassanīyaṃ samvejanīyaṃ ḥānaṃ. Idha tathāgato anuttaraṃ sammāsambodhiṃ abhisambuddhoti bhikkhave saddhassa kulaputtassa dassanīyaṃsamvejanīyaṃḥānaṃ.

Idha tathāgato anuttaraṃ dhammacakkaṃ pavattesīti bhikkhave saddhassa kulaputtassa dassanīyaṃ samvejanīyaṃḥānaṃ. Idha tathāgato anupādisesāya nibbānadhātuyā parinibbutoti bhikkhave saddhassa kulaputtassa dassanīyaṃ samvejanīyaṃ ḥānaṃ.

imāni kho bhikkhave cattāri saddhassa kulaputtassa dassanīyāni samvejanīyāniḥānānīti. (Samvejanīyasuttaṃ)

“Bhikkhus, these four places which arouse religious anxiety should be seen by a clansman who has faith. Which four? Bhikkhus, the place where the Thus Gone One was born should be seen with religious anxiety by a clansman who has faith. The place where the Thus Gone One realized the incomparable rightful enlightenment should be seen with religious anxiety by a clansman who has faith. The place where the Thus Gone One rolled the incomparable wheel of the Teaching should be seen with religious anxiety by a clansman who has faith. The place where the Thus Gone One passed into final extinction should be seen with religious anxiety by a clansman who has faith. Bhikkhus, these four places which arouse religious anxiety should be seen by a clansman who has faith.” **Samevejaniya Sutta** (Anguttara Nikaya, Catukkanipato, XIIKessi Vagga, 4.118; PTS Stirring Emotion)⁶

As mentioned in the *Mahāpadāna Sutta*

There are four sacred places of Avijahita in Jambudvīpa which are associated with all Buddha’s of the past and all Buddha’s of Future; Buddha Gaya: attainment of Bodhi, Sarnath: Turning of Wheel of Dhamma, Sankissa: the spot where the enlightened one returns to earth after visiting the world of devas. Sravasti: where maximum rainy spend. The Four Places where not renounced by all of Buddhas are called “Avijahitathana”. There are the Four Places of Avijahitathana.

- (a) Aparajita Throne erupted from the ground for Gotama Buddha. The Aparajita Throne erupted for all of the ground for Gotama Buddha. The Aparajita Thrones erupted for all of Buddhas. The Place was not changed.

⁶ (<https://www.sariputta.com/sutta-pitaka/3663-samvejaniya-sutta/english>) **Samevejaniya Sutta** (Anguttara Nikaya, Catukkanipato, XIIKessi Vagga, 4.118; PTS Stirring Emotion)

- (b) Isipatana, Migadayavana Forest where the First sermon was expounded by the Buddha. (Every Buddha expounded the first sermon in Isipatana Migadayavana Forest. They did not expound other places.)
- (c) After the Buddha expounded the Abhidhamma in Tavatimsa celestial realm, he descended to the human world and printed his first right-foot at the gate of Sankassanagara. (Every Buddha who printed their first right foot at the place after they expounded the Abhidhamma from Tavatimsa celestial realm to the Human world.)
- (d) The Place where is the Buddha's couch with the four foot which was existed in Gandhakuti, the Jetavana Monastery. (All of Buddha's couches with the four foot which was existed in the only Place where the Gotama Buddha's couch with the four foot which existed.) **Mahapadana Sutta: The Great Discourse on the Lineage** (Digh Nikaya 14).⁷

Integration of Wellbeing through Social Development

The important factors here needs to be highlighted as how Buddhist pilgrimage plays a pivotal role for the social and mental development, through the help of core teachings of Buddha which are not been touched upon in understanding the integration. Pilgrimage itself starts with the external journey and later moves towards internal journey of life; it is bridge to connect from outer pilgrimage towards inner pilgrimage. As each religions in the world emphasis or look upon pilgrimage as path to rejuvenate them and here how Buddhist pilgrimage stands apart will be studied for the well-being of humans.

Social development is essential for all mankind as each person, if develops the qualities or reach each stage through right approach will certainly transform the society in a better way. Buddha termed just merely going on pilgrimage is not essential if practice accordingly can develop and gain merits while performing pilgrimage will certainly lead a better life and help to attained the path towards *Nibbana*. *Saddhā*, *Dāna*, *Sīla*, *Khanti*, *Mettā* and *Bhāvanā* are the Spiritual Development factors which adhere to social aspects which can be developed while on Pilgrimage.

The reasons for considering these aspects for spiritual development theory are derived from the teachings of Buddha which can be incorporated in *Dhammacārikā*. So it can help in understanding the relation between knowledge, spiritual and behaviour. These teaching are

⁷ <http://www.mahana.org.mm/en/the-four-places-of-avijahita>

compiled in Pali Tipitaka in the form of *Dasa Pāramitā*, helps in building a good individual and leads towards liberation. Perfections are indeed the authentic tool to lead a better life, and more important while being on pilgrimage and how it can be applied and fulfilled to an extent. The realisation of *Saddhā* towards Tīratna, the knowledge of giving *Dāna*, inculcating truthfulness in developing *Sīla* towards oneself, *Khanti* is the key to success to overcome any obstacles, Meditation in serene environment and sharing *Mettā* to all beings. These factors build a strong spiritual development theory for understanding the right perspective towards pilgrimage and from this the spiritual development is about to happen in each individual.

