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**The 8<sup>th</sup> National and the 7<sup>th</sup> International Seminar  
26 -27 February 2022**

*"Goodness, Beauty and Truth :  
Contemporary Reflections and Interpretations"*

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## Notification of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University

No. **1655** /B.E. 2564 (2021)

**Subject:** The appointment of the knowledgeable people as the Peer Reviewers for academic papers in the 7<sup>th</sup> MCU International Seminar on the Theme: **“Goodness, Beauty, and Truth: Contemporary Reflections and Interpretations”**

In order to well make an arrangement of the 7<sup>th</sup> International Seminar on the theme: **“Goodness, Beauty, and Truth: Contemporary Reflections and Interpretations”** to reach efficiently the objectives and policy of the University.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phra Dhamwacharabundit'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'P'.

(Most Ven. Prof. Dr. Phra Dhamwacharabundit)  
Rector, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University

## Preface

This volume I of the academic papers has been brought to existence as the result of the 8<sup>th</sup> National and the 7<sup>th</sup> International Seminar which was officially organized by Graduate School and MCU Nakhon Ratchasima Campus, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Thailand, under the main theme entitled “Goodness, Beauty and Truth: Contemporary Reflections and Interpretations”. In this seminar, there were many researchers, scholars and students who came to present their papers. Those papers, after revision and correction made by the owner according to the commentators’ comments, were academically chosen by the Seminar Committees to publish through the proceedings whereby its academic values would be expected. So, it was remarkably brought the great honour to the Graduate School and MCU Nakhon Ratchasima Campus.

However, there were some minor problems such as different format of reference and bibliography which need to be rewritten, but they remain unsolved due to short periods of time in making it available. In this matter, the Seminar Committees were of the view that the existing problems can be solved if more time is given, if so, this volume I would never be published. We really understand that those who presented the papers really want to make use of their papers. Therefore, we decided to get it timely done so as maintain the given time and the urgent need of the owners.

Last but not the least; we take this opportunity to express our sincere thank to those researchers, scholars and students whose participations have brought the academic values to the 8<sup>th</sup> National and the 7<sup>th</sup> International Seminar, without them, such a great event would never been brought to light.

Best Wishes from

*Editor in Chief: Assoc.Prof. Dr. Phramaha Somboon Vutthikaro*

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# Metaphysical Concept of Islamic Aesthetics and Its Significance in Contemporary Era

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## Abstract

This paper will focus on the concept of beauty in Islam and the metaphysical doctrine of Islamic Aesthetics. Islamic Aesthetics has its transcendental significance. God is the source of every forms of art through the revelation of Weltanschauung. Islam considers beauty to be a divine quality and teaches that God loves beauty. Therefore, the Muslim Artists, poets and craft-workers etc. tried to create every art form under spiritual inspiration. Thus, innumerable qualities have emerged from Islamic spirituality-oriented aesthetics and have manifested themselves over the ages in many different climes in various traditional arts of Islam from poetry to literature and music to architecture. The present paper will briefly discuss the metaphysical concept of Islamic aesthetics and its significance in contemporary era with a view to highlighting that Islamic emphasizes on aesthetics has a distinctive place in Islamic civilization and this legacy must be revisited again and again for it is essential for the refinement of better social order under Islamic spirituality.

**Key Words:** Islamic Aesthetics, Metaphysics, Divine, Inspiration, Spirituality, Revelation, God

## **Introduction**

Islamic Aesthetics has its Transcendental Significance. Islam considers beauty to be a divine quality and teaches that God Loves beauty. Unity of Being is the real meaning of Islam and this metaphysical belief of Unity is the Transcendental significant of the Void which is the only aspiration and soul of Islamic art. God is the all source of every art, so the Muslim Artists, Poets, craft-workers tried to create every forms of Art under the Transcendental Inspiration.

According to Seyyed Hossein Nasr, it is in reality to the inner dimension of Islam, to the batin as contained in the manner and elucidated by the Truth that one must turn for the origin of Islamic art. This inner aspect is besides inextricably interrelated to Islamic spirituality (Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islamic Art and Spirituality*, Golgon Press, Ipriwich, Suffolk, 1987, p. 185). Man's inwardness has been given much value in Islam. Likewise, it is within the inner aspect of the Islamic tradition that one must seek the origin of Islamic art and the 'power' which has created different art forms and sustained them over the ages<sup>1</sup>. The Qur'an and the prophetic hadith are the main sources of Islamic philosophy as well as Islamic art. All forms of art must be created in the light of the Qur'an and the Tradition of the Prophet. The Qur'an provides the set of guidelines of Unity while the Prophet provides the manifestation of this Unity into multiplicity and the witness to this Unity in His creation<sup>2</sup>. In brief, Islamic Aesthetics is the result of the manifestation of Unity upon the plane of multiplicity. It reflects in its own idiosyncratic manner the Unity of the Divine Principle - the dependence of all multiplicity upon the One-God. This art manifests itself in the substantial order in a straight line perceivable by the senses and the archetypical realities and acts, and as a result, it is a hierarchy for the expedition of the soul from the audio-visual world to the world of Silence and Invisible one.

### ***Metaphysical Concept of Islamic Aesthetics***

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<sup>1</sup> Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islamic Art and Spirituality*, p. 6

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p.6

In order to know the true spirit of Islamic Aesthetics and its Transcendental message and significance, we shall have to comprehend briefly its origin as well as some of its main forms such as calligraphy, architecture, painting, poetry and decorative arts in general with special reference to Iran as the contribution of Iran to these Islamic art-forms can be deemed to be second to none. Generally speaking, Islamic Aesthetics is the art of the civilization based on the Islamic religion.

In this correlation, it is essential to refer to some verses of the Qur'an and few Traditions of the Prophet, which without a doubt endorse the view that Islamic art is inherent in Islam itself: "We have adorned the lowest heaven with the beauty of the planets"(The Holy Qur'an, Surah 37:6). "We have placed constellations in heaven and made them beautiful for those who look"(The Holy Qur'an, Surah 15:16).

In addition to the above Quranic verses, a couple of Traditions of the Prophet would be in order: "God likes that whenever anyone of you performs any work he should do it in a beautiful manner" ("Islam and the Fine Arts" in Islamic Thought, P. - 6). "God is Beautiful and likes Beauty" ("Islam and the Fine Arts" in Islamic Thought, P. - 6).

Muslim artists tried to create every art-form by invoking in them the Power and Blessing of the Supreme Reality. It is His gifted creative energy that man can create and appreciate a number of art-forms. While creating beauty in his product the artist or architect always thinks of God as the Supreme Beauty and He is present everywhere. Islamic art keeps us united before the Divine Presence. It paves the manner for the explorer who wishes to enter the ultimate Sanctum-Sanctorum of Divine Revelation. If we take no notice of or demolish this art in the present day crisis ridden world, we without doubt cut Muslims away from their transcendental moorings for the reason that this art is the onward expression of the inner spirit of Islam. This inner spirit or dimension, according to Hossein Nasr, is inextricably correlated to Islamic spirituality. He further explains that the term spirituality in Islamic languages is connected to either the word ruh denoting spirit or mana signifying meaning. In both cases the very terms imply inwardness and interiority<sup>3</sup>. Consequently, it is within the inner dimension of the Islamic tradition that one must seek the origin of Islamic Aesthetics and the strength which has created and sustained it throughout the centuries.

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<sup>3</sup> Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Islamic Art and Spirituality, p. 6

Prophet Muhammad and Hazrat Ali both are considered as the dominant personalities to symbolize the inner dimension of Islamic message in an articulate manner. Both Sunni and Shia Muslims have great regard and affection for them. The great masters of Islamic art have always shown a special love and devotion to them. It is only the Muhammadan grace which has made the sacred art of Islam possible; and it is the personality of Hazrat Ali who was the founder of basic arts such as calligraphy etc. and Sufi orders which has maintained the true spirit or says the mysterious teachings of Islam<sup>4</sup>.

With the advent of Islam, Calligraphy assumed a sacred status because of the fact that this was the script especially chosen by God to transmit His message to all human beings. Consequently, a need was felt to record the Qur'an and to design a beautiful style of writing for the message. All this played a central role in the development of the script-simultaneously encapsulating clarity, legibility at beauty. Thus at this stage Arabic script ceases to be merely the script but becomes Islamic calligraphy embellished by trained and creative artist-scribes. The word 'Islamic is used with calligraphy to symbolize that the Arabic script had a Transcendental or metaphysical foundation because it was the language of the Qur'an and the followers of Islam developed it in several variants, well thought-out it 'sacred' and regarded it as an expression both of art and of religion. The Islamic calligraphy has a metaphysical basis due to which it is well thought-out as Sacred Art in Islamic culture. It has a distinctive spiritual message to convey. The foundation of the sacred calligraphy is the visual incarnation of the Sacred World.

In the field of decorative arts too Muslim artists used the art of writing as an important ornamental element to decorate the different religious and non-religious structures as well as to beautify many things of decoration such as cloth, paper, utensils, wood, rubber and glass material etc., on which the Words or verse of the Holy Qur'an are written, engraved or embossed. The aim of these artists or craft workers was to be passionate about the One Supreme Reality and enrich their transcendental power<sup>5</sup>. Another branch of Muslim decorative art is that of ornamental writing, which is so often utilized with remarkable effect in the adornment of mosques, mausolea, and palaces, where whole chapters of the Qur'an are carved or inlaid round domes and minarets, doors and arches, testifying to the same religious earnestness, yet in a purely

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid, pp.6-7

<sup>5</sup> Ali, Syed Amir, *The Spirit of Islam*, (B.I. Publications, Bombay, Delhi, etc., 1922) pp. 388-389

monotheistic spirit, as the pictures of saints and martyrs which decorate Christian churches.

The mosque is the main religious structure of Islam usually situated in a Muslim city, town or village. While praying in the Mosque man finds himself away from this corporeal world and, for sometime, absorbs himself in God. In this stage of mental contemplation there exists nothing but God. Thus, this spiritual connection or the inward religious experience originates in excessive love of the Divine Being. It is here in the sacred atmosphere of the mosque that the Mumin is lost in his object of love i.e. (God) and that he loses sight of everything else. Hence, it is this sacred architecture which provides the transcendental connection with God and is therefore considered an important form of Islamic Aesthetics. It has a transcendental significance in the lives of Muslims. Besides the mosque, there are other sacred structures like schools, tombs over the graves of Walis or Sufis which are called ziyarat(tombs) and so on, which have spiritual importance. Generally, tombs provide some of the most striking examples of Islamic architecture and these have a religious identity as well. We have some famous Islamic tombs and mosques in Alhambra (Spain), in Makkah, Egypt, Iran, Iraq and in India at Agra, Ajmer, Ahmedabad, Delhi, Lucknow, Hyderabad, Bihar, Srinagar and some other parts of the sub continental. There are still other examples of Muslim architecture in the shape of palaces, large fortified rest houses along trade routes, hospitals, forts, market streets or bazaars and so on.

Though these are not included in sacred architecture yet they have their own religio-cultural importance. Overall, it is observed that Islamic architecture (both sacred and non-sacred) has a radiant cultural history and owns its extraordinary unity to a religious faith. Islamic architecture is, in many ways, a self-explanatory one and this architecture, as rightly remarked by Hossein Nasr, depends mostly upon the grace of issuing from the Quranic revelation which has made the correspondence in Islam between sacred architecture and natural world possible. Moreover, Prophet Muhammad's grace is equally a powerful source of inspiration to strengthen this unique communication. Muslim artists created and still create it only because it is, for them, a primordial source of transcendental enrichment.

Sufism is an important spiritual movement that has its significant role on Islamic art. In one way or the other, Sufi tradition remained a constant source of inspiration for all Islamic arts during the different

periods of Muslim history. The influence of Sufism on different art-forms, particularly poetry, provided enough religious and transcendental enlightenment to many Muslims architects, miniaturists and calligraphists. These artists tried to understand and underline the spiritual significance of their creative products. Sufi poetry, developed especially on Iranian-Indian soils, has in itself the transcendental element as dominant force. The Persian poetry reflects a transcendental style the message of which is related to the Islamic Revelation<sup>6</sup>.

In Islamic world of art and culture, the Persian poetry is remarkable for its transcendental depth and sweep. The famous Persian poets like Maulana Jalal al-Din Rumi etc. mainly composed Sufi poetry. According to these poets poetry is the result of the imposition of Transcendental and Intellectual principles upon the matter or substance of language. In reality, poetry bears an intellectual and transcendental message. A message of love to God and His creatures, service to humanity and a feeling of universal brotherhood of mankind.

All the above mentioned and many more creative works of Islamic artists indebted to the Islamic spirituality do provide psychological satisfaction to the artist<sup>7</sup>.

## **Conclusion**

Islamic Aesthetics has its deep root in poetry, calligraphy and architecture etc. Islam gave us an incredible legacy of architecture. The impact of Islamic architecture can be seen of every important construction of modern time. Islamic Aesthetics touches upon every aspect of human life and its every form is an echo of Artists soul which undoubtedly establishes its spiritual relationship with the Supreme Creator of everything that relates to aesthetics. A Muslim artist or craft-worker while writing a Word of God in beautiful calligraphic form or producing a piece of fine carpet using attractive colour scheme or preparing a miniature painting from Saadi's Gulistan or from Bayunghur's Qisas al-Anbiya (History of the Prophets) or from the Shah Namah (Anthology) of Iskandra Sultan like View of Makkah with the Holy Place and the Kabah (Shiraz, 1411), or from Halft Awarang of Jami,

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<sup>6</sup> Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Islamic Art and Spirituality, p. 76

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p. 196

especially Yusuf and Zulaikha (rightly a depiction of the Prophet Yusuf's story mentioned in the Holy Qur'an) etc. or composing Sufi-poetry and portraying natural objects in his creative activity like arabesque or constructing a religious structures like mosque etc., in all these and thousand other modes of activity he always finds Gods Presence, His Grace and Love and a transcendental enthusiasm of creativity. The Muslim aesthetician and creative artist equates his every moment spent in the creation of any Islamic art form as prayer in which man's soul communicates God and acknowledges His Presence everywhere.

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**A Proper Application of Contemplation of Mind (Cittānupassanā)  
in Meditation practice with Special Reference to Moguk Sayadaw's  
Way**

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**Abstract**

This article is all about a proper cittānupassanā (contemplation of mind) practice according to Moguk Sayadaw's way. The researcher wrote this research project due to his earnest desire to find a proper application of Cittānupassanā practice towards meditation. Yet, the proper way of Cittānupassanā practice for beginners or people of today remains to be discovered. This article, therefore, attempted to show the proper way of Cittānupassanā practice to reduce the difficulties of Cittānupassanā practitioner. This article aimed for proposing the proper cittānupassanā practice from Moguk Sayadaw's way, however, the concept of Cittānupassanā practice in the Theravāda Buddhist Pāli Tipitaka and its Commentaries was studied as an additional value.

Firstly, the concept of the term of Cittānupassanā was studied from the standard point of Theravada Pāli Tipitaka. Secondly, the way of cittānupassanā practice from Moguk Sayādaw's perspective was analyzed. Finally, the proper application of cittānupassanā was proposed analyzing the books of Mogok Sayādaw's sermons and several audio records.

**Key words:** Contemplation of mind, Proper application, Moguk Sayadaw

## Introduction

Cittānupassanā (Contemplation of Mind) is the third meditation form of the four foundations of mindfulness. It is simply a practice of observing the mind. In Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta, a well-known discourse delivered by the Buddha, the eight pair or the sixteen kinds of mind are named as meditation object to contemplate. Of these minds, some are very common to us but the following four states of consciousness or minds are improper to contemplate for beginner in meditation.<sup>8</sup> It is because of those minds proper only to those who are Jāna-Lābhī - attainer of Jhānic absorption. Most of beginners in Cittānupassanā - contemplation of mind practice, therefore, felt confused. They did not know what are the proper objects that they are supposed to contemplate on? Eventually the application of Cittānupassanā becomes a vital problem to be accessible for beginners in Cittānupassanā practice. Therefore, the proper way of Cittānupassanā practice is necessary for Cittānupassanā practitioners.

Moguk Sayadaw's method of Cittānupassanā - contemplation of mind is very interesting to study for the proper way so that it may be accessible to beginners or all. Moreover, due to the needs of the method of Cittānupassanā practice that applied by beginners and all should be related to their needs. For instance, Ven. Moegok Sayāsaw said: "Five sense door advertent consciousness such as eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness and so on are arise very often to daily life, so Cittānupassanā practitioner should contemplate them with another

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<sup>8</sup> Mahasi Sayadaw, *Manual of Insight*, (P.O Box 118, Kula HI 967901188), A translation of Vipassana Metta Foundation Translation Committee, Wisdom Publication, 2016). pp 245-247.

comprehensive mind, it is not just watching of mind”<sup>9</sup> and he drew a conclusion that the contemplation on consciousness is similar to a living man looking at a dead man. To say looking at the dead by a living is exactly true, because one mind come to exist only when another has gone to death. It means that Ven. Mogok Sayādaw does emphasize on Vipassanā (insight meditation) rather than Samatha (the development of mental concentration). So, his method truly can help understanding on simple theory of Cittānupassanā practice and to apply the proper way of Cittānupassanā practice. If the proper way of Cittānupassanā practice is applicable to all, it will be more practical and more useful for all of beginners and practitioners in Cittānupassanā (Contemplation of Mind) practice.

In Aṅguttara Nikāya, 10 the Buddha addressed on that matter,

*It means that, Monks, I know not any other single thing that brings such woe as the mind that is uncultivated, made much of. The mind that is uncultivated, not made much of, indeed brings great woe.<sup>11</sup> The Buddha also said, On the reverse,*

*Monks, I know not of any other single thing that brings such bliss as the mind that is cultivated, made much of, such a mind indeed brings great bliss.<sup>12</sup>*

Cittānupassanā practice – Contemplation of Mind, therefore, plays an important key role to promote the development of mind in order

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<sup>9</sup> Ashin Adiccaramsi (San Lwin), *A Manual of Insight Knowledge Vipassana as Taught by Mogok Sayadaw*, (Bogyoke Aung San Road, Pazundaung Township, Yangon, Myanmar, Khaing Ye Mon Printing, No 81, 2009). P. 161.

<sup>10</sup> A i PTS.6

<sup>11</sup> F.L. WOODWARD, M.A. (Tr) *The Book of the Gradual Sayings (Aṅguttara-Nikāya) or More-Numbered Suttas, Vol. i (Ones, Twos, Threes)*, (London, PTS Oxford, 2000). P.5.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

to free from suffering and to bring happiness. More importantly, according to Moguk Sayādaw, it is most suitable practice to eliminate the prevalence of long and deeped rooted wrong view in the mind.<sup>13</sup> It is because that the mind is bleeding ground of wrong view.

Moreover, The Most renowned meditation masters in Myanmar, such as Ledi Sayādaw, Thathon Jetawan Sayādaw, and Mahasi Sayādaw focus on instructing no mental subject of meditation but do not focus on the mental subject of meditation. Unlike them, Moguk Sayādaw stress on mental subject of meditation such as *Cittānupassanā* - contemplation of mind. This is because we have no much different view on mental subject of meditation though we are rich in different view on no mental subject or physical subject of meditation. In this article, the researcher will attempt to show the proper way of *Cittānupassanā* practice to investigate the difficulties of *Cittānupassanā* practitioner. The researcher would like to find the best way by analyzing Mogok Sayadaw's method of *Cittānupassanā* practice.

### **The Concept of *Cittānupassanā* practice**

The word “*Cittānupassanā*” is purely Buddhist term and has quite distinct meaning. Moreover, it is one of the original terms used by the Buddha himself; for it occurs in *Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, which means the great Discourse on the Foundation of Mindfulness or setting-up of Mindfulness. It is a combination of two Pāli words; the word *Citta*, and the word *Anupassanā*.

Researcher, therefore, will examine the etymological meaning of each Pāli term. The first term of *Citta* will be studied first. The word *Citta* best rendered by ‘consciousness,’ is the most important of the technical

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<sup>13</sup> U Than Daing, *Cittānupassana (Meditation on Mind) and Vedānānupassana (Meditation on Feeling)*, (Rangoon, Myanmar, Mahaweikza Press, 1970). p. 58.

term in Buddhism. Citta from the verbal root, dhātu in Pāli “Cinta-ta”, cognizing objects, refers to the characteristic of mind. In a technical sense, it means the state of cognizing objects. However, the term Citta from the term of Cittānupassanā used in Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta, does not denote cognizing objects but it actually signifies the objective mind or the subject of Cittānupassanā meditation practice such as “Consciousness accompanied by lust”; or, consciousness without lust. In Pāli term, it is called Kammatṭhāna – the subjects of meditation.

It is, now, time to examine the next Pāli term; Anupassanā. The word “Anupassanā can be found very often in Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta. It is derived from the verb “Anupassati,”. It is from the verbal root “anu-disa-a-ti”, “to look at or to observe again and again”, denotes viewing or consideration. In technical term, it is often used “contemplating”.

Moreover, it is absolutely necessary to study the canonical definition of the Pāli term Anupassanā. The meaning of Anupassanā, thus, would be completed with that canonical definition. The Buddha himself analyzed the set of synonyms of the word Anupassanā in Satipaṭṭhānavibhaṅga. It can be found in the chapter seven of the Books of Analysis – Vibhaṅga Pāli, which is one book in the Theravāda Abhidhamma. It is said as follows;

*‘A ware’ means: Therein what is awareness? That which is wisdom, understanding, search, research, searching the Doctrine, discernment, discrimination, differentiation, erudition, proficiency, subtlety, criticism, reflection, analysis, breadth, sagacity, a " guide ", intuition, intelligence, a " goad " , wisdom as faculty, Wisdom as power, Wisdom as a sword, wisdom as a height, wisdom as light, wisdom as glory, Wisdom as splendor, Wisdom as a precious stone , the absence of dullness, searching the Truth, right View This is called contemplation. Of*

*this contemplation he is possessed, well possessed, attained, well attained, endowed, well endowed, furnished. Therefore, this is called “contemplating”.*<sup>14</sup>

Moreover, each term of the concept of Citta and Anupassanā so also studied from Commentaries were studied. It is important for Cittānupassanā practitioners to understand the nature of Citta – consciousness. The nature of the Citta – consciousness was elucidated in the Abhidhamma Aṭṭhakathā<sup>15</sup> by proposing the four defining devices. These four devices are the essential aspects of Citta; they are:

- (1) Its characteristic – Lakkhana, the salient quality of the phenomenon;
- (2) Its function – Rasa, it’s performance of a concrete task (kicca-rasa) or achievement of a goal (sampatti-rasa);
- (3) Its manifestation – Paccupaṭṭhāna, the way it presents itself within experience; and
- (4) Its proximate cause – Padaṭṭhāna, the principal condition upon which it depends.

In the case of citta, it’s characteristic is the cognizing the objects (Vijāṇāna). Its function is to be a “fore-runner” (Pubaṅgama) of the mental factors(cetasikas) in that it presides over them and is always accompanied by them. Its proximate cause is mind and matter - Nāma and Rūpa accompanied by consciousness. Commentator continues that there is no consciousness that had not the characteristic of cognizing the objects vijāṇāna lakkhaṇa. The characteristic of all classifications of consciousness is mere cognizing the objects. The consciousness is,

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<sup>14</sup> Pathamakyaw Ashin Thittila (Setthila), Aggamahapandita, *The Book of Analysis (Vabhangā)*, (London, PTS Oxford, 1995). p 253.

<sup>15</sup> As Myn. 155; PTS. 112.

However, the fore-runner of all phenomenon. For instance, the consciousness just cognizes the form-object that seen by eye-door. In the same way, the consciousness just cognizes the other objects such as audible-objects, the odor, taste, and so on

The concept of the Pāli term Anupassanā appeared in commentaries. The English word “contemplation” was described as the best technical term above. In the Visuddhi Magga Aṭṭhakathā<sup>16</sup> – the path of purification commentary, eighteen kinds of contemplation were expressed. Researcher will describe these eighteen kinds of contemplation in order to cogitate the concept of the Pāli term Anupassanā. They are as follows:

1. contemplation of impermanence - *aniccanupassanā*;
2. contemplation of suffering - *dukkhanupassanā*;
3. contemplation of no-self - *anttanupassanā*;
4. contemplation of aversion - *nivvidānupassanā*;
5. contemplation of non-attachment; - *viraganupassanā*;
6. contemplation of cessation – *nirodanupassanā*;
7. contemplation of relinquishment - *patinisagganupassanā*;
8. contemplation of destruction - *khayanupassanā*;
9. contemplation of fall of formation - *vayanupassanā*;
10. contemplation of change - *viparināmanupassanā*;
11. contemplation of signal-less - *animittanupassanā*;
12. contemplation of desire-less - *appanihanupassana*;
13. contemplation of void-ness - *suññātanupassanā*;
14. contemplation of the insight into states that is higher understanding - *adhipaññādharmavipassanā*;

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<sup>16</sup> Vism Myn, P. 264 Dev P 263.

