BUDDHIST APPROACH TO GLOBAL LEADERSHIP
AND SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE SOCIETIES
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BUDDHIST APPROACH TO GLOBAL LEADERSHIP AND SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE SOCIETIES

Editors:
Most Ven. Thich Nhat Tu, D.Phil.,
Most Ven. Thich Duc Thien, Ph.D.,
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In 1999, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the resolution to recognize the Vesak Day as an International Day of Recognition of Buddhists and the contribution of the Buddha to the world. Since then, the people and the Royal Government of the Kingdom of Thailand, in general, and Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, in particular, were very honored to have successively and successfully held for twelve years the United Nations Day of Vesak Celebrations in Thailand.

From 2004 to date, we have come a long way in the celebrations, and we are happy to be the host and organizer, but it is time for the celebrations to grow and evolve. The United Nations Day of Vesak is coming to maturity, with twelve celebrations under our belt, much experience gained, and it is time now to share this with others. There will always be room for growth and development, and we are elated to see it grow.

In 2006-2007, having joined the International Organizing Committee for the UN Day of Vesak as Deputy Secretary General, Ven. Dr. Thich Nhat Tu has played a crucial role in building strong relationships between the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and the International Council for Day of Vesak in particular and the Global Buddhist communities in general.

We have supported and congratulated Vietnam on organizing successful UNDV celebrations and conference in 2008 and 2014, respectively. We have full trust in Vietnam being the host of UNDV 2019 for the third time. We like to thank all those who have contributed to the success of previous celebrations and wish all future celebrations be successful.

The teachings of the Buddha see no boundaries; the minds of all are alike; the sufferings of all are similar and truly; and the liberation
of all is the same. We are happy to initiate the process, develop the scope, and now it is time for others to follow in similar footsteps, evolve the celebrations into a truly international event that can be shared with Buddhists and Non-Buddhists alike.

Let the Dhamma of the Buddha be the beacon to the world, shredding away the ignorance within our hearts, bringing development into sustainable capacity for humanity and more importantly, peace and harmony to the world.

Most Ven.Prof. Brahmapundit
President, International Council for Day of Vesak (ICDV)
President, International Association of Buddhist Universities (IABU)
The history of mankind records how the Buddha got enlightenment and showed a path which not only leads but also guides the world till date. That is solely to emanate wisdom and offer insights which help us overcome numerous challenges and achieve the welfare of humanity.

Recognizing his pragmatic approach, values and contribution of Buddhism, the United Nations in a resolution in 1999 decided to celebrate the Triply Blessed Day of Vesak (Birth, Enlightenment and Passing Away of Gautama), falling mostly in a lunar calendar in the month of May. The first celebrations were held way back in the year 2000 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York and subsequently the day has been celebrated hugely in different countries.

Today our planet is confronted with a number of crises and unprecedented natural disasters. The imminent threat of terrorism and ethnic violence, tackling poverty, providing education and sustainable development leads us to strive for social justice. There is an urgent need for concerted and constant planning and right effort at an international level to foster permanent peace in the societies and in the lives of individuals.

Against the backdrop of such widespread misery and strife leading to complex issues and crises, Buddhism with its rich heritage of tolerance and non-violence can contribute immensely and inspire us with His message of loving-kindness, peace and harmony in today’s world. The United Nations Day of Vesak (UNDV) 2019 is a testimony to this fact.

Vietnam got the chance and responsibility of hosting this international Buddhist event UNDV in 2008 and 2014 respectively. The event proved an amazing spectacle of religious and spiritual festivity, with thousands of Buddhists from around the world
converging in Vietnam, to spread the Buddha’s message of peace, love and harmony.

This is the third time that Vietnam is hosting this important international event which is viewed by Buddhists as an opportunity to spread the Buddha’s message and values of love, peace, non-violence, tolerance and compassion across the world.

It is a great honor for Vietnam, the Vietnamese people, the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and Buddhists all around the world to participate in the UNDV celebrations and spread the rich Buddhist heritage, especially its teachings of equality, social justice, respect and understanding for the benefit of all humanity. World Buddhists and particularly the Vietnamese people are excited about their country hosting this auspicious and important event for the third time. This international religious, cultural and academic event would also certainly promote interaction and exchange of Buddhist cultural and intellectual values among diverse countries.

The International Buddhist conference with the main theme of “Buddhist Approach to Global Leadership and Shared Responsibilities for Sustainable Societies” during the celebrations could not have been more relevant and timely. The present book is the outcome of one workshop representing one perspective of the conference. Other perspectives of the conference include: (i) Mindful Leadership for Sustainable Peace, (ii) Buddhist Approach to Harmonious Families, Healthcare and Sustainable Societies, (iii) Buddhist Approach to Global Education in Ethics, (iv) Buddhism and the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and (v) Buddhist Approach to Responsible Consumption and Sustainable Development. This international conference aims to foster co-operation among Buddhist communities and institutions, and to develop Buddhist solutions to the global crisis.

Papers selected for this volume are those that combine thematic relevance, familiarity with the main theme or sub-themes, significant research in primary resources, innovative theoretical perspectives, clarity of organization and accessible prose style. Acceptable articles in this volume are determined by the Academic Peer-Review Committee.
UNDV 2019 certainly is an opportunity for the world Buddhists, the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and all the members of the international community to benefit from the rich traditions, values and spiritual ideals of Buddhism. The pragmatic path shown by Buddha can make the world a better, safer, more peaceful and harmonious place to be cherished and enjoyed by all sentient beings.

On behalf of the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and myself, I would like to warmly welcome President of Myanmar, H.E. Mr. U Win Myint, Prime Minister of Nepal, Right Hon. Mr. K.P. Sharma Oli, Vice President of India, H.E Mr. Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, Chairperson of the National Council of Bhutan, H.E. Mr. Tashi Dorji, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations/Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific, H.E. Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Director-General of UNESCO, H.E. Ms. Audrey Azoulay, Ambassadors, and many other dignitaries.

It is my honor to warmly welcome National Assembly Chairwoman H.E. Ms. Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan, Prime Minister of Vietnam, H.E. Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc, President of the Vietnam Fatherland Front Central Committee H.E. Mr. Tran Thanh Man, Permanent Deputy Prime Minister H.E. Mr. Truong Hoa Binh, Deputy Prime Minister-Minister of External Affairs H.E. Mr. Pham Binh Minh, other dignitaries including former Political leaders of the Government of Vietnam.

I extend my warmest welcome to all respected Sangharajas, Sangha Leaders, Buddhist Leaders, Sangha members and 1600 Buddhist Scholars and practitioners from 115 countries and territories, participating in this international celebration and conference. Let me thank all of you for your contributions to this celebration and Conference.

My heartfelt thanks are extended to respected members of the Supreme Patriarch Council and Executive members of the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, especially 25 sub-committees for UNDV 2019 in Vietnam for their devotion and contribution.

I take this opportunity to express here my profound gratitude
to Most Ven. Prof. Brahmapundit for his continuous supporting Vietnam to host this international event. I also thank profusely all members of the International Council for Day of Vesak (ICDV), Conference Committee and Editorial Board for their devotion.

I am grateful to Mr. Xuan Truong for his generosity and other donors, sponsors, volunteers and agencies from the public sector and the private sector for their excellent contribution.

This publication and other 29 books printed for Vesak could not have been possible without the persistence, hard work, and dedication of Editorial Committee for their devotion including Most Ven. Dr. Thich Duc Thien, Prof. Le Manh That, and especially Most Ven. Dr. Thich Nhat Tu serving as the international conference coordinator.

I extend my warmest and best wishes to all the delegates and participating countries on this special occasion which strengthens our resolve to improve the world by walking on the path shown by the Lord Buddha.

Whatever merit there is in publishing this book may be transferred over to the welfare and happiness of all sentient beings. May all sentient beings be happy and released from suffering.

We wish the celebration of the United Nations Day of Vesak 2019 in Vietnam every success.

Most Ven. Thich Thien Nhon
President of National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha
Chairman of the United Nations Day of Vesak 2019 in Vietnam
EDITORS’ INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

Humans are now facing many major problems such as the rising number of conflicts around the world, deteriorating environment, inequality, depression, etc., that need to be addressed urgently and completely in a way towards establishing globally sustainable peace. The Buddha taught that everything exists in relation to others, so all humans and nations around the world ought to collaborate and take the right responsibilities to deal with all the problems we are facing. Of course, global leadership plays a crucial role in not only resolving the world issues, but also guiding the world to walk on the right path, which pleases all sentient beings in the period of the 4th industrial revolution.

The participants in this workshop were not representative of the mainstream thinking or conventional wisdom of this field, and this volume reflects this richness and diversity. Given the above, this volume collects together a number of papers with a diversity of aspects and in the light of Buddhism, that were presented at the international workshop on “Global Leadership and Shared Responsibilities for Sustainable Societies” which took place on 13 May 2019 at International Conference Center Tam Chuc, Ha Nam, Vietnam on the occasion of THE 16TH UNITED NATIONS DAY OF VESAK CELEBRATIONS 2019.

SHORT REVIEW OF CONTENT

Keynote Speeches

Mr. Vu Khoan, former Deputy Prime Minister of Vietnam proposes the discussion on “Vietnam accompanies the global Buddhist community in striving for a peaceful and sustainable development world.” He has assessed the adversity of the world including moral issues,
increasing social evils, ethnic contradiction, religion, armed conflict and natural disasters, which refer to the opacity (avidya), and greedy motives of these problems. The author calls for Heads of State as well as the world community to rely on Buddhist philosophy, to repel evil, fulfilling the UN Millennium Goals, to develop a sustainable society and peaceful world. The author suggests that Buddhist organizations should apply active solutions from the UN Vesak Celebration into their nation’s life and contribute to the change for a better world in a healthy and sustainable way.

Prof. S.R.Bhatt, Chairman, Indian Philosophy Congress, India, discusses the relevance of the Buddha’s teachings in solving the major existential issues that modern society faces: “Buddhist approach to global leadership and shared responsibility for sustainable societies”. The author notes that humanity is currently at a crossroad between the development of science and the deterioration of our values. In this crisis, he proposes that Buddhist teachings are the cure to fixing the world’s problems. Using the Buddha’s values such as self-sameness with all, harmonious living, shared responsibility, and universal compassion, we can eradicate all the suffering of the present-day corrupted materialistic contraption and build towards a global sustainable existence.

Luangpor Khemadhammo offers his personal experience with his interesting narratives: “Buddhist leadership: A hands on perspective”, focusing on the two organisations that he has helped found and led since their inception. The first is Angulimala, the Buddhist Prison Chaplaincy which is active in the prisons of England, Wales and Scotland; and the second is TBSUK - the Theravada Buddhist Sangha in the UK. He asks: So what have we to learn, both from what we know of what the Buddha taught and from practical, personal leadership experience? He concludes that if Buddhism is to assume a Global Leadership role, it will be by the impressive example of Buddhist countries and communities. He hopes that we can persuade our lay people to live by the five precepts and demonstrate that by simply applying Buddhist standards of morality people can be safe and communities can live in peace and harmony; then we can change the world.

Global Dynamic Leaders: A Buddhist Perspective

Most Ven. Thich Nhat Tu from Vietnam Buddhist University lays
stress on the “Five Principles of global leadership”. For him, to become a global leader, a leader must have a global vision and a global mindset without limiting his ideas in family, community, country and region and to open the interactive vision and connect to all world-class activities. He warns that intercontinental and intercultural conflicts; religious conflicts have prevented many countries from being unified because of the conservatism in their traditional culture, which has become a barrier to other countries and cultures. He advocates that modifying behavior is creating interaction but does not impact on independent voices. The biggest obstacle of global scope arises from language, culture, religious ideology, and political ideology. He asks us to find and overcome these external obstacles, adapting to global social, geographic, geopolitical, psychological, religious, religious ... influences.

Professor Le Manh That proposes the discussion on “Buddhist contribution to good governance and development in Vietnam.” and refers to the case studies of Buddhist contribution to the theory proposed by five statesmen, namely Zen Master Pháp Thuận, Zen master Viên Thông, Emperor Trần Thái Tông, Buddha-Emperor Trần Nhân Tông and Lord Nguyễn Phúc Chu. The author has addressed how, from a general Buddhist theory, the five Vietnamese Buddhist statesmen exploit and develop their own new theories of state governance and development, which have enduring historical values and are still applicable today in Vietnam, despite having many concepts still open for discussion.

Peter van den Berg looks at the aspect of “Leading with wisdom and Buddhist practice”. This paper focuses on the issue of Buddhist leadership and how it will be beneficial for humanity. In this context, Buddhist wisdom and its practice has been dealt with and involves three dimensions of leadership viz. charismatic leadership, moral leadership and strategic leadership. The author has highlighted the benefits of all three dimensions of leadership for the benefit of humanity because Buddhist leadership is inspired by the Dharma along with moral leadership to show compassion for others. The paper also explores Buddhist practice to stimulate openness of mind and the understanding of the cause and effects of behavior by analyzing karma. The paper highlights the three dimensions of leadership with wisdom in the context of positive outcomes and in the light of Buddhist practice.

Garbo Karsai discusses “Buddhist approach to global leadership and
shared responsibilities for sustainable peace”. The author’s goal is to carry out a wide analysis of the challenges the modern world faces under the lens of Buddhism. The research paper explores further into the current challenges of the modern world, as well as delving into the deep theoretical understanding of what the Buddha thought and taught in this context. The paper further analyses how contemporary Buddhism relates to these challenges, while discussing if and how Buddhist leaders can offer a solution and/or if Buddhism itself also requires any transformation.

Amrita Nanda explores the topic of “Exclusivism and parochialism in Buddhist perspective”. The author argues the need to foster more cooperation between major Buddhist traditions and believes that if Buddhism survives, it will have a greater impact on the world order. The paper contends that differences in mutual cooperation between the two traditions have developed for two reasons, firstly Exclusivism, and secondly, Parochialism especially to focus on a local area with narrow-mindedness. The author has also explored many different ways of presenting the Dhamma as promoted in early Buddhist discourses. The paper further highlights that Exclusivism and Parochialism arise from both a lack of education and a communication process to resolve these two issues. Apart from a change in educational curriculum, more dialogue among the followers of Mahāyāna and Theravāda Buddhism can help to resolve these issues.

Devin Combs Bowles analyzes “Dependent origination and migration: The need for Buddhist leadership”. This paper outlines how Buddhist wisdom and leadership could help stop environmental degradation and foster compassion for those peoples adversely affected by it. The paper gives further details on how the ecological systems lead to increasing global temperatures. The author explains how Buddhist wisdom and core concepts can be used as a tool to alter these trends and examines the issue of citizens from developed countries and their concerns about refugees and related issues, in the light of Buddhist leadership.

G.T. Maurits Kwee deals with the question of “What if Buddhists lead the world?” The paper examines the global outreach of Buddhism and its ultimate role in handling the burning issues of the globalized world through education to counter ignorance on self-knowledge, boost wisdom and self-leadership which soften greed and hostility. The paper calls for financial liberation by creating a “Buddhist Bitcoin”
which should be usable across borders and in remote areas of the globe with the idea that a Buddhist world economy comes into being, if 500 million Buddhists form a coalition of the willing to use it. Buddhist leadership targets self-leadership that works toward self-awakening by self-therapy and secures autonomy by crypto self-banking, thus sharing responsibilities and sustaining Buddhist societies worldwide.

Leena Seneheweera explores “The Buddhist approach to global leadership and shared responsibilities for sustainable societies of people with disabilities in the western and oriental world: Through Buddhist music and architectural design”. The paper discusses issues on elements of global leadership and shared responsibilities for sustainable development, which can be traced back to the Buddha's political philosophy. In this research paper, the author introduces Buddhist architectural designs and music to initiate leadership and share responsibilities for non-Buddhist laymen in the Western and Oriental society. The study further, analyses the facts under experience-based findings in the context of music and architectural designs, as a tool for healing spirituality from the Buddhist perspective. The study goes further to recommend using all activities linked with therapeutic processes and Buddhist leadership and shared responsibilities as the fundamental factor to build a sustainable society for the young generation of the future.

Robert Szuksztul presents a paper entitled “Elements of Buddha’s political philosophy in the Pali canon, and its relevance for the global leadership issues and sustainable political relations”. The author discusses the Buddha’s teaching as depicted in the Pali Canon with some important observations on the ways of proper government and political engagements. The paper also defines explicit teachings and targets as social and political relations with the right leadership to advocate values. The area of human concern, far beyond the human realm into the world of nature is also highlighted. The author is of the view that Buddhist teachings certainly are the proposition that delivers a more stable and predictable future where nations discuss their goals based on rules set together with other nations and are seen in principle as equal partners and not as enemies.

Nguyen Ngoc Tien discusses “A vision for the youth development and leadership: A critical study of the young Siddhartha’s renunciation”. This paper looks at the Siddhartha’s life from a human perspective,
to help to inspire young people to reflect on their life values, including personal growth, lifestyle, and leadership. In this paper, the author outlines the great accomplishments as the foundation of life. These accomplishments are based on principles such as inculcating ethical conduct among youth and also foundation and leadership traits to encounter and overcome challenges of life. The paper, also explores the idea of how Siddhartha's renunciation can be used as a source of inspiration for young people in various forms, which proves that anything is possible.

The topic of “Empowerment of women: early Buddhist perspective” is outlined by Meena Charanda. This paper studies the aspects of empowerment of women as depicted in Buddhism and examines the role of women in Buddhism. Through this paper, the author explores new avenues of research on the basis of Hinayana literatures and highlighted the Buddhist perspective on empowerment of women with special reference to early Buddhism.

Nguyen Thi Que Anh presents the results of “The basic studying of the influence of Buddhism in global leadership and sustainable social development”. The author firmly determines that Buddhist compassion and wisdom as the tool for effective solution of social and human issues in many ways; helping humanity to get rid of suffering and lead to happiness and fullness. The growing influence of Buddhism is clear, when the Vesak International Organization Committee now comes under the Economic and Social Committee of the United Nations. This opportunity helps spread out Buddha’s message of compassion, wisdom, peace and non-violence throughout the world and promote global leadership and sustainable social development. The paper concludes with an impression that Buddhism meets the requirements to be considered as the future religion i.e. global religion.

Manish Prasad Rajak’s paper “The Enlightened leader: An insight into Buddhist leadership model for 21st Century” aims to bring forward the Buddhist philosophies that have existed for centuries in the teachings of Buddha and incorporate them into modern leadership and provide an insight into the Buddhist view of leadership for a holistic and sustainable future. The noble Eightfold path along with the ethical (Buddhist lay ethics) principles and the ten perfections
(as laid down in the Jatakas) provide an effective tool for integration with modern theories and develop a holistic model for exemplary leadership that can bring a paradigm shift in the World leadership front to ensure sustainable peace and stability. This paper attempts to develop a practical and universal leadership framework based on the Buddhist philosophy, which can address various issues that are being faced in our times.

Sustainable Societies

Jeff Wilson examines “Social Cohesion and the Ariyaparyessana Sutta”. He begins by introducing one of the most popular philosophies of the free market economy, that is people will work harder if they are working simply to satisfy their own needs. On the contrary, based on the Pariyesanā Sutta and Sigalaka Sutta, he explains that Buddhist teachings lead to happiness and a sustainable lifestyle for everyone. In particular, generosity and donation, sympathetic communication, acts that produce benefit and social equality are of great importance. By cultivating these actions, we can improve the deplorable conditions of the world today. As such, to foster well-being and sustainability, we need to participate in the construction and maintenance of the economy, have clear and honest communication with one another, support one another to produce social benefits and treat one another with kindness and equality.

Most Ven. Thich Vien Tri explores “The adaptability of Buddhism to the changes of modern society” in the fast moving and technology obsessed era, also called the 4.0 IR era and throws light on many questions which gradually come up for debate and discussion. The author also discusses the future of Buddhism in this present era and its role to meet human needs in this era of 4.0 IR. The paper deals with every aspect of the 4.0 IR era from a Buddhist perspective and draws from the teachings of the Buddha to outline his points of view.

Arpita Mitra discusses “Gender equality and sustainable society: A Buddhist view for modern world”. This paper introduces the Buddhist view on gender equality from various sources ranging from the past to the present to show that Buddhist precepts are designed to upgrade the equality of an individual’s mind. The paper puts forth a core Buddhist idea which affirms the basic nature of
the human mind. The study confirms that a spiritually nourished woman is capable to counsel families, meditate disputes, endure safe communities, set public policies and build a sustainable society through implementing Buddhist values of tolerance and compassion.

James Bruce Cresswell details “Global citizenship and sustainability: a contemporary model of Buddhism”. The paper explores the various aspects of global citizenship and sustainability with the focus on profit and economic growth with the purpose to re-examine the objectives and rationales for growth and to be aware of other priorities. The paper further tries to deal with ideas and models for the development of people and institutions as a fundamental prerequisite to attain sustainable development. The author also discusses Buddhist theory and practice in order to achieve these outcomes and explores how Buddhism can play a major role. Further emphasis is placed on ancient wisdom-based teaching, which contains the potential to transform not only the individual but also societies and environments.

José A. Rodríguez Díaz analyzes “The contributions of Buddhists to building more harmonious and sustainable societies”. This paper examines how Buddhists contribute to the building of better future societies with a focus on those attitudes and actions that aim at improving social interrelations and helping to create environmentally sustainable societies. The author explores the meanings and practices of Buddhism regarding trust and relations to others, war-peace and environmental protection issues. The theoretical and methodological approaches used in the paper are the result of combining, and in some cases fusing Buddhism with Sociology. This paper aims to contribute with insight into knowledge of the social structural forms taken by a complex system of interconnections and influences among multiple views and actions towards others. The paper provides the analysis of the interconnections between all Meanings and Practices, using the social network analysis approach and yields a map of Buddhist social DNA which portraits the ways through which Buddhism contributes to the creation of more harmonious and sustainable societies.
Rajni Srivastava deals with “New challenges: Buddhist proposal for sustainable society”. This paper explores the Buddhist response to challenging situations, where any type of major changes brings with itself a sense of uncertainty and Buddhism not only pacifies but also gives skillful methods to handle difficult situations. The paper is divided into two parts with the first part dealing with contemporary issues and Rawls’ concept of a sustainable society. While the second part considers the Buddhist proposal for a sustainable society, where Buddhism has become a leading voice on global issues. The paper has a discussion regarding two important questions: “What are real threats for sustainability?”, “Is there a new inspiration for sustainability in Buddhism?” Both these questions are very important for developing required solutions and achieving sustainability.

Dr. Thich Hanh Chon describes “Buddhist contribution to sustainable social development”. The author examines the most pressing issues in our society today: rising insecurity, crime rate and most remarkably, notes that many counter measures have been unsuccessful. For this reason, the Buddhist approach is proposed as a solution with linkages to promoting goodness, practicing Buddhist ethics and protecting the environment, balancing the life through practicing the Middle Way, promoting gender equality and the doctrine of dependent origination.

Mindful Leadership and World Peace

Benjamin Joseph Goldstein presents the topic of “Moments to mind: Principles of Buddhist leadership and the process of cognition in the Sautrāntika school”. The essay is an abbreviated analysis, bringing Buddhist teachings into dialogue with some modern perceptions of leadership. The author proposes that by adopting the Sautrantika school of thought, highly effective leaders can emerge. Buddhist leadership is manifested through the course of actions following Sautrantika thoughts such as process of cognition and understanding mind events to further support the individual leader. The understanding and learning how to control the variance of kléśas helps one to become a better leader. In conversations with Buddhist leadership, the paper demonstrates how sustainable peace
could be achieved if one chooses to engage themselves in a degree of self-reflection and transformation.

Ven. Dr. Jinwol Dowon discusses “How to achieve mindful leadership for sustainable peace through Josaseon (patriarchal zen) practice”. The paper firstly reviews Josaseon practice in Korea, which was transmitted from India through China, as a classical and genuine meditation, to achieve mindful leadership and sustainable peace. The paper points out the way of practice of Bodhidharma by reviewing the Outline of Practice, which indicates that “to enter by practice refers to four all-inclusive practices”. The paper says that mindful leadership could be one of the valuable contributions to promote mindful leadership for sustainable peace and provide benefit for all sentient beings and Earth.

Samatha Ilangakoonl looks at “Buddhist theory of peaceful coexistence”. The author argues that the conflicts around the world are rising and worrisome. We need more urgent solutions for these than ever before. In this way, the Buddhist approach for peace may offer a better alternative to discuss and the theory of Dependent Origination. More specifically, this theory means that nothing in the world is independent, everything depends on others and everything exists on others. Religion and nationality are also interdependent. Given this, we assume that diversity brings beauty and the Buddhist approach is effective to apply.

Phe Bach & W. Edward Bureau analyze “Three-intertwined paths to leading for sustainable peace”. Sustainable peace anchors itself in mindfulness of the present, the people, and the microcosms in which we exist. Rather than existing as a static state, peace is organic and dynamic, flowing itself around the vagaries of “un-peacefulness.” This paper explores the paths one by one with the aim to emphasize the similar importance of each path leading to sustainable peace. Peace can sustain us in our circular journeys through systems and time.

Family and Healthcare

Kyoung-Hee Lee examines “Buddhist approach to harmonious families in the changing society”. The prime objective of this paper is to examine the Buddhist approaches to harmonious families for sustainable societies in the contemporary changing world order. The
paper is mainly a textual study where the collected data was observed on an historical, comparative, and critical bases with the purpose to highlight the Buddhist approach to create harmonious families in the changing society. The author also deals with the concept of family, family as a social unit and its function is to perpetuate society through procreation and socialization. The paper also highlights the basic factors that lead to the crisis of “family disintegration” and “social integration” which are the current challenges that have to be taken care. In this paper, an approach is to put forward on how Buddhism can be regarded as an integrative therapy for families by approaches to transgenerational, structural, strategic, experiential, solution focused, and narrative therapies.

Pataraporn Sirikanchana details “Duty and compassion of Theravāda Buddhist approach to harmonious families, health care and sustainable societies”. This paper introduces the Theravada Buddhist approach to harmonious families, health care and sustainable societies. In order, to secure happiness and peace in one’s life, Buddhist teachings provide a social member with guidance in which everyone can be physically and spiritually developed. Throughout the paper, the writer also provides the meaning of duty and compassion and how they are supportive to family and society. Through duty and compassion, we can develop our public mind and share responsibility of human beings, societies, and the world of nature. We thus enjoy being with our environment and can live with others happily, creatively and harmoniously.

Padmasiri De Silva explores “Lifestyle enhancement and new dimensions of health care: a focus on pain management”. This paper proposes new ways to make healthy lifestyle changes through meditation with a focus on pain management. When available therapies do not apparently work, mindfulness opens a new entry toward offsetting stress, tension and anxiety. The writer states that a radical transformation of the Western psychological tradition in dealing with pain management has taken place. This shift has seen the acceptance of the Buddha’s perennial insight that the “severity of suffering depends on our attitude towards it”. Based on this foundation, the paper has two major parts covering firstly,
a therapeutic approach to pain management, which involves developing a new mindset on how pain is dealt with, and the second part of the paper presents the contributions of leaders in the field of pain management covering examples of both theory and practice.

John M Scorsine focuses on the question of “Who cares for the caregivers and responders?” This paper addresses the current theories and initiatives meant to support the first responders and caregivers that answer the call. The paper puts emphasis on what aspects of Buddhist thought and understanding can be brought to these embattled persons that pursue the Bodhisattva ideal. How can the Sangha participate as caregivers and responders? What role can be played by Buddhist chaplaincy? The paper studies the teachings of Buddhism, which could be brought into action to reduce the suffering of the responders and enable them to carry-on each day faced with the suffering of thousands and not succumb to the visions of pain they are grim witnesses to everyday.

Education and Environment

Amarjiva Lochan highlights “Buddhist education in Southeast Asia: Crisis and remedies”. The paper presents the humankind’s craving for peace and sublime happiness and that proper and caring education can be the only answer. Buddhism being the greatest interest drawer for people’s daily religious behavior, its educational teachings are prevalent and in abundance in Asian Buddhist vocabulary. The paper looks at the crisis pervading within Buddhist education in general and its status in Southeast Asia. Remedial issues are also explored and discussed in this paper.

Pahalawattage Don Premasiri proposes the idea of “Universally valid ethical norms of Buddhism applicable to global education in ethics”. The paper deals with the hindrance in determining the basis for global ethics education, and the facts about the diversity involved in ethical norms, principles and attitudes held by different global communities that is characterized by their own traditional cultural and religious backgrounds. The author discusses the inherent characteristic of Buddhist teaching with a humanistic approach to ethical life, emphasizing the importance of the autonomous capacity of each individual to determine what is ethically right and
wrong in conformity with the perceptions of all such enlightened humans ‘Knowledgeable Persons’. The paper puts emphasis on the necessity to draw the attention of educators to train the minds of people globally for determination of human ethical choices and the accord with such decisions.

Prof. Dr. Karam Tej Singh Sarao looks at “Buddhist approach to responsible consumption and sustainable development”. The paper examines that there are many common grounds between the goals and ideals of ECOSOC and the teachings of the Buddha (Buddhavacana). The paper proposes that the Buddhavacana has much to offer in terms of sustainable development and can contribute towards the efforts of ECOSOC. Further on, the author also shows that the current globalizing system promotes competition rather than cooperation. In this paper, it is shown that a society founded upon the Buddhist Dharma recognizes that one should aim at promoting the good of the greater unit to which one belongs, and as a minimum, one must not look for one’s own satisfaction in ways that may cause harm to others.

“The framework of right consumption” is presented by Prof. Dr. Gábor Kovács. The planet is now in a new epoch of its history, the Anthropocene, in which humanity exerts enormous impact on planetary processes. Human activities put a huge pressure on the earth system’s structure and functioning with detrimental consequences. According to the patterns of great acceleration, socio-economic trends have been deteriorating and that changes the future of the planet and the future of Humanity. A decisive part of the socio-economic system beside production and distribution is consumption of energy; water usage, fertilizer and paper consumption and the consumption of various services have been exponentially increased. In respect to sustainability, the central role of consumption was recognized by the United Nations as “ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns”. The paper maintains that Buddhism should and can respond to the stressing issues through responsible consumption i.e. right (sammā) consumption that is understood as local, wise and mindful and also gives an opportunity for practicing the virtues of sharing (dāna), contentment (appicchatā) and moderation (mattaññutā).
Buddhism and 4.0 Revolution

Peter Daniels discusses “The aspect of the 4th industrial revolution: a Buddhist perspective for sustainable societies and wellbeing”. The focus of this paper is to analyze the development of the 4th industrial revolution, the emerging of physical and digital world (eco, socio, and environment) in the perspective of Buddhism for sustainable societies and human wellbeing. It comprises a preliminary Buddhist-influenced analysis of the 4.0 industrial revolution and likely consequences in terms of environmental impacts and fundamental aspects of the root causes of samsaric suffering. Mindfulness and awareness of the real sources of wellbeing (and hence suffering) are key aspects of the Buddhist-inspired analysis of relevant effects and identification of responses to guide the 4.0 industrial revolution.

Geoffrey Bamford deals with “Reacting to the 4th industrial revolution: Sidestepping determinism”. The Fourth Industrial revolution is more or less equal to the digital revolution of the world in late twentieth century. This era has influenced everything in the world in a drastic way and Buddhist heritage is not excluded. The Fourth Industrial Revolution introduces advanced technology in all sections, such as retrieval of artifacts, recording of artifacts, storage, exhibiting, transportation and marketing of artifacts with digital technology. This is highly utilized by the dealers of antiquities in Asian countries and auction houses in the West, especially in London and New York. The paper examines how it has been utilized in all these phases and how Buddhist antiquities are being sold in the Western Market by looting and illicit trading, this has affected Buddhist Heritage. Finally, a practical solution to minimize illegal trade of Buddhist antiquities and a proposal to minimize looting and trading of Buddhist heritage is outlined in the paper.

Prof. David Blundell provides “An overview of Buddhism in Monsoon Asia: Digital/Spatial Humanities and Conservation of Heritage”. The paper brings together studies that illustrate digital/spatial approaches for the conservation of heritage across regional economies and bridging distinctions between cultures. Geography continues to play an important role in dynamic global environments of multicultural diversities ranging across very different regions that increasingly find heritage as common denominators. The
paper also highlights early historical evidence of trade networks of Austronesian navigators circulating in the Dharma in the Indian Ocean, mainland and island Southeast Asia, and China. This coincides with work on Lewis Lancaster’s Atlas of Maritime Buddhism as a project of the Electronic Cultural Atlas Initiative (ECAI) with Jeanette Zerenke and other Austronesia Team member utilizing geographic information systems (GIS).

Alex Amies brings a discourse of “The building blocks for open ecosystems of online resources serving Buddhist communities”. The paper gives an overview of the state of the art software building blocks for development of online resources serving Buddhist communities and how those are driving new capabilities and broadening access. The central theme described is the huge scale and rapid evolution of the open source movement and modular package management systems that are built on open source software. The author hopes that the evolving technologies can bring more improvements to Buddhist resources, including large-scale translation of the Chinese Buddhist canon and the collected works of Venerable Master Hsing Yun to English. An additional impact is the broadening of access to high quality scholarly resources beyond the academic community to the monastic and lay Buddhist communities.
- I -
OPENING ADDRESSES
CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE
FOR UNDV 2019
by
Supreme Patriarch of the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha
His Holiness Thich Pho Tue

Vesak is the most sacred event to mark the Buddha’s three most important life stages. It was on this day that the Buddha was born, Buddha attained enlightenment, and Buddha entered Nirvana. It is one of the rarest events in the history of humanity, which was well explained in the Nikaya Scriptures: “A unique being, an extraordinary person arises in the world for benefit and happiness of the people, for compassion, for welfare, for the benefit and happiness of gods and humans. It is Tathāgata, the fully awakened Buddha”. Buddha is a great enlightened teacher. The Buddha spread a message of peace, happiness and compassion for humanity and introduced the path which each person must take leaving behind greed, hatred and delusion, for attaining enlightenment through the training in ethical discipline, meditative concentration and wisdom. This path will lead to welfare and liberation for all.

This year, joining the joyful atmosphere with the Buddhist community worldwide on grand Vesak Day, it is a great honour for the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha to host the 16th United Nations Day of Vesak. On behalf of the Supreme Patriarch Council and Executive Council of National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, as well as all Vietnamese Buddhist monastic members and devotees, I warmly welcome United Nations dignitaries, Heads of State, Ambassadors, Sangharajas, Presidents of Buddhist Sanghas, leaders of Buddhist organizations, Buddhist scholars and practitioners from all 115 countries and territories who are here in Vietnam to celebrate the UN Day of Vesak. This is the third time that Vietnam has been given the chance by the UNDV to host his sacred event.
It is a precious opportunity to strengthen our faith in Buddha’s teaching of liberation, in order to promote the value of the legacy that the Blessed One left to humanity in the priceless doctrinal system such as wisdom, compassion, the doctrine of selflessness, nonviolence, peace and sustainable development.

It is an honor to welcome leaders from the homeland of Buddha, Buddhist countries, leaders of Party, State and Vietnam Fatherland Front Central Committee to attend the 16th United Nations Day of Vesak celebration in Vietnam, and together discuss the successful implementation of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals for a world of peace, stability and prosperity.

The history of 2000 years of Vietnamese Buddhism has proven to be engaged Buddhism. Since the age of independence of Vietnam from the beginning of the 10th century, under the Dinh, Tien Le, Ly, Tran dynasties, Buddhism had become the dominant ideological foundation in political, economic and societal affairs and played a key role in shaping the spiritual and cultural identity of the Vietnamese people. The Thi’en (zen) masters and senior monks, who were also outstanding leaders, great diplomats of history and rendered great merit to the national construction and defense. The golden age of Buddhism was also the prosperous period of our nation.

The National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha inherits and promotes the historical values of Vietnamese Buddhism and these values always accompany the nation. Looking back at the international integration process of Vietnam, we would have been pleased to know that Vietnam has made a positive, proactive and responsible contribution to the international community, which can be recognized and appreciated by the United Nations. The fact that the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha is hosting the United Nations Day of Vesak celebration this year has affirmed that. At the same time, the role and position of the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha is affirmed in international integration.

The main theme of the United Nations Day of Vesak 2019 is “Buddhist approach to global leadership and shared responsibilities for sustainable societies”, while other subthemes cover: (i) Mindful leadership for sustainable peace, (ii) Buddhist approach
to harmonious families, healthcare and sustainable societies; (iii) Buddhist approach to global education in ethics; (iv) Buddhism and the Fourth industrial revolution; and (v) Buddhist approach to responsible consumption and sustainable development. Thereby, a worldwide Buddhist community offers the most basic and practical solutions which are derived from the human mind, to participate successfully in the implementation of the global Sustainable Development Agenda that the United Nations is working towards.

I believe that, the 16th United Nations Day of Vesak celebration, held in Tam Chuc Buddhist Convention Centre, Ha Nam province, Vietnam will be a grand success. I wish that all distinguished guests, Buddhist dignitaries, intellectuals, Buddhist compatriots enjoy a peaceful Vesak season in the Dharma, with unlimited peace and happiness! prosperity!

Supreme Patriarch of National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha

His Holiness THICH PHO TUE
CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE FOR UNDV 2019

by

President of the National Viet Nam Buddhist Sangha’s Executive Council
Most Ven. Thich Thien Nhon

Paying Homage to Shakyamuni Buddha

Your Holiness, Most Venerables, Venerables, Members of the Sanghas
Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

In the course of history more than 26 centuries ago, at Lumbini garden, in ancient India (now in Nepal) an event of extreme importance in the history of humanity was the birth of the World-Honored One who delivers the message of wisdom, understanding and compassion towards building an equal society, without class, a peaceful society, without war conflict and hostility. He has introduced the Middle Way and the combination of compassion and wisdom is an effective solution to solve conflicts between peoples and peoples, between countries and countries in the world.

Today, that truth of the Enlightened Master - Shakyamuni Buddha continues to be the lodestar that has brought meaning to the lives of millions of millions of people around the world. The United Nations has decided to celebrate the sacred Vesak every year in order to promote the spirit of compassion, wisdom and peace that the Buddha has transmitted to us.

In the context of a world facing conflicts, terrorism, war, inequality, ecological environment crisis and climate change, together with the accelerated development of science and technology and impact of industrial revolution 4.0, every aspect of life and traditional structures is changing. In this situation, more than ever, we must work together
to promote the core values of Buddhism with the spirit of tolerance, selflessness, forgiveness, harmony and peace through the Eightfold Noble Path to contribute to solving global problems and challenges.

The truth is that with all things becoming connected, everything can be erased geographically, communities and nations become increasingly interdependent, the world gradually begins to look like a global society. Therefore, to solve the problems posed, it is necessary to have a global leadership. This leadership must ensure equality, reconciliation of interests and dissolution of conflicts between beliefs, economies, cultures, social classes, or territorial states as well as balance the environment and ecosystem.

The main theme of the United Nations Day of Vesak (UNDV) 2019 is “The Buddhist approach to global leadership and shared responsibilities for sustainable societies” shows the great stature and sense of global responsibility of Buddhism. This is responding to the current volatile situation on many aspects of life in the world and the belief that Buddhism can play a major role in being able to contribute to solving these problems.

In the global sustainable development program of the United Nations to 2030, the aims are to eliminate poverty, ensure a healthy life and improve welfare, guarantee quality education, gender equality and promote growth, sustainable economic growth, sustainable consumption and production, response to climate change, securing resources and biodiversity, promoting peaceful societies, revitalizing partnerships for global sustainable development.

The international academic conference celebrating the United Nations Vesak 2019 aims to foster co-operation among global communities and world Buddhist organizations in order to develop Buddhist solutions to the global crisis, leading to the goals that the United Nations pursues. Other perspectives of conference include:

(i) Mindful Leadership for Sustainable Peace,

(ii) Buddhist Approach to Harmonious Families, Healthcare and Sustainable Societies,

(iii) Buddhist Approach to Global Education in Ethics,
(iv) Buddhism and the Fourth Industrial Revolution,
(v) Buddhist Approach to Responsible Consumption and Sustainable Development.

Celebrating the Day of Vesak is an opportunity for all of us to ponder and celebrate the humanistic values of Buddhism, through the life of the Buddha that teaches us the true happiness of every human being, not only to find in material things, but instead, to find peace in the mind. On the national level, instead of pursuing unlimited growth, there is a growth in spiritual wealth, peace, happiness, respect and environmental protection. Examining our core ideas and teachings such as the doctrine of Dependent Origination, the doctrine of Karma and the Law of cause and effect, Buddhism has many advantages in participating with global leadership and having shared responsibilities for sustainable societies.

The message from the UNDV 2019 in Viet Nam calls for world Buddhist leaders to unite and engage in action and share effective solutions for social challenges in our present age. The UN Day of Vesak 2019 will bring goodness, collective wisdom and a unified voice of world Buddhism, creating inspiration towards the social incarnation, serving human life, liberating suffering, bringing happiness, prosperity and sustainable development for humankind on this planet.

On behalf of the Central Viet Nam Buddhist Sangha, I am sincerely grateful to the World Buddhist Leaders including Sangharaja, Supreme Patriarch, Leaders of Buddhist Sanghas, all Buddhist traditions and organizations from over 115 countries and territories who have gathered here at the UNDV 2019 at Tam Chúc Temple, Hà Nam, Viet Nam.

I am also grateful to the Heads of States, the United Nations and international organizations, diplomatic missions, Leaders of the Party and the Government, the Viet Nam Fatherland Front who attended and had messages celebrating Vesak. By attending you have shared happiness with the monks, nuns, Buddhists of the Viet Nam Buddhist Sangha in the Buddhist year 2563 which is extremely special, dignified and solemn, contributing to honoring the value of Vietnamese
Buddhist tradition, which will always accompany with the Vietnamese people for many millennia and continue to contribute to building a beautiful country of Viet Nam with peace, sustainable development and international integration.

In the infinite inspiration, as if receiving the aura emanating from the Buddha’s golden body, the Compassionate Father, I sincerely wish the Respected Venerables, monks, nuns and all Buddhists a peaceful and happy Buddha’s Birthday, countless goodness, the fulfillment of the Buddha’s good works benefitting life, in the spirit of propagating the Dharma, serving sentient beings is a practical offering to the Buddhas on the occasion of the UNDV 2019.

President of the National Viet Nam Buddhist Sangha’s Executive Council
Most Ven. THICH THIEN NHON
CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE FOR UNDV 2019

by
President of ICDV/IABU
The Most Venerable Prof. Dr. Phra Brahmapundit


As already known to many, this great event is aimed at creating understanding among the Buddhist communities worldwide which in the end would bring peace and stability to the world at large in the time of digital society and technology disruption along with numerous challenges. For this, I really hope that Guidance and Insight from the Buddha would be able to cultivate wisdom and harvesting true peace in digital era.

For the celebrations this year, the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha’s Executive Council is dedicating the great efforts, time and energy towards successful United Nations Day of Vesak Celebrations and International Buddhist Conference. Necessary preparations have been made to help facilitate foreign guests from all over the world.

I would like to offer congratulations to all of you for joining 2019 Vesak Celebrations and International Buddhist Conference in order to bring greater mutual understanding and peace to mankind.

May the blessings of the Triple Gems be upon you all.

The Most Venerable Prof. Dr. Phra Brahmapundit
Member, Supreme Sangha Council of Thailand
President, International Council for Day of Vesak
President, International Association of Buddhist Universities
BUDDHIST APPROACH TO GLOBAL LEADERSHIP AND SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE SOCIETIES
SIGNIFICANCE OF VESAK

By Most Ven.Dr. Thich Bao Nghiem

The 2643rd birthday of the Buddha (Buddhist calendar 2563) is an international spiritual and cultural event, very sacred to the Vietnamese and global Buddhist communities, when the United Nations and the world Buddhist community endorse and support the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha to host the Great Festival of the 16th United Nations Day of Vesak (UNDV) for the 3rd time at the Tam Chuc International Buddhist Center, Ha Nam Province, Vietnam on 12-14 May 2019.

The Great Festival of the UNDV 2019 attracts 1600 international delegates, including 600 delegations from 115 countries and territories and tens of thousands of Vietnamese Buddhist monks, nuns, and lay Buddhists. This special event affirms the United Nations’ belief that the Buddhadharma can contribute to peace, progress, prosperity and happiness for mankind on this planet.

The annual Vesak celebration reminds us of the rare and interesting event: “Queen Māyā gave birth to Prince Siddhartha (Siddhārtha) in Lumbini garden, now in Nepal. In the standing posture facing the north, Siddhartha walked seven steps, pointed to the sky, pointed to the ground, and declared boldly: I am the supreme in this world, this is my last life.” The presence of the Buddha Shakyamuni on this globe is affirmed by the Buddhist scriptures: “There is a unique, supreme level that stands between bipedal species.”

1. Translated by Ven. Thich Chan Phap Can.
2. Vice President of National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha (VBS) and National Head of the Dharma Preaching Department (VBS).
Talking about the supremacy of the Buddha in this world, the Majjhima Nikaya (Middle Length Discourses) uses a metaphor: “Just as a blue, red, or white lotus flower, though born in the water and growing in the water, rises above and stands unsoiled by the water, even so, though born in the world and grown up in the world, I have overcome the world and dwell unsoiled by the world.” In terms of purpose and value, the presence of the Buddha in this world is recognized as follows: “Born for great happiness for sentient beings, for compassion and for great bliss for men.”

The core values contributed by the Buddha to mankind are the miraculous truths and high morality, a therapeutic ability, helping people to overcome suffering and pain, as the Buddha declared: “In the past, like this, disciples, I only speak of the reality of suffering and the way to end suffering.”

In order to fulfill the mission and career of ending suffering for humanity, by bodily example, the Buddha called on his disciples to show their noble responsibility and commitment: “…Bhikkhus, for the good, welfare, and happiness of devas and humans. Let not two go the same way. Teach, O bhikkhus, the Dharma that is good in the beginning, good in the middle, good in the end, with the right meaning and phrasing.”

To brighten the truth, for 45 years from his enlightenment to parinirvana, the Buddha, out of compassion for the pursuit of happiness for human life, enlightened and established a new, valuable philosophy which ceased suffering and opened up happiness. As the greatest sage in human history, “The Buddha instructed the path of enlightenment, the method of training, the ability to cease suffering and to lead to attain Nirvana right in the here and now.”

The Buddha is the teacher who directs: “What one needs to be taught, what one needs to be done, the Buddha did with great compassion.” During the time of the Buddha, castes in the society received the truth and morality of the Buddha, including 8/16 kings, hundreds of civil and military mandarins, thousands of sages and millions of other religious followers in India. They, by themselves, became disciples of the Buddha. Taking refuge in the truth of the Buddha, during the past 26 centuries, through the path of wisdom,
building peace and harmony to develop together, Buddhism is now practiced in 5 continents, including 175 countries and regions, with about 800 million followers.

This year, in memory of the three significant events in the life of the Buddha, including his birth, enlightenment and final nirvana without return, more than 56,000 monks and nuns, as well as tens of millions of lay Buddhists in Vietnam pay homage to the great contributions of the Buddha in bringing happiness to humankind. From his outlook on life which focuses on humanity, outlook on society which promotes equality, fairness and democracy; outlook on morality which emphasizes renouncing evil, doing good with noble motives; and outlook on liberation, which focuses on the purpose of untying the mind from suffering and attachment, Buddhism builds the Pure Land in this world.

The main theme of the UNDV celebration 2019 is the “Buddhist approach to global leadership and shared responsibilities for sustainable societies.” On the one hand, this theme demonstrates the concern of the world Buddhist community about global problems. On the other hand, it introduces Buddhist solutions to solve human suffering, rooted in greed, anger, delusion and bigotry. On this occasion, Bhikkhus, Bhikkhunis, and Vietnamese Buddhist communities in particular and the world in general share the collective wisdom and unified voice on the following key issues:

(i) Mindful Leadership for Sustainable Peace,
(ii) Buddhist Approach to Harmonious Families, Healthcare and Sustainable Societies,
(iii) Buddhist Approach to Global Education in Ethics,
(iv) Buddhism and the Fourth Industrial Revolution,
(v) Buddhist Approach to Responsible Consumption and Sustainable Development.

Based on the holy Pali canons, the holy Agama scriptures and the holy Mahayana scriptures, we have the opportunity to discover, contemplate, and share the skills of completely resolving human problems through the spiritual method which consists of four steps (the Four Noble Truths). Step one, acknowledging suffering is
reality. Avoiding the ignoring attitude because it is a risk. Avoiding the attitude of defection, as this is irresponsible. Avoiding the exaggerated attitude, because it is self-torturing. Step two, tracing the cause of suffering from motives, including craving, anger, delusion and bigotry. Addressing the causes is to resolve the suffering half. Step three, by experiencing the happiness of Nirvana here and now when suffering, pain and the cause of their creation ceases. Step four, practice the right path which consists of three pillars. The insightful pillar includes right view and right intension. The moral pillar includes right speech, right action, right livelihood, and right energy. The meditative pillar includes right mindfulness and right concentration. The spiritual method discovered and propagated by the Buddha is an effective and capable solution to cease human’s problems at the international, continental, national, territorial, and communal level, as well as the level of family and individual.

In order to celebrate the 2019 UNDV properly, monks, nuns, and lay Buddhists, please promote the spirit of social engagement: “Serving human life for good secular life and beneficial Buddhism; shedding light on the dharma, and supporting the nation and protecting the people.” That is, we follow the ideal of the Buddha, for the compassion of life, the effort to do the best one can, to contribute to building peace and ending wars, eliminating hatred, harmonizing the present, building the future with qualities of wisdom, compassion, forgiveness, and no self. In this spirit, the Vietnamese Buddhist community actively participates to protect the sacred independence of sovereignty of the Fatherland, to develop a sustainable Vietnamese country, a better living environment, in order to deserve to be called children of the Buddha, inheriting the tradition of “supporting the nation and protecting the people” of Vietnamese Buddhism for 2000 years.
CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE
FOR UNDV 2019

by
Deputy Prime Minister-Minister of Foreign Affairs
of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam
H.E.Mr.Pham Binh Minh

On the occasion of the 2019 United Nations Day of Vesak to be organized at the International Buddhist Conference Center Tam Chúc, Hà Nam, Việt Nam from 12-14 May 2019, I respectfully send to all officials, monastics, lay Buddhists and distinguished guests my best congratulations in friendship and cooperation.

I believe that the Vietnamese people, who value the religious life and have a tradition of tolerance among religions, will be very happy to greet the UN Day of Vesak to be organized for the third time in Vietnam. The UN Day of Vesak is not only an important event in religious life with many religions in Vietnam but also a source of pride for all Buddhists and the Vietnamese people to have organized an important event of Buddhism, a religion that always accompanies the Vietnamese people through several millennia.

The Day of Vesak, an important event recognized by the United Nations, celebrates the birth, enlightenment and passing of the Buddha and is an occasion for us to think and expound the sublime and humanistic ideas of Buddhism, especially the spirit of tolerance, altruism, harmony and peace. Through several thousands of years, these ideas still retain their values, enriching the cultural and ethical values of peoples throughout the world, including the Vietnamese people.

The main theme of the Vesak this year “Buddhist Approach to Global Leadership and Shared Responsibilities for a Sustainable
Society” is very meaningful, realizing the expectations of Buddhism today and spreading the fundamental values of Buddhism in contributing to the solution of grand challenges facing us – from conflict, inequality, strong technological revolution to climate change.

The Day of Vesak is a place connecting the spiritualism and progressive ideas, and enriching the peace culture for the entire humanity. I hope the discussions within the confines of the Celebration will have good results, solidifying the friendship and cooperation among different peoples and cultures and together bringing the good values of Buddhism into daily life. I also wish all Buddhists and the Vietnamese people will continue to develop further the superior ideas of Buddhism, enriching the traditional culture of Vietnam and contributing to the building of a beautiful, peaceful and sustainable Vietnam.

May the 2019 Day of Vesak be a great success and I wish all monastics, lay Buddhists and distinguished guests attending the Celebration good health and at peace.

Pham Binh Minh
Deputy Prime Minister-Minister of Foreign Affairs
of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam
- II -
KEYNOTE SPEECHES
Your Holiness, Most Venerables, Venerables and Members of the Sangha

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am greatly honoured to attend this major global cultural event, the United Nations Day of Vesak (UNDV) 2019 and doubly honoured to address this noble Forum held under the theme of “Buddhist Approach to Global Leadership and Shared Responsibilities for Sustainable Societies”.

Vietnam takes pride in hosting the UNDV celebration for the third time, a momentous event not only for the Buddhist community but also for the whole world. This reflects the trust that the United Nations as well as the global Buddhist community has placed in our people and the Vietnamese Sangha, and their untiring contribution to humanity’s common endeavour for lasting peace, people’s well-being, and the equal cooperation among nations for a sustainable society.

UNDV 2019 is celebrated against the background of multiple changes that Professor S.R. Bhatt from India observed: “We are passing through a critical period, struggling between best..."
possibilities and worst possibilities.” Echoing his views, I would like to characterize the present situation as “the struggle between benevolence and evil, and good and bad”.

It is an irony that while scientific - technological and economic development reaches unprecedented peaks and people’s material life is becoming increasingly adequate, people’s hearts are not peaceful and signs of ignorance (S. avidyā, P. avijjā, C. 無明) are more and more numerous. Many moral values are degrading and social evils are on a steady rise; more and more traditional and non-traditional threats loom large such as ethnic and religious conflicts, armed conflicts, frequent bloody terrorist attacks; humanitarian disasters break out; the ecological environment is being seriously destroyed and epidemic diseases stalk the world etc.

So what led to these ominous situations? Could what is happening be boiled down to causality between development and the need for sustainability? Economic development at all costs, regardless of social justice and ecological environment, has deepened the gap between the rich and the poor in and among nations; social discontent worsens day by day; greed, anger, and ignorance (the three poisons) raise their heads; and the spiritual life towards the good is challenged. In addition, power politics such as imposition, intervention and sanctions etc., have driven many ethnic groups into destructive conflicts and consequently, millions and millions of people have to leave their homelands and look to migrate to foreign countries; this situation leads to racial, group and religious hostility.

Of course, today’s world does not contain only dark spots. In sharp contrast we have the ardent aspirations of nations for a peaceful world, prosperous life, happiness and equal cooperation and hope for a brighter future.

How will that future become a reality? That is probably what each and every one of us is concerned about. In our reflection, such a future will not come on its own but requires the one-mindedness and joint efforts of everyone, every nation, every religion, especially the Buddhist community. With over one billion followers on all the five continents, the Buddhist community plays a very important
role in shaping the future. Certainly, our Scientific Conference with the participation of many renowned scientists and intellectuals from the highly regarded Sangha will thrash out many profound ideas and practical measures to contribute to the common efforts of the international community to make our world more peaceful and more sustainable. As an individual, I am unable to offer any big solutions myself, however, I do have three wishes:

First, in the final analysis, whether the world is peaceful or not and the development of the humanity sustainable or not, largely depends on the people, from ordinary people to those in power. Buddhism teachings contain so many good or right things, contributing to nurturing good and repelling evil. With those advantages, the Buddhist community can play a leadership role, and make effective contribution to sustainable development and building a peaceful world by spreading the good and right things in Buddhism teachings, that encourages good and discourages evil in each human regardless of social status, class and ethnicity.

Also with its own advantages, the Buddhist community can find ways to resolve problems or at least to ease conflicts and hostility among peoples, religions and classes. In this regard, I believe the idea of Professor Emeritus Peter van den Berg from Tilburg University (the Netherlands) on “leading with wisdom” deserves great respect.

Second, all religions converge towards fostering good and repelling evil though they adopt different doctrines and teachings. If religions all over the world agree to work together for that noble goal, they can create a tremendous multiplier effect. It would be a great blessing for humankind, if one day, a global religious summit is held under the auspices of the United Nations with the participation of all religious leaders with the aim to look for directions and solutions to create a peaceful world and happy life for all.

Third, whether the ideas and practical solutions developed at UNDV 2019 will come to life, very much depends on the response of governments, as well as international organizations. Hopefully, the recommendations of VESAK 2019 will be integrated into specific policies adopted by Governments as well as the United Nations and other international organizations, creating a synergy
of change for a more sustainable and peaceful world.

On the path of national renewal over the past 30 years, our Vietnamese government has always emphasized the need for sustainable development that is closely associated with social development, poverty reduction and nature protection within the spirit of economic development. In that framework, the building of culture and our people towards truthfulness, goodness and betterment forms a solid spiritual foundation of the society, with an endogenous capacity to achieve the goal of “wealthy people and a strong, democratic, fair and civilized nation”.

With those ideas in mind, our country has proactively worked towards the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (2001 - 2015) as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Our efforts have won appreciation of the United Nations. Thanks to them, in 2010, Vietnam ranked among the middle-income countries, the country’s poverty reduction recorded impressive achievements with a poverty rate of only about 3% of the population compared to over 50% in the mid-80s, when the renovation launched. Such socio-economic achievements are credited to the efforts of all sections of the population, including followers of various religions, especially Buddhist disciples.

However, our country still faces many challenges and its economic development is still limited. In a world changing daily under the impact of miraculous achievements in science and technology, we need to continue making great strides, so as not to be left behind. Many social issues, including the growing rich-poor gap are becoming acute. Morality and lifestyle are degrading in some parts. Additionally, Viet Nam is one of the countries that is feeling the most serious impact from global climate change.

This current situation calls for extraordinary efforts for sustainable development, in which people should be both the center and the main driver of the development for physically healthy people with sound mind and soul, creative talent, high social responsibility, good character and high morality. In my opinion, this will be decisive in bringing Viet Nam on par with our friends the world over.
In such a way, our aspirations fully coincide with the objectives of UNDV 2019; the ideas of UNDV, including today’s Scientific Conference. I am convinced that our conference today will come up with many useful ideas and recommendations for our sustainable national development.

As a final note, I would like to thank you for travelling long distances to our country and sharing with us many good and right things.

I wish all of you peace and happiness.
BUDDHIST APPROACH TO GLOBAL LEADERSHIP & SHARED RESPONSIBILITY FOR SUSTAINABLE SOCIETIES

by S. R. Bhatt

“Caratha bhikkhave Carikam
Bahujanahitaya bahujana sukhaya lokanukampaya
Atthaya, hitaya, sukhaya
Devamanussanam”.

“O Monks! Move around everywhere for the well-being of everyone, for the happiness of everyone, showering compassion on the entire world; for the good, for the welfare, for the happiness of divine and human”.

Vinaya pitaka I.23.

I am indeed happy and feel privileged to partake in this International conference. I am thankful to the organizers, particularly to Most venerable Dr. Thich Nhat Tu for inviting me. I congratulate them for conceiving this theme as the subject is of great global importance and needed for meeting the demands of the present times. The theme of the conference is also significant in the context of the view that 21st century belongs to Asia to lead the world and Buddhist modes of thinking and living can and should provide new insights and fresh approaches to the present day turbulent world. There are some noble and sublime ideas and ideals in Buddhist thought which the world has to emulate for universal peace, prosperity and wellness.

*. Prof. Dr., Chairman, Indian Philosophy Congress. Former Chairman, Indian Council of Philosophical Research, Government of India. Former Professor & Head, Department of Philosophy, University of Delhi, India.
As we acutely feel, all is not well in the contemporary existential scenario and this calls for a paradigm shift in our value-perceptions, in our modes of thinking and in our ways of living. We are passing through a critical period struggling between best possibilities and worst possibilities. At the present juncture humankind is facing a crisis which is manifold and multi-dimensional. Human existence is stationed at a crossroad. It is a time when forces of unity and harmony can triumph, and marvels of science and technology can be used to ameliorate human suffering and ensure quality of life, precisely at this time forces of terror and violence and impulses of lower human nature are advancing menacingly on a global scale. The ratiocinative human mind is confronted with a dilemma as to how to respond to the present scenario. Rationality in which humanity has placed great trust for realization of its ideals of true knowledge and authentic existence appears to have been overtaken by hurricane of unreason and blind faith and basal passions. It has therefore become imperative to explore deeper and higher dimensions of human resources by means of which we can successfully work for the victory of the ideals and values which have inspired onward march of civilizations. Moving ahead in twenty first century with rich, diverse and varied heritage humankind is still searching for new paradigms, looking for new insights, novel intuitions and fresh approaches and therefore there is a need for serious ‘rethinking’ on the part of knowledgeable persons all over the world. There is a widespread misapprehension about the nature and meaning of Reality and human existence and consequent all round global erosion of values, loss of dignity and authenticity in life, and predominance of disvalues masquerading as true values.

1. RELEVANCE OF BUDDHA’S TEACHINGS

The advent of Sakyamuni, the Buddha, initially the light of Asia and now of the entire world, has been a significant event in the history of world culture and civilization. Born in a royal family with all material prosperity and physical comforts, he was awakened by the pain and suffering, finitude and evanescence of the mundane life. After intensive study, deep reflections and profound meditation he gained insight into the nature of Reality and the phenomenal world. Having attained enlightenment he did not remain self-centered. He
was not contented with his own emancipation and longed for the liberation of all suffering beings. He showed to the humanity the sure path of Nirvana, a way to eradicate suffering and to escape from the labyrinth of the cycle of birth and death (bhava cakra), which consisted of a symbiosis of wisdom (prajna) and conduct (sila), compassionate ethics and meditative practice. He visualized the “Four Eternal Truths” (Catvari Arya Satyani) and practiced them in his own life and being assured of their veracity subsequently moved around to enlighten people about it. The nidana (diagnosis) and the upaya (curative measures) put forth by him were so efficaciously redeeming that during his life time itself people revered him as Bhaisajya Guru (‘Great Healer’), Tayin (Great Savior), Buddha (Enlightened Seer), Sarvajna (Omniscient Person) and Sugata (i.e., one who has visualized and realized the summum bonum of life). The teachings of Lord Buddha are very much relevant in modern times. Buddhist thought being a systematic and critical reflection on our lived experiences has the avowed task of providing a way out from this labyrinth with its liberating knowledge and wisdom and therefore it is the onus of responsibility on those who are exposed to Buddhist modes of thinking and ways of living to put forth fresh thinking and newer pathways by way of creative interpretations of teachings of the Buddha and come out with innovative paradigms of value-pursuits to guide the humanity. There is need to address the imminent problems facing the humankind and provide genuine, effective and efficacious solutions failing which the rich and varied Buddhist culture will cease to be relevant to contemporary needs and aspirations.

Against this background it is hoped that Buddhist thought, which is at once both ancient and contemporary, with its rationalistic philosophy of interdependence, reciprocity, and mutual care and share, universal love and compassion, fellowship and participation, can offer an effective and more beneficial alternative to the present day individualistic, materialistic, competitive and consumerist view of life and reality. There are some seminal ideas, ideals and guiding principles contained in Buddhist thought which may help humanity from its present plight and
provide for new social, economic and political order at local and global levels from Buddhist perspectives.

The world at the present juncture cares for Buddhism because of its rich philosophical ideas and practices. It is therefore imperative that philosophical content and philosophical interpretation are at the center stage in order to see their possible applications for contemporary life in modern society. Buddhist philosophy embodies experiential data and critical enquiry, phenomenological reflections and psychological analysis. They provide the kernel and essence to Buddhist thought and culture. The world of scholarship today is replete with new understandings and reappraisals of old scholarship and therefore theoretical and philosophical contents of Buddhist have to be applied to eradicate human suffering.

2. HARMONIOUS LIVING AND SHARING FUTURE

In this era of globalization and rapid transport system the world has shrunk giving rise to co-existence of multiple cultures which demands peaceful and harmonious living for betterment and wellness. But it has to be holistic globalization involving peaceful coexistence, reciprocal cooperation and mutual caring and sharing. In other words, it should not be mere economic globalization confined to trade and commerce but spiritual one which is all comprehensive in which everyone partakes and gets benefitted. The mode of any such strategic planning and execution with enduring and comprehensive development and health and happiness for the parties involved are usually based on their mutual understanding and sharing of historical past, the present state of affairs and the future prospects. This requires mutual give and take without any selfish consideration. This has to be at the global, regional and local levels all simultaneously. What is needed is a holistic and integral approach, which is all-inclusive and all-comprehending. It takes into account the reality in its non-manifest unitary nature as well as in its manifested diversified form. This organic view accommodates all opposites as distinct. It is not negative and exclusive and therefore it defies the logic of dichotomies. It accepts pure experience of self-awareness at the transcendental level and a relational logic of complex interactions at the empirical level. One is depth level and the other is surface level. One is the level of the
whole and the other is the level of parts within the whole. The one is in many and the many is in one. The basic idea is that one and many are not incompatible but mutually reinforcing, as they are two facets of the same reality. The Avatamsaka Sutra (The Flower Ornament Scripture) gives the analogy of Jewel-net in which each jewel reflects the rest of the jewels all at once and all appearing at once in one jewel. If you are in one jewel you are in all directions because in one jewel there are all the jewels. Hua-yen Buddhism of China is based on this scripture and highlights this point. As Hua-yen Buddhism puts it:

‘In one is all, in many is one,
One is identical to all, many is identical to one’.

The central Buddhist doctrine of Pratityasamutpada represents this fact of interconnection, interdependence and inter-penetration of all phenomena and the ‘implicate order’ prevailing in the cosmos. The Dharmakaya is the universal field all-pervasive, all-accommodating, all-unifying and all-penetrating. There is nothing apart from It and outside It. But within It there is infinite multiplicity all intertwined like flowers in a garland.

The cosmos is a vast and subtle inter-netting of multiple interrelated and interdependent existences which are in a constant flux. It has physical, mental and spiritual dimensions. There is determinism at the physical level but freedom and spontaneity at the spiritual level. The mental realm is partly determined and partly free. The human being is an organic unity of psycho-physical processes animated by spiritual element.

3. SPIRITUAL GLOBALIZATION AND SUSTENABLE DEVELOPMENT

The term ‘sustainable development’ is a fashionable catch word these days and it has acquired popular currency. But we have to be clear about its precise meaning. Human being does not live by bread alone, that food, shelter and clothing, though basic and most essential, they are not the sole requirements of human life and that instead of conflict, cooperation and mutual support are more basic to human survival. So when there is talk of quality of life and standard of living, it has not to be just materialistic because along with a body and mind human being has a spirit as well. The welfarism
and sustainable development propounded in Buddhist thought is not materialistic but holistic welfarism in which the welfare of not only an individual but the whole humanity and the entire cosmos is taken into consideration. It is spiritualistic welfarism that envelops but also transcends material well-being.

In the light of the above averments in this paper an attempt is made to take the connotation of the phrase ‘sustainable development’ out of its materialistic confinements and provide it widest possible meaning by using it in the sense of total or all-round development because that alone is really sustainable. Any development concerning only a part of the Reality can never provide genuine and lasting happiness. On the basis of this logic therefore I make this unconventional usage by tempering and seasoning the materialistic perspective with a spiritualistic perspective and thereby widening the canvas of our deliberations encompassing all that which has not hither to fore been included. It is a radically different usage no doubt, but perhaps it is more meaningful in deeper human context.

“Let everyone be happy. Let everyone be without hunger and disease. Let everyone experience the good and the noble and let no one meet with suffering.”

Reminding us and the whole human race of this sublime aspiration and lofty goal, let us march in the 21st century with full preparedness for total and over-all development of not only the human kind but of the entire cosmos. It is with this sanguine expectation that this paper is presented as a model of a total and integrated development from holistic perspective, because this is really significant and worthwhile sustainable developmental perspective.

The Buddhist perspective of development represented by the terms ‘svasti’, ‘sivam’, ‘kalyana’, ‘mangala’, etc. meaning universal well-being has been genuinely sustainable by virtue of its being holistic, integrated, all-comprehensive and futuristic taking into account individual, social and cosmic dimensions of existence in its material as well as spiritual aspects. It envisages no incompatibility or antagonism or conflict among these, as they are all conceived and experienced as inter-related and inter-dependent elements of
one and the same whole. The model of their interrelationship put forth in Buddhist thought is not that of mutual conflict but that of mutual cooperation, and mutual enhancement. That is why instead of talking in the divisive language it could talk in the integrative phraseology of not to usurp what legitimately does not belong to us and not to accumulate whatever is more than required as bare necessary. All these may sound irrelevant or meaningless or utopian to a materialistic mind but the spiritualistic vision of sages and seers have always projected these lofty ideals as supreme human objectives that are realizable and worthy of realization by a rational, free and responsible human being.

Another salient feature of Buddhist perspective is that it has always talked of welfare rather than empowerment, dharma (responsibility) rather than rights. Acquisition of the material resources and enjoyment of those material resources always require proper management through dharma. Dharma is the regulating principle and Buddhist culture has always denounced pursuit of matter and material comforts without being regulated by dharma. The present day consumerism is an unabashed revival of the discredited materialistic ideology that has been doing immense damage to human psyche.

Projecting the inspiring ideal of the entire cosmos being one family or a global village the Buddhist culture has tried to inculcate the attitude of seeing self-sameness everywhere and of being engaged in the well-being of all existence without any selfish consideration. We find highest expression of this thought in the Bodhicaryavatara of Santideva. Hatred and malice towards none, friendliness and compassion for all, absence of deprivation and exploitation in all respects, this has been the quintessence of Buddhist culture.

Only such ennobling and exalting visions, aspirations and realizations, only such a heightened sense of spirituality, have enabled the Buddhist seers and sages and statesmen to propound the world renowned principles of panchasila of mutual understanding, mutual respect, mutual tolerance, mutual accommodation and mutual interface at national and international levels which alone can provide a genuine basis of sustainable development.
4. PRESENT DAY MELONCHOLY SITUATION

Let me take this opportunity to point out how our lopsided materialistic approach to development has resulted today in multiplication of disparity and deprivation, injustices and imbalances, subjugation and inequalities. There has been all-round moral degeneration resulting in alarming rise in crime and corruption. There is no denying of the fact that during 19th and 20th centuries there has been rapid and tremendous progress in science, technology and in all walks of material life. But the fruits of all this progress have not only been inequitably distributed but they have also been counter-productive and evanescent. Never there have been such disasters and destructions threatening annihilation of life and existence. The way pollution is increasing and the rate at which crimes and criminals are mushrooming makes us doubt as to whether it is a development sustainable and worthwhile. One has only to visit the cluster of slums to see the quality of life people are leading.

5. NEED FOR TRUE KNOWLEDGE OF REALITY

In fact on a wider scale the entire cosmos is a unitary and integrated life-support system. Only our improper and imperfect understanding of it results in problems like the ones that have forced us to talk of sustainability. There are two things we have to note here. First, we should have the realization that the world of matter is a global common possession. It is distributively shareable and all of us must share it for our mutual enhancement. There is a limit to our capacity to enjoy it and we should not hoard it beyond that limit.

The second thing to be noted is that Nature has the inherent capacity of self-regulation and self-preservation. It possesses sustainability and resilience. It can absorb to some extent external shocks and stresses caused by human follies but let us not interfere in this natural functioning of Nature and let us allow it to have renewable resource management. But all this requires proper understanding of Nature and proper practices towards Nature. We have to cooperate with Nature in order to enable it to cooperate with us. Here, again, Buddhist perspective becomes helpful. In Buddhist philosophy we have a very perceptive account of prakrti,
i.e. cosmic matter that is the matrix of the entire material evolution. It is regarded as of great value to us, the conscious beings. It is kind and benevolent to us. It is rich and bountiful and takes delight in serving us and does so dispassionately. But it is very tender and delicate. It feels shy of exploitation and abuse. So it needs to be cared and looked after with love, affection and adoration. It is very aptly compared to a cow and a delicate dancer who serves us but feels hurt if exploited. Likewise Nature also serves us but reacts when exploited and abused. It does so mildly initially to warn us, to correct us, to make us rectify the wrongs we do to it. But if even then we do not pay any heed, it reacts violently. What Nature wants is judicious use of its resources for progress and prosperity and not uncared and indiscriminate exploitation. Nature will provide us nourishment and peace only if we live in peace with Nature. Worship of Nature has been the keynote of Indian way of life. So if Indian culture enjoins worship of reverence to trees and plants, rivers and mountains, land and animals, heaven and earth, it is not an exhibition of primitive animism as some mistaken scholars may tend to believe but it is a display of our concern and regard for Nature which sustains us and provides us nourishment.

The need of 21st century for sustainable development is to stop the mad game of antagonizing Nature and to befriend it once again. Here in alone lies the sure path to progress and prosperity. For this purpose we shall have to humanize science and technology and make humanities scientific. Education for sustainable development is therefore the call of the day and sooner we realize it the better it is for our survival and quality of life.

6. THREE-FOLD TRANSFORMATION

Any holistic model of sustainable development should take into account the three-fold transformation of human individual, human society and the cosmos. This should be the end-all and be-all of all planning and strategies of development at the global level. Then only it can be a total development which can be really sustainable and enduring.

Transformation and regeneration of human individual is the first and foremost requirement. It stands for development of all
dimensions of human personality—physical, mental, intellectual, moral and spiritual. Mere physical or mental or intellectual development is lopsided and can never be sustainable. This requires a value-oriented scheme of education a blueprint of which could be prepared by a world body like UNESCO and which could be universally adopted by suitable modification according to the regional needs and aspirations and conditions. The ideal situation is to have a global planning and strategy. This of course may appear utopian dream but given wisdom and will it is not unrealizable.