While on pilgrimage needs to cultivate devotion towards the Triple Gem: Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha. Embracing these as centres of learning for the refuge means finding inspiration and protection in the quality and process of enlightenment. Without a sense of confidence and protection, one will find it difficult to plumb the depths of the mind. Taking refuge in the Buddha does not imply that the Buddha is a saviour or will extinguish one's suffering. The word „Buddha“ is a title that means „awakened person“, or „one who personifies being awake.“ When we take refuge in the Buddha, we are taking refuge in the qualities acquired by the Buddha, and not in the person himself.

However, having respect for the person is also important, as the Buddha was the one who rediscovered and then compassionately shared this path of liberation with us. Taking refuge in, and having respect for the Buddha helps provide inspiration for developing the qualities of enlightenment in ourselves. It is said that all beings have the potential for enlightenment. This potential however, needs to be cultivated. By taking shelter in the enlightenment of the Buddha, we strengthen the process of developing our own enlightenment. When we explore the sacred sites with a mind committed to awareness and equanimity, every moment becomes an opportunity to achieve liberation

Generosity (*Dāna*) in this sense can be defined as the donation of something that belongs to a person out of an attitude of either devotional respect or altruistic helpfulness with the belief in the fruits of Kamma. Items of offerings such as food, drinks, raiment's etc. are also designated as *Dāna*.

Although *Sīla* is a single concept it is bifurcated as that of the layman (*gahattha*) and of the monk (*pabbajita*). The *Sīla* of both categories has another two fold division as morality comprising performance (*caritta Sīla*) and that comprising avoidance (*varitta Sīla*) referring

respectively to what should be performed and how should be performed and what should be avoided in the ethical sense. Of these two the former, the positive aspect, is more important than the latter. Patience is an excellent quality praised by the Buddha's and other great beings. It is not the quality of suffering or complacently in silence without attempting to extricate oneself from one's difficulties. What patience implies as a virtue and a *Pāramitā* is not becoming confounded and perplexed in the face of difficulties and obstructions.

Mātā yathā niyaṃ puttāṃ, āyusā eka-puttamanurakkhe; evampi sabba bhūtesu, mānasā bhāṅṅe aparimāṇāṃ.

Just as a mother would risk her life to protect her only child; similarly, one should cultivate boundless love towards all beings. Sutta Nipāta 149 (Metta-sutta).

As a journey through the unfamiliar, a knowledgeable and compassionate guide is very helpful to integrate the cultural and spiritual experience into an enlarged awareness of the Buddha Dhamma and integrate with wellbeing

Conclusion

To conclude Buddhist pilgrimage integrates for the well-being social development it emphasizes the real life of today's contemporary world which we always neglect and rather not adhere in the pivotal role. Buddha has given answers to all our questions and pilgrimage to unearth plenty of answers if we practice and implement during the course of time. Each religion gives importance to pilgrimage from understanding the true factors and values which a human inculcates when he or she transforms from outer to inner self-realisation. Educating the masses related to the objective of Pilgrimage which was defined by Buddha himself, stating seeing the Buddha means seeing the Dhamma and the Sangha who are involved in preserving these places. Buddha wanted these holy sites to be a base for physical seeing; inculcating the teachings and making this base Sangha should develop the mental aspects and get them liberated from samsara. This pilgrimage will develop the spiritual aspect to overcome the greed, envy and illusion or termed as raga, dosa, moha.

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DHARMIKA PRANIDHI
UNIVERSITY OF INDONESIA/ NALANDA COLLEGE
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE BUDDHISM: INTEGRATING WITH
MODERN SCIENCE TO MENTAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
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The Implication of Buddhism on Social-Emotional Buddhist Woman

Abstract

Society has been changing rapidly during 2020 as the COVID 19 pandemic was attacked in an entire human's life. Health, education, politics, economics and all the aspects have been changing. Religion as a tool of protection is being reminded. Praying, doing kindness and thinking back all the deeds had been done. Where did it begin? This would be back as to how humans have been learning about their own beliefs. Buddhism as a religion had extraordinary lessons about life, how to learn and live in the present moment. Modern science has been taking a big part during this present moment and how it affects the mental and social development of Buddhists. The focus of this paper will be the writer as a woman who has multiple jobs, as a woman herself, as a wife, as a parent, as a housewife, as an educator, as a college student and a child. These multiple burdens will be examined by gender and Buddhism perspectives, how the modern science on her life and how far the implication to the mental and social development throughout the year of 2020. First of this paper would tell about a woman herself in handling the changing of a pandemic. The strategies and experiences during pandemic, how to manage jobs at the same time and what were the obstacles with gender perspectives. Second, how Buddhism and modern science help and become tools handling the pandemic. Buddhism had a big part of the subject as meditation, the realization of the present moment, and karma law being the main thoughts. Third, how the pandemic had affected mental and social development and the relation with Buddhism. This chapter is about the theory of social-emotional learning including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Each of these criteria will be examined by the subject who had practiced and became Buddhist. The purpose of this writing is to explain the great idea that Buddhism has an invisible yet magnificent effect on our daily life. The other main purpose is to create empathy and awareness for a woman who is most likely always taking care of her family and herself. This would encourage most women to take care of their mental development according to dharma.