15. contemplation of correct knowledge -  
*yathābhūtaññānadassanā*;  
 16. contemplation of danger - *ādīṇawā*;  
 17. contemplation of reflection – *patisaṁkhānupassanā* and  
 18. contemplation of turning away - *vivatthānupassanā*.<sup>17</sup>

Given the above all definitions, the English words; consciousness and contemplation might not be covered the true sense of the Pāli term *cittānupassanā*. The signification of Pāli language is unique in its true sense. Therefore, it is necessary to study the more canonical and commentary explanation.

### **The concept of *cittānupassanā* practice according to Moguk Sayadaw's way**

According to Moguk Sayadaw, there are 13 kinds of noted consciousness are as follow;

1. Eye consciousness;
2. Ear consciousness;
3. Nose consciousness;
4. Tongue consciousness;
5. Body consciousness.
6. Consciousness of greed – *lobha citta*;
7. Consciousness of anger – *dosa citta*;
8. Consciousness of delusion – *moha citta*;
9. Consciousness of greedless-ness – *alobha citta*;
10. Consciousness of hate-less-ness – *adosa citta*;
11. Consciousness of mind or *mano*, thinking, imagining, etc.;
12. Consciousness of in-breathing; and

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<sup>17</sup> Bhikkhu Ñānamoli, *The Path of Purification (Visuddhimagga)*, (Kandy, Sri Lanka, Fourth Edition, Buddhist Publication Society, 2010). pp. 1706-1707.

### 13. Consciousness of out-breathing.

From 1 to 5 were named the Visitor from outside or external Visitors. 6 to 11 are the consciousness that come from within. Moguk Sayādaw, therefore, named them the Visitors from within or internal Visitors. The last two are named as Host consciousness due to they are occur all the time maintaining life. According to the Moguk Sayadaw's perspective, the nature of third teen kinds of mind that mentioned above is that tends to sense-object as like the other consciousnesses. In the other words, the nature of mind is that it is running to the sense-objects as always. Moreover, they cannot occur without senses-objects. After that, Sayadaw has expressed, that, how to contemplate the mind.

#### **Proper application of cittānupassanā practice**

When the cittānupassanā practitioner try to focus on his mind, he should not try to note or know the only mind, but also try to note or know the true nature of the process of mind from the beginning to the end. When he tries to note or know by that way, he will see the two natures, which are characteristic of mind and its disappearance. For instance, when the eye-consciousness occurs, it cognizes visible sense-object and it vanishes without delay as well. In the same way, ear-consciousness, it cognizes audible sense-object and it immediately vanish. The natures of other consciousness also should be noted or observed in that way as well. The whole concept of Moguk Sayadaw on contemplation of mind - cittānupassanā has been summarized in the charts below for more proper and clearer understanding.

#### **Consciousness in first group and their causes**

<b>The two causes</b>		<b>Observed-mind or noted mind</b>
Eye-organ	Visible form	Eye-consciousness

	object	
Ear-organ	Sound base	Ear-consciousness
Nose-organ	Smell base	Nose-consciousness
Tongue-organ	Taste base	Tongue-consciousness
Body-organ	Tactual base	Body-consciousness

### Consciousness in second group and third group

Particular conditions.	Observed-mind or noted-mind
The impact of the six sense-object (ārammana) and six sense-door (dvāra): visible form object, sound base, smell base, taste base, tactual base, and heart-base, and eye-door, ear-door, nose-door, tongue-door, body-door, and mind-door	Consciousness of greed
	Consciousness of anger
	Consciousness of delusion
	Consciousness of greedless-ness
	Consciousness of hatless-ness
	Thinking and imagining
The consciousness in third group	Consciousness of in breathing and out breathing

### Applying the proper application of mind – *cittānupassanā*

Group names	Thirteen kinds of noted mind	Noting-mind
	Eye-consciousness	

The external visitors	Ear-consciousness	Noting-mind or observing-mind that is accompanied by the five properties contemplate on the characteristic, arising and disappearance of thirteen kinds of minds
	Nose-consciousness	
	Tongue-consciousness	
	Body-consciousness	
The internal visitors	Consciousness of greed	
	Consciousness of anger	
	Consciousness of delusion	
	Consciousness of greedless-ness	
	Consciousness of hatless-ness	
The Hosts	Consciousness of mind or mano, thinking, imagining, etc	
	Consciousness of in breathing	
	Consciousness of out breathing	

## Conclusion

The technique of Cittānupassanā practice, taught by Moguk Sayadaw, is contemplating on the two natures, which are characteristic and its disappearance of thirteen kinds of consciousness making that the primary point of observation. The reason for that the thirteen kinds of consciousness always present making most suitable for contemplation on characteristic and disappearance of minds. The noting-mind also must be accompanied by the five constituent of path knowledge whenever a cittānupassanā practitioner makes an effort in contemplation.

Additionally, the traditional ways of contemplation of mind (cittānupassanā) from Mahāstiphatṭhāna Sutta, is not relevant to

practitioner of pure insight meditation. The late Maha Thera Moguk Sayadaw being well versed in the Tipitaka, having checked it all according to the Pāli Canons and their commentaries and found that it conformity with the Tipitaka and the commentaries, formulated the very simple and unelaborate method of cittānupassanā which is considered to be the most suitable for the present day Yogis. Those who aspire to attain the final enlightenment must pass through sotapatti magga, sakadagāmi magga, and anagami magga. It is a widely known fact that in order to attain the first stage, sotāpatti magga, we have to eliminate the wrong view (ditthi), and doubt (vicikicchā), gone to death. His method, therefore, truly can helped understanding on simple theory of Cittānupassanā practice and to apply the proper way of Cittānupassanā practice.

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## **A Comparative Study of the Concept of the Middle Way between Aristotle and Buddhist Philosophy**

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### **Abstract**

This paper attempts to comparatively study the concept of Middle Way between Aristotle and Buddhist Philosophy. In the study, it was found that both refuted the extreme ways of life. On the one hand, both endorsed the moderation; on the other hand, they differ in term of happiness and the process to gain happiness.

**Keywords: Middle way, Moderation, Happiness**

### **Introduction**

In this world, people are born with different characteristics and people try to create the good life that they expect. Some people want to master their lives by aiming for a good living. Some people want to have success and happiness. In fact, deeply in our hearts always looking forward to having a peaceful life, without worries and sorrows, without suffering and complaining, wanting pleasure rather than unhappiness. To achieve that aspiration, people always look for a good way in order to lead them in the right way.

Aristotle, who was a well-known philosopher in ancient Greek claimed that happiness is always the ultimate goal of life that people are seeking. However, pleasure, wealth, satisfaction, or fame are not true happiness. According to Aristotle, "*the final end of human life is to flourish, to live well, to have a good life*" (Aristotle on the Good Life). Therefore, to be able to gain a happy life, Aristotle also discovered the "Golden Mean" in his famous work "Nicomachean Ethics", the middle way between the excess and the deficiency of quality so that it can direct people from negative to positive actions.

For the Lord Buddha is different, in spite of growing up in a wealthy life, he still could not find the true meaning of life. After leaving the royal palace to renounce the world and practice asceticism for six years, he became exhausted and failed with this practical way. Through practical experience, the Buddha himself denied two extremes sensual indulgence, means enjoying too much material and severe asceticism as well as avoided two views of Eternalism (Sassataditthi) and Nihilism (Ucchedaditthi). Hence, he realized that to be able to help people escape the gate of suffering and reach true happiness, man should follow the middle way.

As we see that both Aristotle and the Lord Buddha, lead people to a happy life by walking on the middle way. Hence, understanding clearly the concept of the middle way between Aristotle and Buddhist philosophy is the main purpose of this research.

This paper aims to compare the concept of the middle way in Buddhist philosophy and Aristotle's philosophy in order to discover the fundamental similarity and differences between them.

## **II. Discussion**

### **1. An overview of the Middle way between Aristotle and Early Buddhist philosophy.**

#### **1.1 Aristotle**

In Book II, Nicomachean Ethics, Aristotle describes Golden Mean as a virtue that stands on mid-way between two extremes which are bad, one is bad because of too much, and another is bad because of too little. To be able to get a happy life, Aristotle thought that one should avoid two extremes those are excess and defect. According to Aristotle, a person must discover the proper meaning of excess and defect and thereby discover the appropriate mean<sup>18</sup>.

The Golden Mean of Aristotle is a theory of virtue that helps people balance between feelings and actions. In Nicomachean Ethics, Aristotle attempted to show people the way to avoid two extremes of the excess and the defect based on practical wisdom and moral virtue, then we ourselves will become better people and be able to reach an ultimate goal of life that is eudaimonia or happiness.

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<sup>18</sup> Stump, Samuel Enoch, **Socrates to Sartre: a history of philosophy**, (The McGraw-Hill, Inc:1999), p.94.

## 1.2 Buddhist philosophy

The Middle way (Majjhimāpaṭipadā) in Buddhist philosophy refers to a practical way discovered by the Buddha. After living a luxurious life as well as failing with practice asceticism, then he got enlightenment under the Bodhi tree. According to the first discourse Dhammacakkapavattana-sutta, the middle path is between the two extremes of self-indulgence (kamasukhallikanuyoga) and self-mortification (attakilamathanuyoga) and consists of the Noble Eightfold Path (an'yo affhangiko maggo) leading to freedom and happiness.<sup>19</sup>

Later on, the Buddha rejected two extremes in Kaccānagotta sutta: Eternalism\* who believe in all existences in time are equally real. Nihilism\* those who have the belief that all wicked will be ceased to exist after death. Therefore, avoidance two extremes, Eternalism and Nihilism is the middle way. The middle position is explained as "dependent arising" (paticcasamuppada) which, when utilized to explain the nature of the human personality and the world of experience, appears in a formula consisting of twelve factors (dviidasanga).<sup>20</sup>

## 1.3 Comparison

After analyzing the overview of the Middle way between Aristotle and Buddhist philosophy, we can see the points of similarity and differences as below.

The similarity is that both Aristotle and Buddhist philosophy followed the middle way of moderation between actions and feelings, refuting two extremes of wanting too much and too little. From this concept, people know how to balance themselves and move forward with a better life based on wisdom and virtue as well.

However, with similar points of view, the Middle way of the Buddha also is different from Aristotle's Golden Mean in a practical way. If Aristotle showed the Mean that stays far from two vices of actions and feelings, the Buddha taught people follow the Noble Eightfold Path and to avoid the belief in two sides of existence and non-existence is the middle way.

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<sup>19</sup> Kalupahana, David J., **Miilamadhyamakakarika: the philosophy of the middle way**, (India, narendra prakash jain for motilal banarsidass publishers private limited: 1986), p.1.

<sup>20</sup> Kalupahana, David J., **Miilamadhyamakakarika: the philosophy of the middle way**, (India, narendra prakash jain for motilal banarsidass publishers private limited: 1986), p.1.

## 2. Aristotle's Golden Mean and the Middle way of Buddhist Philosophy

This part is going to compare the similar and different concepts of the Middle way between Aristotle and Buddhist philosophy based on two main points of view: 1) Virtue as the Golden Mean of Aristotle and the Middle way is avoidance two extremes of self-mortification and self-indulgence as well as Eternalism (sassatavāda) and Annihilationism or Nihilism (Ucchedaditthi) of Buddhist philosophy, 2) The Happiness in Aristotle and Nirvana in Buddhist philosophy.

### 2.1. Aristotle's Golden Mean

#### 2.1.1. Virtue as the Golden mean

In order to recognize virtuous behavior and how to become virtuous people, Aristotle showed us about twelve moral virtues in Book II-V of Ethics, those are courage, self-control, generosity, magnificence, high-mindedness, ambition, gentleness, righteous indignation, truthfulness, wittiness, friendliness and justice. For example, fear, confidence, appetite, anger, pity, and in general pleasure and pain can be experienced too much or too little, and in both ways not well.<sup>21</sup> If people know to have them in the right time, right situation that is the mean.

Virtue is concerned with our various feelings and actions, for it is in them that there can be excess and defect.<sup>22</sup> Hence, in the concept of the Golden Mean, two extremes are vices and, virtue or excellence lies in the middle of two vices in order to balance two excess and deficiency, and practical wisdom will determine the right thing to do in each circumstance. For example, between cowardice and recklessness is courage, and courage is a mean. In giving and taking money, the mean is generosity, while the excess and deficiency are wastefulness and stinginess.<sup>23</sup> Virtue, then is a state of being, “a state apt to exercise deliberate choice, being in the relative mean, determined by reason, and as the man of practical wisdom would determine.” Therefore, virtue is a habit of choosing in accordance with a mean.<sup>24</sup> However, for Aristotle,

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<sup>21</sup> Roger Crisp (trans), **Nicomachean Ethics**, Book II, chapter 6, (Cambridge University press 2004), p.30.

<sup>22</sup> Stump, Samuel Enoch, **Socrates to Sartre: a history of philosophy**, (The McGraw-Hill, Inc:1999), p.94.

<sup>23</sup> Roger Crisp (trans), **Nicomachean Ethics**, Book II, chapter 7, (Cambridge University press 2004), p.32.

<sup>24</sup> Stump, Samuel Enoch, **Socrates to Sartre: a history of philosophy**, (The McGraw-Hill, Inc:1999), p.94.

the concept of the mean will be different for each person and every various circumstance.

### 2.1.2. Happiness

Aristotle held that everything in this world is working toward a "Telos" this is an end or purpose; therefore, everything has a purpose and its end of good or bad belongs to how we fulfill its purpose. Here, Aristotle claimed that to achieve a good purpose, people should have a plan to act or to live well or have a good life that is called "Eudaimonia" or "Happiness". Everything we perform or desire is to strive towards eudaimonia.

Typically, as working, people work so hard because they want to get a lot of money, but why do they want to earn money? Almost people will answer that they want to support themselves and their families as well. And all of these purposes are aiming to a happy life. In order to fulfill our purpose of eudaimonia, Aristotle believed that people need to live virtuous life. Hence, the concept of the Golden Mean which decides and develops the virtues or habits of the right thinking, right actions and right choice.

## 2.2 Buddhist philosophical Middle way

### 2.2.1 The Middle way is avoidance two extremes

(1) Two extremes: self-mortification and self-indulgence that was mentioned by the Buddha in Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta.:

Bhikkhus, these two extremes should not be followed by one who has gone forth into homelessness. What two? The pursuit of sensual happiness in sensual pleasures, which is low, vulgar, the way of worldlings, ignoble, unbeneficial; and the pursuit of self-mortification, which is painful, ignoble, unbeneficial. Without veering towards either of these extremes, the Tathagata has awakened to the middle way, which gives rise to vision, which gives rise to knowledge, which leads to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nibbāna.<sup>25</sup>

As we see clearly, the Lord Buddha advised people should not follow two kinds of this way. "Sensual pleasures give little gratification and much suffering and distress, and they are all the more full of

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<sup>25</sup> SN 56.11.

drawbacks”<sup>26</sup>. Another is to practice asceticism, the Buddha also criticized Jainas who followed asceticism: “If the pleasure and pain that beings feel are caused by what was done in the past, then the Niganthas surely must have done bad actions in the past, since they now feel such painful, racking, piercing sensations.”<sup>27</sup> Therefore, pursuing too much sensual pleasure which does not bring benefit to oneself and others. Practicing asceticism also cannot transform people from suffering to happiness.

To be able to get rid of suffering and reach the ultimate goal (Nirvana), the Buddha taught his followers should practice the way of moderation, always be content with what they have. This is the way that they can balance their lives between two extremes of self-mortification and self-indulgence. Both two extremes do not bring people to a state of peace; therefore, “avoiding both these extremes, the Buddha (tathāgata) has realized the Middle Path. It produces vision, it produces knowledge, it leads to calm, to higher knowledge, to enlightenment, to nirvana.”<sup>28</sup> The Middle way was taught by the Lord Buddha is the Noble Eightfold Path and it is divided into three parts of bodily action, verbal action and mental action: Right view, Right intention, Right speech, Right action, Right livelihood, Right effort, Right concentration, Right mindfulness.

(2) Two extremes: Eternalism (Sassataditthi) and Nihilism (Ucchedaditthi).

Eternalism and Nihilism were rejected by the Buddha when Kaccāna asked him about two views of existence and non-existence. The Lord Buddha said that “This world, Kaccana, for the most part depends upon a duality—upon the notion of existence and the notion of nonexistence. But for one who sees the origin of the world as it really is with correct wisdom, there is no notion of nonexistence in regard to the world. And for one who sees the cessation of the world as it really is with correct wisdom, there is no notion of existence in regard to the world.”<sup>29</sup>

Both Eternalism and Nihilism were not accepted by the Buddha: All exists’: Kaccana, this is one extreme. ‘All does not exist’: this is the second extreme. Without veering towards either of these extremes, the Tathagata teaches the Dhamma by the middle<sup>30</sup> which often refers to the

<sup>26</sup> MN 14.

<sup>27</sup> MN II.222; tr. Nānamoli & Bodhi 1995: 832

<sup>28</sup> Vin I.10; tr. **Rewata Dhamma** 1997:17. Cf. Mimaki & May 1979:456fF.

<sup>29</sup> Kaccānagottasutta SN 12.15 (SN ii 16), translated by Bhikkhu Sujato.

<sup>30</sup> Kaccānagottasutta SN 12.15 (SN ii 16), translated by Bhikkhu Sujato

doctrine of dependent origination as a view between the extremes of eternalism and annihilationism as well as the extremes of existence and non-existence.<sup>31</sup> Everything in this world exists with an impermanent state, constantly changing, because they are all created by harmonious, and exist upon causes and conditions. Therefore, everything on earth is impermanent, then the world cannot remain unchanged. If the world is changing, there is no such thing as existence or non-existence.

### 2.2.2 Nirvana

As we know that “the middle way is built upon desire, is a way among desires, is itself the most ultimate achievable goal of desire.”<sup>32</sup> Therefore, the enlightenment or Nirvana can be seen as the ultimate goal of the Buddhists desire (there are three kinds of desire: Kama tanha, bhava tanha and vibhava tanha, and desire for achieving enlightenment or Nirvana is vibhava tanha) which is a state of peaceful mind and extinguishes the fire greed, hatred, and ignorance. Through practical experience himself, the Buddha showed people the Middle way in order to reach the ultimate goal (Nirvana) that is avoidance of two extremes of self-mortification and self-indulgence as well as Eternalism and Nihilism. Avoiding two extremes can help people get out of the circle of samsara as well.

## 2.3 Comparison

After discussing some points of the Middle way between Aristotle and Buddhist philosophy, we can derive some significant differences and similarities as follow.

The similarity: Aristotle's Golden Mean was established based on virtue and it can fulfill the human purpose which is happiness, in which practical wisdom will determine the right thing to do in each circumstance. The Noble Eightfold path included morality (sīla), concentration (samādhi), wisdom (paññā) of Buddhist philosophy also leads people to ultimate happiness, Nirvana. Besides, both Aristotle and Buddhist philosophy consider that human action can direct people to the end of a goal which is called ultimate happiness.

The differences: Although both Aristotle and the Buddha follow the Middle way, they have different views in their practical ways.

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<sup>31</sup> Wallis, Glenn (2007) **Basic Teachings of the Buddha: A New Translation and Compilation**, With a Guide to Reading the Texts, p. 114.

<sup>32</sup> Bahm, Archie. J., **Philosophy of the Buddha**, (London, The Anchor Press, Ltd., Tipiree, Essex: 1958), p.70.

Aristotle holds that virtue is a Mean which can balance human actions and feelings moving toward a good state. While the Buddha encouraged his followers should moderate themselves by following the Noble Eightfold Path. Aristotle believes all souls are implicated in desire; therefore, people want many things in this world that are normal desires. While the Buddha describes craving as a cause that makes people stuck in the cycle of samsara. And a person who wants to reach the ultimate goal (Nirvana) that is *vibhava tanha* means a man who wants to get rid of defilements such as greed, anger, ignorance.

Based on analysis and comparison of the concept of the Middle way between Aristotle and Buddhist philosophy. I realize that the Middle way of Buddhist philosophy can be considered as moral virtue like Aristotle's Golden Mean because the Buddhist philosophical Middle way also teaches people how to practice morality, transferring people from bad to be better. But for Aristotle's Golden Mean cannot be considered as the Middle way of Buddhist philosophy because the practical method and the ultimate goal of the Noble Eightfold Path and Dependent origination are completely different from the Golden Mean.

In my personal opinion, I still doubt whether Aristotle's Golden Mean is really the best way to lead people to ultimate happiness or not. Because for Aristotle, we cannot go against nature; therefore, people still stay between two vices good and bad. Sometimes they might fall to one of two vices because people still cling to the material when they get the happiness. Whereas, the Middle way of Buddhist philosophy can lead people to reach the ultimate goal of Nirvana where there is not good or bad, existence or non-existence because all of these are just the vehicle that helps people reach the goal (enlightenment or Nirvana). When people really attain Nirvana, they will not cling to anything in life because all are non-self (*Anattā*).

Furthermore, from the aims of bringing people to ultimate happiness, the Golden Mean of Aristotle has not really shown people the specific practice like the Middle way of Buddhist philosophy. Suppose, the fifth precept of Buddhist ethics teaches people not to use any drugs, alcohol, or other intoxicants because it is the reason that leads people to do wrong actions, violate laws. But for the Golden Mean, I don't know whether people can use any intoxicants or not or they can use it but just with a sufficient amount. In my opinion, I think that the concept of the Golden Mean is quite vague because Aristotle does not explain in detail

how practical wisdom looks for the mean and helps people act and balance between two vices in every action and feeling.

### **III. Conclusion**

After doing comparison the concept of the Middle way between Aristotle and Buddhist philosophy, this part is going to conclude all the information which have been done from the previous parts.

In the point of similarity, both Aristotle and the Buddha followed the middle way of moderation, rejecting two extremes of wanting or eating too much and too little. Based on practicing virtue, Buddha and Aristotle taught people how to manage their emotions whenever they meet something that makes them satisfied or unsatisfied. Besides, both the concept of the middle way of Aristotle and the Buddha showed that using practical wisdom, moral virtue can determine our virtuous actions. Basically, the goal of life according to Aristotle and the Buddha is to lead people from a lower to a higher, from negative to positive, or from suffering to happiness.

In the point of difference, firstly, besides practicing wisdom and virtue like Aristotle, Buddhism also tries to cultivate mental (practice meditation) that is the Eightfold Noble Path in order to stay away from two extremes of sensual indulgence and self-mortification as well as leading people to calm, to insight, to enlightenment and to Nirvana. In contrast, Aristotle wants people to apply the Golden Mean so that they can become virtuous people and get happiness as well. Secondly, In Nicomachean Ethics, Aristotle states that happiness is, “believed to be the most desirable thing in the world” but Buddhist philosophy does not agree with that. Because desire is one of the defilements that prevent people get rid of the cycle of samsara. To be able to get out of that samsara, people should avoid two extremes of Eternalism and Nihilism and practice insight.

However, still remain some weaknesses in Aristotle’s Golden Mean because the Golden Mean does not teach people exactly the framework for how to act in each circumstance as well as it is not easy to apply in daily life like the Buddhist philosophy's Middle way. Of course, in the Middle way of Buddhist philosophy, not all practice Buddhists can be able to attain Nirvana, at least they are on the path toward the Enlightenment.

After showing some points of similarities and differences, this paper can be summarized that although the concept of Golden Mean of Aristotle and the Middle way of the Buddhist philosophy refused two extremes and looked for moderation, they differ in term of happiness and the process to gain happiness.

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**A THEORETICAL METHOD OF GRADUAL PRACTICE  
(ANUPUBBAPAṬIPADĀ) FOR  
SUSTAINABLE HAPPINESS  
IN THERAVĀDA BUDDHISM**

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**ABSTRACT**

This qualitative research consists of three objectives, namely: (1) to study the doctrines of gradual practice (*anupubbapaṭipadā*) in Theravāda Buddhism, (2) to study the concept of sustainable happiness in Buddhism, and (3) to propose a theoretical method of gradual practice for sustainable happiness in Theravāda Buddhism. The data collection and in-depth interviews were carried out with six key-informants from national and international representatives.