Social transformation is another foundation of sustainable development. It is establishment of a social order and organization in a democratic form in which equality is seasoned with justice, and freedom is tempered with discipline, where tolerance is a guide to mutual relations and cooperation is the law of interaction, where there is practice of democracy in thought, words and deeds. But this again requires a proper type of education in social living.

Transformation of nature is the third pre-requisite of sustainable development. It consists of all such policy efforts that enable us to safeguard the natural capital stock of all five material elements (pancabhuta) of earth, water, fire, air and space, in such a manner that it does not get polluted and depleted. It means that in Nature there should be no negative change, no environmental degradation, no agricultural clearance of forests, no housing on agricultural land, no extinction of forest flora and fauna and Natural live stock, etc. On the contrary, there should be positive change by forest resource management, land, water, air and space resource management, etc. Simultaneously there should be supporting efforts like check in population growth, revival of traditional sustainable practices, etc. These days there is a growing awareness of all these policy measures. It is unfortunate that given the present human psychology all these policies and programs mostly remain confined to papers only and nothing concrete and practical is being done though statistics may show otherwise.

Sustainable development is both a viewpoint and a course of action, a policy instrument and a global movement for a new international order based on enlightened spiritual principles aiming at enhancement of quality of life of the entire cosmos and
not just of human beings. We live by hope and we may hope that saner sense will prevail upon human race for doing the needful in this regard. Let us pray that, “Let us live together, eat together and work together. Let our intellect be pure and bright. Let us not be jealous of each other”.

7. ESTABLISHMENT OF HARMONIOUS CIVIL SOCIETY

Goal

Our goal should be to establish a global society of interdependence and interrelationship. This means we have to care for each other and one another, not to deprive others from their legitimate belongings. Every one is a part and parcel of this vast universe and everyone has to have its existence and sustenance in the world. It is the duty and obligation of each one to ensure that the existence and living of everyone is safeguarded and not endangered. But we have only to satisfy our legitimate needs and should not cater to our greed. So the principle of austerity enjoins to stock only that much which we need. This will guarantee intra-generational and inter-generational justice. Equality and justice go hand in hand. They are the two pillars of good theory of management. These are the most desirable prerequisites of sustainable development and environment stewardship.

It must be stated that pursuit of excellence (paramitas) and striving for betterment of life have been perennial human concerns and aspirations. Freedom from imperfection and consequent suffering has been the main motivating factor for all human enterprises. But this has to be a global vision and a universal realization without any prejudice to any section of the universe. This should be the implication of the Buddha’s saying, “Bahujana hitaya bahujana sukhaya” This realization requires propagation and practice of global ethics.

Means

In fact all social, economic and political organizations are established and aimed at this requirement. They have to serve human needs and requirements but are to be properly managed to serve the purposes for which they are established. There are
two broad stages of human enterprises. They are production, and thereafter distribution and enjoyment. The guiding principles of production are to use the resources judiciously so that they are protected for further use and not depleted. Further usability is natural and their depletion is unnatural. The second stage is augmentation of resources and generation of newer and newer resources. This is what is meant by sustainable development. Environmental stewardship and eco-friendliness is a part of this strategy. But real ecology is mental ecology as it is the mind which generates good or perverted human endeavour. This is professional ethics. It is an efficient management of end, means and modalities. After production comes distribution and use. Fair and just distribution and legitimate use or enjoyment both are needed for intra-generational and intergenerational justice. The policy of corporate living, of caring and sharing, implies that we have to care for the present generation as well as for the future generations to come. But ultimately all human endeavours and enterprises should be a means to and directed towards the realization of cosmic well-being which is the \textit{summum bonum} of life. The practice of austerity demands observance of restraint in consumption. It stands for curbing of desires, and taking that much which is necessary for existence. There should be no boundless greed, uncontrolled. One has to set limit to personal acquisition, wants and unnecessary consumption. These imply practice of inter-generational justice apart from intra-generational justice. This is our universal responsibility.

8. GOAL OF HUMAN LIFE AND GLOBALLY SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

The pursuits of excellence, striving for betterment and attainment of quality of life have been perennial human concerns and aspirations. All human endeavors in diverse fields of culture and civilization have been directed towards realization of this goal. Freedom from imperfection and consequent suffering has been the chief motivating factors for all cognitive enterprises and technological advancements. Though every human being cherishes and strives for these and posits them as goal of life, their realization requires planned corporate efforts. It cannot be a single individual enterprise. A single individual may work out a plan but its execution has to be collective. Moreover, this goal implies
attainment of excellences and best possible quality of life not only of the individual but also of the entire cosmos since the two are interrelated and interdependent and constitute an organic whole and therefore also it calls for collective efforts. This apart, one cannot attempt to realize a good quality of life keeping in view an isolated individual, society, nation or region. It has to be a global vision and a universal realization without any prejudice to any one section of the universe. Everyone has to participate and partake in the fruits of this venture that is a collective enterprise. Everyone should be able to contribute by manifestation of one’s capabilities through a dynamic discovery of one’s potentials being assisted in this process by the society and natural surroundings. So when we plan for social progress our outlook should be global though our performance has to be at the local level. Genuine social progress consists in the realization of universal well-being, in a sense of care and concern for all, a feeling of oneness with all, an attitude of sharing and cooperating. For this collective enterprise all cultures of the world have to come together, share a common platform and work for universal progress and prosperity.

9. GLOBAL SHARING OF COMMON PLATFORM

In order to ensure that co-existence of different cultures is peaceful and for mutual benefit there is a need to share a common platform and have a direct interface and dialogue or polylogue. Such cross-cultural interactions will not only help and contribute to build up mutual understanding, mutual trust, mutual empathy and mutual enrichment; they will also consolidate and vitalize the common spiritual and material roots and resources. This will enable us to appreciate more the integral and holistic perspective as against the divisive and dichotomous world-view. May we through this Conference call upon, without being parochial, all intellectuals, scholars, experts in various fields and walks of life to look at each other more closely, to discover our commonalities, to take stock of as each other’s strength and weakness, to learn from each other’s experiences and lessons so that all countries may march into the future centuries and millennia as partners in universal well-being, as intimate neighbours and cultural cousins.
At the present juncture of time humanity is passing through turmoil and facing a crisis which is manifold and multi-dimensional. Humanity is stationed at a cross road. On the one hand there are marvels of science and technology, on the other there are value-erosions, moral degeneration, and different types of deprivations leading to tensions, strife and suffering. Besides this problems arising out of globalization are also compelling the ratiocinative human mind to seek for new philosophy of life. With the emergence of global society in which we are interacting with people of different ideas and ideals, cultures and traditions, religious and moral norms there arises the increasing need for a global ethics of mutuality and interdependence and inter-cultural dialogue for new set of appropriate interpersonal relationships. In the present times our traditional cultures are getting distorted and are facing the terrible danger of extinction under the perverting influence of the so-called modernization which is divisive, depriving and destructive. For the first time since their inception such a large scale threatening situation has arisen. We have not so far sincerely cared to share a common platform to meet the challenge in a decisive and global way may be due to ignorance, negligence, self-centeredness or bewitchment with modernization etc. A time has come for the initiation of a cultural renaissance, a paradigm shift in our views and ways of life for which the teachings of ancient sages and seers can play a vital and pivotal role. A renewal of cross cultural interactions under this banner will not only help and contribute to mutual understanding, mutual empathy and mutual enrichment; it will also consolidate our common spiritual roots and resources. It will enable us to appreciate the spiritual, holistic and integral perspective as against the divisive and dichotomous world-view.

10. CONCLUSION

By way of concluding it can be said that the Buddha was one of the most revolutionary thinkers and the holiest persons ever lived on the earth. His message of truth, peace, harmony, compassion, altruistic service, selflessness etc. is as relevant today as it was in the past. His advocacy of pursuit of prajna and practice of karuna, his vision of selfsameness with everyone (paratma samata and paratma parivartana) and zealous longing for eradication of
suffering of others as one’s own cross all barriers of race, creed, country and even humanity. His benevolent teachings of universal compassion and cosmic goodwill, his emphasis on noble virtues of maitri, karuna, mudita and upaksa known as Brahmaviharas (i.e., living and working for totality or for the whole universe) all these have a significant message for the present-day distracted humankind suffering from exhaustion of spirit and languishing in the narrow and rigid confinements of ego-centrism, violence, parochialism and disastrous materialistic consumerism, perverted modernism etc.
When thinking about the main theme of this conference, ‘Buddhist Approach to Global Leadership and Shared Responsibilities for Sustainable Societies’ I felt that the most useful and meaningful contribution I could make would be to describe two organisations that since their founding I have had some responsibility for and which, since they are both Buddhist organisations, are run according to Buddhist principles. I hope that the practical example and experience of both will be of use in demonstrating what could be and I believe should one day be a Buddhist Global initiative. Were our world run on Buddhist principles it would unquestionably be a better place and so I believe we have a responsibility to demonstrate and promote those principles for the good, the benefit and the welfare of all beings. I believe too that Buddhism has much to teach the world about skillful and meaningful leadership and I hope to show here by describing something of my experience in the UK over the last forty odd years how this could be a reality.

In this paper my focus is on the two organisations that I have helped found and that I have led since their inception. The first is Angulimala, the Buddhist Prison Chaplaincy which is active in the prisons of England, Wales and Scotland; and the second is TBSUK - the Theravada Buddhist Sangha in the UK. Angulimala was launched at Magha Puja in 1985 and TBSUK began at a gathering of the Sangha in September 2006. Angulimala was founded with the
purpose of making Buddhism available in the prisons and to provide a reasonable and organised support for those prisoners who were already committed Buddhists or were in the process of developing an interest or were just curious. TBSUK arose out of my concern that as Buddhism was developing in the West it was increasingly lay led. I was concerned to see the Sangha being marginalised and devalued, and the Dhamma open to fragmentation and false interpretation. I also felt that it was time for the various Sanghas, whatever their Asian origins and the culture of their temples, to accept that as they are now becoming rooted in the UK it was time for the Sangha to be organised properly and legally acknowledged here. It was also obvious that by working together, we would have a better chance of finding solutions to various problems we have in common.

Before I left England at the beginning of September 1971, I paid a visit to the Hampstead Buddhist Vihara and had a chat with ‘Kappy’, the former Kapilavaddho, twice ordained and by then twice disrobed, who had founded the English Sangha Trust and been many years before the first European to be ordained in Thailand. I remember him telling me that a prison had phoned to ask if a Buddhist prisoner could be made to have his hair cut. So, well before I left England I knew of a contact between the Prison Service and the Hampstead Buddhist Vihara. What I didn’t know was that the Hampstead Buddhist Vihara was the official address that the Prison Service had for matters Buddhist. This was where I had first discovered Buddhism and where I had first learnt meditation and where I returned to in 1977 with Ajahn Chah when he was invited to London. Also, at that interview Kappy asked me to promise to return. He made the point that young men going out to Asia to investigate Buddhism and perhaps ordain seldom returned to teach and propagate Buddhism in England. He of course had and his dream had been to establish a Sangha of English bhikkhus. It was a dream he never quite realised. I promised to return.

It wasn’t that long after the arrival of Ajahn Chah, accompanied by Ajahn Sumedho and myself, at the Hampstead Buddhist Vihara at the beginning of May 1977, that we had enquiries from three different prisons for someone to visit their Buddhist inmates. There was a letter from Parkhurst Prison on the Isle of Wight, another
from Pentonville in London and a phone call from the nearby Holloway Women's Prison in London. I was intrigued. There were only the three of us and this was obviously not something for Ajahn Chah, too much travelling and he didn’t speak any English. Ajahn Sumedho was preoccupied with looking after and translating for Ajahn Chah and as an American was still new to the country. So it seemed to me this was something for me, especially as it looked like an ongoing commitment and Ajahn Chah had already told Sumedho and me that while he would have to return to Thailand before Vassa, we were to stay.

I thought about it, thought about whether I had anything to offer and considered that while I had never been in a prison or a prisoner I had, just like someone locked in a cell, spent a lot of time alone in small one-roomed huts in the forest. I, of course, had done that entirely voluntarily and with a purpose but I reasoned that the meditation techniques I had employed could also benefit prisoners who I imagined, alone for many hours, would inevitably be facing themselves, their thoughts and emotions, but without any means of doing so skillfully. So, I decided to give it a try. Alone one day on a train with Ajahn Chah somewhere near Guildford I told him of the requests and asked him what he thought of my responding. So far as I remember he just said, ‘Go.’ And that was it. That was the start of what will soon be forty-two years in Prison Chaplaincy.

At the time I thought there were only a few prisons in England. I’d heard of the more well-known that occasionally figured in films and in the newspapers but I had no idea that there were something like 140 gaols spread across England and Wales, with another handful in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Nor did I know then how the prisons were organised into categories and how often prisoners could be moved as they progressed through the system. But I soon found out. Especially when men I was seeing in two of the Isle of Wight prisons, both of which were then Dispersal or High Security prisons, were downgraded and moved to prisons that were more relaxed. I also discovered that as they were moved they rather expected me to follow, which meant that I was soon collecting appointments to more and more prisons.

At this point I’d better try and explain roughly how the prisons
of the UK are organised. First of all you have to understand that the UK is composed of four countries and so the prisons of England and Wales are administered through HM Prison and Probation Service from Westminster by the Minister for Justice (in the past before the creation of the MOJ it was the Home Secretary) assisted by the Prisons Minister; those in Scotland are run by the Scottish Prison Service under the Scottish Government; and those in Northern Ireland by the N I Prison Service. I work mostly with HMPPS in England and Wales and to a lesser degree with the Scottish Prison Service. So far as this paper is concerned it will be the prisons and HMPPS of England and Wales that I will be referring to.

For the prisons of England and Wales there is an Act of Parliament that was passed in 1952 when England was a very different country from what it is now. Then there were hardly any black or Asian immigrants. That Prison Act of 1952 is still in force but its interpretation has been modified over the years, especially as the ethnic and religious composition and diversity of both the country and its prison population has changed and grown. Referring to religious observance, the Prison Act only mentions Christianity and particularly the established Church of England because back in the England of 1952, which I am old enough to remember, we knew little or nothing of faiths other than Christianity. That Prison Act states that every prison must have a Chaplain who shall be a clergyman of the Church of England and then it goes on to include provision for the appointment of Visiting Ministers of other denominations but actually says nothing about other faiths. The solution when I began in 1977 was to stretch the interpretation of other denominations to include other faiths and so it was that I used to be appointed as a Visiting Buddhist Minister. Over the years and as the country has changed so things have moved on considerably in terms of human rights and equality and thus, with the gradual establishment of a Multifaith Chaplaincy within the Prison Service, we are all now of whatever faith appointed as prison Chaplains.

The next thing to understand about how our prisons are run is that all male prisons and prisoners are designated as Category A, B, C or D. Category A is the highest security and such a prisoner is usually regarded as dangerous and the sort of person you wouldn’t
want to escape under any circumstances. He will be watched and checked frequently, he will have to be accompanied by a dog and dog handler when being moved from one building within a prison to another and there will be a special vehicle and police escort when he is transferred from one prison to another. Category B is an obvious step down, although it is likely that such a prisoner will remain in a high security or long term prison. Category C is a further relaxation of security but still within an enclosed and secure environment and Category D is what is sometimes referred to as an Open Prison where there is no fence, few staff and where the prisoner will gradually be allowed to go out from the prison every day to work or study. Category D prisons are sometimes designated as resettlement centres and provide invaluable opportunities for men who have been in prison for a very long time to adapt gradually to a world outside that may have changed enormously in the twenty or more years that he has been a prisoner. There are far fewer women than men in prison in the UK and they are not categorised in the same way but still some of their prisons are very secure while others are more relaxed. Obviously, the degree of security usually reflects the length of the sentence and the years to be served and the sentence corresponds to the severity of the crime.

My brief and my interest has been simply to make Buddhist teaching and practice available in our prisons. I’ve long accepted that I can’t do everything and so although I may take an interest in prison reform, be concerned at stories of injustice and wrongful conviction and be enthusiastic about developments such as Restorative Justice, I have to restrain myself and do my best to remain focused firmly on simply enabling prisoners to access and practice the Buddha Dhamma. That is what I am there for. My beginning in prison chaplaincy coincided with a rising interest in Buddhist Social Action and there were several attempts at the time to link me and what I do to that movement but I rejected them. I don’t approve of compartmentalising bits and pieces of Buddhist practice as if other areas of what one does as a Buddhist don’t matter as much or are unnecessary. In my view you should just practice the Dhamma. Which of course means that if it falls to you to help improve the lot of prisoners then naturally you will do it. Being helpful when you can should be part of what you do.
as a Buddhist, just as daily chanting and meditation is part of what you do as a Buddhist. I often make the point that what I do in the prisons is pretty much what I do in the temple but, and this has become something of a watchword with me, as the prisoners can’t come to the temple, we must take the temple to them!

My role first and foremost has been that of a Buddhist chaplain, which has meant leading prisoners, men and women, sometimes of various Buddhist interests and allegiances to be able to know, practise and develop the Buddha’s teachings in their own lives. I have done this in the prisons much as I would anywhere else, including in my own temple. In fact, when people have sometimes expressed surprise at a forest monk like me leaving the seclusion of the forest to work in the prisons, I have explained that in the prison I do pretty much the same as I would do with visitors in a forest temple. Of course, the environment is different but then just as life in the forest exposes and challenges one’s defilements, so does life in a prison, whether as a prisoner or as a Buddhist chaplain. Ajahn Chah, with whom I trained, once said that he had learnt more from sitting under his kuti receiving the almost constant procession of people who came to see him than he had during his years of solitude in the forest. I could almost say the same of my years in the prisons. Although, as I have said, I do pretty much the same as I would in the prison as in the temple, there are differences because I’m working in prisons where people can’t come to the temple, can’t attend different groups, can’t come and go as they wish, don’t have the same freedom to experiment and enquire as they would outside and have only a limited access to books, and no Internet. It’s also true that most of those registering and attending the Buddhist groups in our prisons have developed their interest in Buddhism while in prison and therefore have had little or no contact with the Buddhist world and its various traditions and customs outside. All this means that the people who come to my Buddhist groups in prison are heavily reliant on me as their Buddhist chaplain for practically everything Buddhist. And they depend on me too to ensure and defend their right to practise Buddhism. Thus the leadership that is required of a Buddhist prison chaplain is not only one that inspires and instructs it has also to be one of provision. We become for them the source for practically all things Buddhist.
This is both a privilege and a challenge. To begin with I was pretty much acting alone with little or no support, very little guidance and practically no specific training for what I was doing or what was expected of me. Fortunately, I had the discipline and resolve that came from having been trained and practised as an actor, followed by several years of a fairly spartan existence as a forest monk under Ajahn Chah. Determination, discipline and persistence got me through a lot in those early days in the prisons when I wasn’t in a very strong position at all. The Chaplaincy in each prison was then still run by a clergyman of the Church of England, the established church, and other faiths were hardly known and barely tolerated. Eventually I decided that I should try and make some contact with the Chaplaincy hierarchy and managed to arrange a meeting in London with the then Deputy Chaplain General. He was a very affable Welshman and I came out of that meeting feeling that I had begun to achieve some recognition, particularly as he had agreed that in future throughout the prisons one Buddhist holy day should be recognised every year. At about that time a tendency had begun amongst Western Buddhists to call Vesakha Puja or Vesak ‘Buddha Day’ and so we had agreed that Buddha Day would be recognised and could be celebrated by Buddhists every year in the prisons of England and Wales. This was an historic step forward.

Even to this day, when it is official policy that chaplaincy should be multi faith with reasonably equal provision for all faiths the facilities nevertheless can and do vary from prison to prison but still, everywhere groups are encouraged and able to meet. Thirty and forty years ago, it was a different story with so much depending on the personality and attitude of the Christian chaplains and sometimes other members of staff as well. It was not unusual for us to be refused the chapel, the only available meeting space, although it could be used for staff meetings and film shows. In my early days therefore, I mostly met with prisoners individually. I used to walk around the prisons and sit with prisoners in their cells, mostly just talking to them. In some prisons I had to be escorted, which usually meant quite a bit of waiting around for the escort: patience and determination again and again!

In around 1984, when we were talking about organising
ourselves properly to make sure there was a Buddhist visiting minister available and appointed to every prison in the land, a couple of prisoners told me about Lord Avebury. One prisoner who had been in correspondence with him for some time told me that Lord Avebury was a Buddhist and another showed me an impressive collection of Buddhist books the prison had found for him after he had complained to Lord Avebury that there were no Buddhist books in the prison library. I decided that I had better get to know Lord Avebury and so I wrote to him and asked for a meeting. And that was the beginning of a long and very fruitful friendship. Lord Avebury was of course a member of the House of Lords and was very well known and active in the field of Human Rights. He and I used to meet whenever I was in London and two or three times a week we’d have long, late night telephone calls. As well as Buddhist matters and other things, we discussed the state of the prisons and especially prison chaplaincy. He listened and passed on some of my suggestions and through his influence the then Chaplain General was required to set up a consultation with other faiths. This became a regular meeting, though one that was heavily weighted in favour of Christianity. Eventually it morphed into the Prison Service Chaplaincy Council that we have today. Lord Avebury was a great man and a tremendous help to me in securing for Buddhists better conditions and opportunities to study and practise Buddhism.

As time went on and interest amongst prisoners in Buddhism began steadily to increase the responsibility for taking the temple to the prisoners became more than I could manage. By then I was spending many hours every week travelling all over the country, mostly by train, but then, as I carry no money, still having to walk long distances between stations or from the station to the prison and back. This was not something that could continue for long and nor was it right that the prisons should do nothing and only start looking for a Buddhist minister when a prisoner demanded it. I and one or two supporters decided that we really needed to be better organised and so in about 1984 the idea of a Buddhist Prison Chaplaincy was born. For it to commence and for it to succeed we saw that it needed to have a broad and widespread support. That meant persuading Buddhist groups and individuals of all the
main Buddhist schools to cooperate and help us make the Buddha Dhamma available in this unpopular and neglected area of our society. It must be remembered that Buddhism at that time wasn’t that well established in the UK. Yes, all the main schools were represented but they didn’t get on that well and nothing quite like what we were proposing had ever before been attempted.

We launched our Buddhist Prison Chaplaincy Organisation at Magha Puja in 1985 and named it after Angulimala, that remarkable and unusual disciple of the Buddha, whose story is an inspiration and reminder that even in the most extreme and desperate of circumstances people can and do change. Yes, they can and do embrace Buddhism and practise to improve themselves and deal with their suffering. I have told that story of Angulimala countless times and many times to prison staff when I have been called on to explain Buddhism to them. And I always make the point that, like Angulimala, those who have offended and who are in prison and have done wrong, even terrible things, can and do change, and I point out that that change in Angulimala, a mass murderer, the reawakening of his latent and dormant good qualities, was brought about not by force but by persuasion and above all, example.

When we began Angulimala, first we had to convince the Prison Service Chaplaincy of our proposal, they were sceptical at first but when they realised it wasn’t going to cost them anything they immediately warmed to the idea. Then there were two immediate demands on us: one was to be representative of the entire Buddhist movement in the UK and the other was to provide Buddhist visiting ministers for every prison in the country. The two were linked. Unless all the major schools and groups supported us, we couldn’t fulfil the first, and without the help and support of various groups all over the country, irrespective of their allegiance or style, we couldn’t hope to fulfill the second. We made it clear from the outset that Angulimala doesn’t favour any one school of Buddhism over another and that what we would offer were the essential teachings found in all the great and legitimate schools of Buddhism. Our aim as we have developed and learnt to express it has been and is ‘To make available facilities for the teaching and practice of Buddhism in Her Majesty’s Prisons and other places
of lawful detention or custody. Specifically: To recruit and advise a team of Buddhist visiting chaplains to be available as soon as there is a call for their services; To act in an advisory capacity, and to liaise with the Ministry of Justice chaplaincy officials, with individual chaplains within Her Majesty’s Prisons, and with any other relevant bodies or officials; and to provide an aftercare and advisory service for prisoners after release. We set about canvassing support from the major Buddhist groups and then recruiting people to serve as Buddhist visiting chaplains. We preferred to use the term ‘chaplain’ from the start, although we weren’t allowed to use it in the prisons. It was a Christian term and so could only be used by Christians, we were told. Inevitably in those early days we encountered some prejudice and suspicion and I accepted that it would have be a part of our mission to deal with that and overcome it. We eventually achieved a team of about fifty Buddhist chaplains from a range of traditions and over the years, with a certain amount of coming and going as some have retired and some have joined, we have maintained a fairly constant number of around forty-five to fifty Buddhist chaplains, some of whom, it must be said, have stayed with us for twenty or thirty years. And since the founding of Angulimala I have been its Spiritual Director and I am now also the Buddhist Adviser to HM Prison and Probation Service.

Training in security and matters that concern it from its side is offered and even required by the Prison Service but there’s no easy way to learn how to be a Buddhist prison chaplain other than to take advice and support from us and to learn by doing. From the beginning we have held quarterly workshops for our chaplains and we have made regular attendance a requirement. At first these were held in different venues in various parts of the country but eventually we decided that it was easiest and best to centralise them at the Forest Hermitage where I could always organise for a lunch to be provided and where we keep a stock of books, mala beads and small Buddha Rupas for distribution amongst the Buddhist prisoners. As a Thai forest monk, I am particularly fussed about things to do with the Buddha and the Dhamma not being sold and I have always insisted that the books, mala beads and Buddha Rupas should be freely given. Fortunately, many generous people have
made this possible by donating the items or the money to buy them. Also the point has to be made that prisoners have had a lot taken away from them – their freedom for a start – and it means a lot when something as special as a book or Buddha Rupa is given to them. It also demonstrates that we mean what we say, that it isn’t just words and theory that we’re offering but a practice, something that is there to be lived and done. As well as attendance at our workshops I also insist that all our chaplains maintain good sila by observing at least the Five Precepts. And I am particularly insistent on a proper regard for the fifth precept. Unfortunately, here in the West and amongst certain groups there has been a tendency to redefine the fifth precept. Basically, it is sometimes thought that to observe the fifth precept it’s enough to simply avoid getting drunk, so having what is usually described as an occasional drink is all right. But if you drink alcohol, where is the point when you fall under its influence? Not only is the consumption of alcohol a breach of the fifth precept but it’s a bad example to others. This is especially and importantly the case in a prison where a large proportion of the prisoners are there for alcohol and drug related offences and struggle with addiction. For them there is only one way of dealing with it and that is to stop and the Buddhist chaplain who doesn’t use alcohol and drugs and who in many cases has but has stopped and now abstains can be a powerful and important example. I hold that Buddhist chaplains must set a good example and walk the walk not just talk the talk.

A tremendous example of dana in action that has taken place annually for over twenty years is the Springhill Buddha Grove celebration. In 1992 a prisoner at Springhill Open Prison came up with the idea of establishing what he called a Buddha Grove. We had no dedicated room or space inside for the Buddhists so he suggested that outside there was plenty of room and in particular a small grove of trees that was an ideal site for a small Buddhist shrine. We got the backing of the Governor, I said that I’d get them a big Buddha Rupa from Thailand and the men set to work. It turned out to be a bigger and more ambitious undertaking than we’d expected but very beautiful. An opening ceremony was arranged and on a bitterly cold evening in October an impressive crowd of the great and the good gathered to witness the chanting and take part in a
candlelit circumambulation. Afterwards some members of the Thai community asked if next year they could offer the food, and so they did and thereafter every year but one in September we have had a celebration at the Buddha Grove with a vegetarian Thai meal given to all the prisoners in the prison. To witness dozens of Thai people joyfully giving of their time and their expertise and the food to provide that meal makes an enormous impact, especially, as I’ve said, when as a prisoner you’ve been used to having things taken from you.

To return to our training workshops that all our Buddhist chaplains have to attend. The day begins with meditation and then that’s usually followed with an update from me on Prison Service matters that are likely to affect us. A superb lunch provided by some of my Thai supporters is then served and there is time during the long lunch break for informal conversations and a chance to browse the shelves in the Angulimala resource centre and stock up on books and Buddha rupas to distribute amongst the prisoners. Then we may have a guest speaker, and we have had some very impressive ones down the years: all the recent Chief Inspectors have spoken to us, some prison governors, the previous two heads of Prison Service chaplaincy - the list goes on and on. Their function is to tell us more about the world of criminal justice and imprisonment in which we work. Some former prisoners have also featured amongst our guest speakers and told us about their experience of imprisonment. Whatever the demands on our programme for the day, which stretches from 10am until 5pm and sometimes later, we usually find time for a session on anti-corruption training as well as time to address and advise on specific concerns that chaplains may have. Anti-corruption is aimed principally at preventing staff, including chaplains, from inadvertently becoming conditioned or compromised and then doing things they shouldn’t, like smuggling into a prison drugs or mobile phones. When advising chaplains, I am frequently reminding them of the Buddhist practice of non-attachment. As you might expect, we hear some dreadful stories, stories of a prisoner’s past and sometimes too of his current difficulties with family or other problems outside of the prison about which he can do very little, but which can be very painful: marital breakups, for example, are not uncommon. There are
also those who claim, sometimes very convincingly, that they are innocent and have been wrongly convicted, and some have after many years in prison been acquitted and their sentences quashed. If chaplains are not careful, these painful and heart-rending stories can lead them to an involvement that is emotional and sometimes active, with then unhealthy and sometimes disastrous, even illegal, consequences. They may feel that they are being compassionate and indeed might have the best interests of the prisoner or prisoners in mind but by becoming involved wisdom and common sense fly out of the window and either it all becomes too much, and they burn out and resign or they act inappropriately. To survive and to be really helpful, to be that good friend, you have to be able to maintain a gap between you and your clients. You must be able to let go of what you have heard when you leave the prison after a visit and you have to be able to let go too when a prisoner moves on, either to another prison or on release. Non-attachment, however hard and unkind it might sometimes appear, does not equal aversion, dislike or hatred – on the contrary, it is a wise and considered response that enables proper and appropriate help to be given as and when needed.

While my original and principal role in the prisons has been that of a chaplain, nevertheless, since the founding of Angulimala in 1985 I have as its Spiritual Director had to lead a team of chaplains of various schools in their leadership of their various equally complex prison congregations. Of course many of them hold views and interpretations that I don’t agree with but all that I’ve put aside and long ago decided that their personal practice should be theirs and their teachers’ affair and not mine, except insofar as they maintain certain standards and are capable of delivering core Buddhist teachings. This is a balance that has not always been appreciated but which I’ve had to be very careful of.

Now we come to TBSUK. Since my return to the UK in 1977 I have watched the number of temples and the number of Theravada monks here gradually increase. Back in the late seventies and early eighties we all knew each other and were invited to each other’s temples for various celebrations but by the beginning years of this century all that had changed and we no longer knew each other or visited each other’s temples. By then too there had been a steady
rise in the West and the English speaking world in the number of lay teachers and amongst Western Buddhists respect for the Sangha was in decline. My concerns around this came to a head when I was asked to attend a meeting in Birmingham to discuss the founding of a Buddhist Hospital and Healthcare Chaplaincy. At that meeting I was asked how I decided who was suitable to be a prison chaplain and I described the form and questionnaire that applicants are required to complete. I explained that it includes a question on the five precepts and to my amazement this was greeted with an impassioned outburst that included someone shouting that there are plenty of Buddhists who eat meat and drink alcohol! All I’d done was mention the five precepts. The commotion subsided and I was allowed to carry on until someone asked me what I did if someone drank alcohol, to which I replied that I didn’t appoint them. This was greeted by an even greater outburst that included one chap wittering on about a famous Zen poet who wrote the most wonderful verse and was always drunk! I was really shocked by all this. After all Buddhism hasn’t long been in the West and here are people already reinventing it and discarding the bits that are inconvenient or that they don’t like. Ajahn Chah once said that you must bend yourselves to the Dhamma, don’t try to bend the Dhamma to suit you! After I thought about it, I really marvelled at how the Sangha has for two and a half thousand years protected and maintained the Buddha-Dhamma and I decided that I must do something to try and help strengthen and support the growth and stability of the Sangha in the UK.

The first thing to do, I thought, was to try to bring Sangha members together and for us to at least know each other again. So, a meeting was arranged with representatives from various temples and at that meeting it was agreed to found an association. After some discussion we decided to call it Theravada Buddhist Sangha in the UK (TBSUK) and I became its Chairman with a committee composed of Thai, Burmese, Sri Lankan and British monks. Since then we’ve met twice a year, every year and at different temples, although those near or in Birmingham, Oxford and London have been the most convenient. At those meetings we have had a variety of presentations and discussed problems such as those posed by the UK’s restrictions on Immigration. An early example of the
advantage of working together was when my friend and supporter, Lord Avebury, arranged a meeting for me with the Government Minister for Immigration and when I sat down with him to discuss the difficulties we have bringing monks in from abroad, I was able to announce that I was representing fifty temples. Had I been representing only one it would have had little or no impact, but fifty, that meant something, and I was listened to sympathetically and although I didn’t get all that I wanted nevertheless some help was offered. Most recently we have decided to organise a one-day conference in June with Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi as the principal speaker. I want to emphasise that TBSUK is there to support and care for the Sangha and its members. It’s almost inevitable that in a country that is not traditionally Buddhist monks and nuns will run into difficulties and for a monk or nun from overseas, far from home, with poor English and little knowledge of the laws and customs of this country it could be a very lonely and painful experience. TBSUK is there to help. Here in England we believe in a community caring for its members and that is what I hope TBSUK will do for Theravada monks and nuns in the UK.

So what have we to learn, both from what we know of what the Buddha taught and from practical, personal leadership experience? First of all, may I rework a line from Shakespeare’s ‘Twelfth Night’: some are born leaders, some become leaders, and some have leadership thrust upon them. Few of us are likely to inherit positions of trust and leadership but some of us might have leadership thrust upon us, as in an emergency. More likely, we may find that as we get older and more experienced, we grow into and acquire positions of trust and leadership. It’s a gradual and organic evolution born of our experience. If we take the case of the Buddha, or that of Ajahn Chah, or of many other great leaders and teachers, what we find is that they didn’t set out to be leaders but that their leadership evolved, unsought after, through their dedication and commitment to an ideal. When the Buddha told the monks that after his passing they were to take the Dhamma-Vinaya as their lead he was making an important point. Principle, true principle, always trumps personalities. And importantly, the Buddha was trying to ensure that the leadership of the Sangha did not fall into corrupt and unsuitable hands.
In my own case, I didn’t at first set out to found a Buddhist Prison Chaplaincy and then run it. To begin with I accepted invitations to offer guidance and care to prisoners who identified as Buddhists. The idea of a Buddhist chaplaincy was one that in the course of time evolved in response to a need and as the most experienced chaplain it was natural that I should be its driving force and so I emerged as its Spiritual Director and de facto leader. With TBSUK it was rather different. That was something I initiated in response to what wasn’t quite an emergency but nevertheless was something that alarmed me.

Then in these two leadership roles what has been expected of me, what resources have I had to draw upon and what have I learnt? I claim no particular capabilities, other than determination and, when it comes to the long haul, patience. Both roles have had their share of complex issues to deal with, but central to both have been clear objectives that I have been determined to not lose sight of and to do that, I believe, has been my principal responsibility. In order to maintain those objectives, in both cases I have had to be conscious of differences of view and opinion within the membership and to be careful to keep those various individuals and groups onside. That means I have had to learn diplomacy and remember a duty of care towards the membership. What resources have I had to draw on? Well, I’m a Buddhist monk and a forest monk and I had the good fortune to receive my early training under the guidance of the great Ajahn Chah. That wasn’t an easy time. When I first arrived at his monastery I was leaving behind a very different life, although my training and experience as an actor had already taught me discipline. Still, I had to deal with a culture and climate completely alien to me, and a language I couldn’t speak, a diet that was unfamiliar, and a lifestyle that unlike what I’d done before I had little talent and aptitude for. For example, hot and uncomfortable, I had to sit through hours and hours of Dhamma desanas and conversations that I couldn’t understand a word of. In those first few months, I heard later, it was the opinion of other monks – including some who themselves eventually gave up and disrobed – that I wouldn’t last. But I did, determination and patience pulled me through. And what had I to learn? For both, but particularly for Angulimala, I’ve had to become practically a Jack of all trades. In both cases, I’ve
learnt that it’s been up to me to care for and support everyone involved. And in Angulimala that means supporting its chaplains and being there for them as well as caring for any prisoners who are Buddhist or interested in Buddhism or who come to me for help and support. One of the greatest compliments ever paid to me was by a prisoner of many years, I think he’d been inside about thirty years, and he said of me, ‘What’s different about you is you love us!’

Obviously I have been inspired by the Buddha and his teaching and by various teachers and others whose example has affected me. I think inspiration, to be able to inspire others is very important and goes a long way in the leadership of others. If you can inspire them then they will naturally want to follow. I don’t believe that to inspire one needs to be charismatic but you do need to have an unwavering commitment to what you’re doing with the determination to succeed and the patience to keep at it. In other words you need to be devoted to your subject and its purpose and to the cultivation of both adhitthana and khanti parami. And to do all this you have to have clear in your mind what it is that you are trying to do. You must be clear about what is your super-objective, that is your main and over riding objective, which is supported by lesser actions and by and large by the way that you approach even mundane and everyday matters.

Then next, it’s important to lead by example. Do as I say but not do as I do is rubbish. I can’t recollect whether the Buddha ever had anything to say about leading by example but he certainly demonstrated it. He after all was then and remains for us today the example, inspiration and embodiment of what we as his followers and disciples are aiming for. Remember the extraordinary impact meeting the Buddha had on Angulimala. Imagine that scenario, a fit and ferocious serial killer with a terrifying reputation meets in a remote place far from anyone who might help him a lone, defenceless and unarmed holy man. And what happened? The ferocious killer who was well used to violence and to people hating him and being afraid of him just couldn’t handle this someone who didn’t fear or hate him and who spoke kindly and pleasantly to him. If I am to expect a commitment from members of my team, I have to show that I have that commitment myself. If I’m
to expect members of my team to be understanding and tolerant of each other, I have to show that I too can be careful and tolerant of their views and interpretations. In my life I have noticed that it has been what people have done and how they’ve done it that has most affected me. I have had the good fortune to have known some remarkable people and it’s as if in some cases I have without realising it absorbed their example.

If Buddhism is ever to assume a Global Leadership, and I believe it should and hope it will, it will be by the impressive example of Buddhist countries and communities. If we can show, as at this conference and with the production of Common Buddhist Texts - that excellent anthology from across the traditions, that the different strands of Buddhism can come together and cooperate; if we can persuade our lay people to live by the five precepts and demonstrate that by simply applying Buddhist standards of morality people can be safe and communities can live in peace and harmony: then we can change the world.

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- III -
GLOBAL LEADERSHIP
AND SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES
I chose the topic of “The 5 Roles of Global Leaders” to respond to the main theme of the 16th United Nations Day of Vesak Celebrations held on the 12-14th, May 2019 at Tam Chuc International Convention Center, Ha Nam Province, Vietnam.

The main theme of the United Nations Day of Vesak was “Buddhist Approach to Global Leadership and Shared Responsibilities for Sustainable Societies” proposed by International Council for Day of Vesak (ICDV). Each year, ICDV, representatives of World Buddhists choose a theme that is essentially interest & policy of the United Nations’ leaders in that year.

Today is the second session of a series of talks about Vesak festival and emphasis the importance of 5 roles including Global Vision, Prevention of Cultural Conflicts, Proper Behavior Change, Empathy and management of external forces, as well as communication for overcoming obstacles. I present the above issues as an experienced participant in three international Buddhist organizations around in the world. I have joined the United Nations’ Vesak since 2006 as Deputy Secretary General. For the second organization, I have participated in the International Buddhist Cooperation founded by the World Buddhist community under the patronage of the India government in 2011. The third organization in which I am in position of the Vice President is the the Buddhist Sangha of Asia for Culture, founded in 2013 in Hong Kong.

As the Secretary General of the United Nations’ Vesak, I

* Transcribed from Vietnamese by Giac Minh Duyên. Translated by Ngo Tri Dung. One Day Retreat on October 21, 2018, Vietnam Buddhist University, Ho Chi Minh City.
connected the founder and founding secretary general of the World Buddhist Summit, Japan, inviting the Secretary-General of this organization to be the Vice President of the United Nations Buddha’s Vesak of Vietnam. Through that connection, we convinced the Vietnam government to organize and become the host of the 5th World Buddhist Summit in Hanoi on the occasion of the 1000th anniversary of Ha Noi. The Prime Minister of Vietnam issued a decision to implement the event. There were more than ten meetings between the International Commission of the Buddhist Summit and leaders of Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, the Central Steering Committee, the relative departments signed at least 5 documents, including 3 documents of Deputy Prime Minister Pham Gia Khiem and Minister of Foreign Affairs at that time. However, due to great disagreements about the place, the Buddhist Sangha of Vietnam and the leaders of the World Buddhist Summit finally canceled the organization in early 2010.

Because I am directly a founding member, Vice President and Secretary of the three major Buddhist organizations in the world, the experiences I would share below are personal perspectives that serve as references to help you become superior Buddhist leaders. It will definitely a blessing for Vietnam’s Buddhism.

1. GLOBAL VISION

To become a global leader, a leader must have a Global vision & a Global mindset without limiting his ideal in family, community, country and region to open the interactive vision, connect to all the world-class activities. Thus, we must refer to the classy national model. When the model is highly influential across the country, it immediately becomes a global model if national leaders have plans to introduce, replicate, and even impose the model on the global scale. China often turns its national model with national vision into a global model with a global vision. To do this, the leaders must predict the worst possible situation when participating in the international integration, where there are countless external forces regarding us as obstacles or opponents. Their policy is “to attack first to confirm the power and the existence”. The major challenges including culture, religion, politics in countries, regions and continents.
The World War I took place in the late 20th century followed by the World War II in the 30s-40s-50s made mankind divided into two opposing forces. Cultural, religious and political challenges which whether we admit or not, become global problems. If we do not identify under the view of Zhuan Falun, not admit the deadlock, not search for causes, not experience happiness and a true path of eight elements, then our global dreams and ideals are merely simple dreams.

Many successful strategies at the national level when being applied to a global scale, are proved to be inappropriate. Hundreds of countries have tried to globalize their cultural policy but failed. One of the most typical countries is China. Over the past decade, China has used government money with the way of cultural diplomacy and public diplomacy to sponsor the construction, teaching and propagation of Confucius Institute on a global scale with the main purpose of confirming soft power through Confucianism as well as relative explanations. We recall that when the cultural revolution occurred in China under the leadership of Chinese communism, the past philosophies, especially Confucius philosophy was considered a major obstacle of communism. Communism wanted to eliminate this doctrine. During the global integration, China promoted Confucian to the main ideology because it had a foothold of nearly 2500 years.

In terms of academic levels such as bachelor, master, doctor, postdoctor in the broad scale of society and humanity, in the narrow scale of the Eastern philosophy namely Chinese philosophy; Western countries like United States, Canada, Australia and some European countries were initially eager to embrace them, but then boycotted Confucius Institute because of its expansion of illegal power that threatened the global security.

Over a decade, Vietnam has not yet learned the lesson but continued to support the Confucius Institute as a sign of cultural and academic diplomacy with China. Thus China’s strategy on soft power through Confucianism has been very successful in the present period in China and some areas such as Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, Tibet and Inner Mongolia, but proved a failure when Western superpowers mobilized the world community to boycott it. It is also a diplomatic failure.
On June 21, 2016, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi succeeded in mobilizing 175 regional countries in the United Nations General Assembly to admit that the longest day of summer an International Yoga Day. This was a way to introduce soft power. From a cultural perspective, India was more ingenious than China because it didn’t prove the military power to force small countries to cede their land, their sea, and their sovereignty in the form of being forced to cooperate. They promoted yoga culture to support health. Prime Minister Modi along with ministers and parliamentarians annually on June 21 participate in doing yoga, which has been communicated as an important event in India for the past three years.

Thus, for a successful national-level strategy to be accepted on a world-wide scale, we must clearly see the adaptation between different cultures under the leadership of global political leaders, global religious leaders. The policy of honesty at its best is an appropriate policy, a misleading strategy to show power will be uncovered in the end. It may be perfect at the beginning but not be great in the middle and the end. In the Buddha’s language, his truth is perfect in the beginning, the middle and the last. And the policy of showing China’s soft power globally is only accepted at an early stage, then is excluded in the middle and final stage.

Adapting to different cultural groups in a complex and diverse environment is what global leaders must pay attention to. We should not be subjective and tricky. World leaders are experienced in international activities, international events, international level, international scale which are much greater than emerging countries including China and India, Brazil ...

The global vision must demonstrate the integrity, harmony and interaction that lead to the voluntary participation of UN member states. If what we propose is incompatible with this role, then such efforts are considered as “build a castle on sand”.

In 1999, Sri Lanka representatives under the support of Thailand, the only two Buddhist countries in the United Nations mobilized the UN General Assembly to recognize the Vesak full moon day as a world cultural event commemorating the birth, enlightenment of Nirvana of Shakyamuni. The propaganda is not easy because
more than 95% of UN delegates are Catholics, Protestants and Muslims. While Buddhism is only minor with two delegates from two countries. But the value, the message of peace, the wisdom of solving the problems from philosophy to practical action through the 2600 year history of Buddhism made the UN leader feel convinced to accept Vesak a day of global cultural festival.

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan was a Protestant, but he persuaded the general assembly to approve the resolution to admit the festival without dissenting vote. It was a rare event in the history of the United Nations General Assembly. The resolution affirmed that from May 2000 onwards, at the United Nations headquarters in New York and the United Nations representative offices in the region simultaneously celebrated 3 events relating to Buddha’s life are, also known as the Vesak Festival.

By May 2018, the United Nations leaders successfully organized 18 Vesak Festivals. The Venerable - the principle of Maha Chulalongkorn University, on the occasion of the United Nations General Assembly held in New York in 2003, convinced the Thai government and the Thai Sangha Supreme Council to vote to approve Thailand’s support of organizing Vesak Festival in 2004. At the same time, the venerable had to mobilize the countries in the region to support him. Fortunately, he mobilized more than 30 countries to organize the first in 2004 successfully and Vietnam was a co-founder.

Looking beyond the normal, engaging in global activities is a noble ideal that we all need to care. The example of Shakyamuni Buddha expresses an universal vision. 26 centuries ago, he clearly saw things beyond the earth we live in or in the Buddhist literature as “Place of Jambudvipa” such as solar system, galaxies, that only up until 17th century that scientist could prove those things. The decision to abandon the opportunity to become a king was a global vision. With a progressive look, Prince Siddhartha - the king of Sakya only erased social classes in Sakya - the smallest state in the remaining 15 Indian republics. The two strongest countries are Magada under the reign of Bimbisara and Kosala under the rule of Persian. Less than a year of propagating the philosophy, the Buddha made Bimbisara and Persian King to be his disciples. When the two
greatest kings during the Buddha’s time became disciples to spread the philosophy to every family, especially half of India would be a sure within a few years.

Choosing the path to be a great spiritualist, the Buddha had a great vision that his philosophy would be followed by five continents and hundreds of nations with peace. Therefore, he chose spirituality and did not choose politics. Interacting with continents and the world with only the national vision is backward. In the country, a wrong policy, decision or going the wrong path could be corrected, which can be sympathized by the people for their patriotism and their nationalism, but missing an international trip is unreverseable. The international community’s prejudice on our failure to do something will take a few decades to solve. If we do not accept this rule of the world, we will be isolated and pressured. The pressure Western countries often make is to emphasize freedom of religion, human rights and democracy in their countries. In the countries that want to integrate with the region and the world, it is the first level. Thus, if you want to integrate, you have to agree with religional freedom, which means we welcome Protestantism and Catholicism.

When South Korea adopted capitalism and became America’s backyard in Asia, Korea had to welcome Catholicism and Protestantism. From 1953 until now, Catholics make up 24% of the population, Protestants make up 23% of the population. Buddhism is present in Korea at the beginning of the 4th century according to Western calendar, a Mahayana state was second (receiving Buddhism in the first century BC) and China (receiving Buddhism in 68 AD), currently there is only 18% of the Buddhist population and it becomes a minority religion, while the Protestant has been present around 400 years globally.

The global model inspires many leaders at the national level. The global visionary leader must know to sacrifice national interests, regional interests, community interests, and family interests to become great eagles that could spread our wings to all directions. Otherwise, we are only satisfied on the form of “East or west-home is best”. It is a proud of the outdated ones. Our own ponds are stagnant, with mosses, poisons, insects, cannot be used or grow, so we have to expand our vision into great ocean and continents.
During the period of being deputy secretary-general of the International Buddhist Sangha from 2002-2007, I made an effort to establish diplomatic relations to make the campaign in 2008 was approved to bring the Vesak Festival to Vietnam for the first time in 2000 years. Thus, with a global vision, national leaders can achieve world-class stories that benefit the nation and the world.

2. PREVENTING CULTURE CONFLICT

Intercontinental and international cultural conflicts; religious conflicts prevented many countries from staying together just because of the conservatism in their traditional culture which has become a barrier to other countries and cultures.

I temporarily call a cultural conflict is a body’s reaction to external objects. In 1975 I was 6 years old, my left shoulder had more than a dozen of injections before the epidemic seasons to help the body counteract the disease. Cultural allergies create a culture shock that is even more dangerous than the way our antibodies zone off foreign objects into our bodies. When we take our national culture, our religious culture as a reference system to see the world, we are subjective. Subjectivity creates a cultural ego. The culture ego is in conflict with each other, leading to a situation of resistance.

So the global leader must identify situations that can lead to cultural shocks, cultural conflicts. If you don’t see this clearly, our global ideal is stopped like a race car with a tire explosion in the middle of the race, watching other riders cross the finish line.

First, we need to expose our culture to the cultures of other communities, other countries, and other continents; to erase the monopoly. People who open their hearts at the global level can interact and mobilize people to support national and regional level. It is a long process.

It is necessary to understand the dimension of different cultures. Not understanding others but forcing them to understand us is an authoritarian attitude. The talk of “7 understanding”, ie understanding of Pali Sutra, especially the Central Sutra, I introduced the “Buddhist scriptures for lay people” teaching about understanding other people, on a wider range, understanding other
countries, other continents, other ideology and other cultures, we are able to make others accept us.

In order to resolve cultural conflicts, it is not simply a matter of copying the model in country A and pasting it in country B because of the nature of cultural conflict in different places. The North Vietnam political ideological conflict under the support of the Soviet Union and China, and one of South Vietnam under the support of the United States, led to the war killing several million people, and Vietnamese communists, 58,000 American soldiers. That lesson is not applicable to other countries. The United States only intervened in the Iraq battle against Kuwait, or in Afghanistan. The lesson in Vietnam is not the ideal lesson that the US can use to solve problems with the same structure and the same nature.

In 2007, as Deputy Secretary-General of the International Organization Commission, I dreamed of bringing United Nations Vesak to Vietnam. At that time, in the Commission, there were only two Vietnamese members, Venerable Thich Thien Tam - a standing member and I. To get more votes for Vietnam in this organization, I thought about introducing Professor Le Manh That and mobilizing the Comission to accept Professor Le Manh That, a world-famous conscientious prisoner who was sentenced to death, a famous historian of Vietnam, and a prominent figure in the World Buddhist philosophy. When Professor Le Manh That was accepted in the Commission, we had three votes. In addition, to mobilize the International Organization commission of thirty countries in 2007 to bring Vesak to Vietnam was a long and complicated story.

The first complication was that the government and the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha didn’t have a policy, the people were unaware of communism. During the discussion of this issue at the Commission, it was a venerable Vietnamese monk in Australia who resisted and led a Domino opposition among the remaining national members. There was also a differentiation in the Vietnamese ethnic community for communism. That obsession caused many difficulties, and it took three days to bring Vesak to Vietnam. At that time, I argued as follows: if President Dharman Gosachan of the International Organization Commission could visit the Vesak in Muslim countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan, formerly the Mahayana Buddhist
countries, it would be reasonable to visit it in Vietnam - a communist country. Communism is a political institution, while the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha is not a political institution. Here we organize the Buddhism event in a country with communist political institution, not to honor the communism founder. After listening to my argument, Dharman Gosachan and Commission stopped discussions and agreed.

To create a world-class speaker for UN Vesak celebrations in Vietnam, I invited Zen master Nhat Hanh to be the keynote speaker. I invited Lang Mai to talk to the representatives. After that, I persuaded the Commission to promote a key note speaker of the Vesak in 2008 and it was definitely Zen Master Nhat Hanh. I finally succeeded in convincing.

When the official information was issued, the Chinese government put pressure on the Vietnamese government with three notes. The two diplomatic notes of the Chinese Ambassador in Vietnam and the diplomatic note of the Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs forced the Vietnamese government to consider diplomatic political relations between the two countries and should not allow Zen master Nhat Hanh to return Vietnam as the main speaker of the Great Festival. In fact, I thought that it was necessary to have a resolution of the president through the majority votes in the International Organization Commission. It was the Commission’s decision, not the decision of the Vietnamese government. There were several sessions held by Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung. Finally, Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung decided that China could not interfere with Vietnam’s sovereignty over Vietnamese territory.

Before returning to Vietnam, in Italy during a mission tour, Italian television interviewed Zen master Nhat Hanh on the Tibetan issue, and the Zen master shared that he himself supported the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan community. He cited that Vietnam once became a colony of China in 1000 years from the first century to the 10th century. The Vietnamese did not give up in fighting to regain independence and sovereignty and Finally Vietnam won. Because of this content, China put pressure even though China once welcomed Zen master to lecture in China. Since the interview, the door to enter China of Zen master Nhat Hanh was permanently closed. It was a political ideological conflict.
On a large scale, politics is also a cultural corner that relates to the country’s leadership in a national government. In each historical period, the polity may follow different tendency in different point of time. As a small country, we can easily be imposed, dominated, influenced by many dimensions. We now stand between China and the United States, and are inclined to the United States to create the alliance, and China reduces pressure on us:

“Stand between two flows”

“Swim with one or give up?”

Addressing regional and global cultural conflicts must take place when all our concerns are solved. The Commission has more than 30 countries concerning that communism is opposite to religion, and the festival should be organized or not. Why not? We are an organizational unit, no matter which country we organize, it is just an organizational space. The content was regulated by the International Organization Commission. At least we had to explain, accepting the image of Vietnam to become a host country, solving cultural and political ideological conflicts can become a reality.

3. CHANGE AND ADJUST THE BEHAVIOR

The authoritarian leader tends to turn the policy of assuming his own success into a global undertaking, ie imposing by aggression, with soft power of culture and education. That is the identity of the world class leaders. It could resist human rights, but it creates a great class on a global scale that starts from a national scale. For example, Qin Shihuang, when ordering to build the Great Wall, was originally intended to prevent foreign invaders, he used a dictatorship mechanism, resisters should be killed. Virtually total authoritarian empires with authoritarian kings creating world class wonders with wisdom and ideal, but on the other hand it is full of blood, tears and death.

Modifying behavior is creating interaction but not impacting on independent voices. That is the trend that the United Nations has advocated in the past 7 decades. The members of the United Nations admitted that they were influenced by the way of resolving global conflicts in the spirit of the Buddha’s teaching, especially through the United Nations message of the United Nations in
2018. There is the following proverb: “Pessimist avoids the wind, the optimist hopes to change the wind to progress, adaptive people continue to adjust the sail”. Three concepts of behavior change, adjusted to adapt. So we have three tendency groups: The negative group mourned, grumbled, gave up. The positive group expects positive but only stops at expectation, the Buddha called this “the more you hope, the more sorrow you are”, because the desire is not satisfied. Buddhism encouraged the view of changing behavior. In the Mahayana scriptures, the Buddha mentioned the concept of Emotional Intelligence and wisdom, but unfortunately, the word “wisdom” and “Emotional Intelligence” were deleted later. Smart people are very flexible to adapt, progress and integrate. All the flexibility and adaptation that Buddhism calls “Emotional Intelligence and wisdom means” must be directed by wisdom.

Situations reading skill, understanding the mood of people, communities, countries, continents and the globe belong to one in 6 divine powers. Understanding on a narrow range is knowing the psychology and advocacy of someone, but on a wider range, we know the tendency and policy of a nation or a coalition of many nations.

The world financial market changes every hour because of a saying by the heads of super powers. A quote from US President Donald Trump could change gold prices, dollar prices, or stock markets. Without grasping this progress, the previous day was a billionaire, the next day might be a commoner. That impact creates impermanence quickly. So global leaders must keep track of global trends, global statements, and global policies of multinational impact. People without national vision are people covering them in a blanket and thinking that ghosts don’t see them. In fact, there are no ghosts, but if there are, even if I don’t see ghosts, ghosts will still see me because ghost has a supernatural vision.

Every adjustment begins with the right perception. In philosophy, there is the concept of “Things in itself” and things through our viewing prism. A thing has millions of prisms. Currently 7.3 billion people in the world who see a live program will have 7.3 billion different views for the same thing. So imposing subjective emotions, subjective attitudes, subjective desires on phenomenal things will cause things to deform. Vipassana taught the way which we develop
wisdom based on subjective exclusion. In this way, we have global intelligence for global integration.

Adjusting awareness with mindfulness or wisdom, we will adjust the mission, interaction, contribution from the range of family to community, nation, region and globe. It is a progressive process that is hard to ignore.

In order to adjust the behavior accepted globally, by way of diplomatic forms, we can achieve noble purpose. Zen Master Nhat Hanh represents the Unified Buddhist Sangha of Vietnam, and in 1966 came to the United States to mobilize peace for South Vietnam. At the same time, when studying the Master program of Applied Psychology at Columbia University - USA, the Zen master discovered in the school library the An Bang Thuy scriptures equivalent to the 16 breathing meditation skills. The change occurred since then. Before studying abroad, Zen master Nhat Hanh was very good at explaining meditation through two works. He wrote these two works at the age of 20 but they were very profound. Like the philosopher Pham Cong Thien writing the book New Consciousness in Arts and Philosophy that influenced South Vietnam when he was 19 years old. The concept of philosophy, literature, and political trends around the world were not only cited, but also evaluated in very convincing way by him.

Zen Master Nhat Hanh changed the meditation look with Chinese-based meditation, which he was trained and influenced in Tu Hieu Temple, An Quang pagoda and many years while teaching at universities in Vietnam. study in the country. After 16 years in the United States, Zen Master Nhat Hanh officially built Mai Village in France. Changing the trend and ideal to adjust the behavior, guidelines and mission took Zen master Nhat Hanh 16 years.

In 2005, I organized to invite Zen master Nhat Hanh to Ho Chi Minh City. At that time, I was a lecturer in the Buddhist College class, having played the role of coordinating the interaction between the nun in Mai Village and the college students. Zen Master Nhat Hanh met Zen Master Tu Thong and talked: “Tu Thong, a few decades ago, when I taught at An Quang, you and I committed that we will not need disciples, not build temples, but invest in teaching
Buddhism properly because the teachers are just teachers, their Buddhism understanding is still limited. It is not enough to teach other people for a lifetime, why bother building temples which consume too much time.” Zen Master Tu Thong smiled because from 2005 until now, Zen master Tu Thong still kept his view of not building a temple, not finding a disciple, just going to lecture Buddhism. And Zen Master Nhat Hanh quickly changed the promise.

Zen Master Nhat Hanh said that at the beginning, he established a school of Youth for Social Services (now Phap Van Pagoda at Le Thuc Gian Street, Binh Tan District) that attracted intellectuals to participate in peace activities. But because they had spouses and took family responsibilities and family relationships, they could not spend 100% of their time to do Buddhist affairs. By the time of the establishment of Mai Village in 1982, Zen master Nhat Hanh had to continue to fight ideologically until 1991 when he first renounced his disciples. In 1994, he renounced twenty more monks. It was a process of changing awareness that led to changes in policy and mission. Since 1997, 15 years since the trend change, Mai Village has just begun to be known in the West, with the community of white people, especially intellectuals. Earlier, the Zen master invested in writing books. His books were sold very well, translated into many languages that created global impact. Without those books, Mai Village could not be as great as what we know today. Zen Master Nhat Hanh is a historical witness contributing to the historical changes in the issue of Buddhist practice on a global scale.

The Venerable - our Head - Thich Tri Quang, if you pay attention to the lectures before 2000, he always advocates to build the spiritual temple not because he was influenced by the two teachers: Zen Master Nhat Hanh and Zen master Tu Thong. In 2000, the new Vice-President began building a temple; while with his prestige, if he had built a pagoda from the age of thirty, he would now have several dozen temples.

Therefore, adjusting the behavior should begin from the family perspective to the national or regional to the global one. Only when did Zen master Nhat Hanh change adaptation to the global scope, Mai Village has a global position, contributing to the change of the white community’s practice in many continents.
4. COMMUNICATION FOR OVERCOMING OBSTACLE

The biggest obstacle of global scope starts from language, culture, religious ideology, and political ideology. Without identifying these four obstacles, we cannot overcome them. The method of the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism is to acknowledge difficulties, to find a cause and to have an appropriate solution. Otherwise, it’s just a psychological reassurance that is not effective.

We need to see the importance of global communication creating global change that starts with globalization. New globalization has took place over the past two decades, starting from a continent gradually to five continents. Globalization from the transport of manufactured goods in the city is accepted in nations, then accepted within the regions to the globe. It is the growth of production efficiency to consumers.

The process of shifting going with culture, political and religious ideology of a country is present in all other countries if the influence is very great. Globalization has a dominant impact like a hurricane, mercilessly sweeping indigenous cultures, policies and economies.

Vietnamese culture is being invaded by Chinese culture, we are devastated by globalization hurricanes. We are exchanging indigenous cultures for economic progress. That is the problem that heads of state need to consider carefully. If there is no law-based policy, when the Vietnamese economy is 3/4 as great as one of Korea, then we will lose nearly all Vietnamese cultural identities. Comparing 70 years ago, Vietnamese clothing culture was the long dress “ao dai” and a hat, now how many Vietnamese people keep that tradition apart from holidays, wedding, receptionist ?. We lost our clothing culture quickly in just 70 years of socialism. The house is also built in European and American style, gradually losing the identity of tile roofs, pagoda roofs to show Vietnamese art architecture. Westernized music, Chinese reformed music. Almost our culture has been torn by major cultures through the process of globalization.

The noble ideal of global scope will become the idea if it is not communicated globally, is not explained clearly to people to understand and accept. Therefore, thinking about effective
communication is necessary. Facebook was born in 2003, initially for a small group of Harvard University students, gradually Facebook became the largest media conglomerate with an estimated 3 billion users. Mark Zuckerberg, co-founder of Facebook became a billionaire quickly thanks to the power of communication combined with the technology of the 4th industrial revolution.

All cultural, geographical, political and religious constraints need to be overcome. After Vietnam’s independence in 1975, due to political ideological differences, Vietnamese people became the fourth highest immigrant community worldwide after China, India and Israel. At first we were in other countries as osin. In Japan, Taiwan, Korea, we play the role of bride. After 2 or 3 decades of settlements, Vietnamese people have participated in politics, education, society, fields and become indigenous people having their voice. As my prediction, Vietnam’s global image is very pure and noble. Vietnamese people are diligent and intelligent, the disadvantages are to overcome conflicts and internal opposition.

In order to communicate across countries, we must use international language. Before returning the colony, the Queen of England, in consultation with political experts, forced the colonies to sign as permanent members of the British Senate. By this policy, Britain is still the owner of more than 50 countries that they once occupied. Even France with military politics expanding its world by aggression and expedition, or Spain or Portugal, cannot keep up with Britain. England changed everything in its colonies. So when England left, the natives were very happy. But Frances caused many bad things in its colonies. When France left, it often plundered resources on the colonial countries, leaving the wild colonies backward. Although France claimed itself to be the civilized cradle of Europe, it behaved badly.

English and French are popular media languages because the expeditionary conquests of the poor countries with the policy of sophistication to bring science and technology to backward countries.

DT Suzuki was born in 1870, died in 1966 as a master who contributed to changing the world’s perception of Buddhism
through explaining meditation and meditation applications. As a prominent student in Japan, Suzuki was sponsored by Zenu Soen, a Zen master in the United States, to study in the United States and became an interpreter of Zen Buddha Saku’s teachings. By way of interpretation, Suzuki appreciated traditional Chinese and Japanese meditation methods. He wrote many articles published in international journals starting from the United States, later gathered into three volumes of Essays in Zen Buddhism. Volume 1 was translated by monk Truc Thien in 1966. Volume 2 & 3 was translated by Tuy Sy from 1972-1974.

Zen Master Suzuki’s first influence was academic study in the United States, then spreaded in Freud’s scope of meditation and psychoanalysis. The generation of Freud’s students applied Buddhist meditation to mental therapy, opening a wide meditation movement in Western countries now. At that time, British archaeologists, German Sanskrit and Indian scholars published great works on Buddhist literature through the Pali satru, making the world an Asia research-focused interactive school. especially India. Regarding the scope of world knowledge, Suzuki’s influence is considered to be the best in the Buddhist community. If Suzuki had not known English and only taught in Japanese like his teacher, he would have done anything.

Talking about the contribution to the construction of the temple, no one can be as good as Zen Master 90-year-old Tinh Van living in Kaohsiung City, Taiwan. Zen Master Tinh Van composed from the age of 18, leaving about 300 works, 1 TV station, 4 international universities, dozens of intermediate schools and 150 world-class temples in five continents. Even in Africa, he built nearly 6 temples. But due to the limitation in international language, his integration has not been as successful as Suzuki’s, Zen master Nhat Hanh’s, or Myanma meditator’s named Goenka.

Regarding the effectiveness of modern communication, on Facebook, the Dalai Lama has 13.9 million likes; Zen master Nhat Hanh has 1.7 million likes. Compared to politicians and influential digital technology, we are still very far away. Mark Zuckerberg, the co-founder of Facebook has the world’s largest traffic, nearly 40 million Likes, followed by US President Dolnald Trump. Trump is
the most emotional intelligent president of 45 US presidents when he used Twitter and Facebook as a weapon against antagonistic communication. He was the most powerful US president to watch mainstream media and sideline media as his enemy in the United States. No president has ever advocated like that. He has tens of millions of likes. In order to have 1 million Likes, there must be at least 4 million hits. Donald Trump's Facebook, Twitter has become a major TV station.

If the monks and nuns do not use social media, it is backward, provided we use its in positive way. The local Vietnamese community has just used Facebook for a few years. I am lucky myself so far with 233 thousand of likes, Venerable Phuoc Tien with 218 thousand of likes. Other professors have about tens of thousands of Likes. If we compare Vietnamese Buddhist monks with entertainment characters in cinema, fashion, singers, comedians, then it is too far away. For example, comedian Hoai Linh leads with ten million of likes. So if people use social networks as communication tools, the masses will enjoy online what we teach. For example, when I share a Buddhist perspective on the “World Mission Society Church of God”. Within the first three days after posting on YouTube, there were 1.9 million views. That week, it ranked third worldwide in terms of visits. The largest Ba Vang pagoda in Vietnam covers an area of 6000m² containing only 7,000 seats. Or Hoang Phap Pagoda every Sunday welcomes 10,000 people, the Buddhist retreat courses welcome up to 3600 people, or the world’s largest lecture hall of Dhammakaya Temple, Thailand - 1km² contains up to 1 million seats, all can not get 1.9 million views.

The media network is like a big TV channel where we can’t take anything to compare. It’s a mistake for not using it, not to mention that after you die, your posts on Facebook and Youtube are permanent in 100 years, 1000 years.

Accusing the use of media is for show off the ego is a short-sighted thinking. Communication is a channel to propagate the philosophy of Buddha, the Buddha’s ethics that change the perception, behavior, lifestyle, policies, ideal at the national and global scale. Like Vesak, I have seen clearly that bringing Vesak to Vietnam will change the vision of the National Assembly, and
Vietnamese leaders to Buddhism. According to my own research, in 2008 and before, we had 38 thousand of monks and nuns and about 13,000 temples. After 10 years under the impact of United Nations Vesak 2008 & 2014, now we have 55,000 monks and nuns and 18663 official temples, about 3000 pagodas, following Buddha’s path which have not been acknowledged yet. That is the positive impact of Vesak campaign.

In April 2008, as Secretary-General of this Great Festival, I was assisted by the Central Advisory Committee to hold a press conference for 400 daily, weekly newspapers and Southern television channels that attendees must be at least the Secretary-General to come to listen to the International Organization Commission’s explanation of the Vesak Festival. I had to make a CD to introduce the Great Festival, the benefits of the Great Festival, the national scope, the international scope, the image of Vietnam in the world, the political and cultural interests, education, society and every aspect to help journalists who had little knowledge of Buddhism have a better view of the value of Buddhism. The opening and closing ceremonies and relay programs were broadcast on 63 national television channels. There has never been a Buddhist event in the 2000 year history in Vietnam that has been so powerful before. 400 daily newspapers and weekly newspapers provided free information about the Vesak 2008 event. Coming to Vesak in 2014, as the second time, the density and wide range of television was slightly reduced. That is why the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha is determined to continue organizing in 2019.

The benefits of changing awareness is very great, leading to changes in policy, behavior, ideals ... all begin with communication. So digital media is soft power that dominates hard power on politics and money.

The doctrine has many sides, one introduces another, the Sutras were progressive in defining the 4th industrial revolution, it is internet of things. Unfortunately, our monks and nuns still live in the oasis of the temple, during the lifetime of the temple only follow the dharma practice like the Amitabha for the dead; for the sick; The penitential rite for those who are guilty, while 38,000 suttas about the world view, the life, morality, society, the practice
of concentration, liberation, and the view of the Buddha which are cared by a few monks. That’s why the wisdom of Buddhism is so great but the scale of Buddhism in the world is still too narrow. In the early 19th century, Buddhism spread across the globe, after the remaining religions for centuries.

We are less active in integration. We just sit in the temple waiting for the masses to come. I often thought that it is like a village girl who thinks she is a beauty of the world, waiting for the rich guys in the world to flirt. While the Buddha was from 6 am to 2 pm going into the corner of his life. Every day we must go to a new location. Many people explain in a very short-sighted way that the Buddha is afraid of the masses do not have money to donate, but in fact, going to the village to meet new people, sharing the philosophy, solving the deadlock, helping them overcome difficulties. It is a mistake to give up propagandize Buddhism for five or seven hours. We should propagandize Buddhism in the small group of seven people like Venerable Minh Dang Quang. At that time, he was only 20 years old but he created a revolution in spreading Buddhism in South Vietnam. We proudly boasts that we are a big chariot, a great method, with many beings, but we just sit in a temple waiting for someone to come. It is not enough. In that way, the masses cannot choose and must follow other more attractive religious organizations.

For media, monks when lecturing, filming, editing carefully, do not rush to do live broadcast if you are not confident and good enough. edited live broadcast will create a big effect.

In 2000, Giac Ngo Pagoda had a bilingual English Vietnamese daophatngaynay.com website. In 2004, tusachphathoc.com page was born. Currently chuagiacngo.com introduces the great sutra, audio books, Buddhist books, Buddhist films, Buddhist music. 2007 banhoangphap.com page gathers thousands of dharma talks of nearly 100 Saigon monks and nuns. Parallel that year, there was phatam.com, the largest network for the world community on video clips, 30,000 voice talks by about 100 domestic and foreign monks and nuns. The goal is to eliminate the Buddha-dharma through the self-study path of monks and nuns and lay Buddhists/

In ten thousand of pagodas, how many are currently teaching?
Every province has 25 monk professors, Ho Chi Minh City, outside 25 professors, there are nearly 300 monk lecturers. The “department of Budda teaching” of the whole country consists of one hundred and fifty teachers, but how many people are teaching Buddhism? So it is necessary to use communication to change and redeem your errors in this noble responsibility.

5. UNDERSTANDING AND MANAGING EXTERNAL FORCES

External forces are obstacles that we need to identify and overcome, Adapting to global social, geographic, geopolitical, psychological, religious, religious... influences. it also has a multi-dimensional effect. The influence of mass media, digital innovations, the 4th industrial revolution as well as the phenomena of globalization have changed the way we do business, solve problems, administrate, practice religion and practice in modern times. If we do not identify this change, then it becomes an external obstacle force.

Large corporations that change foreign forces, they advocate losses for several years to change global consumption habits.

In 2004, when I first went to the United States to give dharma lectures to Vietnamese community, a local teacher took me to Starbuck café. I find it strange because the driver calls to order coffee from afar, when I come out of waiting. They came to receive free giveaways and received coffee to drink. In essence, if a person knows how to enjoy coffee, Starbuck carries the title of coffee, not the coffee flavor. Vietnamese coffee is true coffee. I don’t know how to drink coffee but I feel it. We do international business, selling raw coffee, which accounts for 60% of the world market share for only US $ 2 / 1kg. World brands buy back and sell for 200USD / 1kg. Thus, we are bearing for all risks in the process such as land purchase acquisition, human resource investment, labor, natural risks, price competition, competition for traders, and then selling for US $ 2 / 1kg. While big brands do not contribute to most of the processes but could sell at 198USD / 1kg. Many multinational and multidisciplinary corporations invest huge amounts of money to kill small national organizations and small businesses. They lose in one country but take profit in other countries.
Pepsi and Coca-Cola are stranger when it comes to Asian markets. First they give free drinks to make people addicted to the taste. It is a method of changing global consumption habits of large corporations. They grasp demand, market, consumption trends and boldly change consumption habits. In the current context of Vietnam, Pham Nhat Vuong is one of those global visionaries, invested 5 billion USD to buy German technology to manufacture Vinfast cars. Their launch was very impressive, famous player Beckham and Miss Vietnam are reported by the world press.