The pandemic of COVID-19 like a huge attack on human life. The rapidity of *anicca* couldn't be avoided, without any excuse most especially a woman. Women with various roles in social construction, being a wife, mother, child or for themselves to actualize themselves also have multiple burdens, without exception the writer himself as a Buddhist. The conditions of domestic quarantine, support and assignment of various responsibilities are carried out in the same place, at the same time and on non-stop tasks. It is unimaginable to see various reports

about the impact of women during the pandemic, in the form of pregnancy, domestic violence, female workers experiencing termination of employment, as well as domestic burdens carried out while working from home. We can imagine how women should be able to overcome these various things and also maintain their own health, including mental health. Religion becomes a rebuttal and a foundation that strengthens people in living their daily lives with the hope that they can always do good. As a Buddhist, I am very grateful for the various teachings of Buddhism that are visible but feel so powerful to train ourselves to be able to maintain health, especially mental health.

The Woman Burdens in Pandemic

Women as explained can have various roles, both being mothers, wives, workers, children and themselves in carrying out their daily routines. If it is said that women who have these roles are said to be superwomen. Whereas what is not realized is the increasing burden of life which erodes the psychological state of women becoming tired, especially not thinking about their personal needs to improve their inner condition, let alone practising religious teachings.

Motherhood.

The very large role of the mother in the development of her child is the main benchmark in childcare. The function of the mother is no longer only as a biological function of giving birth and breastfeeding but also developing into a social function that must be cared for. Change from nature and nurture. However, if it is examined more deeply, the function of raising children socially also requires the role of the father as a model of balanced parenting. A feminist gender, Nancy Chodorow advocates the existence of dual parenting as a way to lift women's oppression in childcare, no longer motherhood but parenthood, the contribution of men as a father is must be applied in parenting.

"Double parenting will completely destroy the sex division of labour. Men will be required to spend time doing fathering just as women spend time on mothering and women will be required to work together with men in the world of work. " (Tong: 214).

The role of fathers in parenting and having a good impact on children's development Charlie Lewis and Michael E Lamb in their journal entitled Parenting and the different ways it can affect children's lives: research evidence reveals the results of their research that

"Paternal involvement: The warmth of men's relationships. with their children appears greater when they have good relationships with the mothers, when the home is 'well-organized, and when the family engages in regular, shared activities. One study found children's developmental progress was delayed when their mothers returned to work before they were 18 months old, but not when fathers were highly involved in child care. " (Utting: 7).

There is no doubt that if mothers and fathers can work together in parenting, it will certainly ease women's work. This strategy needs to be applied and can be effective during a pandemic.

Workers.

Today's female workers have become commonplace, most of whom consider women to work to get additional income because the main thing is men who work. Women choose to work not only to gain economic stability in the family, but in my opinion, personally, this is a way for them to benefit others, namely being an educator. During the pandemic, both men and women work from home, if a woman is added with domestic work in taking care of household needs, won't that be a double burden? What about the boy who doesn't help? Domestic work is always delegated to women because of the social construction where women cook, clean, wash and do other domestic things. Even though both men and women should do these jobs. Working outside the domestic sphere can also be done by women even though society thinks that this is only an addition to the family economy. On a deeper level, the means of working outside the domestic sphere is an alternative for women to actualize themselves. *"Women can build themselves up because there is no essence of eternal femininity that creates a ready-made ideal for them."* (Tong: 273) Simone Beauvoir, an existentialist feminist, revealed that women can be working women, intellectuals and also women can work to achieve the socialist transformation of society. But during a pandemic when all public and domestic work is in one place at the same time, You can imagine the position of women who have all these responsibilities. It is inevitable that when working in a video conference, women turn off the video to bathe children or turn off the sound for just cooking. As a result, women will be considered unprofessional individuals. Second, how Buddhism and modern science help and become tools handling the pandemic situation.

Interconnected Between Awareness and Modern Science

In dealing with various workloads during a pandemic, women will always be given various choices that can have further impacts. The impact from yourself directly and with other family members. The most important thing that has always been said by Buddha is about awareness.

Awareness

Self-awareness, especially to be more introspective, needs to be trained at this time. Meditating by sitting for one hour is not imaginably difficult to do because you have to and are ready to do domestic work. Strategies in implementing meditation are also carried out by concentrating during the activities carried out. Having awareness of all activities by observing the movements of the body, mind and the various sensations that arise. This awareness will foster thoughtful action. In the Pali language, the term sati is from the word 'sar' which means remembering, then Sati can be translated as awareness or remembrance. In the Satipatthana Sutta (the four basic foundations of mindfulness) there are contemplations that must be done in mindfulness Buddhism meditation, namely: contemplation of the body (kayanupassana), contemplation of feelings (vedananupassana), contemplation of the mind (cittanupassana), and contemplation of Buddhism or dhamma (dhammanupassana) (Satipatthana Sutta, Majjhima Nikaya 10).

These four reflections are carried out simultaneously with carrying out various domestic tasks. Especially to yourself, family and others. This awareness begins with paying attention to the needs of oneself, family and others with a description of the Buddha's teachings based on the Bhaddekaratta sutta as follows.