The findings shown that the doctrines of gradual practice (*anupubbapaṭipadā*) in Theravāda Buddhism which refers to a line of conduct; a mode of progress which is sequential and cumulative process or successive stages of practice that leads to the final destination of sustainable happiness. Sustainable happiness refers to the highest happiness (*paramaṃ sukhaṃ*), the ultimate peace (*parama santi*), the supramundane happiness (*lokuttara sukha*). It is the cessation of suffering (*dukkha nirodha*), true happiness which comes from peace and calm (*santi-sukha*) in Buddhism. It can be achieved only having after the eradication of greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*). The method of gradual practice is represented as a model consisting of five principles of Dhamma that contributes to sustainable happiness. These Dhamma principles are the bases of generosity (*dāna*), morality (*sīla*), cultivation (*bhāvanā*) and the threefold training for the higher spirituality and the attainment of sustainable happiness in Theravāda Buddhism.

**Keywords:** Doctrines, Theoretical Method, Gradual Practice, Sustainable Happiness, Theravāda Buddhism

## Introduction

The doctrine of gradual practice is the vital concept to an endeavor to augment our wisdom in understanding the Buddha's doctrine (Dhamma) and its practices in Theravāda Buddhism. The term '*anupubbapaṭipadā*' in Pāli which the combination of two words "*anupubba+paṭipadā*" is a gradual practice which occurs step by step, of following in one's turn, successive, progressive, in regular order, cumulative manner, for the cessation of consciousness (*so tato amutra tato amutra anupubbena saññāggam...evarūpā anuppābhisaññā-nirodha-sampajāna*).<sup>33</sup> The gradual practice has two expressions that implies a kind of 'actual practice' and if we consider the meaning of *paṭipadā* as close to trainings (*sikkhā*) and performance (*kiriya*), we may take its sense of 'practice' and thus the *anupubbapaṭipadā* simply refers to moving through successive stages.<sup>34</sup> The doctrines of gradual practice is a combination of two words, '*anupubba*' which means regular, gradual or in regular order, by turn and '*paṭipadā*' means practice or gradual progress in practice, as a method or mode of progress of reaching the final goal.<sup>35</sup> The doctrines of gradual practice seem to be difficult for one who knows not how to practice it in step by step manner. When someone starts directly from some higher stage this is what can be called amateurish approach and obviously, brings nothing but frustration and experience difficulties when try to put it into practice. The concept of sustainable happiness is referred to the highest happiness (*paramaṃ sukhaṃ*), the ultimate peace (*paramaṃ santi*), the supramundane happiness (*lokuttara sukha*). It is true happiness which comes from peace and calm (*santi-sukha*) in Buddhism. It can be achieved only having after the eradication of cankers (*āsava*), defilements (*kilesa*) and fetters (*saṃyojana*). There is absolutely no suffering for the Buddha and his noble disciples because they have eradicated its causes: all defilements, craving and ignorance. That is why they have experienced the ultimate happiness which is truly sustainable happiness called *nibbāna (nibbānaṃ paramaṃ sukhaṃ)*.

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<sup>33</sup>D I 184; Vin II 237; Ud 53; Vism. p. 639.

<sup>34</sup>Margaret Cone, 2001, *A Dictionary of Pāli*, part I, (Oxford: PTS), p. 123.

<sup>35</sup>T.W. Rhys Davids and William Stede, 1921, eds., *The Pāli Text Society's Pāli-English Dictionary*, part I (A), (London: PTS), p. 18.

## Objectives of the Research

There are three objectives in this research, namely:

1. To study the doctrines of gradual practice (*anupubbapaṭipadā*) in Theravāda Buddhism,
2. To study the concept of sustainable happiness in Buddhism.
3. To propose a theoretical method of gradual practice for sustainable happiness in Theravāda Buddhism.

## Research Methodology

This is qualitative research consisting of six stages in the research process were conducted as follows:

1. Outline Construction/Problem Discussion: Outlining construction which signifies constructing the overall outline of the work in all related doctrinal concepts corresponding to the objectives.

2. Data Collection: Starting by collecting data from the primary and the secondary sources of Pāli and English languages.

3. In-depth interviews and development of Body of Knowledge: The in-depth interviews were carried out with 6 key-informants from the regional and international expertise who are monks and Buddhist scholar representatives with knowledge of Buddhism. They are: (1) Prof. Dr. Phra Dhamvajirabundit, Rector of MCU, Thailand; (2) Assoc. Prof. Dr. Phra Rajapariyattimuni, Dean of the Faculty of Buddhism, MCU, Wang Noi, Nakhon Si Ayutthaya, Thailand; (3) Prof. Dr. Phramahā Hansa Dhammaso, Director of International Buddhist Studies College (IBSC), MCU, Wang Noi, Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya, Thailand; (4) Prof. Dr. Ven. Khammai Dhammasami, DPhil (Oxford), Founder and Rector of Shan State Buddhist University, Taunggyi, Shan State, Myanmar; (5) Bhikkhu U Revata, Abbot of Heho Branch of Pa-Auk Meditation Center, Heho, Taunggyi, Shan State, Myanmar and (6) Cand.philol. Egil Lothe, President of the Buddhist Federation of Norway, Norway.

4. Creation of Ground Knowledge: Ground knowledge relating to gradual practice, the concept of sustainable happiness and the method.

5. Analysis, Synthesis, and Interpretation.

6. Finalizing a Completed Version of the Research: Identifying the significant research findings; compilation of the bodies of knowledge and insights. Then it is formulating conclusion, conducting discussion, as well as suggesting useful information for possible further researches.

## Research Findings

### 1. The Meaning of Gradual Practice in Theravāda Buddhism

The meaning of gradual practice has two expressions implies a kind of ‘actual practice’, and if we consider the meaning of *paṭipadā* as close to trainings (*sikkhā*) and performance (*kiriya*), we may take its sense of ‘practice’ and thus the *anupubbapaṭipadā* simply refers to moving successive stages.<sup>36</sup> The term ‘gradual practice’ is a combination of two words, ‘*anupubba*’ which means regular, gradual or in regular order, by turn<sup>37</sup> and ‘*paṭipadā*’ means practice or gradual progress in practice, as a method or mode of progress of reaching a goal or destination. According to A.P Buddhadatta, the term ‘*paṭipadā*’ means a line of conduct; mode of progress.<sup>38</sup> It is a mood of practice that transforms into goodness and then to the cessation of suffering. According to Sayādaw Khammai Dhammasami, the gradual practice can be applied with the mentality and understanding of the people, those who have dust in their eyes, they would be difficult to understand the Dhamma. For instance, four kinds of lotus that would be the beginning of *anupubbapaṭipadā*.

In Early Buddhism, there are various expositions of the meaning of gradual practice in the Buddhist scriptures the following examples are drawn from the Pāli *Nikāyas*. Gradual practice means step by step practice of the four main principles of Dhamma which to be cultivated, namely: - i) Moral or ethical discipline (*sīla*), ii) Meditative concentration (*samādhi*), iii) Understanding or wisdom (*paññā*) and *vimutti* comprehended by the noble disciple of the Buddha. It is mentioned in Dīghanikāya and Kathāvatthu as quoted:

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<sup>36</sup>Margaret Cone, 2001, p. 123.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid.

<sup>38</sup>A.P Buddhadatta Mahāthera, 1955, *Concise Pāli-English Dictionary*, (Ceylon: Ceylon University Press), p. 175.

*Sīlam samādhi paññā ca, vimutti ca anuttarā; Anubuddhā ime dhammā, gotamena yasassinā. Iti buddho abhiññāya, dhammamakkhāsi bhikkhunam; dukkhassantakaro satthā, cakkhumā parinibbuto'ti.*<sup>39</sup>

“Righteousness, earnest thought, wisdom, and freedom sublime. These are the truths realized by Gotama, far-renowned. Knowing them, he, the knower, proclaimed the truth to the breathe. The master with eye divine, the quencher of griefs, is at peace.”<sup>40</sup>

The Buddha defined the meaning of gradual practice in various ways according to the mentality and understanding of the people.<sup>41</sup> The meaning of *anupubbapaṭipadā* is the practice of following in one’s turn, successive, gradual, progressive, in regular order, the attainment of the cessation of consciousness occurs step by step (*so tato amutra tato amutra anupubbena saññāggam... evarūpā anuppābhisaññā-nirodha-sampajāna*).<sup>42</sup> The term *anupubbapaṭipadā* is combination of three words ‘*anu*’ means ‘step’, ‘*pubba*’ means ‘forward’ and ‘*paṭipadā*’ means practice. Hence, it is said step-by-step practice or gradual progression toward the cessation of suffering (*dukkha-nirodha*). The Buddha’s gradual talks or sermons (*ānupubbīkathā*) comprised of generosity (*dāna*), morality (*sīla*), heaven (*sagga*) and so on, in moving successive stages towards the final goal of Nibbāna. Now follows the controversy on ‘the gradual attainment of realization’, perhaps, those who are devoted to the Buddha’s teaching (Dhamma), they gradually remove their impurities by practicing accordingly, just as the smith removes little by little his dross from silver<sup>43</sup> (*anupubbena medhāvi, thokathokam khane khane, kammāro rajatasseva niddhame malamattano*).<sup>44</sup> It is very clear the meaning of gradual practice is nothing but the practice of threefold training, after having established in morality (*sīla*), a wise person should think of meditative concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*), an active and wise bhikkhu

<sup>39</sup>A IV 106; Kv I 115; D I 123.

<sup>40</sup>T.W. Rhys David, 1910, tr., *Dialogues of the Buddha*, vol III, (London: OUP), p. 132.

<sup>41</sup>Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli, 1995, tr., *Majjhimanikāya (The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha)*, ed., Bhikkhu Bodhi, (Kandy: BPS), pp. 35-38.

<sup>42</sup>D I 184; Vin II 237; Ud 53; Vism. p. 639.

<sup>43</sup>Achariya Buddharakkhita, 1985, tr., *The Dhammapada: The Buddha’s Path of Wisdom*, (Kandy: BPS), p. 80.

<sup>44</sup>Sn 962; Dh 239.

disentangles this lock.”<sup>45</sup> But the doctrines of gradual practice it seems theoretically a sequential and cumulative process and in practically it is indicated as integrated and interdependent of the whole process of cultivation.

## 2. Classification of Gradual Practice in the *Nikāyas*

In the *Nikāyas*, doctrines of gradual practice have been classified here into five methods. The Buddha enumerated different kinds of gradual method, according to the understating of the people both the laity and the recluses in the Buddha’s Dispensation. In this regard, the classification of gradual practice has been presented with systematic, cumulative and sequential in the respective *suttas*. The doctrines of gradual practice described according to the contexts; it has been mentioned in five of the following categories: (1) Twelfefold stages of Gradual Practice in the Dantabhumisutta, (2) Tenfold stages of Gradual Path-Factor in the Mahācattārisākasutta, (3) Ninefold stages of Gradual Talk of the Buddha, (4) Eightfold stages of Gradual Training in the Gaṇakamoggallānasutta and (5) Sevenfold stages of Gradual Purification in the Rathavinītasutta.

The list of five methods of the doctrines of gradual practice as shown on the following table 1:

Gradual Practice in the Pāli Nikāyas				
(Method 1)	(Method 2)	(Method 3)	(Method 4)	(Method 5)
1. <i>Dhamma/saddhā</i> 2. <i>Sīla</i> 3. <i>pabbajjā</i>	1. <i>Sammā-diṭṭhi</i> 2. <i>Sammā-saṅkappa</i> 3. <i>Sammā-vācā</i> 4. <i>Sammā-</i>	1. <i>Dāna</i> 2. <i>Sīla</i> 3. <i>Sagga</i> 4. <i>Kāmānaṃ</i>	1. <i>Sīla</i> 2. <i>Indriya samvara</i> 3. <i>Bhojane mattāññu</i>	1. <i>Sīla-visuddhi</i> 2. <i>Citta-visuddhi</i> 3. <i>Diṭṭhi-visuddhi</i> 4. <i>Kaṅka</i>

<sup>45</sup>Bhadantācariya Buddhaghosa, 2010, *The Path of Purification (Visuddhimagga)*, tr., Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli, (Kandy: BPS), p. 5.

<i>Indriyasamvara</i>	<i>kammanta</i>	<i>ādīnava</i>	<i>tā</i>	<i>vitaraṇa</i>
4. <i>Bhojanemattāñ ñutā</i>	5. <i>Sammā- ājīva</i>	5. <i>Nekkhāma</i>	4. <i>Jāgariya nu</i>	- <i>visuddhi</i> 5. <i>Maggama gañā</i>
5. <i>Jāgariyanuyuttā</i>	6. <i>Sammā- vāyāma</i>	6. <i>Dukkha</i>	<i>yuttā</i>	- <i>ṇadassana- visuddhi</i>
6. <i>Satisampajañña</i>	7. <i>Sammā- sati</i>	7. <i>Samudaya</i>	5. <i>Satisamp a</i>	6. <i>Paṭipadāñā ṇada</i>
7. <i>Nīvaraṇa pahāna</i>	8. <i>Sammā- samādhi</i>	8. <i>Nirodha</i>	<i>jañña</i>	- <i>ssana- visuddhi</i>
8. <i>cattāro satipaṭṭhāna</i>	9. <i>Sammā- ñāṇa</i>	9. <i>Magga</i>	6. <i>Vivittaṃ senāsana ṃ</i>	7. <i>Ñāṇadassana -visuddhi</i>
9. <i>Jhānāṅga</i>	10. <i>Sammā- vimutti</i>		7. <i>Nīvaraṇa pahāna</i>	
10. <i>Pubbenivāsānu sa</i>			8. <i>Jhānāṅga</i>	
- <i>ti-ñāṇa</i>				
11. <i>Dibbacakkhu- ñāṇa</i>				
12. <i>Āsavakkhaya- ñāṇa</i>				

From the table above, points out that since the standard of gradual practice proceeds progressively through the threefold division, the division of morality, the division of concentration and the division of wisdom. It is used of distinct types of cultivation as presented in the “Path of Purification” (Visuddhimagga). A comparison between the two discourses of the Buddha

pertaining to the gradual practice of three trainings, from the restraint of morality to imperturbability shows several variations, even though the account of gradual process of the practice. Although these three trainings clearly build on one another, this does not imply a rigid separation. The relationship between morality and wisdom can be illustrated with two hands that wash each other. Similarly, the threefold training: morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*) support each other and itself is a process of gradual purification, which requires patience, persistence and dedication.<sup>46</sup>

A comparison of accounts of the gradual practice sometimes started from *Dhamma/saddhā* as first step, someone practices from *dāna* as a first step, some *sammādiṭṭhi* as first step and some practice from *sīla* as a first step. But the morality (*sīla*) is common to all five methods. It is different only because of different mentality, understanding and development of the people's mind. Closer inspection suggests that such variations need not be problematized as reflecting contending accounts of the path of practice. Instead, they can more fruitfully be viewed as complementary. From the viewpoint of tendency, the later path accounts to become more fixed, such variation in presentation has the advantage of being less prone to misinterpretation, in the sense of mistaking what for the purpose of communication is presented separately as reflecting actually separate types of practices.

### 3. The Concept of Sustainable Happiness in Buddhism

In Theravāda Buddhism, happiness is a pleasant feeling, a mental state that born in the mind (*cetasikam sātām sukham*). According to P.A. Payutto, the term “*sukha*” means pleasure or happiness which is two kinds bodily happiness (*kāyika-sukha*) and mental happiness (*cetasika-sukha*) also it can be defined as carnal or sensual happiness (*sāmisa-sukha*) and spiritual happiness or the happiness independent of material things and sensual desires (*nirāmisa-sukha*).<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>Bhikkhu Moneyya, 2005, *Teaching and Training*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, (Singapore: Wave Publications), p. 10.

<sup>47</sup>P.A. Payutto, 2541, *Dictionary of Buddhism*, (Thai Version), (Bangkok: Buddhadhamma Foundation), p. 76.

The ultimate aim of all kinds of activity is for the attainment of sustainable happiness in Buddhism.

The sustainable happiness is referred to the highest happiness (*parama sukham*), the ultimate peace (*parama santi*), the supramundane happiness (*lokuttara sukha*). It can be achieved only having after the eradication of greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*), which included cankers (*āsava*), defilements (*kilesa*) and fetters (*saṃyojana*). It is true happiness which comes from peace and calm (*santi-sukha*) in Buddhism. The unbinding of the mind from the mental effluents (*āsavas*), defilements (*kilesas*), the round of rebirth (*vaṭṭa*), and from all that can be described or defined. As this term also denotes the extinguishing of a fire, it carries the connotations of stilling, cooling, and peace. That is to say, the threefold fire of greed, hatred, and delusion goes out in the heart due to lack of fuel. The extinguishing of this fire frees the mind from everything that binds it to the cycle of rebirth and the suffering experienced therein. Nibbāna represents absolute freedom, the supreme and sustainable happiness—the ultimate goal of the Buddhist gradual practice. This is how one can be achieved sustainable happiness in Buddhism. There is absolutely no suffering for the Buddha and his noble disciples because they have eradicated its causes: all defilements, cravings and ignorance. That is why they have experienced the ultimate bliss of nibbāna (*nibbānaṃ paramaṃ sukhaṃ*) which is truly sustainable in term of Buddhism.

#### 4. Levels of Happiness in Buddhism

In Theravāda Buddhism, happiness is a vital role in the Buddhist spiritual practice. The Buddha emphatically asserted that the happiness is not achieved by merely wishing. Whoever wants to achieve it, has to undertake the path of practice in order to achieve happiness (*sukhasaṃvattanikā paṭipadā*).<sup>48</sup> Happiness has been classified into various categories culminating the highest happiness found in the Buddhist scriptures. In Aṅguttaranikāya, there is a list of happiness (*sukhāni*), such as the happiness of family and the happiness of the life of recluse, the happiness of sense pleasures and the happiness of renunciation, the happiness of attachment and the happiness of detachment, physical happiness and mental happiness. It abounds in different ways of classifying people—both monastics and laypeople, noble ones

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<sup>48</sup>A III 48.

and ordinary people— and it gives primacy to their qualities, their struggles for happiness and meaning, their aspirations and attainments.<sup>49</sup> It has experienced happiness with deeper levels of concentration, the bliss and happiness of seclusion in Buddhism.<sup>50</sup> The Buddha identified three kinds of happiness: *dukkha-sukha*, the happiness that's dependent on the conditions of your life; *anicca-sukha*, the happiness that is based on our mind state; and *sukha-sukha*, the happiness that's independent of the conditions of your life or your mind state. The third type of happiness is the cessation that the Buddha talks about in the Third Noble Truth which refers to sustainable happiness. It focuses on working with all three types of happiness as part of spiritual practice as follows:

1) Sensory happiness (*kāma-sukha*): Happiness pertaining to sensuality is the satisfaction in pleasures of the senses called 'sāmisa sukha or sāmisa pīti'. Sensuality refers to the five senses are strands of the pleasant sensation, joy and happiness that arise from contact with these sense objects represent as the happiness or delightfulness of sensuality. The material shapes cognizable by the door or faculty of eyes (*cakkhu dvāra* or *cakkhu-indriya*), aggregable, pleasant, liked, enticing, connected with sensual pleasure, alluring. Sounds cognizable by the ear.... Smells cognizable by the nose.... Taste cognizable by the tongue.... Touches cognizable by the body.<sup>51</sup> But whatever pleasant or happiness arises in the consequences of these five sense faculties of sense-pleasures, this is the satisfaction or happiness in sense-pleasures.<sup>52</sup> Even sensory happiness has two kinds: (a) Immoral sensory happiness and (b) Moral sensory happiness. To give oneself up to indulgence in sensual pleasure (*kāma-sukha*), the base, common, vulgar, unholy, unprofitable while being finding the solution by the Buddha as said in the Dhammacakkapavattanasutta.

2) Serenity happiness (*jhāna-sukha*): It is also known as *nekkhammasukha*, happiness on renouncing sensual pleasure. For those who

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<sup>49</sup>Bhikkhu Bodhi, 2012, tr., *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Aṅguttaranikāya*, (Boston: Wisdom Publication), p. 25.

<sup>50</sup>G.P. Malalasekera, 2007, *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism*, vol VIII, (Sri Lanka: The Department of Buddhist Affairs, Ministry of Religious Affairs), p. 167.

<sup>51</sup>S IV 236.

<sup>52</sup>I.B. Horner, tr., *The Collection of Middle Length Sayings*, vol. I, p. 112.

practice *samatha* meditation (e.g., *ānāpānasati* or *kasiṇa*) know that it gives a pleasure that is different from any sensory pleasure. There are five kinds of happiness namely: (1) Gladdening (*pāmojja*), Happiness (*pīti*), Tranquility (*passaddhi*), Bliss (*sukha*), and (5) Concentration (*samādhi*), this happiness is a fruit of non-remorse (*avippaṭisāra*) which arise from restraining (*saṃvara*) of the discipline (*vinaya*), which are sustainably maintain the level of concentration (*samādhi*) where they are recognized as “The Fivefold Happiness”.<sup>53</sup> But, one who striving with wisdom (*paññā*), having strong determination to eradicate the cause of suffering can effectively overcome it. That is to say one should not practice just to experience the worldly happiness but diligently practice in order to access the highest happiness in the ultimate level, happiness attends freedom from the *āsava* (*ānāśava-sukha*) or happiness belongs to the ariyan (*ariya-sukha*).<sup>54</sup> It has been mentioned that the combination of conventional contradictory terms as ‘*upekkhā*’ and ‘*sukha*’ in the phrase “*uphekkhāko satimā sukha vihāراتي*,” as well as the presence of happiness even in the fourth stage of meditation absorption (*jhāna*), in which equanimity (*upekkhā*) is attained and in which joy and sorrow are said to be annihilated.<sup>55</sup> The mental happiness (*cetasika-sukha*) means that the mind is delighted, cheerful, not bothered by the power of defilement in mental doors: greed, hatred and delusion, the cause of sorrow and grief. The mental happiness is the state of mind that is usually bright, cheerful.<sup>56</sup>

3) Sustainable Happiness (*nibbāna-sukha*). Sustainable happiness is referred to the highest happiness (*parama sukhaṃ*), the ultimate peace (*parama santi*), the supramundane happiness (*lokuttara sukha*). It can be achieved only having after the eradication of greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*),

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<sup>53</sup>Sanu Mahatthanadull, 2019, “Theravāda Buddhist Practice and the Access of Happiness”, Commemorative Book, The 2<sup>nd</sup> International Academic Forum in Theravāda and Mahāyāna Buddhism, pp. 1-20.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid.

<sup>55</sup>Anagarika B. Govinda, 1936, *The Psychological Attitude of Early Buddhist Philosophy and its Systematic Representation According to Abhidhamma Tradition*, (Allahabad: The Allahabad Law Journal Press), pp. 84-85.

<sup>56</sup>Sanu Mahatthanadull et al, 2019, “A Conceptual Model of Bi-Dimensional Development for Happiness Access by Biofeedback Process”, *A Research Report Funded by National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT) Fiscal Year 2019*, (Buddhist Research Institute: MCU), pp. 86-87.

which included cankers (*āsava*), defilements (*kilesa*) and fetters (*saṃyojana*).<sup>57</sup> It is the cessation of suffering (*dukkha nirodhā*), true happiness which comes from peace and calm (*santi-sukha*) in Buddhism. The unbinding of the mind from the mental effluents (*āsavas*), defilements (*kilesas*), the round of rebirth (*vaṭṭa*), and from all that can be described or defined. As this term also denotes the extinguishing of a fire, it carries the connotations of stilling, cooling, and peace. That is to say, the threefold fire of greed, hatred, and delusion goes out in the heart due to lack of fuel. The extinguishing of this fire frees the mind from everything that binds it to the cycle of rebirth and the suffering experienced therein. The very fact that nibbāna is described, not as “happiness” but as the “highest happiness” should show that there are many levels of happiness below the nibbānic experience.<sup>58</sup> Nibbāna happiness represents as absolute freedom, the ultimate and sustainable—the ultimate goal of Buddhism.

From mentioned above kinds of happiness, it is to be remarked on *nirāmisā nirāmisataraṃ sukhaṃ* as sustainable happiness because it has been uprooted all the roots of wholesome and unwholesome (*kusala* and *akusala-mūla*) from the mind. It is the happiness of liberation (*vimutti-sukha*) which accompanied by wisdom, is of vital significance to our lives.