Global experts must understand the effects of economic, cultural, historical, and legal factors because the rules of each country are different and change constantly. When trade wars occur between the US and China, Vietnam benefits. International investors fled China for fear of risk. They run to Vietnam because Vietnam is a promised land with growing GDP. Understanding the impact factors, the investors will seize the opportunity to become a new dragon.

A few years ago, the project of Long Thanh International Airport was launched. Many investors buy land and take risks if the land is in the planning area. They accept losses, but if located next to the planning area, from a very normal land price will increase by a hundredfold. So, taking the policy or connecting with the policy maker before that policy is announced, the investment will win.

In 2007, I proposed the Church to establish the World Buddhist Association. The Vietnamese government’s consensus is through the Government Religions Committee, General Department of A88, the leader of the Vietnam Buddhist Church, but only one is against it so all must close. Then we have to mobilize large organizations to bring Vesak to Vietnam. When we return, we are under a lot of pressure, we have to agree on conditions that are sometimes unfair. If we are a big organization, with good networking, we will build a global image of Vietnam. In 2007, the United Nations International Organization Committee had only 37 member countries. In 2008 I upgraded to 57 member countries. In 2014, I upgraded to 85 countries. Today my assistants are trying to expand the database to raise the number to 100 to 108 countries. This shows that the sympathy of the world community for Vietnam is very great.
So it is impossible to think globally and try to overcome global obstacles. The problem is that we are still stuck with some legal barriers.

It is necessary to be flexible, it is very difficult to adapt and overcome the global obstacles with a stubborn mind. We also need to rely on social standards, social defaults, global defaults to create interaction, adaptation. I hope that at some time, our country will have a large organization of world Buddhism, attracting the world Buddhist community to return to Vietnam to develop Vietnamese Buddhism to become a caste, not only It is purely an international event organization but also a spiritual tradition of practice, with values for the world community to consult and learn.

These above are personal, subjective and incomplete views. During the last 16-year period when I participated in the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha's International Buddhist Affair Committee, I thought what I was trying and needed, I did my best. The purpose of Vesak’s achievement led to the growth of Buddhist population in Vietnam, the development of Vietnamese Buddhism, the change of the vision of Vietnamese political leaders to Buddhism. I hope her teachers and teachers should not stop at getting bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degrees. It is just a useful tool, not a cure. The new monk generation have an advantage over our generation back in time because we lived in the era of the 4th industrial revolution. We can use useful communication, image selection and content to create positive impact. If 55,000 Vietnamese monks and nuns all do the same, right from the seat of the school, we have made great contributions. I hope that along with the study of Buddhism, because it is a knack, we should learn more about administration and digital studies. His Holiness the Dalai Lama, when he settled in India in 1959, made it clear in the autobiography that he first asked for reform of his education, which was for him to study science and politics. Through awareness and vision, the Dalai Lama has reached the world to become the most famous Buddhist leader today. With that proposal, I believe we will create a glorious history for modern Vietnamese Buddhism.
BUDDHIST CONTRIBUTION TO GOOD GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT IN VIETNAM

by Le Manh That

Buddhism was introduced into Vietnam quite early around the second half of the third century before C.E.¹ It is about this time that the Vietnamese coming to contact with the Chinese civilization, and this contact become increasingly repeated, when the Chinese Emperor by the name Han Wu Tì (Hán Vũ đế) decided to attack three Vietnamese States along the Chinese Southern coast i.e., the Viet state of the East (Đông Việt), (present day Zhejiang -Chiết Giang), the Viet state of Fuchian (Mân Việt), (present day Fuchian - Phúc Kiến), and the Viet state of the South (Nam Việt), (present day GuangTung and Guangxi – Quảng Đông Quảng Tây) in the year 111 B.C.E. During this war of conquest, the Viet state of the West (Tây Âu Lạc Việt), present day Northern Vietnam and Northern part central of Vietnam has dispatched their own troop to help these three Viet states. But according to the Chinese first history book Shichi (Sử ký) by Su Ma Tien (Tư Mã Thiên), one of the commanding generals of this expedition army by the name Tả Hoàng Đồng has betrayed his superior, killed the Prince of Tây Âu and surrendered to the Chinese.² So the conquer of three Việt states of South Yangci (Dương Tử) river was carried out successfully. From now on, the Vietnamese has to face the imminent threat of

attack by the Chinese. And we are not waiting for too long to see the Sino-Vietnamese war to occur between the years 39-43 C.E. The Vietnamese lost the war after a valiant and heroic fighting.

It is at this junction of history that the Vietnamese Buddhist put down their own thoughts about how to govern a state and how to protect that state to keep independence for their own people. First of all, they defined the role of Buddhism in Vietnamese life. In the work *Righting the Wrong*, Mâu Tử (160?-230?) has specified in the following words: “The Buddhist way, when applied to the family, is for serving the parents; when applied to the nation, is for helping the people; when applied to one’s own life, is for perfection of oneself” (道之為物 居家可以事親 宰國可以治民 獨立可以治身). This specification of Buddhism reflects the demand of the Vietnamese people in the first and second century of C.E. when they were struggling to recover the independence of Vietnam. Actually, when Mâu Tử was writing *Righting the Wrong*, Vietnam at that time was an independent country under the leadership of Sỹ Tiếp which Vietnamese called King Sỹ (Sỹ Vương) (137-226). In his work, Mâu Tử also criticized the concept of Middle Kingdom (Trung Quốc) dearly upheld by the Chinese who considered their country as the center of Heaven and Earth (Hán địa vị tất vi thiên trung dã). From this, he determined that China is a land on the North of Vietnam. This determination of North and South put the Vietnamese on the equal footstep with the Chinese and later on, throughout Vietnamese history, became the fundamental concept of the Vietnamese nation in their territorial and sovereign dispute with the Middle Kingdom. Middle Kingdom is a country in the North and Vietnam is a country in the South. Three hundred years after Mau Tu, when Ly Bon (503-548) proclaimed himself to be Emperor in the year 544, he declared himself to be Emperor of the South (Nam Đế). This reminds us of the famous poem written by Pháp Thuận (914-990) during the Sino-Vietnamese war of 981 C.E.

when he affirmed that: “The mountains and rivers of the Southern country are reigned by the Emperor of the South.”

At the same time, the people of Mau Tu’s time or a few years before that also put their own thoughts about the nation and their own people into what later becoming Buddhist sutras. Here, we are talking about the Compendium of Six paramitas (Satparamitasangrahasutra) which later on was translated into Chinese and still extent in the Taisho edition of Chinese Tripitaka under the name Liu du ci qing (Lục độ tập kinh). In the sutra, we for the first time found out the story of the birth of Vietnamese people. They also put out their own thoughts about how to govern the nation successfully by using ten good dharma (kusaladharma) as law of the land. From this, they reason how a nation could get lost by not applying these ten good dharma for governing. They also emphasized that if we lose our nation, that is the nation is conquered and administered by another nation, then we should not lose our culture. If we keep our culture, then we still have hope to regain our territory and sovereignty. They also appealed to the Buddhists to follow the Bodhisattva way in order to carry out the struggle with the tyrannical government to rescue people out of misery. The King as a leader should be human and practice five Buddhist precepts and ten good dharma.

So from the beginning, Buddhism in Vietnam claimed itself to be a political philosophy in responses to the need of the Vietnamese of early times. After Ly Bon proclaimed himself to be Emperor of the South, Dinh Khong (?-808) clearly speaks out the need to set up this new kind of government. The Buddhists then fervently form themselves into different kinds of organizations to struggle for a completely independent Vietnam. Interestingly enough, the earliest bell usually called Thanh

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“Nam quốc sơn hà nam đế cư
Tiệt nhiên dĩ định tại thiên thư
Như hà nghịch lở lai xâm phạm
Nhữ đẳng hành khan thủ bại hư.”
Mai bell was cast in the year 798 C.E. by a number of people under the leadership of King Phung Hung (761-802), among whom the most prominent is General Do Anh Han, the man who surrounded the Dai La citadel and killed the Chinese commanding official Cao Chính Bình in the year 791 C.E.

Thus, step by step, the Vietnamese set up an independent state of their own so the need for a theory of state in Buddhist view must be put forward for the leadership of the nation to govern and develop the country according to the Buddhist ideal of good governance and development. And here, we propose to present five case studies.

Pháp Thuận’s theory

The first case is the theory of good state governance and development proposed by Zen Master Pháp Thuận (915-990). In a poem entitled Quốc tổ (National destiny 国祚), in response to the question by Emperor Lê Đại Hành (reigned 980-1005) about the destiny of the Vietnamese nation, recorded in Thiền ụyển tập anh (Collection of Outstanding Figures in Zen Garden 禪苑集英), Pháp Thuận said:[21]

“Quốc tổ như đằng lạc
Nam thiên lý thái bình
Vô vi cư điện các
Xứ xứ tức đao binh”

Nation’s destiny is just like a bunch of intertwined rattan
Peace reigns over the southern sky
No-action stays in the palace
War will be stopped everywhere

In this poem, Pháp Thuận discusses war and peace and the method for stopping war, enabling peace to be maintained – forever in Vietnam. This is the ideal that the Vietnamese people of Pháp Thuận’s time aspired towards and fervently desired to be present in their country after the successful resistance war for national independence in 939 A.D., and during the war between the warlords from 944 to 968. The key issue here is how to stop war and
bring peace to the people and the Nation’s destiny depends upon
the answer to that question. In Pháp Thuận’s views, for the war to
be stopped, the first and foremost requirement is to have “no-action
staying in the palace”. What does the word no-action in this context
mean? In Buddhist terminology, the Chinese word no-action (wu
wei 無為) is used to translate the Sanskrit asamkṛta which means
“the absolute” in Buddhist epistemology and ontology and has
nothing to do with the term no-action in that poem.

In the Collection of the Sūtras on Six Paramitās, there is a
definition of no-action which has some social and ethical bearing,
which reads as follows: “Careful but not haughty is the character
of a learned man, to give away the ideas of dirty love and not to be
contaminated with the dust of six sentiments, not to let those dirty
loves even small as a strand of hair to be camouflaged in our hearts,
then every thought will become extinct, that is no-action”. [3] But
then, this definition is not fit quite well in the context of the above
poem.

We have to look another place for the meaning of no-action. In
the Chinese literature, this term appears quite frequently, especially
in the works of Lao Tzu (老子) and Confucius. In the Book of the
Way, Lao Tzu is believed to have said: “The sages manage affairs
with no-action, carry out teaching without speech... Act by no-
action, then, nothing is not in order”. [4] But, what the term no-
action means, Lao Tzu does not state clearly. Therefore, it is very
difficult to specify the content of that concept, and there are
different explanations of it in the history of Chinese thought.

On the contrary, in the Book of Sayings, Confucius is said to
have the following statement: “Governance with no-action, only
Emperor Shun did it. How could that be done? It needs only to be
serious about himself in order to face southwards” [5] (子 曰 無
為而治者其舜也 歐夫 何 為 而 治 哉 恭 己 正 南
面 而 已 矣 Tử viết: Vô vi Nhi trị giả, kỳ Thuận giả du? Phù hà
vi tai? Cung kỹ chinh nam dien nhi di hí). Although the concept
of no-action here is used to define the governance and is said to be
the way of the governance of Emperor Shun, but the content is not
clearly specified, except the property of being serious about himself
(恭己). Such a specification evidently is not sufficient to define
the way of governance of Emperor Shun. Fortunately, there are two other places where Confucius is reported to describe Emperor Shun’s way of governance.

The first place is a statement in the section 31 entitled The Middle (中庸) of the Book of Rites (禮記): “Is Emperor Shun a great wise man? Emperor Shun likes to inquire and discuss in order to speak, hide people’s bad sides and show their goodness, maintain two extremes, but use the Middle for the good of people. Is it because of this that he became Emperor Shun?” (子曰舜其大智者歟? 舜好問而好察以言，隱惡而揚善執其兩端，用其中於民，其斯以為舜乎).[6] The other place is also in the Book of the Middle: “Is Emperor Shun a man of great filial piety? He is morally good to be a saint, to be honored as a Son of the Heaven, with wealth spreading to four seas, ancestors honored in the Palace, and children to continue on. Therefore, if the virtue is great, he will get the place, will have the enumeration, will enjoy the fame and will have longevity. So, the Heaven gives birth to all things and treats them depending upon their case. In consequence, if they are good, Heaven will strengthen them and if they are not, It will throw away… That is why man of great virtue will receive the mandate from Heaven” (子曰 舜 其 大 孝 者 與 德 為 聖 人 尊 為 天 子 富 有 四 海 之 內 宗 廟 饗 之 子 孫 保 之 故 大 德 必 得 其 名 必 得 其 壽 故 天 之 生 物 必 因 其 材 而 稱 然 故 裁 者 覆 之 之 詩 曰 嘉 樂 君 子 憲 憲 裁 令 德 宜 民 宜 人 受 祿 于 天 保 佑 命 之 自 天 申 之 故 大 德 者 受 命).[7]

Through these two statements by Confucius about Emperor Shun and how he got the mandate from Heaven to be leader during his lifetime, we know now that his way of governance by no-action requires that the leader should have two necessary qualities in carrying out his mission of leading the people, that is, the wisdom and the virtue. Shun possesses these two qualities, so he becomes the Emperor of China at his time. From this, we presently could understand what the term no-action in the above poem by Pháp Thuận means. It means that if the Vietnamese of his time have a leader who possesses the wisdom and virtue, then the country will have a peaceful life.
Therefore, as a whole, Pháp Thuận’s poem clearly states his Buddhist view on good governance and development in Vietnam of 10th century. At this junction of history, when Vietnam is facing an imminent war from the rising Sung Dynasty in China, the question of the national existence comes into forefront. So, the answer to that question is that in order to keep peace, the Vietnamese should be in great solidarity, just like a bunch of intertwined rattan, and in order to stop the war, they should have a leader who possesses wisdom and virtue. So, quite early in the history of Buddhism in Vietnam, the Vietnamese Buddhists, through the case of Zen Master Pháp Thuận, have known how to exploit the Buddhist theory of good governance and development to apply to the Vietnamese political and social reality.

Viên Thông’s theory

Nearly one century after Pháp Thuận passing away, Zen Master Viên Thông (1080-1151) was born and he became our second case study of Buddhist theory of good governance and development in Vietnam. He grew up in a peaceful Vietnam and the country already became a Great Việt (大越). The leadership of the nation started to show signs of separating from the people and the mass began to ask for their rights. In this circumstance, Viên Thông, as a royal adviser, has proposed a new theory of good governance and development. Again, in this theory, the question of how to keep peace and stop the war is dealt with, but there already appears a shift in the emphasis from war to peace. In a conversation with Emperor Lý Thần Tông in the year 1130 A.D., which Thiên uýển tập anh recorded, in response to Lý Thần Tông’s question about the principles of political order and upheaval, of prosperity and decline in the world, Viên Thông said: “The people is like an instrument. Put them in a safe place, they are safe; put them in a perilous place, they are peril. It all depends on how the leader of the people behaves himself. If his benevolence is in harmony with the hearts and minds of the people, then they will love him as a parent and look up to him like the sun and the moon. This is putting people in a safe place.”
Through this answer, a shift clearly appears in the theory of good governance and development from war to peace. And here, the question of the behavior of the leader becomes a hot spot which must be analyzed to find out what such a behavior should be composed of. Of course, a good leader must possess wisdom and virtue, but how these qualities are put into practice should be inquired. So, Viên Thông went on to say: “Order or chaos rests with the officials. If they can win the people over, then there is political order; if they lose the people’s support, then there is upheaval. I have observed Emperors and Kings of former time, no one succeeded without employing true gentlemen, or failed unless he employed petty men. When we trace how these things come about, it does not happen overnight, but develops gradually. Just as heaven and earth cannot abruptly produce cold and hot weather, but must change gradually through the seasons like spring and autumn, etc., Kings cannot suddenly bring about prosperity or decline, but rather it is a gradual process depending on their good or bad activities. The wise Kings of old knew this principle, so they molded themselves on Earth and never ceased to rely on virtue to cultivate themselves; they molded themselves on Earth and never ceased to rely on virtue to pacify the people. To cultivate oneself means to be cautious within, as cautious as if one were walking on thin ice. To pacify people means to respect those who are below, to be as respectful as one riding a horse holding worn-out-reins. If one can be like that, one cannot but succeed; if otherwise, one cannot but fail. The gradual process of prosperity or decline depends on this.”

Here, Viên Thông expounds a new theory of good governance and development by emphasizing upon what we with our modern science of business management call the question of personnel, the question of employing appropriate men for appropriate works. The leader is now not reserved only for the king or the Emperor, or the head of a state but also for the officials in the governing bureaucracy of a country. In other words, if the working of a state machinery runs smoothly with good officials, then, the country will be in great peace. Otherwise, it will fall into chaotic state. Thus, there is an expansion of the notion of leadership from one man to a group of people who are responsible for the working of a state
machinery. This is a new contribution of Viên Thông’s theory of
good governance and development.

Trần Thái Tông’s theory

Hundred years after Viên Thông’s death, Vietnam underwent
many changes. Even with his advice, the leadership of the Lý
dynasty could not reverse the course of history and the country fell
into a chaotic state. Warring factions fought each other and finally
appeared a new dynasty whose leader was a new young man under
the name Trần Cảnh (1218-1278), later on, widely known under
the title Trần Thái Tông. In the year 1236 A.D., due to the coercion
by Trần Thủ Độ, the imperial head of government, to accept his
brother’s wife, Trần Cảnh fled to Yên Tử mountain from the capital
Thăng Long. There, he met Zen Master Phù Vân and of course,
Trần Thủ Độ got after him, asking him to be back to the capital.
After many requests and not receiving the asquiescence from Trần
Cảnh, Trần Thủ Độ decided to make the mountain into a new
capital. Phù Vân intervened, saying to Trần Cảnh: “To be the leader
of the people, one should take the wish of the people to be his wish,
the heart of the people to be his heart, now, that the people wish
to welcome Your Majesty back to the capital, then how can Your
Majesty not come back?” (凡為人君者 以天下之欲
為欲 以天下之心為心 今天下欲迎陛下歸
之則陛下安得不歸哉). [10]

With this statement, Phù Vân again gives us a new look on
the theory of good governance and development in Vietnam of
13th Century when the Vietnamese began to deal with the rising
power of the Mongolian empire in the north under the leadership of
Genghis Khan (1162-1227). Actually, this new theory for the first
time discusses about the desire and the will of people in relation to
the governance and development of the state in its clearest term and
content. The governance and development of a state totally depends
upon the desire and the will of people and reflects this desire and
will. Thus, a new and most important element is introduced into the
theory of state governance and development, which Pháp Thuận’s
and Viên Thông’s theories do not explicitly state or marginally deal
with, that is, the desire and the will of people. The leader of the
nation will act according to that desire and will.
We can say this is a new contribution of the Vietnamese Buddhist theory of state governance and development of the 13th century which still has a great bearing upon our time. This is because this theory emphasizes the role of the people in the running of a country and demands that any state policy should reflect faithfully their desire and will. This explains why the Vietnamese of the 13th century successfully defended their country against three military invasions of Genghis Khan’s successor, Kublai Khan (1215-1294) in the years 1258, 1285 and 1287.

Trần Nhân Tông’s theory

Tran Nhan Tong (1258-1308) came to power in 1278 when Kublai Khan completely destroyed the Han Dynasty of Sung and set up the new Mongolian dynasty Yuan. Kublai wished to expand his imperial territory southward into Southeast Asian countries. But Vietnam stands as an obstacle on his way to realize that ambition. So he had to conquer Vietnam. The wars of 1285 and 1287 occurred. The Vietnamese under the leadership of Trần Nhân Tông had successfully destroyed these two expedition army of almost one million men and totally crushed Kublai Khan’s dream. After his victory over the Mongolians, he put out his theory of Buddhist life. Through this theory, he appealed to the Buddhists to live a worldly life (cư trần) but behave as a Buddhist (lạc đạo). He gives priority to worldly activities and through these worldly activities, we realize the Buddhist ideal. The first sentence of his prose poem Cư trần lạc đạo says: “We sit in the city but our behaviors are like in forest” (Mình ngồi thành thị, nết dùng sơn lâm). This means that we work for the benefit and welfare of the people but we are not attached to it. We built bridges and roads before constructing temples and stupas. We take care of our parents and our master at the same time we take care of our fellow men. Trần Nhân Tông defeated the Mongolian army in the name of a Bodhisattva way, because he considered that army as a tyranny to his people, as his diplomatic letters to Kublai Khan’s envoy show. He wished to work tirelessly as a leader so that his people to have something to eat when hungry and some places to lay down to rest when they are tired. So, at his time, people looked at him as a Buddha-Emperor (Phật Hoàng) or Buddha-King (Giác Vương). If we talk about the dharmaraja in Vietnamese history, Trần Nhân Tông is probably one
of the best representatives. Because of this title, to maintain Buddhism for him is a duty of the king and the mandarin (duy trì Phật pháp thị quốc vương, đại thần). Therefore, to build the prosperity and create the wealth for the society is the main responsibility of the Buddhists. He set a good example for the leaders to come in good governance and development in Vietnam, which we will find in the next case study.

Nguyễn Phúc Chu’s theory

Throughout history of Vietnam, the demand for good leadership for national governance and development is increasingly acute, as the Vietnamese moved Southward and expend their territory. Interestingly enough, Pháp Thuận’s theory of good governance and development is again proclaimed and put into practice. Nguyễn Phúc Chu (1675-1725) is a lord who governs the South apart of an unified Vietnam, establishes the city of Sài Gòn (now Hồ Chí Minh City) in 1698 and cooperates the Mekong delta into the Vietnamese map. He belongs to a class of those few political leaders who explicitly declare themselves to be Buddhists of some Zen schools and receive some Buddhist precepts. In this case, he receives the Bodhisattva vow in the year 1695. Due to this event, the history of the Southward expansion of the Vietnamese nation is mainly carried out by a Buddha (ie., Trấn Nhân Tổ) and a Bodhisattva (ie., Nguyễn Phúc Chu). In reality, this process of Vietnamization occurred not by military conquest, but to peaceful means mainly through intermarriage. If Trấn Nhân Tổ gives away his daughter Huyền Trân for acquiring the Ô Lý land (now Southern Quảng Trị Province, Thừa Thiên Province, Đà Nẵng and Hội An City), the Granfather of Nguyễn Phúc Chu, Nguyễn Phúc Trần (1620-1687), did the same, but for obtaining not the land, but the right for the Vietnamese to work in the area which is now the Vietnamese call Nam Bộ (the South of Vietnam). It takes almost half a century for that part becoming Vietnamese territory. By the way, we should notice the interesting significance of these two personalities, ie., Trấn Nhân Tổ and Nguyễn Phúc Chu in the annexation of the land which later become the Capital of the Unified Vietnam (Huế) and apart of Vietnam (Sài Gòn). In the inscriptions written by Nguyễn Phúc Chu in the year 1715, after finishing the building of Thiên Mụ Temple (Celestial Lady Temple), Nguyễn Phúc Chu put
down for the first time his theory of state. And also the first time we see the appearance of the word “vô vi”. This shows that in the history of Vietnam, there is a logical inheritance of the theory of state which each generation of Vietnamese political leaders have to devise to suit their own needs and national requirement. Nguyễn Phúc Chu writes: “The stability and security of the nation, peace in four directions (depend upon) the exercise of ‘vô vi’ where Confucianism and Buddhism are in the same service.” This echo of Pháp Thuận’s theory of state reflects not only Pháp Thuận and the Vietnamese theory of state itself, but also the unity of the Vietnamese theory of state power. At the time of Nguyễn Phúc Chu, the globalization is occurred at the world scale with the emergence and participation of the new elements which are the Western states and nations. So, in using the theory of “vô vi,” Nguyễn Phúc Chu enlarges his search for wise and good men not only in his country in Vietnam but also abroad which in this case, the China and Euro. In a circle of those who serve him, we found not only Vietnamese, but also Chinese and Europeans, not only Buddhist clergy men but also Catholic priests. This hunting for talented people had helped Nguyễn Phúc Chu to have those great achievements which history has recorded.

SOME OBSERVATION

We hope, in the discussion of these case studies of Buddhists contribution to the theory of state governance and development in Vietnam, we will realize how from a general Buddhist theory, four Vietnamese Buddhist statesmen exploit and develop into new theories of state governance and development of their own which has enduring historical values and are still applicable to Vietnam today in spite that many concepts in them still open for discussion. These Buddhists were all active political leaders and personally took part in the political advisers and leaders of the country. Therefore, what they were discussing was the policy they were trying to apply, so that the people’s welfare could benefit from their realizations. The people here are all those whom the modern science of human resource management would call: “stakeholders” with a small difference in that these stakeholders are not limited to the members of a corporation, but belonging to the whole society and their welfare should be taken care of, or managed, by good leadership.
LEADING WITH WISDOM AND BUDDHIST PRACTICE

by Peter van den Berg∗

ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the question: How does Buddhism relate to leadership that is beneficial for humanity? To answer this question, I use the concept of leading with wisdom. Leading with wisdom is defined as the type of leadership that effectively leads to the common good of the people involved and consists of three dimensions: charismatic leadership, moral leadership and strategic leadership.

Charismatic leadership appears to be the most effective leadership style in many situations, especially in crises. Not everyone can become a charismatic leader because some inherited traits are required, but Buddhist practice can help to become more charismatic. For example, through study and meditation, a Buddhist may be inspired by the Dharma, while inspiration is an important element of charisma.

Although charisma is a prerequisite for being an effective leader, this characteristic does not guarantee that the leader strives for the common good of the people. This indicates that for leading with wisdom moral leadership is also required. In moral leadership the leader transcends his ego and shows compassion for others. These behaviors are usually seen as the results of following the Buddhist path.

A leader might be charismatic and moral, but his or her actions can still not be effective because he or she has misjudged the effects. An

∗. Professor Emerituous., Tilburg University, Netherland.
example is Evita Peron, the former first lady of Argentina, who tried to fight the economic crisis by giving money to the poor. In contrast, Ghandi, who also was a charismatic and moral leader, was effective in making India independent from England with as less bloodshed as possible. The reason was that he had an open mind and knew the effects of his behavior, for example during his salt walk he acted with the strategy of nonviolence. So, in order to lead with wisdom, a third leadership style must also be exposed: strategic leadership. Buddhist practice stimulates the required openness of mind and the understanding of the cause and effects of behavior by analyzing karma.

The paper will show that all three dimensions of leading with wisdom are related to positive work outcomes and can be argued as related to Buddhist practice.

1. INTRODUCTION

Leadership is in crisis! More and more countries are being ruled by authoritarian leaders who try to gain or maintain their dominance at the expense of human and democratic values. These leaders may also do something good for their country, but there are many possible negative effects, such as the brutal violation of human rights, the creation of tensions between groups and countries and the taking of impulsive and self-serving decisions. A common characteristic is that they have a big ego and do not have the inclination to listen to advisers and critics, but surround themselves by yes-men. Their leadership style also influences the style of other leaders in those countries and poses a real threat to the world community. As a Buddhist you can ask yourself: What can Buddhism contribute to the development of leaders who make a beneficial contribution to society? That is the question that is central here.

The paradox is that a big ego is often needed to become a leader, while Buddhism learns not to be attached to the ego. At the end of his life, the Buddha said: “Ananda, it never occurred to me that the monks are dependent on me or I am governing the Sangha. The teachings that I have given them and the rules of discipline that I have instituted can be their leader” (Maha-Parinibbána Sutta). Although the Buddha led his followers with humility, he trained the
other leaders to transform their followers into leaders. That is why leadership is also an important issue in Buddhism.

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A Buddhist view of leadership can not only promote the development of leaders in Buddhist countries, but it can also influence people’s perspective in other countries, which will influence future elections and appointments of leaders in politics and business. The aim of this paper is to present such a view. This will be done by first distinguishing the most important characteristics of a more wholesome leadership style and then showing how these characteristics relate to Buddhist practice.

2. LEADING WITH WISDOM

The leadership style that I would like to present is what I call leading with wisdom (see Van den Berg 2011). To understand this concept, let us analyze its two constituents: leading and wisdom. As will be shown later, charisma is the main characteristic of an influential leader. Therefore, charismatic leadership is conceived as the fundamental dimension of leading with wisdom. A leader must be influential, but it is also important that he or she leads people in the right direction, which is indicated by the wisdom part of the construct. Wisdom is a central concept in Buddhism, but it is also very complex. First, we need a definition of this concept.

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1. All suttas referred to can be found at http://buddhasutra.com
Sternberg (2004:165) defined wisdom as “the application of intelligence and experience as mediated by values toward the achievement of a common good through a balance among intrapersonal, interpersonal, and extrapersonal interests, over the short and long term, to achieve a balance among adaptation to existing environments, shaping of existing environments, and selection of new environments”. The first element of the definition focuses on the common good and takes into account the interests of those involved. Wise leaders strive for the general welfare of society and not only for their own interests. This part of leading with wisdom will be called **moral leadership**. The second part of the definition of wisdom refers to the inclusion of long-term goals and the adequate response to the situation at the moment. This has to do with the strategic used. The third dimension of leading with wisdom is therefore **strategic leadership**. This yields three dimensions of leading with wisdom: charismatic, moral and strategic leadership.

The examples in Figure 1 may make clear why these leadership dimension are fundamental parts of leading with wisdom. First, to be a real leader and not just a manager or someone with formal power, a high level of charismatic leadership is required. The most important result of this leadership style is the support of many followers. Hitler, however, was a very charismatic leader with many loyal followers, but no one would call him a wise leader because he was responsible for the death of millions of people and for the destruction of much of Germany. Apparently he missed the right moral attitude.

Therefore, moral leadership is a second requirement to lead with wisdom. Supporters of a moral leader will find that justice is done for them and that their human rights are respected. Not all leaders who are charismatic and moral, however, make wise decisions. An example is Evita Perón, the former First Lady of Argentina who has set up a special fund for the poor to counter the effects of the economic crisis. The people who received money felt no more need to work, and the crisis was deepened.
To be a wise leader, a third dimension is required: strategic leadership. A strategic leader uses the best means to achieve the set goal. An example of a leader who stood high on all three dimensions and can be called a wise leader is Mahatma Gandhi. He orchestrated the peaceful liberation of India from the United Kingdom without much bloodshed and prevented a civil war (Easwaran 1997). For example, he walked several thousands kilometers through India to the ocean where he would make some salt from the sea water, which was forbidden by the English. More and more Indians joined the walk and Gandhi taught them the attitude of nonviolence. The English soldiers tried to stop the walk by knocking down the Indians who offered no resistance. To make this public, Gandhi had invited the world press and the resulting scandal led to international pressure on the United kingdom.

3. CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP

Charisma is a Greek word that means ‘gift by grace’ and indicates that a leader has inexplicable powers that are not within the reach of normal people (Weber, Henderson & Parsons 1947). But in a way charisma is also a very common phenomenon and many leaders have it to a certain extent. The function of charisma is to get followers
and influence their behavior. It can be regarded as the basis of real leadership. According to the attribution theory of charismatic leadership, charisma is not a personality trait, but a perception of followers that occurs when a leader advocates a vision that deviates from the prevailing opinion, behaves in an unconventional way, sacrifices himself and takes personal risks (Conger & Kanungo 1987). Charismatic leadership can be measured with the Charisma Scale of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Avolio & Bass 2004).

Research clearly shows that charismatic leaders are considered effective. For example, Lowe, Kroeck and and Sivasubramaniam (1996) conducted a meta-analysis and reported that charisma was strongly related to the perceived performance of the organization (mean corrected $r = .71$). Another meta-analysis by Fuller, Patterson, Heste and Stringer (1996) showed that charisma was strongly related to the perceived effectiveness of the leader by their subordinates, and also to how satisfied they were with their leader (mean corrected $r = .87$ and $78$, respectively). Judge and Piccolo (2004) showed in their meta-analysis that transformational leadership, of which charisma is the most important factor, was strongly related to follower’s satisfaction with the leader and their effectiveness perceptions (estimated true $\rho = .71$ and $.64$, respectively).

However, research findings also show that the effects of charismatic leadership are overstated by the subordinates because the relationships with more objective performance indicators are much lower. For example, Lowe et al. (1996) have shown that the correlation between charisma and organizational performance measures is weak (mean corrected $r = .34$) and Judge and Piccolo (2004) found that transformational leadership is only weakly related to objective job performance of subordinates (estimated true correlation $\rho = .27$). The lack of a strong relationship can be explained by the fact that charismatic leaders sometimes lead companies in the wrong direction. There have been many cases where charismatic leaders have ruined organizations and even entire societies, for example Jeffrey Skilling who brought Enron to bankruptcy. Bass and Steidlmeier (1999) called this the dark side of charisma, and House and Howell (1992) have distinguished between positive and negative charismatics. Negative charismatics
have a personal power orientation, a high level of narcissism, a greater concern for self-glorification and unrealistic visions. Most negative charismatic leaders do not succeed in the long run because of fraud and self-enrichment and because they do not benefit their followers or their organization. Paradoxically, it is their charisma that prevent their actions and policies from being questioned (Sankowsky 1995). Offerman (2004) has discussed the problems that arise when narcissistic, charismatic leaders encircle themselves with ‘yes men’ and has recommended to surround such leaders with strong subordinates and to create an environment where criticism is acceptable.

4. MORAL LEADERSHIP

The difference between positive and negative charismatic leaders can be explained by their level of moral development. Kohlberg (1969) described six stages divided in three levels of moral development: the pre-conventional, the conventional and the post-conventional level. The preconventional level is characterized by egocentrism, meeting personal goals (Schminke, Ambrose & Neubaum 2005) and following rules only to avoid punishment (Ho, Vtell, Barnes & Desborde 1997). Leaders who are fixated at this level will easily break the law if they think that no one can catch or punish them. Leaders at level two, the conventional level of moral development, show respect for authority, help to maintain the social order (Schminke et al. 2005) and strive to comply with the rules to obtain the approval of others (Schaffer 2002). Few leaders reach the third level of morality, the post-conventional level (Ho et al. 1997). To reach this level, one must have a clear understanding of the general principles that underlie the rules of society and agree with them. An individual at this stage of moral development acts independently of the environment in determining good an evil (Shaffer 2002).

Leaders who have fully developed themselves in terms of moral reasoning have several positive effects on their subordinates. They can deal better with complex problems, act less for self-interest but more for the common good and encourage subordinates to surpass their own interests (Gibbs 2003). Level three leaders see the larger
picture and are more focused on the interests of all people involved, while leaders fixated at earlier stages of moral development are more selfish and demand strict obedience. For example, when Nelson Mandela was president of South Africa, he asked his black colleagues to support the national rugby team, the Springbokken, although the team was a symbol of apartheid. He did so to achieve reconciliation between blacks and whites.

Several studies have shown that moral leadership is related to relevant criteria. Brown, Trevifio and Harrison (2005) developed the Ethical Leadership Scale to measure subordinates’ perceptions of ethical leadership. Ng and Feldman (2015) found in their meta-analysis that this measure of ethical leadership was related to the job attitudes of followers, their own job performance, the predictions of task performance by their leaders, citizenship behavior and counterproductive work behavior, even after controlling for the effects of various other leadership styles. In our own research (Van den Berg 2009) we used Brown et al.’s measure to assess the moral leadership of 40 managers of four organizations and found that this measure, after correcting for the effects of charismatic and strategic leadership, was significantly related to job satisfaction ($\beta = .40$) and satisfaction with leader ($\beta = .28$). In another study (see Van den Berg 2011), we used a short form of Gibbs, Basinger and Fuller’s (1995) Sociomoral Reflection Measure consisting of 10 item to assess the moral leadership of 25 commanders in the Royal Netherlands Army. The scores for moral leadership, after adjusting for the effects of charismatic leadership, were strongly related to the number of organizational citizenship behaviours of their 306 subordinates ($\beta = .51$).

5. STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

Leaders can be charismatic and moral, but they will not improve the performance of the organisation unless they have good strategies. Guillot (2005) defined strategic leadership as: “the ability of an experienced, senior leader who has the wisdom to create and execute plans and make consequential decisions in the violate, uncertain, complex and ambiguous strategic environment.” In addition, Boal and Hooijberg (2001) noted that strategic leaders have the ability to change their plans.
Stumpf and Mullen (1991) indicated that strategic leadership not only has an analytic dimension, but also a human dimension. In a qualitative study (see Van den Berg 2011) we asked Dutch generals and lieutenants to give examples of strategic leadership behaviors, which were categorized into groups. Important categories were: long-term orientation, consulting experts, flexibility to changing situations and communicating plans with subordinates. These results suggest that strategic leaders not only focus on the analysis of the situation and make plans themselves, but also pay attention to the human aspect by consulting experts and creating support.

Once a strategy is selected, many leaders tend to become more and more tenacious, and become uncompromising about considering other alternatives. However, Hambrick and Fukutomi (1991) indicate that a leader with an open mind will remain flexible, whereas a leader with a strong power orientation will not deviate from the original strategy that might have been successful in the past. For example, during the battle of Stalingrad in the Second World War Hitler’s generals advised him to withdraw his army, but Hitler refused to do that, and he lost a large part of his army.

Although strategy in organizations is an important research topic, strategic leadership as a style has never been studied in a quantative research. Therefore, on the basis of the qualitative study mentioned, we developed a questionnaire consisting of 23 items to measure strategic leadership (Van den Berg, 2011). In a sample of 358 leaders of the Royal Netherlands Army, we found that strategic leadership was significantly related to subordinates’ work motivation ($\beta = .34$), organizational commitment ($\beta = .37$) and job satisfaction ($\beta = .39$), even after correction for the effects of charismatic leadership.

6. CONTRIBUTIONS OF BUDDHIST PRACTICE

The previous sections have shown that leading with wisdom is a multidimensional concept consisting of charismatic, moral and strategic leadership. So, according to this concept a wise leader combines all three leadership styles. This makes clear why there
are so few truly wise leaders, while they are desperately needed in the modern society. The following shows how Buddhist practice can contribute to the development of each of these leadership dimensions.

Charismatic Leadership

A key characteristic of a charismatic leader is that he or she is strongly convinced of a certain vision. All great political, business and religious leaders have presented a vision in a way that impressed their followers. When the Buddha began to preach after his enlightenment, his friends were immediately impressed by his charisma and the way he talked. He had found a new reality that he preached to them with a strong conviction. All Buddhist teachers I met spoke with authority and persuasiveness. In the Soka Gakkai, the lay organization of Nichiren Buddhism, I saw new converts tell how their lives changed by Buddhist practice in a very convincing way. In general, being convinced of the Dharma can stimulate the development of charisma.

However, people with a strong conviction tend to become dogmatic, while Buddhism learns to see the relativity of things. Once a man fiercely claimed that no one could know anything with absolute certainty, after which the Buddha asked: “How do you know that for sure?” The Dharma should not be presented as an absolute truth, but as a lifestyle for which one can choose.

Strong conviction is not unique to Buddhists and can be found in most political and religious groups. What is special for Buddhists that they combine their belief with modesty. For example, when the Dalai Lama was asked about his leadership, he said: “I am just a simple Buddhist monk.” In the Anattalakkhana Sutta, the second lecture, the Buddha taught the principle of anatta or not-self stating that there is no permanent self. According to Buddhism such a self is an illusion and attachment to it is an obstacle for further spiritual development. Therefore, a Buddhist leader who is charismatic should also be modest.

It was noted earlier that the tendency to narcissism is the dark side of charisma. Narcissist leaders are selfish and want the glorification of their imago, while modest leaders primarily focus
on the success of the organization rather than their personal success. According to Morris, Brotheridge and Urbanski (2005), modesty as a leader characteristic has several positive effects, such as supportive relationships with others, gaining a socialized form of power and exhibiting a participative leadership style. Charismatic leadership that is in line with Buddhism has the advantage to be less self-centered and more acceptable to many people. However, the down side of modesty might be that the leader is less visible in the larger environment.

Moral Leadership

Morality is a central to Buddhism and therefore moral leadership fits in the philosophy of Buddhism. In the Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta or the Thread on the Setting of the Wheel of the Dhamma in Motion the Buddha set out the Noble Eightfold Path. This path is divided into three basic divisions and one of them is morality, consisting of right speech, right action and right livelihood. The Buddha applied morality to leaders by listing five characteristics an ideal ruler in the Cakkavatti Sihanada Sutta:

i. Atthannu (able discriminate good from bad)
ii. Dhammannu (knows righteousness)
iii. Mattannu (knows the limit of punishment etc.)
iv. Kalannu (Knows suitable time for court work, pleasure and tour)
v. Parisannu (Knows his assembly; as to what type of people are they).

Many religions encourage moral behavior, but Buddhism takes an extra step not only by learning to follow moral rules, but also by showing compassion for others. Compassion is more than charity. It relates to seeing the Buddha nature in the other individual and thereby stimulating the other’s Buddha nature to rise. Based on the Lotus Sutta, Nichiren Daishonin stated that all people have a Buddha nature and that everyone can be a Buddha. He said, “The Buddha nature refers to the potential for attaining Buddhahood, a state of awakening filled with compassion and wisdom” (The Gosho Translation Committee 2006). While charity can be done
with feelings of pity where the other individual is seen as a victim, compassion provides inner connection and empowers others. That is why a leader with compassion respects other people and will not use violence against them. For example, Dzjengis Khan conquered and terrorized a large part of Asia and Europe with the Monguls, but after the Monguls were converted to Buddhism, their leaders used much less violence and became more peaceful.

**Strategic Leadership**

As previously demonstrated, a strategic leader not only has the ability to make a good plan, but also has the openness to change the plan on the advice of others or because of changes in the situation. Sometimes it is better to escape from a dangerous situation to service the greater good. The flexibility required is in line with the openness that Buddhism encourages by living in the here and now during meditation and in daily life. The Buddha said in the Bhaddekaratta Sutta: “You shouldn’t chase after the past or place expectations on the future. What is past is left behind. The future is as not yet been reached. Whatever quality is present, you clearly see right there, right there.”

The idea that a strategic leader must pay attention to changes in the current situation is recognized everywhere, although not always practiced. The contribution of Buddhism could be to take into account not only the outer conditions, but also the own inner conditions. Everyone has his own life history with good deeds and bad deeds. This behavior pattern determines future actions and is often called karma. Buddhists face their own karma and try to free themselves from it. As a result, they can better be open to the actual situation without the illusions that come from within.

An example is given by the old Hindu scripture of the Mahabharata that tells the story in which Arjuna, as leader of the Pandava’s on the battle field, is ready for a great fight. When Arjuna sees his relatives and old friends as enemies to him, he is filled with despair and cannot give the go-ahead for the fight. In a long dialogue consisting of the Bhagavad Gita (Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada 2014), Krishna, his chariot, declared to him the fight as a necessity and as a selfless action. After Arjuna received a spiritual liberation, he started the battle and won.
10. CONCLUSION

Buddhist practice can be argued for contributing to the development of leading with wisdom. Wise leadership is a complex concept and therefore difficult to train directly. However, by distinguishing the constituent elements of leading with wisdom, it can be easier to manage. The model presented consists of the three dimensions of charismatic, moral and strategic leadership. By encouraging these leadership dimensions prospective Buddhist leaders may lead with more wisdom.

The latent trait of charisma can be further developed by studying the Dharma, which may lead to more conviction, and by speaking eloquently about it. A problem for a Buddhist charismatic leader can be the accompanying modesty that makes the leadership less visible. Although other Buddhists will see and praise the value of this modest behavior, many other people will regard it as a weakness. Buddhist leaders must be aware of this and remain authentic.

Moral leadership can be developed by discussing moral issues with teachers and fellow-Buddhists. In addition to the application of moral rules, the value of real compassion with victims of unjust behavior should be emphasized. This does not mean that you only feel sorry for others, but that you appeal to their own strength.

Strategic leadership can be stimulated by learning to face reality and view the situation without being bothered by illusions. This requires not only full awareness of the outside world, but also of the inner world. A Buddhist should open the eyes for own karma and try to overcome it or at least not get caught up in it.

By combining scientific research into leadership and Buddhist philosophy, some advise is given that can be integrated in existing training programs for Buddhist leaders such as the Awakening Leadership Training Program of the International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB).
References


BUDDHIST APPROACH TO GLOBAL LEADERSHIP AND SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE SOCIETIES

by Gabor Karsai

‘Global Leadership’ and ‘Sustainable Societies’ are two inspiring but difficult notions that require a wide analysis of the challenges the modern world faces, as well as a deep theoretical understanding of who we, human beings are, how we function as individuals as well as a collective, and if we have an inherent nature that either allows or, to the contrary, destroys the possibility of social change at a global scale that our world seems to require today. One element of that deeper understanding is to address the ideological, psychological, spiritual and/or religious character of the human nature, and to see if that is part of the problem itself, or if it can be utilised or transformed as a way out of the challenges that the various socio-economic factors of human behaviour pose in the form of a major crisis today. It may turn out that the crisis we face is not the one we think about, but a totally different one, and is closer to the notion of avijja (ignorance) the Buddha talked about.

Pope Francis’ Laudato Si’ encyclical discusses the main set of issues from a Catholic theological perspective. My goal is to investigate if and how Buddhism could give any answers to these issues. That requires a threefold approach: a) to properly understand the current challenges of the modern world, b) to understand what the Buddha thought and taught in this context and c) to see how contemporary Buddhism relates to these challenges while

*. Rector, Dharma Gate Buddhist College, Budapest, Hungary.
discussing if and how Buddhist leaders can offer a solution and/or if Buddhism itself also requires any transformation.

My goal, as one of the main outcomes of this investigation, is to provide some practical suggestions how Buddhism could go forward with its approach and develop its ‘mindful leadership’ practice that can also inspire global leadership in general. The conclusion, however, may be something completely unexpected.

I. CURRENT CHALLENGES OF THE MODERN WORLD

We all know the 17 SDGs or Sustainable Development Goals of the UN from our heart, they are discussed widely in this important gathering. They all address a particular challenge or issue we face in our modern life: poverty, hunger, illnesses, illiteracy, gender inequality, racial discrimination, water scarcity and polluted water, overconsumption of energy and materials, polluting transportation, exploitation of work, contamination of water, air and soil, lack of knowledge and indifference, incompetency of leaders, lack of global partnership to solve issues at large scale, etc.

According to PwC, one of the leading auditing companies, there are 5 major megatrends or global shifts that are shaping our world today (https://www.pwc.co.uk/issues/megatrends.html):

- Demographic shifts (towards emerging economies)
- Shifts in economic power (towards emerging economies)
- Accelerated urbanization (especially in medium-sized cities of developing countries)
- Climate change and resource scarcity (increased population, urbanization and prosperity increase the demand for energy, food and water supplies)
- Technological breakthroughs (digital revolution without boundaries and borders)

These megatrends imply the notion of infinite growth, often criticised by people looking for an alternative paradigm of sustainable development or simply that of no-growth. Based on his teacher, Leopold Kohr’s concept, E.F. Schumacher argued in his famous book, *Small is Beautiful: A Study of Economics As If*
People Mattered, that “it does not require more than a simple act of insight to realise that infinite growth of material consumption in a finite world is an impossibility” (Schumacher, 1973, p. 88) and that “I have no doubt that it is possible to give a new direction to technological development, a direction that shall lead it back to the real needs of man, and that also means: to the actual size of man. Man is small, and, therefore, small is beautiful. To go for gigantism is to go for self-destruction” (Schumacher, 1973, p. 117).

II. ECOLOGICAL SPIRITUALITY

As former Director of the Spirit of Humanity Forum in Iceland, I had belonged to that group of people who thought that the world is going through a major crisis in the current Human Epoch or Anthropocene considered to be the latest geological period of Earth: major global climate change, environmental crisis and degradation, the 6th mass extinction, etc., mainly caused by disruptive human activities on the planet. Participants of that Forum and many other similar gatherings worldwide conclude that unless a massive shift happens in global human attitudes toward nature and life in general, including our everyday lifestyle and economic activities, the global events soon take a form of an irreversible chain of catastrophes. The primary change should happen in our mindset that many of its proponents call a spiritual transformation from within: less consumption, the economy of enough, the lifestyle of contentment, etc.

Pope Francis’ *Laudato Si’ Encyclical Letter On Care For Our Common Home*, issued in 2015, identified all these issues and possible solutions in a detailed and moving call for an ‘integral ecology’, i.e. an ecological spirituality that combines all environmental, economic, social and cultural aspects of our life on this planet (Pope Francis, 2015, pp. 103–120). The Holy Father also offers practical lines of approach and action to tackle the crisis, i.e. dialogue: dialogue on the environment in the international community, dialogue for new national and local policies, dialogue and transparency in decision-making at all levels, dialogues between politics and economy how to understand human fulfillment, and dialogue between religions and sciences how to embark on a path of finding solutions hand-in-hand (Pope Francis, 2015, pp. 121–148).
Many Buddhists follow this call all over the world, a great example of which is this UNDV conference on “Buddhist Approach to Global Leadership and Shared Responsibilities for Sustainable Societies”. The ideal of a new way of life on this planet that is more loving and compassionate, that is applied in all aspects of our activities and decision-making, from the top to the bottom, is inherent in Buddhist spirituality. The notions of *ahimsa* (non-harming), *metta* (loving kindness), *karuna* (compassion), *anatta* (non-self), etc., all lead to the idea of a new way of being and acting, and that such change can only start from within, from an enlightening moment of understanding the interdependent nature of reality (*patiïå-samuppada*) and that we live in a coherent web of causes and effects: our actions do have their consequences and we cannot avoid them (*karma*). The Buddha identified the root cause of our actions leading to a life and world permeated by suffering (*dukkha*) with three inherent aspects of the human psyche: *avijja* (ignorance), *tanha* (thirst) and *upadana* (attachment). One of the main realisations of the Buddha was that the key underlying factor behind the suffering nature of existence (*bhava dukkha*) is psychological. Changing our psychological character would change the outcomes of our actions, thoughts and words, and the root causes of our suffering would cease to exist. While that may be true to the individual, the question arises whether we can repeat that collectively?

This doctrine of the need for and possibility of ‘inner change’ is the main common ground that connects all spiritual approaches to offering a solution to the current crisis. We may call it the ‘Inner Change’ doctrine. This doctrine is applied to all aspects of our societies: inner change of parents will nurture happier children, inner change of teachers will lead to a more inclusive education system, inner change of nurses and doctors will provide us with a better health-care, and inner change of leaders will lead to better decision-making and more harmonious societies. Systemic change is achieved through personal change at all levels if the latter miraculously coalesces in massive numbers of individuals, thereby reaching a tipping point of large-scale societal change. Others believe that even a smaller-scale change can lead to global consequences in the form of a ‘Butterfly Effect’.
III. POPULAR MAINSTREAM VARIATIONS OF THE ‘INNER CHANGE’ DOCTRINE

Yuval Noah Harari, one of the most popular contemporary public intellectuals, the author of best-selling books *Sapiens* (Harari, 2014) and *Homo Deus* (Harari, 2016), in his most recent book, *21 Lessons for the 21st Century* (Harari, 2018), identifies the major challenges of our current age that are reshaping what we think we, human beings are. These are:

a) technological challenges affecting our belief in liberal democracy, the dignity of work, liberty and equality (Harari, 2018, pp. 1–81),

b) political challenges disrupting communities and human civilisation as a whole in the form of nationalist and religious dogmas, and raising issues around immigration (Harari, 2018, pp. 83–155),

c) psychological challenges in the form of living in despair or hope, affected by issues such as terrorism, wars, human self-centredness, religious exclusivism or secularism (Harari, 2018, pp. 157–214), and

d) challenges with what truth is: our ignorance, what justice is, the phenomena of post-truth and fake news, and disillusioned views on the future (Harari, 2018, pp. 215–255).

Finally, e) he analyses the importance of resilience amidst all of that: constantly changing education adapted to the actuals needs, the meaning of life and the practice of meditation and observation as a final sane stance in this chaotic and rapidly changing world (Harari, 2018, 257-319).

In the concluding remarks of his book he writes: “we had better understand our minds before the algorithms make our minds up for us” (Harari, 2018, p. 318).

Harari’s books (Harari, 2014, 2016, 2018) are revolutionary in the sense that they don’t depict an ideal, spiritualistic view of the human nature that we would only need to find inside. He fully understands and takes in the most recent scientific findings on the human psyche and its biases. He is truly Buddhist in the sense
that he acknowledges the existing boundaries and limitations of our understanding, their underlying factors in the human psyche, but still offers a naturalistic (non-religious) view of the inherent capabilities of the human mind to calm down, observe and find meaning from within. He offers a solution for all the problems identified in the first four parts of his book: to find a global identity of the human race that can then face the major challenges as united as it can be:

“This may sound overambitious, but Homo Sapiens cannot wait. Philosophy, religion and science are all running out of time. People have debated the meaning of life for thousands of years. We cannot continue this debate indefinitely. The looming ecological crisis, the growing threat of weapons of mass destruction, and the rise of new disruptive technologies will not allow it. Perhaps most importantly, artificial intelligence and biotechnology are giving humanity the power to reshape and re-engineer life. Very soon somebody will have to decide how to use this power – based on some implicit or explicit story about the meaning of life. Philosophers are very patient people, but engineers are far less patient, and investors are the least patient of all. If you don’t know what to do with the power to engineer life, market forces will not wait a thousand years for you to come up with an answer. The invisible hand of the market will force upon you its own blind reply. Unless you are happy to entrust the future of life to the mercy of quarterly revenue reports, you need a clear idea what life is all about” (Harari, 2018, pp xiii–xiv).

IV. CHALLENGING THE ‘DOOMSDAY SCENARIOS’

More recently, another two best-selling authors have shaken the firm building of these ‘Doomsday Scenarios’ and the narrative of the ‘Inner Change’ doctrine as I called it above.

One of them is cognitive scientist Steven Pinker who in 2018 wrote a new book, Enlightenment Now: The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism, and Progress (Pinker, 2018). He argues that the depressing interpretation of world events is based on our human
psychological biases, such as the so-called ‘negativity bias’. “[T]he gory headlines and prophecies of doom … play to our psychological biases” – we can read on the back cover (Pinker, 2018). If we think that the world is falling apart or soon coming to an end, we need to think again: “people are living longer, healthier, freer, and happier lives, and while our problems are formidable, the solutions lie in the Enlightenment ideal of using reason and science” (Pinker, 2018, back cover). Pinker suggests to follow the data: he presents many graphs showing that “life, health, prosperity, safety, peace, knowledge, and happiness are on the rise, not just in the West, but worldwide.” This progress is “a gift of the Enlightenment: the conviction that reason and science can enhance human flourishing.” Pinker argues, however, that the Enlightenment project, as he calls it, is under attack today, it “needs a vigorous defense”. It “swims against currents of human nature – tribalism, authoritarianism, demonization, magical thinking – which demagogues are all too willing to exploit. Many commentators, committed to political, religious, or romantic ideologies, fight a rearguard action against it. The result is a corrosive fatalism and a willingness to wreck the precious institutions of liberal democracy and global cooperation” (Pinker, 2018, back cover).

Another best-selling author, Hans Rosling, together with Ola Rosling and Anna Rösling Rönnlund, published a book around the same time, in early 2018, with the title Factfulness: Ten Reasons We’re Wrong About the World – and Why Things Are Better Than You Think. They prove in the book that “[w]hen asked simple questions about global trends – what percentage of the world’s population live in poverty; why the world’s population is increasing; how many girls finish school – we systematically get the answers wrong. So wrong that a chimpanzee choosing answers at random will consistently outguess teachers, journalists, Nobel laureates, and investment bankers” (Rosling, 2018, back cover).

Why does it happen? – one may ask. The author’s answer:

“Think about the world. War, violence, natural disasters, man-made disasters, corruption. Things are bad, and it feels they are getting worse, right? The rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer; and the number
of poor just keeps increasing; and we will soon run out of resources unless we do something drastic. At least that’s the picture that most Westerners see in the media and carry around in their heads. I call it the overdramatic worldview. It’s stressful and misleading. In fact, the vast majority of the world’s population lives somewhere in the idle of the income scale. … they are not living in extreme poverty. … Step-by-step, year-by-year, the world is improving. … Though the world faces huge challenges, we have made tremendous progress. This is the fact-based worldview. It is the overdramatic worldview that draws people to the most dramatic and negative answers … if your worldview is wrong, then you will make systematically wrong guesses. But this overdramatic worldview is not caused simply by out-of-date knowledge … it is not the fault of an evil-minded media, propaganda, fake news, or wrong facts. … the overdramatic worldview is so difficult to shift, because it comes from the very way or brains work. … Our brains often jump to swift conclusions without much thinking… We are interested in gossip and dramatic stories… We crave for sugar and fat… We have many instincts that used to be useful thousands of years ago. … we need to learn to control our drama intake. Uncontrolled, our appetite for the dramatic goes too far, prevents us from seeing the world as it is…” (Rosling, 2018, p. 13–15).

Rosling’s purpose with his book is “to fight devastating global ignorance. … to change people’s way of thinking, calm their irrational fears, and redirect their energies into constructive activities. … it is data as therapy. It is understanding as a source of mental peace. Because the world is not as dramatic as it seems” (Rosling, 2018, pp. 15–16). In the end, “[i]t turns out that the world, for all its imperfections, is in a much better state than we might think. … when we worry about everything all the time instead of embracing a worldview based on facts, we can lose our ability to focus on the things that threaten us most” (Rosling, 2018, back cover).

In his work, Rosling identifies ten instincts that distort our perspective, instincts he calls gap, negativity, straight line, fear, size,
generalisation, destiny, single perspective, blame and urgency. Some of it is associated with our tendency to divide the world into two camps (us and them), the way we consume media (dominated by fear) or how we look at progress (“things are getting worse”). In his laudation of the book, Former U.S. President Barack Obama writes: “Factfulness ... is a hopeful book about the potential for human progress when we work off facts rather than our inherent biases.”

What is interesting in these latest arguments made by public intellectuals is that they offer data-driven analysis of trends, the methodology of so-called ‘factfulness’ as an antidote to the sentiments of depression and inertness felt by many people all over the world in their hearts while still continuing living with the same old habits. There is a big debate why people, when confronted with immediate doomsday scenarios of global climate change, mainly driven by their own ‘negativity bias’, are not able to change their course of action and work on a collective solution. Probably, because while feeling depressed, they know deeper in their heart that somehow everything is fine, things are not as bad as they look like.

V. THE ‘WAR OF PSYCHOLOGICAL BIASES’

Many psychologists and behavioural economists started developing a complex framework of additional ‘biases’ to explain the so-called massive, global inaction in environmental matters. It seems there is a ‘war of psychological biases’ waged upon who understands our inherent biased nature better. There are those who think that our ‘psychological biases’ constitute the main reasons why we don’t change our behaviour towards nature:

“... the five common psychological biases [i.e. positive illusions, cognitive dissonance, fundamental attribution error, prospect theory and in-group/out-group bias]... bode ill for environmental protection. All of them lead people to downplay the probability and danger of environmental change, and their role in it, while increasing their perceived incentives to maintain the status quo, and to blame problems on others. ... Numerous features of human nature and the nature of institutions that humans create, limit our ability to detect and react
appropriately to novel threats. Because these features stem from independent sources at different levels of analysis (e.g. individual behaviour, organizational behaviour, elite decision-making, etc.), they are likely to generate a status quo bias across a wide range of circumstances. For example, even a forward-looking bureaucracy may run up against a reluctant public or a short-sighted political leadership. To put it bluntly, society seems predisposed to preserve the status quo until something goes wrong. ...

We suggest that sensory, psychological, organizational and political biases are a powerful influence on people’s preferences, perceptions and reactions to environmental change. The good news is that because these biases are systematic, not random, with known sources of variation, it will be possible to identify their causes and consequences and design political, economic and social policies that channel people’s biases away from disaster. ... What are the prospects for the future? An awareness of psychological biases is likely to become increasingly important. There is a growing mismatch between our psychology – a psychology that evolved to deal with small groups of human beings in a very different social and physical environment – and the increasingly technological and globalized world we inhabit. As human interactions are increasingly replaced by human–computer interfaces for shopping, working and entertainment, we are gradually preventing natural sensory feedback to the brain. This means that the causes and consequences of our decisions and actions often fail to trigger the appropriate human responses. Simply put, we see less and less of the results of our actions, even as they have a larger and larger impact on the globe. ... History suggests that without experiencing direct negative consequences of our actions (and sometimes even with such experience), human societies often wait for disasters to occur before adapting to novel threats, whether they are disasters of national security, disease, starvation, poverty or environmental change” (Johnson, D. and Levin. S., 2009, p. 1598–1601).
We, Buddhists, also think that there is some inherent flaw in the human nature, something we call *avijja* (ignorance).

There are those, such as Pinker and Rosling, who consider our ‘negativity bias’ or ‘ten instincts’ as the major reason for the so-called overdramatic worldview, and would like to offer a therapy of facts to cure our pessimism and depression.

What if the real reason for the ‘lack of action’ is that we instinctively know what the real truth is: that we live better day by day, and it’s good enough? What if it’s not the ‘boiling frog’ fable that shapes our current reality (i.e. we are like frogs being slowly boiled alive not noticing what’s happening), nor even the ‘ostrich burying its head in the sand’ metaphor that describes how we, human beings act collectively when we face the massive challenges of our world today? What if we simply live a life in front of a TV, horrified by all negative news that we crave for simply because we enjoy hearing dreadful stories while also enjoy living a good life?

The notion of ‘factfulness’ was clearly introduced with the intention to replace another trendy notion offered as an antidote to our more and more depressed state of mind, i.e. ‘mindfulness’. ‘Mindfulness’ as an international movement clearly belongs to the ‘Inner Change’ doctrine described above. My paper is not about highlighting or arguing for the benefits of mindfulness, there are thousands of articles doing that nowadays. I would simply like to offer a tentative question: is mindfulness really the antidote we need? Doesn’t it (and other similar trends of introspection) create a new form of pressure on those who practice it? I call it the ‘transformation pressure’. I meet more and more people telling me they know they need to transform themselves, they need to change their habits of eating, working, sleeping, loving, everything, but they can’t. They are not good enough, they start blaming themselves, initiating a never-ending circle of remorse that they are not doing well enough what they are supposed to do. Isn’t that a new form of pressure, in many cases leading to mental breakdown and more depression?

And now Buddhism is under pressure, too, to roll up its sleeves and compete with the secular mindfulness movement for the souls
of sentient beings who are suffering. Mindfulness may cover the idea of Samadhi within Buddhism, but where are Sila and Panna left? Isn’t Panna an invitation to develop right understanding of how things function? Isn’t it about ‘facts’, rather than being driven by emotions? And isn’t Sila about knowing how to act rightfully? The basic fact of reality is suffering, not stress. We are stressed, because we feel we don’t do the things we are supposed to or ought to. Is Buddhism about reducing stress? Or is it about understanding and practicing the Noble Eightfold Path as a way to liberation, as a way to eliminating the causes of suffering, not suffering itself? And that is eliminating avijja (ignorance), tanha (thirst) and upadana (attachment). That requires Panna and Sila as well.

When we talk about ‘mindful leadership’ in this conference, I also highlight the need for ‘wise and righteous’ leadership as well. Meaning, sometimes, ‘factful leadership’ as such. We can’t always take for granted all the doomsday scenarios, we need to investigate them thoroughly as well.

VI. CONCLUSION

Unless we understand the very nature of who we are, from both a first-person experiential (phenomenological) and third-person descriptive perspective (data-driven analysis based on theoretical and empirical science), we tend to fall into the trap of our so-called ‘psychological biases’, whatever they are.

Is it possible to achieve a non-biased perspective? The Buddha’s teachings might provide us with such an approach. When asked about questions such as the creation of the universe or the end of life, he dismissed them as ‘metaphysical’, meaning, we don’t know the answers, we can only speculate about them, but what matters in the end is how we experience our life here and now and what we do with it. It may lead to a very narrow perspective on what we can understand and know, but this very minimal programme of understanding is the one that leads to liberation from the causes of suffering in the end. We may feel quite depressed watching the unfolding environmental and ecological apocalypse, or any other scenario that may lead to a major eruption of the current world order in the form of wars or any other societal and technological
developments, we would then travel to conferences where we can discuss the catastrophic nature of things and issue statements or calls for immediate change, but at the end we would still continue our journeys the same way as the day before: having lunches and dinners, traveling on planes, writing emails and organizing the next year’s conferences. So far so good. Until something really radical and tragic happens. Then we swiftly change our perspective and adapt to the new circumstances: we stop traveling, stop emailing, stop organizing conferences. In the end, what is it all about? Nothing else than coming together, enjoying the togetherness, giving some importance to it and telling tales – joyful or dreadful – to each other. The changes happen in and around us anyway, no matter what. Including stories of ‘Inner Change’, ‘Societal Change’, ‘Social Transformation’, ones with the ‘Butterfly Effect’ or with longer-term development of human capacities and resources ridiculing all fears of immediate collapse.

We can only observe all that as we are destined to take part in those processes based on our roles and histories anyway. Some of us might save some people, some of us may realise great things, some of us may make everything worse, but we all will cope with the individual and collective consequences of our actions whether they are based on karma, on divine guidance or simply on good or bad luck.

Does it sound rude? Maybe. It’s as good as offering ‘solutions’ to the world problems without any possibility of real change. In many situations I observed such speeches as ‘look good’ moments disguising some hypocrisy. I don’t know the real truth what’s happening around the world, and don’t have a solution to offer. Does anyone know? “All composite things pass away. Strive for your own liberation with diligence.”

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THE ISSUE OF EXCLUSIVISM AND PAROCHIALISM IN BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVE

by Amrita Nanda*

ABSTRACT

Inclusivism and broad-mindedness are basic principles of the Buddhist teachings. Nevertheless, one can witness nationality, ethnicity and culturalism often supersede Buddhist identity among many adherents of Buddhism. Many Buddhists are over-attached to own nationality or cultural values that give rise to exclusivism and parochialism. This is more observable among Asian Buddhists. As one of the phenomena we often find in the West is Asian Buddhists have their centres for their own nationality or ethnic group. In these centres, cultural aspects predominate than the practice of the Dhamma. Hence, these centres often isolate themselves from the local community and people from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

Another aspect of parochialism is the reluctance to engage in dialogue with either world major religious traditions or among different Buddhist sects. For instance, bilateral discussion between followers of Theravāda Buddhists and Mahāyāna is not very rare. This leads to many misunderstanding among the followers of the two traditions. The reluctance arises from the inability to see things from a wider viewpoint. This results in a lack of mutual co-operation between the two Buddhist traditions. Another aspect of parochialism is blindly following teachers and accepting everything a particular teacher says to be true and absolute. And building a community within the followers of that particular teacher and being isolated from others. The question is, does the exclusivism

* Dr., Lecturer of the Centre of Buddhist Studies, The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong.
and parochialism of Buddhist community lead to sustainable Buddhist societies in the 21st century or lead to unsustainability? If it is the latter, what are the obstacles and what could be the solution? This paper discusses the issue of exclusivism and parochialism and some underlying causes which lead to exclusivism and parochialism.

1. INTRODUCTION

When I visit non-traditional Buddhist countries, in particular in the West, I am struck by the observation that most of the Buddhist monasteries in the Western counties almost exclusively centres of Asian migrants. For instance, Sri Lankan Buddhist monasteries in the West, only Sri Lankan Buddhist devotes are present. Similar situation for the Thai and Chinese monasteries also. There is a conspicuous absence of local community people.

For Buddhism to continue to survive and to able to have a greater impact in the world, it must reach out to a greater majority of the people. Buddhism will not sustain merely on its great ideals and lofty philosophical and psychological embodiment, but will depend on the followers who take refuge in the Triple Gems and are committed to Buddhism. Apparently, it looks like Buddhism is progressing very well in the West, as many Buddhist monasteries are built. However, a careful observation would reveal that these outer emblems are not indications of establishment of Buddhism in the West. The absence of the local community indicates that the Dhamma is not appealing to the local community. This may be our failure to translate the spirit of the Dhamma and over-emphasis on the cultural aspects of Buddhism rather than the spirit of Buddhism. We have to investigate the underlying causes for these problems and find a way to resolve this, otherwise the hope of Buddhism outside the traditional countries will be doomed. Not only in non-traditional Buddhist countries, as Bhikkhu Bodhi in his article “Sangha at the Crossroads” points out that Buddhism will face a lot challenges to survive in traditional Buddhist countries.\(^{(1)}\) My stay over nine years in a traditional Buddhist country like Sri Lanka, and over eight years with Mahāyāna Buddhist tradition in Hong Kong, I observe that there are a lot

\(^{(1)}\) Bhikkhu Bodhi (2002) 66.
of misconceptions and among the followers of the two major Buddhist traditions. Therefore, there is an absence of mutual co-operation and between the major Buddhist traditions - the Mahāyāna tradition and the Theravāda tradition.

2. EXCLUSIVISM

Exclusivism in the religious context is a form of religious fundamentalism. It is a rigid attitude that what one believes is the absolute truth. In Buddhist discourses, this is defined as “this only true, all else are false” (idaṃ eva saccam mogham aññaṃ)\(^{(2)}\) or “over attached to one’s view” (idaṃ saccābhinivesa).\(^{(3)}\) In this article, the term is used to refer to the traditional Buddhist rigid attitude towards the Buddhist rituals and the socio-cultural aspects and the non-accommodative view of new socio-cultural values.

I think, the major problem that traditional Buddhists face is to distinguish the spirit of the Dhamma from the cultural and the ritualistic dimensions which have grown over a long time in the traditional Buddhist countries. Although the spirit of the Dhamma resonates with the modern world and is relevant to all human beings irrespective of social, cultural and psychological differences in different geographical locations, but traditional Buddhism envisaged by Asian Buddhist traditions may clash with modern cultures and values in the West. Modern Western people, who are of different cultural and social and educational backgrounds may not feel the relevance of cultural and ritual dimensions of traditional Buddhism.

The spirit of Buddhism is essentially a liberation from both physical and psychological sufferings. Subservient to it, Buddhism aims to establishing a moral society, where everyone is genuinely kind and loving to each other; freely generous and concern wellbeing and happiness of each other. Finally, where distinction between wellbeing of oneself and wellbeing others does not exist. However, these ideals cannot be presented in abstract manner. Rather Buddhism had to use fables, similes, cultural and social aspects people in the environment were familiar with.

\(^{2}\) MN I 498.
\(^{3}\) ibid.
In the course of time, many different forms Buddhist rituals and ceremonies developed assimilating local cultural and psychological values with Buddhism. These were used as expedient devices to make the Dhamma understandable to the people. These similes, fables, rituals and cultural aspects of Buddhism do not have universal values which means they are applicable to everyone and everywhere. But, the Dhamma is universal and transcending time and space (akālika). The essential spirit of the Dhamma is effective and applicable to everyone irrespective of geographical locations and time differences. Therefore, we should be able to distinguish between essential spirit of the Dhamma from the external devices used in the Buddhist traditions to translate spirit of the Dhamma to the people. In other words, we have to change methodology of translating the spirit of the Dhamma to the audience of space and time. We have to understand that the young generations in the West are of social and cultural backgrounds, and have different psychological attitude. Therefore, cultural and ritualistic aspects of Buddhism which were developed in the East a long time ago will not appeal them. They will not feel Dhamma relevant to their lives. They have different psychological needs. If we choose to neglect their needs, and continue with same old methodology and take those traditional methodologies and cultural aspects as truth per se then the future of Buddhism is not very bright. For any religion to sustain, it should adapt to change in the new environment and time.

Buddhist discourses contain this accommodative attitude. For instance in the Sanskrit Buddhist literature, there is the list of the fourfold reliances (catvāri pratiśaranāni):

1. Reliance on the spirit, not reliance on words (artha-pratiśaraṇatā na vyañjana-pratisaraṇatā).
2. Reliance on the knowledge, not reliance on cognition (jñāna-pratiśaraṇatā na vijñāna-pratisaraṇatā).
3. Reliance on the discourse whose meanings are explicit, not reliance on the discourses whose meanings are to be drawn out (nīta-artha-pratiśaraṇatā na neya-artha pratiśaraṇatā).
4. Reliance on the Dharma, not reliance on the individuals
These fourfold reliances can serve as a remedy to the problems of exclusivism and Parochialism. Among the four, the first and last are extremely relevant to our present discussion. The first reliance, literary means reliance on the meaning (artha), not letter (na vyañjana). The term artha can include spirit. So the first reliance reminds us that we should rely on the spirit of the Dhamma, not the letters. This implies that we cannot blindly attach to the words literary as the absolute teachings of the Buddha even if they appear in the Buddhist discourses. We have to understand the spirit the discourses convey. Here, letters or words include fables, similes and other devices employed in the Buddhist teaching methodology. These stories, similes and fables or the words used to explain the Dhamma cannot be taken as absolute truth per se. They are like the fingers pointing at the moon. The moon signifies the spirit. If one pays too much attention to these, he may not find the essence of the Dhamma. The last factor reminds us that we have to rely on the Dhamma, not the persons (teachers). Although term ‘pudgala’ means an individual’ in this context it has wider implication. It can include teachers, texts or even traditions. It means we should not rely merely on the traditions or the cultures or even the texts, rather we should examine these with the spirit of Dhamma. This implies we can change the devices as long as we can translate the spirit of the Dhamma.