Atitam nanvagametta, nappikankhe anagatam

Yadatitam pahinam tam, appattanca anagatam

"We shouldn't reminisce about something that has passed, and shouldn't hope for something to come. The things that have passed are the things that have been past, and the things that will come are things that have not arrived. " (Bhadderakatta sutta, Majjhima Nikaya 131)

Fulfilling one's own needs, especially for eating, cleaning up and preparing various teaching needs, needs to be done in order to carry out various responsibilities to children, husbands and other jobs.

"Having traversed all over with a thought, a person does not find anywhere more dear to him than himself. Likewise, for everyone, he himself is most cherished; Therefore, he who cherishes himself should not harm others. " (Mallikāsutta SN.3.8). The Sigalovada Sutta is also a reference for householders to carry out their obligations according to their respective portions. The wife's obligation to her husband, the husband's obligation to the wife, the parent's obligation to the child, and the child's obligation to the parent. By making the Sigalovada Sutta a guideline for daily life, it means that we are fully present for the family, so that we get a valuable lesson, namely when we are with loved ones who are completely present, not what we need.

Meanwhile, to contribute to others, both in the work of Kāladānasutta AN.5.36 (providing assistance on time), explain what assistance is provided on time? (1) Someone gives a gift to a guest. (2) Someone gives a gift to someone who is travelling. (3) Someone gives gifts to patients. (4) Someone gives gifts during times of famine disaster. (5) Someone offers the harvest and the first fruit to the noble. Although the various activities carried out were very busy, these various gifts were of course done virtually. Both to students who are taught and to members of the organization as well as every opportunity that arises. It is inevitable to get around these things with the help of various sophisticated technologies, such as computers,

Interdependence

The development of modern science is in line with Buddhist teachings. The laws of action and reaction that we often study in physics are known as the laws of cause and effect. *"As a seed is sown, that is the fruit which will be reaped; the virtue maker will reap goodness, the evil maker will reap evil. "* (Samyuta Nikaya 1,293). It is the same with Avatamsaka Sutra chapter 37: "Like billions of planets, the universe is not formed by one condition alone, not by (only) one phenomenon - the universe can be formed by various causes and countless conditions." the same

as modern science regarding the phenomena of interdependence, interconnection and interpenetration. There is not a single phenomenon that occurs spontaneously without any cause and relationship related to other things.

The use of technology in everyday life is closely related to the concept of consciousness as a Buddhist guideline for activity. The reality is that using technology is excellent awareness training. From the use of technology, we must be aware of the purpose of its use, how to use it and the optimal benefits for completing tasks. No wonder the use of technology can also shift the focus that should be done. The appearance of advertisements, music, videos that interfere with work can slow down activities that could otherwise be completed. Moreover, karma plays a role in this. As we use technology to communicate, fingers and thumbs work together with the mind to comment, speaking on video calls automatically. If it is not based on awareness, it could create a bad Kamma.

Third, how the pandemic had affected mental and social development and the relation with Buddhism.

Applying The Social Emotional Learning with Buddhism Perspective

Social-emotional learning was introduced by an organization named Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) in Chicago, United States. This curriculum is used worldwide including in Indonesia. As a teacher, I have observed this curriculum and made it for my thesis topic in 2016. This curriculum is actually very linear to Buddhism and very useful to be used during this pandemic. Therefore, I also manage this curriculum in my daily life.

CASEL's Definition of SEL (2020 Update):

"Social and emotional learning (SEL) is an integral part of education and human development. SEL is the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions." CASEL's framework identifies five core competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making that will explain as follows.

Self-Awareness

The abilities to understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behaviour across contexts. This includes capacities to recognize one's strengths and limitations with a well-grounded sense of confidence and purpose. Such as:

- Integrating personal and social identities
- Identifying personal, cultural, and linguistic assets
- Identifying one's emotions

- Demonstrating honesty and integrity
- Linking feelings, values, and thoughts
- Examining prejudices and biases
- Experiencing self-efficacy
- Having a growth mindset
- Developing interests and a sense of purpose

This competency is being used daily, every second and every thought to be aware. This is in line with Buddhism as meditation and the right concentration. To be able to realize the moment is time-consuming training. But when we are aware of the things that surround us, especially to our own self, it becomes clear to do and think about the activities, obligations to be done. Self-awareness is the key to really manage our self. Breathing in breathing out, have a little moment to be aware.

Self-Management

The ability to manage one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviour effectively in different situations and to achieve goals and aspirations. This includes the capacities to delay gratification, manage stress, and feel motivation & agency to accomplish personal/collective goals. Such as: •

Managing one's emotions

- Identifying and using stress-management strategies
- Exhibiting self-discipline and self-motivation
- Personal and collective goals
- Using planning and organizational skills
- Showing the courage to take initiative
- Demonstrating personal and collective agency

Self-management is the next step to show what are the feelings we have. I use technology to set up reminders for my teaching schedule. I also manage to wake up earlier and do the things I need to be done before doing the teaching. It's like the clock is my best friend because I always look at it.