### **5. A Theoretical Method of Gradual Practice be Proposed for Sustainable Happiness in Theravāda Buddhism**

The theoretical method of gradual practice provides a framework on how to practice and attain sustainable happiness. There are several aspects of method in the list which demonstrably been mentioned of that course of practice, and which broadly resembling nothing but the noble eightfold path. It is proposed to be a model for sustainable happiness which to be achieved step-by-step progression. The method of gradual practice is represented as a model consisting of five principles of the Dhamma that contributes to sustainable happiness, namely: 1) The Gradual talks, 2) The Trainings, 3) The Practices, 4) The Right-Path and 5) The

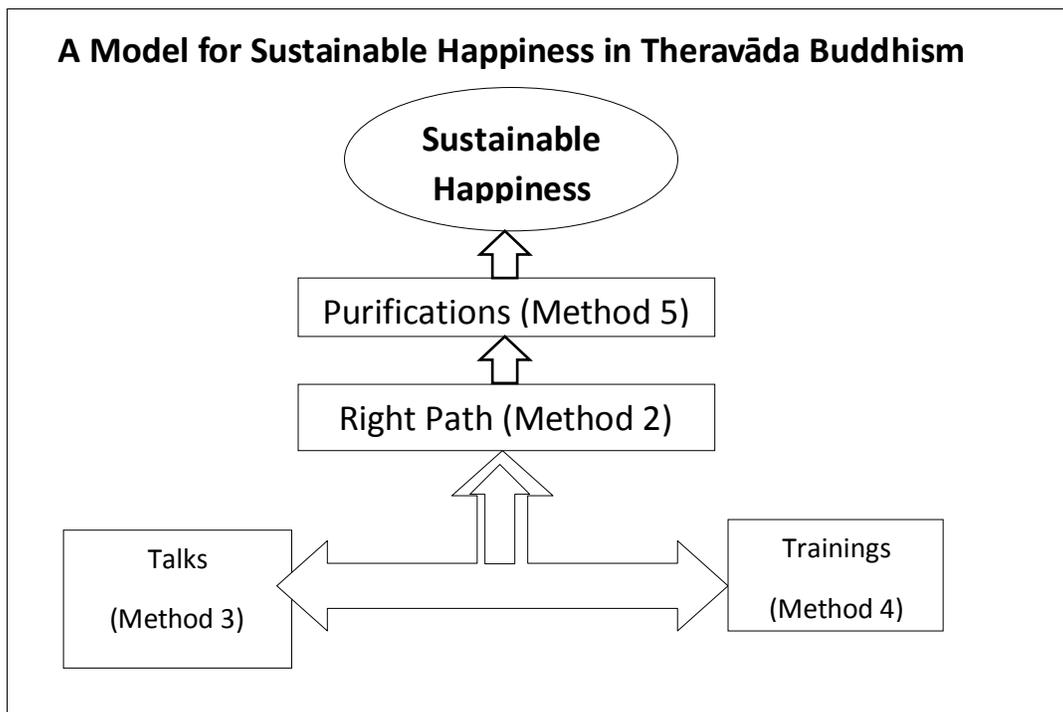
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<sup>57</sup>A IV 414.

<sup>58</sup>S IV 236-37: *Nirāmisā nirāmisataraṃ sukhaṃ: yaṃ kho bhikkhave khīṇāsavassa bhikkhuno rāgā cittaṃ vimuttaṃ paccavekkhato dosā cittaṃ vimuttaṃ paccavekkhato mohā cittaṃ vimuttaṃ paccavekkhato uppajjati sukhaṃ somanassaṃ, idaṃ vuccati bhikkhave nirāmisānirāmisataraṃ sukhaṃ.*

Purifications. These Dhamma principles are the bases of generosity (*dāna*), morality (*sīla*), cultivation (*bhāvanā*) and the threefold training consisting of morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*) for the higher spirituality and the attainment of sustainable happiness in Theravāda Buddhism.

The researcher has proposed the method of gradual practice entitled “A Theoretical Method of Gradual Practice for Sustainable Happiness in Theravāda Buddhism. The details are as follows.



**Figure 1:** The Five Principles of the Dhamma leads to Sustainable Happiness.

From the presented Model as shown above is for sustainable happiness by the gradual process of practice accordingly, life will flourish and realize secure, constant happiness. The figure demonstrates five methods consisting 46 factors of the Dhamma altogether for attaining supreme and sustainable happiness as shown on the table 1.

The Model suggests that the five methods of how the earnest practitioner can access sustainable happiness in this very life. The five methods are further detailed:

1. Talks (Method 3) referred to graduated talks or sermons (*anupubbikathā*), the progressive talks given by the Buddha to the lay devotees which consists of nine factors of Dhamma. They are: 1) Generosity (*dāna*), 2) Morality (*sīla*), 3) Heaven (*sagga*), 4) Danger in sensual pleasure (*kāmānaṃ ādīnava*), 5) Renunciation (*nekkhamma*), 6) Suffering (*dukkha*), 7) Cause/Origin (*samudaya*), 8) Cessation (*nirodhā*) and 9) Path (*magga*).

2. Trainings (Method 4) referred to gradual trainings (*anupubba-sikkhā*) consists of eight factors of Dhamma, namely: - doctrine of gradual training is eightfold which linked as the three joint compounds relating to the *Dhamma-vinaya*. They are: 1) Morality (*sīla*), 2) Sense-restraint (*indriyasamvara*), 3) Moderation in Eating (*bhojane mattaññutā*), 4) Wakefulness (*jāgariyā*), 5) Mindfulness and Clear Comprehension (*sati-sampajañña*), 6) Devotion to Seclusion (*vivittam senāsanaṃ*), 7) Eradication of Hindrances (*nīvaraṇa pahāya*), and 8) Factors of Absorption (*jhānaṅga*).

3. Practices (Method 1) referred to the gradual practice (*anupubbapaṭipadā*) consisting of twelve factors of the Dhamma, namely:- 1) Teaching/confidence/renunciation (*Dhamma/saddhā/pabbajjā*), 2) Morality (*sīla*), 3) Sense-restraint (*indriyasamvara*), 4) Moderation in eating (*bhojanemattaññutā*), 5) Wakefulness (*jāgariyanuyuttā*), 6) Mindfulness and Clear Comprehension (*satisampajañña*), 7) Overcoming of the Five Hindrances (*pañca nīvaraṇa pahāna*), 8) Four Foundations of Mindfulness (*cattāro saṭipatṭhāna*), 9) Factors of Absorption (*jhānāṅga*), 10) Knowledge of Past Lives (*pubbenivāsānussati-ñāṇa*), 11) Knowledge of Seeing with Divine Eye (*dibbacakkhu-ñāṇa*), 12) Knowledge of the Destruction of Cankers (*āsavakkhaya-ñāṇa*).

4. Right Path (Method 2) represents as the Middle Path (*Majjhima-paṭipadā*) consisting of eight factors followed by another two factors of the Dhamma, namely:- 1) the right view comes first, and how does right view come first of the following ways: 2) From right view (*sammā-ditṭhi*) comes right thought or intention, 3) From right thought (*sammā-saṅkappa*) comes right speech, 4) From right speech (*sammā-vācā*) comes right action, 5) From right action (*sammā-kammanta*) comes right livelihood, 6) From right livelihood (*sammā-ājīva*) comes right effort, 7) From right effort (*sammā-vāyāma*) comes right mindfulness, 8) From right mindfulness (*sammā-sati*) comes right meditative concentration, 9)

From right meditative concentration (*sammā-samādhi*) comes right knowledge, 10) From right knowledge (*sammā-ñāṇa*) comes right liberation, and 10) Right liberation (*sammā-vimutti*).

5. Purifications (Method 5) referred to gradual purification (*anupubba-visuddhi*), namely: - 1) Purification of Morality (*sīla-visuddhi*), 2) Purification of Mind (*citta-visuddhi*), 3) Purification of View (*ditṭhi-visuddhi*), 4) Purification of Doubt (*kaṅkavitarāṇa-visuddhi*), 5) Purification by knowledge about Path and Not Path (*maggamaggañāṇadassana-visuddhi*), 6) Purification by knowledge of Right and Wrong Practice (*paṭipadāñāṇadassana-visuddhi*) and 7) Purification by Knowledge (*ñāṇadassana-visuddhi*). These seven purifications are to be cultivated successively, each stage leading to and supporting the next, until liberation is attained. It implies that in the view of those who assert that clinging is due to a condition, sustainable happiness is without clinging means final liberation due to no condition. The unconditioned death-free element has not arisen on account of a condition, so they speak of it as final nibbāna, the sustainable happiness with clinging to nothing. This is the end, the peak, the goal of Buddhism.

The grounded on a steady basis of wholesome mental qualities for everyone. These qualities bring about a sense of inner wellbeing, and they spur people on to engage in wholesome deeds. By recollecting on the good they have done, people feel satisfied and delighted. This satisfaction enhances their sustained, secure sense of ease and wellbeing, and it goes hand in hand with the vital quality of wisdom. Wisdom safeguards the mind, preventing it from being dominated and overwhelmed by the rough currents of nature, and it facilitates the realization of liberation—the true and sustainable happiness in Buddhism.

The threefold training system gathers all important doctrines under one roof. These Dhamma principles work together to proceed to the ultimate goal—the liberation from suffering. All Dhammas in the system act as factors and connect to each other in such a way that they follow the process of factor and effect. Thus, in Buddhism, every practice of Dhamma is part of the process of the threefold training. The ultimate benefit according to the Buddhist principle is its role as a factor to support wisdom leading to the achievement of the final goal in the gradual practice. When *samādhi* is developed, the mind is appropriate for work. Its work is to cultivate wisdom—wisdom to investigate, to realize the *samādhi* in Buddhism.

The Three Characteristics (*tilakkhaṇa*) of impermanence (*aniccatā*), suffering (*dukkhatā*), and non-self (*anattatā*). The ability to know the true nature of all things with a liberated mind will lead us to the ultimate goal in Theravāda Buddhism

## Conclusion

The doctrine of gradual practice is for the purification of beings, for the eradication of all defilements such as craving, hatred and delusion. It is a line of conduct which resonate with our own life's journey, a mode of progress which is sequential and cumulative process to reach the final destination. It is to be cultivated step by step through various stages of Dhamma principles for the destruction of cankers (*āsavas*). The cessation of suffering has been referred as the sustainable happiness, the ultimate goal of Theravāda Buddhism. It is supramundane happiness (*lokuttara-sukha*) having after the destruction of all defilements (*kilesa*), cravings (*taṇhā*) and cankers (*āsava*) that eliminated greed, hatred, and delusion from one's mind. The implications of gradual practice give rise to the purification of bodily, verbal and mental actions. The insightful practice of Dhamma leads to the total destruction of cankers (*āsavakkhaya*). The theoretical method of gradual practice is not only for the devoted Buddhists but also for everyone can be practiced accordingly for the attainment of sustainable happiness and peace in this very life.

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Society.

## **The Concept of Ministration (*upaṭṭhāna*) in Theravāda Buddhism**

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### **Abstract**

This is a qualitative research consists of three objectives, namely:- 1) to study the meaning and types of ministration (*upaṭṭhāna*) in Theravāda Buddhist scriptures, 2) to study the significance of ministration (*upaṭṭhāna*) in Theravāda Buddhism, and 3) to suggest the practical ways of ministration (*upaṭṭhāna*) to modern society.

The finding show, the meaning of ministration (*upaṭṭhāna*) in Theravāda Buddhist scriptures refers to an act of generosity and kindness toward oneself as well as others. It is a good behavior and moral act of charity to help others for the well-being in society, which promote social harmony and universal peace and obstructs misery in the community. As a human being, our duty is to maintain mutual respect and strong relationship in living with different groups and communities, cultures and traditions. In this article the researcher discusses briefly the doctrine of Buddhist social teachings on *upaṭṭhāna* both in the Tipitaka Pāli canon, commentaries and its English translations. It is found that one can practice the teaching of ministration through bodily, verbally, and mentally for the welfare

of humankind and bring the peace and harmony to the society. So, in this sense the practical ways of ministration are one very effective tools to overcome from this critical situation of pandemic of covid-19.

**Keywords: ministration, *upaṭṭhāna*, significance, practical ways, modern society**

## Introduction

Buddhism is the teaching for social welfare and to make a good social relationship, the ministration is one of right livelihood which is one factor of noble eightfold path, venerable P.A. Payutto has mentioned “the Buddhist Middle Way applies also to the matter of the individual’s responsibility for himself or herself and for the sharing of social relationships.”<sup>59</sup> “Buddhist values through their occupations perhaps by choosing a service profession as a means of livelihood or by trying to make their workplace more humane and peaceful.”<sup>60</sup> Asst. Prof. Dr. Sanu Mahatthanadull and Dr. Sarita Mahatthanadull, “Holistic Well-beings Promotion for Balanced Way of Life according to Buddhist Psychology”<sup>61</sup> The way of social and moral beings, based on the human behavior and the way to being a well-being in the society, in both individual and socially.

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<sup>59</sup> Bhikkhu P. A. Payutto, *Vision of the Dhamma: A Collection of Buddhist Writings in English*, (Nakhon Pathom: Wat Nyanavesakavan, 2007 Thailand), 15.

<sup>60</sup> Sallie B. King, *Socially Engaged Buddhism*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2009), 7.

<sup>61</sup> Sanu Mahatthanadull and Dr. Sarita Mahatthanadull, “Holistic Well-beings Promotion for Balanced Way of Life according to Buddhist Psychology”, *A Research Report Funded by National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT) Fiscal Year 2016*, (Buddhist Research Institute: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, 2016), p. 41.

The teaching of Ministration in Buddhism is to spread humanity toward society. The ministration is a good conduct in the Pali Canon, it is found that the ministration is one of noble behavior. It is a practical action and also Dudley Wright and Edmund Mills, they have argued that “acts must include in their object the lessening of suffering in our fellow-men, regarding them as we regard ourselves, feeding the hungry, raising the fallen, and comforting the afflicted.”<sup>62</sup>

The practice of ministration brings happiness, here in this very life and in the next. One can be a good example in society by practicing the teaching of ministration oneself, which encourages and inspire others to practice, we should do such deeds that bring happiness, also it is the same as one guard and protect oneself as well as other living beings also can enjoy happiness long life and reborn in a happy and blissful realm after life, also able achieve a high and respectable person in the society. So, the practicing of Ministration through bodily, verbally, and mentally, is concerning the principles of practice or behavior to benefiting in a practical way, which can be considered as the foundation of harmonious in a sustainable society.

### **Objectives of the Research**

There are three objectives in this research, name:

1. To study the meaning and types of ministration (*upaṭṭhāna*) in Theravāda Buddhist scriptures.
2. To study the significance of ministration (*upaṭṭhāna*) in Theravāda Buddhism.

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<sup>62</sup> Dudley Wright, Edmund Mills, *A manual of Buddhism*, (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1912), 22.

3. To suggest the practical ways of ministration (*upaṭṭhāna*) to modern society.

## **Research Methodology**

This is qualitative research. There are five stages in the research process conducted altogether respectively as follows:

1. Outline Construction/Problems Discussion: Outlining construction which signifies constructing the overall outline of the work in all related dimensions corresponding to the objectives.

2. Data Collection: starting by collecting data from the primary source and the secondary sources among Pāli, and English languages.

3. Creation of Ground Knowledge: Ground knowledge relating to Buddhist ministration, significance, and suggest the practical way was created at this step.

4. Analyzing, Synthesis, and Interpretation: They will be carried out carefully by using the ground level-knowledge obtained in the previous step.

5. Finalizing a Completed Version of the Research: Starting by identifying significant research findings; compilation of bodies of knowledge and insights. Then it is formulating conclusions, conducting discussions, as well as suggesting useful information for possible further researches.

## **Research Findings**

### **1. Meaning of Ministration (*upaṭṭhāna*)**

The term ministration is an English word, which means as attendance, looking after, service, care, ministering,<sup>63</sup> an act the provision of assistance or care, the services of a minister of religion or of a religious institution.<sup>64</sup> In order to make clearer and more interested to the readers, the researcher will provide the meaning of *upaṭṭhāna* in different synonyms terms that found in the Theravāda Buddhist scriptures, as well as expounded the term by various scholars. In the pāli canon the term of ministration is literally translated multiple Pāli terms, such as *upaṭṭhāna*, *pāricariyā*, *paṭisanthāra*, *sevā*, *upakāraka*, *upaṭṭhāka*, *paccuggamana*, *sakkāra*, *sammāna*, *atthacariyā*.

In Buddhism it is an one of the meritorious deeds<sup>65</sup> *veyyāvacca*,<sup>66</sup> and it is one of 38 highest blessings, R.L. Soni has given the meaning of *upaṭṭhānaṃ* as adequately supporting, looking after properly, waiting on patiently and rendering proper service.”<sup>67</sup> According to the *Khuddakapāṭha* commentary Bhikkhu Ñānamoli mentioned that *upaṭṭhāna* means the furnishing of assistance by the provision of the four requisite-conditions for life together with the washing of feet, rubbing, anointing, and bathing.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> T. W. Rhys Davids, William Stede, (eds.), *The Pali Text Society's Pali-English Dictionary*, Part.V. (London: Pali Text Society, 1921), 142.

<sup>64</sup> Archie Hobson, (eds). *Oxford Dictionary of Difficult Words*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 277-8.

<sup>65</sup> Ashin Janakābhivaraṃsa, *Abhidhamma in Daily Life*, (Penang: Inward Path Publisher, Malaysia, 2012), 165.

<sup>66</sup> A III 41; J III 422. (veyyāvaccakammena).

<sup>67</sup> Khp 3., R.L. Soni, *Life's Highest Blessings: The Mahā Maṅgala Sutta* (Revised by Bhikkhu Khantipālo), (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1978), 24.

<sup>68</sup> Bhikkhu Ñānamoli, (tr.), *The Minor Readings (Khuddakapāṭha): The First Book of the Minor Collection*, (London: Pali Text Society, 1978), pp. 148-50.

The above discussion pointed out, the term ministration means, it is a social service for the betterment of the entire human society. As we live in society, it is our responsibility to maintain good relationships among us. Buddhism encourages such an attitude, and behaviors towards all sentient beings, and practicing ministration is the best approach to bring harmony to a sustainable society.

## 2 Types of Ministration (*upaṭṭhāna*)

According to the Itivuttaka, there are two kinds of gifts *āmisadānañca dhammadānañca*; the gift of material things and the gift of the Dhamma.<sup>69</sup> these two types of gifts It can be understood as material help such as, ministering as personal, physically, ministering on giving *āmisadānañca*.

In the Pali canon, we can see, whenever the Buddha preach to the people, Buddha started gradually to deliver the discourse and emphasized the significance of giving, “talk on giving; *dānakathaṃ*,”<sup>70</sup> and giving is the first meritorious deed of the three wholesome bases *dānamayaṃ puññakiriyavatthum*,<sup>71</sup> the basis of meritorious activity consisting in giving;<sup>72</sup> the base founded on gifts.<sup>73</sup> Whereas, Phra Brahmagunabhorn (P. A. Payutto), “helping with physical service, making an

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<sup>69</sup> Iti 101-2; Peter Masefield, (tr). *The Itivuttaka*, (Oxford: Pali Text Society, 2000), p. 99.

<sup>70</sup> Vin I 15; I. B. Horner, (tr). *The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Piṭaka) Vol.IV, (Māhavagga)*, (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1971), p. 27.

<sup>71</sup> A IV 241.

<sup>72</sup> Bhikkhu Bodhi, (tr). *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Aṅguttara Nikāya*, (Boston: Wisdom Publication, 2012), p. 1170.

<sup>73</sup> E.M. Hare (tr.), *The Book of the Gradual Sayings (Aṅguttara-Nikāya), Vol. IV (The Books of the Sevens, Eights and Nines)*, (London: PTS, 1978), p. 164.

effort to lend a hand to others in their activities; performing actions that are helpful to the community; including helping to resolve problems and promote morality.”<sup>74</sup>

The Buddha emphasized the basic human needs, the four requisites *cīvara-piṇḍapāta-senāsana-gilāna-paccaya-bhesajja-parikkhārā*; clothing, (robe) food, shelter, and medicine.<sup>75</sup> The above statement is very clear that the ministrations are social actions intended to benefit mankind, from the above passage, it is clear that the Bodily ministrations are done, through material support.

The *Dhammadāna*, the gift of the noble teaching, the dhammadāna, the Buddha emphasize “*sabbadānaṃ dhammadānaṃ jināti*; the gift of Dhamma excels all gifts,”<sup>76</sup> is the best so that it is called noble because through bodily and verbal ministrations, one only can help others to relief temporarily, but through *Dhammadāna*, that leads to the attainment of the Path and Fruition (*maggaphala*)<sup>77</sup> destruction of all defilements *kilesa*<sup>78</sup> and *āsava*,<sup>79</sup> which are the causes of suffering.

According to the above discussion, it is found that the ministrations (*upaṭṭhāna*) two types as material support *āmisadānañca* and gift of *Dhamma dhammadānañca*. The material support is an act of supporting with gifts, whereas *Dhammadāna* is to advice and instruction with kind words, and helpful behavior.

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<sup>74</sup> Bhikkhu P.A. Payutto, *A Constitution for Living: Buddhist Principles for a Fruitful and Harmonious Life*, (tr). Bruce Evans, (Bangkok: Sahathammika Co., Ltd., 2006), p. 21.

<sup>75</sup> A V 131; F. L. Woodward (tr.). *The Book of the Gradual Sayings (Anguttara-Nikāya)*. Vol. V (*The Book of The Tens and Elevens*). London: Luzac & Company, Ltd., 1972), p. 89.

<sup>76</sup> Dh 354; Acharya Buddhārakkhita, (tr). *The Dhammapada: The Buddha's Path of Wisdom*, (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1985), p. 77.

<sup>77</sup> Abhs 45.

<sup>78</sup> Vbh 246; Sn 61.

<sup>79</sup> M I 7; (three kinds of āsava: kāmāsavo, bhavāsavo, avijjāsavo).

Which is the essence and the principles of Buddhism on creating happiness and harmony in the human welfare principles to live happily together as well as the mental support for people to build unity.

### **3. Significance of ministration (*upaṭṭhāna*)**

The Buddha's teaching of ministration (*upaṭṭhāna*) is the core of humanity, the Buddha encourage us to cultivate the actions which brings benefit and welfare to both. In the pāli canon as *yvāyaṃ puggalo attahitāya ca paṭipanno parahitāya ca ayaṃ imesaṃ catunnaṃ puggalānaṃ aggo ca seṭṭho ca mokkho ca uttamo ca pavaro ca*; so the person practicing both for his own welfare and for the welfare of others is the foremost, the best, the preeminent, the supreme, and the finest of these four persons.<sup>80</sup> It is very clear that the one who practice for both the benefit and welfare is the greatest, the chief, the best noblest person for types of person in the society.

According to Mahāparinibbāna Sutta, the Buddha highlighted the individual significance of ministration is to practice the Dhamma properly and perfectly fulfils the Dhamma, which is the best way to honor and respect to the Buddha, that Buddha expounded in the to the disciples. *Anudhamma-cāri, so Tathāgathaṃ sakkaroti garukaroti māneti pūjeti paramāya pūjāya*; The Buddha appeals to the disciples to honour Him by practicing the Dhamma, in resorting to moral conduct and not by material offerings.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> A II 95; Bhikkhu Bodhi, tran., *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Aṅguttara Nikāya*, (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2012), p. 477.

<sup>81</sup> D II 138; Ven. Pategama Gnarama, *The Mission Accomplished: A Historical Ananlysis of the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta of the Digha Nikaya of the Pali Canon*, (Singapore: Ti-Sarana Buddhist Association, 1997), p. 194.

The doctrines of “*attasammāpaṇidhi*”<sup>82</sup> establishing oneself rightly and to establish oneself firmly in virtue and a right way of life.<sup>83</sup> It is one of the noble qualities of the Dhamma *paccattaṃ veditabbo vinnūhī*;<sup>84</sup> and highest blessings, which means to be seen by each wise person by themselves. The Buddha has encouraged in many discourses as *atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussānaṃ*.<sup>85</sup> Phra Brahmaganabhorn (P.A. Payutto), the term *upaṭṭhāna* means as careful attention which is one of higher states of mind and the function of mindfulness is to attend to or oversee (*upaṭṭhāna*) the mind.<sup>86</sup> With this statement, it is clear the individual significance of ministration means to practice oneself in order to develop in right way, which is good for oneself as well as for the good, welfare, and happiness of many people, of devas and human beings.