A careful survey of the history of Buddhism would point out that throughout the history this accommodative attitude is maintained. Buddhism, which was originally founded in India, is embodied in many Indian socio-cultural and religious dimensions. When it travelled to foreign countries, it did not carry these dimensions. For instance, when Buddhism travelled to China, it absorbed and assimilated many Chinese socio-cultural and religious dimensions to make Dhamma relevant and understandable to local people without losing the spirit of the Dhamma. Similarly when Buddhism was introduced to Tibet, it assimilated with many Tibetan socio-cultural and religious dimensions. Wherever Buddhism was

4. These four reliance are recorded in Mahāyāna sūtra-s such as the Akshayamati sūtra.
introduced, it assimilated with THE local culture and social aspects without losing the essential spirit of the Dhamma. Therefore, today we have different forms of Buddhism, such as Chinese Buddhism, Tibetan Buddhism, Japanese Buddhism and Sri Lankan Buddhism. In other words to whichever country Buddhism was introduced, Buddhism has never rejected her cultural diversity to create a mono-culture. Professor Karunadasa correctly remarks: “...Buddhism promotes cultural pluralism, therefore Buddhism does not become a culture-bound religion. What this means is that just as a bird fly from place to place leaving behind its cage, even so Buddhism can fly from one place to another, say from Hong to America, leaving behind its cultural baggage”\(^{(5)}\).

Buddhism is a very open-minded and inclusive religion. Buddhism does not even interfere in personal ways of living by imposing many restrictions insofar as one’s personal living does not himself and does not harm others. Therefore, it does not prescribe dress and foods, marriage system etc. Because early Buddhists understood the cultural and social etiquettes change from location to location and time to time.

When introducing Buddhism to the Western world, we should properly understand cultural, social values and psychological needs of the people there. We have to present the Dhamma in the manner they feel the relevance of the Dhamma. We should adopt their social and cultural values without losing the original spirit of the Dhamma. The socio-cultural and psychological backgrounds of the people in the Western world are very different from the Eastern traditional Buddhists. We have to translate the spirit of the Dhamma in new ways that appeal to audience of different time and space. It is not just case of the audience in the West, but even Dhamma will not be appealing to modern generations of the Asian traditional Buddhists. We must acknowledge that with the passage of time and the change of socio-economic conditions, psychological needs of people also change. If we do not address these issues, young generation will feel the conflict between modern culture and Buddhism. Then the young generation would abandon or not pay any hit to the Dhamma,

\(^{(5)}\) S. Karunadasa (2013) 162-63. \(\)
considering Buddhism as outdated, whose relevance is not felt in real life. This would not help the sustainability of the Dhamma.

Here, we have to remember that Buddhist rituals, cultural strands are only outer forms of Buddhism. If we attach to them as absolute truth and unamendable, this is not just demeritable for the propagation and survivability of the Dhamma, but also is an obstacle to realization of the liberation. For instance, in innumerable passages in the early Buddhist discourses, mention that one has to cut off three fetters (saṃyojanāni) to attain the stage of stream-entry which is considered as the first stage towards the attainment of arahantship. One of the three factors, is irrational attachment to rituals and vows (silabbatapāramāsa). Some scholars argue that Buddhism originally rejects all forms of rituals and ceremonies. A careful reading of the early discourses preserved in the Pāli Nikāya-s shows that such arguments have no strong footing. Rather, we find Buddhism has always been accommodative of several rituals and ceremonies insofar as they are subservient to the essential goal of Buddhism. The term ‘silabbatapāramāsa’ implies irrational attachments to rituals and cultural dimensions of Buddhism as absolute truth per se. In other words, infatuation with the rituals and cultural dimensions of Buddhism. It is a rigid attitude to the rituals and ceremonies. Rituals and ceremonies are accepted and are used in Buddhism as devices to translate the spirit of the Dhamma. The doctrine of dependent co-arising shows that any attachment leads to clinging (tanhā-paccayā upādāna). The clinging is classified as fourfold, viz. clinging to sensual pleasure (kāmūpādāna), clinging to rituals and ceremonies (silabbatūpādāna), clinging to views (diṭṭhūpādāna) and clinging to self-theory (attavādupādāna). Thus attachment to outer forms is not even helpful to realize essence of the Dhamma.

3. PAROCHIALISM

Parochialism is means “a narrow outlook, especially focused on a local area; narrow-mindedness.” In this article, the term is used to refer to narrow-mindedness of Buddhist traditions towards one

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6. These three known as fetters (saṃyojanāni) may appear innumerable times in Pāli literature.
7. MN I 261.
another. In particular, narrow-mindedness of the Theravāda and Mahāyāna Buddhist traditions. It is truism that in order to flourish and to have greater impact in the world, mutual cooperation, respect and appreciation between the two traditions are necessary. Although apparently, it looks like the two traditions have good cooperation, but my stay in stronghold Theravāda Buddhist country like Sri Lanka, and with Mahāyāna tradition in Hong Kong, and my visits to Thailand, Taiwan, China, Vietnam, etc. I feel still there is lack of genuine appreciation and respect for each other. We have many superficial misunderstandings about each other. While still large number of Theravāda Buddhist monastics hold high esteem about their own tradition so-called ‘pristine pure Buddhism’ or ‘original Buddhism’ very often they have the parochialistic attitude towards Mahāyāna Buddhism. Although these are not openly discussed, the view that Mahāyāna Buddhism is not genuine or true Buddhism prevails in them. Few years back during a conversation with a Theravāda Buddhist scholar, I was struck to hear his definition of Mahāyāna Buddhism as ‘distorted Buddhism’. When questioned about such assertion, he kept repeating minor cultural and ritualistic differences between the Theravāda tradition and the Mahāyāna tradition. This is not the view of one particular person, but many Theravāda monastics and non-monastics hold similar views. Theravāda Buddhist followers try to understand Mahāyāna Buddhism through their own lens, and they perceive only the shell, the outer forms of Mahāyāna Buddhism, such as food, dressing, rituals and other cultural dimensions of Mahāyāna Buddhism. They see these rituals and cultural aspects are different from what they believe to be Buddhism. They are totally ignorant of inner vitality and spirit of Mahāyāna Buddhism as they are not aware of the socio-religious aspects of Mahāyāna Buddhism.

On the other hand, many Mahāyāna followers have gross misunderstanding about Theravāda Buddhism. They are of the view that Theravāda Buddhism is self-centric. It is not concerned about the welfare and liberation of others. They often define Theravāda Buddhism as ‘inferior vehicle’ (Hīnayāna). This is again because Mahāyāna Buddhist followers fail to comprehend the spirit
Theravāda Buddhism as well as its historical and social contexts. Such views are results blindly accepting words in few relatively Mahāyāna discourses without understanding their proper historical contexts. This is gross misunderstanding of Theravāda Buddhism. The essence of all forms of Buddhism is to transcend self-interest or self-centeredness. How can there be self-centric Buddhism?

Even if Mahāyāna followers read earliest Mahāyāna literatures, they would clearly show that early Mahāyānists had no prejudice against the traditional monastics Saṅgha. Rather, they had great respect and admiration for the traditional (Theravāda) Saṅgha. For instance, A.K Warder argued that Mahāyāna Buddhism started within the monastic saṅgha, who were greatly inspired by spiritual spirit and previous life stories of the historical Buddha Gotama as recorded in the Pāli sources. Edward Conze and Jan Nattier have pointed out that early Mahāyānists were very respectful towards the traditional monastic saṅgha. The monastic saṅgha was never condemned. The Aṣṭasāhasrarika-prajñāpāmitā described monastic arahant-s as: “outflows dried up, undefiled, fully controlled, quite freed in their hearts, well-freed, wise, thorough bred, great serpents, their work done, their task accomplished, their burden laid down, their own weal accomplished, with the fetters that are bound them to becoming extinguished, their hearts well freed by right understanding, in perfect control of their whole mind, etc.”

In the Ugraparipṛcchā, another important Mahāyāna sūtra, monastic life is highly appreciated. The lay bodhisattva-s are advised to respect, not only monastic arahant-s, but even an ordinary monastic saṅgha member. Lay-bodhisattva-s are even urged to leave household life as soon as possible. Thus, it is safe to conclude that the Mahāyāna started as a spiritual movement with the members of monastic saṅgha and spiritual lay community who were greatly inspired by life stories of the Buddha Gotama and his Bodhisattva career. If the followers of Mahāyāna and Theravāda Buddhism carefully investigate thus, they will discover that both traditions are similar in terms of essential teachings of Buddhism. In other words, all forms of

Buddhism is the emanation from the early Buddhist teachings. So they are similar in terms of the essence of Buddhism. For instance

i. Both traditions commonly accept that the ultimate soteriological goal of Buddhist practice is to completely transcend all unsatisfactoriness and realize Nibbāna.

ii. Both traditions commonly hold that the fundamental teaching of early Buddhism is.

   a. Four Noble Truths (caturāriya saccāni).
   b. Eight-fold Noble paths (ariya aṭṭaṅgika maggā)
   c. Conditioned co-origination (paṭiccasamudpāda)
   d. Teaching of karma, all moral and immoral intentional actions produce consequence karmic retributions.
   e. Three common characteristics of conditioned phenomena (saṅkhata dhamma), transitory nature (aniccā), nature of unsatisfactoriness (dukkha), and devoid of permanent soul (anattā).

iii. Regarding the monastic code of disciple (vinaya), Mahāyānists have not developed their own version. They follow the vinaya piṭaka of the Dharmaguptaka, which was a sub-sect of the Sthaviravāda (Theravāda). So the monastic codes of disciple (vinaya) of the two sects are very similar, while Theravāda vinaya pitaka contains 227 rules, the Mahāyāna has 250 rules, the difference is only in the number of sekhiya. Apart from 250, Mahāyānist introduced some disciplinary codes, such as 10 bodhisattva vows, mandatory vegetarianism. According to travel the diary of Chinese traveler I Ching (635-713), there was no significant difference in the lifestyle of Theravāda and Mahāyāna monks of that time. He records that the adherent of Mahāyāna and Hināyāna practice the same vinaya, recognize the same five categories of faults, are attached to same four Noble Truths. Those who worship the bodhisattva-s and read Mahāyāna sūtra-s are known as Mahāyānists, those do not are Hināyānists.\(^{10}\)

Though there are some differences between the two traditions,

yet we have much more commonness. Both traditions share the fundamental teachings of the Buddha. The different doctrinal interpretations do not necessarily imply that they have deviated from the original Dhamma. Rather, these should be understood the essence of Dhamma can be presented in many different ways. Many different ways of presenting the Dhamma is promotes in early Buddhist discourses. For example, the Bahuvedaniya sutta of Majjhimanikāya records many different ways of analyzing feelings.\(^{(11)}\) In the essence of the Dhamma is not descriptions, in the Alagaddūpama sutta of the Majjhimanikāya, the descriptions of the Dhamma is compared to a raft (kullūpama), the teachings is not for grasping (gahanatthāya), but realizing the essence of Dhamma (nittharanaṇatthāya).\(^{(12)}\) Therefore, as long as the spirit of Buddhism is concerned, both traditions are united. The differences are only in its descriptions. It is unfortunate that there is so much misunderstanding between the followers of the two major traditions of Buddhism. This misunderstanding leads to parochialism and exclusivism. If this misunderstanding are clear up and build a good understanding and cooperation, Buddhism may not be able to play a significant role in the modern world.

4. CONCLUSION

The issue of exclusivism and parochialism arises because of the lack of education and communication. Buddhist monastic education system is outdated and the education curriculum does not properly train monastics member to translate the spirit of the Dhamma and the accommodative strands of the Dhamma. Rather too much focus on the outer forms of Buddhism is emphasized. Bhikkhu Bodhi rightly comments:

If one compares the system of instruction in the Buddhist monasteries with the curriculum of the Christian seminaries, the disparity is striking. In the seminaries, the future priests and nuns are trained, not only in Latin, theology and scripturebut also in all the fields of modern knowledge they will need to play a leading role in the today’s world, including the critical and comparative

\(^{(11)}\) MN I 396; SN IV 424.
\(^{(12)}\) MN I 130.
study of religion. In the *pirivenas* or Buddhist monastic schools, so far as I can see, the young monks (never nuns) are trained to become village priests capable of preserving religious culture not very different from that of the sixteenth century.\(^{(13)}\)

In order to resolve the issue of exclusivism and parochialism, we need to change the curriculum of monastic education system. It should include subjects as such as philosophy, psychology, comparative religion, history, literature and modern languages etc. It should give emphasis on the study of the early Buddhist discourses in proper contexts and historical and doctrinal development of different Buddhist traditions. Apart from educational curriculum more dialogue among the followers of Mahāyāna and Theravāda Buddhism, such as through conferences on the historical and doctrinal development of the two traditions, can help to resolve this issue. If these issues are not resolved, they would pose a threat to the sustainability of the *Dhamma* in future.

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DEPENDENT ORIGINATION AND MIGRATION: 
THE NEED FOR BUDDHIST LEADERSHIP

by Devin Combs Bowles*

ABSTRACT

The number of displaced persons globally increased dramatically over the last decade. In 2018, there were almost 70 million people displaced, a new high. Displaced people flee from situations of substantial suffering, and are driven largely by violent conflict. Increasing ethnic and geopolitical tensions raise the prospect of additional conflict and millions more displaced people in future.

At the same time, climate change and other ecological degradation will likely increase the number of migrants, potentially on a scale which is unprecedented in human history. Sea level rise threatens many coastal communities, some of which are unlikely to be able to adapt over the medium and long term, especially when coupled with the destruction of reefs and increasingly powerful storms. Agricultural productivity will move toward the poles, leaving millions in developing equatorial countries without access to their traditional means of subsistence. These and similar factors will independently increase the risk of violent conflict. Some commentators have linked climate change to the onset of the Syrian conflict, which has been a key driver in the increase in displaced people in the last decade. Even without conflict, loss of livelihoods will drive many to seek new homes.

The vast majority of this migration is likely to be within and between developing countries. Many receiving communities are unlikely to

*. Dr., Lecturer, Australian National University, President of Benevolent, Organisation for Development, Health and Insight (BODHI), Australia.
have the resources necessary for the health of their existing residents and displaced peoples. New arrivals may be forced to live in unsafe conditions in slums, conducive to the spread of illness and suffering. Ethnic and political tensions may increase, spilling over into violence and perpetuating a cycle of migration.

While Europe’s ambivalent acceptance of a substantial number of refugees from the Syrian conflict is an exception, the global trend has been for developed countries to strengthen their borders against refugees and for nationalism and xenophobia to increase. Buddhist wisdom is a useful anecdote to these trends. Greater understanding of the concept of dependent origination would foster action to reduce and ultimately stop climate change. A greater appreciation of the concepts of anatta and impermanence would enable the developed world assist the developing world for the climate change that could not be avoided and increase its humanitarian intake. This would allow for a more rational global conversation about the distribution of resources.

1. INTRODUCTION

Globally, the number of displaced persons is rising fast, with almost 70 million displaced people. This surge of human tide is unequalled in history, with the UNHCR estimating that a new person is displaced almost every two seconds (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2019). People typically experience substantial suffering to cause them to leave home and become displaced. Violent conflict or political persecution is the most common cause of displacement, though environmental catastrophe is another driver (UNESCO, 2019). While it is reasonable to assume that most displaced people minimise their suffering by moving (where they do so of their own free will), displacement itself often entails additional suffering. Both the factors which cause displacement and the displacement itself are linked with poorer health, as displaced people must often live in conditions conducive to the spread of disease (Bowles et al., 2014c, Bowles et al., 2014b, Butler et al., 2014, Bowles et al., 2014a, Bowles et al., 2015).

The number of displaced people is likely to increase substantially in the future. Globally, humanity is degrading the natural environment on which humans depend at an unparalleled rate.
This will combine with increasing human numbers to create more displacement in response to ecological disasters, including from short-term extreme weather events and longer-term trends which permanently reduce the habitability of some areas. Degraded environments are less productive for humans, which can strain economic, social and political relations. In situations with imperfect governance, this can exacerbate existing ethnic or religious tensions, increasing the risk of violent conflict. In turn, an increased rate of violent conflict will lead to more displaced people.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS

The ecological systems which support human civilization and a global population of almost 8 billion people are being rapidly degraded. Their capacity to continue their role supporting human civilization is at risk. Scientists indicate that a number of key earth systems are in danger. These include from climate change, and disruptions to the phosphorus and nitrogen cycles (Rockström et al., 2009). The current rate of species extinction may be comparable to the five mass extinction events, including the one which wiped out the dinosaurs (Barnosky et al., 2011).

Each of these problems is global in scale and could affect billions. While space does not permit a full examination of each risk and their interconnections, climate change is an illustrative example. Anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide and methane, are combining with degradation of carbon sinks such as forests, to increase the average global temperature. Increased concentrations of greenhouse gases act as a blanket around the earth, trapping more of the sun's energy and increasing global temperatures. This is disrupting the climate system.

Humans have already changed the climate, and have taken insufficient action to diminish the pace of climate change. One important effect is sea level rise, which will reduce the amount of land on which people can live. Sea level rise could be relatively rapid, though precise predictions are difficult. It will disproportionately affect low lying river deltas, currently centres of agricultural production and human settlement. Coastal communities may find adaptation difficult or impossible, prompting migration.
With a changing climate, extreme weather events, including hurricanes, floods, droughts, and periods of extreme temperatures, are more common and/or stronger. Each of these events can harm people directly, but perhaps more importantly, is disruptive to productivity and water and food security. Climate change is likely to reduce worker productivity in some places and industries because of biological limitations on the people’s capacity to function in extreme heat (Kjellstrom et al., 2009, Hanna et al., 2011, Tawatsupa et al., 2012).

Extreme weather can devastate water security, both through drought and when floods or storm surges compromise clean water reservoirs. Crop production is also at risk, including at a scale which affects entire countries or regions (Butler, 2014, Butler, 2009, Butler et al., 2014). Equatorial countries are likely to experience some of the worst effects of climate change on food production. Some degree of adaptation may be possible, but adaptation has theoretical and practical limits. Importantly, many of the world’s most disadvantaged, who are disproportionately represented in equatorial countries, are least able to adapt due to lack of access to information and capital. This is especially unfair given the relatively little contribution the most disadvantaged have made to climate change. In the long term, regular temperature extremes will become normal and preclude crop production and safe habitation. Some areas will lose the ability to consistently equal current food production.

Fish and other marine animals will be adversely affected by warming water. Coral reefs, which currently support rich ecosystems, will experience more frequent bleaching. Oceans absorb a substantial fraction of excess carbon dioxide emissions, increasing their acidity. This affects the ability of many marine animals to grow, including shells (Baumann et al., 2012, Cooley and Doney, 2009, Barnett, 2011). Ecological diversity will plummet. Fish stocks which provide critical protein and calories for millions of people are at risk (Barnett, 2011, Baumann et al., 2012). Some scientists go so far as arguing that humanity should plan on coral reef ecosystems collapsing, because they have so little chance of survival due to the combination of ocean acidification, pollution and overfishing (Bradbury, 2012).
Extreme weather events have always led to human displacement. As they become more extreme and more frequent, this will be exacerbated. Global civilisation has never experienced the sort of long term alteration to the climate that anthropogenic climate change is bringing, but long term changes may increase the number of displaced people by many times. Expert estimates have varied by more than a factor of ten, and have been as high as 300 million (Gemenne, 2011).

3. ENVIRONMENT AND CONFLICT

Many countries’ defence leaders recognize the link between climate change and violent conflict, and have started to prepare for further climate change (Bowles and Butler, 2014, Schwartz and Randall, 2003, Ministry of Defence, 2010, Department of Defense, 2014). Food and water security are important for peace. Their absence increases the risk of conflict (Bowles et al., 2014a, Bowles et al., 2014b, Bowles et al., 2015). Poor governance increases the risk, as it inhibits a government’s capacity to address legitimate grievances of its citizens. Unscrupulous actors can use food insecurity to increase ethnic and religious tensions or incite violence (Kahl, 2006, Bowles et al., 2014a).

There is evidence that climate change may have helped initiate the civil conflict in Syria. Syria experienced a severe drought in the lead up to the conflict, which may have been caused or exacerbated by climate change. This substantially reduced rural food production in Syria, creating substantial problems for farmers. At the same time, the Asad regime reduced support to rural families. As a result, young men from rural families travelled to the cities in search of work to support themselves and their families. Many were unable to find it. The cities then became hotbeds of discontent with the regime, potentially precipitating the civil conflict (Gleick, 2014, Kelley et al., 2015).

4. CONFLICT AND DISPLACEMENT

Over one quarter of the world’s 24.5 million refugees come from Syria. In addition to the 6.3 million from Syria, South Sudan and Afghanistan contribute another 5 million refugees (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2019).
clearly demonstrating the importance of avoiding conflict to limit the number of displaced people.

Displaced people are in need of help, but can be perceived by locals as competition for limited resources including employment. This perception often colours the reception displaced people receive. While displaced people frequently originate from developing countries, many in developed countries worry about an influx of refugees or other migrants. This xenophobia is frequently played out in elections, with recent and important consequences for the leadership and long-term strategic policies of a number of democracies (Welzer, 2012, Macgregor-Bowles and Bowles, 2017).

While citizens of developed countries often worry about an influx of refugees, in fact 85% of the world’s displaced people are in developing countries (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2019). This is in spite of the fact that developing countries have fewer resources to accommodate new migrants, and have typically contributed far less to the global ecological degradation that is anticipated to increase migration. Developing countries’ capacity to provide displaced people with the relief they need could be strengthened by material and expert assistance from developed countries.

5. THE NEED FOR BUDDHIST WISDOM

Buddhist wisdom and core concepts should prove a useful antidote to these trends. Action on climate change would be enhanced with greater understanding of Buddhist core concepts, such as anatta, dependent origination and impermanence (Bowles, 2015, Bowles, 2014). This would facilitate the developed world recognising its disproportionate contribution to the suffering associated with climate change and other forms of environmental degradation and act to alleviate such suffering. This would include action to mitigate environmental degradation including climate change and efforts to assist those in the developing world adapt to problems which cannot be avoided. The former could involve transitioning to renewable sources of energy, which are already near parity in cost with some forms of fossil fuels.

Assist the developing world to adapt to a world with a
degraded ecology would involve increasing dialogue and understanding of those in developing countries which are most vulnerable to climate change. Helpful actions might include increasing the number of migrants accepted by developed countries, and enhancing their prospects upon arrival, given the role of remittances in some economies. Importantly, it would also recognise that the act of displacement is often traumatic, and should be avoided where possible. This means assisting developing countries to adapt to climate change to prevent displacement. Effectively, this would help reduce global inequalities between people and nations. Ideally, Buddhist wisdom could help guide a conversation about improving global equity.

Buddhist wisdom could be a guiding light, helping to reduce suffering from displacement associated with environmental degradation. For this potential to be realised, it is important that Buddhists actively and visibly demonstrate compassion to ethnic and religious minorities. The world needs good role models demonstrating tolerance acceptance to the rest of the world. Such action will also enhance Buddhism’s already strong reputation globally. In turn, this will increase the number of people who find refuge in its teachings and could reduce suffering.

6. CONCLUSION

Displacement of people, due to conflict or environmental catastrophe, causes immense suffering. Environmental degradation will increase the already overwhelming number of displaced persons globally, through both environmental catastrophe and violent conflict. This will cause immense suffering. Buddhist wisdom could help stop environmental degradation and foster compassion for those adversely affected by it.

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ABSTRACT

If Buddhists are leading with a global outreach then there is education from the cradle to the grave to counter ignorance on self-knowledge, boost wisdom and self-leadership which soften greed and hatred. Since the financial crisis a decade ago humanity is still being poisoned by bankers’ greed and extremists’ hatred. These poisons are to be detoxified by raising consciousness through shared responsibilities ensuring awareness that inner peace and social harmony outweigh the highs of money or revenge. Buddhist leadership sets the stage by encouraging people to be self-aware in a two-pronged approach to sustainable societies. Firstly, a shared responsibility to self-awaken to “our inner world”. Meditation, a form of self-therapy, is a love affair with a non-abiding, provisional, illusory self toward the inward silence of ultimate not-self. There is nothing to fear, grief, hate or be depressed about when cultivating balanced loving-kindness, compassion and joy. Deeply understand that happiness blocking unhealthy emotional suffering stems from the birth, aging, illness, death of psychological self and that ego extinction begets awakening. Nirvana requires an eightfold balancing practice encompassing this view of self/not-self (1) to transform karmic intention (2), speech (3) and action (4) in daily life (5), requiring effort (6), awareness (7) and attention (8). The latter two refer to “being mindful to be heartful”, a walking the talk self-therapy by “kindful empty self” sometimes to be supplemented by psychotherapy, a method of structured conversation.
Once awakened and looking around in today’s world, another awesome awakening is facilitated: greedy craving accrues hateful grasping and clinging threatening the human race. Secondly, support a sustainable society by self-awakening to “the world-out-there”. Buddhist leadership guides an outward balancing by practicing an ennobling eightfold way of relating with collaborative masses toward self-leadership. Calling upon 21st century Buddhists-to-be, a giant step to global outreaching is disseminating Buddhism as a psychological way of life rather than as a worshipping religion. The Buddha’s teaching of mind cannot be but a self-therapy that offers guidelines for scouting this wondrous world via TV, newspapers, magazines, and social media. What’s fake, what’s real? Is the elite manipulating us? Embodying societies’ poverty suffering, let’s empirically follow the money and track the USDollar from our wallets to the local Bank, Central Bank, International Monetary Fund, World Bank up to the Bank for International Settlements and amaze that they are all privately owned in governmental disguise. Enlightenment that questions elitist authority discharges a dire need to bypass never jailed “banksters” who got financially rich at the expense of innocent tax payers. At the 2008 recession, Satoshi Nakamoto created Bitcoin, a swift peer to peer electronic cash “self-banking” system and alternative for central banking. Cryptocurrency’s blockchain, where trust is an algorithm in millions of computers, frees from middle men enabling everyone to be a decentralized bank without anyone’s permission. Here is a call for financial liberation by creating “Buddhist Bitcoin” usable across borders and in remote areas of the globe by a thus united community that excludes no-one. A Buddhist world economy comes into being if 500 million Buddhists form a coalition of the willing by using it. Buddhist leadership targets self-leadership that works toward self-awakening by self-therapy and secures autonomy by crypto self-banking, thus sharing responsibilities and sustaining Buddhist societies worldwide.

1. INTRODUCTION

This essay offers a roadmap of two kinds of self-awakening, within and without, for Buddhist global leaders to guide the world into a prosperous future with Buddhism 4.0. This has got nothing to do with the 4th industrial revolution save that both are innovations for the 21st century. The spirit as in the Buddha’s discourses can be rejuvenated as a psychology rendering the interpretation
and observations of a poetic activist who studies Buddhism and the beguiling titanic of big money. Awakening within reflects a Buddhism as psychology and psychotherapy for the post-modern secular urban citizen. Not only is the Dhamma pregnant of terminology referring to mind or psyche in the Buddha’s ca. 17000 discourses (www.accesstoinsight.org); the first, second and third discourses disseminate a psychotherapy of alleviating emotional suffering. By the Buddha’s memorable words spoken 2600 years ago, mankind can be guided to live a wholesome life and flourish in “heartfulness” (Kwee & Berg, 2016). Can a rebirth of Dhamma as therapy offer a regenerated practice, a structured conversational method, that helps awakening within? (Note: the sustaining suttas and sutras below are selected based on their psychological significance and may be viewed as a biased choice which it is; they are to be retrieved by googling the preferred version).

Here is a case in point. Having practiced Dharma in reclusion for decades as a self-therapy, an awakening poetic activist is alarmed into a world-out-there where big money rules the planet, watches with awe, and is amazed how people are being enslaved by loans and shackled in an economy ruled by deceiving US bankers who already scammed the globe into recession in 2008 without being seriously sanctioned for their hoax (97% Owned, 2012). Disguised as governmental agents, but in reality private “banksters”, central bankers issue money called “federal reserve notes” out of thin air and impose interest rates to enrich themselves while keeping the masses in poverty. Because the money for interest rates are not printed along, the global monetary system is always short of currency with a bust as result. This practice is replicating now a decade later in worse circumstances of governmental debt to the central banks promising economic disaster if nothing changes; and nothing has changed thus far. A way out is to bypass banks by becoming one’s own bank which is possible by cryptocurrency based on the blockchain technology that makes use of an open distributed ledger. An expanding block lists and records by running in numerous computers transnationally and registering transactions between two parties efficiently and effectively in a trustworthy way. Thus installing freedom from a third party control, this trustful
dealing verified by mathematical algorithms not by banks, ensures that bankers as middle men will outlive their usefulness. Financial freedom via Buddhist crypto money is a grassroots movement of shared responsibility that unleashes time and energy. Can that lead to the real, the rational and the good, and sustain a completely transformed society (Cryptocurrency Explained, 2018)?

A Buddhism as psychotherapy that aims to self-awaken within and without does not dwarf or discard non-psychological interpretations of the Dhamma as a religion, cosmology or metaphysics. It wants to stand as one of them, the more as it aligns with the Mahayana description of the three turnings of the Dharma Wheel (Samdhinirmocana Sutra) as 1) a middle way soteriology (the Buddha), 2) a philosophical quest (Nagarjuna), and 3) a religious quest (Asanga/Vasubandhu). The idea of a 4th turning of the Dharma Wheel had been innovated earlier by the Huayan School in China as from roughly the second part of the 4th century until a Buddhist purge in 841 (Hamar, 2007). It practices Dharma as in the Flower Garland Sutra, a 2nd to 3rd century compilation of 39 sutras on the relational nature of existence with the last book, the Supreme Crown Sutra as its pinnacle. Huayan bears similarities with Relational Buddhism (Kwee, 2012) which takes the Dharma up from there. The present essay submits, standing on the shoulders of giants, that Buddhism as psychotherapy is the Fourth Turning of the Wheel for the 21st century, which is in full accord with the healing discourses of the historical Buddha. Hence, Buddhism 4.0, a fourth turning that has come into existence more than a century ago next to Buddhism as a soteriology, philosophy, and religion, due to the writings of William James, the father of American psychology, and of C. Rhys Davids of the Pali Text Society in the UK (Rhys Davids, 1914). Theravada (Dhamma) can be regenerated to flourish as a contemporary psychotherapy which aims at transforming the karma of regrettable intentional action. Buddhism, with its 2600 years of experience might help psychotherapy to mature. The present psychology of awakening includes the topic of economy, particularly the subject of finance as an important field of Buddhist handling. Can Buddhist leadership throw a light on money, its dependent origination, and secure safety from scams?
2. AWAKENING WITHIN: A PSYCHOLOGY OF SELF AND NOT-SELF

Can Buddhism 4.0 as psychotherapy regenerate the practice of Dharma like precious old wine in a new bottle (Kwee, 2010; Kwee, Gergen & Koshikawa, 2006)? The wisdom of kindness wards off greed (fear, grief) and hatred (anger, depression) by cultivating virtue (compassion, joy). Happiness blocks venomous greed, hatred and ignorance which are intricately linked to the birth, aging, illness and death of psychological self. Ego extinction accrues awakening and nirvana (flame extinction) needs an 8-Fold Balancing Practice (8-FBP). This requires a balanced view of self/not-self (1) to transform karmic intention (2), speech (3) and action (4) in daily life (5), demanding effort (6), awareness (7) and (8) attention. The latter two refer to heartfulness meditation, i.e. being mindful to be “kindful” to self, a walking the talk practice of emptying self. Awakening within for secular people astray and distressed in this world is guided by a psychological interpretation of the first three discourses as a basis for self-therapy.

2.1. First discourse

Forty-nine days after bodhi the Buddha set the Dhamma Wheel in motion by delivering the 4-Ennobling Realities (4-ER), generally known as the four noble truths, which is a discourse about a healing middle way to awaken psyche without a creator god. Transcendental Truth is not what the Buddha could have meant as the purpose for his way of life. 4-Ennobling Realities sounds more appropriate than “noble truths” with a connotation of permanence and eternity discarded in the Dhamma’s spirit that emphasizes impermanence and the here-now. Ennobling however indicates a process of becoming an Arhat who is noble of heart and karma; a worthy one who has abolished his inner enemies and has quenched emotional fires for nirvana (extinction) by a self-therapy called meditation. Note that this meaning and use of ennobling realities differ from “True Realities for the Spiritually Ennobled” (Harvey, 2009). The 4-ER coined here is a psychological interpretation that aims to reflecting the Buddha’s spirit rather than inferring from linguistic or semantic analyses. Suffering is interpreted here as a body-mind
experience on a continuous scale. A psychological take delimits the purview to a “mind-only” (Yogacara flavored) interpretation of the Dharma by only considering the emotional suffering without denying or belittling bodily suffering or physical pain. Indeed, painfulness harnesses a double meaning as of the body and of the mind. Psychological painfulness is in its core emotional suffering which on its turn also inheres in a double meaning based on the dual experience of emotion, as of the body and of the mind. The emphasis is on the psychological aspects of the experience. A psychological perspective leans on psyche rather than on soma as conveyed in the Salattha Sutta about the man shot by a poison arrow who suffers from two kinds of pain whereby the Buddha prioritized the man’s mental healing rather than his physical condition, which he qualified as a skillful approach.

1st Ennobling Reality, dukkha, is to be understood. There is dukkha, psychologically inferred as emotional suffering, regarding birth, aging, illness and death of body and particularly of self. The Buddha’s dual view of human beings as namarupa, mindbody, implies that we need a body to experience mind and consciousness. Quintessential to understanding emotional suffering is the “double entendre” when speaking about the sufferings of birth, aging, illness, and death of self in an overarching teaching of not-self. Critically thinking: why is birth mostly a joyful event in all known cultures and does birth in the Buddha’s take comes to mean suffering? Birth of body is the start of physical suffering due to aging, illness and dying for sure. But, the sutta further points to suffering as “sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, despair, being with the unloved, not being with the loved, not reaching goals” which are all psychological conditions. Moreover, the last indication in the sutta reads: “In short, the khandhas of clinging”. The concluding question is: clinging to what? The answer embeds the quintessence of all listed sufferings: the illusion of self. Khandhas refer to mindbody/namarupa, consciousness/vinnana, organ sensing/vedana, (introspective) perceiving/sanna and mental formations/sankhara. These are modalities or inflammable heaps which if on fire motivates to cling onto and give birth to I-me-mine/ego-self enabling a psychology of birth, aging, illness, and death of self. The birth and rebirth of khandhas’ clinging implies the creation of I-me-mine/ego-self.
Aging refers to me or self and illness implies the inflation of ego, or egotism, considered a “dis-ease” of disturbed mind. Death is losing what is I and dearly mine and which belongs to me and self, my status, my possessions and my loved ones. All this defines my I.D. as a person that is lost or going to be lost when dead or dying causing emotional suffering. Death of psychological self has rebirth at the flip side: the birth/rebirth of an unwholesome, provisional, illusory self that develops onto a wholesome, ultimate not-self, liberated from obnoxious emotionality and rebirths of self illusions. Body rebirths are anathema in a Dhamma that defies metaphysics and embraces a nama perspective. Is this the end of the provisional householder index self? Obviously no! We’ll still pay taxes, have a name, address, phone number, and passport. Not-self is a psychological redeath post and pre a rebirth in a this-worldly cycle of samsara-nirvana. Being not-self on life’s ultimate level is a reboot of our body/speech/mind systems to non-clinging. Death of self-I.D. is about losing that was mine, rising sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, despair, being with the unloved, not being with the loved, and frustration, all hurting I-me-mine/ego-self toward understanding ultimate not-self

2nd Ennobling Reality, craving, is to be abandoned. Craving begets greed, hatred and is due to ignorance how to manage these 3 poisons (3P) as in the basic negative emotions of depression, fear, anger, and grief. Greed includes fear of losing and grief to have lost, hatred includes anger toward another or oneself, resulting in depression. Be aware of craving’s dependent origination, conditioned arising-peaking-subsiding-ceasing. How does craving arise and cease in dependent origination? Through the fiery modalities of feeling, thinking, and doing. Behavior, action, karma; Affect, emotion (sankhara); Sensation, sensing and perceiving (vedana and sanna); Imagery, mental pictures (sankhara); Cognition, thoughts, concepts (sankhara) and Inter-relations, emotion’s context alike body and consciousness. This forms the acronym BASIC-I (a wordplay) that winks to the khandhas constituting I-me-mine/ego-self, which are illusions lacking substance in life’s impermanence; the self illusion was dis-illusioned by the Buddha during meditation in his quest to end emotional suffering. Consciousness (vinanna) appears from contact of 6 sense organs with a sensed object, thus
6 awarenesses, the usual 5 and a 6th one capable to perceive, watch, and observe body/speech/mind and to look into psyche and its contents. The 6th, “mind perceives mind”, here called the “mind’s eye” or “brain as sensing organ” completes the list of organs: eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin. Having sensed (vedana) and aware how the object feels (+, -, or neither), one inwardly perceives (sanna) mental formations. Craving, a mental formation of Affect, Imagery, Cognition, mounding in the intention-motivation and Behavior of karma. These subconsciously fabricated mental formations might aggravate suffering by mental proliferation of (racing) thoughts, called papanca, resulting in emotional disorder. Since the term Affect or emotion is lacking in the Asian Buddhist languages, it is subsumed under sankhara (a lump of what is put together) in concert with Cognition, intention-motivation. Khandhas (aggregates), also a lump term, does not per se indicate a “firing order” of BASIC-I which manifold dependent originations can be experienced in meditation as firing orders. The Buddha’s firing order “sensation/vedana-perception/sanna-formation/sankhara-action/karma” translates in Sensation-Imagery-Cognition-Affect-Behavior, SI/CAB and SAC/IB, whereby I/CA and AC/I comprise the lump “mental formation”. Other orders of dependent origination: seeing a snake, we sense heart racing, think “danger”, feel fear and run, thus: SI/CAB (James-Lange). Or seeing a snake, we feel fear, sense heart racing, think “danger” and run, thus: ASI/CB (Cannon-Bard). Or seeing a snake, we sense heart racing, run, feel fear and think about it, thus: SBAI/C (Schachter-Singer). Any firing order depends on idiosyncratic disposition, conditioning and timing which determine one of a 100 billion possible neuro-electro-chemical brain reactions. Understanding dependent origination and the emptiness of self, the Venerable Kondanna, one of the Buddha’s five first disciples, self-awakened instantaneously.

3rd Ennobling Reality, nirvana, is to be realized. Craving and emotional disturbance are ceased by the wholesome karma of thought, speech, and action by equilibrating an 8-FBP, the Buddhist middle way to apply daily. The subsiding-ceasing of craving to grasping is like its origination-arising an interdependent process of the modalities. Ceasing occurs abruptly in a bigger cycling process of samsara-nirvana. Emotional suffering ends by breaking out of the
vicious cycles of birth-rebirth and death-redying of samsara until nirvana is attained. The quenching of sensory flames and inner fires extinguishes emotional arousal. Basic emotions show ingrained psycho-physiological patterns to mentally form fear, anger, grief, depression, each of which arises in dependent origination in the framework of illusory self. Nirvana, temporary or long-lasting (Bahiya Sutta), is dual thinking transcended into non-dual views like “empty self”. The Arhat walks the talk of the 4-ER, is in a love affair with self to find not-self, has abolished inner enemies and realized a noble heart. The road to nirvana depends on fetters and four levels: stream-enterer, once-returner, non-returner and Arhat. Nirvana, peaceful mind in total emptiness, is a transitional state or long-lasting trait of liberation from greed, hatred, and ignorance, freed from fear, anger, grief, depression and which, beyond joy, love, happiness, has arrived at an unshakable silence that was there all along. One gets there by virtue, meditation, and wisdom; the 8-FBP. The first wisdom for a stream-enterer is insight, understanding and a transformed view of self/not-self to attain via conversation and meditation. The Buddha as a kammavadin, specialist in transforming kamma, reflects the “raison d’être” of Buddhist practice. Arhat and nirvana, not a “saint” or paradise out-there, are inner conditions indescribable by words. If there is no self, craving and emotional suffering are abolished breaking the cycle of emotional rebirths and redeaths. The realization is completed by performing wholesome body/speech/mind karma.

4th Ennobling Reality, the 8-FBP, to be cultivated, contains firstly a balanced view on self as an illusion and not-self as a basic reality. The first step follows the oxygen mask principle: put it on your face first before applying it to your kids, i.e. take care of self first and abolish self by the divine attitudes of kindness, compassion and joy toward self and others in equanimity. Balance between outer-inner and take care of rational self-speech. Traverse the 8-FBP, begin to experientially view not-self (1), transform karmic thoughts (2), speech (3), acts (4), in daily life (5) with effort (6), start here-now in full awareness of the inner-outer flux of events (7) with attention (8) (7/8= heartfulness). Note that 2, 3, and 4 refer to karma, so that my take of the 8-FBP is about changing activity of thought,
speech, action and is therefore called Karma Transformation, a self-therapeutic strategy of stress inoculation based on meditation and conversation. Heartfulness, better known as mindfulness is the G-factor of Buddhist meditations comprising 4 stages and 8 steps; each stage consists of 2 steps and includes the best of Theravada, Mahayana, and psychotherapy (see also: Kwee, 2015):

1\textsuperscript{st} Stage of vigilance (appamada) to practice 1) Samatha, a deep relaxed stress-free state and 2) Samadhi, state of absorption or flow which dissolves views and extinguishes emotional arousal (nirvana). 2\textsuperscript{nd} Stage of wise reflection (yoniso manasikara) if practicing 3) Vipassana, insight in mind’s dependent origination and 4) Sunyata, experiencing total emptiness/MTN of self due to life’s omnipresent impermanence. 3\textsuperscript{rd} Stage of clear comprehension (sampajanna) to arrive at 5) Non-duality of conceptual paradoxes like in “form is MTN” and 6) “Kill-the-Buddha” a Chan way of ridding a conceptual obstruction. 4\textsuperscript{th} Stage, to accomplish inter-mind (antaratman) by 7) the Brahmviharas: kindness, compassion, joy in equanimity and 8) ubiquitous and universal MTN as everything in the world is a social construction (Kwee, 2012).

2.2. Second, third discourse, and more

The second discourse, Anattalakkhana Sutta, five days after the first, is the teaching that instigates the instant self-awakening of the Buddha’s four other companions, also at the Deer Park; see: Dhammapada (277-279) with the same essence, the Three Empirical Marks of Existence. Life has 3 marks: impermanence, suffering, and not-self with the essence that to be is to become, we cannot set the clock backward. Because of constantly moving forward, we always grow until death, the only perfect state where the body as a whole ends. Emotional suffering is due to perfectionism: “must” and “should” express an innate striving that fails while the perfect is unattainable in an imperfect world. Obsessive demands, if changed into wishing make failing bearable; tolerating life’s imperfections and unsatisfactoriness is more easy if we take a not-self stance toward frustration of not meeting goals. Letting go of self is not selflessness, as we need a provisional-household-index
self as a citizen making selflessness a lopsided stance, not a middle way of healthy self-interest to help and serve. Not-self does not imply a psychiatric “suicide” and although the term literally means “eradication of self”, not-self does not imply “somacide”, the killing of the body to achieve psychological goals. The art of living is in the paradox: to be self/not-self, to be empty of self but full of experience and bringing into practice that self cannot be captured; due to life’s flux we are ultimately always left without a self. A life that never sticks to anything surfs on waves of emotions, balances through the storms of existence, and peddles amid a troubled ocean of impermanence with one certainty, to sink one day. Without the illusion of a self that has no substance, we’ll “see things as they really are”, impermanent, imperfect and unsatisfactory; thus, emotional suffering is easier to bear. Notably, Sariputta’s three kinds of suffering (Dukkhata Sutta), the suffering of suffering, the suffering of conditionality or mental formations, and the suffering of change or impermanence as above, can all be inferred as psychological suffering.

The third discourse, Aditta Pariyaya Sutta. The Buddha expounded to fire worshippers that the six senses can be burning and that the flames of craving fabricated in psyche effect emotional fire; thus the advice: dis-attach from the 6 sense bases or the ALL, defined as the 6 consciousnesses by contact of organs and objects (Sabba Suta). To declare another ALL is to talk non-sense beyond human ability. The Buddha’s omniscience cannot go beyond this ALL. Consequently, metaphysics is denounced as anathema like in numerous other discourses (Dona, Rohitassa, Lokanta Gamma Suttas).

To the Brahmin Dona, awe-stricken by the Buddha’s radiance, he said not to be a supernatural being and wanted to be remembered as a lotus flower arisen from the mud of existential trouble. To Rohitassa: the world of dependent origination and the path to cessation of emotional suffering is in this one fathom long body with perception and thought. Thus, the ALL is in the 6 senses and the beginning and end of the world is within psyche, rather than out-there. The Buddha left questions regarding metaphysics unanswered, like: Is the world eternal or finite? Is soul different from body? Will a Buddha exist or not exist after death? Answering these questions will not lead to the end of emotional suffering, awakening, wisdom,
and nirvana. No clairvoyance like about his death, he only taught the cessation of emotional suffering and karma self-transformation by the “miracle” of education (Aggi Vacchagotta, Sabbasava, Malunkyaputta, Anuradha, Kevatta and Sangarava Suttas). Rejecting psychic powers and mind reading, the Buddha shut the door for metaphysics and delimited his education to a healing method, like in the narrative of the man shot by a poison arrow who suffers from physical pain and mental pain. He was clear in his mission to be a healer of mental pain (Culamalyankuvada Sutta) who practices mental training. By dealing with manifest behaviors (karma) and behaviors of the mind, he resembles a cognitive behavior therapist. The Dhammapada points at the primacy of cognition: “We are what we think and with our thoughts we make the world. Speak or act with an afflicted mind and trouble will follow. Just like the wheel that follows the ox that draws the cart… Speak or act with a wholesome mind and happiness will follow steadily” (Byrom, 1976, pp. 1-2). The quote points at the karma of speech and action which arises suffering or happiness depending on cognitive content. The Vittaka Santhana Sutta on intrusive sticky thoughts advises to relax and removing these 1) by opposite thoughts, 2) contemplating obnoxious consequences, 3) ignoring and distraction, 4) removing cause, or 5) forceful control. The Brahmavihara Sutta, boosts four sublime multiplying attitudes: kindness, compassion, joy in equanimity to self-train positive attitudes which likely prevent emotional disturbance and ward off imbalances in “reciprocal inhibition; e.g. visualizing loving-kindness with an enemy. In the Kalama Sutta, charter of free inquiry, we read: beware of hearsay, divine revelations, ancient testimonies, tradition, fancy thoughts, rumor, favored presumption, authority, official texts, theoretical ideas, dogmas, common sense, teachers’ beliefs, and own opinions. Instead, rely on experience and reasoning and only then apply to the benefit of oneself and the world. Was the Buddha the first psychotherapist ever, before the word and clinical profession existed? There is a hint when he compared himself as a physician and his Dhamma as a medical treatment (Magandiya Sutta).

3. GRADUAL APPROACH AND STANDARD TEACHING

It might be indicated that a student needs psychotherapy, a
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“structured conversational treatment” before being able to meditate fruitfully. Psychotherapy is alluded to in the scriptures as the “gradual approach” (anupubbasikkha) (Queck, 2007). Here it refers to a training by a counselor dialoguing insightfully with a client in a warm, genuine, empathic working relationship to transform emotion with the help of a khandha self-analysis form, a template to self-fabricate sane karma. Completion takes place in hourly weekly sessions plus homework and is to learn to kindfully deal with self by changing self-talk toward healing emotions conform the adage: only I can change myself (Kwee & Ellis, 1998). The Karma Transformation form, has 6 sections: 1, 2, 3 left and 4, 5, 6 right, and is at bottom a khandhas “selfie” analysis (a snapshot of self in terms of the khandhas) for alleviating dukkha (see also: Kwee, 2013):

Section 1) is to fill in an afflicting dukkha event, a sensing (vedana) moment (e.g. “Walking at sundown, saw a snake and felt fear”); 2) to jot down numbered sentences of the perceived (sanna) cognitions after seeing the snake causing or aggravating fear (jankhara) due to irrational (miccha ditthi) and proliferating thoughts (papanca) (e.g. “What if it is poisonous and bites me, I’ll die and never see my family again?”); 3) to complete the mental formation (sankhara) by naming and rating the disturbing emotion (e.g. “90% Fear”) and consequent action (karma) of grasping-clinging (upadana) (e.g. “Running”); 6) opposite 3: the desired effect (goal, aim, purpose) in terms of % of fear (e.g. 25%) or equanimity, joy, love, silence, nirvana, and completed by little or no grasp-cling (upadana), plus a new wholesome karma (e.g. Stay in the here-now); 4) to control the contact of sense organ-object-consciousness (phassa): outward check and inward dispute (vicara) reveal that “The object was a rope not a snake”; 5) to dispute (vicara) by thinking (vitaka) skillfully (upaya) and constructing rational/wholesome self-talk (samma ditthi) via questioning whether the thoughts are 1. realistic (rational, wholesome), 2. kindful (compassionate, joyous) and 3. to phrase realistic cognitions in a new train of self-instructional sentences. “It was unrealistic to mistake a rope for a snake and fabricate irrational fear by misleading thoughts. This is proof that I create my own fears by bringing inner demons to life. Next time, rather than unkindly fooling myself by self-sabotaging thoughts, I better instruct myself to doubt if it is a snake, whether it is poisonous...
and will bite me, and doubt whether I will instantly die and never see my family again. By these chasing thoughts I am only scaring myself. When I strive for only 25% fear next time, I slow down my thinking by staying in here-now with my breath and thought of the moment, to enable questioning validity.” (cf. Madhupindika Sutta).

The Buddha’s clinical work can be found in his conversational skillful methods and the salubrious conversations adhering a gradual approach that prepares for the standard teaching conform the first three discourses. The gradual approach is the skillful means of therapeutic dialogue and conversation that uses metaphors, analogies, parables and “double entendres”, like with the serial murderer Angulimala, who summoned the Buddha to stop (walking) by replying that he had stopped (killing) already long ago and by asking in return: “when are you going to stop?” Another example of skilled conversation is with the Bhaddavaggiyas, young men of the good life. Once, 30 of these affluent young men had a party. One had no wife and engaged a courtesan who robbed the company of all valuables. Searching the woman they asked the Buddha sitting under a tree whether he saw a woman on the run, whereupon a counter: “what is better, to seek for a woman or for self?” Here are four case examples: 1) The Buddha gave an insightful behavioral assignment which is a gradual approach as a preparation for the standard teaching to the slow learner Culapanthaka who was bullied by his brother that he was going to leave. Having heard this, the Buddha gave him a white cloth and asked him to keep on rubbing while repeating “Removing impurity”. As the cloth became dirty, insight dawned with the student that nothing is impermanent and that he too can learn the standard teaching. 2) Kisagotami’s baby was dead, bitten by a snake. She denied the fact, was berserk with grief and looked for a cure. She went to the Buddha who, for the medicine, needed mustard seed coming from a home where no deads are known. Looking everywhere and unable to find the pinch, she came to realize that death is common, accepted this fact, and stopped grieving. So, the Buddha gave a behavioral assignment leading to insight and acceptance. Again, a gradual approach prior to the standard teaching given after her ordination. 3) Sona was burnt-out because he practiced meditation day and night to no
avail. He considered to do good as a layman. Counseled by the Buddha, Sona was reminded of his lute and gradually gained the insight that investing too much energy results in restlessness and laxness in idleness, like the strings of a lute. Only if pitched in the middle of strung and lax can the lute be played. Thus, Sona was offered the gradual approach before continuing the standard method. 4) Anitthigandha is a wealthy young man set to marry a gorgeous woman who died while traveling to him and depressed after his bride’s death. Fascinating is the Buddha’s psychological assessment of his status and how the lovelorn was cured by a gradual approach. The analysis revealed a layeredness of his condition: depression due to grief about her death and broken-heartedness due to sorrow to have lost lust gratification, arising fear for the future, resulting in depression that he got rid of by insight and abstaining from sensuality. The Nikayas contain more clinical cases, like the psychotic Patacara, the drowsy mahamoggallana, the obese King of Kosala, the doubt-ridden Tissa, and many others. Note a red thread in all of these retrievable cases: a gradual approach of dialogical therapeutics which often include behavioral assignments and sensory awareness preceding the standard method of teaching the Dhamma on the three discourses’ content and heartfulness as a start. The gradual approach likens psychotherapy as a karma transforming self-counseling preparing the individual toward self-awakening without: self-awakening as a dire necessity to survive physically.

4. AWAKENING WITHOUT: A PSYCHOLOGY OF POVERTY AND MONEY

Awakening without means awakening within on deceptive matters out there. While in the first self-awakening we deal with truth vs. reality, the self-awakening without deals with: is what I see and hear “true or a lie”? Once awakened within, an awakening poetic activist looks into the world of the 21st century where the number of billionaires grow exponentially on the planet. How come? Is there greed in play? How can a poetic activist, who does not want to be a Buddhist but a buddha, and who lives assaying inner gold via a millennia old teaching and now catapulted into this cyberspace of electronic money, how can he survive on earth? How to buy a piece
of bread and where can he get money? Where does money come from? And what is money in the first place? Where do currencies go and what is the role of banks? It seems that ignorance abounds on a subject that determines all walks of life, but yet only a few is aware of money’s whereabouts, busy with earning and spending, and distracted by arena games with the new gladiators: soccer players. Answering these questions is an arduous task, it requires to follow the money to the rabbit hole, from wallet to where it is eventually destined, carried by the global currency flow. It seems that everybody parking money in a bank give the bank an irrational reason to create money from thin air. Let’s cut to the chase, the four centripetal focal points of fact finding are: ignorance, greed, money, and banking. The text below is based on the author’s insights as an informed private citizen (Maloney, 2015; Rickards, 2014; 2016; 2019).

4.1. Money and banking

The first thing to know is that there is a banking cartel worldwide governed by central banks in almost all countries in the world and by the central bank of central banks (Bank for International Settlements) in Basel, Switzerland (renowned for financing opposite parties in almost any war). Take the most powerful central bank whose policies are followed on the globe, that of the USA. This central bank is called the Federal Reserve (Fed), but if questioned the prefix Federal only suggests a US governance but is in fact an independent private organization run by the biggest banks in the USA. Although the President of the USA has the symbolic prerogative to nominate the board members (www.federalreserve.org), the beguiling prefix Federal has as little to do with the government as the prefix in the name Federal Express that delivers parcels across the USA. At bottom, the Fed is a private company that functions to enrich itself which is allowed to print money (on the screen) and determine the interest rate of lending. So, the USA do not print their own notes backed by gold, but issue treasury bonds and sell this to the Fed that buys them with money it creates out of thin air, called fiat money, theoretical digital money that was, is and never will be there. This money created is the debt of the US Treasury to the privately owned central bank, the Fed. The hard fact is that if there is no debt, there is no money, and by money creating
the US Treasury is bound to be eternally in debt and pay interest rates to the parasite called Fed. This US Treasury debt plus interest rate can never be repaid because there was no fiat money printed along to pay the interest. Because there is not enough money in circulation the next step is to issue treasury bonds again, and this is a vicious cycle, a spell the US Treasury cannot ever break. The result is an accumulating debt of almost 22 trillion USD in 2018 which is almost $63.000 per capita, thus enslaving everybody for it is impossible to ever pay it off. The private citizen is bound to become crushed in a debt machine as the value or purchasing power of money will decrease by more and more debt and fiat money printing. Indeed the Fed notes called US Dollar has lost 96% of its original value since its inception in 1913. In order to pay interest the US will be forced to issue more bonds for electronic money, called Quantitative Easing or helicopter money, under the aegis of the private Fed. This is not unlike in Zimbabwe where solving debt by making more debt is called irrational. All poor countries have debt and should repay the fiat money, which is eventually impossible, because there is simply insufficient currency available. Financed by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, poor countries are luted, shackled, and enslaved. Nations all over the world with a central bank are owned by the banking cartel.

On the level of the dealer around the corner, this bank gets its money to loan from the Fed which on its turn got money from the interest rate the US has to pay every year. Suppose, the bank got $100.000 interest from the state, 10% of this or $10.000 it keeps in reserve, while the remaining, $90.000 go to the dealers. The dealer bank (e.g. Goldman Sachs) on its turn is obliged to keep another 10% from what it has got, say $100 from $1.000, and then it may on its turn loan $900 to a private citizen who is charged an interest rate. Interest rate money, however, has not been printed along so that there will always be a shortage of money supply enslaving the people to make ends meet. If the private citizen deposits his $900 in another bank, this bank is to keep 10% or $90 in reserve and is allowed to loan $810, which someone again can deposit allowing the bank to loan $729, etc. and this chain can be continued until the original $1.000 becomes tenfold, $10.000. This hocus pocus is called “fractional reserve banking system”
whereby government decreed fiat money is created out of debt and thin air.

Charging interest rates on money created out of nothing smells like fraud and creating money out of debt is like a ponzi scheme perpetuated by new borrowing victims. On top, these private central bankers apply a sucking interest rate policy. Not only is there insufficient money in circulation in a nation’s currency system to ever pay debt with by the citizens and their government, but also interest rates are raised as soon as there is prosperity to keep inflation down and prevent the economy from overheating. Cooling down the economy goes along with corporate bankruptcies and with people unable to recompense their debts caused by creating fiat money for the banks’ profit in the first place. So, profits go to the banks, losses to the customers and when broke the banks confiscate houses, property, and real wealth cheaply, leaving the people poor and hungry. This interest rate game follows a boom and bust cycle that is already going on for three centuries. The system implies a perpetual expansion of money creation which likely navigate to a colliding crash course. This frightening scenario is unprecedented and has already started. The master planners of all of this are in Basel, the headquarters of the ultimate parasites, where the sucked money eventually goes. The specifics of who, what, when, and how remain unknown and because of its private nature, the meetings’ minutes are secret and stored on the guarded grounds prohibited for the unauthorized to enter. Is it to conceal a massive scam? How come that criminals are prohibited to print money, but not the Fed? Ludicrously, this counter fitting is legal. In short, governments issue treasury bonds and for the amount issued, banks are legally allowed to create fiat money from thin air by lending. How can governments and the innocent tax paying citizen become liberated from this hijacked position and how can Buddhism help to free Buddhist and other commoners from being slaves of debt?

4.2. Greed and ignorance

Issuing loans can be multiplied by seducing people who cannot afford to buy a house and lend money knowing that a raise of the interest rate will result in a default of the hard working citizen who then needs to cede back property. This selling of so called subprime
mortgages is a premeditated act to enrich the banks themselves. Sold by the billions these mortgages are mixed in packages and subsequently sliced in attractive tranches to be sold as excellent products like Collateralized Debt Obligations or with other mysterious names \((\text{Asset-Backed, Credit-Backed, Mortgage-Backed Securities, Credit Default Swaps})\) but in fact these are worthless papers rated as “excellent” by ditto corrupt private agencies (like Moody, S & P, Fitch) who profit from their fake ratings of the worthless products without being punished. Another fraud is that the Fed dealer banks (like Goldman-Sachs, J.P. Morgan Chase, Morgan Stanley) that sell these derivatives to countries and competing banks, at the same time short these junk equities and bonds on the stock and bond market knowing that they will plummet, thus profiting enormously from a downfall they themselves had staged. This led countries like Iceland and investment bank Lehman Brothers to bankruptcy in 2008. The latter was deliberately not helped to create a impoverishing bust common people are still suffering from. Now a decade later, some systemic banks who are “too big to fail”, because their default could crumble the entire world economy worse than before, are still contaminated like the Deutsche Bank, it seems. Although some derivatives’ issuing banks were fined, nobody was imprisoned. Thus, kindred methods are still practiced by these “banksters” jeopardizing humanity with their weapons of mass destruction that if implode no money will come out of the ATM with all its ramifications.

Only few people know about the above and the erroneous path of solution which is creating more debt so that the present economic situation (2019) is worst than 2008. Even if we all deal with money everyday, these fraudulent facts are too dark to fathom that it is quite difficult to shine a light in a simple way for the ignorant masses to understand the money system scam without a very serious intellectual effort. It seems that greed does not stop with the banking business but is the basis and inspiration for other sectors of public life to have greed reign their hearts, like the multinational corporations, the mainstream media and corrupt governmental institutions to mention a few areas. It seems that money and greed have outweigh the ledger on the wicked side of morality all over. If in the grips of banks, will the big pharmacological corporations like
Pfizer, Roche, Sanofi prioritize the health of fellow human beings or corporate profit? Do companies like Monsanto, now Bayer, work for healthy food or is there evidence that the population is slowly being genetically transmuted? Is there an increase in attentional disorders, in autism, in transsexuality, and why? Why do free people in a free world need to overcompensate Nestlé or Coca-Cola for spring water given by nature to humanity for free? Is it true that the rich gets wealthy by robbing resources and dominating the poor? Are the citizens of the world really being sucked, manipulated, and brainwashed? Can politics give answers or are most politicians being lobbied corrupted? What is the role of mainstream media in politics? Do they broadcast to brainwash, make propaganda, and p.r. the elitist agenda? Do we daily see news or fake news? Why and who killed John F. Kennedy? Who brought down the twin towers, a not-attacked third crumbling neighbouring skyscraper and what was piercing the Pentagon building on 911; was it controlled demolition to cover up 3.4 trillion dollars missing? How come that 26 of the world richest own as much as the poorest 3.8 billion people, half of the world’s population (Oxfam)?

4.3. A case in point

The awakening but hungry poetic activist, just arrived on earth, learned that he can borrow money from the bank if he has a job, which he meanwhile got as a waiter. So, he has a salary, paper money and coins, physical currency, comprising 3% of the total amount of money in the world. The remaining 97%, the digital fiat currency, is printed numbers on a screen. Having a job he goes to a bank to borrow money for his second basic need, shelter. He fancies $100.000 to buy a house, an amount he gets because of having a job. After an interview and assessment of his credit-worthiness debt is contracted and thus fiat money is electronically created abracadabra on the spot. So he walks out the bank with $100.000 and pays upfront for the house $12.000 and deposits the remaining 88.000 in some other bank nearby. Now this bank and the first bank are allowed to conjure up fiat money out of thin air. The first bank is allowed to juggle 90% of $100.00 which is $90.000 for another customer and the second bank is allowed to juggle 90% of $88.000 which is $79.200 for any other customer. These actions can be
repeated by any central bank dealer with any customer until the first and second credits are juggled tenfold of each original amount of debt. Our poetic activist is contractually obliged to pay back in say 10 years this amount of $100,000 with an interest rate of say 5%. So in the first year he owes the bank $5,000; in the second year, if he redeems 10% each year, his debt is $90,000 and with the 5% interest rate which is $4,500, he pays in two years $9,500 interest rate which adds up until his debt is zero. Totally, he will pay after 10 years $127,500, thus the bank “earned” or stole $27,500 via electronic debt and juggling fiat money out of thin air.

On the backdrop there is the Fed with its boom and bust cyclical game by lowering and raising interest rates. When our poetic activist lend in an economic upturn, expansion and boom, the interest rate was say low, but if a few years later the economy is downturning, contracting and in a bust, the interest rate is raised to high. Then he losess his job, becomes a delinquent, faces foreclosure, and consigns his house to the bank. So, he is left bankrupt while having “helped” the bank becoming richer. The bank would blame him for the inflation and recession because of his unreasonable wage demand and housing speculation. The poetic activist might say that he has been enslaved and sucked out. However, imprisoned by the system in the system, he might later give another try with the bank if he has a new job to continue his enslavement from where there seems no way out if he wants his own shelter. Or is it better for him to bypass banks and do future dealings with the help of a truth telling algorithm called Bitcoin (Nakamoto, 2008)?

CONCLUSION

What if Buddhists lead the world? Buddhist global leadership facilitates both self-awakenings, to ennobling realities and to banksters’ lies. Psychology is helpful in both cases, to awaken within by self-therapy and to thus be able to discern banking practices. Practicing and proselytizing the Dhamma and heartfulness to awaken within is a shared responsibility. The future will tell how effective the spirit of the Buddha’s gradual approach via conversation or self-therapy by Karma Transformation is as a preparation to self-awaken to the world-out-there. While the practice to attain the first awakening abounds in the Buddhist countries in Asia and in
pockets of urban areas in Europe and the Americas, the second self-
awakening falls behind and is usually not part of awakening in the
original Buddhist sense. Nonetheless this is also awakening: the
dependent origination of a bank loan, creating theoretical money
called credit, investing effort to counter ignorance and detoxify
the poison of greed, and infusing an equanimous loving-kindness,
empathic compassion and shared joy in daily life including finance.
Money is ubiquitous, penetrates and pervades in many aspects of
life. It drives social life beyond family and friends. In trade and the
service industry, it is all about dealing with money. Considering the
relevance of finance, global Buddhist leaders are set to help self-
liberate debt enslaved Buddhists and other citizens of the world
from a globalist heartless banking system that keeps mankind in
economic vicious cycles. It seems that at present there are only three
countries without a central bank: Iran, North Korea, and Cuba. Not
long ago Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Sudan joined global central
banking. These are all countries in conflict with the US deep state.
Russia that is on the verge to drop out of the central banking cartel
is being sanctioned. Opposition against global central banking is
voiced by worried citizens known as anti-globalists who are against
the New World Order agenda of the elite forcing toward a one
world government, like the Occupy Wall Street demonstrators,
Q-Anon, Q+, and recently the yellow vests in France combatting
a “Rothschild President”. It seems that the patriotic US President
Donald Trump is crusading against the globalists by promising to
drain the swamp of the deep state (CIA, FBI and NSA), to defuse
the globalist bankers and lawmakers’ networks, to identify the Fed
as the biggest threat to his success and to possibly remove it.

How can Buddhist leaders free the invisibly incarcerated citizen?
The answer is by promoting self-leadership by self-therapy to self-
manage karma and by self-banking with a decentralized crypto
currency. The latter is a disruptive innovation like with Über for
taxi's and Airbnb for hotels. Movers and shakers might want to
deploy a “Buddhist Bitcoin” or utilize the existing Bitcoin that has
already set the stage for overhauling the present global fiat central
banking and the “petro dollar”. Bitcoin can be a store of value
and a way of electronic bartering as it is a direct exchange ruling
out the banker as middle man. Regarding the future, the result of
going crypto is that all middle men will outlived their usefulness and disappear. The world will function totally differently and look unrecognizable without intermediating agents between producer and consumer. No wholesalers, retailers, brokers, notaries, bankers anymore. Bitcoin is a store of value because of its limited edition of 21 million coins, quoted with eight digits behind the comma (called Satoshi) and is digital gold because of its scarcity. The current fiat currency is not backed by gold as a guarantee of value. This is the case since the gold standard has been abandoned by President Nixon in 1971 leaving the value of the Federal Reserve Notes intrinsically worthless in principle. The value of the USD is solely based on trust and on the oil trade, and is thus as solid as a house of cards in an era that obsoletes oil. The banksters’ grotesque 300 years of sucking and enslavement have led the car mogul Henry Ford (1863-1947) say that “it is well enough that people of the nation do not understand our banking and monetary system, for if they did, I believe there would be a revolution before tomorrow morning” (Vennard, 1980, p. 12). The Buddhist way of leadership is not revolution but accelerated evolution by making the repeated call to awaken to detoxify the harming viciousness of greed as imposed by central banking. Bitcoin can be used alongside the pernicious fiat money in a transitional period. Because cryptos transcend borders, its transnational use by Buddhists helps unite Buddhists all over the world.

This essay is a first call of its kind for freedom, compassion, and prosperity by crypto finance in collaborative Buddhist practice with non-Buddhists in a coalition of the willing across borders in order to arrive at a shared responsibility that sustains societies all over the world. In closing, a poetic activist comes to realizing a twofold self-awakening via understanding the insights to be liberated by owning responsibility for emotional suffering and by stopping to believe banksters’ lies on money even though yet unable to free from the system. The hope is for a patriotic Buddhist leadership to come forward to lead people to self-leadership toward self-awakenings within by self-therapy and self-awakening without by self-banking.
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BUDDHIST APPROACH TO GLOBAL LEADERSHIP AND SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE SOCIETIES OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN THE WESTERN AND ORIENTAL WORLD: THROUGH BUDDHIST MUSIC AND ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

by Leena Seneheweera

ABSTRACT

The current study investigates the Buddhist approach to Global leadership and shared responsibilities for sustainable societies of people with disabilities in the experience of Western and Oriental communities. Buddha's teaching has proved the nature of leadership, positive thinking of sharing fundamental responsibilities and the features of sustainable societies in the universe. Those factors could be learned from reading, listening to audible and seeing visual Buddhist art as well. The study selected audible (Buddhist Music) and visual art (Architectural designs; paintings, sculptures, carvings) as the best way to lead and share responsibilities for people with disabilities to construct a sustainable society in the Western and oriental community. According to researcher's working experience as a resource person, the study has selected Autistic and Down syndrome people from Sri Lanka as well as physical disabilities and selected abled people from Zagreb,

*. Dr., Department of Fine Arts, Faculty of Arts University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka.
Croatia in the East Europe. The study intends to show the significant role and capabilities of Buddhist music and architectural designs that aid to realize global leadership within sustainable societies and shared responsibilities for people with disabilities as the purpose of this study.

The study has followed qualitative research methods and the primary data were gathered from a few students of two special needs schools from Kandy Sri Lanka and physically disabled students from the faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Zagreb and able people form the village of Vinkovec, Zagreb, Croatia through practical workshops, education seminars, lecturers and interviews. The study analyses the facts under the experience-based findings. The results prove that applicability of Buddhist music and architectural design have great powers to reach the global leadership, shared responsibilities for sustainable societies of people with disabilities by understanding their self-esteem (atma mana) self-love (atma-sneha) as successful human in the world.

The research problem of study proceeds as how to mediate Buddhist music and architectural designs to build up global leadership, and sharing responsibilities for sustainable society of people with disabilities who comes from diverse cultural backgrounds.

1. INTRODUCTION

The selected topic explains the significant role and capabilities of Buddhist music and architectural designs which are enhanced to realize global leadership within sustainable societies and shared responsibilities for people with disabilities and abled people as well. Art is constructed by cultural identity and humanity each other. There is not a bond with gender, ethnicity, disability, class and status etc. According to researcher’s experience, Buddhist music and architectural designs prove as fundamental tools to initiate leadership and sharing responsibilities for non-Buddhist laymen in the Western society. However, the best examples of global leadership, sharing responsibilities and building up a sustainable society in accordance with the Buddhist approach, are depicted in the Buddhist temple visual arts in Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Thailand, China and India. Although, those Asian regions have powerful expressions of Buddhist art and aesthetic path in the temples, the Western world are different from them. However, the religious and other genre of art mutually contributes to teaching and learn the
reality of the actual world and spiritual as well as the emotional atmosphere in the human mind. There are various methods of understanding in Buddhist doctrine through art in between Buddhist followers and non Buddhist followers as well as disabled and non-disabled people. Therefore, study orientates to the people who comes from divers cultural background. The Buddhist art particularly music and architectural designs (including paintings, sculptures and carvings) can be considered as a tool of healing spirituality.

In accordance with the literature survey in 2017 it was very difficult to find a Buddhist temple, monk or Buddhist people in the Zagreb city in Croatia. Therefore, the researcher as a leader who is Buddhist follower, introduced few Buddhist doctrine among disabled and non-disabled people through Buddhist art for sharing positive experience with their healing spirituality. The main target group of the study is disabled individuals from Sri Lanka and Croatia and the non-disabled villagers from Croatia with non-English speaking cultural background. The study analyses the facts under the experience-based findings.

The people with disabilities are susceptible and receptive human in the society. Thus, the responsibility of mainstream community is to rehabilitate them within knowledgeable, thoughtful, emotional as well as success group through leading and shearing responsibilities for inclusion them to the sustainable society. For developing the healing spirituality of a disabled person, proper leadership and shearing responsibilities with each other is fundamental values. Then they will be able to approach the sustainable society with self- esteem, compassion, happiness, well-being, good health and peacefulness.