Social Awareness

The abilities to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, & contexts. This includes the capacity to feel compassion for others, understand broader historical and social norms for behaviour in different settings, and recognize family, school, and community resources and support. Such as:

- Taking others' perspectives
- Recognizing strengths in others
- Demonstrating empathy and compassion
- Showing concern for the feelings of others
- Understanding and expressing gratitude
- Identifying diverse social norms, including unjust ones
- Recognizing situational demands and opportunities

- Understanding the influences of organizations/systems on behaviour

Staying at home as a mom, wife, teacher, students will have a lot of responsibilities to take care of. In a day, there will be many schedules to be followed such as meetings in school, teaching, planning the teachings, learning, helping daughter with her school, participating in organizations, joining the online puja. These activities definitely have connections to other persons. Of course, I teach primary until college students. I am always surrounded by my daughter who is always in my sight at all times. This social offline and online awareness needs to be aware of, as I try to be kind and really be aware of the feelings, though that is constantly changing.

Relationship Skills

The abilities to establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships and to effectively navigate settings with diverse individuals and groups. This includes the capacities to communicate clearly, listen actively, cooperate, work collaboratively to problem solve and negotiate conflict constructively, navigate settings with differing social and cultural demands and opportunities, provide leadership, and seek or offer help when needed. Such as:

- Communicating effectively
- Developing positive relationships
- Demonstrating cultural competency
- Practicing teamwork and collaborative problem-solving
- Resolving conflicts constructively
- Resisting negative social pressure
- Showing leadership in groups
- Seeking or offering support and help when needed
- Standing up for the rights of others

As a wife I communicate to my husband for the routines that need to be done for a day. I will contact him to help me do the chores at home. As a mom, I take care of my four years old daughter as she is able to speak and listen to me attentively. Her wonder and random actions are cheering me up. We had a good relationship. The family becomes the first and priority to build good relationships as they are always near us, especially during this pandemic time. As the teacher, co workers, using social media as the technology will be helpful, but again always be mindful for the words to be sent. It is not an easy thing when a problem occurs. As miscommunication happened at the time. The things that I try to prevent is to talk mindfully, explain step by step. Again, Buddhism taught me a lot about being kind, aware, and communicating effectively.

Responsible Decision-Making

The abilities to make caring and constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions across diverse situations. This includes the capacity to consider ethical standards and safety concerns, and to evaluate the benefits and consequences of various actions for personal, social, and collective well-being.

Such as:

- Demonstrating curiosity and open-mindedness
- Identifying solutions for personal and social problems
- Learning to make a reasoned judgment after analyzing information, data, facts • Anticipating and evaluating the consequences of one's actions
- Recognizing how critical thinking skills are useful both inside & outside of school • Reflecting on one's role to promote personal, family, and community well-being • Evaluating personal, interpersonal, community, and institutional impacts This ability relates to all those things, the decision making. Anytime we decide something it means we have the responsibility for it. It is the same as the karma law. Any karma that we've done always has consequences either small, big or none. These decisions are responsibilities for our life.

Conclusion

Upasika, the laywoman in Buddhism has many gender roles in her daily life. As a woman, as a wife, as a mother, as a worker and a daughter. Their roles had great impact during this pandemic time as the burdens became one place and at the same time. Having a great understanding of Buddhism helps a woman to do her daily life. Realize the changing of situation, realize there is always a source for things and there is cause and effect law that Buddhism thought to optimize the deed. Relate to the social emotional learning, by being aware and starting by having self awareness, self management, to take care of herself. Next, to improve the social awareness and create the relationship skills to have a kalyanamitta. Responsible for decision making is really the mirror for the karma law. This article is to help understand the situation that many people are facing. It might help to open minds for other people to start to have tolerance, start to be compassionate and understand laywomen who have many burdens. For the laywomen, Buddhism is really great teachings and we should always be grateful, improve the better version of ourselves and be aware in every situation.

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Modernism and Buddhist therapy

Dr. Vivek Sharma
Academic-Coordinator, Kathua Campus
Department of Buddhist Studies
University of Jammu, Jammu

The people of modern time are disturbed by various problems of daily life; some are due to official work, household life and so on. While some people can not take stress in life and committed suicide. So Buddhist therapy is very essential for every human being. Buddhism includes an analysis of human psychology, emotion, cognition, behavior and motivation in conjunction with therapy practices. Buddhist psychology is embedded within the greater Buddhist ethics and doctrine and its psychological terminology is colored ethical overtones. Buddhist psychology has two therapy goals: the healthy and virtuous life of a householder, and thus the last path to reach the goal of nirvana, the whole cessation of dissatisfaction and suffering.

According to Buddha whereas initially unreliable, one's mind is often trained, calmed and cultivated, so on to make introspection a refined and reliable method. This methodology is that the foundation for the personal insight into the character of the mind, the Buddha is said to have achieved. While introspection is a key feature of the Buddhist method; scrutiny of a person's behavior is also important.

Buddhism and Therapy are intensely well-matched and have encouraged scholars to positively inspect both the meditative practice and Buddhist thoughts about the individual mind. Several academicians and scholars have taken up this challenge in modern times. We will examine that how some of the basic Buddhists is claimed about the human mind holding up. How the techniques of Buddhist therapy can give benefit all people for happiness and peace, and how to apply the Buddhist principles, which can make useful to all human beings.

The proposed research paper will elaborate on these points in detail.