In the Anguttara Nikāya the Buddha highlighted ‘Giving’<sup>87</sup> giving is one of the best ways to support others, one who wishes to continue a family tradition of giving; wishing to support those who do not cook for themselves; because great sages of the past were supported by alms; because giving leads to mental calm, joy and gladness; or because giving enriches the heart and equips it for meditation. Furthermore, Peter Harvey also stated that a person may initially focus on generating *puñña*, perhaps by acts of *dāna*.<sup>88</sup> According to him giving is not only

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<sup>82</sup> Khp 3.

<sup>83</sup> Bhikkhu P.A. Payutto, *A Constitution for Living: Buddhist Principles for a Fruitful and Harmonious Life*, Bruce Evans (tr), (Bangkok: Sahathamika Co., Ltd., 2006), p. 35.

<sup>84</sup> A III 356.

<sup>85</sup> A III 356.

<sup>86</sup> P. A. Payutto, *Buddhadhamma: The Laws of Nature and their Benefits to Life*, Robin Philip Moore, (tr). (Bangkok: Buddhadhamma Foundation, 2017), 659, 1389.

<sup>87</sup> Bhikkhu Bodhi, (tr.), *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Anguttara Nikāya*, (Boston: Wisdom Publication, 2012), pp. 1041-43.

<sup>88</sup> Peter Harvey, An Analysis of factors Related to the Kusala/Akusala Quality of Actions in the Pāli Tradition, “*Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*,” Vol.33:1-2. (2011), p. 203.

to contribute to his or her future worldly happiness but then also to help give a supporting basis for the path to Nibbana.

The above studies, pointed out, the significance of self ministration is to establishing oneself rightly and to establish oneself firmly in virtue and a right way of life. The significance Ministration to other is to practice to supporting through material, and emotional support that is to give something and encouragement to someone. Which can be played an important role in encourages and make positive emotional energy to those who are in stress and depress conditions in this present situation, most of the people are facing trouble in this trying pandemic.

#### **4. Practical ways of ministration (*upaṭṭhāna*) to modern society**

The Buddha's teaching of *sārāṇiyadhamma* is the practical of ways of ministration, according to *sārāṇiya sutta*, the Buddha recommended *cha sārāṇiya dhamma; mettā-kāyakamma, mettā-vacīkamma, mettā-manokamma, sādharmaṇa-bhogī, sīla-sāmaññatā, diṭṭhi-sāmaññatā*, T.W., and C.A.F. Rhys Davids translated as “six occasions of fraternal living,” and Maurice Walshe as “six things conducive to communal living.”<sup>89</sup> The Buddha always encourages to use pleasant words, charming characters, patience, honesty, and kindness, in order to generate friendliness and the feelings of respect. That promotes unity and harmony among the sangha, but these can be applied same harmonious in the society also.

The serving and support of others is a compassion one characteristic of the four-sublime abode *bhrahmavihara*. Asst. Prof. Dr. Sanu Mahatthanadull also has mentioned that on a social level, the community inevitably turns into a quality

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<sup>89</sup> D III 245-6; T.W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids (trs.), *Dialogues of the Buddha Translated from the Pali of the Dīgha Nikāya*, Part III, (London: Humphrey Milford Oxford University Press, 1921), p. 231; Maurice Walshe, (tr.), *The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya*, (Boston: Wisdom Publication, 1995), p. 499.

society that members treat each other with loving-kindness, compassion and having the ability to scrutinize what's right or wrong, not taking advantage of each other.<sup>90</sup> The Buddha teachings can be found into two levels as conventional and ultimate, and the teaching of ministration is considered as conventional because the teaching of ministration is at the social level.

Model to apply the ministration in practical ways to modern society		
	Practice	Outcome
	<i>Upaṭṭhāna</i>	Mutual relationships Peace, happiness Harmony, Trustworthy,
	<i>pāricaiya</i>	
	<i>Paṭisanthāra</i>	
	<i>sevā</i>	
	<i>upakāraka</i>	
	<i>Upaṭṭhāka</i>	
	<i>paccuggamana</i>	
	<i>sakkāra</i>	
	<i>sammāna</i>	
	<i>atthcariya</i>	
	<i>Piyavāca</i>	

The above model shows the practical way of ministration to the modern society, and the outcome of it. In order to apply the teaching of ministration one

<sup>90</sup> Sanu Mahatthanadull, "Buddhist Response to Environmental Degradation under Conceptual Framework of the Five Niyāma", *Proceedings Document*, The 1st MCU International Academic Conference (MIAC) on Buddhism and World Crisis, Graduate School, May 29, 2015, (BKK: MCU Printing), p. 71.

must establish himself perfectly in pure conduct by bodily, verbally and mentally which is welfare and benefits to oneself as well as other, that will be no distractions caused and not endangered from any side. At the same time, one should so guard the door of his senses with mindful that he may not be attracted or fascinated by anything which is perceived by his senses. In shortly, it is understood that to apply the practical ways of ministration, one should develop oneself with the purification of morality, concentration, and wisdom, which leads the peace, harmony, and mutual relationship to the society.

According to Phra Brahmaganabhorn (P.A. Payutto), the term *Sārāṇiya-dhamma* is translated as the principle for harmony and conditions leading to mutual recollection. Furthermore, he has explained the way to observed as follows:

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**1) Mettā-kāyakamma:** friendly action; [members of the community] each show friendliness and goodwill to their colleagues, associates, and fellow community members by willingly helping them in their duties, and bearing a courteous and respectful manner, both in their presence and in their absence.

**2) Mettā-vacīkamma:** friendly speech; they each inform the others what is of benefit; they teach or advise them with a heart of goodwill; they say only polite and respectful words to them, both in their presence and in their absence

**3) Mettā-manokamma:** friendly thoughts; they establish their minds in goodwill, thinking of ways to be of service to each other; looking at each other in a good light, having a pleasant and congenial attitude toward each other.

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<sup>91</sup> Bhikkhu P.A. Payutto, *A Constitution for Living: Buddhist Principles for a Fruitful and Harmonious Life*, Bruce Evans (tr.), (Bangkok: Sahathamika Co., Ltd., 2006), p. 23-4.

4) **Sādhāraṇa-bhogī**: sharing of gains; they share with each other whatever gains have been rightfully acquired, seeing to it that even small things are distributed equally to all.

5) **Sīla-sāmaññatā**: moral harmony; they maintain virtuous conduct, abide by community rules and regulations, and do not conduct themselves in ways that are objectionable or damaging to the community.

6) **Diṭṭhi- sāmāññatā**: harmony of views; they respect and honour each other's views; they have reached consensus or agreed upon the main principles; they adhere to the same ideals, principles of virtue or ultimate aims.

It is very clear that the teachings of *sārāṇīya-dhamma* are the best way to practice making for affection, which creates feelings of respect for each other. It is a manner of expression to respecting one another and working manner of being friendly talk each other with softly and politely, in short, it is understood that the teachings of *sārāṇīya-dhamma* are the foundation to having mutual rules and regulations in working and share the justice which is benefits in every aspect. therefore *sārāṇīya-dhamma* is very useful and applicable teaching for the society and they can connect with not only the harmonious unity but also the end of suffering or the highest goal of happiness.

As the above discussion points out, in the Buddhist teaching the practice of ministration is highly valued and encouraged. The ministration (*upaṭṭhāna*) is social activities to the cultivation of meritorious deeds, which lead one to a happy throughout the life, considered as the foundation of harmonious society. The practical ways of ministration are the act of bodily, verbally and mentally of goodwill and thinking well of others; wishing to assist others; cheerful manner. This leads to community life, one must give priority to the interest of the

community above one's own interest for, this is the only way to harmonize to all the individuals of the community together. One who practices the teaching of ministration for oneself as well as to others can make a better connection, when they can feel our helping nature and understand, they also minister to us in return, which is the result of a good relationship.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, ministration in Buddhism is a social action of social service for the betterment and maintain good relationship and a meritorious deed, which brings welfare and beneficial to others, but to oneself as well. The teaching of ministration is practice in both monastics and laity in the past as well as present. Moreover, the teaching of ministration, is not applied only for the Buddhist communities but it could be applied and treated same way of ministering in different societies and religions. The ways of Ministration is applicable during the current situation of the pandemic Covid-19. We can practice the ministration to help the people, through bodily, verbally, and mental ministration, those who are infected with this pandemic. Bodily ministration is by giving materials and financial help, the doctor takes care of the patients at the hospital. The age of technology made it easy to practice the Verbal ministration, by speaking kind words, such as “take care, soon recovery etc.” Mental ministration, we can share merits and wish for their safety, good health, and happiness, after practicing meditation every morning and evening.

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# The Doctrine of *Kamma* : A Buddhist Perspective

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## Abstract

This article clearly details Kamma and all the relevances of Kamma in the Buddha's teachings. The meaning of Kammas is elaborated as well as Kamma as of the Five Universal Laws, The Kinds of Kamma in case of their function, Intensity and time. It also points out the cause of Kamma which lead people to be born in good ways or bad ways. According to Buddhism, because what ones have done ones' deeds with wholesome and/or unwholesome intentions, the bad and/or good fruitions happen to ones' lives and make ones be happy or suffering within both mind (Nāma) and matter (Rūpa). However, the Lord Buddha not only points out the cause and effect of Kammas but also guides the bright way to cease all the Kammas and to destroy the circle of life. It is very crucial that people must observe and be aware of their Kamma.

## 1. Introduction

Among all religious prophets or the founders of all religions, *Gotama*, the Recluse or the Buddha said that he was a human-being who lived in chastity with a very simple life. He did not claim that he was directly authorized to be a god or owned any superstition. He taught his disciples that his enlightenment and his achievement of the eye of wisdom were gained by his own effort and the use of wisdom, and so did other human-beings. He said "*One is one's own refuge.*"

Man's position in Buddhism is the state that completely refuses the superstition, but derives from the Dependent Origination, that is, after existence, all states then gradually decline under the process of conditioned arising, with four main essences, that is; 1. Human-beings are

their own masters; Buddhism refuses the belief in the creator, but believes in the law of cause and effect. 2. Human-beings are under no other power. 3. Human-beings can escape from suffering with their own efforts and wisdom. 4. One is one's own refuge. (Graduate School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya Buddhist University, 1997, p. 103)

According to the life of the Buddha, after attaining the enlightenment, the Buddha wandered from place to place throughout the country. He concentrated on preaching his doctrine mainly for moral upliftment of mankind, through cultivation of virtues like friendliness and charity, wisdom and compassion, renunciation and meditation, as well as non-violence and loving-kindness. He taught the people and showed them the way of purity, peace and happiness, here and hereafter. We call his teachings '*Dhamma*'.

The term '*Dhamma*' is variously translated as '*doctrine, truth, law, norm, duty and nature*'. The *Dhamma* is held as the essence of Buddhism and is regarded more important than the Buddha, as Hackmann H Lic Theol remarks "*the great importance than the life of the Buddha is his teaching.*" (Hackmann H Lic Theol, 1982, p. 7) Even the Buddha himself had regarded the *Dhamma* (doctrine) and *Vinaya* (discipline) as most important and placed them as the teacher and guiding principles for his followers, after his passing away. He told his disciples "*the Truth (Dhamma) and the Rules of the Order (Vinaya) which I have set forth and laid down for you all, let them, after I am gone, be your teacher.*" (SBE.XI., 11)

For forty-five years, the Buddha wandered and taught his numerous doctrines to people. He taught different doctrines to different kinds of people according to their situation, tendency and potentiality. (Phra Saneh Dhammavaro, 2001, pp. 8-9.) His main and most essential doctrines are; the Three Characteristics (*Tilakkhana*), the Four Noble Truths (*Ariyasacca*), the Noble Eightfold Path (*Atthangikamagga*), the Dependent Origination (*Paticcasamuppada*), the Action (*Kamma*), the Salvation (*Nibbana*) etc.

The main points of this article will be devoted to a discussion of the *Kamma* (Action) in Buddhism i.e. the Kind of *Kamma*, the Causes of *Kamma*, the Fruition of *Kamma*, *Kamma* and Rebirth and the Cessation of *Kamma* etc.

## **2. The Meaning of *Kamma***

According to the Buddhist thought, the word '*kamma*' is defined more specifically as based on intention or deeds willfully done. Intention instigates and directs to all human actions, both creative and destructive, and is, therefore, the essence of *kamma* as given in the *Anguttaranikāya* "*Cetanāham bhikkave kammam vadāmi cetayitvā kammam karoti kāyena vācāya manasā.*" (A.III., 415) (Monk! Intention (*Cetanā*), I say, is *kamma*. Having willed, we create *kamma*, through body, speech and mind.). Actions which are willed deliberately and

manifest themselves are called *kamma* because they are the potential causes of future results. “The other deeds which are unintentional or unaccompanied by volition do not bring about any future results.” (Phra Khantipalo, 1993, p. 32)

Moreover, it is expounded about its meaning by the Commentators of Buddhism in the contemporary world as follows:

*Thanissaro Bhikkhu* explains that the doctrine of *kamma* (karma-action) is one of the Buddha’s central teachings. There is a modern myth that he simply picked up his ideas on *kamma* from the prevalent worldview in his days, and that they aren’t really integral to his message. Nothing could be further from the truth. Early Buddhists often cited the Buddha’s teaching on *kamma* as one of the prime teachings that set him apart from his contemporaries, and a study of his teachings on *kamma* will show that they underlie everything else he taught.

*Buddhadasa Bhikkhu* stated that *Kamma* is attachment (*upādhi*) or burden. When one performs *kamma*, life happens according to *kamma*; that is, one is bound by *kamma* no matter whether it is good or evil *kamma*. Good *kamma* makes one laugh and bad *kamma* makes one cry, but both weary us almost to death. Even so, people still like to laugh since they misunderstand that good *kamma* is great virtue. When *kamma* does not bind our lives, it is as if there are no chains on our legs, whether iron chains or diamond-studded golden chains. Life becomes a burden when it is weighed down by *kamma* and we have to carry and support it. The end of *kamma* makes our lives light and free, but only a few people appreciate this as it is obscured by the veils of *atta* (self).

*Payutto Bhikkhu*, (Bhikkhu P.A. Payutto, 1995, p. 6) mentioned that *Kamma* means ‘work’ or ‘action’. But in the context of *Dhamma*, we define it more specifically as ‘action’ based on intention (*cetanā*) or ‘deeds willfully done’. Actions that are free of intention are not considered to be *kamma* in the Buddha’s teaching.

*Pesala Bhikkhu* also said that *Kamma* means any intentional action done by body, speech, or mind. It is the inner intention that the Buddha called *kamma*, not the outward deed.

*Sayadaw U Thittila*, stated that *Kamma* is a *Pali* word, meaning action. It is called *Karma* in Sanskrit. In its general sense, *Kamma* means all good and bad actions. It covers all kinds of intentional actions whether mental, verbal or physical thoughts, words and deeds. In its ultimate sense, *Kamma* means all moral and immoral volitions.

*Venerable Nārada* also argued that *Kamma* is the law of moral causation. Rebirth is its corollary. Both *Kamma* and Rebirth are interrelated, fundamental doctrines in Buddhism. Although Buddhism denies the existence of an unchanging and substantial soul, it believes in

the transmigration of the *Kamma* and souls. A complex of psychophysical elements and states change from moment to moment, the soul with its five *Khandhas* (Groups of Elements) i.e., Corporeality (*Rūpakkhandha*), Feeling (*Vedanākkhandha*), Perception (*Saññākkhandha*), Mental Formation (*Sankhārakkhandha*), and Consciousness (*Viññānakkhandha*)-ceases to exist; but the *Kamma* of the deceased survives and becomes a *Viññāna* (Consciousness) in the womb of a mother. This *Viññāna* is that aspect of the soul reincarnated in a new individual. (Nārada, 1988, p. 333)

*Oliver Leaman* says that a Sanskrit term for ‘deeds’ (*Pāli, kamma*) which represents intentional action, acting on the basis of a motive and a desire. This determines the actor’s fortune in this life and possibly the next, and links the actor with *sansāra*, the cycle of death and rebirth. (Oliver Leaman, 2004, p. 158)

### 3. *Kamma* as of the Five Universal Laws

Although Buddhism teaches that *Kamma* is the chief cause of the inequalities in the world, it does not teach fatalism or the doctrine of predestination, for it does not hold the view that everything is due to past actions. The law of cause and effect (*Kamma*) is the only one of the twenty-four causes described in Buddhist philosophy, or one of the five orders (*Niyamas*) which are laws in themselves and operate in the universe. They are; (1) *Utuniyama*, physical inorganic order, e.g., seasonal phenomena of winds and rains. The unerring order of seasons, characteristic seasonal changes and events, causes of winds and rains, nature of heat, etc., belong to this group. (2) *Bijaniyama*, order of germs and seeds (physical organic order) e.g., rice produced from rice seed, sugary taste from sugar cane or honey, peculiar characteristics of certain fruits, etc. The scientific theory of cells and genes and physical similarity of twins may be ascribed to this order. (3) *Cittaniyama*, order of mind or psychic law, e.g., processes of consciousness, arising and perishing of consciousness, constituents of consciousness, power of mind, telepathy, telesthesia, retro-cognition, premonition, clairvoyance, clairaudience, thought-reading, all psychic phenomena which are inexplicable to modern science are included in this class. (4) *Kammaniyama*, order of act and result, e.g., desirable and undesirable acts produce corresponding good and bad results. As surely as water seeks its own level so does *Kamma*, given opportunity, produce its inevitable result, not in the form of a reward or punishment but as an innate sequence. This sequence of deed and effect is as natural and necessary as the way of the moon and stars. (5) *Dhammaniyama*, order of the norm, e.g., the natural phenomena occurring at the advent of a Bodhisattva in his last birth. Gravitation and other similar laws of nature, the reason for being good and so forth may be included in this group. (*Abhidhammavatara*. p. 54)

The first four *niyāma* are contained within or are based on the fifth one. The following illustration of *Dhammaniyāma* is given that just like the word ‘*the populace*’ or ‘*the people*’ also includes different categories of positions of people such as police, soldier, prime minister, etc.

To be more clarified, let us look at the chart given below: (Phramaha Suvin Ruksat, 1998, pp. 89-90)

<i>Dhammaniyāma</i>	
<i>Utuniyāma</i>	<i>Bījanīyāma</i>
<i>Cittanīyāma</i>	<i>Kammanīyāma</i>

These five orders embrace everything in the world and every mental or physical phenomenon could be explained by them. They being laws in themselves require no lawgiver and *Kamma* as such is only one of them.

#### 4. The Kinds of *Kamma*

We come across to the other kinds of *kamma*, according to the commentaries, (*Vism.*, 600-602) *kamma* can be divided into twelve kinds which are subdivided into four groups, as follows:

##### A. Based on Function

**1. *Janakakamma* or Reproductive *Kamma*,** every birth is conditioned by a past good or bad *karma*, which predominated at the moment of death. *Karma* that conditions the future birth is called Reproductive *Karma*. The death of a person is merely ‘*a temporary end of a temporary phenomenon*’. Though the present form perishes, another form which is neither the same nor absolutely different takes its place, according to the potential thought-vibration generated at the death moment, because the Karmic force which propels the life-flux still survives. It is this last thought, which is technically called Reproductive (*janaka*) *Karma*, that determines the state of a person in his subsequent birth. This may be either a good or bad *Karma*.

According to the Commentary, Reproductive *Karma* is that which produces mental aggregates and material aggregates at the moment of conception. The initial consciousness, which is termed *patisandhi* (rebirth consciousness), is conditioned by this Reproductive (*janaka*) *Karma*. Simultaneous with the arising of the rebirth-consciousness, there arise the ‘*body-decade*’, ‘*sex-decade*’ and ‘*base-decade*’ (*kāya-bhāva-vatthu dasakas*) decade meaning

10 factors; (a) The body-decade is composed of the element of extension (*pathavi*), the element of cohesion (*Apo*), the element of heat (*tajo*), and the element of motion (*vāyo*), (b) The four derivatives (*upadana rupa*); colour (*vanna*), odour (*gandha*), taste (*rasa*) and nutritive essence (*oja*), these eight elements (*mahabhata* 4 and *upadana* 4) are collectively called *Avinibhoga Rupa* (indivisible form or indivisible matter), (c) Vitality (*jivitindriya*) and Body (*kaya*) these ten elements (*avinibhoga* 8, *jivitindriya* 1, and *Kaya* 1) are collectively called “*Body-decade*” (*Kaya dasaka*).

Sex-decade and base-decade also consist of the first nine, sex (*bhava*) and seat of consciousness (*vathu*) respectively (i.e. eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body). According, it is evident that the sex of a person is determined at the very conception of a being. It is conditioned by *Karma* and is not a fortuitous combination of sperm and ovum cells. The pain and happiness one experiences in the course of one’s lifetime are the inevitable consequence of Reproductive *Kamma*.

**2. Upatthambhakakamma or Supportive Kamma**, which comes near the Reproductive (*janaka*) *Kamma* and supports it. It is neither good nor bad and it assists or maintains the action of the Reproductive (*janaka*) *Karma* in the course of one’s lifetime. Immediately after conception till the moment of death, this *Karma* steps forward to support the Reproductive *Karma*. A moral supportive (*kusalaupathambhaka*) *Karma* assists in giving health, wealth, happiness etc. to the being born with a moral Reproductive *Karma*. An immoral supportive *Karma*, on the other hand, assists in giving pain, sorrow, etc. to the being born with an immoral Reproductive (*akusalajanaka*) *Karma*, as for instance to a beast of burden.

**3. Upapilakakamma or Obstructive Kamma** which, unlike the former, tends to weaken, interrupt and retard the fruition of the Reproductive *Karma*. For instance, a person born with a good Reproductive *Karma* may be subject to various ailments etc., thus preventing him from enjoying the blissful results of his good actions. A human being, on the other hand, who is born with a bad Reproductive *Karma* may lead a comfortable life by getting good food, lodging, etc., as a result of his good counteractive or obstructive (*upabidaka*) *Karma* preventing the fruition of the evil Reproductive *Karma*.

**4. Upaghātakakamma or Destructive Kamma**, According to the law of *Karma*, the potential energy of the Reproductive *Karma* could be nullified by a mere powerful opposing *Karma* of the past, seeking an opportunity, may quite unexpectedly operate, just as a powerful counteractive force can obstruct the path of a flying arrow and bring it down to the ground. Such an action is called Destructive (*upaghataka*) *Karma*, which is more effective than the

previous two that is not only obstructive but also destroys the whole force. This Destructive *Karma* also may be either good or bad.

As an instance of operation of all the four, the case of *Devadatta*, who attempted to kill the Buddha and who caused a schism in the *Sangha* (disciples of the Buddha) may be cited. His good Reproductive *Karma* brought him birth in a royal family. His continued comfort and prosperity were due to the action of the Supportive *Karma*. The Counteractive or Obstructive *Karma* came into operation when he was subject to much humiliation as a result of his being excommunicated from the *Sangha*. Finally, the Destructive *Karma* brought his life to a miserable end.

## **B. Based on Intensity**

**1. *Garukakamma* or *Weighty Karma***, this is either weighty or serious – may be either good or bad. It produces its results in this life or in the next for certain. If good, it is purely mental as in the case of *Jhana* (ecstasy or absorption). Otherwise, it is verbal or bodily. On the Immoral side, there are five immediate effective heinous crimes (*pancanantariyakarma*) namely matricide, patricide, the murder of an *Arahant*, the wounding of a Buddha, and the creation of a schism in the *Sangha*. Permanent Scepticism (*Niyatamicchaditthi*) is also termed one of the *Weighty (garuka) Karmas*. If, for instance, any person was to develop the *jhana* (ecstasy or absorption) and later was to commit one of these heinous crimes, his good *Karma* would be obliterated by the powerful evil *Karma*. His subsequent birth would be conditioned by the evil *Karma* in spite of his having gained the *jhana* earlier. *Devadatta* lost his psychic power and was born in an evil state, because he wounded the Buddha and caused a schism in the *Sangha*. King *Ajatasattu* would have attained the first stage of Sainthood (*Sotapanna*) if he had not committed patricide. In this case, the powerful evil *Karma* acted as an obstacle to his gaining Sainthood.

**2. *Bahulakamma, Acinnakamma* or *Habitual Karma***, It is that which one habitually performs and recollects and for which one has a great liking. Habits whether good or bad becomes ones second nature, tending to form the character of a person. At unguarded moments, one often lapses into one's habitual mental mindset. In the same way, at the death-moment, unless influenced by other circumstances, one usually recalls to one's mind habitual deeds. *Cunda*, a butcher, who was living in the vicinity of the Buddha's monastery, died yelling like an animal because he was earning his living by slaughtering pigs. King *Dutthagamini* of Ceylon (Sri Lanka) was in the habit of giving alms to the *Bhikkhus* (monks) before he took his own meals. It was his habitual *Karma* that gladdened him at the dying moment and gave him birth in the *Tusita* heaven.