According to the UN conventions the rules and regulations are legalized for disability rights in the modern world. Under the rules and regulations those conventions and policies highlight their health, education, support system, freedom, safety etc. for inclusion in society\(^1\). The accommodation of *The United Nations*

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1. (b) Support participation and inclusion in the community and all aspects of society, are voluntary, and are available to persons with disabilities as close as possible to their own
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2006’ (hereafter UNCRPD-2006) confirms equal rights, fundamental freedom, enjoyment through non-discrimination for disabled as the basis of the world freedom, justice and peace. (UNCRPD-2006: Preamble (a) & (c)). The convention performs the common judgment of protection, sharing, responsibilities of abled people and needs of disabilities with the world happiness, peacefulness as well as protection for a sustainable society.

But during the Buddha’s time there were not those kinds of rules to protect any people in the society. He always led the vulnerable community in the society as a welfare service. In the modern Western and Oriental world, disabled or special needs community in the society has not been considered as abled community and they are also not blended with typical society due to their impairments. Therefore, people have to understand their needs and address to support system and expand the awareness for leading as well as sharing experiences through religion, education and art education or performances. A person who is not suffering from mental impairment she or he could understand the basic level of Buddhist ethics, values, and morals for sharing experience and learning Dhamma. Buddha accepted all kinds of people to sharing experiences with them as a leader to build up a sustainable society through live discussion. In addition, he conveyed his teachings to the live audience through story telling during his Bodhisatta period, and in accordance with the actual situation with positivist tradition through verbal communication. During Buddha’s Dhamma teachings the highest people gained panna\(^2\) and other one could have concentrated practical knowledge of ethics, morals etc. to build their well-being and happiness life. Buddhist music and architectural designs prove the practical knowledge of Dhamma and it could be enhanced for sharing experience and responsibilities with healing spirituality of disabled and average people in the diverse culture.

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2. Panna has a specific application in Buddhism and it does not signify knowledge in general but knowledge which is connected with the highest good of man (Premasiri: 1987, 38).
2. THE APPROACH OF BUDDHIST MUSIC FOR DISABLED COMMUNITY TO LEAD AND SHARE EXPERIENCE IN THE WESTERN AND ORIENTAL WORLD

The concept of leadership appears as an activity of guidance or supervision to a group of community or individual through a clear vision. (Encyclopedia of Psychology, second edition 1984, Vol.2). And a leader motivates to achieve his or her clients’ common positive goals with shearing experience in accordance with his/her practices of the life. The proper leadership is implemented for the people of physical disabilities’ lives to solve their problematic area and for inclusive into the mainstream community. The study identified the practical approach of Sri Lankan Buddhist music particularly devotional songs which come from popular music genre and sound homage (shabda puja) are the best tools to guide them with proper leadership and share experiences. Those songs express the Buddha’s sacred Dhamma including pleasant lyrical composition and sound homage of sacred drums and those are performed in a sacred environment.

According to Buddhist teaching, a leadership as well as leader should practice the code of training (vinaya) through showing respect and honor. During Buddha’s period all Sangha follows his leader’s sila (moral conduct) samadhi (right concentration) and panna (wisdom) as higher value-added activities. Among of those concepts, the sila requests right speech, right action and right livelihood. Also, this is divided into four parts; avoidance of false speech, slanderous speech, harsh speech, abstention frivolous or vain talk (Premasiri 2006) Right speech is a very basic activity as well as an easy access for leading and accommodating the inclusion of people with disabilities to the mainstream community. Not only for special needs people, but also this term facilitates to change human’s modern life style and solve social conflict for bridging a sustainable society.

The above mention moral conducts have been identified in the Sri Lankan Buddhist songs as well as Pirith chanting and sacred

3. Shabda puja means sacred sounds offering to Buddha. There is a offering beat and using five sacred musical sounds from percussion, winds and brass and family. (Seneviratne 2002).
recitatives. Researcher initiated to orient student with physical disability and abled peers at the Faculty of Education Sciences and Rehabilitation, Zagreb, Croatia and Autistic and Downs’ syndrome students from Bluerose school in Kandy Sri Lanka through practical music workshops and lectures. I selected Buddhist songs which has been expressed Buddha’s effort and experience for human liberation. Those songs represent the value of compassion and loving –kindness, his welfare service with using pleasant words with each other. The best example could be examined from Mha-Parinibbana Sutta in the 16th text of the Digha-Nikaya\(^4\). There are seven perceptions that leads welfare process such as: impermanence, Egolessness, impurity, wretchedness, relinquishment, dispassion, cessation (Mha-Parinibbana Sutta, (trans.) 1974). Welfare service has higher value for upgrading disabled people in the society. Therefore, at the beginning of the workshop, I briefly explained few perceptions which they could understand in simple manner and then start my musical arrangements.

Normally, there is no exact meaning of musical sounds as a meaning of verbal cues. It is globally diagnosed as a concept for healing not only human mind but also animals, plants etc. During the two hour workshop I shared my experience with them through translating the theme of songs and singing marvelous melody. This firstly explains the meaning and flow of the scared words of the song. Then it initiates a discussion with comparing other religious doctrine and the method of those religious activities. The issues mainly depend on their lives with good, happiness, and well-being atmosphere. Additionally, they express a forward integration mood and mindfulness with each other and also build a calm and quite environment in the class room. Then open the flow for question and answer.

According to my observation, I could see their performance without blankness, nothingness with pleasing emotional association in their actual life. Their understating of the sacred words of the song creates visual suggestion and it is helpful to figure out the high value of the Dhamma. The following examples convey

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4. Bhikkhus, so long as they attend on each other with loving-kindness in deed, word and thought, both openly and in private; so long as in respect what they receive as due offerings (Mha-Parinibbana Sutta, (trans.) 1974.
those values. 

_Budukaruna Desa Themi_ (The Lord Buddha) sung by famous female singer Nanda Malini and entitled _himi sanaramara_ (the Lord Buddha) sung by female singer Malani Bulathsinhala.

_Himi sanaramara loka sinwankara Llowlhuru Budhu saminde_  
_Ma hada malawena mal dothata gena - Padawadimi nibande_  
_Himi guna akara loka diwakara- Louthuru Budhu saminde_  
_Hitha duka wawana budhu bana padayata-Mihira dakimi nibande_  
_Himidam akara gunamini sagara- Louthuru Budhu saminde_  
_Hitha suwadayaka Budhu guna giyaka-Rrasaya vindimi nibande_

Meaning of the song in briefly:

_The Lord the Buddha, who is the utmost blessing for men as well as gods is pre-eminent to the world_

_With withering flowers in handfuls in my heart I worship your feet._

_The Lord who is a mine of virtue is the sun to the world and surpassed as pre-eminent_

_I experience the delicateness, the line of your utterings of doctrine, upon which my sorrowful heart is rest_

_The lord who is the mine of doctrine is the ocean of the gem of virtue surpassed as pre-eminent_

_I sense forever the delighted song in which stored the virtue of Buddhahood_

Throughout the song including the above part depicts the cultural values of Buddha’s preaching, taste and the healing spirituality of Buddhist songs as in the second part of the song expresses the healing function of Buddha’s preaching and the third part of the song expresses the therapeutic value of listening to Buddhist song. The next step of my workshop was arranging practical musical events. Before the practical session I explained the healing effect of sacred music therapy for to the human mind and the explanation of the theory of Aristotle’s reference to catharsis (_Poetics_ 1449b 24-28). In its theoretical aspect, it examines briefly, the relationship as well as the value of pleasure to mind. Pleasure is a significant medicine in living a cheerful life. Similarly, listening to sacred songs, recitatives or hymns produce those values for balancing or stabilizing physical and mental relaxation.
According to the existing Sri Lankan sacred music theory, I demonstrate my vocal part with monophonic style of the pitch\(^5\). It was strange for Western audience and they accepted this pitch system, and I developed not only songs but also sacred recitatives and piri\(\text{th}\) chantings with them. The piri\(\text{th}\) chanting is unaccompanied with music and there is no fixed time value but it has vocal unity and audible healing of its verbal sounds. The monophonic pitch of piri\(\text{th}\)chanting inquired how slowly create peaceful environment for mental and physical relaxation. However, the sense of sacred song slowly absorb to the human mind\(^6\) and they could listen to the song with meaningful lyrics and those are demonstrated with mindfulness. Moreover, the nature of range in the pitch of Sri Lankan Buddhist song is not so broad and most of songs are created at middle octave. The middle octave mediates to ensure balance in our mind. It is not a low or high range of musical sounds therefore, I always select the song which is created by middle octave. According to the Buddhist teachings the middle path is helpful to arrange our life style. Its application is benefited for not only differently-abled people but also abled individuals.

Additionally, listeners express their emotions such as love, joy, happiness, peace and rational judgment through sharing emotions with each other. This situation creates a practical realization of an atmosphere love and kindness. This bridges the gap between vulnerable people and abled people of the society. At the end of the workshop all are realized basic morals of Buddhist teachings and its healing process as well as the mediation of Buddhist song for sharing and mutual understanding between Buddhist and non-Buddhist people in the world.

I applied those songs for Sri Lankan Autistic and Downs ‘syndrome students through practical sessions per a week. Although they couldn’t understand the lyrics of the song they quietly listen to the melody. Also, Sinhala words are familiar with them and few students could understand the meaning of lyrics. When they hear

\(^5\) Western style is polyphonic and oriental style is monophonic.

\(^6\) “The sense of tone was probably acquired slowly by man, and savages to-day are musically still in the rhythmic stage, while in the East music has developed on rhythmic rather than tonal lines (Halliday F.E. 1946, 122).
the word of Buddha in a song they express their happiness mood with sitting on their heels and showing patience. I share with them the experience about the Buddhist morals by singing and chanting or reciting verses in our daily life. Most of the students like to listen to Buddhist songs because of its slow or middle beat and tempo. For them, I accompanied our inherited scared drums. These healing sounds produce a sacred and peaceful environment. They could memorize Buddhist songs rather than romantic or songs of children. Therefore, I led them to improve their memory through this kind of Buddhist approach. They sing with me and repeat words several times and learn basic Buddhist ethics through the songs. This is the basic method which I used to share experience with them through Buddhist teaching.

3. ENHANCEMENT OF BUDDHIST ARCHITECTURAL DESIGNS FOR DISABLED AND ABLED COMMUNITY TO BRIDGE SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY IN THE WESTERN AND ORIENTAL WORLD

The basic concepts of sustainable society maintain socially, economically, healthy and environmentally successful background of human. Those concepts could be identified as a uniform arrangement of the nature. Among of them the environment which can be natural and man-made impact on developing the spirituality of the human mind. Furthermore, the material environment of human makes religious and aesthetic sense in accordance with the location, constructed structure, and cultural values. Hence, architecture has been defined as a significance medium to fulfill religious and aesthetic sense rather than the other material environment and art forms. Among of them, the function of Buddhist architecture is examined to realize of Buddhist teachings, veneration of human and nature, orientation of visual rhythm, uniqueness and sense of site. Therefore, I presented visuals of Buddhist architectural designs such as painting, sculpture and carvings as well as location of Buddhist temples in hills, mountains, forests, rocks with green floral beauty to enhance fundamental Buddhist ethics and morals.

7. The practice of architecture emphasizes special relationship, orientation the support of activities to be carried out within a designed environment, and the arrangement and visual rhythm of structural elements, as supposed to the design of structural systems themselves (Britannica Ready Reference Encyclopedia, Vol.1, 2005:126).
for non-Buddhist community in the West. The modern world it is made completely of different atmosphere of high-rise building blocks as human residence environment in the West and East.

But the simple architectural designs in Buddhist temples particularly the temple paintings give a lesson on how to construct buildings with natural resources and the impact of its benefit for health and a peaceful mood to demonstrate sustainable society. Also, those images contribute in understanding and developing human’s religious knowledge, thought and emotion. Most of temple paintings represent Buddha’s counselling services for physical and mental disabled as well as typical community. Few examples depict on the temple walls; enlightenment process, seven weeks after the enlightenment (sathsathiya) and jathaka stories (examples of previous life) in the Bodhisatta period. Selected images from Samawardhanarama temple, Kandy and those paintings were composed in 2012.

Those stories depict human needs and social function as well as the harmonious Buddhist society. In addition, some Paintings and carvings depict Buddha’s residence in natural environment; rocks, trees. These locations produce natural water, air shadows, cold weather as well as exchange the ideas with animals, birds, flowers and rivers etc. It is remind this kind of environment nurtures human health and mindfulness. After the enlightenment Buddha spent seven weeks in different locations with various postures for giving examples to the Bikkhu and the public community. In

8. Buddha spent seven weeks with helping from human as well as natural environment including snake to repay his achievement of Buddhahood
addition, there are some painting compositions the Buddha and his followers’ activities of daily life with expressing healthy, peaceful and mindfulness atmosphere from wall paintings. I show the example of the composition of food gathering culture of Buddha and his follower Bhikkhus. According to the feedback from the audience, it was a new experience for them about the sharing food gathering culture and values of alms giving and simple life pattern of human behavior.

Therefore, Dhamma could be explained through Buddhist sculptural images. The best are examples of Buddha statues in the temple with various hand gestures and postures of sitting, standing and lying. The hand gestures depicted the concentration of the mind and facial expressions express mindfulness. During my presentation, I confirmed that the audience preferred white color Buddha statues and they love it because they think white color is the symbol of purification. However, my observations confirmed the color of statues, pagodas, wooden carvings and temple painting depicts Buddhist architectonic features and its three dimensional form such as shading, tone and intensity of statues are healed of spirituality in mind. Furthermore, the preparation to worship of the Buddha, devotees wear white colored cloths when they visit the temple. They also offer flowers, water, and fragrant medicinal plants in front of the Buddha statue to purify their mind as a habit in daily life. This is not a spiritual practice but an act done in psychological pursuits. These functions of sensory perception mediate to gather knowledge, thought and emotion. According to the Buddhism the way of our actual life is represented from its beliefs and it is
beneficial to grow our mental disposition with good behavior since it impacts to build a sustainable society.

All activities link with therapeutic processes such as color, smell, cloths, plants and sounds, shapes, form, pattern and material etc. In the feedback of the audience they mentioned these kinds of habits should be improved by elders in a family at home and children will follow them particularly this is a good example for physical and mental impairment children. Although this is a very basic activity it is a useful lesson for the children in a family. If children grow under this circumstance, and they initiate good conduct from their families and become a mature and sensible person in society. Then the person will be able to improve his or her moral conduct from the family and it can be confirmed that it is a fundamental level to build a sustainable society. Because a person create his own reality on the basis of insights.

As the next step, I selected to show mythical images from Buddhist temples in Sri Lanka and Vietnam to the audience to determined the equality and inclusion in the community to sustain the society. Moreover, some animal figures and mythical images which are a combination of human and animal or bird together represent symbols of *metta, karuna, muditha, upekkha*. The concept of mythical images such as divine or demoniac is not new or strange for Western audience because mythical figures are very famous concept like goddess of phoenix appear in Western churches. Mermaid (*kinnera*) female stoned figures of musician at Phat Tich pagoda in Vietnam and wooden dancing figures at Padeniya, temple Sri Lanka are represented Buddhist artistic and aesthetic sense pleasing human with cognition. The mermaids at Paht Tich pagoda are holding and playing sacred musical instruments such as; drums, Pipa, cymbals, horn, etc. Their smiling face, facial expressions and music gesture express peaceful, prosperous and well-being life. Furthermore, those images present another lesson in between universal creation of human and animal.
I discussed this concept with comparing between Buddhist art and the art of Catholic churches through visual images. Furthermore, I understood the abled and physical disabled people enjoyed with its religious mimetic representations. During my presentation, I saw their smiling faces and they expressed their happiness forgetting their barriers in life due to the images that I presented these examples through my presentation. There were selected examples in my presentation; the divine assembly in the temple paintings in Sri Lanka and Dunhuan cave art in China and demoniac composition of the Buddha defeating evils (*mara parajaya*). Moreover, significant architectural designs of floral decoration of wooden and stoned carvings, painting on ceiling and walls, were always used to decorate in the background of the composition. This creative process remind the impact of long–term ecological balance in the human and the nature for developing sustainable society.

4. CONCLUSION

To sum up with my argument, the study of Buddhist music and architectural designs which have mediated to build up global leadership and sharing responsibilities for sustainable society of community including disabled people. The results prove that the Asian audible and visual art successfully respond to healing and mutually understanding not only basic Buddhist doctrine but also sophisticated references of Dhamma by all community to
develop unsustainable ways in the society. Buddhist approach in art represent main activity to introduce the elements of sustainable society such as sharing responsibilities and experiences to the Western community including disabled as well as abled people.

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How to mediate read Buddhist philosophy and culture book page 133.
ELEMENTS OF BUDDHA’S POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY IN THE PALI CANON, AND ITS RELEVANCE FOR THE GLOBAL LEADERSHIP ISSUES AND SUSTAINABLE POLITICAL RELATIONS

by Robert Szuksztul

ABSTRACT

The presentation will be dedicated to showing that the Buddha’s teaching contained in the Pali Canon delivers some important observations about the ways of proper government and political engagement. Those elements can be divides into two groups:

1. Explicit teachings on social and political relations and right leadership. In this category we’ll find a very clear message advocating for values- and rules-based order in which a ruler should lead by example of upholding high standards (charisma) and not by force. War and employing power pressures in general are shown not only as morally wrong, but as ultimately futile, leading to the downfall of the one resorting to them.

2. Implicit teachings, are universal Buddhist assumptions with bearing on the political issues. One must begin with the concept of “sentient beings” which escapes the pitfalls of narrow-minded nationalism that seeks one’s superiority in one’s nation seen as inherently superior to any other, and extends the area of human concern far beyond the human realm into the world of nature. From this perspective Buddhism rejects

* Dr., Senior Lecturer, Centre for Comparative Studies of Civilisations, Jagiellonian University, Krakow, Poland.
all claims concerning superiority and all social stratification based on birth, nationhood or generally, power. The only stratification Buddhism upholds is based on the positive personal accomplishments – on virtues. All of this point to the ideal in international relations where very powerful and relatively weak countries are relating as equals by following a common set of agreed rules ("level playing field"). Other such teachings of a general nature (e.g. the importance of transparency and truth for any relation on any level) will be discussed in the full paper.

It needs stressing that, far from being an unachievable dream of an idealist, the elements of the aforementioned teachings are being implemented in various organisations in contemporary world (such as EU or UN). At the same time we see very recent developments in international politics that go directly opposite to that vision. It is not sure which one of them (if any) will win in the long run, but the Buddhist view certainly is the proposition that delivers more stable and predictable future where nations discuss their goals based on rules set together with other nations seen in principle as equal partners and not as enemies.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the Pali Canon, one can find clear indications as to the Buddha’s view concerning worldly matters that in today’s terms might be described as politics, civil administration, international relations and conflict. Obviously those matters do not constitute the center of the Buddha’s teachings, but neither do they feel out of place because the teachings concerning politics are deeply integrated with the fundamental aspects of the Dhamma. So it is not at all surprising that the rules for growth that the Buddha presented to the Vajji confederacy are very similar (in some points identical) to those given to the Saṅgha.

The paper will be divided into three parts:

i. Explicit teachings on social and political relations and right leadership in the Pali Canon.

ii. Implicit teachings, concerning universal Buddhist assumptions with bearing on the political issues.

iii. Some concise remarks about the value of the Buddha’s view for the present.
2. SOCIAL AND POLITICAL THOUGHT IN THE PALI CANON

During the Buddha’s time there were two main competing forms of state organizations on the Gangetic Plain. The first was kingdom whose defining characteristic was the institution of a consecrated monarch, who got that status based on hereditary rights. The most important (powerful) kingdoms mentioned in the Nikāyas are Magadha ruled by Bimbisāra and later by his son Ajātasattu, with the capital in Rājagaha and then Pātaliputta, Kosala, ruled by Pasenadi and his son Viḍūḍabha with the capital in Sāvatthī, Vamsa ruled by Udena with the capital in Kosambī, and Avantī with the capital in Ujjenī, ruled by king Pajjota.

The second form of government – gaṇa-saṅgha – is not as easy to translate. It is frequently described as a republic, oligarchy or chiefdom (Thapar 2003, p. 147 ff.). It contained some participative elements, such as meetings, discussions and voting, but those were reserved to the representatives of the ruling clan, or clans – in the case of a chiefdom-confederacy. Even smaller number of people dealt with a day-to-day administration. The term rājā was also used in gana-saṅghas, but its meaning was different from the usage in kingdoms. It could be applied to any clan member with the power to discuss or vote on the state affairs, but more specifically it described the select few (gaṇarājās) who decides on matters concerning foreign policy, war and administrative matters (Barua 2003, p. 297). A gana-saṅgha could consist of a single clan (Sākyas, Mallās, Koliyas) or a confederate group of clans. The prime example of the latter is the Vajji confederacy, consisting of eight or nine clans (Barua 2003, p. 294 ff., Thapar 2003, p. 138). Those political entities, no matter the political organization were constantly competing for power. Sometimes this competition took form of a military conflict.

The Buddha himself was born in a gana-saṅgha state of the Sākyas, and clearly had sympathy for this form of government. He perceived it as a more sustainable polity in the long run, but at the same time he was undoubtedly aware of its fragility as the following story about the coming conflict between the Vajjis and the kingdom of Magadha illustrates.
The story is part of the narrative of the Mahāparinibbānasutta (DN 16) but it is also an independent story in AN 7.22 (Bodhi 2012, p. 1010 ff.). King Ajātasattu of Magadha wants to attack and conquer the Vajji confederacy. He declares “As powerful and mighty as these Vajjis are, I will annihilate them, destroy them, bring calamity and disaster upon them.” (Bodhi 2012, p. 1010). He sends his minister Vassakāra (“Rainmaker”) to the Buddha to inquire about his prediction concerning this plan “for Tathāgatas do not speak falsely” (Bodhi 2012, p. 1011). The Buddha’s response is to enumerate seven activities in the Vajji confederacy, by upholding of which only growth might be expected for them, not decline. These are: (1) assembling often and holding frequent assemblies, (2) assembling in harmony, adjourning their meetings in harmony, and conducting the affairs of the Vajjis in harmony, (3) not decreeing anything that has not been decreed and not abolishing anything that has already been decreed, but undertaking and following the ancient Vajji principles as they have been decreed, (4) honoring, respecting, esteeming, and venerating the Vajji elders, (5) not abducting women and girls from their families and force them to live with the Vajjians, (6) honoring, respecting, esteeming, and venerating the traditional shrines, both those within [the city] and those outside, and not neglecting the righteous oblations as given and done to them in the past, (7) providing righteous protection, shelter, and guard for arahants, [with the intention]: “How can those arahants who have not yet come here come to our realm, and how can those arahants who have already come dwell at ease here” (see: Bodhi 2012, pp. 1011–12)\(^1\).

All those activities point to a system that is based on compromise, strongly conservative in nature, looking for guidance about the present affairs in the past experience (the elders) and resolutions (“ancient Vajji principles as they have been decreed”), and protecting those who need and deserve protection. The Buddha informs Vassakāra, that it was he, who taught the Vajjis those seven principles. Vassakāra replies: “If, Master Gotama, the Vajjis were to observe even one among these principles of non-decline, only growth would be expected for them, not decline. What can be said if they observe all seven? King Ajātasattu Vedehiputta of Magadha,

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Master Gotama, cannot take the Vajjis by war, except through treachery or internal dissension” (Bodhi 2012, p. 1013).

Vassakāra indeed succeeded by diplomacy (upalāpana) and sowing disunion (mithubheda) as we are informed. Faking quarrel with king Ajātasattu over his supposed sympathy for the Vajjis, he flees Magadha to the Vajjian territory, and within three years is able to totally break the union of the confederacy. Buddha’s rules are forgotten and Ajātasattu scores an easy victory (see: Malalasekera 1938a, p. 846).

The Buddha certainly did not approve of military solutions to conflicts. Wars are rarely justifiable (except perhaps for defensive engagements); they lead to the suffering of many and hardly ever solve anything. The story of the conflict over the village of Kāsi between king Pasenadi and Ajātasattu illustrates that. Pasenadi married his sister to king Bimbisāra, Ajātasattu’s father, and gave her the village as part of the dowry. When Ajātasattu killed his father, and his mother died of grief, Pasenadi reclaimed Kāsi, arguing that patricide does not have right to the inheritance. Ajātasattu waged war against his uncle and defeated him in battle. The Buddha commented that as follows: “Bhikkhus, King Ajātasattu of Magadha has evil friends, evil companions, evil comrades. King Pasenadi of Kosala has good friends, good companions, good comrades. Yet for this day, bhikkhus, King Pasenadi, having been defeated, will sleep badly tonight” (SN 3.14, Bodhi 2000, p. 177). The fortunes in war, however, often change and king Pasenadi ultimately defeated king Ajātasattu confiscated his army and held him prisoner. The Buddha responded in verse: “[...] The fool thinks fortune is on his side / So long as his evil does not ripen, / But when the evil ripens / The fool incurs suffering. [...]” (SN 3.15, Bodhi 2000, p. 178). Later, supposedly after Ajātasattu renounced his claim to the throne, Pasenadi released him, gave him his daughter Vajirā as a wife, and presented as a wedding gift with the same village of Kāsi (Malalasekera 1938a, pp. 171–72). It cannot escape one’s notice that war was hardly justifiable course of action, especially given the end result, but there are also deeper reflections to be made. One is the contrasting behavior of the two kings – Pasenadi and Ajātasattu. It might be compared to the conflict between devas, representing the
former and asuras similar to the latter. As Bhikkhu Bodhi remarks in his introduction to the Samyutta Nikāya: “In Buddhist legend the Tāvatimsa devas are perpetually being attacked by the asuras, the titans, beings of great physical prowess and violent ambition who seek to conquer them and take control of their domain. The Sakkasamyutta repeatedly pits Sakka in struggle against the leaders of the asuras, Vepacitti and Verocana. The two sides can be read as symbolizing alternative political philosophies. The asura leaders favor rule by force and retaliation against enemies; they rationalize aggression and extol the ethic of “might makes right.” Sakka, in contrast, stands for rule by righteousness, patience towards aggressors, and the compassionate treatment of wrongdoers” (Bodhi 2000, pp. 86–87).

The second observation is that war is ultimately futile as it settles nothing by itself. It is very interesting, that the remarks about war in the Nikāyas are very similar to remarks about gambling, because they are both very uncertain affairs as to the immediate results, and secondly, on the deeper level both leave one exposed, irrespectively of the result. Let us compare the description of the dangers of gambling from the Sigālovāda sutta (DN 31) with the aforementioned sutta concerning the conflict between Pasenadi and Ajātasattu:

[...] being devoted to the recklessness of gambling is a way of losing one's belongings; [...] ‘Young householder, there are these six dangers in being devoted to the recklessness of gambling: if one wins one engenders hatred, if one loses one bemoans the things lost, one's wealth diminishes, one's word has no authority in an assembly, one is despised by one's friends and companions, one is not considered a desirable marriage partner, since the gambling man does not have the means to support a wife. (Gethin 2008, pp. 131–32)

Victory breeds enmity, / The defeated one sleeps badly. / The peaceful one sleeps at ease, / Having abandoned victory and defeat. (SN 3.14, Bodhi 2000, p. 177).

2. jayaṃ veraṃ pasavati, dukkhaṃ seti parājito. / upasanto sukhaṃ seti, hitvā jayaparā-jayaṃ. The same verse is to be found in Dhammapada 201 (see e.g. Bhikkhu Thanissaro 1997, p. 77, Buddhharakkhita 1985, p. 37).
So the ultimate Buddhist observation is that war itself is not the method to resolve conflicts but to perpetuate it. The greater aggression and oppression, the greater opposition and counter-aggression: “The killer begets a killer, / One who conquers, a conqueror. / The abuser begets abuse, / The reviler, one who reviles. / Thus by the unfolding of kamma / The plunderer is plundered”. (SN 3.15, Bodhi 2000, p. 178)

The Buddha accepted the existence of different forms of government, and the questionable practices those governments engaged in, as a reality of his times. This, however, never precluded him from teaching about the more perfect form of polity, and the ultimate goal to which it should lead. To put it simply, the Buddha wanted a government in whatever form, to serve its purpose (maintaining order and protecting the people) and be guided by virtue (Dhamma). In order to illustrate this, let us turn first to the Aggañña sutta, and then to Mahāsudassana sutta, which describes the ideal of ruler – a cakkavattin.

The Aggañña sutta (DN 27) is a text very rich in content that describes – among other things – the origin of the present world, of the society with its stratification into four classes (vaṇṇa), and of the institution of kingship, what is the most important for the present discussion. The setting for the story is the dissolution of this world-system, in consequence of which most beings are reborn in the Ābhassara (“Radiant”) realm.

There they exist made of mind, feeding on joy, self-luminous, moving through the air, always beautiful. They remain like this for a long, long time. Then there comes a time, [...] when, at some point, after a long period of time this world evolves. When the world evolves beings for the most part fall from the realm of the Radiant and come here to this world; and they exist made of mind, feeding on joy, self-luminous, moving through the air, always beautiful. They remain like this for a long, long time. (Gethin 2008, p. 120)

The story depicts a perfected state of existence, where beings are self-sufficient, and there are no distinctions between them – there are no male and female, beings are counted only as beings. This perfected state soon starts to deteriorate. The essence
of earth formed as the skin on boiling milk, and one being of greedy disposition became curious, tasted it and was overcome by craving (taṇhā). From then, craving intensified, more things appeared, beings became coarser, and their differentiation became apparent. Finally male and female appeared, and with them sexual intercourse. Later still rice appeared, ready to eat, without bran or husk. Whenever beings collected rice for the evening meal, it was grown and ripe again by the time of the morning meal. Than one being of lazy disposition, decided to collect enough rice for two meals. Others followed his example and food-storing was invented. As a consequence of that, rise grew with husk and bran, and what was cut did not grow back again. Faced with the perspective of food shortages, beings decided to divide the fields into personal plots, and ownership and possession was invented. But then one being of greedy disposition, while keeping his plot, decided to take the rise belonging to another.

From then on taking what is not given, chastising, lying, and punishment became known.

‘Then those beings gathered together, lamenting, “Alas, bad practices have appeared among beings, for certainly where taking what is not given becomes known, chastising, lying, and punishment will also become known. Suppose we were to agree on one being: he could accuse whoever deserved to be accused for us, he could reprimand whoever deserved to be reprimanded, he could banish whoever deserved to be banished, while we would hand over a share of rice to him”.

‘Then those beings approached the most handsome, best-looking, most graceful and most commanding being among them and said to him, “Come, good being, accuse whoever deserves to be accused, reprimand whoever deserves to be reprimanded, banish whoever deserves to be banished, while we will hand over a share of rice to you.” And having agreed to their request, that being accused whoever deserved to be accused, reprimanded whoever deserved to be reprimanded, banished whoever deserved to be banished, while they handed over a share of rice to him. (Gethin 2008, p. 125).

As is clear, the story envisages the social contract between the rulers and the subjects. In this vision both the king, and the subjects have rights and also duties. The king is elected based on his personal
qualities (charisma, accomplishments), for the purpose of serving those who elected him, but there is no essential difference between him and the other beings. In other words, the differences in social class, position or power are superficial and have no foundation in essential differences among beings, contrary to the Brahmins’ claims. The following fragment from Aggañña illustrates this clearly: [...] “Mahāsammata” means “agreed on by all people (mahā-jana-sammata)”; it was “Agreed Great” that was the first expression that appeared. “Ruler (khattiya)” means “lord of the fields (khettānaṃ pati)”; it was Ruler that was the second expression that appeared. “King (rājan)” means “he pleases (rañjeti) others by his truth”; it was “King” that was the third expression that appeared. In this way, [...] in accordance with the ancient original expression, the circle of Rulers came into being—made up of those very same beings, not other beings, of beings who were just like them, not different in kind, in accordance with good practice, not bad practice. For Truth is best in the world, both here and now and for the future”. (Gethin 2008, p. 125)

The passage just cited illustrates one more important fact. The ultimate function of a king is to follow and act according to the moral guidance – the Truth or Righteousness (here: dhamma). This association of kingly power and Dhamma finds elaboration in the concept of the universal ruler, the “one turning the will” – cakkavattin. In many respects, the cakkavattin is described very similarly to the Buddha. Both have the 32 marks of a great man (mahāpurisa), both are unique in the world (there can be no other at the same time), their funeral rites must be conducted in the same way, etc. (Gokhale 1969, p. 737) The reason for this similarity is that both have Dhamma as their guide. Of course the Buddha realized it perfectly and cakkavattin only to some extent given mundane nature of his activity, but nonetheless he is called dhammiko dhammarāja, a “righteous king who rules by the Dhamma”.

“Bhikkhus, even a wheel-turning monarch, a righteous king who rules by the Dhamma, does not turn the wheel without a king above him.” When this was said, a certain bhikkhu said to the Blessed One:

3. or elaboration on the subject of cakkavattin and its place in the Buddhist political thought see e.g. Gokhale (1969).
“But, Bhante, who could be the king above a wheel-turning monarch, a righteous king who rules by the Dhamma?” “It is the Dhamma, bhikkhu,” the Blessed One said. (AN 5.133, Bodhi 2012, p. 746)

We see this Dhammic characteristic of cakkavattin in the description of his conquest. Following the wheel-treasure (the mark of his righteous rule), king Mahāsudassana marches with his fourfold army first to the East and then to other directions. Everywhere he is greeted with joy by the local rulers, who readily accept his supremacy and ask for his instruction. Mahāsudassana gives them the moral guidance in the form of the five precepts and allows them to stay in power:

King Mahāsudassana said: “Do not kill living beings. Do not take what is not given. Do not indulge in sexual misconduct. Do not tell lies. Do not drink intoxicants. Govern as you have governed.” And so the rival princes in the east became obedient to King Mahāsudassa (DN 17, Gethin 2008, p. 101).

It is a stark difference to the political art, as it is usually understood, where ends usually justify the means, and ethics is not something that worry rulers too much. In the Nikāyas one can find several terms describing the science of statesmanship, usually in a pejorative context. There is khattadhamma or khattavijjā (“science of rulers”), daṇḍanīti, and nītisattha. It is described as tiracchāna vijjā – a low art, a pseudo-science, and wrong occupation – micchājīva (Goyal 2002, p. 129, Rhys Davids and Stede 1972, p. 303). The PTS dictionary gives us a description of khattavijjavādin, “one who engages in the science of rulers”: “even at the expense of killing father and mother is wealth to be desired for oneself” (Rhys Davids and Stede 1972, p. 232). It need not be repeated, that this is a description fitting precisely to the case of king Ajātasattu.

The Buddha did not approve of this and set another ideal for the ultimate purpose of the existence of king and state in the model of the cakkavattin. What is described here, in the story of Mahāsudassana, is a moral conquest, where a just ruler conquers hearts and minds of the people, who become his subjects willingly and eagerly. Ultimately, in the developed political theory in the Nikāyas, the function of the state is to protect and implement Dhamma. This
ideal, which reached down to the smallest settlements through the local monastery, undoubtedly kept in check the more extravagant and morally questionable activities of a ruler. In this sense Buddhism and Buddhist Saṅgha served as a subtle spiritual counterbalance to the military, political and economic power of the state (Gokhale 1969, p. 738). However, it is impossible for the division between political and spiritual, āṇā and dhamma to be ultimately bridged, and the Buddha concentrated his efforts on establishing the Saṅgha for the purpose of creating perfect micro-society and perfect model to imitate by the society at large (Nakamura 1999, p. 88).

The main function of the Saṅgha is to provide a fertile spiritual environment (or “field” – khetta) for successful practice towards awakening. But the Saṅgha has also other, indirect functions for the wider society. The Buddha always consciously rejected attempts to steer the Saṅgha into the direction of Indian forest ascetics and to sever its relation with society. Precisely that was the attempt of Devadatta with the intention of causing the schism in the Saṅgha. Devadatta demanded that five rules be made compulsory for all monks and nuns:

(1) that monks should dwell all their lives in the forest, (2) that they should accept no invitations to meals, but live entirely on alms obtained by begging, (3) that they should wear only robes made of discarded rags and accept no robes from the laity, (4) that they should dwell at the foot of a tree and not under a roof, (5) that they should abstain completely from fish and flesh. The Buddha’s reply was that those who felt so inclined could follow these rules—except that of sleeping under a tree during the rainy season—but he refused to make the rules obligatory. This refusal delighted Devadatta, who went about with his party, declaring that the Buddha was prone to luxury and abundance (Malalasekera 1938b, p. 1109).

The reasons for the Buddha’s refusal, however, are quite clear. He imagined the Saṅgha, and the society that hosted it, in reciprocal relation – both giving, and receiving something in exchange. The lay society provided the Saṅgha with food, medicine, clothes, shelter, etc. The Saṅgha for its part, provided laity with teachings about how to lead a fulfilled, morally grounded life, as well as how to secure a good form of afterlife. But it was also something more.
The Saṅgha was meant to be an exemplar or micro-model of the ideal society.

Many of its features show the attempt to “turn back the clock”, so to speak, to restore things to a better state, described by the Aggañña sutta. In the times before the necessity of electing the king, there was no food storing, no need for cooking, no private possession, no punishment by force, etc. When we look to the vinaya, the similarities are striking. Monks and nuns must go about with minimal possessions, evenly distributed, so there are no inequalities, they do not store the food (except for a limited period during sickness), do not cook, their stature is based on a personal charisma associated with accomplishments on the path. Saṅgha exhibits also strict internal and external pacifism. There are no corporal punishments and no forced punishments – the punitive procedure is set in motion by the Saṅgha only after a monk’s or nun’s acknowledgement of the fault and a formal confession. Of course it might be said that the Saṅhga cannot serve as a model for a general society, because it depends on that very society for the production of material things (food, clothes, etc.)\(^4\), and needs constant right exertion by right minded, select individuals oriented on the spiritual. Perhaps it is true, but it doesn’t mean, that the Saṅgha cannot serve as an inspiration for steering society and polity. And one of the points touches precisely on the role of individuals. The society can only be as good, as its members. The positive social and political change must start with the right exertion and positive self-change of individuals.

The second lesson concerns the organizational aspect of the Saṅgha, which in an important aspect is similar to the organization of a gaṇa-saṅgha. Let us revisit seven rules of non-decline, this time given to the Buddhist monks:

(1) “As long as the bhikkhus assemble often and hold frequent assemblies, […] (2) “As long as the bhikkhus assemble in harmony, adjourn in harmony, and conduct the affairs of the Saṅgha in harmony, […] (3) “As long as the bhikkhus do not decree anything that has not

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4. Although later Buddhism reflected on this issue, and monasteries engaged in e.g. food-production.
been decreed or abolish anything that has already been decreed, but undertake and follow the training rules as they have been decreed, [...] (4) “As long as the bhikkhus honor, respect, esteem, and venerate those bhikkhus who are elders, of long standing, long gone forth, fathers and guides of the Saṅgha, and think they should be heeded, [...] (S) “As long as the bhikkhus do not come under the control of arisen craving that leads to renewed existence, [...] (6) “As long as the bhikkhus are intent on forest lodgings, [...] (7) “As long as the bhikkhus each individually establish mindfulness [with the intention]: ‘How can well-behaved fellow monks who have not yet come here come, and how can well-behaved fellow monks who are already here dwell at ease?’ only growth is to be expected for them, not decline (AN 7.23, Bodhi 2012, pp. 1013–1014).

We might note, that these rules are very similar to the ones given to the Vajjis; the first three are in fact identical. The gaṇa-saṅgha form of social and political organization, with frequent assemblies, discussions and voting, is also an important lesson for the structuring of general society as well as international relations. As we have seen in the case of the Vajjis, an enemy intent on destroying this form of polity can well succeed, but the important lesson here is that – while not immune to danger – a form of a polity in which its members actively participate, generally has more sustainable characteristics(s). We might mention the feeling of identification with, and responsibility for the society and polity by actively participating in their makings, reduced risk of being dependent on one person’s catastrophic social or political mistake, and a general approach of negotiating differences on the open forum by discussion, instead of secret scheming and military activity – what might be an important lesson for international relations.

3. GENERAL BUDDHIST TEACHINGS WITH BEARING ON THE POLITICAL ISSUES

The rest of the present discussion will be necessarily brief, due to space constraints. The most important thing to note is that political

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5. A similar observation can be made by comparing a closed-source, propriety software with its open-source counterparts (e.g. in case of security applications). The bugs and security risks in the latter are usually spotted and patched must faster, thanks to the communal work.
ideas in the Nikāyas are tightly integrated with the more general teachings. Some that will be discussed here are the observation of a fundamental commonality of all human beings and in fact of all living, sentient beings (sattā) connected with the universal experience of saṁsāra-generated suffering, the awareness of deeply interrelated nature of reality, and the role of truth.

Nothing summarizes more concisely the commonality of sentient beings, than these verses from Dhammapada:

All tremble at violence; all fear death. Putting oneself in the place of another, one should not kill nor cause another to kill.

All tremble at violence; life is dear to all. Putting oneself in the place of another, one should not kill nor cause another to kill (DhP 129-130, Buddharakkhita 1985, p. 30).

Although there are words in pāli for a human person (purisa, puggala), the preferred term is rather the general “sentient (living) being” – sattā, as in the above quotation. Such choice underscores the fact that all human beings are fundamentally the same, sharing the same aspirations, hardships and fears. The term sattā, also logically require to extend the area of human concern far beyond the human realm into the world of nature. On the political level, the category of “sentient beings” provides the tool to escape the pitfalls of narrow-minded nationalism, where one seeks the confirmation of one’s nation’s superiority by hatred and denigration directed to other nations. From this perspective Buddhism rejects all claims concerning inherent superiority based on national claims, and all social stratification connected with birth, wealth, formal education or, generally, power. The only stratification Buddhism upholds is based on the positive personal accomplishments – on virtues.

The idea of the fellowship of all beings with their struggle in saṁsāra finds a natural application in the practice of the four abodes of Brahma (brahmavihāra), also called the “immeasurable” meditation, where one pervades the whole world with the mind imbued with loving-kindness (mettā), compassion (karuṇā), altruistic joy (muditā), and equanimity (upekkhā) (See e.g. AN 4.190, Bodhi 2012, p. 560). Loving-kindness is beautifully described in verse in the Mettā sutta of Suttanipāta:
[...] May beings all live happily and safe, / and may their hearts rejoice within themselves. / Whatever there may be with breath of life, / whether they be frail or very strong, / without exception, be they long or short, / or middle-sized, or be big or small, / or dense, or visible or invisible, / or whether they dwell far or they dwell near, / those that are here, those seeking to exist— / may beings all rejoice with themselves (Sn 145–147, Laurence Khantipalo Mills 2015, p. 48).

The other, most important teaching connected with the notion of commonality of all sentient beings is *paṭicca samuppāda*, the teaching on dependent origination. It is usually presented as a twelve-factored list describing the elements responsible for renewal of existence, but here we are interested in its abstract form:

\[
\text{When this exists, that comes to be; with the arising of this, that arises.}
\]
\[
\text{When this does not exist, that does not come to be; with the cessation of this, that ceases} \quad (SN 12.37, Bodhi 2000, p. S7S).
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The implications of this notion are very profound for the Buddhist teaching, and impossible to exhaust here. In the social and political dimension it means that we are all interconnected and interdependent. It applies not only for the realm of sentient beings (*sattaloka*), but also to the receptacle world (environment for beings – *bhājanaloka*). It means not only that we should treat one another (be it individuals, firms or nations) as partners, we have no other choice, given the state of affairs. This interconnectedness of the world is clearly visible and a necessity today, for example in environmental, demographic or economic phenomena.

But partners need to trust one another. Here we come to the right speech (*sammāvācā*). The prime aspect of the right speech is to speak the truth, that is to state that which is in agreement with objective reality and one’s actions and intentions. There are also three other aspects of the right speech: refraining from harsh speech by which one’s partners are antagonized, refraining from divisive speech by which one causes quarrels and divisions, and refraining from idle or nonsubstantial speech. Whether we talk about individuals or nations, there can be no trust, no common endeavors and no mutual respect (only the appearance of them) when there is no proper form of communication.
4. VALUE OF THE BUDDHIST TEACHINGS FOR SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ISSUES IN CONTEMPORARY WORLD

Let us briefly summarize some tenets concerning Buddhist teaching about social and political dimensions of human activity. As concerns the individual, Buddhism stresses the need for self-development, and moral grounding of human and trans-human interactions, based on the perception of commonality and interdependence of sentient beings. In the social dimension, the individuals should show active, participative attitude. Their relations should be built on trust and respect for others, by the means of the truth.

As for the state and other trans-individual actors, the Nikāyas remind that they have responsibilities for their members. The social differences of wealth, education, status, or access to healthcare should be minimized as much as possible. This lesson comes from the organization of the Buddhist Saṅgha, as well as from the Aṅgānaṇa sutta, where in the perfected state, beings were only counted as beings, without difference, prejudice or inequality. Also in the functioning of the Saṅgha we can find lessons that a transparent organization, based on truth, frequent assemblies, compromise, negotiation, and discussion, is to be sought for. There is also a strong thesis that war (or more generally – conflict) ultimately never solves anything\(^6\). The other lessons are as those for an individual.

It needs stressing that, far from being an unachievable dream of an idealist, the elements of the aforementioned teachings were and are being implemented in various organizations in contemporary world. In Europe, after two cataclysmic world-wars, there was longing for a long lasting peace. The European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) was an initiative by Robert Schuman to centrally regulate the production of said assets in six European countries. The main goal of the project, beside the economic advantages, was to tightly

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\(^6\) I would see the exception to this in a purely defensive war, where a country must defend the lives of its people from an unprovoked attack. Even then, however, to permanently end the conflict, other, non-military means are necessary.
integrate traditionally rival countries in order to make war “not merely unthinkable but materially impossible” (Anonymous 2016). The idea proved successful and gave way to the formation of European Union (EU). As an organization that have to negotiate the diverging interests, aspirations and world-views of 28 countries (7), the EU has no other option than to be a rules-based, open and transparent political body – in consequence the EU sets a stage on which very powerful and relatively weak countries are relating as equals by following a common set of agreed rules (“level playing field”). The EU also proves that a trans-national political body (not unlike a gana-saṅgha) can become quite powerful, however in this case not by the military might, but by the institutional and economic strength (8).

They were, and are, other organizations, that exhibit qualities mirroring teachings in the Nikāyas. The organizations that may serve as an example are the League of Nations and its successor, the United Nations with the sub-bodies. Their role was to provide a negotiation forum for conflict resolution, and by that to facilitate international peace and cooperation. The results may be described as mixed, but generally positive. It is certainly a contemporary phenomenon, that the method of political and economic pressure, or a hybrid war is preferred over the open military conflict. When it comes to war it is rarely a war over territorial expansion – a standard form of military conflict in the past. It appears that Buddhist observations concerning war, are finally being realized by the contemporary societies (9).

The future will be defined by the ever growing need for the realization of our commonality and interdependence on both an individual and trans-individual level. The growing number of

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7. Likely soon to become 27, because of the Brexit. It shows that the EU is an institution not without its own profound problems. For the future challenges for the EU see (Barnier 2019).

8. The global impact of EU laws is a well-known phenomenon, where the EU regulation are mirrored in non-EU countries. A recent example is the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

9. A point in case concerning the futility of war is the partitioning of Poland by its neighbours. In consequence the commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania disappeared from the maps for 123 years. Yet both Poland and Lithuania reappeared as states, because even so thorough a conquest could not eradicate their cultural (linguistic, historical, religious, etc.) identity.
people on the planet, and ever deeply integrating markets, together with the ecological challenges make it an inevitability. We are, or soon will be faced with the issues of mass migration, workforce transfer and outsourcing, building a sustainable framework for multinational companies, providing living space, food and water in sufficient quantities and of sufficient quality, climate change, pollution, emission, etc. Those problems are global in nature, and need to be addressed with the affirmative attitude of the Buddhist notion of the community of sentient beings. On the political level it requires a common set of universally applicable rules made for the benefit of all beings and the environment. It deserves to be noted that this is not incompatible with the appreciation and affirmation of one’s own country, as the case of the EU illustrates. On the individual level it calls for mindful living, with awareness that the way I consume goods, the things I choose to buy, the means of transport I use, and other everyday decisions directly and indirectly affect other beings.

This direction seems inevitable given the state of things, but we have a choice to positively embrace it and help to shape it in the spirit of the Nikāyas, or to oppose it. The globalization is an ongoing process, troubled by profound problems, that usually hit already the most adversely affected social groups. Some seek to oppose it by making the case for isolationist and nationalist ideology. This might be illustrated by the Brexit vote in the UK, “America First” movement in the USA, or the wave of nationalist governments within the EU.

It is not sure which way of addressing the future challenges (if any) will win in the long run. However, the Buddhist view certainly is the proposition that delivers more stable and predictable future where nations discuss their goals based on rules they set together with other nations that are seen in principle as equal partners and not as enemies.
**ABBREVIATIONS**

DN: Dīgha Nikāya (references are to the sutta number)

SN: Saṃyutta Nikāya (references are to the saṃyutta and sutta number)

AN: Aṅguttara Nikāya (references are to the nipāta and sutta number)

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sabbe tasanti daṇḍassa, sabbe bhāyanti maccuno.
atānaṃ upamaṃ katvā, na haneyya na ghātaye.
sabbe tasanti daṇḍassa, sabbesam jīvitaṃ piyam.
atānaṃ upamaṃ katvā, na haneyya na ghātaye.
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Dhammapada 129–130

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**Bibliography**


ABSTRACT

According to traditional Buddhist history, in the journey to seek liberation, while he was still very young, Siddhartha received teachings from two of the most famous teachers of his time, namely, Ārāḷa Kālāma and Uddaka Rāmaputta. They taught him different techniques for meditation, and he eventually succeeded those practices and realized that he was still unable to grapple with his more significant concern: liberation from the suffering of samsara. He left the two teachers unflinchingly. Some historical accounts suggest that he spent the next few years struggling with different kinds of practice, some of which almost cost him his life. With energetic, youthful determination, finally, young Siddhartha accomplished the ultimate spiritual path and became the Buddha.

In this paper, I hope to critically engage Siddhartha’s renunciation from various Pali suttas. My main argument will emphasize the life of Siddhartha and his decision to renounce the world in search of spiritual enlightenment. I seek to articulate how his renunciation could become a source of inspiration for youth to develop the necessary qualities for a leadership role. While I would like to ground my argument in specific

* Robert H.N.Ho Family Foundation Scholar, Harvard Divinity School, USA.
ideas about what the components of ideal leadership are, I hope to explore further the obstacles that young people may encounter and how the teachings of the Buddha might help them overcome those challenges. Although there are various accounts about Siddhartha’s renunciation, I seek to understand the human aspect of Siddhartha’s renunciation, rather than the god-like or legendary aspects, as many Buddhists commonly believe. From this understanding, I hope I can shed light on the path for youth development and leadership to guide many bewildered youth leaders.

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There is a wide range of theories about why Siddhartha left his palace life to become a monk. One of the most prominent arguments is that, although he lived a luxurious life, he was not satisfied with the happiness stemming from sensual pleasures. He yearned for an alternative path to achieve eternal satisfaction. Furthermore, he may well have understood the nature of samsara, which is the suffering of birth and death, and he could not ignore it. Other people argued that he had practiced and accumulated the Bodhisatta path for eons and it was in the last birth that Siddhartha fulfilled his commitment. These accounts are reasonable and widely accepted among many Buddhist followers. What I am focusing on is how these accounts could become a motivation to inspire young people to live a meaningful life. A closer investigation into his youth before leaving the household life will undoubtedly provide some insight into why he renounced his lay life.

Naturally, human nature tends to find comfort from sensual pleasures. However, the young prince was not happy at all with those mundane feelings. At first, we may think that he was a prince, so he took it for granted that sensual entertainments would be there for him when he needed them. His father was a king; therefore, he could rely on that power to do whatever he wanted. However, he did not. There are many cases in our society in which children from affluent and powerful families rely too much on their parents, which generates a habit of dependence on family wealth. They believe that their parents are wealthy and influential; therefore, it is not necessary to strive for anything. In contrast, Siddhartha understood that those worldly sources of sensual pleasures did not bring about a long-lasting, satisfying experience; instead, they were
the cause of more craving and suffering. In the following passage of the *Buddhacariya*, Asvaghosa describes how Siddhartha rejected worldly pleasures:

“I show no contempt for pleasures of sense,  
I know that people are obsessed with them;  
But knowing that the world is transient,  
My heart finds no delight in them at all” (1)

It seems to suggest that Siddhartha had experienced sensual pleasures, but found neither delight nor attachment in them. He wanted to find something different from the rest of what human beings always wished for. In other words, he realized the capricious nature of life and that nothing remained permanently. Some people may argue that Siddhartha had cultivated the path over the course of many lifespans; therefore, during this last birth, he did not crave sensual pleasures anymore. It may be correct, but I want to look at his life from a very human perspective, which may help to inspire young people to reflect on their life values, including personal growth, lifestyle, and leadership.

Through the rejection of sensual pleasures, Siddhartha went against the stream of samsara to search for something that he later called, in the *Ariyapariyesana* sutta, *The Noble Search* sutta, “the noble quest.” To elaborate on what the noble search is, we will discuss what it is *not*, which is “the ignoble.” The Buddha defined an “ignoble search” as follows: “There is the case where a person, being subject himself to birth, seeks (happiness in) what is likewise subject to birth”(2). The ignoble search seems to be similar to what almost everyone strives for. I think it is not incorrect to pursue something in life, especially when people live a household life. Even the Buddha, before he attained enlightenment, was also in search of the ignoble cause, and he admitted it. There is a passage in this same sutta where he states, “I, too, monks, before my Awakening, when I

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was an *unawakened bodhisatta*, being subject myself to birth, sought what was likewise subject to birth.”[3] This appears to suggest that whoever is not awakened will continue to search for happiness, which is subject to birth, old age, sickness, and death. Therefore, I would assume that perhaps our quest for happiness is somehow “ignoble,” but having something to strive for is not ignoble at all, especially when it conventionally benefits many other people.

There is another passage in a different sutta where the Buddha uses the phrase “unawakened bodhisatta,” but indicating a different realization, he says, “I myself, before my Awakening, when I was still an unawakened bodhisatta, saw as it actually was with right discernment that sensuality is of much stress, much despair, and greater drawbacks.”[4] In this passage, the Buddha, though he was not awakened, realizes that sensual pleasures are the source of suffering. Is the stage of the “unawakened bodhisatta” of this sutta and that of the Ariyapariyesana sutta equivalent? I find the ways in which these two stages of being “unawakened” were described very motivating. They seem to suggest that there are different stages in our lives, given that those stages are “unawakened” ones, and that sometimes we are caught in thoughts that lead to negative consequences and thoughts that liberate us from miserable conditions. We have a chance to lead our lives in the right direction even though we are not awakened yet.

Many young people in our generation are being dragged away by the flux of social media. They are fed by newsfeeds from people in the virtual and digital world whom they do not even know. Comparing their lives to other people’s lives and feeling “not good enough” is a common disease of this generation. They do not understand that people may have a perfect social media life, but they may be miserable in real life. The Buddha brought out two different realizations from two stages of being “unawakened” to encourage us by the fact that although many of us are unawakened in many ways, we still can realize something meaningful in our lives.

3. Ibid.

Access date: Dec 8, 2018.
We may not have a perfect life and our pursuits may be “ignoble,” but acknowledging that it is an important act, and we can work from there.

I would further argue that an acknowledgment of our generally “ignoble” quest could provide ethical guidance for young people as well. We live in a world where suffering and dissatisfaction are always unavoidable, and where everyone has been through something in their lives that involves one or another kind of suffering. Many people may not realize that the goals that they are seeking, and even their own selves, are subject to birth, old age, sickness, and death. Having understood that, we will be more sympathetic to the people around us. We can generate more compassion toward them and at least will not do any harm to them. It is because we, too, having similar problems with our ignoble search, simply wish for happiness. Therefore, if young people understand this, they will not be depressed by comparing themselves to other people; they will be more compassionate toward others because deep down, they understand that people are suffering.

Realizing the shortcomings of the ignoble search, prince Siddhartha sought to search for something else that worldly pleasures could not replace. I propose that he did not really know what exactly he was looking for when he first left his palace. He only knew later what he described as “the noble search,” which was to “seeks the unborn, unexcelled rest from the yoke: Unbinding.”(5) The point is that, at the beginning of his spiritual quest, he was not certain about what he would get himself into. It was just that he was not satisfied with the royal life and he wanted to find an alternative way to liberate himself and then others from the circle of birth and death. It is very striking to think about a journey in which we do not know where it will take us. Fearlessness is another quality that, I think, we can learn from his renunciation.

Many young and inspired leaders often encounter fear when they try to do something new. Fear of failure, fear of uncertainty, and

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fear of judgment are the dominant forces that hold them back from what they want to pursue. Fear is the result of our brain trying to protect us from danger. It would be unwise to think that Siddhartha did not feel afraid when he left home and practiced before his enlightenment. In one sutta, the Buddha described how terrified he was when again an “unwakened bodhisatta”, dwelling alone in the isolated forest: “It’s not easy to endure isolated forest or wilderness dwellings. It’s not easy to maintain seclusion, not easy to enjoy being alone. The forests, as it were, plunder the mind of a monk who has not attained concentration” (6). However, he did not let his fear obstruct his spiritual pursuit. If he gave up his path out of fear, we would not have inherited the wonderful teachings that benefited many people. If, out of fear, many young and inspired leaders do not pursue their callings for the benefit of themselves and of many other people, consider how many people would have suffered because of that failure. Therefore, looking at the young Siddhartha’s renunciation can motivate and inspire us to overcome our fear and maybe do something good for ourselves and society.

Another elaboration on the quality of fearlessness of his renunciation is that he dared to do something that many people thought impossible. In ancient Indian society, a man’s life was supposed to go through four stages, namely, being a student, a householder, a retired person, and a renunciation. It seemed that no one approved his choice. He says that his parents cried “with tears streaming down their faces” (7) and were unwilling to let him go. However, having seen enough suffering of people and potentially of himself, he knew that he had to leave. What young people can learn from this is to dare to do the impossible. It will be painful when people, especially our loved ones, do not approve of what we do, but it is our calling, our decision to make. I think it is a message that Siddhartha wanted young leaders to understand.


It is not unusual that Siddhartha, after he left his palace, searched for spiritual teachers who could guide him to find an answer to his concern. Historically, his first meditation teacher was Alara Kalama, who was a renounced meditator at that time. After practicing under the guidance of Alara Kalama, he soon realized that those teachings were not sufficient to tackle his questions. While he hoped to learn the teachings that could lead to dispassion, direct knowledge, and Unbinding, the teachings from Alara Kalama did not lead to such results; instead, those teachings led to a meditative stage in the dimension of nothingness, which was bound by samsara. Similarly, it happened when Siddhartha practiced under Uddaka Ramaputta—his second meditation teacher. The practice that he received from Uddaka only led to another stage of meditative experience, which still did not help him answer his burning question about liberation from birth and death. The encounter and practice under these two teachers may have been historical facts, Siddhartha may have practiced and achieved these highly meditative stages, but what I want to emphasize is his attitude toward the teachings that he found unsatisfactory; he said, “So, dissatisfied with that Dhamma, I left.”

Siddhartha left these two teachers unflinchingly just like when he left his household life. It exemplifies a kind of quality that contributes to the character of a person and a leader, namely, effort. We may wonder what effort has to do with his decisions to leave. Generally, effort is understood as the physical or mental energy that we need to accomplish certain tasks. In this context, effort is deemed a crucial component derived from the four right efforts (sammappadhāna), which is one component of the Thirty-seven Wings to Awakening. The concept of four right efforts elaborates


10. Thirty-seven Wings to Awakening are: The Four Frames of Reference (satipatthāna), The Four Right Exertions (sammappadhāna), The Four Bases of Power (iddhipāda), The Five Faculties (indriya), The Five Strengths (bala), The Seven Factors for Awakening (bojjhaṅga), The Noble Eightfold Path (ariya-magga). For more details, visit https://www.accesstoinsight.org/lib/authors/thanissaro/wings/index.html#table
the idea that one should abandon whatever is not conducive to the path of liberation, and one should cultivate whatever is conducive to the path. Effort does not only mean striving for something good, but it also indicates that whatever is unwholesome should be discarded. He saw that the practices of these two teachers could not liberate him; therefore, once again, he left for another journey that, to him, was not entirely predictable.

Effort plays a vital role in every aspect of our lives, as it had in the young Siddhartha’s practice. There are many occasions in our lives that require tremendous effort for decision-making. We may have a magnificent idea that could benefit many people in the world. However, if we do not execute it with effort, we would never succeed in accomplishing it. While effort means that we always strive for the right cause, it also indicates that whatever is unskillful should be abandoned. For instance, on the path of leadership, there will always be many dilemmas that require our right decision to tackle appropriately in order to protect our integrity. This is where right effort comes to the fore. Right effort informs what the most skillful action should be for any given situation. Within the framework of right effort, “do” and “do not” seem to suggest that there is a component of ethical consideration that is essential to youth development and leadership as well. We will discuss further the ethical component of youth development and leadership in the next part of this essay.

Siddhartha’s renunciation was one of the biggest quandaries that he had ever encountered. It is generally believed that renunciation does not bring any good to society. Is it a rejection of a social life to live in recluse? In fact, Hajime Nakamura, in his book entitled Gotama Buddha, points out that Siddhartha’s renunciation encountered various criticisms from the modern resistance about the idea of abandoning one’s family. It seemed even more unacceptable when he abandoned his duty as a king-to-be, a husband, and a father of a newborn. It is reasonable and valid from a modern perspective. He writes “there is modern resistance to the idea of abandoning one’s family for the life of a wandering practitioner... Such criticisms have been raised in the past by Hindus, particularly those of the Mimamsa school, which was tended to value lay life; by Chinese
Confucianists; and by Japanese nativist scholars of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Nakamura pushes back, stating that we must look at the social conditions of ancient India, when leaving home was a necessity so that one could pursue the spiritual path.

The Buddha said that he left home for a higher purpose that could benefit more people than just his beloved family. In the *Parinibbana* sutta, he taught, “In age but twenty-nine was I, Subhadda, when I renounced the world to seek the Good” (12). “The Good” that he discovered and taught to the world is almost irreplaceable by anything that he could have done if he would not have left home. However, in order to discover the Good, he had to endure tremendous hardships physically and emotionally. For example, Siddhartha practiced self-mortification for several years, which almost killed him. The *Nidanakatha* (13) describes the different types of austerity that Siddhartha performed, such as that he “lived off one sesame seed,” and even “fasted completely,” such that “his body became emaciated to an extreme,” and “he was wracked with severe pain and lost consciousness” (14). It is unfathomable how much sacrifice he made to fulfill his journey. Indeed, there are always sacrifices for the right cause that everyone may have to confront.

I do not think that leaving a loving family and a great career behind to pursue something uncertain would be deemed an easy task. Young Siddhartha underwent enormous sacrifices, from emotional challenges to physical breakdowns, with the hope of finding the threshold to spiritual revolution. It is a beautiful lesson that young leaders should take into consideration. When asked “what do we want?” many of us probably have a similar answer: “we want to be happy, successful and have a good life.” It is not unusual to wish for these things. However, to achieve these qualities for our lives, we should ask “what sacrifices do we want to make?” There

13. It is a part of Jataka genre about the Buddha’s previous lives.
is no such thing as “easy success” in life. It depends on how much hardship we can bear, how much difficulty we can overcome, and how much sacrifice we are willing to make to achieve our goal. Siddhartha did not achieve enlightenment through an easy path. His sacrifices can be seen as living proof of his achievement of the ultimate spiritual goal.

After attaining enlightenment, young Siddhartha became young Gotama Buddha, and he did not keep the teachings to himself. Out of compassion, he delivered the Dhamma to serve the world. It was a spiritual revolution against the belief that renunciation equals rejection of the world. The act of coming back to teach people what he realized contradicts the notion of worldly rejection. What concerned him was the complexity of different philosophical teachings, which caused confusion to people. There were many contemporary thinkers whom the Buddha did not agree with. Considering that he was young when he became the Buddha, as opposed to those philosophers, he was not afraid to raise his concerns about the incorrectness of those philosophers. This is an interesting account that deserves a further elaboration and can contribute a valuable lesson to young leaders.

Traditionally, young people’s voices do not weigh much in family and societal structures. The belief that young people do not have enough lived experience compared to that of elderly people has been dominant in many societies. Specifically, in the Asian society, complete obedience to one’s parents is seen as showing a person’s good character, which may confine his or her creativity, agency, and autonomy. Siddhartha, however, overcame this hierarchical system to raise his opinions and declare what was right or wrong. In terms of spiritual achievement, a fascinating fact is that many of his contemporary thinkers were much older than him, but, in spite of his young age, Siddhartha was able to achieve the liberation that many other older thinkers may have not. Undoubtedly, suspicion about his highly spiritual realization was inevitable. A king named

15. DN 2, Samannaphala Sutta: The Fruits of the Contemplative Life Sutta, mentions more than sixty different philosophers.

16. Some historical accounts write that he was thirty-five when he achieved enlightenment, while other accounts states that he was thirty years old when he became the Buddha.
Pasenadi of Kosala, who was one of the Buddha lay disciples, questioned him about how a young person like the Buddha claimed to “have awakened to the unexcelled right self-awakening,” whereas those philosophers had not.\(^\text{17}\)

The Buddha, in the same sutta, answered the king that although someone or something may appear insignificant, they have the potential to accomplish significant tasks. In the following passage, to answer the king’s doubt, the Buddha illustrates an example about four phenomena that should not be looked down upon: “A noble warrior, great king, shouldn’t be despised and disparaged for being young. A snake... A fire... And a monk should not be despised and disparaged for being young.”\(^\text{18}\). The Buddha further explains that each of these four things, despite “being young,” would turn out to be enormous and could have a tremendous effect on many lives. This is an encouragement reminding young people that age cannot determine the quality of a person. Being young is a privilege to explore one’s potential to have an impact on society. The Buddha also suggested that young leaders have the opportunity to challenge the traditional stigma about the ability of young people. Moreover, young Siddhartha was a living proof of this, who challenged the entire ancient Indian society, in which he succeeded.

It is not difficult to raise our concern to challenge social injustice, gender inequality, and/or anything in the world. However, the principles on which our arguments and our lives stand in order to make that challenge valid are very critical. Siddhartha did not ground his arguments on mere reasoning or in vain speculation. His life is the proof of what he said. Young people may be inspired by learning about his renunciation and achievement, but if their lives are not established on certain principles, it will be difficult to achieve any great accomplishment. Therefore, one of the most critical principles that can help establish the foundation of their lives and leadership is ethical conduct or moral precepts. Someone may think that the ethical codes that the Buddha taught are only useful for spiritual practice, especially for the monastic community.

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18. Ibid.
However, they are vital for every aspect in life, especially for the moral development of young people and those who aspire to be leaders.

The benefits of the ethical component in the precepts of the Buddha’s teachings for young people are manifold. Firstly, there is a guide for living a moral life that connects to the “do” and “do not” aspects indicated above in the right effort. Secondly, it protects us from unwholesome activities that may occur from an untamed mind. Most importantly, it is deemed as the essential starting point of every journey, whether spiritual or worldly. Thanissaro Bhikkhu in one of his articles entitled The Healing Power of the Precepts, states, “The Buddha’s path consisted not only of mindfulness, concentration, and insight practices, but also of virtue, beginning with the five precepts. In fact, the precepts constitute the first step in the path”(19) to indicate that the [five] precepts(20) are the cornerstone of every great achievement, not only in spiritual practice, but also for a healthy lifestyle and personal development. Thus, youth development and leadership start from the very humble practice of having the ethical conduct.

With a solid foundation built on ethical conduct, young people may be able to encounter challenges in life. The Buddha was well aware of the difficulties that many young people would eventually confront. In the Sukhamala sutta: Refinement(21), the Buddha points out three different obstacles that, typically, a young person would face, namely, the three forms of arrogance: the arrogance of youth, arrogance of health, and arrogance of life. These three kinds of arrogance were, in fact, experienced by Siddhartha when he was a young person living a luxurious life in his palace. These three arrogances indicate that being young is a privilege and, at the same time, can invite obstacles. For instance, it is not unusual to think that young age means having more time to finish any task;

therefore, we may think, why bother doing it now, which would lead to procrastination. Thus, if young people take “being young” for granted, they would undermine the privilege of young age and could miss chances for great success.

Ultimately, there will be more obstacles, challenges, and problems that young people and young leaders have to confront. Regardless of how those difficulties may arise, whether externally or internally, there are always moments when perplexity and bewilderment penetrate our decisions and leave us wondering what to do. The Buddha may not have direct answers for everything regarding differences in time and space. What we could inherit from his teachings is the power of discernment stemming from the lessons and meanings of his renunciation. In the following passage from a discourse entitled the *Kalama* sutta, the Buddha allows us to figure out how we want to tackle our perplexity based on our own experience: “When you know for yourselves that, ‘These qualities are unskillful; these qualities are blameworthy; these qualities are criticized by the wise; these qualities, when adopted and carried out, lead to harm and to suffering’ then you should abandon them.” Maybe we are not entirely certain of what action may be appropriate, but we “try it out,” and learn from it to “know for ourselves”. Siddhartha figured out by himself the path to liberation by going against many commonly-held beliefs. He suggested that a belief, be it from tradition, scripture, or legend, cannot be accepted as if it is true without the understanding to “know for ourselves”. Thus, when it comes to personal callings, we are the authors of our lives and we have to decide what should be done. Ultimately, we are the heirs of our decisions.

The renunciation of Siddhartha has been understood and translated through various approaches. While many people may look at the young Siddhartha’s renunciation as a myth or a legend, and other people may criticize him for abandoning his family, his duty, and his country, the fact is that his renunciation has contributed to transforming the ways in which people live their lives. His renunciation has been a source of inspiration for young people in various forms pertaining to personal transformation, social challenge, and spiritual revolution. It required sacrifices,
audacity, effort, and many distinct qualities that many people thought were impossible to accomplish. Through his renunciation, Siddhartha proved that anything is possible. Though the youth are inspired to challenge the world, to accomplish tremendous success, and to pursue their dreams, it all starts with a simple step, which is to have an ethical foundation. Ethical conduct is the solid ground on which we stand to encounter difficulties in life.

Understanding his renunciation from its human dimension and perspective motivates us to live meaningful lives. We may have a different search than that of Siddhartha’s, and our quest may not be as “noble” as his, but we all have ambitions, dreams, and purposes. We wish to accomplish something that is greater than ourselves. We want to contribute to the world and to make it a better place. These are genuinely legitimate pursuits. However, we are also perplexed, confused, and bewildered. We are so afraid of failure that we do not dare to carry on our tasks. I think Siddhartha, too, was perplexed and confused when he encountered the world after a long time spent in the palace. He wanted to understand the world in order to transform it. So, at least we have something in common with him, and we may start from there. I genuinely believe that if we study his renunciation and take it into our hearts, it will benefit our mundane lives enormously, especially for young people and those who are inspired to become leaders in their society.
References


*Ibid.*,


Thirty-seven Wings to Awakening are: The Four Frames of Reference (*satipaṭṭhāna*), The Four Right Exertions (*sammappadhāna*), The Four Bases of Power (*iddhipāda*), The Five Faculties (*indriya*), The Five Strengths (*bala*), The Seven Factors for Awakening (*bojjhaṅga*), The Noble Eightfold Path (*ariyamagga*). For more details, visit https://www.accesstoinsight.org/lib/authors/thanissaro/wings/index.html#table


It is a part of Jataka genre about the Buddha’s previous lives.


Some historical accounts write that he was thirty-five when he achieved enlightenment, while other accounts states that he was thirty years old when he became the Buddha.


*Ibid*.,


EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN: EARLY BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVE

by Meena Charanda*

ABSTRACT

This paper is an attempt to study the aspect of empowerment of women as depicted in Buddhism and aims to examine the role of women in Buddhism. It will consider existing literature on the topic and contribute to new avenues of research with the help of literature of Hinayana. Buddha was the first religious teacher who gave women equal and unfettered opportunities in the field of spiritual development. He truly paved the way for women to lead a full religious life. Buddha was not a reformer but he admitted women into the monastic order. The Buddhist concept of empowerment tells that a woman who wants to empower herself should not only realize her potential and true nature but must put in efforts to achieve her goals. Buddha made women eligible for Buddhahood by opening the gates to women by forming the Bhikkhuni Sangha. Several nuns and laywomen were among the Buddha’s ablest and wisest disciples. It is recorded that in Sangha, there was free intermingling of male and female monks and nuns. Present study will analyze Buddhist perspective on empowerment of women with special reference to early Buddhism.

* Assistant Prof. Dr., Department of Political Science, Kalindi College University of Delhi, Delhi-110008, India.
1. INTRODUCTION

United Nations has developed the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) for the cohesive development of the society. Goal 3 of the MDG promotes Gender equality and empowerment of women. The MDG focuses on the education of the women to eliminate the gender disparity and points out that the developing countries including India as a whole should have achieved the target to eliminate gender disparity in primary, secondary and tertiary education. Women in India continue to experience significant gaps in terms of poverty, labor market and wages, as well as participation in private and public decision-making. Empowerment involves the enhancement of an individual’s capacity to know, to act and to enjoy. Empowerment brings confidence, awareness, mobility, ability to choose and capacity to control all types of resources and above all to possess decision making power. Empowerment can be achieved through developing positive role models. The need for empowering individuals is vital in order to identify the real and appropriate needs, encourage commitment, ensure sustainability and personal development and inculcate self-esteem and equal opportunity to share power. The aim of empowerment is to transform the society though the transformation of individuals. When an individual is empowered, he can transform the society in different ways. For example, education is considered to be prime means of empowerment. Economic empowerment involves removal of insecurity, development of skills and control over resources and decision-making processes.