Keywords: Modernism, Buddhist therapy, Mind, Meditation, Ethics

Gautam Buddha has served his full life for the welfare of people after attaining enlightenment at the age of thirty-five. He gave various discourses and techniques for staying a peaceful and happy life. Whereby, this form of therapy was considered to be consistent with what was taught by the Buddha 2500 years ago, as the path to ending suffering at its origin,

while Buddhist therapy may be used in the modern time to remove all types of tension, worry and mood disorder.

Siddhártha Gautam was born in a royal family, spent his childhood and youth as a prince. All ease and comforts available at that time were easily available to him. However, worldly attractions could not deter him from taking the course of homelessness. He got married to a beautiful girl Yaśodhará and got a son-Ráhula as well her, but to no avail. He set out in search of some lasting answer to the perennial problem of ‘suffering’ that affects every being. His severe austerity for six long years ultimately yielded the desired fruit in the form of realization of the four noble truths; which he made face to face at the age of 35 at Bodhgaya. Now he became the perfect enlightened one.

Though the Buddha stayed at Bodhgaya itself for seven weeks, enjoying the bliss of his knowledge, keeping in mind the well being of all the beings, he left for Sarnath, where he sermonized for the first occasion to his five friends, who had abandoned him at the time of his accepting the sweet rice offered by Sujátá.

When the number of his disciple rose to 60 and all became arhats, the Buddha dispatched them in different directions with the clear-cut instruction of spreading his message for the welfare of more and more people and even deities.

“Caratha,bhikkave,Cárikam bahujanahitáya bahujana-sukháya lokánukampáya attháya hitáya sukháya devamanussánam.”¹

In brief, the Buddha fixed up the mission of his life at the ‘well-being’ of others.

This is right that the Buddha organized an unparalleled system of missionary activity.

However, Buddhist philosophy is not an evidence- based therapy modality, but several of its themes have been utilized in therapy. Practical models - like meditation and mindfulness

techniques - have been modified by therapists to help people experiencing mind healthiness challenges.

While the Buddha found the root of misery to be within the mind. He has given a therapy whereby the common mentality may be transcended and suffering overcome. Which was, in fact, the First Sermon of Gautama Buddha.

The four noble truths: (Buddha's diagnose of human ill)

1. There is suffering. (Dukkha: bad state of mind)
2. There is a cause of suffering. (*duḥkha-samudaya* Craving, lust, attachment, selfishness)
3. There is a destruction of suffering (*duḥkha-nirodha* A cure is possible, but not easy)
4. There is a way leading to the destruction of suffering. (*duḥkha-nirodha-gāminī-pratipad*, Sila: Ethics, Samadhi: Pure mind, Prajna: wisdom)

According to the First Noble Truth, birth is suffering, old age is suffering, death is suffering, sorrow, grieving, dejection, and despair are sufferings. Contact with unpleasant things is suffering; not getting what you want is also suffering. In short, the five aggregates, that is to say, mind and body are suffering.

The Second Noble Truth states that there is a cause of suffering, and the cause is Desire. Furthermore, there are three types of Desire, such as (a) Sensual desire, (2) Mundane desire (Worldly desire), and (c) Supra-mundane desire.

1. Sensual desire: this type of desire is a desire for things that we can realize through five sense objects, such as sight (eye), hearing (ear), feeling (skin), taste (tongue), and smell (nose). Examples include: desire for certain yummy food, or sounds, desire for affectionate touch, attractive sites and smells, wanting to have an exquisite meal, and so on

2. Mundane desire: This is the desire for something or someone in this world. For example, the desire to be wealthy, muscular, better at something, and so forth.

3. Supra-Mundane Desire: This is the desire for something, which is beyond this world, viz. heaven, good rebirth, et cetera

The Third Noble Truth says that the destruction or cessation of the cause that is responsible for suffering, and that cause is Desire. In other words, if a person wants to be free from suffering, then he or she has to destroy the desire. Once the Buddha himself was asked what his teaching was, he said that it was whatever led to the true cessation of misery. Buddhism, therefore, is also, and maybe we could say mainly a therapy. The Buddha perceived the universality of sorrow and prescribed therapy for this universal sickness of humanity. The uppermost conceivable happiness, according to the Buddha, is Nibbána, which is the total extinction of misery.

The Fourth Noble Truth is a path leading to the destruction of suffering. The Path is the prescription to follow for the destruction of suffering. This path is called the Noble Eightfold Path. The Eightfold Path is enumerated below:

1. *Right View (Samma ditthi)*, An understanding or view of the nature of things in the world as they truly are. In particular, one should understand the first three Noble Truths: (a) the nature of suffering, (b) the cause of suffering and (c) the cessation of suffering.

2. *Right Determination (Samma sankappa)*, Making confident or firm our thoughts and intentions toward others and ourselves are meant to help and support.

3. *Right Speech (Samma vaca)*, Always communicate to promote harmony and understanding and avoid any harmful communication

4. *Right Action* (Samma kammanta) Our actions promotes moral and honorable conduct
5. *Right Livelihood* (*Samma ajiva*), The work you do in the world must not harm anyone or anything or compromise any of the precepts
6. *Right Effort* (*Samma vayama*), Master your thoughts to promote loving-kindness and abolish negativity
7. *Right Mindfulness* (Samma sati), Awareness of all activities in the body and surroundings that are tangible and intangible.
8. *Right Concentration* (Samma Samadhi), In association with meditation and involvement in a state of full meditative absorption.