**3. *Āsannakamma* or Proximate *Kamma***, this is that which one does or remembers an action immediately before the moment of dying. Owing to the great part, it plays in determining the future birth, much importance is attained to this deathbed (*asava*), *Karma* in almost all Buddhist countries. The customs of reminding the dying man of good deeds and making him do good acts on his deathbed still prevails in Buddhist countries. Sometimes a bad person may die happily and receive a good birth if he remembers or does a good act at the last moment. A story runs that a certain executioner who casually happened to give some alms to the Venerable *Sāriputta* remembered this good act at the dying moment and was born in a state of bliss. This does not mean that although he enjoys a good birth, he will be exempt from the effects of the evil deeds that he accumulated during his lifetime. They will have their due effect as occasions arise. At times, a good person may die unhappy by suddenly remembering an evil act of his or by harboring some unpleasant thought, perchance compelled by unfavourable circumstances. In the scriptures, Queen *Mallikā*, the consort of King *Kosala*, remembering a lie she had uttered, suffered for about seven days in a state of misery when she lied to her husband to cover some misbehaviour. These are exceptional cases. Such reverse changes of birth account for the birth of virtuous children to vicious parents and of vicious children to virtuous parents as a result of the last thought moment being conditioned by the general conduct of the person.

**4. *Katattākamma* or Cumulative *Kamma***, this literally means ‘because done’. All actions that are not included in the aforementioned and those actions soon forgotten belong to this category. This is as it were the reserve fund of a particular being.

### C. Based on Time

***Ditthadhammavedaniyakamma* or Immediately Effective, *Uppapajjavedaniyakamma* or Subsequently Effective, *Aparapariyavedaniyakamma* or Indefinitely Effective, and *Ahosikamma* or Ineffective**, Immediately Effective *Karma* is that which is experienced in this present life. According to the *Abhidhamma*, one does both good and evil during the *javana* process (thought-impulsion), which usually lasts for seven thought-moments. The effect of the first thought-moment, being the weakest, one may reap it in this life itself. This is called the Immediately Effective *Karma*. If it does not operate in this life, it is called ‘*Defunct or Ineffective*’ *Karma*. The next weakest is the seventh thought-moment. In case of its effect, one may reap in the subsequence birth. This is called ‘*Subsequently Effective*’ *Karma*. This is also called Defunct or Ineffective *Karma* if it does not operate in the second birth. The effect of the intermediate thought-moments may take place at any time until one attains *Nibbāna*. This type of *Karma* is known as ‘*Indefinitely Effective*’ *Karma*.

No one, not even the Buddhas and *Arahantas*, is exempt from this class of *Karma* which one may experience in the course of one's wandering in *Sansāra*. There is no special class of *Karma* known as Defunct or Ineffective, but when such actions that should produce their effects in this life or in a subsequent life do not operate, they are termed Defunct or Ineffective *Karma*.

### 5. The Causes of *Kamma* (Sumalai Ganwiboon, 2005, pp. 133-135)

*Kamma* cannot appear by itself. It also depends on other condition. It is motivated by various causes (*Hetu*). *Kamma* can be good or bad depending on its causes.

The *Dhammasangani* (*Dhs.*, 181; *A.III.*, 109) mentions that there are six causes, which are divided into two divisions. They are as followed; Moral Cause (*Kusalahetu*) consists of three causes i.e. (1) Unselffulness (*Alobha*), (2) Hatelessness (*Adosa*), and (3) Undeludeness (*Amoha*); Immoral Cause (*Akusalahetu*) consists of three causes i.e. (1) Greed (*Lobha*), (2) Hatred (*Dosa*), and (3) Delusion (*Moha*).

Good *Kamma* is defined as actions, which arise from the absence of Lust (*Lobha*), Hatred (*Dosa*), and Delusion (*Moha*). In contrast, bad *Kamma* is defined as action, which arise from the three roots of immoral i.e. Lust (*Lobha*), Hatred (*Dosa*), and Delusion (*Moha*).

The *Kammas* originated in association with eight unwholesome consciousnesses and rooted with the three immoral roots (*Akusalahetu*) or the immoral mental concomitants are termed as the *Akusalakamma*. In one's life, a being performs only the following ten types of *Akusalakamma*. (Sumalai Ganwiboon, *Ibid.*, p. 134) They are namely: (1) Killing (*pānātipātā*) is the intentional destruction of a living being. Causing accidental death even by negligence does not amount to killing, though negligence is unwholesome. The evil effects of killing are; having a short life, frequent illness, constant grief caused by separation from loved ones, and constant fear. (2) Stealing (*adinnādāna*) is taking the property of others by stealth, deceit, or force. Tax evasion and infringement of copyright also amount to stealing. The evil effects of stealing are; poverty, wretchedness, unfulfilled desires and dependent livelihood. (3) Sexual Misconduct (*kāmesumicchācārā*) is the enjoyment of sexual intercourse with unsuitable persons. A good rule of thumb for modern people is, "If my parents or my partner's parents know we are doing this, will they be unhappy?" The evil effects of sexual misconduct are; having many enemies, getting an unsuitable spouse, rebirth as a women, or rebirth as a transsexual. (4) Lying (*musavāda*) is the intentional perversion of the truth to deceive others. Telling a lie in jest, expecting not to be believed, comes under the heading of frivolous speech, rather than lying. The evil effects of lying are; being tormented by abusive speech, being subject to vilification, incredibility, and bad breath. (5) Abusive speech (*pharusavāca*) is speech intended to hurt

others. Though speech is hurtful to others, if the intention is to correct or prevent immoral or foolish conduct, it is not abusive speech. The evil effects are being detested by others, and a harsh voice. (6) Slander (*pisunavāca*) is speech that is intended to divide others. To warn someone about another's bad character is not slander. The evil effect is the dissolution of friendship without sufficient cause. (7) Frivolous speech (*samphappalapa*) is speech with no useful purpose. A lot of conversation, and nearly all modern entertainment falls into this category. The evil effects are disorder of the bodily organs and incredibility. (8) Covetousness (*abhijjhā*) is the longing to possess another's property, spouse, or children. This evil *kamma*, though arising in the mind only, is strong enough to cause rebirth in the lower realms. If one strives further to attain the object of one's desire then one will also have to steal or commit sexual misconduct. The evil effect is non-fulfillment of one's wishes. (9) Ill-will (*byāpāda*) is hatred, aversion, or prejudice. This *kamma* is also only mental. The evil effects are ugliness, many diseases, and a detestable nature. (10). Wrong View (*micchāditthi*) is of many kinds, but in essence all wrong views deny the law of dependent origination (*paticcasamuppāda*), or cause and effect (*kamma*). The evil effects are base attachment, lack of wisdom, dullness, chronic diseases, and blameworthy ideas. (*M.*, 9.2)

The *Kammas* that refraining from these *Akusalakammas* are categorized as the *Kusalakamma* (Moral activity). For these *Kammas* originated from the wholesome consciousness (*Kusalacitta*) and rooted it the moral roots (*Kusalahetu*). In one's life, a man may perform innumerable *Kusalakammas*. However, the early Buddhist literature makes a generalized classification of all the *Kusalakammas*. These *Kusalakammas* are classified into ten divisions. (Sumalai Ganwiboon, *Ibid.*, p. 134) They are as followed; (1) Abstention from killing (*Pānātipāta veramanī*), (2) Abstention from taking what is not giving (*Adinnādāna veramanī*), (3) Abstention from sexual misconduct (*Kāmesumicchārāna veramanī*), (4) Abstention from false speech (*Musāvāda veramanī*), (5) Abstention from tale-bearing (*Pisunavācā veramanī*), (6) Abstention from harsh speech (*Pharusavāca veramanī*), (7) Abstention from vain talk or gossip (*Samphappalāpa veramanī*), (8) Unselfishness (*Anabhijjhā*), (9) Non-ill-will (*Abyāpāda*), and (10) Right views (*Sammāditthi*). (Bhikshu Satyapal, 1986, p. 163)

Moreover, there is another way to classify the *Kusalakammas*. They are as followed; (1) Charity (*dāna*) is giving, or generosity. It is the volition of giving one's possessions to others, or sharing them liberally. (2) Morality (*sila*) is the volition of refraining from evil. It is the volition of right speech, right action, and right livelihood. (3) Mental Culture (*bhāvanā*) is the volition when one practices tranquility meditation (*samatha*); or it is the development of insight by repeatedly contemplating mental and physical phenomena. (4) Reverence (*apacāyana*) is the volition of paying respect to the Buddha, *Dhamma*, and *Sangha*; to one's parents and elders, to

teachers, to others who lead virtuous lives, or to shrines, images, and pagodas. (5) Service (*veyyāvaccā*) is the volition of helping virtuous people, those about to set out on a journey; the sick, the old, and the feeble. (6) Transference of Merit (*pattidāna*) is the volition of asking others to participate in wholesome deeds and thereby to share in the resultant merit. (7) Rejoicing in Other's Merit (*pattānumodanā*) is the volition of rejoicing in the good deeds or virtue of others. (8) Listening to the *Dhamma* (*dhammassavana*) is the volition of listening to or reading *Dhamma* with a pure intention to gain morality, concentration, or insight; or to learn the *Dhamma* to teach others. (9) Teaching the *Dhamma* (*dhammadesanā*) is the volition of teaching *Dhamma* motivated by compassion, without any ulterior motive to get offerings, honour, praise, or fame. (10) Straightening One's Views (*ditthijjukamma*) is the volition to establish right understanding (*sammāditthi*).

## 6. The Fruition of *Kamma*

Along with the idea of *Kamma* occurs the idea of *Vipāka* or the resultant of *Kamma*, which literally means ripening of the *Kamma*. Buddhism teaches that *Kamma* produces results, which correspond to its good or bad character. Thus, good *Kammas* produce good results and bad *Kammas* produce bad results. The phenomenon of *Kamma* produces a corresponding result as an aspect of the general causal process operative in nature. There is no agent, human or divine who is responsible for this process. Buddhism explains the process of *Kamma* and its result by appealing to a rational understanding of causation. This idea is highlighted in the fivefold classification of 'Law of Nature' (*Niyāmadhammas*), namely; (1) Law of seasons (*Utuniyāma*), (2) Law of Seeds (*Bījanīyāma*), (3) Law of *Kamma* (*Kammanīyāma*), (4) Law of Nature (*Dhammanīyāma*), and (5) Law of mind (*Cittanīyāma*). (*DhsA.*, 272)

The *Pāli-English Dictionary* defines the term '*Vipāka*' as fruit, fruition, and product; always in pregnant meaning of result, effect, consequence (of one's action), either as good and meritorious (*Kusala*) or bad and detrimental (*Akusala*). (T. W. Rhys Davids and William Stede, 1997, p. 627) *Vipāka* is the consequence of deeds committed in the past which may disturb the mind as regards sight, sound, taste, smell, and pleasant touch. (Francis Story, 1976, pp. 376-377) It is predetermined (by ourselves) by previous *Kamma*. *Kamma* is action: *Vipāka* is the passive mode of coming-to-be. In addition, *Kamma* is regarded as the seed (*Vīja*). *Vipāka* is found used in various senses, such as 'fruit', 'fruition', 'resultant', 'product', etc. This term is also used to give the meaning of 'effect' of 'after effect', 'consequence' of one's particular action.

According to *Dr. Bhikshu Satyapal*, the *Kammas*, which produce some after effect, are known as the *Vipākajanakakamma*. These types of *Kammas* bear ethical value. The *Kammas*, which do not produce any after effect, are called the *Kiriyākammas*. These types of *Kammas* do

not bear any ethical value. They are like the fried or roasted seed. (Bhikshu Satyapal., *Ibid.*, pp. 165-166)

According to the *Kukkuravatikāsutta* of the *Majjhimanikāya* the *Vipākajanakakammas*, might be classified under the following three divisions namely; (1) *Kammam kanham kanham vipākam* (Dark Action with Dark Outcome), (2) *Kammam sukham sukka vipākam* (Bright Action with Bright Outcome), (3) *Kammam kanha sukkam kanha sukkam vipāka* (Both Dark and Bright action with Dark and Bright Outcome). (*M.I.*, 387 ff.)

The same source describes the *Kiriyakammas* as the *Neva kammam kanhasukkam na kanha sukka vipākam* for the *Kiriyākammas* are neither dark nor bright with corresponding outcome.

As the plants and creepers grown from their respective seeds, in course of time bear flowers and fruits, the *Kammas* performed by the beings also yield their varieties of results (*Vipākaphala*). In the *Abhidhammapitaka*, the use of the term '*Vipāka*' is considered to be of a very delicate, tranquil (*Santabhāva*), and mental in nature, for it comes into being as if it were not impelled by any effort (*Nirussāha*). Hence, in the capacity of a *Paccaya* (Condition), the *Vipāka* exerts a tranquilizing influence on its mental form; this does not mean that the matter cannot become the *Paccayuppannadhamma* (the conditioned in relation to the *Vipākapaccaya*). Both mind (*Nāma*), and matter (*Rūpa*) may become the conditioned product (*Paccayuppannadhamma*). The *Vipākas* are experienced by way of various types of *Vedanā* (Feeling).

The *Akusalakamma* and the *Kusalakamma* do not produce the same result. The *Akusalakamma* produces the *Akusalakammavipāka* (Immoral and unpleasant resultant) and the *Kusalakamma* produces the *Kusalavipāka* (Moral and pleasant resultant). Again, the results of *Kammas* are not experienced all the time, at the moment of performance of the *Kamma*, or just after the performance of that *Kamma*.

In addition, the *Dhammapada* states that: "By oneself evil is done, by oneself one suffers. By oneself evil is undone, by oneself is one purified." (*Dh.*, 165) No one can delay the fruition of *Kamma*. It is true that beings have their own *Kamma*, heirs of their own *Kamma*, descended from their own *Kamma*, supported by their own *Kamma*, as the Buddha states thus: "Women, men, householders and those gone to homelessness should regularly reflect, 'We are the owners of our kamma, the heirs of our kamma, born of our kamma, descended from our kamma, supported by our kamma. Whatever kamma is done by us, whether good or bad, we will receive the results thereof.'" (*A.III.*, 71, quoted in Sumalai Ganwiboon., *Ibid.*, pp. 144-146)

The *Cūlakammavibhangasutta* give the details of the fruition of *Kamma* that differentiates beings into coarse and refined states. It may be cited as follows: The youth name *Subha* asks this question to the Buddha “*Master, Gautama, what is the reason, what is the condition, why inferiority and superiority are met with among human beings, among mankind? For one meets with short lived and long-lived men, sick and healthy men, ugly and handsome men, insignificant and influential men, poor and rich men, low-born and high-born, stupid and wise men.*” To this the Buddha replied in the following manner: “*See here, young man. Beings are the owners of their kamma, heirs to their kamma, born of their kamma, have kamma as their lineage, have kamma as their support. Kamma it is which distinguishes beings into fine and coarse states.*”

**1. People who have short or long life:** (a) A woman or a man is given to killing living beings, is ruthless, kills living beings constantly and is lacking in goodwill or compassion. At death, on account of that *kamma*, developed and nurtured within, that person goes to a woeful bourn, the nether worlds, to hell. Or, if not reborn in hell, but in the human world, he or she will be short-lived. (b) A woman or man shuns killing and is possessed of goodwill and compassion. At death, on account of that *kamma*, developed and nurtured within, that person goes to a good bourn, to a heaven realm. Or, if not reborn in heaven, but as a human being, he or she will be blessed with longevity.

**2. People who are healthless or healthy:** (a) A woman or man is given to harming other beings by the hand and the weapon. At death, on account of that *kamma*, developed and nurtured within, that person goes to a woeful bourn, the nether worlds, to hell. Or, if not reborn in hell, but as a human being, he or she will be sickly. (b) A woman or man shuns harming other beings. At death, on account of that *kamma*, developed and nurtured within, that person arrives at a good bourn, a heaven realm. Or, if not reborn in heaven, but as a human being, he or she will be one with few illnesses.

**3. People who are ugly or beautiful:** (a) A woman or man is of ill temper, is quick to hatred, offended at the slightest criticism, harbors hatred and displays anger. At death, on account of that *kamma*, developed and nurtured within, that person goes to a woeful bourn, the nether worlds, to hell. Or, if not born in hell, but as a human being, he or she will be ugly. (b) A woman or a man is not easily angered. At death, on account of that *kamma*, developed and nurtured within, that person goes to a pleasant bourn, a heaven realm. Or, if not reborn in heaven, but as a human being, he or she will be of pleasant appearance.

**4. People who are non-influential or powerful:** (a) A woman or man has a jealous mind. When others receive awards, honor and respect, he or she is ill at ease and resentful. At

death, on account of that *kamma*, developed and nurtured within, that person goes to a woeful bourn, the nether worlds, to hell. Or, if not reborn in hell, but as a human being, he or she will be one of little influence. (b) A woman or a man is one who harbors no jealousy. At death, on account of that *kamma*, developed and nurtured within, that person goes to a good bourn, to a heaven realm. Or, if not reborn in heaven, but as a human being, he or she will be powerful and influential.

**5. People who are poor or wealthy:** (a) A woman or man is not one who gives, does not share out food, water and clothing. At death, on account of that *kamma*, developed and nurtured within, that person goes to a woeful bourn, the nether worlds, to hell. Or, if not reborn in hell, but as a human being, he or she will be poor. (b) A woman or a man is one who practices giving, who shares out food, water and clothing. At death, on account of that *kamma*, developed and nurtured within, that person goes to a good bourn, to a heaven realm. Or, if not reborn in heaven, but as a human being, he or she will be wealthy.

**6. People who are in a low family or a high family:** (a) A woman or man is stubborn and unyielding, proud, arrogant and disrespectful to those who should be respected. At death, on account of that *kamma*, developed and nurtured within, that person goes to a woeful bourn, the nether worlds, to hell. Or, if not reborn in hell, but as a human being, he or she will be born into a low family. (b) A woman or man is not stubborn or unyielding, not proud, but pays respect and takes an interest in those who should be respected. At death, on account of that *kamma*, developed and nurtured within, that person goes to a good bourn, to a heaven realm. Or, if not reborn in heaven, but as a human being, he or she will be born into a high family.

**7. People who have poor knowledge or are intelligent:** (a) A woman or man neither visits nor questions ascetics and Brahmins about what is good, what is evil, what is harmful, what is not harmful, what should be done and what should not be done; which actions lead to suffering, which actions will lead to lasting happiness. At death, on account of that *kamma*, developed and nurtured within, that person goes to a woeful bourn, the nether worlds, to hell. Or, if not reborn in hell, but as a human being, he or she will be of little intelligence. (b) A woman or man seeks out and questions ascetics and Brahmins about what is good and so on. At death, on account of that *kamma*, developed and nurtured within, that person goes to a good bourn, to a heaven realm. Or, if not reborn in heaven, but as a human being, he or she will be intelligent. (*M.III.*, 203)

However, the correspondence between *Kamma* and its *Vipāka* does not necessarily imply that one's future birth is determined exclusively by the nature of the *Kamma* performed by that person in his or her previous existence. The Buddha explains this fact in the

*Mahākammavibhangasutta* (M.III., 207) In this discourse, the Buddha classifies into four categories people who are reborn due to their *Kamma*: (i) those who are engaged in ten *Akusalas* born in woeful existence, (ii) those who are engaged in ten *Akusalas* but born in pleasurable existence, (iii), those who engaged in ten *Kusalas* and consequently born in pleasurable existence and (iv) those who are engaged in ten *Kusalas* but born in woeful existence. It is clear to this classification that one's next birth does not necessarily reflect one's predominant behaviour in his or her past life. In some exceptional cases, the predominant *Kamma* may produce results immediately, subsequently or indefinitely though it has been superceded by a *Kamma* of the opposite nature. (Jotiya Dhirasekera, and W. G. Weeraratne. ed. Vol. VI. Fascicle 1, 1979-1989, p. 117) However, there is no good *Kamma* bearing bad result, and there is no bad *Kamma* bearing good result.

It is necessary to note here that some factors can change the *Vipāka*. It is mentioned in the *Manorathapūraṇi* (AA.II., 218 ff.) the commentary on the *Anguttaranikāya* refers to this classification as one belonging to the *Abhidhamma* tradition. According to it, there are four factors i.e., the Birth (*Gati*), Physical Appearance (*Upadhi*), Time of Birth (*Kāla*), and Behaviour (*Payoga*), which may act as Advantage (*Sampatti*) or Disadvantage (*Vipatti*) with regard to both *Kusala* and *Akusala* results. For example, by being advantage in any of the four factors, one's bad results may disappear or by being disadvantage one's good results may disappear. In the like manner by being advantaged one's bad result may appear and by being disadvantaged one's bad result may appear. This analysis shows that a *Vipāka* of a *Kamma* may undergo changes due to these extra-kammic factors. It further shows that the relation between *Kamma* and its *Vipāka* is not always inevitable. (Jotiya Dhirasekera, and W. G. Weeraratne. ed. Vol. VI. Fascicle 1., *Ibid.*, pp. 117-118, quoted in Sumalai Ganwiboon., *Ibid.*, pp. 147-148)

## **7. *Kamma* and Rebirth**

Generally, death may be the end of life but for Buddhism death, gives rise to another life. As Buddhism is a rational religion, everything does not appear accidently but by causes and effects. There is no inequality but resultant from one own deed from the past.

According to Venerable *Nārada*, *Kamma* is the law of moral causation. Rebirth is its corollary. Both *Kamma* and Rebirth are interrelated, fundamental doctrines in Buddhism. Although Buddhism denies the existence of an unchanging, substantial soul, it believes in the transmigration of the *Kamma* and of souls. A complex of psychophysical elements and states changing from moment to moment, the soul, with its five *Khandhas* (Groups of Elements)—i.e., Corporeality (*Rūpakkhandha*), Feeling (*Vedanākkhandha*), Perception (*Saññākkhandha*), Mental Formation (*Sankhārakkhandha*), and Consciousness (*Viññānakkhandha*)—ceases to

exist; but the *Kamma* of the deceased survives and becomes a *Viññāna* (Consciousness) in the womb of a mother. This *Viññāna* is that aspect of the soul reincarnated in a new individual. (Nārada, *Ibid.*, p 131)

By examining certain key *Pāli* terms that involve the state of *Kamma* in early Buddhism, and the exegeses of the commentary and *Pāli* Canon Dictionary of Thailand, I have found that *Kamma* and rebirth are pre-supposition. If we do not accept the theory of *Kamma*, rebirth cannot be explained and rebirth can be explained only based on the principle of *Kamma*. (S. Gopalan. *Outlines of Jainism*, 1973, pp. 114-115, quoted in Sumalai Ganwiboon, *Ibid.*, p. 39) How the concept of rebirth after death crept into Buddhism is difficult to explain, and we need not concern ourselves with it. Simply preventing rebirth within the stream of Dependent Co-origination is enough for us to be free. Stopping egoistic rebirth is truly in accordance with Buddhism, and such action will be the kind of *kamma* that can be taken as refuge. When a good deed is done, goodness spontaneously arises; when an evil deed is done, evilness spontaneously arises. There is no need to wait for any further results. If there will be any birth after death, that rebirth only occurs through the *kamma* one has done in this very life and the results of which have already occurred here. We need not worry about rebirth such that it obstructs our practice. (Buddhadasa Bhikkhu, 2007)

## 8. The Cessation of *Kamma*

According to Buddhist philosophy, the concept of rebirth is the will-to-live based on ignorance (*Avijjā*). This will-to-live is Craving (*Tanhā*), which produces continuing existence, accompanied by pleasure and lust, finding its delight here and there, particularly in thirst for pleasure, for existence and non-existence. (*Vin.I.*, 10) However, the entire conditions are ruled over by ignorance as well as clinging as the cause of unwholesome tendencies. Thus, desires and ignorance are the causes in order to continue being lives. (Phramaha Suvin Ruksat, *Ibid.*, pp. 107-108)

We may say that *Kamma* conditions rebirth. Past *Kamma* conditions present birth; and present *Kamma*, in combination with past *Kamma*, conditions the future. The present is the offspring of the past, and becomes the parent of the future. (Sumalai Ganwiboon, *Ibid.*, p. 408)

*Kamma* is not fatalism nor determinism. The view that everything happens because of a past cause is a serious wrong view called *Pubbekatahetudithi*. Past *kamma* is very significant because it determines where we are reborn, whether we are wealthy, healthy, intelligent, good-looking, etc. It also determines many of the trials that we have to face in life, and the family and society that we are born into, which have a very powerful influence on our lives. The law of dependent origination says that because of not understanding the truth of suffering we

continue to roll around in the cycle of existence, blinded by ignorance and driven by craving. In this existence too, we continue to make *kammas* (*sankhāra*) that will give rise to more existences in the future.