As far as the empowerment of women is initiated during the Buddhism is concerned, it is better to know the Pre-Buddhist period of explanation about the women empowerment. The role of women has mentioned in the Vedic culture, the epics of Ramayana and the Mahabharata. The women in these societies were not given importance in the core area of the society and the issue of enhancement of their potential does not arise. The women in the family are a unit consisting of parents, mother, daughter in-law, husband, wife and children. The family members have used the balance and power and control her behaviour with the other members of the family, in the decision-making process and administering the day to day activities.
The empowerment of women during the period of Buddhism needs to consider the following considerations such as women's perspective about herself, woman's perspective about the society and the society's perspective about the woman.

2. WOMEN'S STATUS AND BUDDHISM

The position of women in the society is analyzed through her position as an individual, position in the family, position in the decision-making and position in the society. Women in the individual capacity and her empowerment as an individual level enhance all sorts of capacities of the individual in spiritually, economically, socially and morally. The confidence of the women developed these capacities and created self-respect. The nature of self-respect motivated her in taking her own decision and strengthened her relation with the society. To understand the empowerment of women as an individual during this period, one should analyze the women's overall capacities in transforming her spiritually, economically, and morally.

The analysis of existing literature such as Purushertha and other sources explains the status of women in the society at the time of origin of Buddhism. Women in the individual capacity in the family is analyzed through individual's spiritual, economic, social and religious aspects. The analysis of Purushertha about the individual is explained as such that there are four goals of human life, namely Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksa. The status of woman as far as dharma is concerned, was negligible. It was assumed that woman did not need money because she was cared for either by her father, husband or son. In fact, the women had no important place as far as artha is concerned. The women had no provisions of attaining the economic resources and as a result, there are rare chances of women empowerment at that time. The concept of Mokṣa is directly related to the attainment of knowledge and the women of this period in general were deprived of knowledge and education. As a result, women empowerment in the field of moksha, could not be attained by the women. The history of that period did not glorify the women's attainment of Mokṣa. Overall, the women of this period was untouched the Dharma, Artha, and Moksa and is considered only for the Kama. Women primarily was considered as
sensuous pleasure to her husband and fulfills the karma tendency in the society.

The concept of marriage was considered as a religious sacrament or Sanskara that builds the man-women relationship into a social tie and an emotional bond. This status and position was well received by the woman and she was extra careful in performing her role as a wife and provided maximum sons. It reflects the status of women in the family and vis-a-vis her position of the woman as a real partner in all his activities including religious sacrifices. It reflects the light on the society that women were meant for injustice, exploitation, and suppression of women that is based on sexual discrimination. The nature of the society considered that man and woman are social construction constructed out of the need of the society in which women acted the role of mother, an individual as compassion, forgiveness etc. In this way, criterion of empowerment as well as feminist understanding of concepts, doctrines and thoughts in Indian social and moral philosophy show that women belonging to Pre-Buddhist Era were not empowered. Overall, at the time of initiation of the Buddhism, it was rarity of the rare that the woman empowerment is either spoken or idea of practice and never been practically implemented in the society. As a result, the women did not consider any primary importance in the family and question of women enhancement of their capacities does not arise.

3. WOMEN'S STATUS DURING THE BUDDHISM

The philosophy of Buddhism did not elaborate the concept of empowerment of women. But the details of the Buddhist texts have referred about the women's in the society that enables to articulate the Buddhist concept of women empowerment. The Buddhist philosophy emphasizes on the self-realization of woman and her active participation in decision-making in her social and personal life that is attributed towards empowerment of woman. The woman's holistic development highlights the social, cultural, economic, political, mental and spiritual development. It further elaborates the woman's realization of her own capacities and power that helps in the overcome of social and cultural barriers and further strengthen her active participation in decision-making related to her and her family. The Buddhist philosophy emphasizes that the
empowerment is not something that is external to her but it is built in her and it has to be excavated to fulfill self-realization.

The self-realization of women is related with actualization of different possibilities of empowerment and its actualization related with their application in the society where woman as well as society have an important role to play. The actualization of woman’s self-realization is possible only when there is change in the mental attitude of woman and change in the mental attitude of the society. Change in mental attitude of woman enables her to break social and cultural barriers and change in mental attitude of society enables the society to accept the independent existence of woman and to provide the opportunities to woman and also to encourage her so that she can explore her capacities. The Buddhist philosophy explains further about women self-realization by analyzing woman’s perspective about herself, Woman’s perspective about the society and society’s perspective about the woman.

It is equally important to note that the empowerment of woman is attained through her self-realization having mental and spiritual development and independent existence.

The self-realization of women makes her aware of her attributes, qualities and the processes of enculturation and socialization. The woman in the society has clear understanding regarding the nature of co-existence will develop the holistic nature of the society. Gautama Buddha through his discourses always tried to enlighten the people about the myth of gender difference. In Buddha’s days also, the birth of female child was not welcomed. Her birth made the parents unhappy. It may be because the parents believed that after marriage, daughters went to their husband house then who would take care of the parents in their old age. But if they had son their son lived with them even after their marriage. So the sons could take care of them. It is because of this belief, parents preferred the male child. The Buddha tried to remove this kind of belief from the mind of people. Further, Buddha explains that there was no reason to feel gloomy at the birth of a daughter. For example, King Pasenadi was unhappy at the time of birth of a girl to his Queen Mallike. He went to the Buddha to tell this news and when the Buddha observed that King is unhappy, he said; “Indeed, a woman
of a certain sort is better than a man lord of folk: Wise, Virtuous, reversing her husband’s mother, a devoted wife, the man born of her is a hero, ruler of the regions, such a son of a good wife is one who advised his realm” (SN.I.86.).

4. WOMEN AND UNFETTERED SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Buddhism did not just look at women as child-bearers, and did not accept that marriage was the only aim of a woman. It is because unmarried adult woman held a legitimate role, and she could also become Buddhist nun. It is said that the faithful laywoman would encourage her only son to emulate the best laymen or monks, and her only daughter to emulate the best laywomen or nuns.

The Buddhist literature explains about marriage is that the marriage itself was not held to be imperative as it was in the case of Vedic culture. A single life was not regarded as a wasted life. Even a maiden was allowed to lead a life of celibacy and devote herself exclusively to other secular or spiritual affairs. The example of goldsmith daughters remained unmarried throughout their life and devoted themselves to the management of their family affairs. The Buddhist text states that wife by husband is always esteemed in the household. In the choice of career for children, wife had the same right of decision as husband had for him. These indications certainly lead one to believe that the status of women in the household had improved.

The practice of early marriage before puberty is not mentioned in the canonical literature. Thus the age of marriage is sixteen years of age. Women had greater liberty in the choice of their husbands during the Buddhist age as compare in the preceding periods. The Buddha tore off the observance of parda (face covering) and gave the clear verdict that women had the full right of leading independent religious life. Women had the option to share their husbands’ calling and undertake any productive labor. Thus they were often instrumental in bringing prosperity to their homes. This social arrangement worked very well in the Buddhist society. In the Buddhist age, marriage ceases to be a sacrament and instead became a strictly civil and domestic affair. Gautama Buddha himself ordains in no uncertain terms such as Slaughter of life, theft, lying, and adultery.
The Buddhism did not make gender discrimination during the preaching of the dhamma. Buddha at the time of enlightenment said, “it is for the sake of monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen and to all four groups are said to have an analogous effect on the persistence or disappearance of Buddhist knowledge and practice. Thus the Sa-gha is illuminated by a monk, nun, layman and laywoman who is accomplished in wisdom, disciplined and is confident...practicing according to Dhamma and the same set of virtues or vices leads to hell or heaven for a man or woman. He further said, women have both the same spiritual limitations and the same spiritual powers as men” (Harvey, Brian).

Nuns may develop spiritually to the same extent as monks. Buddhism emphasized that the philosophy would not die until he had monks, and nuns, and laymen, and laywomen, who could teach Dhamma, establish it, expound it, analyze it, and make it clear. Buddha gave the same teachings to both male and female, and sometimes went out of his way to teach women. The Buddha refused a meal invitation from some proud and rich young man, as he had already accepted an invitation from the courtesan and honored even when the young men objected.

Buddha gave a new outlook to the society. His outlook was rational, which prompted the society to give fair treatment to women. Buddhism was essentially a moral religion, the moral precepts of which touched all classes irrespective of any sex consideration. During the life time of the Lord Buddha and in the time of Asoka when Buddhism was at its zenith the status of women improved appreciably. The Buddha’s outlook was liberal and in the propagation of his teachings, he treated women and men alike. He gave Dhamma to both the sexes without making any distinction. This was indeed a great achievement for women as in the previous centuries women had lost their individuality.

5. WOMEN BUDDHAHOOD, BHIKKHUNI SANGHA AND DEVELOPMENT OF SPIRITUALITY

The word religion means Dhamma in the philosophy of Buddhism. Women had freedom to listen to the thoughts of the Buddha and had freedom to follow Dhamma. The religion is a
religion of free individuals. The Buddhist religion believes that mere living is not the highest good but living righteously with self-control, pure mind, clean heart and clear conscience is the supreme attainment that mankind ought to strive for. The teaching of Buddhism confirms that, there are no differences between men and women if both are psychologically strong. In many discourses, the Buddha said that women can develop their mind up to the extent of liberation.

Women can achieve highest fruits as the men and gave the example of “Culavagga, Bhikkhunī khandaka”. Buddhist philosophy tried to remove the low positions of women in the society. On hearing the news of a birth of a girl, King Kosala was disappointed. The Buddha encouraged him and said that women are as good when they have cultivated virtuous activities and explained, “By those wishing with attachment the excellence, again and again of life span, good health, beauty, heavens and high birth, Merit should be done, wisely appreciating diligence. Diligence, serves for the welfare of this and the other world. When the diligent one attains his aim, he is called a wise man” (SN.S. 127).

No woman could reach the high ground of the wise once anybody humiliates the women because she has only the two-finger knowledge. It is an allusion to cooking where the consistency of the cooked rice is tested by pressing it between the fingers. The refutation of has mentioned in the Buddhist texts and mentioned, “When the mind is established, being a woman does not matter I have knowledge and reflect the teaching rightfully, whether woman or man whatever was mine is suitable to be in the power of Māra” (SN.S. 163).

The foster mother of the Lord Buddha actuated by feelings of her spiritual welfare went to the lord Buddha and requested him initiation in the Order. It was quite a new experience for the first time for Gautama Buddha. A woman had approached him independently with a request for admission to the religious organization. Ānanda, the disciple of the Buddha, took upon himself the task and he secured the Lord’s consent. The Buddha in consultation with Ānanda inaugurated the order of nuns as a separate religious organization. In this way the status of women was elevated tremendously.
Women could work out their own destiny and achieve salvation. The first sermon that the Buddha delivered to Mahāpajāpatī and her associates was the same which he gave the men on their admission to the order of monks. By this identical sermon to the male and female disciples, the Buddha decidedly acknowledged the equality of both the sexes in the religious sphere. In Rajpriha alone not less than six thousand nuns with Mahāpajāpatī at their head practiced severe austerities with spiritual thirst in their hearts. The teacher himself was so impressed with their deed so earnest that to Ānanda he was compelled to acknowledge once more that women are capable of Arhatship (Arhatship means gained insight into the true nature of existence and has achieved salvation nirvana).

Women could no longer be restrained from ascending the heights. Therefore, the Buddha himself was concerned and allowed women to take to ascetic life and reach any spiritual height from their own efforts.

Ānanda, the faithful disciple of the Buddha brought the matter of admitting women into the Sangha and the Lord Buddha replied: Are the Buddhas born only for the benefit of men? Have not Visīkhā and many others entered the paths? The entrance is open to women as well as men. Thus the Buddha gave woman an independent status and placed her on a footing of equality with man. The consistent principles of the Dhamma, which sees no difference between man and woman except that which may exist by superiority of virtue. The step taken by the Buddha was indeed bold, considering the depraved moral condition of ancient India and the consequent low estimation in which woman was then held. That the Buddhist revolt against this depraved social and moral condition proved a success is shown by the Therīgāthā, a work containing verses ascribed to Bhikkhunis. A good many of these verses are not only beautiful in form but also give evidence of a very high degree of that mental self-culture which played so great a part in the Buddhist ideal of the perfect life. Many of the women who joined the order became distinguished for high intellectual attainments as well as for moral earnestness.

Some women nuns or Bhikkhunis were teaching Buddhist men which men meant not only expounding the deeper and subtler
points of the Dhamma but also as having attained the great peace which is the final result of intellectual illumination and moral earnestness.

Mahāpajāpatī, Kēsā Gautamī, Somī, Khemī, Uppalavannī and others were recognized to be the accomplished sages, widely learned and brilliant orators. Subha was one of the most eminent teachers of the faith along with Mahēprjīpatī and Paōēchērī. One of the brilliant orators of religion was Khemī, who along with the king’s, queen Mallikī persuaded her husband king Pasenadi to be converted to the new faith of Buddhism. Likewise Sēmēvatī and Khemī were successful in persuading their husbands Udayana and Bimbisēra respectively to accept the holy doctrine of Buddhism. In addition to these, Sujīta, Sigalmētī, Bhaddē Kuōēalkeshē attained Arhatship. Subhaddē Nanda Mētī, Suppiyē and Visēkhē were the laywomen who attained high religious positions as laywomen Visēkhē and other laywomen with their religious zeal, laid the foundation and principles of oldest Buddhist community.

The Buddhist reformation being a moral reaction against a corrupt state of society and it was necessary that the relations between the sexes should be guarded with care. Strict rules were therefore laid down for the conduct of Bhikkhus with women and of Bhikkhunis with men. The Buddha did not make any difference between man and woman. If he honored Moggallēnā and Sērēputta, he also held in high esteem Khemī, the wife of King Bimbisēra and Dhammadinnī, the chief among the Bhikkhunis that preached the Dhamma. In no religion has a woman played such a prominent part as Visēkhē has done in Buddhism. Buddhism being a matter of self-control and self-culture, it regards every individual, whether man or woman as a complete whole. Accordingly the Dhamma does not concern itself with those relations between man and woman in which one sex is regarded as completing the other.

6. CONCLUSION

Buddhist concept of empowerment explains the authentic empowerment of women as individual and in the society. The understanding of the Buddhist women empowerment analyses
that a woman has empowered herself in the realization of her own nature and has to take enough efforts to achieve her goal.

To sum up, Buddhism and feminism is a growing field of interest in the present context. The Buddhism becomes an increasingly relevant globalized force with the scriptures of all schools available freely to monastic women. Today, the various scriptural sources may present an ambiguous view of women, and discriminatory practices and attitudes still exist in Buddhist countries and including India. There may also be doubts about the accuracy of the scriptures themselves, as well as their misrepresentations viewed through the opaque prism of each culture as Buddhism incorporated many of the existing beliefs and cultural norms as it spread across different regions. However, meditation is not only the highest and most crucial stage of the Buddhist stereological Path but also its truly practical, experiential and educational aspect that is timelessly and universally open to everyone to test. The Dhamma that promotes the eradication of all negative attitudes and false views is genderless at its pristine and transformative core.

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SN.S. 127. Itthīpi hi ekacciyĒ, SeyyĒ posa janÈdhipa; MedhÈvini SÈlavatÊ, sasudevÊ patibbatÊ. TassÊ yo jÈyati poso, s|ro hoti disampati; TÈdisÈ subhagiyÊ putto, rajjampi anusÈsati’ti.

SN.S. 163. ItthibhÈvo kim kayirÈ, cittamhi susamÈhite;ÒÈnamhi vattamÈnamhi, sammÈ dhammam vipassato. Yassa n|na siyÈ evam, itthÈham purisoti vã, KiÒci vÈ pana aÒÒasmim, tam mÈro vattumarahati’ti.

SN.I.86. ItthÊ pi hi ekacciyÊ seyyÊ posÈ janÈdhipa, medhÈvinÊ sÈlavatÊ sassudevÊ patibbatÊ. TassÊ yo jÈyati poso s|ro hoti disampati, evaÈ subhagiyÊ putto rajjam pi anusÈsati.
THE BASIC STUDYING
OF THE INFLUENCE OF BUDDHISM
IN GLOBAL LEADERSHIP
AND SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
(Through the typical case of King Tran Nhan Tong - Vietnam)

by Nguyen Thi Que Anh

ABSTRACT

Buddhism with the power of compassion, wisdom etc. has effectively solved social and human issues in many ways; strongly influenced on social life all over the world; helped humanity to get rid of suffering, and head to happiness and fullness.

The influence of Buddhism is clear when the Vesak International Organization Committee is under the Economic and Social Committee of the United Nations. This opportunity helps spread out Buddha's message of compassion, wisdom, peace and non-violence throughout the world, in global leadership, sustainable social development.

1. INTRODUCTION OF ISSUE

Buddhism with the power of compassion, wisdom etc. has effectively solved social and human issues in many ways; strongly influenced on social life all over the world; helped humanity to get rid of suffering, and head to happiness and fullness.

The influence of Buddhism is getting more obvious when the

* Dr. Senior Lecturer., Deputy Dean of Faculty of Culture and Development, Academy of Politics Region I.
International Vesak International Committee under the Economic and Social Committee of the United Nations regularly organizes scientific conferences on Buddhism with themes related to ideals and activities entering the reality, associated with an “awakening” society for people, for sustainable social development.

To better understand the influence of Buddhism in global leadership and sustainable social development, we also need to recall the idea of Vesak and Vesak celebration so that we will have the opportunity to contribute a little more of our compassion and wisdom for a sustainable society today and tomorrow.

In ancient Indian language, Vesak means spirituality. Vesak is also a word for one of the ancient Indian calendar months; Vesak is also the first month of the year in the old Nepalese calendar.

In addition, the date of birth, the day of enlightenment, and the day of nirvana - the three great events of Buddha’s life - took place on the full moon day of Vesak month. According to researchers, it is the full moon day of the fourth lunar month of the East or the fifth solar month of the West. Therefore, the origin of Vesak Festival was held in many countries such as Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Cambodia, Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam etc. which have Buddhism and Buddhism is always growing

Upstreaming of the history, on December 15, 1999, at the 54th session of the United Nations General Assembly, after discussing Section 174 of the agenda, the General Assembly voted, officially acknowledged: Buddhism is a typical religion and the Patriarch of Shakyamuni Buddha is a typical figure. The Buddha’s idea from the past “Peace, friendship, cooperation, development” is also the motto of the United Nations today. The United Nations General Assembly adopted the following contents: From 2000 onwards, every year, the United Nations will hold the Vesak celebration at a time equivalent to the full moon day of May. The Vesak celebration is held at the United Nations headquarter in New York City, the United States and the United Nations centers in different regions of the world. Countries with Buddhism can host the United Nations Vesak celebration in their countries, according to the commitments and implementation of UN regulations.
The Vesak celebration has become the Great Cultural and Humanity Festival on the international scale of the United Nations.

For the first time, in 2000, the United Nations Vesak Festival took place solemnly at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, with the participation of Sanghas from 34 countries. Since 2004, Vesak Festival has been hosted by countries with Buddhism 12 times, of which 9 times were held in Thailand under the patronage of the Royal Thai government and Thai’s Sangha. Mahachulalongkorn Buddhist University served as the main organizer along with the Asia Pacific Office of United Nations and Buddhamonthon World Buddhism Center, Bangkok, Thailand. Once Vesak was held in Sri Lanka in 2016.

Since 2013, the International Organization Committee of Vesak has become an organization under the Economic and Social Committee of United Nations. This great event is considered by the world Buddhist community as a precious opportunity to spread Buddha’s message of compassion, wisdom, peace and non-violence throughout the world.

Twice Vesak was held in Vietnam. In 2008, Vietnamese Government hosted the United Nations Vesak Festival with the cooperation of Vietnam Buddhist Sangha. In 2014, Vietnam Buddhist Sangha hosted and organized this great ceremony from socialization funds with the guidance and help from the Government regarding: security and safety in and out the event, communication and other related issues. United Nations Vesak Festival 2008 was held in Vietnam on the occasion of Buddha’s birthday. Vietnamese also call this the Great Buddha’s Birthday of United Nations.

In 2019, for the third time, the United Nations Vesak Festival - The Great Buddha’s Birthday is held solemnly and intimately in Vietnam.

The annual Vesak Festival of the United Nations is an opportunity to help Buddhism, the Buddhist community in the world in general and Vietnam in particular spread Buddha’s message of compassion, wisdom, peace and non-violence worldwide, in global leadership and sustainable social development.

When studying basically the influence of Buddhism in global
leadership and sustainable social development, the author hopes to contribute an additional perspective, a light of fire, though small to join monks and nuns and Buddhists in motivating and continuing to spread the light of the Buddha's compassion, wisdom and peace messages to people in the whole world.

In this article, the author will present three main contents:

i. The scientific basis of issue

ii. King Tran Nhan Tong - Buddhism in global leadership and sustainable social development

iii. Open perspective in contributing to global leadership and sustainable social development of the 20th century Buddhism.

From the point of view of a teacher having 29 years of experience in the profession, who always cultivates the mind of goodness; longs to transmit some experience to live happily; gathers knowledge of expertise, of Buddhism to foster the goodness, humanity, kindness in students for a life of goodness, kindness and happiness, this article presents and analyzes the three main contents mentioned above.

2. SOLVING OF THE ISSUE

2.1. The scientific basis of issue

2.1.1. Some relevant concepts to the issue

In order to have a scientific basis to explore and discover Buddhism in global leadership and sustainable social development, it is important to review some concepts: Buddhism, global leadership, development, sustainable society... in order to come to an unity in understanding, discovering, commenting and evaluating.

The above concepts are understood uniformly by Vietnamese people as in Hoang Phe's dictionary:

“Buddhism is a religion born in the sixth century BC, founded by Shakyamuni Buddha.”

“Leadership is creating policies, direction and organization, encouragement and implementation.”

“Society is a form of human living together at a certain
development level of history, built on the basis of a certain mode of production; crowded with people who live together for a while; gathers people with the same economic and political status, and class.”

“Development is changing or making changes from little to many, narrow to wide, low to high, simple to complex.”

From the common understanding of such concepts in Vietnamese society, the influence of Buddhism in global leadership and sustainable social development is increasingly widespread.

2.1.2. Tran Nhan Tong Buddha and Vietnamese Buddhism

King Tran Nhan Tong was born on 11 November in the year of Horse 1258 and died on 1 November, the year of Monkey 1308. He was in the throne for 14 years, 5 years as Grand Emperor, and had 8 years of ordination. He lived for 50 years. He was the 3rd king of the Tran dynasty - the period of great martial arts and literature, religions and daily life in extreme harmony.

Tran Nhan Tong is a great cultural figure, a national hero, an emperor who has left behind a great political career. He was a thinker, an educator, an artist, a humanist and a great religious leader. He has the combination, and sublimation of Vietnamese culture, Buddhism and the Three Teachings of the contemporary Eastern Aura. He was a national hero who led the entire population against the Yuan enemy, saved the nation and helped save humanity from the war disaster.

Buddhism has been introduced and has been present in Vietnam for over 2000 years. In the history of Vietnam, there were periods when Buddhism became the national religion (XI - XIII century, Ly - Tran period in Vietnam). Buddhist philosophy and thought deeply influenced the society and every aspect of social life. It can be seen that, from the early days of its introduction into Vietnam, Buddhism harmonized with indigenous cultural practices. The most typical example is during reign of King Hoang Tran Nhan Tong. In Vietnam, he is a pioneer in the implementation of a political way which is for people by combining peaceful spirit with Bodhisattva’s mercy.

Not only that, he was the one who initiated and promoted the great spirit of national unity with the spirit of kindness, tolerance
and harmony. Among these, kindness is the immense light that shines throughout the universe in the present and in the future. He is the model not only of “the noble man” but also the model of “solemn Bodhisattva” for Vietnamese people and many Buddhists around the world.

Buddha - King Tran Nhan Tong - in fact not only protected, preserved and built the country but also founded the Vietnam Zen lineage before, during and after his renunciation. Both Vietnamese people and Buddhists know him as the founder of Vietnam Buddhist Sangha. He has a long-lasting positive impact on Vietnamese history and Vietnamese Buddhism. In other words, he made a great contribution to the receiving and localizing Buddhism ideals; found the unique way to make Buddhism suitable for Vietnamese and spread it out to every individual. At the same time, he brought reforms of the philosophical thought and spiritual practice to Vietnamese people.

His Buddhism thought has a profound meditation theory, strong determination for a path of liberation, but is still so simple that every Vietnamese can study and practice daily to achieve peace and happiness in their lives. Therefore, people of that time venerated him as Buddha Truc Lam, a Vietnamese Buddha. People today are becoming more and more aware of his magnificent and profound intimacy. He was a great cultural figure and humanist of all time.

King Tran Nhan Tong remains an example of Buddhism entering daily life - Buddhism in leadership, social development and sustainable global integration.

2.2. King Tran Nhan Tong - Buddhism in global leadership and sustainable social development

2.2.1. The influence of King Tran Nhan Tong in leadership and development of Vietnamese society

Accompanying and being honored by Vietnamese history and people but perhaps the highlight of the influence of Buddha Tran Nhan Tong in leadership and development of Vietnamese society is concluded in the celebration of 700 years from his entering the nirvana, when the National Assembly Chairman Nguyen Phu Trong - now General Secretary and President of Vietnam affirmed:
“In the multitude of high merits taught by predecessors. King Tran Nhan Tong has many contributions and has a special position in the history of the nation.

For his life, he was an eminent king. He led people with unity and defeated Yuan enemy twice, given that it was the most powerful invader in the world at that time. That victory is forever engraved in the national golden history. After giving the throne to his son, he devoted himself to finding a plan to nurture and protect people in order to build and develop the country.

For religion, he is a Zen master, the founder and leader of the Truc Lam branch of Zen, his own meditation line in Vietnamese Buddhism. Having a heart for others, the vision of a wise king, an enlightened monk, he advocated building the religion to nurture and promote the harmony mind among people, build and foster their independence, self-reliance, foster the harmony in the world, between king and his officials, father and son, husband and wife, etc. That thought is the root of the national strength which over the time has become the tradition of Vietnam.

In his life and career, religion and life are always in harmony with the happiness of everyone. He skillfully combined the religious mind, virtue to build a strong life. That merit is preserved till today and forever.” (2)

Over the years, along with the development of Vietnam and the world in the globalization environment, in a flat world, with 4.0 technologies, in the strong scientific and technological development, in global communication, with so many opportunities and challenges, with the support of many country leaders and different social institutions, Buddhism with its credo of “Peace, friendship, cooperation and mutual development” toward a sustainable global society is growing and confirms its positive role in the development of a sustainable and prosperous global society.

2.2.2. Contribution of King Tran Nhan Tong in leadership and sustainable global social development

Today, mentioning King Tran Nhan Tong, after more than 710 years of his entry into nirvana, we remember him and are grateful for the golden, most brilliant dynasty in Vietnamese history. During
the dynasty, the military commander contributed his intellectual
strength, outstanding talent as a great politician and militarist to
unite his people unanimously, “to fight together” to fight against the
most powerful army in the world at that time - the Yuan army. Not
only that, the whole nation was enlightened by his virtue. Many
talented and good generals are touched, enlightened by him. He
had no regret to spare his efforts, blood and bones to build and
protect the country. He helped people under his reign to have a
happy, prosperous, peaceful, life in body and mind. They are the
most convincing and eloquent testament to the contribution of
King Tran Nhan Tong in the leadership and development of ancient
Vietnamese society, which is the root of Vietnamese cultural
identity so that Vietnam can continue to reach higher and farther
when building a sustainable society in global integration.

He is also the King of Buddha who gave up the good, rich and
glorious flowers to choose for himself the path of monotheism:
to practice monastic life and still stick to and care for the world,
the daily life of Vietnamese people. He devoted himself to the
desire to build an ideal Buddhism closely linked to people’s real
life, the destiny of the nation. His contribution is immensely great
through virtue of propagating and guiding people to build a moral
foundation and a living standard that are bold with the identity and
spirit of Vietnamese nation and eliminate practices of superstition,
as well as practice regularly the Ten goodness. He blew into the
heavenly frame of Vietnamese Buddhism, which had a long history,
a new wind - the cool wind of the spirit of incarnation, not only in
the historical moment but also till this day, and tomorrow.

Referring to the contributions of King Tran Nhan Tong in
leadership, global sustainable social development, we cannot help
but to re-affirm what made the great greatness in his life that take
more time for our generation and next generations to study and
research:

i. He is the great king who was extremely good at martial
arts, military, commanding, and twice defeated Yuan
army.

ii. At the time when he was enlightened in Buddhism, it
became clear that the “If the king’s morality is too big, it is impossible for him to lead a slavery country.”

iii. He successfully built an incarnate Buddhism - Vietnam Buddhism - useful for people, for life, and he committed to educating people everywhere.

iv. The Buddhism he built is in association with people’s real life, the fate of the country. Therefore, in the year of his ordination, our country was invaded by Ai Lao and he went to the battle as a Zen master.

v. Throughout his journey to educate people, his visit to Champa left a deep lesson on an important diplomatic strategy that protected the good relations between Vietnam and Champa.

For his whole life, King Tran Nhan Tong - the Buddha of Vietnam - contributed in teaching, leading people to live morally, honestly, developed Vietnamese society to become a peaceful society, honest, kind, a ecstasy place in this earth, a paradise worth living with high quality. He created a glorious period of national history in many ways.

King Tran Nhan Tong made a great contribution to the founding of Truc Lam Zen Buddhism in Vietnam, unifying the national ideology, building a religious ideology bearing the national cultural identity of Vietnam. Generations of Vietnamese people acknowledge, appreciate, and admire him and his merits as treasures of multi-value cultural heritage in many ways. Increasingly, our generation today especially treasures those in the process of leadership, social development in Vietnam and the as well as in the global sustainable development. Special cultural heritage treasures need to be acknowledged, preserved, transmitted and continued to develop in all aspects (here, the author points to three aspects and will discuss these aspects on another occasion):

i. Time of cultural heritage: What Vietnamese Truc Lam Buddhism and Zen Buddhism leave behind were important in the past, and they last until today, and future. They are also the trigger our looking towards the origin.
ii. Creativity in the structure of cultural heritage: Truc Lam Zen Buddhism and King Buddha are not only heritage structures handed down from the past but also structured, inherited and re-created in the present and in the future.

iii. Existence of the overall cultural heritage: Truc Lam Zen Buddhism and King Buddha are not only a single event, cultural heritage phenomenon but also a phenomenon, a unique and extraordinary cultural heritage event in a whole.

It can be affirmed that the King Buddha, Truc Lam and the cultural heritage have a dialectical relationship between the common and the particular, between the subject and the object, between the fractions and the whole, between tradition and present and they are inseparable towards a sustainable development society in the context of a global flat world.

3. VIETNAMESE BUDDHISM WITH GLOBAL LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT OF A SUSTAINABLE PEACEFUL SOCIETY

In global leadership and the development of a peaceful, sustainable society, the core of public administration is social work to effectively help people and society. Vietnamese Buddhism with monks, nuns, and Buddhist in the process of entering life also focus on that core issue for people’s happiness, and a prosperous and sustainable development of society.

Up to now, Vietnamese monks, nuns and Buddhists who have participated in social work, incarnation, and helped the community are mostly “dependent on grace”. At present, activities to help people and society and the application of Buddhism in social work in Vietnam have had interferences and mutual support to develop together. Public officials and civil servants in public administration learn, and cooperate with Buddhist organizations and monks in leading and organizing the application of Buddhism to social work activities at schools, hospitals, cultural institutions, public places of the community etc. The number of monks, and nuns participate in learning, understanding and participating social work is increasing. It can be said that the present life requires
Buddhist social workers to have higher criteria and capacity to be compatible with social workers in public administration. The reform process is aimed at: “Building the organizational structure of the entire streamlined, effective and efficient political system; promoting the fight against corruption, wastefulness and bureaucracy.” issued by the Party and Government of Vietnam in the Central Resolution XII. (3)

Modern social work is derived from religious charitable activities. Many activities of Vietnamese Buddhism when participating in social work have been and continue to make charitable activities spread stronger and more effectively.

Vietnamese Buddhism through the method of adhering to the “four-gauge” spirit and “constant invariance” from the time of the King Buddha has shown the effectiveness of Buddhism with global leadership and sustainable social development. Specifically, Vietnamese Buddhism has focused on leading beliefs for each person in society. Buddhism helps every citizen to believe in the right things, into good things, to help them believe in righteous thoughts in order to be able to increase their blessings, goodness, and pursuit towards real happiness and peace of mind.

Buddhism gives people true belief because that belief is built on three solid grounds: (i). Pure and clear wisdom; (ii). the truth; (iii). the spirit of purity is equal, not biased by oppressive impulse. Once the belief formed will lead people’s thinking and action, create a source of motivation to help people become aspirations. Since then, people will be more persistent with their own beliefs, reinforcing the Buddhist faith. Greater clarity contributes to the influence of Buddhism in education, participation in social work, global leadership and sustainable social development when entering life.

Not only that, Buddhism also shows that if you want to lead the world and develop a sustainable peaceful society, you must lead, or educate true faith with sincerity, perseverance and meticulousness. And after all, we must have the faith of the leading and educating people. Vietnamese Buddhism is increasingly influencing global leadership and developing a sustainable peaceful society because of the beliefs of monks, nuns, and Buddhists in society through action
and entering life which are accompanying public administration in many different social affairs.

4. OPEN PERSPECTIVE IN CONTRIBUTING TO GLOBAL LEADERSHIP AND SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF BUDDHISM IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Like many other countries in the world, Vietnam is a diverse country in ethnicity, religion and different types of beliefs. The State of Vietnam always respects, guarantees the freedom and equality of religious beliefs of ethnic groups in the view of “The peoples are equal, united, respectful and help each other to develop”. All registered teachers are protected by law, are free to practice religion, open dignitaries, publish books, build and repair worship facilities in accordance with the law.

In fact, the first Constitution of Vietnam affirmed: “Vietnamese citizens have freedom of belief”. Since then, people’s right to freedom of religious beliefs has always been inherited and developed in our Constitutions and clearly defined in the Law on Belief and Religion adopted by the National Assembly of Vietnam on 18 November 2017.

It can be said that Vietnam and other countries in the world have policies and measures to manage religion and Buddhism management based on the principle of respecting religious freedom and harmony in order to develop a sustainable country.

Buddhism as well as religions in general direct people to love, remind people in society to preserve and practice good values in morality, cause and effect, holy wisdom; orient human to religious faith in the process of faith, resolution, action, and witness. By that we can to promote a harmonious society of science and technology by giving, loving, benefiting and co-working so that people really have equality and happiness in society.

Vietnam always actively addresses the relationship between the state and religious organizations, including Buddhism; promoting self-regulation of religions in the process of entering life to adapt to the management of the state, in the process of effectively participating in the policy implementation and programs for
socio-economic development, improving material and cultural life of religious communities, Buddhist communities and people, contributing to stabilizing socio-political security, to peaceful and sustainable development.

Through the lens of the current cultural and development perspective, Buddhism is a powerful resource that needs to be mobilized, transformed into spiritual strength towards peaceful development and social sustainability. In fact, Buddhism relates to development issues, especially in developing countries by referring to elements of ideas, practices and experiences. In addition, Buddhism also contributes to social development in relation to the concept of human development in terms of:


ii. About society: paying attention to the ability of literacy, education ability, social relations, living quality of citizens

iii. Ethics: paying attention to the development of conscience, moral awareness, will and the ability to act based on proper knowledge of society and culture.

iv. In terms of psychology: caring about the health of mind, self-esteem, success in meaningful relationships and happiness.

Currently, in the global trend, in the rapid development of modern science and technology, strong changes in economy, society and culture, Buddhism is also strongly affected and an adaptive change is required in the new context.

The special figures of Buddhism such as the ancient Tran Nhan Tong Buddha of Vietnam, or the current special figures of Buddhism such as Thich Nhat Hanh, India’s Gyalwang Drukpa etc. have increased their influence that leads the spirit of Buddhism to all people in society.

Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh has been involved in social activities since the 1960s as a scholar, teacher and peace activist, the founder of Van Hanh Buddhist University in Saigon and La Boi
publisher (publishing a magazine for peace). In 1966, he founded the Order of Continuation. He wrote books and introduced the concept of “Buddhist commitment” to everyone. He is also a famous lecturer, writer, poet and monk of world Buddhism, the abbot stayed at Plum Village temple, in the south of France for decades.

Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh spreads the message of peace and compassion, universal moral message in everyday life with “Practice 5 mindfulness”. Recently, Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh has established a worldwide movement for young people to train in the habits of “Practicing 5 Mindfulness”, and initiated a training program for international teachers to teach mindfulness at schools in Europe, America and Asia.

His unique and famous literary works, good sayings and stories expressing the nature of his mindfulness from 2010 to date are displayed in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Canada, Germany, France and New York. In addition, he has opened many monasteries in California, New York, Vietnam, Paris, Hong Kong, Thailand, Mississippi and Australia, and an “Applied Buddhist Institute” in Germany.

In recent years, Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh has led events for US, British, Irish, Indian and Thai members of Parliaments; proposed UNESCO to call for specific steps to reduce violence, war; made positive impact on the globe such as appearing in high-minded events at Google, World Bank, Harvard University Medical School. At present, he has returned to settle down in Vietnam. (4)

Working non-stop, Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh has became the second most influential Buddhist leader in the West world, after the Dalai Lama, according to foreign news agencies. “American queen” Oprah Winfrey also said “Thich Nhat Hanh is one of the most influential spiritual leaders in our time”.

The Gyalwang Drukpa of India is also a special character. At the head of the Drukpa Lineage with over 30 years of teaching the Dharma around the world, his holiness initiated many humanitarian projects, in accordance with the principle of serving the Drukpa Lineage and humanity.

One of the most outstanding projects of his holiness is the
“Live to Love International Charity” (Living to Love) “For the Millennium Development Goals” and promoting 5 charitable goals: environmental protection, rescuing, education, health services and heritage preservation. He also supported the equal rights of women with the idea: “Enlightenment regardless of gender, compassion regardless of gender, wisdom regardless of gender, because in nature, we are all Buddhas” and “Everyone, regardless of whether they are male or female, has the potential and full authority to attain enlightenment.” He is also a “Guardian of the Himalayas” and attempts in humanitarian activities and contributes to the preservation of the world environment.

The typical Buddhist figures mentioned above are the most authentic evidence to affirm that Buddhism meets all the requirements of global practice, of the flat world today.

5. CONCLUSION

From what Vietnam Buddhism and world Buddhism have accomplished throughout the history process, we fully believe that Buddhism today meets all the requirements of future religions – Global religion. Albert Einstein, the world’s No. 1 science-famous brain in the twentieth century, once affirmed: “The religion of the future will be a global religion, transcending all gods, dogmas and theology. That religion must embrace both the natural and the supernatural aspects, based on the basis of moral consciousness, arising from the overall experience of all these areas in a fully meaningful way. Buddhism will meet those conditions”. (5)

In the 21st century, Buddhism contributes to global leadership and sustainable social development through active participation in social affairs in public administration. Buddhism can play an active role in socio-economic development with the creation of strong economies.

Buddhism can be a partner for social growth because people have the right to choose faith and possess brain’s infinite creativity.

Buddhism provides a moral foundation for society through good faith and the mindfulness that human faith has led.

Buddhism also brings peace of mind and positive emotions to
followers and people, helps them towards a happy and peaceful life.

Buddhism has a wide range of social connections, maintains a wide network of countries around the world, links different social events with religious activities.

Buddhism can support regimes supporting education, and many of the social work fields focusing on improving living qualities. It can call for and create many resources to work on daily issues.

Buddhism has supported in mass mobilization, in people-to-people relations, and sustained public relations.

In modern society, Buddhism is also a social service partner that expresses citizens’ spirit and responsibility. Buddhism also spread its ideology and theory to support business, to grow prosperity and social equality.

This article closes with an open view of Buddhism in the 21st century, shows the great impact of Buddhism in global leadership and sustainable social development with a mechanism in which everyone can attend. The spirit of incarnation, the commitment of Buddhism is more promoted in modern society. It helps people practice their faiths in the global social integration, social networking, create a sustainable peaceful society.

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THE ENLIGHTENED LEADER: AN INSIGHT INTO BUDDHIST LEADERSHIP MODEL FOR 21ST CENTURY

by Manish Prasad Rajak

ABSTRACT

Buddhism in recent times has garnered extensive recognition from scholars’ around the world for responding to some of the major contemporary issues that threaten the existence of mankind. Be it in the arena of politics, economics, conflict-resolution, sustainable practices, etc., effective leadership is seen quintessential for averting the variety of interrelated problems humanity faces; this paper aims at developing an ideal leadership model on the lines of Buddhist philosophies that have existed for centuries in the teachings of Buddha. Philosophies that addresses the root of all problems and extends its unique prescription of selflessness, love, compassion, kindness and peace, for men to follow. The Noble Eight-Fold path along with the ethical (Buddhist lay ethics) principles and the ten perfections (as laid down in the Jatakas) provide with an effective tool for integration with modern theories and develop a holistic model for exemplary leadership that can bring paradigm shift in the World leadership front to ensure sustainable peace and stability.

1. INTRODUCTION

Humanity is on a course that is considered to be the beginning of the end of our so called ‘civilized society’ as the 21st century world is struggling against challenges that are threatening the very existence
of mankind. In this era of economic instability and inequality, environment degradation, terrorism, religious intolerance and radicalization, displacement of people due to war and conflicts—human beings have failed to address the threats and provide a concrete solution. The problems are not independent of human beings as it originates from our deep-rooted selfish motives and self-centered goals; so, the solution lays within us and it cannot be denied that we as responsible beings have failed to help ourselves. In his quest for materialistic and short term (temporary) happiness and to feed his ‘ego’, man has ruthlessly exploited not just nature but his fellow beings too. Therefore, the problem lies not in the threats but the people who are at the helm making decisions and the ones who blindly follow them for selfish pursuits. Be it in Western or in Asian context, the future of humanity and the objective of peaceful co-existence depends on the leadership and pro-active participation of the community of responsible and concerned leaders who can bring change within them as well as in the system.

The inability of modern leaders to address the emergent issues which were brought to their face is a testament for the failure of evolved mindsets and the botched approaches that we have been boasting of with pride. The ‘self-centered’ philosophy of modern men is not a viable solution to address the issues as they deal with them superficially. Hundreds of theories and models, decades of peace conferences and sustainable goals seemed to be going in vain if the leadership at helm is unable to follow what they have been preaching without understanding the gravity of the situations knocking at the door. Scholars have been finding some new models of leadership and seeking different views as to what makes an ideal leader but have failed to come up with a holistic model that can claim to be the perfect leadership model. Because leadership has nothing to do with any models or theories, it has to deal with human beings and no superficial theory can claim to understand human beings and his motives in a comprehensive manner.

It is believed that the 21st century would be the era of Asian dominance but are we ready to accept that responsibility or is the Asian leadership is going to repeat the same mistakes of the West and pursue ‘self-centered’ materialistic goals? The answers seem not
to be distant; they lie in the centuries old philosophy that has been followed on these lands in the form of religion – Buddhism, which originated some 2500 years ago and have been the guiding light for a major part of the Asian community. Scholars are now of the view that Buddhism has to offer a great array of inter-disciplinary principles in terms of economics, ecology, peace and, definitely, leadership. This paper will aim to bring forward the Buddhist perspective into modern leadership and provide an insight into the Buddhist view of leadership for a holistic and sustainable future.

2. LEADERSHIP

There are a number of schools of thought on leadership approaches which define leadership from different perspectives according to the style and ideology of the leader and the functions of it. Generally, a leader is someone who guides a group of individuals to achieve a defined objective or set of goals by certain skills and techniques. It is the equation of ends and means where a group is either motivated or cajoled to meet an end through some prescribed means. At times the means may not be justified or called ethical because it may not consider the well-being of the various stakeholders, or even the followers; to put it in simple terms, such actions may not be ethically correct and most of the leadership theories have failed to address these aspects of leadership. Although a few of the models, like the ethical leadership, spiritual leadership, the sustainability leadership and holistic leadership models do address these issues to a considerable extent; it is required to supplement such leadership models with a more ethical and wholesome philosophy.

The global challenges can be categorized as complex adaptive challenges or wicked problems which, while familiar are in some way new and have no prescribed solutions, two of the most wicked problems impacting current and future generations are issues of sustainability and peace (Saterwhite, et al., 2015). For humanity to embrace each of the beliefs needed to create a healthy, economically vibrant, and sustainable global society we would need approaches to leadership that differ quite markedly from those offered by most leaders in recent history (Alder, 2009).
Providing ethical leadership is one of a leader’s most important responsibilities. Ethical leaders act as moral persons, behaving ethically as they carry out their leadership values, treat employees fairly and express care and concern for followers. They live up to the values they espouse and are perceived as open and honest. Spirituality in organizational settings operate simultaneously at two levels: individual and collective. Individual spirituality derives from the values, feelings, and practices of each person in the organization. Spiritually oriented individuals engage in behaviors designed to nurture their inner lives, they strive to get in touch with their deep desires and feelings, seek a sense of purpose and want to establish deep connections with others (Johnson, 2009). Transforming from the inside out turns conventional leadership theory upside down, it posits that in order to change someone else, one needs first to change oneself. Spiritual leadership is therefore relevant because these leaders can transform others, organizations and society by transforming themselves first (Law, 2016).

For an organization to prosper to a higher state of thinking and doing on leadership, so that it eventually becomes a natural way of how people demonstrate their own leadership, a guiding set of principles is helpful way in which to get pointed in right direction (Taggart, 2006). Such guiding principles can be an ethical philosophy or a holistic vision which can guide the leadership for a higher vision; vision when combined with a sense of mission of who we are and what we do establishes the organizations culture with its fundamental ethical system and core values (Fry, 2003). Holistic leadership is an approach to leadership that incorporates not only what leaders need to do and how they do it, but also who and where of leadership. It is not just about acquiring some leadership ‘skills’ or ‘techniques’ or even ‘behavior’, it’s about aligning the whole person-intellect, emotion, spirituality and behavior (Larcher, 2011).

A sustainability leader is someone who inspires and support actions towards a better world, care for the well-being of humanity and all other forms of life, as well as being guided by moral compass are often associated with sustainability leadership (Visser & Courtice, 2011). Sustainable leadership means a kind of leadership undertaken with the responsibility to individual people, groups
and organization by assenting ecological, social, and economic principles of sustainability in context of a group, organization and community and by encouraging successful mastering of ideas of sustainability, co-operation with environment, successful and teaching based on the principles of sustainability-operation with environment, successful learning and teaching based on principles of sustainability as well as peoples self-expression. The leaders who seek sustainable leadership in an organization should start with oneself; to analyze themselves. The leader’s own personal qualities and skills and having identified insufficient abilities, to learn consistently sets an example for the employees to use innovations and creativity (Simanskiene & Zuperkiene, 2014). One of the pre-conditions for creating sustainable peace is the presence of a critical mass of peace-building leadership from the domains of politics, diplomacy, defense, economics, religions etc. Peace building leadership attaches a great deal of importance to the future, they envision a shared, clear and mutually attractive peaceful future depicted as non-violent, inclusive, and as a win-win situation. Peace building leaders having courage, humility, sense of humanity, personal integrity, ability to cope up with personal stress and complex situations, and intrinsic motivation, (Reychler & Stellamans, 2004).

Buddhist leadership philosophy situates itself somewhere among in the spectrum of ethical, spiritual, sustainable, and holistic approaches which makes it even more interesting to get into an in-depth analysis for discovering new avenues in the field of leadership. The views various scholars bring a different outlook to leadership approaches in application and in theory; the need of the time is to bring more insights in such leadership models based on some concrete ethical and logical philosophies; this is where Buddhist philosophy comes into the picture.

3. BUDDHISM & LEADERSHIP

The rationale behind venturing into Buddhism to seek a way for a better leadership lies in the very philosophy of Buddhism which is based on ‘self-introspection’, ‘self-development’ and ethical conduct; taking into consideration the well-being of every stake holder. Buddhism has always been appreciated for its advocacy of
non-violence and compassionate approaches and loving kindness for every sentient being. The truth of suffering and the noble eight-fold path is the most basic of Buddhist philosophies that can be studied to understand human nature and behavior. In this paper, the Buddhist concepts of wholesome and unwholesome motives, the noble eight-fold path and the ten perfections would be studied from the stand point of an ethical and holistic leadership approach.

_Bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya lokānukampāya_: for the good of many, for the happiness of many, out of compassion for the world- is the world view of Buddhist philosophy which not only encompasses individuals but each and every sentient being.

The Buddhist monastic code and other Buddhist principles can illuminate the following three modern categories of Governance: (1) Leadership Skills; (2) Decision making; and, (3) Problem solving. They teach us that a better world is possible and that it can be achieved through wise and compassionate governance (Brahm, 2007). Buddhism has got much to offer to enlighten the corporate executives, government officials and politicians about the dangers of excessive greed (Monksfield, 2009). The philosophy of Buddha comprehends a theory of knowledge, a theory of reality, an ethical system, a social and political, philosophy, suggestions for philosophy of law and international relations. The Buddhist theory of reality and ethics are summed up in the four noble truths, and the rule of power is to be dependent on the rule of righteousness (Jayatilleke, 1978). Buddhist teachings which include a combination of self-reflection, compassion, renunciation and wisdom can improve one’s leadership performance and ability to lead others (Atkinson & Duncan, 2013). A leader who engages in (morality) right view will mindfully concentrate on decisions that are based on improvement of quality of life for all stakeholders, consequently, all intentions, communication (speech), effort and actions of this leader will be geared towards the goal of becoming morally sound, with such mindful approach from initial views to ultimate actions, the leader becomes aware of the need to engage in right livelihood, as he consistently gauges his or her accomplishment to higher moral standards developed. While some may think that the ancient eight-fold is too idealistic for contemporary leadership, there are
hopefully enough who may start utilizing this path as a mindful moral compass in their decision making and directional process (Marques, 2017).

In Buddhism, the intention behind any action defines it as wholesome (kusala) or unwholesome (akusala), this also brings into the preview the concept of ends and means for a leader. The Buddhist teachings on wholesome and unwholesome roots provides a criterion of good and evil that is neither theological nor authoritarian but experiential, one with sound psychological basis offering an autonomous pragmatic motivation for avoiding the evil and choosing the good (Thera, 1999). The ten perfections are a post canonical list describing attributes that should be cultivated by the being who wishes to be Buddha and teach others, these perfections have evolved as the qualities that goes into the making of the Buddha (Shaw, 2006). Kusala and akusala are the terms perhaps most commonly used for praise worthy and responsible actions or states of mind in early Buddhist texts; the roots of wholesome action, literally non-greed, non-hatred and non-delusion are not just absence of greed, hatred and delusion, but states which oppose them: anti-greed (generosity and renunciation), anti-hatred (loving kindness and compassion) and anti-delusion (wisdom) (Harvey, 2010).

3.1. The 3 Wholesome and Unwholesome mental states (roots)

The justification of good or evil before undertaking any action depends largely on the motive behind it; in terms of leadership it becomes even more important as to any action or decision taken by the leader will have large-scale implications not just on his immediate environment of followers and organization but also other stakeholders- be it the society at large, or economy and environment. Therefore, for leaders it is necessary to ensure if they have been under the influence of such defilements, as a decision taken under greed, self-interest, and ignorance may fetch immediate results but in the long earn they will be having implications on the reputation of the leader and the society. On the other hand, the decisions that have the welfare of masses in mind, and which based on loving and compassion for all sentient beings may not give immediate results or short-term benefits but in the long run, it will prove to be beneficial for everyone including the leader and his followers and organization.
3.2. The Ten Perfections (pāramīs)

The ten perfections in Buddhism denotes to the ten qualities or values of Bodhisattva that helps on the path of enlightenment. These qualities have taken form in the shape of ethical values that have been used to teach the masses about the Bodhisattva virtues through stories of previous lives of Buddha. The Jatakas, which are a part of the Pali canon, have been most instrumental in making these virtues reach the masses in the form of stories.

The ten perfections, pāramīs are the most important conditions for the complete eradication of defilements and every effort should be made to accumulate every kind of Kusala for pañña (wisdom) to arise which can eradicate all defilements stage by stage. It is beneficial to study the ten perfections so that we can consider and investigate ourselves as to which perfection has not been accumulated and should develop all of them in order to realize the four noble truths (Boriharnwanaket, 2007).

The ten perfections are: Generosity (dāna), morality (sīla), renunciation (nekhamma), wisdom (paññā), energy (viriya), patience (khanti), truthfulness (sacca), determination (Adhiṭṭhāna), loving-kindness (mettā), and equanimity (upekkhā). These perfections can be taken as the ideal characters of a leader and help in developing a personality that encompasses all these virtues. These virtues are directly related to overcoming of the mental defilements mentioned before and the cultivating of these perfections enable one to walk the path of Bodhisattva. From the standpoint of ethical leadership, the ten perfections can be taken into consideration as the qualities of ideal leadership.

3.3. The Noble-Eightfold path

The Buddhist path begins with understanding the four noble truths which are the first discourse of the Buddha in the Dhammachakkappavattana Sutta, which had as its subject-the four noble truths and the middle way. These are: the truth of suffering; the truth of cause of suffering; the truth of cessation of suffering; and, the truth of the path which is the Noble Eight-fold path of Buddhism (Santina, 2012). The four noble truths are the way of leading to the cessation of Dukkha (suffering), which is known as the
middle path. The middle path avoids the two extremes of searching for happiness through sensual pleasure, which is unprofitable and the way of ordinary people, and searching for happiness through self-mortification in different forms of asceticism, which are painful and unworthy and unprofitable too (Rahula, 1958).

The middle path that Buddha prescribed for removing the veil of ignorance can be the ideal path for the new leaders who have to nurture themselves for the challenges in front of them. This path is far from our self-centered and egoistic goals and objectives of life and therefore incorporating it in any form of leadership style will be beneficial for not just the society but for the leader as well. The noble eightfold path:

i. Right Understanding (correct understanding of oneself, and the reality of things as they are which is the highest wisdom).

ii. Right Thought; thoughts of selfless renunciation, love, and non-violence.

iii. Right Speech; which means to abstain from falsehood, slandering, harsh and malicious words, frivolous and idle talk.

iv. Right Action; promoting moral, honorable and peaceful conduct (abstinence from killing, stealing and sexual misconduct).

v. Right Livelihood; one should abstain from making one’s living through profession or business that brings harm to others (arms and lethal weapon, intoxicating drinks, killing animals, and in human-beings such as slave trade, trafficking etc.).

vi. Right Effort; endeavor to discard evil, preventing evil and unwholesome states of mind from arising, to produce and cause arise to good and wholesome states of mind not yet arisen, to develop and bring to perfection the good and wholesome states of mind already arisen.

vii. Right Mindfulness; being mindful of the body, feelings, mind, and thoughts.
viii. Right Concentration; one-pointedness of mind, meditative absorption.  


The Table below shows a relationship between the three unwholesome/wholesome roots and the noble eight-fold path.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3 Roots of Unwholesome (akusala)</th>
<th>3 roots of wholesome (Kusala)</th>
<th>Stages for overcoming</th>
<th>The Eight-Fold Path</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greed (lust, self-indulgence,)</td>
<td>Non-Greed</td>
<td>Stage I- Morality (Sila)</td>
<td>Right Speech</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Right Actions</td>
<td>Right Actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hatred (Ego, Pride)</td>
<td>Non-Hatred</td>
<td>Stage II- Meditation (Samadhi)</td>
<td>Right Effort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delusion (Ignorance)</td>
<td>Non-Delusion</td>
<td>Stage III- Wisdom (Panna)</td>
<td>Right Concentration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source- Author

Overcoming the defilements is a three-stage process which leads to the middle way of Buddhism, the noble eight eight-fold path. The Eight-fold path is divided into three parts- of which Morality is the first one and it comprises of Right speech, action, and livelihood; it can be considered as the first step towards realization of one-self and removes the defilements of greed, craving, self-indulgence, and attachment thereby developing generosity, self-less service and sacrifice. The second aspect is Meditation- which comprises of right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration; at this stage
one develops loving kindness, compassion and sympathy. The last one or the highest is the wisdom stage which comprises of right understanding and thoughts, at this stage one develops insight, wisdom and equanimity which are the highest goals of the path.

4. CONCLUSION

Every religious philosophy has a multi-dimensional approach addressing various aspects of men and society. These approaches are either in the form of commandments or philosophies and they aim to address the ethical aspects of society. Buddhism is one such philosophy that most authoritatively places itself in the forefront of such approaches. This paper was an attempt to develop a practical and universal leadership framework based on the Buddhist philosophy which would address various issues that are being faced in our times. It would be arrogant to say that Buddhism is the best philosophy at our disposal but rather it is the most viable and time-tested philosophy that could rescue humanity and fulfill the dearth of an ideal leader- ethical leadership community that can put forward principles that will safeguard the interests of even the weakest and smallest stakeholder in the world. This paper can serve as the base for in-depth study of Buddhist leadership model and open new avenues for research.

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- IV -
SUSTAINABLE SOCIETIES
ABSTRACT

The eight goals for world development in the new millennium, adopted by the UN in 2000, have one theme in common. That is the theme of social cohesion (on a global scale). An economic system that can allow people of all backgrounds and nationalities to live a relatively prosperous and happy life is clearly essential. Unfortunately, the economic system that prevails today is founded on the notion of competition, the idea that a competitive attitude between individuals, groups and nations is basic to the success of an economy. Adam Smith developed the notion of the ‘free market economy’ in 1776 when he argued that the individuals that constitute a society manage to produce the goods and services they require simply by acting in their own self interest. An economy functions better, in other words, if everyone is selfish. The belief behind adherents of this economic philosophy is that people will work harder if they are working simply to satisfy their own needs and that a true communal spirit is impossible to achieve. It is clear that such an attitude encourages people to make their lives into a quest for the acquisition of wealth and power. This is an attitude that the Buddha Sakyamuni firmly rejected.

In the Pariyesanā Sutta there are two kinds of quest; the noble quest and the ignoble quest (ariyā ca pariyesanā, anariyā ca pariyesanā). The Pali term pariyesanā can be translated as a ‘search’, a ‘quest’ or an ‘inquiry’. The Buddha realized while he was still young that he was
not interested in a quest that generates only power and wealth. He saw the endless circle of birth, decay and death, connected empathically with the suffering of others, and dedicated his life to relieving that suffering. His quest was to discover the right kind of education that could lead to happiness and a sustainable lifestyle for everyone. That is why, in the Sigalaka Sutta, the Buddha teaches the Sāṅgaha-vatthu, the ‘four foundations of social unity’. These are: generosity and donation (dāna), sympathetic communication (peyyavajja), acts that produce benefit (atthacariyā) and social equality (samānattatā). It is clear that a spirit of generosity could tackle the global problem of hunger. It should also be clear that clear and honest communication (peyyavajja), particularly by those in power, can create clarity rather than confusion; this is how ‘right speaking’ (sammaditthi) functions in the eight-fold path. A life of usefulness (atthacariyā) and social equality (samānattatā) complete the Buddha’s recipe for social unity which is more vital than ever in today’s troubled global situation.

1. INTRODUCTION

There is a shop in the northern beach suburbs of Sydney called ‘Samsara’. The shop sells luxury goods, particularly goods that carry fashionable labels. The name of the shop is carefully chosen; it informs the potential customer that what is on sale here is a collection of objects considered desirable according to global society’s present value system. The word Samsara is usually interpreted as representing entirely negative values in Buddhism; it signifies all that should be avoided in order to achieve equanimity and tranquillity. From the perspective of modern global economics however the sale and acquisition of luxury items has a thoroughly positive connotation. Luxury goods carry social status and are thus highly desirable in the global market place. A mythology has grown up around certain objects, bestowing upon them a surplus semantic value. Each object carries references to the value system that constructed it, and which it helps to construct in turn. The foundational ideology behind this urban mythology is that to consume more than one needs is to strengthen the economy.

Of course there are times when Buddhists do go shopping. Everyone has to shop for necessities, and alms would not be offered
to monks if Buddhists did not shop. However, the discourses of the Buddha reveal a social philosophy far removed from this fascination with luxury and status. It appears that the modern global economy, with its emphasis on private ownership, is in opposition to the basic message of Buddhism. Where Buddhism encourages us to be generous and to promote social equality, the modern global economy encourages us to be selfish and to seek greater social status than those around us. Although the Tipiṭaka reveals that the Buddha had no interest in politics, certain of the discourses—such as the Ariyapariyesana Sutta—make clear references to social cohesion.

The “eight goals for world development”, adopted by the UN in 2000, have one theme in common and that is this issue of social cohesion. The theme is implicitly implicated in the eight millennium goals. To ease the burdens of poverty, hunger and disease, and the educational, gender and economic inequalities that often support them, it is clearly necessary to improve our means of producing social cohesion and ensuring equality. The Buddha recommended a system of social cohesion based on compassion and equality while certain dominant economic systems depend on competition and inequality. While it would be unrealistic to imagine a world free of consumerism and the pursuit of profit, it is surely reasonable to seek a solution to these global problems through a change of emphasis on the things we seek.

It is clear that a system is necessary that allows all people to live together in harmony. Many such systems have been established, some more successful and equitable than others. The Buddha taught an art of living based on selflessness. The ‘samsara’ of modern economic materialism, on the other hand, emphasizes the ‘natural’ inequality between owners and workers. Its philosophy is based on the thoughts of Adam Smith who constructed an economic system based on selfishness. Smith’s system assumes that humans can be no better than they are right now, that they possess a basic human nature that they cannot rise above or go beyond. The Buddha’s teachings, on the other hand, are full of inspirational stories of humans that have risen above their conditioned ‘nature’.
2. THE NOBLE QUEST

In the Ariyapariyesana Sutta the Buddha talks about two kinds of search or quest that a person can embark upon for the course of his or her lifetime. There is a noble search and an ignoble search. The ignoble search is for all the things that are subject to birth, aging, sickness, death, sorrow and defilement. These things are the objects of attachment.¹ If, on the other hand, the person chooses the noble quest, he or she seeks the “deathless supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna.”² This phrase “the deathless supreme security from bondage” is repeated for each of the objects of attachment, for birth, ageing, sickness, death, sorrow and defilement. The phrase is a description of Nibbāna from the point of view of the meditation practitioner. It says that the ultimate experience of meditation is one in which the practitioner feels secure, ‘free from bondage’ and utterly unconcerned with death. It is a way of describing Nibbāna that is useful in terms of the experiential and phenomenological language of contemplative practices. The notion of the ‘deathless’, in particular, is important as a description of the psycho-physical state to be attained during meditation practice. This is demonstrated in the Thai and Khmer meditation manuals unearthed in recent years that employ analogies and metaphors to describe that which cannot be described in less poetic language.³

There are therefore two ‘paths’ between which each individual must choose. One is a path that leads to success in Samsara; to social power, to adopting the symbolic language of the status symbol and to satisfying more than the individual needs. The other is the path taken by the Buddha; to face the deeply rooted needs and desires, to dissolve attachments and to ‘go forth’ into tranquillity. The statues rescued from Gandhāra and the Jataka stories of the Buddha emphasize this point of Ariyapariyesana, the noble quest. The Buddha left a secure and privileged background to pursue a

² Ibid, p.256: amatam anuttaram yogakkhemam nibbānam pariyesati (amatam = eternal; anuttaram = incomparable; yogakkhemam = security; pariyesati = to seek for).
radically different form of security. It was a security based on a realization about the causes of suffering and the quest that must be undertaken to be free of attachment to those causes. It involved a radical change of perspective and a commitment to certain tactics and strategies for changing the ‘nature’ of the individual. That is, where the nature of the individual is taken as constituting his or her needs and desires.

3. THE QUEST FOR SELF-SATISFACTION

This is in stark contrast to the viewpoint of the modern, global, free-market economy. A major patriarch of this movement was the Scottish philosopher and economist Adam Smith. Margaret Thatcher is said to have kept a copy of his book ‘The Wealth of Nations’ in her handbag. It is implicit in Smith’s arguments that human nature cannot change. If our nature is identified with our needs and desires, then the logical way to create social cohesion is to seek the most efficient means of satisfying those desires. His economic philosophy, therefore, is based on self-interest. The division of labour creates a situation in which workers and stockholders are in competition and thus a system of economic values emerges. That is, each object or phenomenon appearing in the social environment has a certain value placed on it. A signifying system is constructed within which a vast array of economic and mythological values ebb and flow according to the fashionable ideologies of the time.

What are the common wages of labour, depends everywhere upon the contract usually made between those two parties, whose interests are by no means the same. The workmen desire to get as much, the masters to give as little, as possible. The former are disposed to combine in order to raise, the latter in order to lower, the wages of labour.⁴

Each works in his or her own self-interest, and each value emerges according to this ‘natural’ balance between competitors. If human nature is unchangeable then the most logical way for people to

⁴ Adam Smith, An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations, Pennsyl-
vania State University: Electronic Classics, p.60.
live together cohesively is by recognizing this fact and founding a system of values based on this empirical reality of human desire. The baseness of the human character is acknowledged and a system allowed to emerge that reaches a ‘natural’ balance between the competing interests. The Buddhist attitude to social cohesion is quite the opposite. It does recognize the ability of humans to change, and it is founded on the ability of humans to make better choices— to follow paths that lead to more than satisfaction of basic instinct.

Alain de Botton sees the global fascination with wealth and success as ‘status anxiety’.5

It is common to describe people who hold important positions in society as ‘somebodies’ and their inverse as ‘nobodies’ - nonsensical terms, for we are all by necessity individuals with identities and comparable claims on existence... Those without status remain unseen, they are treated brusquely ...6

Botton quotes Adam Smith; “to feel that we are taken no notice of necessarily disappoints the most ardent desires of human nature”.7 Our human nature, according to this view, is to feel important, and this is at the very root of status anxiety. It is a particular notion of human nature that Buddhism reveals to be conditioned, obsessive and deluded. The environment that western children are born into conditions them to believe that they are worthless if they do not become powerful or important. The markers of self-esteem promoted by popular culture create a false sense of identity which is chained to the fashionable objects of attachment constructed in the global media. A vivid image from feminist theory is that of the ‘imaginary body’,8 the body that (western) women are obliged to convert themselves into. Constructed by socio-political structures, and all the qualities and values received from the signifiers of the global marketplace, it is the completely fashionable body, possessing “particular kinds of needs and desires”.9 A quest is taking place here

9. Michel Foucault, quoted in Moira Gatens, 1996, Imaginary Bodies, p.52
but it is not freely chosen. Socio-economic signifiers exert a pressure that draws seekers toward the imaginary body like moths to a flame.

The Buddha lists the subjects of the ignoble search in the Ariyapariyesanā Sutta:

Wife and children are subject to birth, men and women slaves, goats and sheep, fowl and pigs, elephants, cattle, horses and mares, gold and silver are subject to birth. These acquisitions are subject to birth; and one who is tied to these things, infatuated with them, and utterly committed to them, being himself subject to birth, seeks what is also subject to birth.\(^\text{10}\)

Although wives and children are no longer considered possessions, the rest of the list clearly consists of the objects of attachment and desire that constitute the status of the accomplished citizen. The sutta confirms that the Buddha was talking about tangible possessions when he warned of the dangers of attachment. Many other aspects of life can be subjects of over-attachment but the tangible is significant in the construction of identity. As stated above, each subject is applied to birth, ageing, sickness, death, sorrow and defilement. That is, each of the possessions is subject to birth, ageing, sickness, death, sorrow and defilement and the individual is constructed in particular ways through attachment to it. The person is subsequently affected intensely through intimate relations with the experience. One who chooses the noble path, however, will achieve unborn, un-ageing, un-iling, deathless, sorrowless and undefiled security from that attachment. Rather than constantly succumbing to the pressures of desire and suffering status anxiety and the fear of loss, the path of Dhamma is followed into the realm of inner tranquillity where the seductive symbols of status and materialism have no dominion.

4. IN SEARCH OF SOCIAL COHESION

The Pali noun pariyesana, as was discussed above, involves the notion of a quest or a search. It appears also in this sutta in its third-person verbal form as pariyesati ‘he/she seeks’ (that which is subject

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to death etc.). Therefore the quest is an active one-in the present moment-that actively moves toward its goal. The individual is on a quest to find something, whether it be the ‘noble’ goal of interacting with others through compassion and equality or the ‘ignoble’ goal of acquisition by means of contention and dissension. In this *sutta*, the person has a deep inclination to move toward the goal. One who follows the Dhamma has a deep inclination to stay on the path that leads away from attachment and longing, while one who shops at Samsara follows an equally deep commitment to satisfy desire.

Another *sutta* that discusses the notion of social cohesion is the Sigālaka Sutta where advice is offered to the laity on interpersonal relations. Instructions are first given to children on how to respect their parents and to husbands and wives on mutual respect within the marriage contract. But then he turns his attention toward the *ariyaka*, the leader, and the discourse takes a markedly socio-economic turn. The basic attitude recommended to the employer is one of compassion and fairness:

There are five ways in which a master should minister to his servants and workpeople as the nadir: by arranging their work according to their strength, by supplying them with food and wages, by looking after them when they are ill, by sharing special delicacies with them, and by letting them off work at the right time.¹¹

Workers are instructed to respond in kind: they should do their work properly, be supportive of the employer’s reputation and be conscientious. A reciprocal approach to management is established, an approach that recognizes the reasonable desire-and right-of workers to share in the prosperity of the organization. It is the doctrine of the *Sanīgaha-vatthus*, which is usually referred to in English as the ‘four foundations of social unity’.¹² The expression is made up of two Pali terms. The first is *Sангha* which invokes the concepts of conjunction, compilation and assemblage.¹³ It thus expresses the notion of coexistence and, subsequently, of living

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together in peace or social cohesion. The second is *Vatthu* which signifies the multiplicity of matters, causes or substances out of which such cohesion can emerge.\(^\text{14}\) The *Saṅgha-vatthūni* form a conjunction, then, of the principal aspects of social cohesion, of the fundamental qualities that must be present for a cultivated society to thrive. The four *Saṅgha-vatthūni* are:\(^\text{15}\) *Dāna, peyyavajja, atthacariyā* and *samānattatā*, or “liberality, kindly speech, a life of usefulness and equality/impartiality in justice”.

a) *Dāna* signifies generosity and liberality as well as the spirit of ‘giving’, and the offering of donations.\(^\text{16}\) With this general semantic foundation it engenders social cohesion as it passes into the socio-economic domain wherein citizens become stakeholders in the society by investing in it. This is still a rather materialistic interpretation however as the notion of *dāna* passes far beyond issues such as rights and obligations. The Buddha taught that true social cohesion depends on people sincerely embracing the spirit of generosity, emphasizing that generosity brings happiness and well-being to the giver as well as the receiver. The generous person benefits by ‘letting go’ of possessions and the objects of attachment. Grasping leads to suffering and can only be alleviated by committing to the noble quest for that which lies beyond attachment to material possessions.

b) The second aspect of social unity is *Peyyavajja*, the nominal form of *piyavāḍi* which means ‘speaking kindly’ or being affable. ‘Piyo’ means to be kind and loving while *vāḍi* comes from *vadati* which means to speak, to say and to declare. It therefore refers to all speech acts, the social activities that we perform by means of the words that we utter in public. The acts that are carried out through our speaking can have a major effect on the people we meet. Kindly and honest speech creates peace and good will. An atmosphere of truth and reality emerges from the discourse rather than one of delusion and frustration. It is closely connected to the doctrine of *sammaditthi*, ‘right speech’, and generates clarity through compassionate means of communication.

\(^{14}\) Ibid, p.558.