Following this path, that is to say, the Eightfold Path, we can make our minds pure and free from suffering. Our mind is simply influenced by negative thoughts like anger, greed, envy, attachment, and the likes. It is through proper training, which is the Eightfold Path that we can eradicate negativity in thought and action.

He also preached that the extreme of luxury and extreme of self tortures in the name of purifying both are harmful to the welfare and progress of human beings. Of course, these are unavoidable in the practical and day-to-day life of mankind, yet a person desirous of welfare and happiness should follow the middle path between these two extremes².

In the Saṅgutta Nikāya is found an interesting interpretation of the dependent origination (*paticca samuppāda*) in terms of happiness. The Buddha says:

Suffering leads to self-confidence (*saddhā*); Self-confidence to ecstasy (*pāmojja*);
 ecstasy to joy (*pīti*); joy to tranquillity (*passaddhi*); tranquillity to happiness (*sukha*); happiness to concentration (*samādhi*); concentration to knowledge and vision of things as they truly are (*yathābhūta-ñāṇadassana*); the knowledge and vision of things as they truly are to repulsion

(*nibbidā*); repulsion to non-attachment (*virāga*); non-attachment to deliverance (*vimutti*); deliverance to the extinction of passions (*taṇhakkhaya*); i.e., to arahantship³. This significant way, evidently indicates how misery may lead to happiness and finally to sainthood.

Additionally, the Eight-Fold Path has been again reorganized into the Triple Path, such as the *Sīla*, (Right Conduct), *Samādhi* (Right Concentration), and *Prajñāa* (Right Wisdom). According to the categorize of development, morality, concentration, and wisdom are the three stages on the grand highway that leads to Nibbána.

These three stages are personified in the attractive ancient verse:

*“Sabba pāpassa akaranam,
kusalassa ūpasampadā,
sacitta pariyo dapanam
etam Buddhāna sāsanaṃ”*⁴

To cease from all evil

To cultivate good

To purify one’s mind

This is the advice of all the Buddha.

The Buddha spent his whole life, till his last breath, moving on foot from village to village, from town to town and from one Janapada to another for the welfare and happiness of mankind: ‘bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya.’⁵ His sole aim was to remove bane and sorrow from the life of beings and make them sorrow-free--- ‘Sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhitattā.’⁶

The Buddha’s *Dhamma*, *Pāramī* or *Pāramitā* is a precise way of benefitting other beings. This may be seen which *Dasapāramitā* or ten *Pāramī* is the Buddhist therapy for universal compassion and worldwide well-being.

According to Dhammapāla, *Pāramī* is the merits such as charity, ethics, and so on, that is not ruined by desire, arrogance, and wrong views, and are collected by compassion and competent means⁷.

These are ten paramīs given as under :

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Generosity (<i>dāna</i>), | 2. Virtue (<i>sīla</i>), |
| 3. Renunciation (<i>nekkhamma</i>), | 4. Wisdom (<i>pañña</i>), |
| 5. Energy (<i>virīya</i>), | 6. Patience (<i>khanti</i>), |
| 7. Truthfulness (<i>sacca</i>), | 8. Determination (<i>adiṭṭhana</i>), |
| 9. Lovingkindness (<i>metta</i>), | 10. Equanimity (<i>upekkha</i>). |

The total number of *Pāramī* is dissimilar in various Buddhist traditions. It has been renowned that the number is commonly considered to be ten in the *Pāli* literature of the *Theravāda* school. However, in *Sanskrit* sources of the *Mahayāna* school, that is given at six *pāramīs*. This is no doubt which the *Pāramī* practicing leads to the Buddhahood or the liberation from misery, therefore, the practices are all very much highlighted in Buddhism is universal. Possibly, in the sense of right here and right now, ten *Pāramīs* guide humans to build global well-being.

Buddhist meditation is directly touching people's minds and hearts, leading to a state of happiness and peacefulness, that can be benefitted by own experience by practice. There are two main types of Buddhist meditation: *vipassanā* (insight) and *Samatha* (tranquility) common practices today. Tranquillity meditation has been taught in many Indian traditions as a way of helping individuals to calm down the mind and develop an attitude of equanimity. Insight meditation or more popularly referred to today as a mindfulness practice is unique to Buddhism⁸. Maybe the mainly succinct way of summarizing the qualities needed for

awakening/enlightenment is as: samatha means calm, peace, tranquillity and vipassanā means insight. It is believed that both samatha and vipassanā are an aspect of liberating knowledge:

If samatha is cultivated, the heart and mind (Citta) are developed, that leads to the abandonment of attachment and lusting after (rāga); if vipassanā is cultivated, wisdom (paññā) is developed, that leads to abandonment of spiritual ignorance.

Here one sees that the spiritual path involves work on both affective and cognitive aspects of the mind's attachment rooted emotional reactions for and against things, and how the individual sees and understands things. These are interrelated, for emotional turbulence makes it difficult to see clearly, and confusion and misperception feed emotional turbulence. Functioning together, samatha and vipassanā bring about a state in which direct knowledge can arise in a tranquil, serene, clear, peaceful mind

The mindfulness meditation as taught by the Buddha in his Discourse of Satipaṭṭhāna and provides a very simple and direct way. Whereby the most thorough and effective method for training and developing the mind and deliverance from lobha (greed), dosa (hatred), and moha (delusion).