The Buddha taught us how to transcend this cycle by becoming aware of the whole process. The cycle of dependent origination can be broken in two places: at the link between ignorance and mental formations, and at the link between feeling and craving. We must cultivate insight to dispel ignorance, and practice renunciation and patience to abandon craving. Instead of being led around like a bull with a ring through its nose every time a pleasant or unpleasant object appears, we should contemplate the feelings that arise within us. To break the chain at its other weak link, we should study the *Dhamma* and develop insight, by investigating mental and physical phenomena as and when they occur. Awareness, concentration, and objectivity will reveal their true nature.

If we examine our thoughts and feelings systematically, we will overcome the urge to follow them. The grip of craving and delusion will be loosened, and our *kamma* will incline more and more towards *nibbāna*, the cessation of all suffering. Mindfulness meditation was taught by the Buddha for the purification of beings, for the transcendence of grief and lamentation, for the extinction of pain and sorrow, for attaining the right method, for the realization of *nibbāna*. If we only practice without praying for *nibbāna* we will achieve it in due course -if we really strive hard. If we only pray for *nibbāna* without practicing, we will continue to suffer, however pious our hopes and prayers. (Bhikkhu Pesala, 2007)

## 9. Conclusion

According to Buddhist ethics, the doctrine of *kamma* plays the leading role in determining right or wrong. *Kamma*, for the Buddha, unlike the other contemporary heretical thinkers, is the volitional action. *Kamma* is classified as good or bad depending upon the roots of action (i.e. greed, aversion or delusion or their opposites). For example, if *kamma* is motivated by a bad rooted cause, the *kamma* is bad. The Buddhist texts reveal that in doing his *kamma* man has freewill. The freewill belongs to man because there is no permanent self which would hinder the ability of change and make decisions one way or the other. According, man has to take complete responsibility for his own actions. With each action, man builds his own future and partially condition future actions. (Phramahā Somwang Kaewsufong, 1998, pp. 119-120)

So, Life in the above-mentioned realms is not permanent. All of these beings are still bound up in *Sansāra* until they reach the final stage of liberation. Rebirth in any of these realms is the result of *Kamma*. The good *Kamma* leads the doer to be reborn in human world up to the

*Nevasaññānāsaññāyatanabhūmi*. The bad *Kamma* leads the doer to be reborn in animal world or even hell. (Sumalai Ganwiboon2004, p. 7) The phrase that Thai people like to repeat, “*Good actions bring good results, bad actions bring bad results,*” comes from the Buddha’s statement, (Payutto, Bhikkhu P. A., 2007)

*Yādisam vapate bījam*

*Tādisam labhate phalam*

*Kalyānakāri kalyānam*

*Pāpakārī ca pāpakam*

(S.I. 227, Jat.II 119, Vol.III 157)

One reaps whatever one has sown.

Those who do good receive good and those who do evil receive evil.

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*Dh.* 165. *Dhs.* 181. *DhsA.* 272.

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*M.* 9.2. *M.I.* 387 ff. *M.III.* 203, 207.

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AN ANALYSIS OF THICH NHAT HANH ON HIS BELIEF “WALKING  
PEACEFUL ON THE EARTH IS THE REAL MIRACLE”

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**ABSTRACT**

Every day, all over the world, people do their things, their jobs with tired minds, they walk on the Earth with many hard steps, even Venerable and Buddhists. Being go with the mindfulness mind, taking an honest look inside my heart, I see that all miracle things are happening nearby me, like a “mediation walking,” like a “tea with mediation way,” or “count breath.” I am impressed and do like the word of Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh – “People say walking on water is a miracle, but to me walking peacefully on the Earth is the real miracle.” I am proud of the Buddhist Zen of Vietnamese Buddhism, so, in this paper, I would like to analyze one of the most prominent famous words of Most Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh and the charming behind his teaching.

**Keyword: mindfulness, the miracle, Thich Nhat Hanh**

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- (1) Thich Nhat Hanh, (1999). *The Miracle of Mindfulness: An Introduction to the Practice of Meditation*. *Published Beacon Press*.

## **1. Introduction**

Buddhism is one of the world's largest religions and originated 2.500 years ago in India. Nowadays, many schools of Buddhism have been created and developed until now, one of the famous schools is Zen, or Zen Buddhism, which was established in 1982 by Master Thich Nhat Hanh, and he is the second essential people of Buddhists around the world. Teacher Nhat Hanh has written many books and taught for more than 72 years; his teaching will lead the readers and listeners to Mindfulness ways and practice their mindfulness. By “look the life with kindly heart,” his Venerable taught us about the daily miracle, the power of silence, mindful and kind heart.

In daily life, people may not recognize that they are breathing, their hearts are beating, or just like they are washing the dishes without meditation, they think about other things, and the result could be not as well as they wish, to find the simple miracle of daily life, this paper servers as a window to an understanding of the saying “walking peacefully on the Earth is the real miracle” and show to the reader about the charming of his teaching.

## **2. Discussion**

### **2.1 Definition of “mindfulness” and “miracle.”**

Master Nhat Hanh said, *“Mindfulness is the energy of being aware and awake to the present moment. It is the continuous practice of touching life deeply in every moment of daily life. To be mindful is to be truly alive, present, and at one with those around you and what you are doing. We bring our body and mind into harmony while we wash the dishes, drive the car, or take our morning shower.”*

For the word “miracle,” I found one meaning which so nice is “*A miracle (from the Latin mirari, to wonder), at a first and very rough approximation, is an event that is not explicable by natural causes alone. A reported miracle excites wonder because it appears to require, as its cause, something beyond the reach of human action and natural causes.*”<sup>(2)</sup>

Thus, we could easily imagine that the miracle of walking mindfulness is walking with awake, recognizing that we are walking at this moment, our mind is peaceful and truly alive. For some people, the miracle is the reach of walking mindfulness, we are enjoying our life, and we are in mindfulness status; we can listen to our heart, our mind. What a beautiful and fantastic experience in our daily life.

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(2) Waka Takahashi Brown, (2002). Introduction to Buddhism. Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education. Retrieved from:

[https://spice.fsi.stanford.edu/docs/introduction\\_to\\_buddhism](https://spice.fsi.stanford.edu/docs/introduction_to_buddhism)

## **2.2 The Way of Mindfulness was mentioned in Majjhima Nikaya and Digha Nikaya**

In Majjhima Nikaya (sutta No.10 - Satipatthana Sutta or The Discourse on the Establishing of Mindfulness) and Digha Nikaya (sutta No.22 - Mahasatipatthana Sutta or The Great Discourse on the Establishing of Mindfulness), the Buddha said, *"This is the direct path for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow & lamentation, for the disappearance of pain & distress, for the attainment of the right method, & the realization of Unbinding - in other words, the four frames of reference. Which four?"*

*"There is the case where a monk remains focused on the body in & of itself - ardent, alert, & mindful - putting aside greed & distress concerning the world. He remains focused on feelings... mind... mental qualities in & of themselves - ardent, alert, & mindful - putting aside greed & distress concerning the world..."*

People could know more about the way of mindfulness practice by doing:

- a. Sitting meditation
- b. Walking meditation
- c. Sitting meditation with counting the breath

The Blessed One also teaches us about four “foundations of mindfulness” like kāyā (body), vedanā (sensations/feelings aroused by perception), cittā (mind/consciousness), and dhammas (elements of the Buddhist teachings).

While we are doing or practicing Mindfulness, we need to take a deep look inside our body, our feeling, our mind, and the Buddha teaching. Go with the World Honor One teaching; Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh created mindfulness lessons and Mindfulness Zen; he teaches us how to walk with silence. Mindfulness walking is a miracle in our daily lives because sometimes, we like to forget that we are walking or standing in that moment.

## **2.3 Mindfulness in Buddhism**

### **2.3.1 How to practice mindfulness by the teaching of other Most Venerable**

#### **a. His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama**

The other Most Venerable Dalai Lama is considered the most important sprits of World Buddhism; his words and the ways of honing his mindfulness have set an excellent example for our generation.

Dalai Lama said, *“Having a calm or peaceful state of mind doesn’t mean being spaced out or completely empty. Peace of mind or a calm state of mind is rooted in affection and compassion and is sensitive and responsive to others.”*

And *“Every day, think as you wake up, today I am fortunate to be alive, I have a precious human life, I am not going to waste it. I am going to use all my energies to develop myself, to expand my heart out to others, to achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all beings. I am going to have kind thoughts towards others; I am not going to get angry or think badly about others. I am going to benefit others as much as I can.”*

His Venerable also practice like *“Whatever forms of meditation you practice, the most important point is to apply mindfulness continuously, and make a sustained effort. It is unrealistic to expect results from meditation within a short period of time. What is required is continuous sustained effort.”*

### **b. Ajahn Chah**

Ajahn Chah (1918 – 1992) was a Thai Buddhist monk. He was an influential teacher of the Buddhadhamma and a founder of two major monasteries in the Thai Forest Tradition.

He gave us many lessons about Wisdom and Mindfulness, there are some of it, his Venerable said, *“Wisdom arises from mindfulness and concentration. Concentration arises from a base of morality or virtue. All of these*

*things, morality, concentration, and wisdom, are so interrelated that it is not really possible to separate them.”*

And he teaches us to practice Mindfulness by these steps:

*“Mindfulness and self-awareness, arising from the mind, will know the in-breath and the out-breath. Be at ease. Don’t think about anything. No need to think of this or that. The only thing you have to do is fix your attention on the breathing in and breathing out. You have nothing else to do but that! Keep your mindfulness fixed on the in-and out-breaths as they occur. Be aware of the beginning, middle and end of each breath. On inhalation, the beginning of the breath is at the nose tip, the middle at the heart, and the end in the abdomen. On exhalation, it’s just the reverse: the beginning of the breath is in the abdomen, the middle at the heart, and the end at the nose tip. Develop the awareness of the breath: 1, at the nose tip; 2, at the heart; 3, in the abdomen. Then in reverse: 1, in the abdomen; 2, at the heart; and 3, at the nose tip.”*

### **2.3.2 Mindfulness is the miracle**

Zen Master Nhat Hanh said that “every day, we do many miraculous things, but we don’t know that we did it [...] Mindfulness is the miracle by which we master and restore ourselves. Consider, for example, a magician who cuts his body into many parts and places each part in a different region-hands in the south, arms in the east, legs in the north, and then by some miraculous power lets forth a cry which reassembles whole every part of his body. Mindfulness is like that -it is a miracle which can call back in a flash our dispersed mind and restore it to wholeness so that we can live each minute of life.”

We could see that mindfulness is a miracle; it is the master who could help us to restore ourselves. But the tricky thing is how to practice mindfulness? In modern life, we find that it is too hard for us to be peaceful just in a minute while taking a shower; we also think about the next job, while driving, our mood maybe not be suitable due to the ambiance and the mindfulness while doing something is hard if we do not practice it frequently.

#### **2.4 Some approaches to practice Mindfulness by Zen Master Nhat Hanh**

In many suttas of Nikaya, The Lord Buddha taught that. While taking mindfulness meditation, people can touch the wisdom with appropriate methods. Therefore, teacher Nhat Hanh follows the Buddha's teachings and trains our mindfulness daily.

*“You might well ask: Then how are we to practice mindfulness?”*

*My answer is: keep your attention focused on the work, be alert, and be ready to handle ably and intelligently any situation which may arise -this is mindfulness. There is no reason why mindfulness should be different from focusing all one's attention on one's work, being alert, and using one's best judgment. During the moment one is consulting, resolving, and dealing with whatever arises, a calm heart and self-control are necessary if one is to obtain good results. Anyone can see that. If we are not in control of ourselves but instead let our impatience or anger interfere, then our work is no longer of any value.”*

His beloved teacher teaches us the simple way to practice and understand mindfulness by giving examples about our daily life works. We could practice dealing with whatever arises; we should calm down and have self-control. I found the key and valuable words are “calm-down” and “self-control” in his teaching. He

doesn't talk about the hard things; he teaches us the introductory lesson, the main lesson of human-being activities in their daily life.

#### **2.4. The Way of Mindfulness in Majjhima Nikaya and Digha Nikaya**

In Majjhima Nikaya (sutta No.10 - Satipatthana Sutta or The Discourse on the Establishing of Mindfulness) and Digha Nikaya (sutta No.22 - Mahasatipatthana Sutta or The Great Discourse on the Establishing of Mindfulness), the Buddha said, *"This is the direct path for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow & lamentation, for the disappearance of pain & distress, for the attainment of the right method, & the realization of Unbinding - in other words, the four frames of reference. Which four?"*

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### **3. Conclusion**

The teachings of Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh gave us many ideas about mindfulness, and sometimes, the miracle is the simple thing that happens around our daily life activities. Why don't walk on water a miracle, and why walking peace on the Earth is a miracle? Our minds will not give up making questions, and our questions also grow wisdom. By practicing more love with the World, we could feel like at this moment we are one, we are on the Earth, we are breathing and understanding more about the mind and love. Teacher Nhat Hand, with his kind heart and wisdom, gentles teach us about Mindfulness and how to practice it; by some words, we could not enjoy all his teachings, hope that the world will peace, the charming of Mindfulness and Meditation will be discovered by yourself after these teachings of Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh.

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## **THE ROLES OF THERAVĀDA YOUNG MONKS IN MODERN SOCIETY OF VIETNAM**

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Phramaha Nantakorn Piyabhani, Asst. Prof. Dr.

Asst. Prof. Dr. Sanu Mahatthanadull

### **Abstract**

The youth is the most significant section of any society. It is the blooming age with full of energy, ability and potentiality to prepare themselves as the future leader of society. The development of Buddhism required the active participation of young monks. When discussing the role of young Buddhist monks in the modern society, it cannot be denied that they have an important role in spreading the teachings of the Buddha. Buddhism has many kinds of obstacles and challengers in modern society, so young monks have a very important role. Because, young monks will be representatives of Buddhism and soon they will have an even more pronounced role in the temples acting as consultants for the laity, and constitute the future clergy.

This article also attempts to underline the origin and development of Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhism and the way to practice of Theravāda young monks in Vietnam.

***Keywords:* Roles, Vietnamese Theravāda, Young Monks, Modern Society**

## **Introduction**

Buddhism may have been introduced into Vietnam very early, at least in the centuries following the departure of Buddhist missionaries sent by the Emperor Asoka to East Asia, the Theravāda teachings could not spread so widely there as in some other countries. There are two major reasons for this: one is that the aspirants to the Theravāda teachings were not formed into a community for any possible development of this tradition and the other is that Vietnamese culture was much more influenced by Mahāyāna countries than by Theravāda countries.

As a result, Theravāda Buddhism, though being introduced so early into Vietnam, remained nothing other than a pure belief for a minority of the population for centuries.

Vietnam is a special Buddhist country with many kind of Buddhism was developing together like as Mahāyāna Buddhism, Kinh (or Vietnamese) Theravāda Buddhism, Khmer Theravāda Buddhism, Hoa Hao Buddhism, Khat Si Buddhism, etc. When talking about Vietnamese Buddhism, most people immediately think of Mahāyāna Buddhism, which has deeply influenced the Vietnamese culture for many centuries. How about the Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhism? What are the Roles of Theravāda Young Monks? How they play an important role to Modern Society of Vietnam?

## **An Overview of Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhism**

Buddhism has a great influence on the thinking and behaviour of Vietnamese people. For Vietnamese people, Buddhism is not only a religion, but also a way of life that emphasizes for human beings to be freedom from suffering

(*dukkha*) in the present life by attain enlightenment or *Nibbāna*. Through the practice of following the teachings of the Buddha:

*“Bhikkhus, both formerly and now what I teach is suffering and the cessation of suffering”*.<sup>92</sup>

Buddhism was introduced into Vietnam in the first century CE.<sup>93</sup> Going through many ups and downs as well as events of Vietnam history, Buddhism has gone with the Vietnamese nation during 2000 years. Especially, under the Ly and Tran dynasties from 10th to 14th century, Buddhism became state religion contributing considerably to the glorious career of the nation and it was called the golden age of Vietnamese Buddhism and feudal system.<sup>94</sup>

The southern part of the present Vietnam was originally occupied by the Champa (Chăm) and the Cambodian (Khmer) people who followed both a syncretic Saiva-Mahayana Buddhism and Theravāda Buddhism, although Champa probably had a Theravāda presence from as early as the 3rd century CE, whilst Cambodia received the Theravāda as late as the 12th century.<sup>95</sup> The Vietnamese started to conquer and absorbed the land in the 15th century, and the current shape of the country was finalised in the 18th century. From that time onward, the

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<sup>92</sup> Bhikkhu Ñanamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi, (tr.), **The Middle Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya**, Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2009, p. 234.

<sup>93</sup> Nguyen Lang, **Viet Nam Phat Giao Su Luoc (Essay on the History of Vietnamese Buddhism)**, Ha Noi: Literature Publishing House, 2000, p.9.

<sup>94</sup> Venerable Nguyen Ngoc Minh, **“The Contributions Of Salient Vietnamese Zen Masters To The Development Of Buddhism During Ly And Tran Dynasties”**, M.A Thesis, Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, 2018, p.1.

<sup>95</sup> Skilton Andrew, **A Concise History of Buddhism**, Brimingham: Windhorse Publication, 1994, p. 160.

dominant Viet followed the Mahayana tradition whilst the ethnic Cambodian practiced the Theravāda tradition, and both traditions peacefully co-existed.<sup>96</sup>

In the late 1930s, Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhism was introduced to Vietnam from Cambodia, by the Vietnamese intellectuals living in Cambodia at that time.<sup>97</sup> At that time, the first three Vietnamese intellectuals ordained to follow Theravāda Buddhism in Cambodia were Venerable Thien Luat ( Vinaya Kusalo), Venerable Hue Nghiem, Venerable Ho Tong (Maha Thera Vansarakkhita).<sup>98</sup> These are the first three Vietnamese bhikkhus who had the merit of spreading Theravāda Buddhism in Saigon - Gia Dinh to the Vietnamese at that time. In 1938, the first Theravāda temple for Vietnamese Buddhists was established at Go Dua, Thu Duc – Saigon and the Venerable Thien Luat was the first abbot in 1939.<sup>99</sup> The temple was named Buu Quang (Ratana Ramsyarama). Then received an invitation from the group of lay Buddhists led by Mr Nguyen Van Hieu, group of Vietnamese bhikkhus, who had received training in Cambodia, such as Venerables Thien Luat, Buu Chon, Hue Nghiem, Gioi Nghiem, Tinh Su, Ho Tong, etc, went back to Vietnam and started teaching the Buddha Dhamma in Vietnamese language.<sup>100</sup> Also translated many Buddhist materials from the Pali Canon, and Theravāda

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<sup>96</sup> Binh Anson, **Theravāda Buddhism in Vietnam**, accessed on 21 February 2021, [https://www.budsas.org/ebud/vn\\_thera.htm](https://www.budsas.org/ebud/vn_thera.htm).

<sup>97</sup> Thich Thien Tam, **A Brief Introduction of Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhism**, accessed on 21 February 2021, <https://phatgiao.org.vn/vai-net-ve-phat-giao-nam-tong-d25178.html>.

<sup>98</sup> Thien Hau (Kusalapaccā), **“Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhism 1938 – 1963”**, Hanoi: Hong Duc Publishing House, 2017, p. 13.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid, p. 20-23.

<sup>100</sup> Thien Minh, **“History of Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhism”**, Hanoi: Hong Duc Publishing House, 2017, p.54.

became part of Vietnamese Buddhist activity in the country. In 1957, the Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhist Sangha Congregation (Giao Hoi Tang Gia Nguyen Thuy Viet Nam) was formally established and recognised by the government, and the Theravāda Sangha elected Venerable Ho Tong as its first President or Sangharaja.<sup>101</sup>

Currently, there are more than 150 Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhist temples in total throughout Vietnam, which the number of monks and nuns is more than 2000.

Although Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhism is very young in the Buddhist history, with a period of more than 80 years, but Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhism was and doing accompany with the nation, with history and Vietnam Buddhism to guide human being towards the truth, the good and bringing peace and happiness to society. Nowadays, the Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhism has spread deeper and bigger in the Vietnamese society. Many Vietnamese families now practice Theravāda Buddhism as their own traditional religion. Therefore, in this research will also analyse the Belief and Practices of Young Monks in modern society of Vietnam based on the Theravāda Buddhism.

### **The Practices of Theravāda Buddhism of Young monks in Vietnam**

What is the meaning of practicing Dhamma? To practice Dhamma means to apply the Dhamma, to use the Dhamma in conducting our life and work. This means to apply the Dhamma in a way that brings about benefit in our daily life so that our life becomes better and happier.

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<sup>101</sup> Binh Anson, **Theravāda Buddhism in Vietnam**, accessed on 22 February 2021, [https://www.budsas.org/ebud/vn\\_thera.htm](https://www.budsas.org/ebud/vn_thera.htm).

Thus, whenever we practice Dhamma it means we apply the Dhamma in our actual life; in other words, we use the Dhamma to bring about happiness for our life.

### **Paṭipatti: The Threefold Training (Tri-sikkhā)**

In Pali, the word used for practice, conduct, behaviour, religious practice “*paṭipatti*”<sup>102</sup>, means the practice of Dhamma and practice Dhamma means to apply the Dhamma in our voyage through life, or in other words to apply the Dhamma in order to conduct our life in the right way.

To practice Dhamma means to apply the Dhamma for the benefit of our life. Therefore Dhamma practice is a very broad matter indeed, not merely separating oneself from society, going to a monastery or a forest and sitting there to train ourselves in concentration. This is only one aspect of Dhamma practice, namely the endeavour to apply the Dhamma on a deep level of resolute mind-training. We can call this kind of practice, where we separate ourselves from society, intensive practice or specific training.

According to Bhikkhu P. A. Payutto explains that, the Pali word “*paṭipatti*” means “to travel”, “to voyage”, “to walk a certain path”. Usually, “to travel” means to travel externally, which means to travel in terms of material things: that is, we use our feet to walk or a vehicle to move us. Regarding our life it is just the same: to live is one kind of “voyage” or “travelling”. Our being is comparable to a path. If we live in the right way, we say “our voyage in life” is right, which means we conduct our life in the right way. If our “voyage in life” is not right, we say that we

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<sup>102</sup> Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds.). **The Pali Text Society’s Pali-English Dictionary**. London: PTS, 1979.

conduct our life in the wrong way. Thus, we can say that if we do not apply the Dhamma, our voyage through life might be wrong or incorrect, so that we get lost and stumble onto the way that leads to decline or ruin but not to happiness and progress. Thus, we use the Dhamma as a help, and practice Dhamma so that we get the good results we want from our voyage through life.<sup>103</sup>

Dhamma practice has many dhamma, of which there are three main dhammas called Threefold Training (Tri-sikkhā)<sup>104</sup>:

1. Sīla (Morality)
2. Samādhi (Concentration)
3. Paññā (Wisdom).

The Threefold Training or Trisikkhā is the key teaching in Buddhism which can be subcategorized further into the Noble Eightfold Path which is the “heart” of Buddhism. These threefold training has resulted in good human behavior, compassionate in society, not to harm each other, social integration that leads to generous sharing and to benefit from each other and society.

### **The Roles of Theravāda Young Monks in Modern Society of Vietnam**

In Theravāda Buddhism, monks are the most important part in the BuddhaDhamma. The presence of monks is the embodiment of the existence of Dhamma, because the Dhamma is the monk’s sole guide.

Buddhism combines with three parts: Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha. All three parts gather with each other to become Buddhism. Buddhist people always

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<sup>103</sup> Bhikkhu P. A Payutto, **A Brief Introduction to the Buddha-Dhamma**, (tr.),(eds) by Bhikkhu Nirodho and Martin Seeger, First published 2011, p.15.

<sup>104</sup> M II p.272.

respect and practice from three parts. For Theravāda Buddhism, nowadays monks have the most important influence on lay disciples. Because they are responsible for the preservation and dissemination of the Buddha's teaching and the guidance of Buddhist lay people.

The development of Buddhism required the active participation of young monks. When discussing the role of young Buddhist monks in the modern society, it cannot be denied that they have an important role in spreading the teachings of the Buddha. Buddhism has many kinds of obstacles and challengers in modern society, so young monks have a very important role. Because, young monks are will representatives of Buddhism and soon they will have an even more pronounced role in the temples acting as consultants for the laity, and constitute the future clergy.