\(^{16}\) R.C.Childers, 2005, A Dictionary of the Pali Language, Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, p.111.
c) The third aspect is *Atthacariyā*, which signifies the production of wise acts, acts that produce benefit’ and ‘useful conduct’.\(^{17}\)

Speech acts are the consequences that our utterances produce in the social environment but these are the physical actions of our daily lives that affect others in a direct and concrete fashion. The noble quest again draws on the doctrine of the Eight-Fold Path by this time referring to *(sammaajjiva)*, (right employment) and rejecting those professions that cause harm to others. Again the Buddha’s attitude to social unity is confirmed as founded on compassion as we choose occupations that contribute to the smooth running of our community and to the happiness of those around us. Day after day we construct the world around us, transforming our environment by ‘bringing forth a world’. Modern neuroscience has called into question the notion that the world is “out there”, somehow “independent of our cognition”, and that consciousness is just a “re-presentation of that independent world.”\(^{18}\)

Human cognition is so constituted that it constantly recreates its world. It is not necessary to assume with Adam Smith that human nature is a self-absorbed obsession with self aggrandizement and that we are trapped within this nature. The Dhamma teaches that better potentialities lie within and that we can release those potentialities.

d) A literal translation of the term *Samānattatā*, the fourth ingredient of social cohesion, reveals the interesting concept of ‘being equal in terms of self-hood’. The Pali notion of *attā* is a difficult and often challenged concept in Buddhist scholarship. Particular interpretations of the term and its associated ambiguities spring up from all parts of the Buddhist world. However it is generally agreed that no true ‘self’ exists in any kind of permanent state or as an independent unit. This raises questions of identity, how we might be deluded by false notions of ourselves and how the self recreates itself through aspiration and desire. These socio-political references are seldom addressed directly in the Buddha’s teachings, but they are implicit nevertheless. It is clear that self-interest is that which the Buddha sought to avoid and that social unity is endangered by self-absorption and over-attachment to personal desires.

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5. CONCLUSION

We can achieve the UN Millennium goals of eradicating hunger, AIDS and child mortality, and we can bring about environmental sustainability, by adopting the quest for global equality, fairness and the greater good (ariyapariyesanā). They will not be achieved through policies that encourage a form of economics based on corporate hegemony and personal ambition (anariyapariyesanā). True social cohesion can be established by means of a compassionate and altruistic attitude to others and to the environment. The necessary changes, according to the Buddha’s discourses, can be achieved within four main areas of social activity. They are: participation in the construction and maintenance of the economy, clear and honest communication with others, working together with others to produce social benefits and interacting with others in an environment of legal and social equality. We can improve the conditions of the globally disadvantaged by transforming the objects we seek (pariyesanā), by ‘bringing forth’ a different world, one that is founded on generosity (dāna), honest and compassionate speech (peyyavajja), useful conduct (atthacariyā) and social equality (atthacariyā).

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THE ADAPTABILITY OF BUDDHISM TO THE CHANGES OF MODERN SOCIETY

by Most Ven. Thich Vien Tri

ABSTRACT

With the rapid progress in science and technology, every issue in life nowadays seems to be clarified by human beings through the lens of science. From personal, family, social, psychological issues to spiritual ones, different branches of sciences have been showing their important roles. Moreover, from the most distant planets such as the Moon and Mars to the end of the ocean, the magic wand of science has been gradually shedding light on things that have long been a mystery to the understanding of human-beings. Many mysteries, including the real ones or the ones that science has not been able to decode yet, have been divinized by humans and have become objects of beliefs and religions. However, in the light of science, the true nature of unreal mysteries has been gradually emerging. What is inconsistent with science, with the humans’ benefits, including the areas of belief and religion, has been constantly being eliminated. Even the values of material and spiritual culture or social and religious organizations, which have proven their value in the process of survival and development but do not adapt to social changes, are also forgotten by humans, especially in the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution or the Industry 4.0. This is a great concern to many people, especially those in the areas of belief and religion!
So what will the future of Buddhism be like? What are the roles of Buddhism in the modern society? What does Buddhism have to do to meet human needs in this era of 4.0? This is one of the most important topics of the Vesak Festival - 2019 held in Hanoi, Vietnam.

1. THE PURPOSE AND MISSION OF BUDDHISM

Before finding out the answers to the above-mentioned questions, we need to redefine what the purpose of Buddhism is, what roles Buddhism plays when existing in this life. The above questions will be answered through the following teaching of Buddha: “Bhikkhus, both formerly and now what I teach is suffering and the cessation of suffering.”

In other words, as long as people on this planet were completely out of suffering, then human beings would not need the existence of Buddhism in this life any more. The mission of Buddhism would be completed only if this world turned into a world of ultimate bliss! However, the suffering of people in this world from the past until now seems to have never been minimized. The sufferings of birth, aging, sickness, and death, as well as the suffering of being unable to obtain what one desires, the suffering of having to part from those whom one loves, etc., remain in human life. In addition, human suffering seems to be more and more serious when people are bringing suffering to each other for the purpose of satisfying their own craving for sensual pleasures ($kāma$-$taṇhā$), craving for existence ($bhava$-$taṇhā$), and craving for non-existence ($vibhava$-$taṇhā$). To satisfy these three types of craving, people are becoming more selfish and colder.

The phenomenon of lacking empathy for each other, even for parents, children, relatives, neighbors, is a serious illness of the society. Never in human history have there been more warnings about the threats of human existence such as war, robbery, murder, crisis of living environment, natural disasters, and epidemics as in the contemporary world. The Secretary-General of the United Nations’ speech to the world of Buddhists on the Day of UN Vesak in Thailand in 2018 illustrated the above arguments: *The world faces numerous challenges, from conflict to climate change, from prejudice to*

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growing inequality. We see people turning inwards. And we see a crisis of solidarity. *(2)*

More significantly, the Secretary-General of the United Nations affirmed the importance of Buddhism to human beings as well as to the purpose that the United Nations is aiming for: “The Buddha’s teachings can inspire us to become global citizens. And the focus in Buddhism on the inherent dignity of life finds resonance today in our 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” *(3)*

The above statement of the Secretary-General of the United Nations has affirmed that Buddhism still proves its value to this life, Buddhist teachings are still essential to people in today’s civilized era, especially their capacity to regulate crises. It should be noted that, as a religion, Buddhist teachings focus not only on liberating the suffering of human life through the path of spiritual experimentation to achieve the ultimate goal of Nirvana, but also on solving the problems of personal, family and social life at each specific time in history. Recognizing the social value of Early Buddhism, Max Weber, one of the most authoritative scholars in sociology, said: “Buddhism was the creation of an urban culture.” *(4)*

Max Webber’s statement is closely linked to the context of the pre-Buddhist Indian society in the sixth century B.C. when Indian society had many political, cultural, social, religious, and especially economic changes. This was the turning point of human wisdom with the advent of the Iron Age, the application of new farming techniques in agricultural life *(5)* which changed the perception and living value of ancient India. One more important factor is that the cultural and anthropological interference between the two peoples of Dravidian and Aryan created the process of assimilation and fusion. A new race of people was created, which led to the demands for essential changes in all fields of life. *(6)* In my opinion, the crises and demands for changes in society nowadays are similar to the history of the pre-Buddhist Indian society.

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2. Excerpt from the speech of the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Vesak 2018.
3. Ibid.
Playing the role of the ideal for living, the polytheistic philosophy, particularly Veda philosophy, did not meet the above-mentioned demands. As a religion, Brahmanism also showed its weaknesses in the system of dogma and in its role of leading the spiritual life of India at that time. The outbreak of a revolution in the two areas of philosophy and religion was inevitable and could not be different. The result of this revolution was the creation of a philosophical and religious system, called Sramanic thought, advocating a humanistic trend instead of gods, self-responsibility instead of fatalism, and emphasizing asceticism instead of ritualism. The Sramanic philosophical system included Ajivaka, Lokayata, Jaina, Ajnana (Agnosticism) and Buddhism. However, after nearly 27 centuries, most of these ideologies have been lost over time; on the contrary, Buddhism still proves its meaning and value in the existence and coexistence with humanity, especially in the context of our modern civilized society today. Why does Buddhism have such intense vitality under the law of impermanence of time? The following statement by Albert Einstein can clarify this issue: “The religion of the future will be a cosmic religion. It should transcend a personal God and avoid dogmas and theology. Covering both the natural and the spiritual, it should be based on a religious sense arising from the experience of all things, natural and spiritual as a meaningful unity. If there is any religion that would cope with modern scientific needs, it would be Buddhism.”

2. THE VITAL CHALLENGES TO BUDDHISM

Despite the above positive statement, that does not mean Buddhism has never faced the challenges to its survival. Some of the following cases may illustrate the ups and downs of Buddhism. After the recession and collapse of the Maurya dynasty at the end of the second century B.C., Sunga’s reign began to rule India. Buddhism

7. The Western world has also experienced similar crises, especially the crisis in the fourth century A.D. when Christianity replaced Greek beliefs and the second crisis with the emergence of some particular religions in the seventeenth century: the belief in the scientific and technical progress and nationalism when Christianity did not satisfy the feelings and knowledge of mankind at that time. (see “Vien Tri, The Concept of Avalokitesvara Boddhisattva”, Indo Asian Publishing House, 2001)
had to go through many cruel persecutions during this time.\(^{(10)}\) King Pusyamitra, a Brahmin, was the fiercest enemy of Buddhism. He devastated temples and stupas, burned many monasteries from Madhyadesa to Jalandhar in Punjab, and killed many bhikkhus with the goal of eliminating Buddhism and propagating Hinduism (the descendant of the Brahmanism).\(^{(11)}\) Besides, when Brahmanism actually gained back the upper hand and took power on the religious forum, the revival of the practice of polytheistic worship attracted a large number of people including Buddhists. Also, when Buddhist monks were too busy arguing internally about the philosophy, showed a lack of care for aspirations and benefits of lay Buddhists, especially did not update themselves to adapt to the progress of society, Buddhism lost its position and vitality in society.\(^{(12)}\) Moreover, the ploy to turn Buddha Shakyamuni into the ninth avatar of Vishnu, a Hindu god, in the Indian people’s belief became a reality in the ninth century. Therefore, most Indians have regarded Buddha as the avatar of Vishnu since then.\(^{(13)}\) In other words, Buddhism has been Hinduized, became part of Hinduism, lost its identity, and lost its name for a pretty long time.\(^{(14)}\) Under the threat to their own survival, Buddhists have had to be flexible and adaptable in their mission of maintaining and developing Buddhism in order to adapt to each historical circumstance.

It should be noted that no matter how adaptable or flexible it is, under any circumstance, the fundamental foundation of philosophy cannot be separated from the Buddha’s wisdom which was included in the Tripitaka of Buddhist sacred texts, because “There is in Buddhism really no innovation, but what seems so is in fact a subtle adaptation of pre-existing ideas”.\(^{(15)}\) The reason is that the teaching of

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14. The concrete evidence is in the relics of Buddhism in India where there is always the presence of holy images and statues, and rituals of Hinduism.
the Buddha has never been old or backward along the development path of human knowledge, and never lost its practical values that life always needs. Buddha’s teaching is still a light in the middle of the night to help people truly realize who they are, what they want, and how they can achieve true happiness in this life. Determining so is to eliminate some people’s idea that modernization of Buddhism is necessary to match the advancements of science, because according to Albert Einstein, our age needs a kind of religion called a cosmic religious feeling and Buddhism contains such stronger element of this. (16) Thus, the remaining matter of Buddhists is how to apply skillfully the truth that Buddha discovered for the benefit and happiness of humanity in each specific historical situation.

3. THE CONDITIONS TO APPLY THE ADAPTABILITY OF THE BUDDHISM

Everyone will agree that the true value of Buddhism, or of any religion, lies in its doctrine and precepts. However, the true power of this system can only be measured through its organization, namely congregation or the Sangha, consisting of two elements of clergy and lay-people. Therefore, each individual’s virtuous life and true inner strength reflect the strength or weakness of a religion. For this reason, the quality of a Buddhists, as messengers of the Tathagata, is one of the factors determining the prosperity or decadence of Buddhism. (17) It should be noted that the Buddha’s method of spreading the true Dhamma is always on the basis of fitting not only the truth but also the ability of each individual. Thus, a messenger of the Tathagata (clergy and laity) at all historical times needs to meet these two abilities.

First of all, the factor of fitting the truth can only be achieved when a Tathagata messenger comprehends in a thorough and complete way the essence and quintessence of the middle path that the Buddha attained and preached throughout his life of Dhamma propagation. It is included in the doctrine of the Four Noble Truths, Five Aggregates, Dependent Origination, None-self, Karma, Nirvana, etc., and it has been used skillfully by generations

of our patriarchs in the mission of maintaining and developing Buddhism from the past until today. In order to truly understand and experience the spirit of practicality and the value of liberation that the middle path has brought, Buddhists must seriously study, experience, and practice the Buddha’s teaching in their own daily life. The moral perfection and inner strength of each practitioner will arise in the process of hearing, contemplation, and meditation. This is the material that nurtures the existence and development of each member in the Sangha in particular and of Buddhism in general. On the contrary, if Buddhists are only knowledgeable in terms of philosophy, qualified for academic research, capable of preaching Dhamma, but lack practice and application, that is, understanding not to go along with cultivation or saying not to go along with action, this will be the germ of chaos for Buddhism sooner or later. As a result, the belief of Buddhists and the masses will run out and the Dhamma will wither away when the words of the Tathagata’s messengers are contrary to their true lives. The decline stages of Buddhism in the past as well as the present have all been the result of a lifestyle which lacks ideals, morality, and spiritual elements of Buddhists. As the Buddha taught: “…the elder monks live in abundance, they are lax, taking the lead backsliding (to the worldly life), shirking the burden of secluded life, they set going no effort to reach the unattained, to win the goal not won, to realize the unrealized; so the generation that follows comes to depend upon their views…. This, monks, is the fourth thing which conduces to the confusion, to the vanishing away of Saddhamma.”\(^{(18)}\) This phenomenon according to the Buddha is the main cause of the destruction of the Buddha Dhamma as Buddha taught that only the worms inside a lion can kill the lion. The historical documents recorded by Xuanzang proved that an unethical lifestyle, enjoyment of sensual pleasures, indulgence, dissipation, sectarianism, socialization, secularization, becoming tools of power, scrambles for wealth, money, and fame had been the major causes leading to the decline of Indian Buddhism for a very long time.\(^{(19)}\)

In addition, the Buddha is often called the King of Medicine

\(^{19}\) S. R. Goyal, A History of Indian Buddhism, Kusumanjali Prakashan Meerut, 1993.
because his teachings are likened to different remedies to cure illnesses. There are many different diseases so physicians need to thoroughly understand the causes of each disease in order to be able to cure the disease. Similarly, sentient beings have a myriad of different spiritual abilities, levels, and different psychology. Thus, to make the propagation of the righteous Dhamma effective at each specific time and adaptable to the needs of Buddhist Dhamma learners, a propagator of Dhamma needs to be able to reflect on the learners’ feelings and desires in order to choose appropriate teachings to preach. This is the capacity of fitting ability, also known as using skillful means in application of Buddha’s teaching that a messenger of Tathagata needs to meet. The reason is that, as in the field of medicine, a medicinal ingredient can be very good, very valuable, very effective, but if used incorrectly, the medicinal herbs can become poisonous. Similarly, the truth, though it is the Buddha’s teaching, but is spoken at a wrong place and a wrong time, to wrong people; the truth will also become ridiculous.

In order to attain a real capacity of fitting ability, a Tathagata’s messenger must study secular subjects such as philosophy, psychology, education, ethics, politics, social sciences, etc., in order to serve the work of Dhamma propagation. In particular, in the Industry 4.0 era, Buddhists need to be trained and equipped with the necessary knowledge and means of computer science to be flexible and adapt to the advances of human knowledge and human demands in the modern society. Without being flexible and adapting to the changes of this era, Buddhism will lack vitality and will become rigid. Indian Buddhism has experienced such a difficult period and has been forgotten for quite a long time. For this reason N. Dutt, a senior Indian scholar, once stated that “Buddhism was never a social movement.”(20) This can be seen as a historical lesson that the Buddhist world needs to pay attention to. However, there is another important experience that Buddhists, especially monks, nuns and lay intellectuals in today’s society, need to consider carefully. That is, if too much focus is on the aspect of formalism or arbitrary explanation of the Buddha’s teaching to satisfy the needs and tastes of believers and the masses (fitting ability) with

20. Ibid.
the aim to attain transient achievements, Dhamma propagators will disregard moral and spiritual factors (fitting the truth); sooner or later, Buddhism will decline\(^{(21)}\). When the factors (monks and nuns and lay intellectuals) play a major role in spreading Buddhism but underestimate their own moral and spiritual experiment, it’s sure that they are following the same path of failure of the ancient Indian Buddhism.\(^{(22)}\) More seriously, the Buddhist teachings will be likely to be mixed and interwoven with non-Buddhist ideas, as they were during the Third Buddhist Council under the Asoka’s dynasty through the way of such Dhamma propagation.\(^{(23)}\)

Obviously, in a world where materialism is rising and pragmatic mind is being valued in daily life, Buddhism really needs a generation of Dhamma propagators who can meet the two demands of both fitting the truth and fitting ability so that Buddhism can be flexible and adapt to a society that is always changing. Also, it should be emphasized that impermanence is always the law for all things in the universe; therefore, the prosperity or decadence of Buddhist organizations is inevitable. However, the wisdom of liberation, that is, the middle path which the Buddha attained and declared more than 2,600 years ago will exist forever, because “the sound core will stand”/”Whatever is of essential worth will remain” (YO SÀRO SO THASSATI).

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GENDER EQUALITY
AND SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY:
A BUDDHIST VIEW FOR MODERN WORLD

by Arpita Mitra

ABSTRACT

In the contemporary world gender quality and egalitarian society have been most debated issue. The Buddha since foundation his religion was very vocal about equal status of women and inculcation of democratic values in the society. The Buddha was one of the first thinkers of India who encouraged gender equality by founding orders of nuns. Buddhist values always promote equality among men and women and coexistence of all elements of society. This paper also contends that while social and legal reforms are essential, it is meditation that ultimately uproots the innate conditioning of both the oppressors and the oppressed as the Dhamma at its pristine and transformative core is genderless. Buddha was against in any sort of discrimination that is based on colour, lineage, birth etc. In the modern world conflict is rampant. Buddhist values of gender equality among projection of right of women and sustainable development of society.

In 21st century the position of women in Buddhism has been introspected through many lenses. In modern era women are competing with men in every field. There has been a sense of equality in both men and women. The gender equality is essential

*. Ph.D. Research Scholar, Department of Pāli, University of Calcutta, India.
for ensuring that they both can contribute fully at work, at home and in public life for the betterment of economies and societies at large. The men and women are regarded as the two wheels of cart. The one wheel cannot move forward if the other one is smaller than the other one. India is male dominated society. The women were subjected to the control of their families, and husbands. They had to be under the care of parents in childhood, in youth in the protection of husband and in their old age they have to be under control of their son. The picture of Indian women records moderately dismal lot prior to the advent of the Buddha. (Goyal, 1987:292-98) Against this background the opportunity obtainable by Buddhism to leave their families and seek personal salvation was truly revolutionary. So one can see that all forms of actual discrimination well eliminated but the aspiration towards gender equality, despite the restriction of the era a large number of Buddhist women who had been ordained in the Buddhist Order. In the early period both male and lay women were prominent sponsors of caityas, caves and images. Bhikkhunīs and Upāsikās also participated in the sponsorship of some of the earliest Buddha images. In Sri Lanka, ten of the early (3rd century BCE to 1st CE) Brāhmī inscription edited by Paranavitana records the donation of caves to the saṅgha by bhikkhunīs as against nearly about 300 by bhikkhus (Paranavitana 1970:cv-cvi, cxvii). There are many inscriptions from Sāñcī, Bhārhut, Kanheri, Kārle, Kuḍa, Nāsik, Pauni, Amrāvātī and Mathurā show that bhikkhunīs were major sponsors of the early monuments. Gregory Scopchen has calculated that at Sāñcī there were 129 bhikkhus and bhikkhunī donor was 125, Bhārhut there were 16 bhikkhunīs and 26 bhikkhus donors, Amrāvātī there were 12 bhikkhu and 12 bhikkhunī as donors. (Scophen, 988-89:164). Even at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa in Andhra Pradesh women of royal families were prominent donors. (Chaudhury, 1982: 229-232). The 2nd century BCE to the 3rd century CE inscription shows that bhikkhunīs played an active role in the erection of caityas and vihāras. Bhikkhunīs Upāsikās, queens, and mothers played a significant role, and without their participation the monuments would have been lesser places.

In ancient India the position of woman doesn’t appear to have a very happy one. The women were neglected in the society in
Buddha’s time. They had no free will. They were confined to the four walls of their home. The *Samyutta Nikāya* (Samyutta, 86) refers that king of Kosala Pasenadi was not happy that queen Mallikā had given birth of a girl child. The Buddha comforted him by saying that girl child breed noble men, who protect the world. But one cannot refute that generally trend of people was partial to birth of boy child. Besides being physically weak women cannot make decree for Buddhahood. She must try to become male and then would be eligible for Buddhahood. (Barua, 1997: 65). Karma Lekshe Tsomo gave a speech at the 2006 Global Buddhist Conference in Perth; she delivered her speech about equality between men and women in Buddhism. In the Theravada tradition, she spoke, women are equal to have the opportunity of being liberated from samsāra and are allowed to become arhats, enlightened beings, but there isn’t an equal opportunity to become ordain. In Mahayana, there is a disparity of equality, because when becoming a fully enlightened Buddha one must be in the male form, an idea that comes from the *Lotus Sutra*. The *Vimaladattā Sūtta* reveals that a woman called Vimaladattā who by virtue of her vow to attain Buddhahood changes her body into a male. The lord Buddha admired her. He said that Vimaladattā already practiced Bodhisattva deed several enlightenment even earlier that did Mañjusrī. The assumption of bodily transformation is mentioned in many other texts, as such *Vimaladattā Paripṛcchā*, *Mahāratnakūṭa Sūtta*, *Sumati dārikā Paripṛcchā*, *Stirīvivarta vyākaraṇa*, *Aśokadattā vyākaraṇa*. But none of these texts give evidence of sensual inequity. The theory of tathāgatagarbha including the fundamental idea that only one who has a female nature can attain Buddhahood. The concept of sensual transformation for enlightenment appears to be a strategy that eventually led to a theory of enlightenment in a female body. But the Buddha was reluctant to give permission because he was aware to maintain the purity of the Saṅgha. It is universally proved that it is extremely difficult to lead pure and holy life while the men and women come close together. In few suttas Lord Buddha advised lay persons to respect their mothers, wives, daughters. He
did not encourage polygamy and tried to emphasize of the benefit of limited on one wife. The primary reason to refuse the first request of Bhikkhunī as the Lord Buddha was concerned about security of women. Therī Uppalavaṇṇā faced tragic situation of sensual harassment. The Dhammapada Commentary (Dhp-Ath, 178) records that Uppalavaṇṇā returned and lay herself down on her bed, and then her cousin Ānanda concealed himself in her hut in Andhavana, suddenly came out and committed rape on her. From at that time onwards by the order of the Buddha the nuns were prohibited from living in the forest (Vin, III: 35) The Therīgāthā shows the relief which obtained by women who faced many domestic violence. In few suttas Lord Buddha advised lay persons to respect their parents. From the fundamental Buddhist rules called five precepts (Pañcasīla), the sensual misconduct. Lord Buddha in Sigālowāda Sutta admired Upasikas who respect their wives, and provide them necessities. In the 6th century B.C.E the consciousness of Lord Buddha about gender equality and violence against women is a wonderful fact. History records that the ancient Sri Lankan women proved their talents in teaching, education sector, and medical sector as nurses and attendance women gave remarkable contributions to the agriculture and commercial sector of the country. The most striking fact is, they have been treated with sufficient remuneration and social status similar to their male. (Indrani, 35-48.) So the chief eight rules imposed on women before admission in the Order. These rules gave subordinate position to women. In spite of such hard conditions women accepted all because their yearning for knowledge and emancipation were intensive. In modern era many Buddhist women through their perseverance and skillful negotiations, many women manage to take part in retreats and other Dharma activities. These women are also engaged in trying to spread Dharma activities. These women are also engaged in trying to spread Dharma, in their own way women still lag far behind man in numbers and development but the situation is slowly improving. Today’s world women’s retreat and Dharma classes are led by these devoted women. The Buddhist women from urban or rural areas whatever they are educated, illiterate, rich or poor these women are keenly interested in learning more about the Buddhadharma and in
developing their understanding through meditation and reflection. Women of urban areas achieving their goals day by day, but on the other side Tai Phake Buddhist women of Assam are facing many psychological, economical, gender discrimination, and domestic violence due to dowry or for some other reason. Even now the both male and female go to religious places as well as in any festival they both wear traditional attire. Tai Phake has also been influenced by modernization in various aspects such as economic, political, social and cultural. Education level is getting higher. Now a day’s Tai Phake Buddhist women achieved their goals in every field and their own society’s women are not at all abandoned.

Women should have more education opportunities than any time in history. Buddhism plays in maintaining gender inequality in education. The aim of Buddhist teachings is to educate the male or female to overcome dukkha or suffering. So the first step is to insist on equal education opportunities for the women. Then equal opportunities for education, ordination and economic development will virtually bring many changes for women. According to Lord Buddha all sentient beings have equal potential for enlightenment. But today’s Buddhist women are more active in technologies and we should support women’s who use such technology to address issues including violence against women, political empowerment, education, preaching Dhamma and health care in remote and marginalized areas. Technology initiative will achieve the more safe online spaces for women and girls or women’s rights organizing, to advance women’s rights for designing and shaping technology for leadership in the east and west countries.

In contemporary society, women in Buddhist world generally take on more submissive roles than any other male counterparts. So, at present women should be granted the right to practice and achieve Enlightenment, regardless of their background or nationality. Monks like Bhikkhu Bodhi, Bhikkhu Analayo, and Venerable Ajahn Brahm among many others Bhikkhus also assures us that women’s ordination will accord with the Vinaya and not harm Buddhism. The first ordained women Mahāpajāpati Gotami
but Venerable Ānanda was supportive to her and also the five hundred Sākya ladies. The Lord Buddha imposed the eight rules may be due to some socio-religious factors that prevailed in India that time. Therefore, the relation between bhikkhu and bhikkhunīs would be like teacher and student. As a rule, teachers should have some rights and privileges in order to guide the students. Buddha's sympathy and love for women knew no bound. History shows him to have been the greatest benefactor of women even born in India. The Buddha kept his way open to all classes of women, married, unmarried, slaves, widows and even to courtesans. Buddhism notices all human beings are equal in dignity and rights neutrally of consideration such as caste, colour, race, creed, gender etc. Buddhism doesn't recognize rights and freedoms for the male which cannot be extended to the female. Indeed as borne out by Therīgāthā woman actually enjoy a higher position of intellectual freedom under Buddhism, being able thereby to gain spiritual advancement on an equal basis. The Buddha described women as one of the seven jewels (Samyutta, 1960: 83). Mahāpajāpatī succeeded in founding the bhikkhunī Saṅgha and skilfully guides its development until her death. Mahāpajāpatī and her followers freed themselves from the recommended roles that allotted them. They blazed new pathways for women both personally and socially. Instead of being confined to the expected female roles of housewife and mother, thousands of women at the time of the Buddha became seekers, many of whom were publicly recognized by the Buddha as outstanding paradigms of spiritual attainment. A rich merchant’s daughter Sujātā who had offered a bowl of milk rice to the emaciated renouncing Siddhartha and who sustained the fledging the Buddha in the crucial days leading up to his final awakening, was one of the first to enter his newly discovered path to liberation. Thousands of women became respected arhats and were recognized by the Buddha himself for their extraordinary attainments: Uppalavaṇṇa and Patācāra for their excellent monastic discipline, Khemā for her great wisdom, Dhammadinnā for her proficiency in teaching the Dhamma, Nandā for her dedication, Soṇa for her energetic determination and so on. Not only nuns but also eminent Upāsikās were recognized by Buddha. Visākhā (Kassapa, 306-310). The pious daughter of a rich man became renowned for her exceptional
generosity to the Saṅgha. The eminent qualities and spiritual attainments of outstanding women, the Buddha began challenging centuries-old views about women as objects for defeat and neglect. The story of these renowned women’s bravery has withstood twenty five hundred years of telling and has provided significant meaning and encouragement to millions of the women in the generations that have followed. The Bhābrū and Schism Pillar edicts of Asokā mention bhikkhus and bhikkhunīs were equally powerful in matter of unity or division in the Buddhist Fraternity. (Barua, 1997: 75). In contemporary era American Buddhist women arguably more forward about quality than their British counterparts, they enjoy learning Dharma with the bhikkhus, but the bhikkhus also wanted to learn from bhikkhunīs. Afterwards the bhikkhus invited the Amaravati and Chithurst Siladhara to establish a training monastery for nuns in U.S. Later the Theravāna bhikkhus such as Bhikkhu Bodhi, Bhikkhu Analayo, and Bhikkhu Sujato spoke noticeably of their support for the reinstatement of bhikkhunī ordination. Through the work of Karma Lekshe Tsomo many more women Buddhist nuns have been ordained and given education and better jobs. Buddhist women follow ordained male role models, and this shows the inequality between men and women. The humanitarian work that is being done in Asia by Buddhist women shows that there is hope for the better sustainable society.

Sustainable development is defined as development that is the present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. (World Commission, 43). The importance of educational and cultural experiences within their educational programs, for example, in terms of the number of schools in India educates number of girl and women. India is a nation on the move, slowly making its place among the top nations of the world. One of the biggest challenges facing this growing power is the science education of its sizeable young population. A majority of India’s population still lives in economically conditions. Under such circumstances for educational institutions to keep pace with scientific and technological innovations is a challenge in itself. There are well- publicized international imperatives advancing education for women and girls in Science, Technology, Education,
and Mathematics (STEM) fields, rarely in STEM education linked with empowering Buddhist bhikkhunīs. This STEM education advances all levels of teaching and learning particularly in tertiary education, for Buddhist nuns and novices in STEM fields. It regards education as a basic human need and agrees with Karma Lekshe Tsomo, one of the forthright advocates of the education of Tibetan Buddhist nun, that impartial educational opportunity for women is a human right. This study regards STEM education as a kind of transformative education devoted to relieving material and social suffering in the world. This education helps women, girls to achieve their spiritual goals, develop their identities, and in STEM fields prepare nuns for leadership roles not just in science education but in infrastructure and sustainability projects. Today more than 160,000 Buddhist bhikkhunīs worldwide work in all its multiplicity, as a manifestation of their monastic vows worldwide work. (Karma, 2004, 342-366.)

According to Buddhism, argument, intolerance and disharmony arise out of desires, hatred and ignorance. To develop confidence, tolerance and harmony it is important to cultivate common values or universal ethics. Thus, promotion of education, dialogue, social and economic development would lead for sustainable development of peace in the world. The cross culture exploratory and experimental study is firmly rooted in international initiatives to advance women’s right and empowerment. It explores the Dalai Lama's perspective on western, scientific curricular and pedagogy within the monastic community. In the modern world STEM education regard as instrumental for empowering Buddhist bhikkhunīs. As significant moral and ethical actors in fulfilling their vows to improve the spiritual and material conditions for all sentient beings. His Holiness Dalai Lama who since issuing a progressive imperative in 1999 has actively promoted secular and science-based education among monastic community.

STEM education that integrates Buddhist and western knowledge in the Saṅgha as well as Buddhist institutions. This study found the historical and religious marginalization of bhikkhunīs persists in the context of science education programs and resources. It supports the evolution of more gender inclusive
Buddhist institutions and leadership as it supports using Buddhist moral and ethical guidance to address the endemic fraud and corruption associated with sustainable development and infrastructure projects. This study is also predicated upon a Buddhist understanding of dishonesty as a manifestation of greed, hatred and delusion. STEM education is important because our modern world depends on it. The economic, social and general well being- it is all backed by science, technology, engineering and math. His Holiness Dalai Lama, the undisputed spiritual leader of Himalayan Buddhists, speaks out forcefully and repeatedly for religious equality, personally and endorsing women’s right to full ordination, any resistance to the idea of improving conditions for nuns is ordinarily expressed in more subtle ways, such as neglecting to help. In 1998 His Holiness Dalai Lama impelled educational reforms to the Buddhist curriculum which in some cases had not changed for centuries. (Yee, 2009). H. H. Dalai Lama the Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) program, part of UNESCO’s strategy for the Decade (2005-2014), which defines education for sustainable development as, a process of learning how to make decisions that consider the long-term future of the economy, ecology and equity of all communities. STEM Education (science, technology, engineering, and math) programs specifically focused on women and girls provide confidence, an innovative spirit, and the necessary skills needed to compete in the workforce. Today’s world Education will be an increasingly powerful collaborator of Buddhist nuns. These STEM initiatives afford Buddhist bhikkhunis opportunities to honour their monastic vows to care for sentient beings and to engage the world in disciplinary provinces that have needlessly been inaccessible to women. These initiatives could herald a transformation of Buddhist female monastic educational traditions and humanitarian work as well as a revaporization of core Buddhist teachings. STEM educational initiatives for Buddhist nuns, as well as cultivating nuns as humanitarian leaders practicing active compassion in the context of sustainable development of the modern society.

It is fundamental for societies to educate children about the
equality of genders and harmful nature of discrimination at home. We know that home is the first school and parents are the first teachers. Mindfulness practice a skilful means enables us to go beneath the surface level of our moment to moment life experiences. It allows to see the truth of what is happening which are clouded with emotions, habitual thinking. We can develop mindfulness through the practice of formal meditation practice. Meditation increased awareness of one’s mental life can reduce emotional and cognitive habits. Meditation related to the body with the objective of decrease its significance, the loving kindness metta, it belonging to the Four immeasurable - Āppamānas, provides another meditative subject that has great significance both in terms of exterminating negative sensitivities and fostering positive emotions. (Nanamoli, 2010:236-258). In modern era meditation has become more crucial mainstream secular technique in the West largely extricate from its Buddhist source, it is used not only psychotherapy but also every sphere of society from education, sports, business to even military. (Kwee, 2006). Contemplation of the Body (kāyānupassanā) is another one of the Ten Recollections and one of the Four Foundations of Mindfulness (satipatthāna) that involves the observation and categorization of the body to thirty three parts and its processes with a focus on its impermanent repulsive and illusory nature. (Nanamoli, 2010). The opportunity for training and participating in research should reach all corners of the society, including the minorities, the underprivileged and the economically backward classes.

Modern education deals almost exclusively with the minds, the practice of Dāna. If we give more to our society then one can see the practice of Dāna which is more important than receiving. We should share our wealth, talent, wisdom or insight. Buddhism makes a meaningful contribution to liberating the modern world from violence and oppression; we should confront the root cause of evil, greed, hared, and delusion in the society. For all these we should practice right mindfulness. The eightfold Path consist of Right Speech, Right action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, Right Concentration, Right Views and Right Intention- resulting finally in paññā (insight). It is at the end of
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gradual training of the mind. We must create an inner piece along with an understanding of social realities and structural violence as extra profit for both individual and collective liberation. Full liberation is both individual and societal. In Buddhism the most important requirement for training mind is to achieve tranquillity (samatha), the true nature of one’s psycho constitution, technique for understanding. It becomes an integral factor for right understanding from intellectual knowledge. Self awareness can also be used over own society, nation-state, culture and even our Buddhist Tradition. Mindfulness supports the moment to moment intention to not cause harm, to be kind and to renounce those thoughts and action that lead to heedlessness. Without wise intention and wise understanding, mindfulness is aimless. We can then transform our society more peaceful and sustainable, a society would be full of goodness for all beings and there will not be any inequality.

Buddha taught that everyone is same and Buddhist scriptures demonstrate gender transformation is used as a tool to promote equality among genders by using a transgender being. It can be said that gender is a worldly concept. The Vinaya shows honoured members with high spiritual attainment that are also transgender. The Buddha clearly accepts a person who into the religious community even if they transform gender. Still the Lord Buddha looks beyond patriarchal bounds and individual themselves as well as the weird. People are all capable of becoming enlightened to be buddhas regardless of gender, age, social class, and race. (Kurihara, 2009:94–111.) Gender identity for the third sex becomes a matter that is solvable with a willingness to be progressive by certain monastic communities and religious authorities. The Buddha taught that everyone is equal that physical properties of a person are not to affect their minds capacity for dhamma or their ability to achieve nibbāna. Buddhist precepts are designed to upgrade the equality of an individual’s mind. There will be nothinharmful for society if two people whether they are different gender as gay, straight or lesbian relationship as long as they are behaving skilfully towards the other persons. Therefore, Buddhism clarifies the difference between essence and manifestation, consuming Buddhist equality. A core Buddhist idea affirms that the basic nature of the human mind is innocent and pure. Buddhist wisdom differentiates between essence
and manifestation, discerning that all beings are equal in nature but present in various forms such as status, shape, and colour.

CONCLUSION

Today’s women have proved themselves to be extraordinary. They have deserved a greater and an equal role as compared to men with their hard works and even outclassed men in many instances. Buddhist men and women have nearly equal opportunities to education, ordination and facilities for religious practices. In Buddhist societies, women are generally trained to be humble and self-effacing, but monks have the power and freedom to speak out and therefore can be great advocates on behalf of equal opportunities for them. While women must gain their own voices, bhikkhus can also be tremendously helpful in transforming societal attitudes toward women. Among the greatest obstacles Buddhist women face today is their limited access to qualify teachers and adequate educational facilities. Despite the gender equality of the Buddha’s own views, in later era, the Buddhist view of women changed under the influence of societal norms and systems prejudicial to women’s interests. This resulted in such teachings as they must be excluded from holy sites. Without a doubt the intersection between Buddhism and feminism is a growing field of interest as shown by the numerous studies done in recent years. India. Buddhism sees all human beings are equal in dignity and rights irrespective of consideration such as colour, caste, race, creed, gender etc. The *Therīgāthā* suggests that women actually enjoy freedom at the time of Buddha. They were able to attain spiritual advancement on an equal basis. Modern egalitarian expectations require men and women to have equal access to Buddhist practices and for these to have equal significance. Contemporary women are establishing equal access to stereological attainments, constructing the Buddhist path in more recognizably feminine ways. Even so, there are also many benefits that may result from recognizing the equality of women, including greater support for the Saṅgha that would naturally accrue to the bhikkhuss. Women can help to revitalize the tradition through conscientious practice in the ways that will rekindle piety. They can contribute to a general resurgence of Buddhist scholarship, and help to educate a generation of Buddhist followers who will
broaden the base of spiritual and ethical paradigms. Giving women an equal opportunity is wholeheartedly encouraging them in teachings and the practice of meditation. It can have many beneficial consequences. A spiritually nourished woman is capable to counsel families, mediate disputes, endure safe communities, set public policies, and build a sustainable society through implementing Buddhist values of tolerance and compassion.
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GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP AND SUSTAINABILITY
A CONTEMPORARY MODEL OF BUDDHISM

by James Bruce Cresswell

ABSTRACT

In today's world, focused as it is on profit and economic growth, it has become more necessary than ever to re-examine our objectives and rationales for growth and to be aware of other priorities.

Sustainability is not exclusively or even primarily an environmental issue. Rather it is fundamentally about how we choose to live our lives, with an awareness that everything has consequences.

At its heart sustainability is the work of constructing a society that accords highest priority to the dignity of life and to the dignity of all beings both present and future and to the environment that sustains us.

In order to achieve such sustainability it is necessary to develop people, communities and societies who benefit others and bring to the fore our most positive and creative aspects.

In this paper I will present some ideas and models for the development of people and institutions as a fundamental prerequisite for the achievement of sustainable development.

These will include active engagement and education of young people, the development of 'Global citizens' or people who who are genuinely concerned for the peace and prosperity of the world, and an educational framework promoting sustainability which should include a

* Dr., Director, Centre for Applied Buddhism - UK.
comprehensive awareness raising of learning, reflecting and empowering.

I will draw on buddhist theory and practice in order to achieve these outcomes and will show how Buddhism, whilst being an ancient wisdom based teaching, is also a thoroughly modern and contemporary philosophy which contains the potential to transform not only the individual but also societies and environments.

1. INTRODUCTION

Sustainability is not exclusively or even primarily an environmental issue. It is fundamentally about how we choose to live our lives, with an awareness that everything we do has consequences for the 7 billion of us here today, as well as for the billions more who will follow, for centuries to come. (Clark, 2012)

This powerful statement was part of the statement which Helen Clark of the UN Development Programme presented at the start of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in 2012.

Although many societies continue to see economic growth as the priority, in order to achieve the sustainability which Helen Clark refers to above it is necessary to develop people, communities and societies who benefit others and bring to the fore their most positive and creative aspects.

At the heart of sustainability is the work of constructing a society that accords highest priority to the dignity of life and to the dignity of all beings both present and future and to the environment that sustains us.

It is easy to see present day society as consisting of powers which constantly seek opportunities for profit, and openings that allow economic or political advantage.

Society today seems to be enthralled by the amoral pursuit of the possible, largely unimpeded by ethical constraints. This is seen in the continued quest for armaments in order to intimidate others and in the global economic competition which holds issues of poverty and income disparities as indifferent.

Buddhism of course knows well the spiral of desire which eventually escapes our control. The issue of greed and desire lies
at the heart of many of the critical challenges which we face today. This unfortunately lies at the very heart of many of the challenges which face the world today. We see the prioritizing of economic growth whilst ignoring ecological degradation and economic crisis brought on by overheated speculation.

This is not to ignore the value of the pursuit of the possible which has often been an important aspect of development in the area of essential needs and food, clothing and improving health and welfare. Leading to advances in situations for people.

There is great benefit to these pursuits. This brings me to the educational Japanese thinker Tsunesaburo Makiguchi. He developed an idea of positive competition. This he expressed as being ‘to hone and refine people’s capacities and unleash their energy’ (Makiguchi Date)?

He goes on to say:

“We find progress and development where competition is strong and powerful; where it is hampered, either by natural or human factors, we find stagnation, immobility and regressions.” (Makiguchi Date)

In his writing, Makiguchi sees the need to shift away from the military, political and economic competition in which benefit is sought for oneself with no thought to the sacrifices imposed on others. He called for a new form which he termed Humanitarian competition. “one protects, extends and advances the lives of others while doing the same for oneself” and “one benefits and serves the interests of others while profiting oneself.”

In this idea, the impulse to do something about one’s situation is oriented towards more valuable ends, generating happiness for both self and others.

In other words, as Buddhism might teach, anger or frustration, greed and self-interest, resulting in acts which might cause harm or degrade others, can be transformed into motivations for action to counter social ills and threats and to illuminate society with the qualities of courage and hope.

Political competition, based on hard power-struggles and self-
interest, which today is rife and can be extremely damaging to the society, can be transformed into a soft power to develop creative policies gaining respect from other countries.

This has been seen in recent history. For example, some forward looking governments and various nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) worked together some years ago in order to bring about the multilateral treaties banning antipersonnel mines and cluster bombs. This was brought about through the catalysing of each other’s efforts and through pressurizing various countries to prioritize the humanitarian aspect over the pursuit of military technology.

I think that the point here is that human potential is infinite, as is the ability to create value within situations. Sustainability must be considered as a dynamic concept which relies on human striving to create positive value within all aspects of life.

Buddhism puts the power for creating one’s life firmly in the hands of the individual person.

Human potential, unlike physical resources, is infinite as is an individuals’ capacity to create value.

Referring back to the quote above from Helen Clark, I would say that sustainability is a dynamic concept in which we see striving or intention to generate positive value and share it in the world.

2. BODHISATTVAS EMERGING WITHIN THE WORLD

The Saddharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra commonly called the Lotus Sutra, is a very popular and well known Buddhist text in East Asian Buddhism. It originated in India and was translated from Sanskrit to chinese in China by Kumarajiva (344-413) It is one of the most popular and influential Mahayana Buddhist texts, and the basis on which several schools of Buddhism have been established.

The sutra contains parables and dramatic events which are amongst the most powerful in Buddhist literature. It is vast in its presentation of themes but I would like to focus on a few specific aspects of its teachings.

Chapter eleven of the Lotus Sutra opens with a fantastic and wondrous scene.
As the Buddha is teaching and right in front of him emerges a massive stupa.

At that time in the Buddha’s presence there was a tower adorned with the seven treasures, five hundred yojanas in height and two hundred and fifty yojanas in width and depth, that rose up out of the earth and stood suspended in the air. Various kinds of precious objects adorned it. It had five thousand railings, a thousand, ten thousand rooms, and numberless streamers and banners decorated it. Festoons of jewels hung down and ten thousand million jewelled bells were suspended from it. All four sides emitted a fragrance of tamala leaves and sandalwood that pervaded the whole world. Its banners and canopies were made of the seven treasures, namely, gold, silver, lapis lazuli, seashell, agate, pearl, and carnelian, and it was so high it reached to the heavenly palaces of the four heavenly kings. The beings of the heaven of the thirty-three gods rained down heavenly mandarava flowers as an offering to the treasure tower, and the other heavenly beings, the dragons, yakshas, gandharvas, asuras, garudas, kimnaras, and mahoragas, the human and nonhuman beings, an assembly of thousands, ten thousands, millions, offered all kinds of flowers, incense, necklaces, streamers, canopies, and music as alms to the treasure tower, paying it reverence, honour, and praise.

At that time a loud voice issued from the treasure tower, speaking words of praise: “Excellent, excellent! Shakyamuni, world-honoured one, that you can take the great wisdom of equality, a teaching to instruct the bodhisattvas, guarded and kept in mind by the buddhas, the Lotus Sutra of the Wonderful Law, and preach it for the sake of the great assembly! It is as you say, as you say. Shakyamuni, world-honoured one, all that you have expounded is the truth!” (Watson. Trans 1993)

This voice is from the Buddha Prabhūtaratna who is a living Buddha sitting inside the tower. At the request of his disciples Shakyamuni rises into the air and takes his place beside Prabhūtaratna. This image of two Buddhas sat side by said can be seen often in Buddhist art. Within images of the treasure tower and in wall paintings and so on.

Prior to this event and during the time Shakyamuni was teaching, millions of Bodhisattvas had appeared from other worlds
and universes and, in Chapter 15 they determine that they will voluntarily remain in the world in order to teach and preserve the Lotus teaching.

However, Shakyamuni somewhat surprises them by stating that already there are plenty of Bodhisattvas in this world who will carry out the task.

Then from within the earth billions of bodhisattvas appear, ‘emerging from the earth’.

Shakyamuni explains that these people are his disciples whom he taught aeons previously and who are already on the path to Buddhahood. These are the ‘Bodhisattvas of the earth.’

The 13th Century Buddhist monk (priest) Nichiren interprets the treasure tower in the Lotus sutra as symbolizing the ultimate reality of life, which in his teaching he identifies as Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. This dharma nature or reality has always existed but manifests only under certain conditions. The Buddha Prabhūtaratna represents the eternally enduring world of Buddhahood. Shakyamuni Buddha represents here a mortal Buddha, or Buddhahood manifest and active in this transient, actual world. Shakyamuni’s act of sitting himself beside Prabhūtaratna represents the fact that these two aspects of the Buddha—the eternal and the transient—are the same.

As Nichiren says ‘No treasure tower exists other than the figures of the men and women who embrace the Lotus Sutra.” Here he is referring to those Bodhisattvas of the earth who vow to carry out the teachings and practice of the Lotus Sutra and to carry out the intention to live their lives fully and with total altruism.

In a letter to a follower, Nichiren explains where the ultimate reality exists. It is in the depths of the lives of all people. He writes, “No treasure tower exists other than the figures of the men and women who embrace the Lotus Sutra.” The kind of behaviour which Buddhism presents as an ideal way of living in the world is called the Bodhisattva life-state.

The Bodhisattva vow which is central to the Mahayana teaching, refers to the person undertaking to save others and bases all action
on this vow of a spontaneous expression of altruism. This is a commitment which the bodhisattva devotes her or his entire being. Bodhisattvas refuse to be discouraged by difficult challenges.

The Lotus sutra talks of the pure white lotus rising from the muddy waters of the pond. This analogy illustrates The Bodhisattva Way in the Lotus Sutra. This is also interpreted to mean that, as ordinary human beings we are able to rise up from the muddy waters of our karma and our suffering and to reveal our wonderful dharma nature and bodhisattva spirit. These people are then called the Bodhisattva of the earth. They emerge from the earth in the 15th chapter and are considered to be those of the essential teaching of the Lotus Sutra. Interpretations of the Lotus sutra agree that the bodhisattva practice is explained in many chapters within the text.

A contemporary Nichiren Buddhist organization, Soka Gakkai, explains on its web site, ‘The attributes and qualities of the Buddha are already within the life of each individual. The purpose of the Lotus Sutra, and the mission of those who practice it, is to activate the qualities of the Buddha inherent in the depths of life and bring them into the world. The Lotus Sutra is what connects these two realities. Nichiren formulated the practice of chanting Nam-myoho-ренge-kyo as the means of practicing the Lotus Sutra—of enabling the treasure tower to emerge within our lives. As a tool for this practice he inscribed a mandala—the Gohonzon—which depicts, in Chinese calligraphy, the Ceremony in the Air, and is a representation of the Buddha nature present in all things.’ (SGI web site)

Often in Buddhism, Bodhisattvas are seen as celestial beings, however it is clear from the story of the Treasure tower that the Bodhisattvas referred to here are those ordinary people who have decided to work towards the living a life of altruism and empowerment. They are the ordinary people who appear in the world and take on the responsibility to work towards helping others – The Bodhisattvas emerging from the earth.

The Bodhisattva is that person who takes on the struggles of the world, who expands their mind to see the suffering of others and who determines to make changes, positive changes in the ‘saha’ world or the world of human suffering. The Lotus Sutra ultimately
depicts the shift of individuals seeking transformation to individuals taking action to help others free themselves from suffering, the transformation from empowerment to leadership.

Buddhism teaches that the way of overcoming suffering does not exist in some way outside ourselves, rather through awakening to and manifesting our inner potential we transform ourselves and our minds towards leading others to happiness and security. In this way, our own inner transformation enables us to transform our own suffering into the intention and determination to improve society. This personal inner transformation is the starting point towards the process of peace. This is contrasted with attempts at external reforms based on abstract principles. The efforts at Inner transformation reveal that both positive and negative are found within the human mind and are non dual. Holding to and relying on external reforms often finds the negative outside of our minds, perceived as bad people or bad ideologies, and the positive is perceived to be internal to our mind.

Daisaku Ikeda, the Buddhist thinker and peace maker has said that this tendency to locate evil or negativity outside ourselves has caused great suffering to humanity, and this has been demonstrated time and time again through violent revolutions, civil wars, organized warfare and so on. This tendency to locate ‘evil’ outside of ourselves has often led to the sacrifice of real life for an abstract ideal. Therefore, we can say that progress towards peace begins and ends with self-mastery and of identifying evil or negativity as a personal, inner tendency that needs to be overcome and transformed through what we might term a human transformation or revolution.

As we see in the preamble to the UNESCO constitution:

*The Governments of the States Parties to this Constitution on behalf of their peoples -declare:*

*That since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed;*

*That ignorance of each other’s ways and lives has been a common cause, throughout the history of mankind, of that suspicion and mistrust between the peoples of the world through which their differences have all too often broken into war; (UNESCO Constitution 16 November 1945)*
3. GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

In the confusion of today’s world moving, at it is, towards ultra-nationalism, hate crime, extreme racism and sexism more, the most pressing need is for those people who will respond with courage and imagination to the deepening world crisis of human dignity to stand up.

As Karl Jaspers has said;

*Today we stand poised on the razors edge. We have to choose: to plunge onto the abyss of man’s lostness, and the consequent extinction of all early life, or the leap to the authentic man/women and their boundless opportunities through self-transformation* (Jaspers. 1967)

We cannot ignore the sufferings and threats to the dignity of those who share this world if we are to speak of the future of humankind.

The transformation of the self into the authentic man/women is the first important step toward world citizenship or Global Citizenship. Therefore, the shift in focus towards the welfare of humankind is a real and necessary requirement. This is not only a conceptual shift, but rather a day to day experience based upon the discipline of our spirits. The idea of global citizenship and a global civilization is not that which is mostly understood as the Western led attempt to impose the same socio-economic standards in every corner of the world, through the development of global markets for labour, goods and services, which may be considered to be a current form of cultural imperialism imposed, often through violent intervention. Rather a Global civilization can be considered to be a framework allowing people of different backgrounds and ideologies to participate together in the construction of a better world. This will depend on people’s capacity for inner transformation, or Human Revolution. Ikeda describes this as ‘the cultivation of the inner life of human beings and their spiritual elevation towards peace. ‘Global Citizens can be considered to be part of a movement of people who are involved in, and dedicated to encouraging people to become aware of their own boundless inner power and to take responsibility for the welfare of humankind.’ (Ikeda) This could
be considered to be a contemporary framing of the Bodhisattva vow. Those beings who vow to work towards the enlightenment of all beings.

Chapter four of the Lotus Sutra posits the concept of ‘Inner Universalism’. To put it simply this concept affirms each person’s intrinsic potential and value. This is at the basis of the concept inner transformation. Inner universalism can counteract the imposed from without and one size fits all universalism often found in Western Models. Global citizens are not abandoning other identities, such as allegiances to countries ethnicities or political beliefs. Rather they have an additional layer of responsibility for being members of a world-wide community of people who share the same global identity. Though individuals may not yet be fully awakened to this responsibility, it is there to be embraced in order to build a sustainable, values based world community.

We can say that Global citizenship involves three dimensions, awareness (of self and other) responsibility and participation. It is possible when people spontaneously undertake to live by these norms, to act with the bodhisattva spirit, refusing to ignore or abandon those who suffer, to carry out acts for the benefit of others, encouraging people. We can foster in each individual life the kind of active independent basis for altruistic behaviour exemplifies in the bodhisattva vow. We can establish the fundamental foundation for an ethic of responsibility and commitment upon which a genuine culture of human rights and sustainability can flourish. As contemporary practitioners of Buddhism we can also consider ourselves as Global Citizens. Actually, the language of Global Citizenship may be more relevant for a contemporary world.

It is important that this work and action is based on dialogue, mutually enriching and trying to bring out the best in oneself and others. Through inner transformation one can enhance one’s own courage, wisdom and compassion. The Mahayana tradition of the Lotus sutra (and many others) shows that the ultimate objective of Shakyamuni’s life was revealed in the humanity he manifested in his behaviour and actions. The cultivation and perfection of a person’s character is considered, in the Buddhist tradition, to be the ultimate goal of religious training. Then one can develop an identity as a
global citizen and contribute to the implementation of elements of an inclusive global civilization of harmony and interdependence.

In this short paper, I have begun to outline how Buddhism and aspects of Buddhist thought, specifically the bodhisattva vow and spirit, can contribute, in positive and valuable ways to contemporary civilization. There is much more to be said and developed. For example, we must consider how to bring ideas of Global citizenship into education. Not only through classroom instruction but through community based education. Also, the concept if interdependency is central to Buddhist thought and hugely relevant to future sustainability and human rights. I believe it is important for the future of Buddhism and the future of humanity, That we continue to clarify Buddhist principles in contemporary language and show how these ideas can be developed and how contemporary society can benefit from them.

Buddhism is an ancient, wisdom based teaching, and importantly, a valuable and often fresh way to consider and take action towards solving some of the world’s most problematic issues.

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References


Social Harmony and Sustainability are two key issues and central avenues of Buddhist global social and political action towards a better future world.

This paper analyzes how Buddhists contribute to the building of better future societies as it focuses on those attitudes and actions aimed at improving social interrelations and at helping to create environmental sustainable societies.

The analysis of the Buddhist contributions to more harmonious and sustainable societies leads us to explore the social dimensions of Buddhism and to see Buddhism as a social path. Although there are important contributions to its social aspects, the dominant view of Buddhism is as an individual path. However, some key and central elements of Buddhism (and its practice) are beyond the autonomous individual realm and point to the realm of the social (as interrelations).

This seems to indicate that the practice of Buddhism implies a social path. Non-ego, dependent-origination, vacuity, non-duality, they all lead to interrelation (the social) as the space providing
identity. The Law of Karma points to the causality in the system of interrelations. And the idea of the Bodhisattva, or the idea of Loving-Kindness or the Four Immensurable\textsuperscript{3}, have a social form in their practice. They all focus on the interrelation with other beings (human or non-humans) looking for their wellbeing and happiness. They constitute a main avenue of values and practices towards the creation of harmonious relations with others, and within and between societies.

To explore these social dimensions and social path we focus on the Meanings given and the Practices deployed towards harmonious relations and sustainability.

Using survey data, the paper analyzes the meanings and practices of Buddhists regarding trust and relations to others, war-peace, and environmental protection issues. It analyzes the interrelations among values and actions along with the similarities and differences between Buddhists of different countries or/and of different regions in order to understand some of the social cognitive and action structures existing.

The theoretical and methodological approaches used in the paper are the result of combining, and in some cases fusing, Buddhism with Sociology.

Version 1.0 (30/01/2019)

Paper prepared for the 16\textsuperscript{th} United Nations Day of Vesak 2019 Academic Conference, hosted by the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, to be held at Tam Chuc International Buddhist Convention Centre, Ha Nam Province, Vietnam, 12 to 14 May 2019.

WHAT

This paper aims to contribute with some insight into the knowledge of the structural form socially taken by the complex system of interconnections and influences among multiple views and actions towards the others. To do so, the paper analyzes values (Meanings) and actions (Practices) of Buddhist people in some Asian countries towards others and the environment. The analysis

\textsuperscript{3} Mettam Sutta: The Brahma-viharas. SN 46.54
BUDDHISTS CONTRIBUTIONS TO BUILDING MORE HARMONIOUS AND SUSTAINABLE SOCIETIES

Aspires to understand the peculiarities, the similarities and the differences of Buddhist people of different countries and regions.

The first part of the paper empirically explores, using survey data, values (Meanings) and actions (Practices) of Buddhist people. We use indicators of their contribution to a better world by focusing on the happiness and wellbeing of others and the environment and therefore facilitating harmony and sustainability. To enhance the comparison, I use Multi-Dimensional Scaling (MDS) and Hierarchical Cluster Analysis (HCA) to build social maps which depict countries according to their social distances.

Once I have seen how countries get placed in a new social map of Meanings and Practices, we explore, in the second part of the paper, its social structure. That is to say, how it takes form as structural combination of variables. The combination of systems of relations, of those values, attitudes and actions define the cognitive-action social field. The map of the social field shows the essence of the social cultural identities of Buddhist people.

As a clear example of the non-duality approach, the interrelation of Meanings and Practices yields a social cognitive and action structure we could think of as the Buddhist social DNA. This Meaning and Practices social structure is the central piece of a system of interrelations with Social conditions and with a representation of a harmonious and sustainable society formed by happiness, health and life satisfaction (Life) of Buddhist people. Life is both a resulting and a causal factor embedded within this large cognition-action interaction system.

HOW

I use the best and largest global sociological survey currently being carried out (World Values Survey) which focuses on general social values and attitudes and has questions and indicators related to trust and care for others, war, and environmental protection. The latest wave of the survey (2014) gathers information from more than 90 thousand people from 62 countries worldwide with an important presence of countries with large Buddhist populations. This ample data-set allows me to study and compare Buddhists in
Asia, where the vast majority (99%) of Buddhists live⁴. The data-set includes Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia and Singapore along with China, Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan and India. It will provide a glimpse of how, through their positions and actions, Buddhists help to build a better world.

We identify and work with indicators (variables) of Meanings that represent views and orientations towards others and harmonious relations: regarding war and violence, the environment, altruism and tolerance, trust, importance of others, and more human societies. As Practices we have selected activities and behaviors towards harmony in relations with other people and the environment such as: Willing to fight for country, being member and active in civil and in environmental organizations, doing good for society and caring for others and the environment, and trusting people both known and unknown. All these indicators provide a profound view of the role of Buddhist people contributing to harmonious relations and building a better and more sustainable future society.

As technical, and conceptual, apparatus I use Multi-Dimensional Scaling (MDS) and Hierarchical Cluster Analysis (HCA) with the statistical program SPSS (for the first part of the paper) along with Social Network Analysis using UCINET (in the second part of paper).

MDS, using the ALSCAL algorithm in SPSS, is a statistical procedure that calculates similarities and differences between countries and translates them into Euclidean distances in order to place countries in a two dimensional space. The positioning in the Euclidean space is metrically equivalent to the physical distances between all countries at the same time that produces the standard geographical map. Here I substitute physical distances for social distances producing social maps.

Hierarchical Cluster Analysis (HCA), using closest neighbor approach, mathematically identifies and groups together the most similar countries in what we could think of as social regions.

Social Network Analysis (SNA) works with relational matrixes, in this case they are mathematical expressions of the relations among all the variables used in part one of the paper. We can identify and visualize, using the special visualization program Netdraw, the social structure, the social grid and network, of this Buddhist social system.

In the first part of the paper we use a theoretical and methodological individual approach, we treat variables as independent and autonomous entities and we create this artificial duality of Meanings and Practices, values and actions, in a first approach to the issue. We study their distribution and the social proximities generated. In the second part of the paper we move a step further and we use a relational sociological approach in which we do not consider variables as independent and autonomous but rather we focus on the relations between them and how those interconnections create a sort of Buddhist social DNA.

That system of interconnections among all the elements is the social space in which social orientation, social harmony, is created. In this last part of the paper we also look into how this interconnection of elements is linked (in a cause and effect causal relation) with Happiness, Satisfaction, Health. Being them a representation, even partial, of better harmonious societies. And as a base of the structure we have Social conditions and Religion completing a model of the whole system of interactions between views and practices. The whole structure creates a map, a system, where social harmony is based. It is a system yielding and facilitating social harmony and sustainability, and we could view it as a social DNA of Buddhist people.

In this paper we explore, and attempt to contribute to, how the social dimensions of Buddhism are translated and practiced by Buddhist people defining their social role contributing to better harmonious and sustainable future societies.

MEANINGS AND PRACTICES FOR BETTER SOCIETIES

The values and practices of Buddhist people in the Asian countries studied can be seen as part of Loving-Kindness and The

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5. Loving-Kindness is an English equivalent for the term Metta, described in the Metta
Four Immeasurable.⁶ They are indicators of their visions and actions contributing to a better world by focusing on the wellbeing of others and facilitating peace, harmony and sustainability (Table 1).

MEANINGS

A first overall analysis of the Meaning (value system) shows Buddhist clear positions towards harmonious relations. They are opposed, as most non Buddhist, to war (more than two thirds of them) and do not justify violence against others at all (a value of 1.95 in a scale from 1 to 10). In fact, they value Altruism and Tolerance as good qualities to teach children and stand out believing most people can be trusted (more than one third of Buddhist) and that it is important to progress towards a more human society in which wealth could be shared better (Table 1).

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

Overall, Buddhist values provide an image of proximity and care for those around them and an orientation and desire for harmony with people and the environment. But the distribution of these values is not even throughout the Buddhist population, existing some contrasting positions and similarities between countries, and also some differences with non-Buddhist populations. Some of the similarities and differences can be seen in Graph 1 and Graph 2.

Sutta of the Pali Canon’s Sutta Nipata (Sn 1.8) and Khuddakapatha (Khp 9)

6. Mettam Sutta: The Brahma-viharas. SN 46.54

May all sentient beings have happiness and its causes,
May all sentient beings be free of suffering and its causes,
May all sentient beings never be separated from bliss without suffering,
May all sentient beings be in equanimity, free of bias, attachment and anger.
Even though most Buddhist are against war and against violence, in some countries Buddhist justify war a bit more (more than half in China, Hong Kong, Thailand) and in India and Singapore they justify violence above the mean level. In contrast, South Korea and Japan stand out for their strong opposition to war and violence. Japan stands out for seeing the deterioration of the environment as a serious problem while India is in the opposite extreme. Indian Buddhist people are the ones supporting the most the idea of altruism in children and those from Taiwan and Hong Kong are the ones supporting the value of Tolerance. Meanwhile Buddhist people in South Korea are in the opposite extreme well below the mean level (Graph 1).

In China and in India more than half of Buddhists (65% and 53%) believe most people can be trusted while, at the other end, in South Korea is less than one fourth of them. India is the country where more Buddhist believe in the importance to move towards a more human society while in China is not a relevant goal. The relevance of friends in their lives is quite similar for almost all Buddhist with the exception of those of Vietnam with very low rates.

GRAPH 1

Comparing large population groups, the most striking differences are in relation with the justification of war and violence between Asian Buddhist and Asian non-Buddhist, being the last
ones much more inclined to justify them. However, Non-Asian Buddhist stand out for the importance given to tolerance and to friends. Overall, Buddhists stand out (well above non-Buddhist) for believing most people can be trusted and, with the exception of non-Asian, for seeing the environment deterioration as the most serious problem (Graph 2).

GRAPH 2

The representation of distances (similarities and differences) between Asian Buddhists populations done with MDS produces a social map (with characteristics similar to geographical maps) according to their values towards others and harmonious relations.

In spite of some differences, there is an overall high level of similarity among Buddhists with respect to most values. MDS places the countries (their Buddhist people) spread through the space, some countries grouped close to the center (Taiwan, Hong Kong, South Korea, Singapore, Thailand) and others around towards the edges (Japan on the center top, Vietnam towards the right bottom corner, and Malaysia on the left bottom corner. (Graph 3).

GRAPH 3
Hierarchical Clustering (HQ) identifies a large clustering of countries with high levels of similarities in the center and China and Malaysia towards the edge of it. Japan, India and Vietnam occupy isolated extreme positions on top, right and bottom right of the space. The axes cut the space providing meaning to the positions. From left to right countries seem to be placed according to the importance given to family, more importance on the left and less on the right. And from top to bottom they are placed according to the relevance given to environmental deterioration, less on the bottom and more on top.

The extreme position of Japan on top reflects its strong believe on the importance of the environmental problems, the extreme position of Vietnam on the bottom right reflects the little importance given to family and friends, and the position of Malaysia is the result of valuing family but not considering the environment deterioration as a central problem. China singles out for its justification of war and India for supporting altruism as a value and the goal of a more human society.

To better understand the role of Buddhist people system of
values we create population groups and compare them: Buddhist population (Asian, non-Asian, and Total), Non-Buddhist (Asian, non-Asian), and total Global population.

In the spatial representation of proximities among group categories generated by MDS (Graph 4) the center is empty and the group categories are pushed toward the edges of the space reflecting four different cosmovisions of meanings. On the left we have, on top, Non-Asian Buddhist, which as we have seen have a rather different system of values compared to Asian Buddhist, and at the bottom Non-Buddhist and Global Population together. Both groups on the left coincide not considering the deterioration of the environment as the most important problem but considering that Tolerance and Friends are very important. They have opposite views regarding others: Non-Asian Buddhist stand out (40% of them) for believing most people can be trusted while Non-Buddhist and the Global Population are the ones least believing it.

GRAPH 4

On the right we have Asian non-Buddhist, on the center of the top quadrant, and towards the center right of the space we find the aggregation of All Buddhist and Asian Buddhist very close together. Asian Non-Buddhist stand out for their higher legitimation of war
and violence (as Non-Asian Buddhist also on the top part of the space) and at the same time for their support to the teaching of Altruism to children. The Buddhist cluster on the center towards the right border (representing the vast majority of Buddhist) stand out for believing most people can be trusted, the deterioration of the environment is the most important current problem, and that wealth can be better distributed among all.

PRACTICES

Buddhists also stand out by their high level of social activity, above the means of the global and non-Buddhist populations, defending and caring for others and the environment. Their practices caring for others and the environment place them in the leading positions of the social activity towards a more harmonious and sustainable society.

Even though they are against war, a large majority would fight to defend their country, more than non-Buddhist in general and much more than Asian non-Buddhist. In contrast, and possibly as a result of their belief that most people can be trusted, their level of social closure (number of types of people not wanted as neighbors) is the lowest of all.

Buddhist people stand out by their actions and practices towards the wellbeing and happiness of others doing something good for society and caring for others and also for the environment. Their higher level of social action matches their higher level of membership in civil and environmental organizations. This points to the socially organized character of their action towards the others, it is the result of collaboration with others. Participation in social organizations increases trust and ties facilitating more extensive and harmonious relations.

As with other indicators analyzed previously, the distribution of these actions and practices is not even throughout the Buddhist population, existing some contrasting positions and similarities between countries, and also some differences with non-Buddhist populations. Some of the similarities and differences can be seen in Graph 5 and Graph 6.
In spite of the overall high level of social activity, there are some differences among Buddhists worth mentioning. The most socially organized and active Buddhist are those of India and Taiwan and the least those from China and Malaysia. Vietnam Buddhists stand out doing good things for society (along with India), caring for others (along Hong Kong) and caring for the environment (along Malaysia). Japan would be in the opposite extreme with lower levels of action towards the wellbeing of others (Graph 5).

**GRAPH 5**

Buddhist in South Korea and India appear to be the most socially closed ones while those from Japan and Vietnam are definitely the ones more open to different people around them.

Another indication of proximity to others is the level of trust to unknown people (unknown, from other religions, from other nationalities). Overall, Buddhist, as non-Buddhist, do not trust unknown people very much. India, Singapore, Taiwan and Hong Kong stand out with higher levels of trust while China, Thailand, Malaysia and Vietnam seem to be more untrusting and therefore distant from people not known.

Comparing population groups, we see two singularities worth mentioning. Asian Non-Buddhist people differ from the rest by their very high level of social closure. Non-Asian Buddhist show a differentiated profile with an open position towards others and
a strong social activity agenda with very high participation in civil organizations and also very high rates of care for the environment and positive actions for society. It all adds up to the highest degree of trust in unknown people and the lowest rate of social closure. The rest of the groups (Buddhist and non-Buddhist) have a very similar pattern of social actions and practices (Graph 6).

The representation of distances (similarities and differences) between Asian Buddhists populations done with MDS produces a social map (with characteristics similar to geographical maps) according to their practices and actions towards others in the form of harmonious relations.

In spite of some differences, there is an overall high level of similarity among Buddhists with respect to most actions. MDS places the countries (their Buddhist people) spread through the space, some countries grouped close to the center (China, South Korea, Singapore and Malaysia along Taiwan and Thailand) and others around towards the edges (Japan on the left top, Hong Kong on the left bottom, Vietnam towards the right top corner, and India at the center bottom. (Graph 7).

Hierarchical Clustering (HQ) identifies a large clustering of countries with high levels of similarities. In the very center of the system, and of this large cluster, we see a very cohesive and similar group of countries (South Korea, Singapore, China and Malaysia).
Taiwan and Thailand (bottom right quarter) are very close together and also a part of this large cluster along with Vietnam (on top of them). Japan, Hong Kong and India occupy extreme and isolated position towards the left and bottom edges of the system of practices.

The axes cut the social space of practices providing meaning to the positions. From left to right countries seem to be placed according to their disposition to fight for the country, from less resolve to fight on the left to more on the right. From top to bottom countries are placed according to their involvement in social organizations (being member or/and being active), with those at the bottom more involved and those at the top less.

In the center, as references of the system, South Korea and Singapore coincide in their high level of care for the environment. On the extremes, Indian Buddhists stand out by their very high level of social activity and support in the environmental scene. Vietnam (top right) sticks out by its low level of social closure following Japan (isolated on the far left). Thailand and Taiwan coincide and stand apart by their willingness to fight for their country if needed.

GRAPH 7

The representation of distances (similarities and differences)
between population groups done with MDS produces an image (Graph 8) quite similar to the map of meanings seen earlier. Non-Asian Buddhist, with a quite differentiated system of practices, is placed on the bottom left while Asian non-Buddhist is placed opposite at the bottom right. Non-Buddhist and the Global population groups are together in the center of the system, and All Buddhist and Asian Buddhist are placed on the top center of the social map (Graph 8).

The social space is organized through the axes according to resolve to participate in war (less on the left and more on the right) and level of social activity (from higher at the bottom to lower at the top).

GRAPH 8

All Buddhist and Asian Buddhist stand apart on top because they are socially very active. Low levels of social activity place Asian non-Buddhist in the opposite extreme (bottom right) while Non-Buddhist and Global Population are placed in the middle.

Non-Asian Buddhist are clearly differentiated from the rest by their very high levels of social activity and practices aimed at the wellbeing of others and their opposition to participate in a war.
MEANINGS AND PRACTICES

The MDS of the combination of all meanings and practices produces a social map summarizing the proximities and distances of all Buddhist populations in their ways to see and do, in their ways to understand and see the others and in their ways to establish harmonious relations and act for the wellbeing of others and the sustainability of the planet (Graph 9).

It produces a social spacing quite similar to ones seen before (of meanings and practices). A high level of similarities yields a large cluster of six countries (Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, China and Malaysia) over the center of the space, with Singapore as central reference for the whole system. Singularities result in isolated countries placed towards the corners (Graph 9).

The large cluster seems to represent the reference (dominant common ground) cognitive and action model shaped by high levels of social orientation and action towards harmonious relations and towards sustainability. The extremes represent singular patterns worth knowing since they create differentiated versions of the reference model. Japan and Hong Kong (on the top left) stand apart for their opposition to war, India for the very high level of social activity and orientation, Vietnam for the very low social closure, and Malaysia for the importance given to the family.

GRAPH 9
The social spacing of the population groups generated by MDS with all meanings and practices yields a social map representing the cognitive-action distances between them.

It confirms the four different patterns we have seen until now. Buddhist and Non-Buddhist are clearly differentiated in the social space, with the first ones on the top side and the latter one packed on the lower side (Graph 10). The differentiation is the result of the fact that overall Buddhist stand out by their belief that most people can be trusted. This indicator of proximity to others matches their higher levels of social involvement and activity and also, with the exception of non-Asian Buddhist, their leading role in views and actions towards a sustainable planet. The main characteristics that distinguish the groups are:

All Buddhist/Asian Buddhist stand out for their belief that most people can be trusted and that deterioration of the environment is the most serious problem. Probably as a response to that, they are the most socially active ones.