The term sattipaṭṭhāna should appropriately be understood as a compound of sati, mindfulness or awareness and upaṭṭhāna⁹ with u of the latter term dropped by vowel elision. The Pāli term *upaṭṭhāna* literally means “placing near”, as well as in the current context refers to a particular way of “being present” and the “attending” to something with mindfulness. *Satipaṭṭhāna* can be interpreted as “presence of mindfulness” or as “attending with mindfulness”¹⁰

The difficulty with the commentarial clarification is that, instead of understanding *satipaṭṭhāna* as a particular attitude of being aware, *satipaṭṭhāna* becomes a “foundation” of mindfulness, the “cause” for the establishment of *sati*.

Therefore “foundation of mindfulness” would be the depiction that best captures the original meaning. The four foundations of mindfulness structure a complete system of meditation practice for the development of mindfulness and insight. The four foundations of mindfulness (*cattaro satipaṭṭhāna*) are given as under:

1. Kāyanupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna the foundation of mindfulness in contemplation of the body.
2. Vedanānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna, the foundation of mindfulness of contemplation of the feelings
3. Cittanupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna, the foundation of mindfulness of contemplation of the consciousness.
4. Dhammānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna, the foundation of mindfulness of contemplation of the mental object

The practice and study of mindfulness meditation, which was running from the Buddha period, now has intervened as a cure in mainstream medicine. It is being studied in universities and colleges and also used within hospitals. Modern scientists have revealed the power of mental culture and mindfulness in the art of living a worry-free life and healthy life. Mindfulness-based therapy is being used to treat patients and has given some positive results.

The mind is an indication of thoughts and actions¹¹, tare motivated by craving (*tanha*) of wholesome, and unwholesome; sexual driven (*rāga*), angrily driven (*dosa*), and deluded driven

(*moha*)¹² The mind is an indication of thoughts and actions, that are mostly motivated by craving of wholesome, and unwholesome; sexual driven, annoyed driven, and deluded driven.

Padmasiri de Silva expresses about the mind that “In one sense, everyone is subject to ‘mental disease’, except the arhants who have destroyed the *āsavas*”¹³.

Hence, *Mahasatipatthanasutta* offers four foundations of mindfulness as a therapy for mental illness and also for complete psychological liberation, *Nibbana*.

There are monks, this one way for the purification of beings, for the overcoming unhappiness and misery, for the disappearance of pain and sadness, for the gaining of the right path, for the realization of Nibbana- that is to say the four foundations of mindfulness¹⁴.

The four Brahmavihāra-bhāvanās have been propagated by the Gautam Buddha along with other Kammaṭṭhānas for the growth of the Mind-culture and acquiring Jhānas, (Absorption) leading to the realization of liberality i.e. Nibbāna. Hence the four Brahmavihāras are attached with cetovimutti (freedom of mind) to real appamāna-cetovimutti (freedom of mind through infinitude) e.g. Mettā-cetovimutti, Karuṇā-cetovimutti, Muditā-cetovimutti and Upekkhā – cetovimutti¹⁵.

Brahmavihāras is the subject of meditation. They are four in number as follows¹⁶:

- (i) Mettā (loving-kindness): Contemplation of loving-kindness and compassion or universal benevolence towards every sentient being, praying: “May all beings be happy.”
- (ii) Karuṇā (compassion or Pity): Contemplation of compassion, that is Pity for and sympathy for those who are suffering, praying in mind that "May all beings be free from misery and sufferings."

(iii) *Muditā* (sympathetic joy): Contemplation of feeling pleasure with others in their happiness and prosperity praying in mind that they "May continue to be happy and prosperous as at present without diminution"

(iv) *Upekkhā* (mental equilibrium): Contemplation on remaining indifferent with a feeling of equanimity to the state of condition of all beings, bearing an impartial attitude that things happen according to one's *Kamma* that has been committed.

The *Brahma-vihāra* practices explicate in detail in the *Visuddhimagga* written in the 5th century A.D. by the great Pāli scholar and commentator *Buddhaghosa*¹⁷.

These virtues are also highly regarded by Buddhists as a powerful therapy to these negative mental states, like greed, anger, arrogance and so on.

Buddhism as a religious institution of mental healing in modern times can be used therapeutical techniques, mindfulness meditation and through the teachings. Which assist not only in healing mental illness; however, it improves a qualitative livelihood as well. Besides, the Buddhist philosophies of *Dharma* lead the community to accurate attitudes and helpful thoughts by managing badly accessing emotions. The community would be gained with a moral standard by the bond to Buddhism as a spiritual path or religious institution.

Buddhist therapy in modern times can successfully improve your life by helping you to reduce the anxiety in your life, identify and change basic thought and behavioral patterns that contribute to your struggles, and provide you with strategies to reduce uneasiness, and restore an overall sense of peace. Lastly, we can say that Buddhist therapy can play an important role in modern times to overcome the problem of the day-to-day routine life of all people. If the entire people go on by following the path of the teachings which has been taught by *Gautama Buddha*.

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