### **Propagation of Buddhism**

Propagation of Buddhism is one of the important missions for the existence and development of a religion. Buddhism is no exception. During the Buddha's lifetime, one of the Buddha's goals in establishing the Sangha was to spread the Dharma for the happiness and benefit of sentient beings. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the monks, nuns, and disciples of the Buddha to propagate the Dharma, who perform their duties in enlightening sentient beings and discuss how they deal with current problems. in global society.

*“Caratha bhikkhave cārikaṃ bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya lokānukampāya atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussānam”.*<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Dutiyā Mārapāsa Sutta, Saṃyutta Nikāya, IV (I).5

Mean that: *“Go on a walk, oh monks, for the benefit of many people, for the happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world, for the welfare, benefit, and happiness of gods and men”*.<sup>106</sup>

The above saying of the Buddha, at the time of sending out the first group of sixty disciples to propagate the Doctrine in the second year of his preaching, is an explanation of how and why Buddhism has survived for so long and succeeded in converting a large part of mankind to its cause.

During the Buddha’s lifetime, Buddhism spread rapidly through the great personality of the Buddha himself and through the spirit of renunciation, self-discipline and sacrifice of the disciples, who formed the Sangha and followed the Buddha’s example. After his death, the disciples, still living up to these ideals, continued to spread Buddhism far and wide.

To continue that tradition, the young monks in Vietnam continue the path of spreading Theravāda Buddhism in modern society of Vietnam. The propagation of the Buddha's teaching in present days in Vietnam is a lively work, especially for young monks.

There is no doubt that the great responsibility of young monks and nuns is to become the religious advisors of Buddhists, when they are equipped with the standard knowledge to propagate. The Buddha taught that the teachings he proclaimed were for the benefit and happiness of man, helping him to be free from afflictions and suffering both personally and socially. Buddhism is not only a philosophy of life but also a way of life that brings happiness to those who practice it.

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<sup>106</sup> I.B. Horner, tr, **The Book of The Discipline (Vinaya Piṭaka)**, Vol. IV, (London. Luzac & Company LTD, 1951), p.28.

Nowadays, technology has been widely available to everyone. There are many forms of technology that human beings have to adapt their activities to the unstable tools for the convenience in the digital era. For example, we have been communicating to each other by face to face, but in the digital era, we communicate via the digital tools such as the smart phones, which make the way of communication changed.

To teach or propagate Buddhism in the digital era will be the age of globalization of studying and very effective daily life, there is no barrage between people and information. There are several channels where can support us to spread and teach the Dharm of Buddha such as Youtube, facebook, Line, Zoom etc. All these medias play very important role and useful to instructor as open class online.

The Internet has become a good means for religious missionaries. It works very effectively and have a lot of advantages. Day and night, Theravāda monks, nuns, and lay Buddhists talk about the Dhamma on the live stream of Facebook, Zoom and Youtube. They preach and discuss many Buddhist topics and are ready to answer religious questions of Buddhist and non-Buddhists. Thereby, it makes it interesting to many people. The way of this propagation has helped the Vietnamese people easy to understand the Theravāda doctrine and to come to take refuge in the Triple Gem according to Theravāda Buddhism. Besides, the Theravāda monks have established a website to spread the Pali Canon of the Theravāda doctrine and update hot news of Theravāda Buddhism in Vietnam to the Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhist. In this way, it can help many Vietnamese people easily access information, images of the daily life of Theravāda monks and especially the teachings of the Buddha.

This is a new way of Dhamma propagation. The explosion and popularity of the internet and digital technologies have provided many opportunities for young monks to participate and connect with the Buddhist community. From there, it is possible to share information and knowledge of Buddhism to bring many benefits to the propagation of the Dharma. Young monks with technological knowledge and creative skills can convey messages and content about Theravāda Buddhism to spread Buddha's teachings to the Vietnamese people.

To sum up, Dhamma propagation of Theravāda Buddhism in Vietnam has become an important duty of Theravāda young monks in Vietnam. The spreading of the Buddha's teachings through social networks with the aims at increasing the belief of Buddhists and to make non-Buddhists easily to understand the Dhamma. Therefore, all Theravāda young monks in Vietnam can be Dhamma missionaries according to their ability.

As a preacher, the first responsibility of a young monk or nun is to thoroughly follow the teachings of the Buddha and become a model individual for others to follow. Along with the progress in science and technology, the negative side of society as well as the moral degradation, people no longer live in a peaceful and happy environment. Moreover, it is the responsibility of monks and nuns to be aware of current globalized social problems and how to solve problems encountered in modern society.

## **Education**

Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhism does not have any opportunity to develop the education system of schools. Because Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhism is very young in the Buddhist history, with a period of more than 80 years, the number of monks is also not much, so it is difficult to establish a school education system.

Therefore, Theravāda monks mainly study Theravāda Buddhism's traditional doctrine at temples and to learn the original teachings of Theravāda Buddhism, Vietnamese Theravāda monks usually go to Theravāda countries to learn the Dhamma.

In Vietnam Theravāda temples always hold Dhamma classes to educate their monks and lay to get more knowledge on the Theravāda doctrine in the Abhidhamma class, the Dhammapada class and the Pāli class. Thanks to these help, Vietnamese Theravāda monks always know the basics of the Theravāda traditional views before they study in the Universities in Vietnam as well as in the Universities of other countries.

Education is a process of teaching, training and learning to improve knowledge and to develop skills. Here, the purpose of education by the Sangha of Theravāda Buddhism in Vietnam also aims at improving knowledge of the Theravāda doctrine and of developing skills of practice and propagation. The purpose of education of Theravāda Buddhism in Vietnam is to educate talent and virtue for the monks to preserve Theravāda Buddhism and training lay people, who have the ability to serve Buddhism and the nation. This also aims at educating citizen servicing societies. It contributes to have a good religion and world today and in the future.

The role of young monks is very important, they must try to learn and observe the original teachings of the Buddha of the Pāli Tipitaka to improve themselves and also to help human beings to practice the true Dhamma.

## **Social Welfare**

The main task of the Buddhist monastic community is to preserve and practise the Teaching of the Buddha. The Buddha Himself had indicated that the survival of the Teaching depended upon the existence of the monastic community, whose members can devote all their time and energy to this important task. Having accomplished this, they can use their learning and wisdom to help society as a whole.

Actually, according to the flow of time, the modern society is different from the ancient one. Therefore, the monk's life has to change as well. The members of the Sangha no longer limit their holy life to monastic activities. The monks today have taken part in social activities in various ways. Yes! Because the monks are members of the society and, of course, due to the social life in the community, they have many different contributions.<sup>107</sup>

Although the members of the Buddhist monastic community have renounced the worldly life, they still have an important contribution to make to the welfare of the society. For instance, they help to solve the problems of the lay followers through counselling. Not being attached to the worldly conditions such as happiness and pain, gain and loss, they are more objective and farsighted in their outlook. They are therefore able to advise the lay followers on the best course of conduct. They also help lay followers to face the trials and sufferings of life, especially in times of distress such as when a serious illness or death occurs.

The members of the monastic community also help to provide various social services for the lay community. The Buddhist monasteries have an important role to play in the education of the young and even today, there are Buddhist schools

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<sup>107</sup> Interviewed with Ven. Thiện Bảo in Phat Bao temple, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, 5 Jan 2022.

functioning alongside state schools. In addition, Buddhist monks and nuns help in the running of free clinics, orphanages, homes for the aged and the sick, and other welfare organisations.

## **Conclusion**

The development of Buddhism required the active participation of young monks. When discussing the role of young Buddhist monks in the modern society, it cannot be denied that they have an important role in spreading the teachings of the Buddha. Buddhism has many kinds of obstacles and challengers in modern society, so young monks have a very important role. Because, young monks are will representatives of Buddhism and soon they will have an even more pronounced role in the temples acting as consultants for the laity, and constitute the future clergy.

There is no doubt that young monks have a great responsibility to become well-equipped religious advisors to mankind. The Buddha presented his teachings for the wellbeing and happiness of human beings so that they are free of all sorts of individual and social miseries and sufferings. Buddhism is not only a philosophy of life but also a way of life that should be adopted by people for their happiness. Therefore, as potential religious advisors, it is the first responsibility of young monks to adhere to the teachings of the Buddha and become an example themselves for others to follow.

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### **In-depth Interview:**

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# **The Stoic's way of managing the mindset of working for a good life**

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## **Abstract**

It is clear that in work life, there is often a problem about mindset. In this article has intention to purpose how to apply the Stoic philosophy to approach the problems of the human's mindset in modern epoch. Applying the four main Stoic virtues to solve the modern era's mindset with wisdom, courage, justice and temperance are tool to make every day work more efficient and fuller of happiness.

**Keywords: wisdom, courage, justice, temperance, and self-control**

## **Introduction**

In Life, there may be some things that we neglect. No matter what, no matter how small it is. It often affects our lives to cause more or less suffering. Here we are not talking about the systems, but the cognitive behavior. Even if it is very small thing, however it is important to our living. I would like to give the small example of system such as office has an attendance rule to start working at 6 am. It is something we do not like but we

cannot change the system. These are systematic matters that we do not address. However, we are talking about how we can change the mindset about going to work early, for example it's better to get up a little earlier because we will get healthy by receiving the morning sun or have time to pick up my child at school and have more quality evening time together with family. It is better than finish work late and back home late, no time to spend with the kids and family. When we get home late, it is almost the time for them to sleep. We just need to practice changing the perspective of thoughts on those little things, it will benefit us and everyone around us immensely and live a happier life. Some minor bad behaviors that are embedded in ourselves and those who close to us, such as our parents, husbands and wives, our children, or our colleagues. These little things tend to create stories and grow into broader physical and mental suffering in some way when it is attached to the person we interact with. This article therefore proposes the application of Stoic philosophy in mind management to use in workplace and daily life. It makes work more efficient and happy life. The Stoic adheres to a philosophy that focuses on the subject of "Self-control". This article discusses the self-control of thought in the form of wisdom, courage, justice, and temperance on the Stoic style also adapt them into the happy work-life.

Today we are living in the society where we are surrounded by the problems such as environment, emotion, overthinking, and so on. The scientist has researched about how many thoughts appear in our brain in one days. The result from the national science foundation shows that human has ability to think up to 70,000 thoughts per day. (1) They are mix with positive and negative thought. For sure, some among them might disturb us more or

less. The dysfunctional job that stresses you out, a contentious relationship, life in the spotlight and so on. Stoicism, because it helps us manage and think through our emotional reactions, can make these kinds of situations easier to bear. It can help us manage and mitigate the triggers that seem to be so constantly tripped. All these usually are caused us internal and external problems like overthinking, stress, mental health, mayhem, crime and so on. These are often start with single problem but it may damage our life and caused the other problems like a webster. Life will not be balance such as problems caused by work and spread to health and relationships. However, all aspects of life are always related. Therefore, to help us especially cope with these cognitive difficulties in the workplace with joy in order to develop work efficiency and to be happier in life.

Efficiency work, that we are talking about, refers to the application of knowledge, skills, techniques, methods, and so on. Taking all of them to use and apply the process of work on appropriate way in order to be effectively successful. The developing, the work of this article, means applying knowledge, abilities, techniques, and methods to successfully perform tasks effectively. Also, the happiness in this article is divided into two parts as the Dharma Piṭaka states that happiness is the fulfillment of needs or desire which these needs need to be developed. happiness divides into two main types:<sup>108</sup> Extrinsic value or external happiness, is the tangible feeling that can be seen with the eyes. This kind of happiness that must be sought, must be built, such as having wealth, good occupation, having good friends and family, etc. Extrinsic values as normal things that is neither good nor bad. Intrinsic value

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<sup>108</sup> <https://www.discovermagazine.com/mind/the-70-000-thoughts-per-day-myth#.WOIRk4GGPct>

or Inner happiness is the underpinnings of extrinsic values. Helping you live a balanced, self-sufficient, and meaningful life., which is peace in one's mind, clear and unobstructed in the mind. Happiness does not depend on reciprocity example by ethical deeds serving, by helping fellow human beings. All these are kinds of happiness in the heart. Helping you live a balanced, self-sufficient, and meaningful life. If there is only external value but lacks internal value, Life may lack of stability and peace of mind. It may deteriorate and be miserable because these external values are not permanent.<sup>109</sup>

### **What's Stoicism?**

Stoicism is a philosophical idea that teaches us to endure hardships, control ourselves, and not let negative emotions get in the way. Also the happiness is in our view and we can choose to be happy if we free ourselves out of fear. Historically, Stoicism is a concept that dates back to 1859 from the person whose name Zeno of Citium, where at the heart of this doctrine is the teaching that 'reason' or 'morality' for human being thing that everyone must have. There are three radically men led radically different lives. Epictetus the slave, Marcus Aurelius the emperor. Seneca the power broker and playwright, those who all had the same Stoic habit in common.

### **Why we need Wisdom at work?**

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<sup>109</sup> หนังสือพุทธธรรม ฉบับปรับขยาย, พระพรหมคุณาภรณ์ ป.อ.ปยุตโต, หน้า 1072-110

Today's work needs complicate skill. The new generation always has more fresher ideas and imaginations. There are many people among us who can replace or fit on your seat at all time then we need to improve ourselves by working wise with wisdom. No one want to be replaced in the next day when the HR call you for the personal meeting and tell you that you failed our KPI (Key Performance Indicator) criteria for three quarters. Nobody likes to face this situation. Epictetus said "Only focus on what is in your control"<sup>110</sup>

(3) Try to make task simply, identify and separate matters so that we can say clearly to ourselves which are externals not under control, and which have to do with the choice I actually control. As we can say that what we can change and what we cannot. What we have influence over and what we do not. So, we put all attentions and make it the best for what we can control for example Mr. A is one of sell representative among five of them in the company. He is the senior. He knew about the competitions in his department. If someone who is often the lowest sell, it might be difficult to get the chance to go on here. He wakes up very early everyday for doing some exercise, having some good breakfast, meanwhile he has reviewed the daily plan what he has to do, must do, and restricted do for today list (prioritize the incremental actions.) and making a short data note to use with his customers as a habit. He never forgets to schedule everything in advance. Moreover, the simplest strategy to achieve larger success is to break down the end goal into management and attainable milestones. Something you can act on daily. Mr. A split the monthly sell goal into weekly and daily. He understands that time flies, but I am the pilot so it is his time to drive force to reach the goal. His routine is

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<sup>110</sup> 3. The wisdom of Stoics, The Enchiridion, or Manual of Epictetus, Title 1, Page 103

goes out to meet customers with enthusiasm and positive mind. He always makes people around him laugh and happy whatever situation is. Because life is short. So, Be joyful. It is not worth to trade suffering for small problems then he chooses intrinsic value over extrinsic value. He like to practice and learn new things to improve himself. He believes that small improvements add up to massive differences. Compounding works in other areas besides money. Progress is always in your control if you can make the most of incremental habits. As Jim Rohn said "Success is nothing more than a few simple disciplines, Practiced everyday. The failure is a few errors in judgement, Repeated everyday."<sup>111</sup>

Every time when face the problems. He always thinks for five minus about the current situations and separate them into two categories 1. What is in your control and 2. What is out of your control. Now only seriously focus on what is in your control. Take a deep breath, leave uncontrolled issue, and go on! Stop thinking about it because it just waste your time as Seneca said " We suffer more from imagination than from reality"<sup>112</sup> It means do not suffer imagined troubles. Don't get consumed by the big picture decisions you cannot control, and focus on your responsibilities and how you contribute to the project. You cannot change the circumstances, the seasons, or the wind, but you can change yourself. That is something you have charge of. Being disciplined with your time, and focus creates even more time to do the things that matter to you. Plato said "Better a little which is well done, than a great

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<sup>111</sup> <https://www.skilllane.com/blog/20-Inspirational-Quotes-from-Jim-Rohn%20>

<sup>112</sup> The wisdom of Stoics, Marcus Aulelius , Book 3, Part 1-3, page 131-132

deal imperfectly.”<sup>113</sup> Make progress, no matter how small. Building better habits is hard. Maintaining good habits is even harder. Small things done consistently produce results. Consistent action coupled with time guarantees lasting progress. Enjoy what you do, and take pride in your results as the words of Aristotle, ”Pleasure in the job puts perfection in the work.”<sup>114</sup>

### **What Justice work at the workplace?**

Marcus Aurelius said that justice is ”the source of all the other virtues.”<sup>115</sup> It influences all the others. Justice is subdivided into piety, honesty, equity, and fair dealing. In the workplace or even in relationship, we should do as Marcus said “ If it is not right, Do not do it. If it is not true, Do not say it”<sup>116</sup> in order to stay in peace and happiness life Stoicism is acted for the greater good of the community, even to the extent where self-sacrifice is required. The compassion is one of the key even holding the door for someone or picking up the litter when you see it. This is only a few partly an analogy for exerting some effort for the betterment of the relationship of neighborly and kindness to make society a better place. Furthermore, Stoic equality can be compared with the Thai proverb that ”water depends on the boat, the tiger depends on the jungle.” It is a comparison of interdependence and mutual benefit in living in society. It's like water that has to rely on a boat to keep the river moving and helping the stream to remain intact. The soil at

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<sup>113</sup> Phaedo "Better a little which is well done, than a great deal imperfectly", Plato (Author), Benjamin Jowett (translator), Publication date February 22, 2018

<sup>114</sup> Aristotle

<sup>115</sup> <https://dailystoic.com/justice-the-most-important-virtue/>

<sup>116</sup> <https://dailystoic.com/meditations-marcus-aurelius/> Meditations by Marcus Aurelius: Book Summary, Key Lessons and Best Quotes

the bottom of the water will not precipitate. The river will not be shallow. Comparing with Wild tigers use the forest like home, where they find food. The forests rely on tigers to keep people from encroaching on the forest too much. This will help the forest to survive sustainably. These were seen as fair in a stoic way. On the otherhand, When in the office, sometimes employees in the same department buy and share food with equally cost. About food, Mr.A who is chubby always consume food more than Mr.B who is very skinny. On the other side about work, Mr.A always help Mr.B on his personal work when he faces the hard time on deadline schedule. These were not a problem for the Stoics. It is fair enough. We happy to cooperate on each other to get the job done with productive. We don't think much of these little things what is not equal. Give and take are the key. When everything gets on track. Everyone feels happy and not get stress. In vice versa, It is possible to live in a selfish as non-stoic society but we will be alone. When we encounter any problem, we have to solve it and go through it alone. Would not it be better to have good friends help you figure out a solution or help you solve thru the problem, perhaps faster than solving the problem alone, right? Yes indeed! we have to go thru it by yourself in most of the case however, it's probably better to have two or more brains helping each other than one.

### **Why being Courageous is important in the workplace?**

Epictetus said "Two words should be committed to memory and obeyed: persist and resist."<sup>117</sup> Persistence is the idea to remain on for a

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<sup>117</sup> <https://dailystoic.com/persist-and-resist/>

moment example Mr.A works in a construction company as an architect . He takes courage to work on a draining, unfulfilling job for almost a year in some Epictetus said ”should be committed to memory and obeyed by alternatively exhorting and restraining ourselves, words that will ensure we lead a mainly blameless and untroubled life” project to support his beloved company to be chosen from customers. To get the highest customer’s satisfaction in order to win the project over many companies in the market. If company loses the customers, it is affected the expense, income, cashflow, and many lists of the company. No customer, No money. How company survives without work. It is going to end up with layoffs. It is important for organization to have the courage workers who devote their heart to cooperate each project into the golden path. Furthermore, it takes courage to strive constantly to improve oneself and avoid slipping into the lazy mediocrity that is mass-marketed to us on a daily basis such as spending a lot of time on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, or others social media. This persistence and resistance, over a long and uninterrupted path, is the embodiment of courage that the Stoics emphasized. Courage is resisting the idea of comfort and happiness whether you feel like it or not. Therefore, be patient, courage and complete the work according to the goal setting, we could divide the main goal into sub-goals and plan to accomplish them step by step. it is because small successes are part of big overall success. When we use the courage to achieve goal, only then will we experience happiness, relaxation and celebration.

### **How Temperance work in the workplace?**

Temperance is the practice of balance to the self-control. It is not towards material goods, but self-control, harmony, and good discipline always in term of pleasure or pain, admiration or contempt, failure or triumph. Temperance is protected against extremes, not relying on the fleetingness of pleasure for happiness nor allowing the fleetingness of pain to destroy it. Controlling emotions and thinking rationally are the staple of the Stoic. They view that certain emotions such as furious, bring more harm than good, for example, causing us to be less rational, less concentrated, causing quarrels, etc., so when we feel angry at work, whether it's small or large issue. Let's apply the Stoic concept. Just don't show your anger. Hold on by taking a deep and long breath. Think carefully about the negative effects of using emotions before explode the bomb. Anger does more harm to you personally than to the thing which is the focus of your anger. Don't waste time feeling angry about things that people say or do. You create that feeling yourself and project it on to something else. You will feel the pang of anger, as this is human, but instead of allowing yourself to go with the emotion presented to you, simply pause, breath and reflect on the bigger picture. Anger makes you stupid, less rational, narrowing your focus, puts things out of context and limits your ability to reason. Pause, reflect and then act when you are calm. As Marcus Aurelius said Don't let your imagination be crushed by life as a whole. Don't try to picture everything bad that could possibly happen. Stick with the situation at hand, and ask yourself why is this so unbearable? Why can't I endure it? You'll be embarrassed to answer. You just be patience and focus on the present moment as Buddha said because you cannot fix past and decorate the future.

People tend to think negatively. For example, my work will not success, or our work will surely turn out to be worse than others. Marcus Aurelius said that we face each task with the thought that it will be the last.<sup>118</sup> You do everything as if it were the last thing you were doing in your life, and stop being aimless, stop letting your emotions override what your mind tells you, stop being hypocritical, self-centered, irritable. You see how few things you have to do to live a satisfying and reverent life. Emotions make us not use reason also worry does not help the job succeed. Take the time to work is better. Marcus points us to work on intrinsic value instead of extrinsic as he said “You can see how mastery over a few things makes it possible to live an abundant and devout life. It is just you control your emotion, leave the absurdity behind, make all things simple and focus on your work. It will make your life more productive than obsessing over your emotions.

Also Epictetus said ” We suffer not from the events in our lives but from your judgement about them”. So, in the majority, we address circumstances not in accordance with the right assumptions, but mostly by following wretched habit. Since all that we have said that human trends to think negative, the person in training must seek the way to start steering away from pain; to stop clinging to living and abhorring death; and in the case of property and money, to stop valuing receiving over giving as Buddha said.

In another side, there are some people choose to be happy with their imagination by staying in the past and sweet dream for hoping the future by

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<sup>118</sup> <https://dailystoic.com/meditations-marcus-aurelius/> Marcus Aurelius, Meditation, 2.5

doing nothing in life. It is not wrong to do but Buddha taught us” when you worry about the past or think much about future, you always suffering with them, therefore staying in present and do the best you can”. People only need to prepare themselves for heedfulness. Heedfulness means keeping ourselves awake to the truthfulness of our body and mind also of the world around us. Staying in present helps you have awareness, and peaceful mind. You are the one who chooses or trades the happiness from inside or outside that you belong with the self-controlled.

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(12) <https://www.payutto.net/book-content/อยู่กับปัจจุบัน/>

In conclusion, the four pillars of Stoicism are wisdom, justice, courage and temperance. If you are tempted to reframe these as ”prudence, morality, fortitude and moderation,” you’re only half-right. Prudence is the application of wisdom. It is moral to be just, but justice is not morality. Fortitude is more like perseverance than courage. Temperance is about discipline, while moderation is about appetite.<sup>119</sup> These are important distinctions. The Stoics show how the cardinal virtues are about action, not thought. About acting, not just ruminating. Stoics use courage to stand up, use wisdom to know the truth, use the discipline to keep going, and Justice to make it right. Moreover, we need to increase awareness, consciousness and consistent practice in Buddha’s way to rise up the productive before taking any action in work. It will take the four virtues to achieve better results. Altogether, working as a team through them. Carefully use the virtues has an opportunity to **approach** quickly

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<sup>119</sup> The wisdom of stoic, Book four, title 29, page 140

successful. It will be more accurate and perfect. Practice often is going to lead to happiness and peaceful life. As Jim Rohn said "How sad to see a father with money and no joy. The man studied economics, but never studied happiness."<sup>120</sup> Therefore, we should take the Stoic system into consideration. Applying them to balance our live is completed the Internal and External Value in every aspect.

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