Non-Asian Buddhist differentiated by their higher justification of violence and not considering the environment as the most important problem but coincide with Asian Buddhist in believing that most people are trustworthy and their very high levels of social activity.

GRAPH 10
Asian non-Buddhist stand out by their high level of legitimation of war.

Global non-Buddhist and Asian non-Buddhist are spatially very close as indication of sharing lower rates of social activity.

**MAPPING BUDDHISTS SOCIAL PATHS**

We overcome the duality Meanings-Practices and the individualization of values and actions focusing on the interconnections between all of them. The use of Social Network Analysis approach yields graphic representations of the interaction/relational system. We could view and understand this cognitive-action structure as kind of DNA. It is the map of the Buddhist social DNA which portrays the ways through which Buddhist contribute to the creation of more harmonious and sustainable societies.

In the Graphs nodes are the elements forming the Buddhist social cognitive-action system. Lines connecting nodes (those elements) indicate the existence of the causal relation between elements. The size of the nodes indicated its centrality in the system (the number of its direct relations) and the thickness of the lines connecting nodes indicates the intensity (correlation level) of the causal relation between them.

Graph 11 depicts the system of relations between meanings (nodes in red) and practices (nodes in cinnamon). In the network we can distinguish two separated components (structures where all nodes are connected). A very large one, including almost all the elements of the system, and a small one (top right) with two values related to the environment which are not connected to the rest.

In the large component occupying almost all the social space, we can distinguish two connected structures. The larger, very cohesive and most central one is an **Action**-practices network (B) and its formed by two dense sub-networks. The sub-structure on top represents **organized social action** (b1), and the other one below represents **harmonious relations** (b2) and actions and

---

7. Significative correlations with a moderate-strong relational intensity (r larger than 0,120).
practices towards others. This large Action network is linked to two smaller networks. Hanging from the Action network there is a small structure of values regarding others and relations with them (C). The other structure on the left represents trust and proximity to others (D). We could define it as a Trust network.

There are two main connections between the Action network and the Trust network. The first one (lower road) is through elements stressing harmony in smaller social spaces: between Family Being Important and Helping people nearby. The more important connection (higher road) links Trusting Non Known People and Being member and active in Social Organizations and financially supporting Environmental Organizations. This road portraits the socially open projection of the organized social action.

GRAPH 11

The Action network is made up of the Organized Social Action (composed by being Member and being Active in Social civil organizations and in Environmental organizations plus Giving money to Environmental organizations and participating in demonstration for the environment) and the Harmonious Relations (composed of Important for the person to help people nearby, to
do good deeds for society, and to care for the environment).

In brief, the Meanings and Practices relational system is dominated by a very cohesive set of practices, organized and towards others, in the center. It is linked to a small sub-structure of harmony oriented values (below) and to a larger sub-structure of values and practices indicating trust and proximity to others and therefore facilitators of harmonious social relations. On top of the map we find a group of values towards environmental protection (A) not connected to the main network at this relational intensity, by being weaker relations.

This Meanings and Practices structure will be the central element in a model aimed at understanding Buddhist contributions to a more harmonious and sustainable society. To this main piece of DNA, we first add a set of elements roughly representing harmony (happiness, satisfaction, health) which are considered as social goals for a better society. To that we will add Social conditions and Religious indicators. All together it represents the Buddhist social DNA which symbolizes ways and roads used by Buddhist people to contribute to better and more harmonious and sustainable societies.

The addition of the triad elements (happiness, satisfaction, health) which we call Life (nodes in green), enriches our vision of these Buddhist social paths (Graph 12). Here it is worth noting the causal relational (bidirectional) between Happiness and Satisfaction with the Trust network (trust and proximity to others) through the direct relation with Family and Friends being important in their lives. Satisfaction with life (strongly connected with Happiness and Health) is linked to the idea that Wealth accumulation could result in its better distribution, and indirectly to the sub-structure of harmony oriented values (at the bottom).
Actions and practices are indirectly connected to Happiness, Health and Satisfaction through the Trust network acting as a causal bridge between them. In brief, Trust bridges the road between Actions and Happiness.

Social conditions (nodes in purple) and Religion indicators (nodes in blue) act like the bases of the system. When included in the system of relations (Graph 13) the level of interactions in the whole system increases a lot. Social and Religious conditions become new additional bridges causally connecting Life with Action. Both Religion Importance and Social Class are directly connected to Happiness, Health and Satisfaction.

In this final image of the social system (that we call Social DNA) we see how the network becomes circular, there is continuous causal flow circulating. From Actions to Trust to Life to Social Conditions to Religion to Harmony oriented values (bottom) to Actions to... and so on. It is a circular causal interrelation system.

We can then use this map to search for roads to Harmonious
Societies (and specifically Happiness). The roads to (and from) Happiness are built with the combinations of values and actions. We can distinguish two main roads towards Happiness. The first road (top road) will start on the right connecting the set of values at the bottom with the whole body of actions on top of it. It will later move to the left, to the Trust territory, and towards the Life territory and ending in Happiness. The second road (bottom road) will move from the Action territory and Harmony oriented values to Religion and Social Conditions which will open another access to the Life territory and Happiness, or vice versa.

The map representation of the Buddhist social DNA offers a glimpse to the complex system of interrelations contributing towards better and more harmonious and sustainable societies.

GRAPH 13
IN CONCLUSION

Buddhist values and practices provide an image of proximity and care for others and an orientation and desire for harmony with people and the environment. There is an overall high level of similarity among them but the distribution of these values and practices is not equal throughout the Buddhist population. There exist some contrasting positions and similarities between countries and also some differences with non-Buddhist populations.

The similarities result in a large group of six countries (Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, China and Malaysia) which represents the reference cognitive and action model (dominant common ground) characterized by high levels of social orientation and action towards harmonious relations and towards sustainability.

Singularities are Japan and Hong Kong, which stand apart for their opposition to war, India for the very substantial level of social activity and orientation, and Vietnam for the very low social closure.

Buddhist and Non-Buddhist are differentiated as a result of the overall stronger Buddhist belief that most people can be trusted, their higher levels of social involvement and activity and also, with the exception of non-Asian Buddhist, their leading role in views and actions towards a sustainable planet. Non-Asian Buddhist differentiated from Asian Buddhist by their firmer justification of violence and lower consideration of the environment as the most important problem. And Asian non-Buddhist stand out by their robust legitimation of war and, coinciding with Global non-Buddhist, their lesser rates of social activity.

The analysis of the interconnections between all Meanings and Practices, using the social network analysis approach, yields a map of the Buddhist social DNA which portraits the ways through which Buddhist contribute to the creation of more harmonious and sustainable societies. The most relevant conclusions derived from this network of causal interrelations are:

The important connecting role played by Trust between Actions and practices with Happiness, Health and Satisfaction. Trust bridges the road between Actions and Happiness.
The network becomes circular with continuous causal flow circulating. From Actions to Trust to Life to Social Conditions to Religion to Harmony oriented values to Actions to…and so on. It is a circular causal interrelation system.

Using this map to search for roads to Harmonious Societies (and specifically Happiness), we can distinguish two main roads (combinations of values and actions) towards (or from) Happiness: one through the Trust territory and the other through Religion and Social Conditions.

FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL BEINGS

TABLE 1. BUDDHIST VALUES AND ACTIONS BUILDING A HARMONIOUS SOCIETY
BUDDHISTS CONTRIBUTIONS TO BUILDING MORE HARMONIOUS AND SUSTAINABLE SOCIETIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEANINGS &amp; VALUES</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes (w is necessary for justice (%).</td>
<td>31.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence against others, people available (scale: 1-10)</td>
<td>1.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most serious problem, environment (%).</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment is, economic goods, %</td>
<td>78.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Athens in Children Important (%).</td>
<td>43.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Toleration in Children Important (%)</td>
<td>65.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most people think, wealthy, %</td>
<td>32.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tends more human society, %</td>
<td>18.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words for All (scale: 1-10)</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tends Very Important (%)</td>
<td>90.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends Very Important</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PRACTICES & ACTIONS

| Eight for country, % | 89.4 |
| Civil Organizations, % | 2.26 |
| Civil Organizations, if any, % | 1.12 |
| Do something good for society (scale: 1-10) | 2.72 |
| Care for others (scale: 1-10) | 2.89 |
| Care for environment (scale: 1-10) | 2.61 |
| Give to religious organizations | 16.9 |
| Member Environmental Organizations | 15.9 |
| Active Environmental Organization | 6.5 |
| Social Closure (r = 1) | 4.09 |
| TKF Test Knows People (r = 0) | 2.4 |
| TransKTP Trust (1-10 People) | 5 |

LIFE

| Very Happy (%) | 59.9 |
| New Happy (%) | 8.6 |
| Good & Very Good Health | 70.3 |
| Bad & Very Bad Health | 20.7 |
| Life Satisfaction (scale: 1-10) | 7.55 |
| Abroad'Relational Services (scale: 1-10) | 3.36 |
| Relatives Present Year (%) | 32.6 |
| Relatives Very Important | 56.7 |

SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

| Maker | 51.8 |
| Female | 48.2 |
| Age (mean) | 42.5 |
| Education level (scale: 1-10) | 4.74 |
| Scale of intolerance (scale: 1-10) | 4.39 |
| Subjective social class (score: 1-5) | 3.15 |
| N | 1154 |

% of Buddhist in survey | 96 |

W&H 2015: Thailand, Vietnam, India, Singapore, China, Ages, Small, Large, Total, Male, Female, Relational Services, scale: 1-10, Intolerance Scale: 1-10, Subjective Social Class.
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NEW CHALLENGES: BUDDHIST PROPOSAL FOR SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY

by Rajni Srivastava

ABSTRACT

World is now on the edge of turmoil. Political instability, economic insecurity, excessive exploitation of natural resources, religious conflicts, violence, all are posing a threat for world community. It is becoming more serious with the problem of immigration. Today migration is not a simple issue as it was perceived earlier, it is a complex issue and done with a certain agenda that is creating social anxiety, tension and conflict. Now it is more important to raise the issue as the policy of multiculturalism is questioned, simply policy of tolerance and indifference cannot work though it was believed earlier that the policy of multiculturalism will naturally resolve most of the problems of the modern world and would be able to create a society that would be more inclusive and more just. But now Nations are raising their boundaries to restrict ‘others’ to take benefit from their social, political, economical and human resources.

So the world needs new theme, a new proposition for sustainable society that would acceptable to all and accommodate all. Buddhism is welcomed by the world community for its insight for rational inquiry and now it has greater appeal to masses than the earlier generations because of its scientific and analytic explanations which suits to modern man scientific spirit. John Rawls an American philosopher in his book A theory of Justice proposed the conception of ‘society as cooperation’ and perceived society a cooperative venture of mutual advantage and

*Doctor, Deptt. of Philosophy, University of Lucknow, India.
constructed rules for cooperation with the help of artificial devise original position. But it does not claim to create bonding and belongingness among its members. Here it is important to explore Buddhism what is its response in this situation as it is rightly said that any type of major changes brings with itself a sense of uncertainty and Buddhism not only pacifies but also gives methods skillfully approaching difficult situation.

The paper will be divided into two parts. The first part will deal with contemporary issues and Rawls’ conception of sustainable society and second part will consider the Buddhist proposal for sustainable society.

“We still in spite of the efforts of three countries of moral philosophy and one of sociology, lack any coherent, rationally defensible statement of a liberal individualistic point of view.” Alasdair Macintyre

Contemporary world is witnessing political instability, economic insecurity excessive exploitation of natural resources, religious conflicts and violence. All are posing a threat for world community. It is becoming more serious with the problem of immigration. Because now immigration is not a simple issue as it was perceived earlier, it is a complex issue and done with a certain agenda. So it is creating social anxiety, tension and conflict among the native members. Now it is more important to raise this issue because policy of multiculturalism is being questioned. Earlier it was believed that policy of multiculturalism will naturally resolve the cultural conflicts and social tension of the world and it would be able to create a society that would be more inclusive and more just. But unfortunately the result is not achieved and in the name of multiculturalism separatism and fundamentalism is encouraged and emerged radicalism, and revival of old fashioned irrational practices contrary to human dignity and respect.

This is the reason that most of the countries denounced the policy of multiculturalism. Some though not openly rejected the policy of multiculturalism but limited its scope and application.

In 17th century the world was struggling for better political system that would be accountable to its entire citizens and, would not discriminate among members and have respect and concern for all its members. In 18th and 19th century the focus was on new inventions and new technology for better health services and for better agriculture. In 20th century the world was fighting for the assurance of human rights, but in 21st century the whole world is struggling for sustainability, the sustainability of
society. So it is important to investigate what are the major threats for the sustainability and in this reference I have tried to explore Buddhism if there is any new story or new proposition or principles that would help for sustainability of society.

1. RESEARCH PROBLEM

Sustainability of society is essentially related with the very existence of human being and if it is threatened, the very existence of human beings is threatened So there is urgent need to work for sustainability and make a long term plan to move in this direction. Many morally concerned people believe “Humanity struggle now it is to survive is to re-examine its experience in the world and come to some deeper understanding of the way civilizations reduced the vividness and range of human experience by conflicting it to a linguistic system and metaphors that take charge as individuals came up of age.” (Kenneth K Inada, Nalon p. Jacobson 1984 p.381)

Where as some other people believe unless a society is just it cannot be stable and if it not stable it cannot be sustainable. They believe that it is the unjust economic system of the world which is the main threat for sustainability of society. “Many morally unconcerned today believe, we should make moderate changes in the present economic order, so as to render it just and sustainability. Others believe the basic principles that govern the global economy today inherently lead to increasing injustice and unsustainability.” (Light Andrew and Rolston Holmes 2002 p.359) but this is not the whole truth, other factors are also responsible for unsustainability and the sad part is that most of the efforts done by the world community have not shown a remarkable result.

So it requires a new framework new theme, and a new propositions so that world can move forward for the sustainability of society. The paper is an analysis of the Buddhist proposal for sustainable society as Buddhism has become a leading voice on global issues. Sustainability is an essential condition for the very existence of human being and if there is problem regarding the sustainability of society, it must be considered urgently with a plan that would accommodate all and assure all ‘Present and future generation’ for just and sustainable social order.
When we look at the debates on the concern for environment, United Nation in 1972 held the conference on the Human Environment and United Nations Environment Program had addressed various environment issues as increasing rate of pollution. In 1980 United Nations Environment Program published World Conservation Strategy and here the sustainable development was used and here it was recognized that development and sustainability cannot be mutually independent.


The question is if there are so many programs that have been designed or framed for sustainable societies, why still we are struggling for sustainability. The fact of reality is that it is still difficult to convince nations to implement the policy for sustainable development. Even after 30 years since the Brundtland Committee Report has been published nothing seriously has been done for the sustainability of the society. Though it was mentioned as ‘Our Common Future’, so there must be a common responsibility of all the members of this world for the sustainability of the world, but the fact is neither the government nor non government organizations are serious on the issue of sustainability. The reason is clear that it does not appeal to common man, it does not awaken and created awareness among common individual for the issue. There is an urgent need for new theme for sustainability that would appeal to both common individual as well as professional and Buddhism can help in this direction.

2. DISCUSSION

The discussion in this paper concerned on two questions that:

- What are real threats for sustainability?
- Is there a new inspiration for sustainability in Buddhism?
Both these questions are very important because unless it is identified the real threat for sustainability, it would be difficult to find the solution.

Buddhism is welcomed by world community for its insight for rational enquiry and it is also true that now it has a greater appeal to masses than the earlier generation, because of its emphasis on scientific and analytic explanations that appeals to the modern men’s scientific spirit. It is true that Buddhism is the fourth largest religion in the world but as a philosophy it cover more than the 80% of the population of the world and the reason behind is its openness to rational inquiry for its fundamental principle, its non essentialist and nor universalistic in approach.

So it is important to explore how Buddhism responds to this situation? It is rightly said that any type of major change brings with itself a sense of uncertainty and Buddhism not only specifies but also gives methods for skill fully approaching difficult situations. The world has witnessed the power of Buddhist practice in approaching difficult situation whether it may be American war on Vietnam or the football team players along with the coach trapped in the cave in Bangkok. How they responded in the situation sets an example for others.

But the first question that must be answered, why sustainability of society is so much important for human being?. The answer is man is characterized as a social animal. It means human history and history of society is synonymous. So if the sustainability of society is in danger, it is also true that even the existence of human being is endangered.

Rawls in his book A theory of justice proposed the conception of ‘society as cooperation’ and he perceived society as a cooperative venture for mutual advantage. To construct the rule of cooperation he used an artificial device ‘veil of ignorance’, so that rules will be rational as well as reasonable and would be acceptable to all under impartial point of view. Unless a society is just it can be stable and it cannot expect cooperation from all the members and if it is not stable it cannot be sustainable. But only a theory cannot help a society to become just, stable and sustainable. It is claimed by the
most of the sincere thinkers of the world that present economic system is unjust and responsible for deeper inequalities. So they believe that “we should make moderate changes in the present economic order so as to render it just and sustainable.” (LLight Andrew and Rolston Holmes 2002 p.359 ) But the threat for sustainability does not come only from unjust economic order. It comes from two directions:

- Exploitation of natural resources
- Conflicts in social relations.

The term sustainability was first popularized in the field of resource usage and had very limited applications. “Such as maximum sustainable yield which represents the highest level of exploitation consistent with maintaining a study flow of resources.”(Neil John, Turner Kerry 2001 p.616) The most cited definition of sustainability given by Brundtland that mentioned multiple interrelated environment and human problems that affecting the planet; and it suggested that development should meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own need.

Almost all definitions of the sustainability focuses on the economic relation between nature and human being but sustainability is a moral concept also which expects moral obligation from human being towards nature and towards other fellow beings ( present and future ) and it demands a balance and harmony between environment sustainability, economic sustainability and socio political sustainability and it demands a social order which would embrace all the members and would guarantee the same for future generation.

3. EXPLOITATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Exploitation of Natural Resources is the first major threat for the sustainability.

The natural resources are of two types:

- Reservoir
- Regenerative Resources
Reservoirs are that natural resources which are created by nature in the course of millions of years. Human being cannot create these with his own effort. These resources are essential for human life and men were using them since the beginning of this existence on earth. If it is the case how it has become a threat for sustainability. The reason is with the advancement of technology one can extract these reservoirs to maximum limit and the new materialistic thinking provoked him to extract these to the maximum and this has created a threat for sustainability.

But sustainability in this sense challenged on two grounds:

- There reservoirs are limited in character. So it will end in the course of time, so if they end today or tomorrow, it does not matter. The fact is that it will end on some day. We cannot extent it to unlimited generations. So the critics challenged the urge for sustainability. They claimed “As a social goal sustainability is fraught with unresolved question. Sustainability for how long; a generation, one century, a millennium, ten millennium.” (Neil John Turner R. Kerry and Bateman J Ian 2001 ) One cannot stretch it for eternal. So what is wrong in using these resources lavishly for our pleasure?

- Men is the in the centre place of the nature. Everything in the nature is created for his use. So there is nothing wrong in exploiting nature for his own purpose.

Both these arguments raised against sustainability are misleading. The first argument that claims sustainability as fraught is misguided because it is not about calculation of the quantity of natural reservoir but it is the question of moral responsibility for future generation. And second argument that claims as men as supreme creature in this universe that he is in the centre of this universe has no scientific and empirical support.

4. REGENERATIVE RESOURCES

Such as water, air and agriculture etc., if these are used with caution it is regenerated by the nature itself, but today excessive exploitation of water, air pollution and over exploitation of land, use of chemicals endangering even the existence of human being.
It cannot be stopped without change in the perception of human being towards the world.

5. CONFLICTS IN SOCIAL RELATION

The most serious threat for sustainability comes from conflicts in social relations. Diversity is the characteristic of modern society. People with different culture, tradition, different way of life, having different values have to live together. The better modes of conveyance and liberal laws of immigration made it easy for the people to migrate from one place to another, but the problem is, this migration flow is only one way. Sometimes migrants move in search of better opportunity, sometimes because of exploitation, sometimes because of the threat of terrorism and because it is only of one way, it is creating burden on the natives and leading violence, anxiety, conflicts and tension among the people.

It was in the latter half of the 20th century, diversity was acknowledged by the states and most of the countries in the world adopted the policy of multiculturalism to resolve the conflicts and to create a space that would embrace and respect all. It was believed that policy of multiculturalism would create a space where everyone can respectfully lead one’s life. It was introduced to create harmony and togetherness among its members but in the name of multiculturalism emerged radicalism, conservatism, fundamentalism and revival of old fashioned, irrational traditions contrary to human respect. This is the reason the policy of multiculturalism is now questioned and most of the countries some explicitly denounced this policy of multiculturalism and some though not openly rejected the policy but limited its scope and application, it is also true the diversity is the fact of reality and no one can reject and neglect it.

So, there is an urgent need for new theme and new perspective to acknowledge this diversity and create a bond and togetherness among members. Buddhism is trying to provide a new theme and new framework for plural society. It has become a leading voice for environmental ethics and for pluralism. The question again comes why the world is expecting new framework for sustainability from Buddhism, because there are so many religions which also have
something to say on these problems then why Buddhism has greater responsibility? The reasons are, that the virtues and scientific temper of Buddhism not only appeals to its followers but to most of the rational groups of human beings and second the method of Buddhism that diagnose the cause problem as physician diagnose the disease by seeing the symptoms and this diagnosis is done on four stages, first identifying the problem, finding the cause of the problem on the basis of its principle of Pratityasamutpada, finding the way to cure it and finally curing it. Pratityasamutpada is the causal principle of Buddhism that says if ‘this’ exists, that will follow and if ‘this’ do not exist ‘that’ would not follow. So if you want ‘that’ continue to ‘this’ and if you do not want ‘that’ discontinue ‘this’. Nothing in the world is uncaused. So if there is a situation which is endangering the human existence, it also must be caused and through the chain of causal relation, one can reach the main cause then only it can be cured.

If we look at the irrational and selfish behaviour of human being towards nature it is only because of the wrong perception about nature of human being. On the one hand he is perceived as material body where he is only a material body where he is only consumer and confines only to his body because each body is individual body. So he does not have any concern and responsibility for other individuals and on the other extreme he is perceived as eternal self who is indifferent to the world, but according to Buddhism human being is the combination of five skandhas Rupe, Vedna, Samjna, Samskara & Vijnana. So man is neither material body nor only consciousness, but he is the combination of five elements along with the three other elements, he is the combination of the five elements and so it needs the balance among these five elements. It is also important mote that among these five Skandhas there is only first one that expresses physical body and rest four are the mental body and so when individual acts as a consumer, he focuses only on his physical body and neglects his mental body so he cannot lead harmonious life and the result is suffering. Man is not something over and above the nature, neither he is apart from nature but he is part of nature. So in this world of interdependence, exploitation of one effects the whole series. So if human race wants to survive, it must have harmonious relation with nature, society and world. Buddhism do not support
anthropocentric approach that claims that man is superior or supreme in this world and he must protect nature for his own welfare, instead it claims that it is a moral claim ‘not to kill’ and ‘not to destroy’ and lead a harmonious life with nature then only he can realize his true nature. That is egoless, substance less and momentary and in this way it attacks on the root of exploitation of nature that is the greedy attitude of human being towards nature. It does not boast to change the world rather it changes the perspective towards world.

Conflict in social relation usually occurs because of the non acceptance for opinions, traditions and culture that are different from their own. Buddha not only acknowledged the existence of different opinions and faith, he advised his followers to have patience to listen the views that are different to them, it will help them to explain their views with more clarity even in the case. “Other should malign the Buddha the Dhamma and Sangha, you must not feel resentment, nor displeasure, nor anger on the account. You should explain (to them) what is false as false and saying it is not so.”( Brahmajala Sutta of Digha Nikaya p.5) Open-mindedness and rational discourse are essential for conflict resolution and Buddhism favours both. In Culaviyha Sutta of Digha Nikaya it is advised by Buddha.”Standing rigidly to his own views and depending on his own criteria, he enters into dispute in the world. Desisting from all the theories the wise one does not enter the dispute in the world”(Sutta Nipata) Difference of opinion is main reason for social conflicts and the liberal model to avoid this conflict is non interference and toleration but it does not has any positive approach to ease the tension. In Paramatthapa Sutta of Sutta Nipata mentions– “The person abiding by a certain dogmatic view considering it is the highest in the world claims this is the most excellent and disparages others view, different from that as inferior. As a result he is not free from disputes.”(Sutta Nipata 796) Buddha’s approach towards other faith is not based on mere toleration. Toleration is a rational behaviour towards different faith and beliefs but mere toleration cannot built a bond among the members and it is the compassion which relates oneself to others and because of the compassion one can extend oneself to such an extend which includes otherness and so he can feel the pain and sorrow of others and can subverts his egoist nature.
6. CONCLUSION

To conclude it can be said that Buddhism has lots of potentiality to construct a new proposition for sustainable society. Though it is true that there is no set or universal formula to settle the problem in Buddhism but the important is its unique methodology, its scientific temper to inquire into the problem. To trace this cause, then to try to end the cause of that one and the interest point is Buddhist approach appeals both to its followers and non followers.
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BUDDHIST CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

by Thich Hanh Chon

ABSTRACT

Society is growing in accordance with the law of progress. That development is inevitable because of the growing population and improved material life. However, the development also brings many problems for society such as instability in security, social evils... Many solutions have been studied to apply to limit the above problem. Buddhism, which was founded by the Buddha, has also contributed a number of solutions from more than 25 centuries. The article will outline some of the Buddhist solutions that can help society develop sustainably: (i). Buddhist humanistic education through promoting goodness, practicing Buddhist ethics and protecting the environment; (ii). Balancing the material and spiritual life through practicing the Middle Way, and disinterestedness and contentment; (iii). Gender equality in society through respect, without gender discrimination; and (iv). Indispensable relations in society through the doctrine of dependent origination. Thereby, the article also offers suggestions from the above solutions.

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A sustainable development society needs to have a synchronous development of the aspects in which people are centered. In other words, people play a decisive role for a society to grow sustainably by

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*. Dr., Member, Vietnam Buddhist Research Institute Lecture, Binh Dinh School of Basic Buddhist Studies, Vietnam.
the people who create society or community and people affect the natural environment directly or indirectly. More than 25 centuries ago, the Buddha identified man as the main factor that created a happy society and taught teachings or methods to help people become perfect. In this short article, I present four basic points, which are considered as practical contributions of Buddhism to the issue of sustainable social development:

1. BUDDHIST HUMANISTIC ETHICAL EDUCATION

Anyone who seeks to learn and practice Buddhism can realize that the Buddha introduced a humanized moral education. In Buddhism, no matter what school you practice and how it is, you will agree to practice the Noble Eightfold Path. In the Noble Eightfold Path, it is possible to divide into three groups including silà/ virtue, sàmadhi/concentration, and paññà/wisdom. Sila is considered Buddhist ethics. Right speech, right action, right livelihood belongs to silà or morality. If a specific analysis is based on the 5 precepts or the 5 rules of training of the Buddhists, then the speech is equivalent to the fourth precept. Right action includes the first, the second, the third and the fifth precept related to the karma of the body. Of course, the karma of the mind is not mentioned but it is the driving force behind it. If based on the 10 good deeds, right action includes the karma of body, the karma of the mouth and the karma of the mind, divided into the 10 deeds. Practicing the 5 precepts or the 10 good deeds is a solid moral foundation that contributes to making society stable. In addition, right livelihood lists some careers that must be given up or at least should be restricted for the sustainable development of society, including arms trade, human trafficking, meat trade, alcohol trade, and poison trade.3

The above-mentioned careers need to be understood and applied flexibly to bring positive results to the society. Human trafficking needs to be banned because people cannot be considered as goods. Arms trade should be controlled because it is difficult to strictly ban it. Meat trade or animal slaughtering, alcohol trade and

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2. Majjhima Nikaya, Saleyyaka sutta, no. 41.
poison trade need to be managed and implemented appropriately. Because these trades cannot be completely banned, people should control them effectively to make society more stable. For example, we cannot prohibit meat trade because people also need to eat meat. Therefore, what needs to be done is how to manage animal slaughter for hygienic. Alcohol trade or poison trade should be clearly managed such as the specified places, limited time and adults only. This issue has been well done by a number of the developed countries.

Practicing the five precepts and the ten good deeds means that each of us contributes to build a stable and peaceful community or society. Since then, Buddhist morality has expanded by practicing the protection of the surrounding environment through not killing indiscriminately, not destroying the environment as it relates to right livelihood and right action. The problem is how to motivate many people to practice. If the state uses laws and penalties; religions use the teachings such as God’s punishment, and so on, Buddhism emphasizes the law of cause and effect. The doctrine of cause and effect helps people to be afraid of bad fruits, and to know the blessings of practicing Buddhist ethics. Therefore, if the Buddhist ethics is widely applied, the results for sustainable social development are very positive and reliable. The above issues are decided by human beings not by any other supernatural being.

2. PRACTICING THE MIDDLE WAY

An important historical event in the life of the Buddha before his enlightenment is to give up austerity or self-affliction and return to a balanced life. That way of life, which is later taught by the Buddha, is known as the Middle Way. In the Setting in Motion the Wheel of the Dhamma (the Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta) - the first Sutta taught by the Buddha after his enlightenment, the Buddha presented the Middle Way discovered by him. The Buddha taught:

There are these two extremes that are not to be indulged in by one who has gone forth. Which two? That which is devoted to sensual pleasure with reference to sensual objects: base, vulgar, common, ignoble, unprofitable; and that which is devoted to self-
affliction: painful, ignoble, unprofitable. Avoiding both of these extremes, the Middle Way realized by the Tathagata leads to calm, to direct knowledge, to self-awakening, to unbinding.4

Generally speaking, an ordained person or a person in general needs to avoid self-indulgence and self-mortification because both lead to suffering and unsustainable social development. An example of Sona who was skilled at playing the vina (a kind of music instrument) is used to illustrate a balanced way of life. Answering the Buddha's questions, he agrees that when the strings of his vina is neither too taut nor too loose, but tuned to be right on pitch, his vina is in tune and playable.5 In the same way, the Middle Way leads to long-term happiness and the four stages of enlightenment in Buddhism. The Middle Way is also the Noble Eightfold Path.

The Buddha said that to addict to indulgence of sense-pleasures and to addict to self-mortification could not bring about positive results. For monks or religious practitioners, they cannot get enlightenment or achieve religious purposes if they fall into these two extremes. For secular life, indulgence of sense-pleasures will lead to boredom and suffering when lacking them. When spiritual life is less concerned with practice, people's ability of controlling the mind or people's endurance of the adversity becomes weak. Therefore, they often have unwise behavior that may cause suffering for themselves and other people. Moreover, excessive material satisfaction makes people do more, consume more and exploit the environment much more. As a result, people get anxious, stressed and depressed; the environment that is devastated by over-exploitation causes climate change. The paradox is that some rich countries or a group of the rich enjoy a lot of sense pleasures causing environmental pollution while many poor countries and many poor people must suffer the same consequences. Climate change and changing environment, which can cause natural disasters, impacts all of us.

The doctrine of the Middle Way really benefits all of us and contributes to sustainable social development. The monk needs to practice the Middle Way to live happily and get enlightenment. The

4. Samyutta Nikaya. Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta. 56.11
layman who practices this doctrine will be less consumed. His mind will be less stressful, depressed due to meditation to balance the mind and body. Meditation helps many people in western society deal with depression, stress, mental confusion, sadness, and so on through transforming their emotions or feelings. \(^6\) When people are able to control their emotions, actions that cause suffering, instability, crimes and so on are reduced and thus society lessens social evils. That is probably the goal of all countries in the world.

In consumption, according to the Middle Way doctrine, we need to practice ‘disinterestedness and contentment.’ Cultivating ‘disinterestedness and contentment’ can bring happiness right now. It is said that: ‘If his mind is satisfied, he will be happy even though he lies on the ground, but if his mind is not satisfied, he will feel unhappy and miserable even if he lives in heaven.’ When people know how to be satisfied with the results due to their efforts and know how to consume appropriately, life is happy. Obese population and excessive consumption will decrease. The surplus can be shared to the poor. When people know how to share and support each other, the society will reduce the gap between the rich and the poor. This is one of conditions that develop stably the society. Moreover, when consumption is reduced, people decrease to devastate nature and have free time to practice living mindfully. Mindfulness is an effective practice that can help everyone control his or her life and live peacefully and happily right now. That happiness is not brought about by indulgence of sense pleasures, but it is generated from inner mind.

**3. EQUAL RIGHTS FOR MEN AND WOMEN**

Human rights are very important to stabilize society. Depending on a society, the rights or equality between men and women are specified. Today, male and female rights are considered equal, but in order to achieve that result people have to struggle for quite a long time. \(^7\) On equal rights for men and women, the Buddha mentioned


\(^7\) Bonnie Eisenberg and Mary Ruthsdotter. (1998). *History of the Women’s Rights Movement*. The National Women’s History Alliance. (online). Available at: https://nationalwom-
more than two millennia ago. The Buddha talks about the role of the woman on the occasion of the birthday of King Pasenadi’s daughter: “A woman child who may grow wise and virtuous is admired. A woman gives birth to a son who may become a king or a national hero. That woman deserves to be the master of the people.”

In particular, the Buddha allowed women to be ordained as nuns or Bhikkhunis in Buddhism. This event had never happened before and even at the present time for some religions. The Buddha also affirmed the ability of the woman who could practice the Dharma to attain Arahantship. The women’s enlightenment has been recorded in the Therigatha (Verses of the Elder Nuns), which proved the statement of the Buddha.

In today’s society, women contribute greatly to social development. Women can be presidents, prime ministers, CEOs of corporations, professors of universities ... and they succeed in their assigned roles. Because of gender equality, they have the opportunity to be voted or chosen for the positions mentioned above. Thus, the equal opportunity to compete between men and women create a driving force for the sustainable development of the society. Historically, injustice has led to the struggle to overthrow the government and fight for justice. It has really caused instabilities in society. Therefore, the recognition of gender equality is a social progress and Buddhism has been going for more than 2,000 years.

In Buddhism, the ordained women have contributed to the development of Buddhism. In Mahayana Buddhism countries and a few Theravada Buddhism countries, the nun contributes a great deal to guide the faithful in practicing the Dharma as in Plum Village, to mobilize people for the construction of a temple where Buddhists can study and practice the Dharma, to teach children at kindergartens, and to do charity work like the case of Bhikkhuni

[Accessed 20 February, 2019].
8. Samyutta Nikaya, volume 1, Sagatha Vagga, I. 86. The Daughter.
10. This is also one of the eight aims of the Millennium Development Goals outlined by the UN.
Cheng Yen in Taiwan.\textsuperscript{11} Of course, the precepts, which were set out to protect women, are necessary and they need to comply.

4. THE INTER-RELATIONSHIP OF PEOPLE IN SOCIETY

Social formation and development are conceived according to different theories that lead to different lifestyles. There is a theory that recognizes the intervention or decision of God and a great number of people implicitly accept this view. Buddhism teaches that all of us are correlated according to the principle of dependent origination. Therefore, there is nothing that can be separated but co-existed. Therefore, everyone must be responsible for building a sustainable development society and having the right to inherit results.

In western countries, the government has built a strict legal system to protect citizens’ rights. All citizens must pay taxes as mandatory obligations depending on their income. In contrast, all citizens have the right to enjoy social security policies in accordance with the law. The law is clear and the people comply with the law strictly. Therefore, the people are conscious of protecting their country. The citizens of a country are not very poor, the situation of crime is reduced and society is stable.\textsuperscript{12} In particular, if people are influenced by morality and satisfied with their living conditions, they can be peaceful and happy like the Bhutan people. In contrast, people suffer from common misfortune in the countries where there are injustice, corrupt leaders, taxpayers without enjoying social services, and so forth... Since then, society is unstable because of social evils, moral degradation and so on.

The doctrine of dependent origination is a miraculous discovery of the Buddha. Through the doctrine, the Buddha proved convincingly about the inter-existence of all phenomena (inter-being) including the relationship of individuals in society. The Udana (Khuddhaka Nikaya, chapter Bodhi) writes: “When this is, that is. From the arising of this comes the arising of that.” According


\textsuperscript{12} This is also one of the eight aims of the Millennium Development Goals outlined by the UN.
to this doctrine, sustainable social development needs to develop synchronously between material and moral life. Material wealth making a civilized society must go hand in hand with protecting the natural and human environment. Wealth is based on exploiting others, a corruption, an environmental destruction, an excessive exploitation of resources; society is difficult to be stabilized for a long time. However, if people’s morality and responsibility are promoted, people will cultivate their compassion and loving kindness in order to think about their fellow human beings, to think about the common in which they themselves are involved.

To apply the doctrine of dependent origination to the practical life is a great challenge. With a developed education, people can understand the relationship of individuals and between individuals and the environment. However, crimes and destruction still exist due to greed and selfishness. Therefore, people need to be educated on the one hand and their living conditions need to be improved on the one hand. The harmonious development of material and morality is an effective solution to contribute to the stable development of society.

5. CONCLUSION

Buddhism has practical solutions for sustainable social development. For more than two millennia, the Buddha’s teachings are still valid. The Buddhist humanistic education, the Middle Way, gender equality and the doctrine of dependent origination can contribute to sustainable development of society. The government of countries and the leaders of social organizations may study and apply these teachings of Buddhism to society or the community. I hope that scholars will provide a program that guides people to apply these teachings to their life.

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SELECTED THEMATIC PAPERS
MOMENTS TO MIND:
PRINCIPLES OF BUDDHIST LEADERSHIP
AND THE PROCESS OF COGNITION
IN THE SAUTRĀNTIKA SCHOOL

by Benjamin Joseph Goldstein*

ABSTRACT

Leadership informed by Buddhist principles does exist in a clearly definable manner and can be applied in service to sustainable peace. Utilizing the Sautrāntika Buddhist model of the process of cognition and the arising of afflicted states of mind, this paper demonstrates the metrics by which Buddhist Leadership is defined. Locating afflicted states of mind in the decision-making process and understanding the process through which one arrives an afflicted judgement presents the possibility of consciously undercutting some of the most unwholesome activities masquerading as effective leadership. The application of this model of cognition to leadership recognizes the high degree of personal responsibility that people in leadership positions hold. Further, this awareness emphasizes personal agency that promotes both the well-being of leader and follower(s). Finally, this analysis underlines the seemingly obvious principle that simply considering one’s self

*. Boulder Colorado, USA.
“Buddhist” does not thereby make their decisions illustrative of Buddhist Leadership.

This essay utilizes the Sautrāntika Buddhist model of cognition to isolate the arising of unwholesome states of mind. The insights gained through the analysis are non-sectarian and need not be seen through a religious lens. The Sautrāntika Buddhist School provides the intellectual backdrop for this analysis. Sautrāntika literally means the “followers of sutra”. Vasubhandhu in the Abhidharmakośakārikā effectively juxtaposed the Sautrāntika view against the Sarvastivada-Vaibhāṣika Abhidharma that the text relates (Lusthaus and Buswell, 2004, p.878). The nuanced description of the causal processes of cognition offered by the Sautrāntika school, provide the backdrop for understanding its relationship to leadership. The theories of modern writers in the field of leadership are reinforced and given fresh perspective through the integrations of the Buddhist view.

Most of the modern work on the topic of leadership is organizationally focused. The leadership principles developed here are some of the dominate themes they explore. In Enlightened Leadership Oakley and Krug present a key characteristic of enlightened leadership as intentionally moving away from reactivity in the decision-making process. As they say, “Enlightened Leadership is not so much about things to do as it is a place that leaders come from with everything they do. It is actually a state of being.” Such an understanding directly aligns with Buddhist teachings. Avoiding reactivity in our thinking process is clearly a central factor of leadership development. Oakley and Krug juxtapose the “reactive” and “creative” thinkers on a spectrum of relative performance (1991, p.59). To the extent that the leader is exclusively interested in business and performance, basic attitude adjustments can be very helpful. The Sautrāntika Buddhist model for changing from a mindset of reactivity is not directly concerned with business interests, but with a fundamental shift in the manner any individual processes all stimuli. Enlightened leadership in a Buddhist lens is thus defined first and foremost by the internal disposition of the leader and the degree of reactivity and cognitive affliction they entertain.

There are a variety of topics that could be used to explore this
topic in relation to Buddhism. Here we will confine the inquiry to some a couple of the common topics that are addressed by modern thinkers in the field of leadership development. Specifically, the paper will bring into dialogue the Buddhist understanding of what mindset a genuine leader cultivates, the manner of focus they apply to their work, the method for working with implicit biases, and the larger vision of the practice with modern leadership theories about the same. Through the analysis it is also established that personal identification as a “Buddhist” does not necessarily mean that the person exhibits Buddhist leadership. Quite to the contrary, Buddhist leadership principles must be defined through actions and the psychological underpinnings that support the articulation of the action.

Buddhist psychological theory is notable for the thorough treatment of the topic and ability to be applied broadly to many areas of thought and innovation. As such it is important in this initial analysis to structure the approach to leadership an approachable manner. There is significant room for further research on this topic.

Although Buddhist psychology in the abhidharma tradition ca appear intimidating and inapproachable at the outset, the take away from this research are remarkably approachable. Indeed, that basic logic the Sautrantika Buddhist model exposes about leadership and so forth are principles that most small children can readily recognize. For example, a child may initially place blame for an unpleasant situation upon whoever is at all related to the occurrence of their discomfort. For that Child the other individual is characterized as innately bad and the source of all problems. The skillful parent will remind the child that although the other person appears as the cause of their suffering, they are not. Further, the other is not innately bad as the child believes. This example as we will see contains the message of the Sautrantika Buddhist model of cognition without being inapproachable to the non-specialist. With this in mind we turn to the first topic for our dialogue, the mindset.

1. MINDSET

To begin, one of the striking features that is shared by Buddhist and modern authors is the mindset of the modern leader. From
compartmentalizing to cultivating positive self-image for oneself and their subordinates, modern writers on the topic of leadership take pains to show how we have clear agency with regard to our own attitudes and that our mindset may be skillfully cultivated in service to a larger goal. The Buddhist tradition likewise offers a detailed path of practice for understanding the process of mind to gain direct control over reactive impulses. Still, the Buddhist path is distinct in significant ways. The “mindset”, which is to say the ambition and drive to succeed for Buddhists is not only viewed as something to be adjusted, but a clear indicator that ignorance is dominantly present for that being.

In the Buddhist tradition, “mind” is pure and undefiled, is not a product of matter and cannot directly interact with matter.\(^1\) When the mind is charged by an afflicted state (Skt. kleśa), the purity of mind’s fundamental essence remains unchanged. The stains of afflicted states of mind are superficial (Gyaltsen, 2004, p.84). Kleśas are generally classified as three with respect to the root of their affective nature, attachment (rāga), aversion (dveṣa), and delusion (moha). Still, kleśas are diverse, and different Buddhist schools provide various explanations, but these three are always considered the root of the other afflictions.

When a kleśa is present, it greatly disturbs the natural state of mind. Through viewing the affliction of a kleśa to be the natural state of mind, some feel that their kleśas do not disturb their mind. However, all of the afflicted states of mind arising from the three root poisons are unwholesome in the Buddhist context because they reify the concept of “I” or personal self which they function in regard to. An individual relating to the external world specifically in reference to a self that is proven non-existent (Gyaltsen, 2004, pp.245-251) is engaged in delusional activity (Chaba Chökyi Senge, 2004 p.246). A core tenet of Buddhist thought is the selfless nature of the individual (Skt. anatman, Pāli. anatta). Any action arising from such a feeling is craving and thus the creation of new karma (volitional activity).

The highest degree of leadership in this Buddhist system is a

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1. Mind can causally interact with matter, but not directly.
leader who recognizes the process of kleśa arising from the innocuous forms to the highly destructive. The Buddhist call to action in this respect strikes considerably deeper than the creative, principled mindset promoted as leadership. The Buddhist leadership mindset is grounded in the selfless mindset. Such a mindset is not imposed quickly, but must be necessarily cultivated, due to the deeply ingrained subtle propensities that are the root of the arising of afflicted states of mind, which thereby motivate unwholesome activity.

The karma originating from a mind under the influence of a kleśa is still indeterminate. For example, a person may be under the sway of intense anger and yet perform a virtuous deed. Still, from the Buddhist perspective even virtuous actions arisen from defiled states of mind perpetuate the condition of cyclic existence (saṃsāra). The ideal situation is where one acts organically and automatically, not from a sense of self, but skillfully and compassionately in response to the situation at hand, thereby not producing new karma. This significant distinction suggests that for the Buddhists, modern theories of leadership that emphasize changing the mindset are only addressing a superficial symptom while allowing the deeper problem to proliferate.

For most people there is a persistent tendency to latch on to the idea of self, obscuring the natural state of mind. The tendency is so strong that even when shown proof of its complete inability to be found, we still retain a naïve belief in it. In the process of cognition, feeling arises through the contact of a triad of sense faculty, a sense object, and the respective sense consciousness. This level of consciousness is non-conceptual. At that point there is still no mental proliferation of “I” off which to form an opinion of the relative value of the experience. This significant moment of personal experience is the foundation of the theory of Buddhist insight meditation. The meditator focuses equanimously on the arising of sensation and observes it non-judgmentally to allow dissipation without creating new karmic momentum. Through practice the mediator can become very effective at unburdening their continuum of karmic momentum.

To provide a little more theoretical context, even outside of formal mediation, in the Sautrāntika philosophical system, feeling
or direct experience is the result of past volitional activity. As such, not only is feeling non-conceptual, it is also karmically neutral. In other words, feeling is a result and results do not create new karma (Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche, 2016, pp.26-29). At the moment of feeling, some previous karma is exhausted, never to ripen again. Although feeling is non-conceptual and in terms of karma neutral, it does not thereby negate the content of experience. Such a mistake can occur when one conflates feeling with emotion or assumes that there is anything in feeling that is inherently good or bad.

Value judgements actually require several additional moments of mind to form, despite their seeming simultaneity. There are positive, negative, and neutral feelings that are entirely non-conceptual. Still, at this initial point in the process of cognition there is no construct “I”, and as a result there can be no value judgment of the relative goodness or badness of the feeling. All of that valuation takes place in the following moments of consciousness, which is causally linked to this initially arisen feeling (Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche, 2016, p.27). The Buddhist explanation is explicit that there is no positive or negative quality to the direct sense experience. They contend that all value judgments and concepts attached to the image, sound, smell, taste, or tangible sensation are in no way linked to the actual object in question.

2. FOCUS

Focus is a common theme of many of modern manuals addressing leadership. Having a vision, adjusting habitual patterns, and building systems to support the vision (Oakley and Krug, 1991, pp. 167-190). In contrast to the one-pointed concentration needed for Buddhist meditation, the focus of the leader is narrow. People do tend to move towards what we focus on. In that sense the prescription of modern leadership manuals to keep the big picture in mind, focus on the vision of the organization, and not lose goal-orientation are all valuable strategies for the Buddhist leader as well. Applying focus one-pointedly to bring the flurry of mind to rest, assessing the influence of kleśas for the person, and acting virtuously without contrivance, the Buddhist model simply asks for a higher degree of commitment.
There is a basic incongruence between the views of Sautrāntika Buddhists and these modern writers on leadership. For the Sautrāntika Buddhists, typical humans are not sufficiently realized to address the component of improper mental engagement with respect to the causal process of the arising of a kleśa. The one place that the kleśa can be prevented from arising (at this early human stage) is through severing and curtailing the subtle propensities through analytical meditation as described in the previous section. The practical focus emphasized by leadership manuals in this Buddhist lens amounts to simply covering over the problem superficially while not addressing the underlying cause. To explain further we consider the verse from the eighth Karmapa Mikyö Dorjé:

The subtle propensities have been abandoned
An object [that accords with the subtle propensities] abides proximately,
Mind engages improperly [with that object],
This is the complete cause of a kleśa.\(^{(2)}\)

As Mikyö Dorjé explained, for a kleśa to occur there are three necessary factors. First, the subtle propensities (Skt. anuśaya) are still present within the mind-stream of the individual. They have not yet been completely abandoned and are therefore liable to be activated. Next, there must be an observed object, which is to say that an appropriate object for the activation of a subtle propensity comes into contact with the sense media of the person. Last, the person has improper mental engagement (Tib. tshul bshin ma yin yid byed) with respect to that object. Those three together are the necessary elements for the arising of a kleśa.

It is tempting when confronted with this explanation to assume that one can simply override their natural improper mental engagements through brute force of focus. Unfortunately,

\(^{(2)}\) Phra rgyas spangs pa ma yin dang/ /yul ni nye bar gnas pa dang/ / tsul bshin ma yin yid byed las/ /nyon mongs rgyu ni tshang ba yin/ / from Eighth Karmapa Mikyö Dorjé’s commentary on Vasubandhu’s Abhidharmakaśa called chos mnong pa’i mdzod kyi ‘grel pa rgyas par spros pa grub bde’i dpyid ’jo
Such an opportunity is not available to people in this system of momentariness (Ronkin, 2018). First it is important to define what is meant by proper mental engagement as opposed to its opposite. Improper mental engagement is the tendency to engage with the conception and imputed desirability or aversion of that object as though it is real and present within the object itself. As Dr. Stanley has stated: “Mind thinks we are seeing something that is not actually there, but then reacts to our own projection as if it is actually there” (Stanley, 2017). In the context of leadership this point is particularly potent. A leader with ingrained propensities can be highly reactive or impute general characteristics onto a diverse group of circumstances.

Through analytical meditation, one is able to address the anuśayas present in their individual mind stream. Improper mental engagement cannot be addressed until the path of seeing or above because such work requires the direct knowledge of selflessness. Analytical meditation addresses the anuśayas by demonstrating to the practitioner that as they engage with a phenomenon there is no intrinsic nature therein that causes a kleśa to arise. Calm abiding practices are understood as essential and efficacious as it allows for the practitioner to cultivate single-pointedness and non-reactivity to all stimuli, permitting feelings to arise without indulging in clinging activities. In addition to thereby building a pattern of non-reactivity, the focus of Buddhist meditation is then applied specifically to the practice of analytical meditation allowing old karma to ripen and dissolve without new karma taking its place. Meditation in the Buddhist view is a cause for celebration, because the practice analytical reflection literally loosens the bonds yoking each person to cyclic existence.

3. VISON AND WORKING WITH BIAS

A clear vision is important for any organization and the leadership therein. Oakley and Krug spend a significant amount of time discussing the importance of a shared vision and purpose at all levels of an organization (1991, pp. 167-190). The question then naturally arises, what is the shared vision? The individuals in the organization need to have a high degree of buy-in to the vision. Setting aside the many ways to motivate people such a through
money, the abstract point of this facet of leadership is that the value of an organization to the lives of the participants is qualified by intangible currency, such as the manner that people

Even young children intuitively understand that the anger they experience at their parent or friend is not coming from that individual or their actions. There is a causal link, but it would be foolish to suggest that their anger or the direct cause of the child’s emotion is that object. Again, as obvious as such admonitions are to children and adults, there is no question that in general we are quite capable of looking past such logic to cling to the understanding that our preconceived notions about ethnicities, places, or groups are valid and accurate. We allow ourselves to be willfully ignorant of the potential for misjudging a situation or group of people. The vision that people pursue is nothing other than self-indulgence, even if there is some virtue achieved through the activity.

Having perceived the individual that corresponds with a latent subtle propensity for stereotyping or emotion, the mind engages the phenomena first with a label. Having labeled the object in a manner that corresponds with the subtle propensities, the mind places the object, which is a non-existent concept within a narrative. The narrative then validates the anuśaya and further deepens its propensity to arise again in the future. People tend to trust their judgments and anuśayas regarding others because in general they serve a very specific and trustworthy function – or so it appears. In actuality however, there is very little correlation between our expectations regarding the nature of perceptual objects and their actual nature. It would be shocking, after all, if a consciousness under the delusion of a reified conception of self could ever really understand the unfindable nature of other objects.

Prejudiced people perceive the intrinsic correctness of their belief every bit as much as they perceive a distinct difference in color or shape. This is because they exclude all things that are different from their analysis of the basic similarity such as race or sexual orientation (Tillemans, 1999, pp. 209-211). The conclusions that are drawn from engaging in this manner with the object are inherently misleading. Taking one as many creates many problems by suppressing difference. We can generate endless isolates. Using a
term to describe a generality is a suppression of difference and thus describes the double-edged sword of conceptuality. On the one hand concepts are incredibly useful, such as those that motivate you not putting your hand on a recently used stovetop. Still, on the other hand, conceptuality, grouping things together and excluding all others from the category based on some superficial concept is how unwholesome things like prejudice arise (Tillemans, 1999, pp. 209-211). We need hardly mention that prejudice is an unwholesome character trait in a leader that is working for sustainable peace.

It seems that we intuitively already know what the Buddhist tradition is seeking to explain in a highly analytic and systematized manner. So then why are we so quick to write off such an explanation and conclude that it is simply more just too complicated? Consider the possibility that it is simply because we do not have a broader cultural narrative which frames these logical conclusions in the realm of the everyday and the mundane. Mere acknowledgment of this basic human tendency such as scolding a child that they mis-direct their frustration when they are at their most agitated encourages their dismissal. The fact that we apprehend something that is non-existent, impute qualities onto that abstraction, and then engage with those value judgments as though they are fundamentally part of the essential nature of the object, could offer each person and certainly leaders, valuable perspective. For these teachings to be useful at undercutting the unfortunate occurrence of prejudice and other potent kleśas, individuals need to be working with this understanding every day and with all objects of the senses.

If day-by-day, moments of life that are not overwhelmingly emotionally evocative are analyzed in this manner our habitual patterns can change. Individuals address underlying assumptions before discussion can be seriously had about leadership situations. So explains the Sautrāntika Buddhist psychological model. The habitual patterns of mind are not by their nature positive or negative, but in all cases, the one cannot simple resolve to ignore the impulse to indulge the pattern of reactivity. These patterns of reactivity are the first thing that the Buddhist model addresses in the transformative process. At a further stages of realization improper mental engagement is directly challenged and transformed.
Afflictions (kleśa) are defined as that which greatly disturbs the mind. The mind as was previously stated is by nature clear and aware. Thus an afflicted state is not desirable. Still, the nature of the illusion in saṃsāra is that people are under the extremely strong impression that their habitual patterns of behavior, and the vivid and intense emotional states that they experience are acutely real. Further, they accept that those judgments and prejudices are completely righteous and even superior to the lack of experiencing them. The Sautrāntikas enumerate six root afflictions and twenty secondary afflictions from the fifty-one mental events. When a kleśa such as anger arises, the tendency of ego is to lean into that emotion and accept its’ righteousness at face value. There is no question that from the perspective of ego that anger (or whatever kleśa) is not only appropriate, but that the object that was (improperly) engaged from which the kleśa arose, actually exists and that it is directly responsible for the defiled state of mind being experienced. For the Sautrāntika Buddhists all that appears in mind is an impression of sorts that mirrors the actual external object. Thus, in this model an afflicted individual is only fighting with their own mind and thereby reinforcing a negative pattern, like a snake swallowing it’s own tail.

The tendency that people have to indulge their latent propensities through improper mental engagement can at the time feel like the most distinctly correct course of action. Some may rationalize it through the reasoning that they do no harm by allowing anger or prejudice to arise in the mind. As we have seen such an assertion is not accurate and in actuality much suffering is be produced by the indulgence of kleśas before they ever materialize as negative actions. Prejudice is by definition a negative state of mind characterized by ignorance. Individuals, as a result, may go to great lengths to avoid labeling themselves as prejudiced, asserting for example that the stereotype they hold to is not negative. The Buddhist response to such beliefs is not so generous. It is clear in the Buddhist context that the arising of any prejudicial concept is no more than the essence of delusional activity and leading to suffering.

Larger Buddhist cosmology plays a highly significant role in articulating why such states of consciousness are less than desirable. The enlightenment narrative that understands suffering (duḥkha)
as an untenable state of being is an important qualifier to this discussion. By understanding suffering as a state that is inherently problematic changes the underlying assumptions held by many people that suffering is simply an aspect of life that cannot be avoided. Buddhism articulates a worldview that asserts the opposite perspective and is an important element in helping individuals understand that their sufferings are not just something that must be endured, but as a manifestation of their lack of understanding. As it relates to leadership, a skillful leader reflects on these points again and again. Further, that leader will create conditions that support those they lead in realizing their own indulgence of subtle propensities. The good leader thus serves as a cause for creating many more genuine leaders in their image.

Finally, the Buddhist narrative of enlightenment furnishes the realization potent application beyond the mundane occurrences of daily life and its application therein such as in the case of leadership. If individuals hold to a doctrine of nihilism, there is simply no point in addressing the subtle propensities and improper mental engagement that are the core of the problem. In the Buddhist analysis, through the analysis of dependent origination, the enlightenment narrative is essential to derive some point of the practice. It is reasonable to suggest that the kleśa-imbued mind is suffering and that it would be more pleasant or less unpleasant to be without such mental defilements. In so far as that is the case, it is reasonable to conclude that for personal gratification and pleasure one should seek to eliminate the causes of suffering. Still, some people may not be convinced that the emotions and prejudice that they hold so dear are at all negative. They may well be very adamant in the righteousness of their attitude. The tradition suggests that with regard to people such as this, who are not interested in the teachings or find no value in them, those people should be treated with the most compassion.

One of the striking features about the Buddha’s doctrine is that in the same vein as the Brahmanical traditional landscape of ancient India, there persisted a belief in past and future lives known as saṃsāra (Hirakawa, 1990). The understanding Buddha developed as the initial authoritative source is that through
volitional activity an individual creates the causal factors that conduce to their arising in the next moment and so on in this life and the next. Cyclic existence is without beginning or end, but karma is understood as the propelling factor therein and as an extension the anuśaya. Buddha explained how by means of karma beings re-become through nothing other than the simple workings of cause and effect. This tendency he presented as the fundamental problem. Continuing to suffer in cyclic existence perpetually for all time was un-tenable; the solution was the peace of nirvana free from all kleśas and karma.

4. CONCLUSION

This essay is an initial attempt to bring Buddhist thinking into dialogue with some dominant modern theories of leadership. Both bodies of knowledge offer a great deal to the leader attempting to meaningfully contribute to their organization. The Buddhist path is not exclusively a leadership model, but as we can see through this abbreviated analysis, there is a great deal that may be learned through applying some of the insights of Buddhist teachings to the cause of promoting healthy leadership.

Both the Buddhist path and the modern programs to develop effective leadership revolve around cultivating an adjustment of underlying reactivity. In the cause of running an organization, this leadership is conceived of as professional skillset that facilitates productive enterprise. While the Buddhist path of practice will naturally bring about the qualities that make one a highly effective business leader, the character development is not based in ambitious desire for success which is afflicted by its very nature. Buddhism as demonstrated here by the Sautrāntika view brings about positive results that align precisely with modern models of skillful leadership through addressing the individual’s reactivity. This process begins by relaxing the conceptual mind and recognizing the distinction between direct perception and the subsequent emotive states that are generated through improper mental engagement with the object.

Further research and writings on this subject are seriously needed and this work alone is not sufficient. In particular contextualizing various levels of analysis in the dialogue will be very productive
of continuing this dialogue. Likewise, it will be very helpful to future scholarship on the topic to anthropologically research the leadership practices of modern Buddhist organizations as well as specifically the monastic discipline literature (vinaya) and its relationship to leadership. For now, this narrowly focused article can support a basic understanding of the contribution Sautrāntika philosophical thought makes to the articulation of Buddhist leadership principles.

Buddhist leadership can be clearly defined through the lens of the Sautrāntika presentation of the process of cognition, understanding how the wide variety of mental events arise and can afflict or support the individual leader. The most direct way that skillful leadership can be recognized is by the leader themselves reflecting on the degree to which their decision-making process is afflicted by a kleśa. Considering this process in terms of some of the dominant themes presented in modern theories of leadership adds a distinction of depth to the activity of leadership. The genuine leader in the Buddhist lens like the Chakravartin archetype is not afflicted by the variety of kleśas that we have explored in this analysis. They are not enlightened necessarily, but they are personally reflective about regarding the effects of their activity.

The variety of leadership that will support constructing a sustainable future is deeply rooted in egalitarian ethics. Such a leader has uprooted the root of prejudice and the arising of afflicted states of mind. The wide variety of kleśas such as prejudice are detrimental to effective leadership. Minds afflicted prejudicial conception and so forth with regard to situations or problems leads to impulsivity and inattention to detail. The effective leader does not simply apply a new set of guidelines or insist on a personal code of deep listening and contemplation prior to decision making. The Buddhist model demonstrates that without addressing the underlying causes of the afflicted behavior, one cannot act in a manner that is not tormented by those assumptions and implicit biases.

It is simply unreasonable to expect all leaders to be enlightened. Still, the point of the contrast between the intentional avoidance of afflicted and reactive behavior and the Buddhist call to uproot the cause of judgements before their conception is one of scale. The
Buddhist leader maintains a work/life balance that is based in the basic comfort derived from transformative process of reflecting on the arising of all manner of kleśas and clearly delineating between the direct perception of whoever or whatever and the mental proliferation that typically follows immediately and without recognition. The leader who engages in this degree of self-reflection and transformation is capable of supporting sustainable peace.
References


Mikyö Dorjé’s commentary on Vasubandhu’s Abhidharmakaśa called chos mnong pa’i mdzod kyi ‘grel pa rgyas par spros pa grub bde’i dpyid ‘jo


TO ACHIEVE MINDFUL LEADERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE PEACE: SUGGESTING A BUDDHIST WAY OF JOSASEON (PATRIARCHAL ZEN) PRACTICE

Ven. Jinwol Dowon

ABSTRACT

It is known that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of UN, as the Global Goals, are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. Peace is emphasized in the Goal 16 of SDGs. In general, it is clear that Sustainable Development at all and other goals in particular fields would not be possible to achieve without peace around world, although peace itself is also set in an item on the list. Peace is comprehensive and critical for all aspects of SDGs to be managed. Genuine peace should not be temporary but sustainable or permanent. The sustainable peace might be achieved and lead by good leaders of various fields including sociopolitical, economic, cultural and religious experts of the local and global situations. Leaders must be mindful to take care of people of their societies, nations and the world. Therefore, the mindful leadership is needed to achieve the sustainable peace. Leader’s mind has to be mindful and peaceful. Peace is basically developed in and from one’s mind. It is obvious that there is no real peace without peace of mind. If everyone’s mind is peaceful and compassionate then the society and the world would be peaceful and humane.

*. Dr., Dongguk University, Gosung Monastery, CA, USA, President, Korean Buddhist Sangha of North California, USA.
To cultivate one’s mind peaceful and wise, it seems that Zen meditation practice is one of the best and effective ways. Zen practice is not only good to make one’s mind peaceful but also to attain enlightenment and be mindful for one’s speech and action regarding one’s work and responsibility. I would like to introduce a traditional contemplative practice, Josaseon (Patriarchal Zen) in Korea which was transmitted from India through China, as a classical and genuine meditation. This paper will first review and remind the SDGs focusing on peace of Goal 16, then leadership in which importance of mindfulness would be discussed. Second, I will introduce Josaseon, a traditional Buddhist meditation and contemplation practice, including its background and way of practice. The conclusion shall suggest that Josaseon should be spread and practiced to promote mindful leadership for sustainable peace. It would be one of valuable contributions to promote the mindful leadership for sustainable peace regarding benefit for all sentient beings and Earth.

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1. REVIEW AND REMIND MEANING AND VALUE OF PEACE AND LEADERSHIP

1.1. Peace

I think that peace is a basic and ultimate concern of Buddhism for the individual and communal or universal. Buddhism has been known as the most peaceful religion among world religions. History of the world shows that Buddhists have not caused any war with the name of Buddhism since Buddhism founded by Sakyamuni Buddha who taught nonviolence and compassion to people, as well as his disciples. Followers of the Buddha, including Bhikkhu/Bhikkuni, Sramanera/Sramaneri, Bodhisattvas and lay Buddhists, should receive and observe various Precepts depend on their practical status but all of them must restrain from killing and hurting any sentient beings as primary one. Respecting and taking care of life of all living beings are basic doctrine of Buddhism and principal rule of conduct. No killing and hurting others is the base of peace and justice in Buddhist community and also in general society. It is obvious that there is no peace where a killing and hurting or hating and violence are taking place. Silla and Vinaya, Buddhist
ethical codes and disciplines are made to prevent all violence and conflict among people of the Sangha and society. Samadhi, a Buddhist meditation or concentration, makes mind of people calm and clear. It help one’s mind peaceful and compassionate as well as wise and just.

It is known that Buddhist’s ultimate goal is to achieve Nirvana which refers to the state of complete peace and freedom from defilement and suffering, extinction of desire and karma, as well as a state of supreme enlightenment with perfect wisdom. Therefore, we can say that genuine Buddhists are peace seeking people in terms of seeker of Nirvana which includes complete peace and eternal happiness. I believe that Buddhist peace and happiness along with Nirvana are the best quality comparing with other religious or spiritual traditions’ statements regarding them. But then, it is a serious issue or task that how Nirvana could be achieved in the society around world, as well as the individual one. To make Nirvana world, a complete peaceful glove, is our common goal and task of all human beings. I think that we need to share the information about Nirvana and the way to achieve Nirvana with people in the society. We need to discuss about and develop a useful ways for Nirvana in social context.

In modern society, peace has been a critical major issue along with justice or the just for interdependent relationship in the society. Therefore, Peace should be just peace because there have been looked like peace but some unjust things were happened inside there in the name of peace for the political claims. Peace with unjust reality is not true peace but superficial or nominal peace. Considering the sustainable peace, therefore, I would like to bring public attention to the just peace rather than only peace. Let us reflect some denotation and connotation of ‘just’ and ‘peace’ in social context. ‘Just’ can imply fair, right, truthful, moral, honest, honorable, impartial or equitable; it can imply now, recently, lately, only, solely, barely, exactly, entirely, or perfectly; it can also imply simply, really, truly, clearly, or specifically. ‘Peace’ can imply calm, quiet, stillness, tranquility, or silence; it can imply harmony, serenity, concord, or amity; it can also imply understanding, reconciliation, agreement, compromise, synchronization, good will, or good relations; it also imply ceasefire, end of war, freedom from strife,
or lack of violence.\(^{(1)}\) I think that all words mentioned above are related with one another and relevant to our discussion.

1.2. Leadership

In the world history, King Asoka of India is recognized as a manifestation of Cakravartin, the supreme ruler of wheel. The wheel refer to Dharma and it means that he rules people of the world by Dharma, the truth and Buddha’s teaching that avoid violence but promote peace and compassion with wisdom and justice. It is known that he had learned Buddhism and tried to spread it as far as possible around world. His mission was successful and caused to spread Buddhism under his vow and aspiration to rule people by peaceful means. I think that he is one of the best rulers and leaders of world in the history so far. His leadership of peaceful and mindful administration for well-being of people should be a sociopolitical model of the present and future generations.

In modern time, however, global situation has been multicultural and complicated. As David E. Wright said, our world is becoming more and more technical every day. Almost every task associated with business activity involves multiple layers of technology but one of the most critical issues related to business and personal success has nothing much with technology. It involves the human brain and the human heart regarding leadership. Without solid leadership, all the technological advances in the world won’t save a struggling organization and society.\(^{(2)}\) About leadership Alexander M. Haig, Jr. pointed out that some are gifted with strong leadership traits. But some, however, have acquired their talents through study and diligence. They recognize that they can learn and develop leadership principles if they study and analyze those traits demonstrated by the more gifted. It is fair to say that both gifted and the less gifted can always develop and improve their leadership skills and seek to do so by paying attention to improve sound leadership traits.\(^{(3)}\)

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As Ed Oakley and Doug Krug suggested, we need enlightened leadership that leaders who not only have the vision but who have the ability to get people of certain organization and society to accept ownership for that vision as their own, thus developing the commitment to carry it through to completion. The enlightened leaders need to have willingness and ability to draw the vision from their people and inspire them to do what it takes to bring the vision into reality. It is important that leaders must nurture and encourage their people to be open, creative, and innovative and find what it takes to achieve their shared objectives. It brings out the best in people. The leaders should understand the state of being of people they concern with.\(^4\) I think that leaders should be enlightened on the reality of the world and be mindful for people of the world.

Leaders should provide an opportunity and peaceful environment that allows people to enjoy their work while setting high expectations for performance, and watch performance go up. We see that when people’s performance goes up, so do their self-esteem and job and personal satisfaction, which again positively impacts performance. Mindful leader know that the hearts and minds of their people can be won when they are working toward a purpose they find worthwhile. They know that people must feel good with themselves as they are before they will be strong enough to look inside themselves for the possibility of change. They know that enhanced self-image encourages the honest reflection necessary for personal growth. They know, because they have personally experienced both sides of situation through their own multiple personal renewals. Enlightened mindful leaders know people will give their all in working together to accomplish their shared vision. We know the amazing power of community and society when people work together in synergy toward a shared goal. Enlightened mindful leaders know their ultimate role is to support and take care of their people. They also know that leadership has been responsible for encouraging dependant relationship, and they take responsibility for supporting their people’s shift to

independent and interdependent relationships for their benefit as well as for the society’s.\(^5\)

2. A WAY OF MINDFUL ENLIGHTENED LEADERSHIP AND SUSTAINABLE JUST PEACE: JOSASEON

2.1. Background of Josaseon

Josaseon means Soen (Chan/Zen) of Josa. Josa, an ancestral and patriarchal master refer to an enlightened master who have approval or assurance with Dharma transmission from the renowned Seon master of the patriarchal linage which was derived from Bodhidharma, the first patriarchal master of Chan Order in China. In fact, Bodhidharma was known as the twenty eighth Josa in India that derived from Mahakasapa, the first Josa, who received Dharma transmission from the Buddha, Sakyamuni, according to Jeondeunggok (Record of the Transmission of the Light).\(^6\) The Dharma transmission had continued from Bodhidharma to Doui Myeongjeok, a Korean master, who received it from Seodang Jijang (Xitang Dicang 734-814), a Chinese master and ninth generation from Bodhidharma.\(^7\) Doui is recognized as the Jogyejongjo in Korea which means First Patriarchal Master of Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism that is the principal and traditional Buddhist order in Korea. Therefore, Josanson here refer to Zen tradition from Bodhidharma and I would introduce his teaching and practice.

2.2. Darma Josa (Patriarchal Master Bodhidharma)

Generally, Bodhidharma has been known around world that he was an Indian Buddhist monk and the first Patriarch of Chan School in China. It is said that Bodhidharma was born around 440 in Kanch of Tamil Nadu, southeast part of India. He was the third prince of king Simhavarnam.\(^8\) Recently, it has been recognized that Kanchporum near Chennai was his hometown. History of India shows that Kanchiporum was a capital of Palava Dynasty

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5. Ibid. p.247.
and not only the political but also cultural and religious center of the region. However, he became a Buddhist monk as a disciple of Master Panyadara and mastered Buddhist doctrine and meditation practice. He was a sincere practitioner living in the way of Duta, a lifestyle of moderation in eating, clothing and sleeping. It is noticeable in relations with the well known story that Mahakasapa, one of ten great disciples of Sakyamuni Buddha and the first Patriarch of Dhyana (Chan/Zen) tradition, was the champion of Duta practice. He had always concerned and focused on awakening or enlightenment as the most fundamental purpose of Buddhism. He used to be a critic on contemporary Buddhist phenomena for real Buddhist mission to enlighten people by the spiritual way of meditation. He has been viewed as an extraordinary or mysterious person who could not described fully in words and common sense but through intuition and fine art.

2.3. Thoughts and Practices of Darma Josa (Patriarchal Master Bodhidharma)

2.3.1. Thoughts

Regarding basic thoughts of Bodhidharma, we can appreciate that he did not concern about the accumulating superficial merits but the pure wisdom. As the true merit, the wisdom of ultimate reality is not to be sought by worldly means but by spiritual and transcendental practice. Most people have been interested about merit making for their worldly rewards based on the principle of cause and effect. Such conducts would not be the way of freedom from Samsara or transmigration but way of making cause of births and deaths. Bodhidharma pointed out the reality and supreme values beyond worldly desires. It can be said that before Bodhidharma came to China, there had been so much Buddhist activities for accumulating merits since Buddhism was introduced in China around the first century CE. However, it seems that before his arrival there had been lack of efforts to try to attain enlightenment which is the ultimate goal of Buddhism. Therefore, Bodhidharma tried to make change of trends at the time from worldly concerns to Buddhist spirituality. He brought attention of people to inner practice than outer activities. He emphasized the fundamental
and eternal purpose of Buddhism rather than phenomenal and temporary rewards for worldly interests.\(^{(9)}\)

It is good to review the Gwansimnon (Treaties of Contemplation on Mind)\(^{(10)}\) from which we can understand Bodhidharma’s idea as follows:

*If someone is determined to reach enlightenment, what is the most essential method he can practice? The most essential method, which includes all other methods, is beholding the mind. But how can one method include all others? The mind is the root from which all things grow. If you can understand the mind, everything else is included. It’s like the root of a tree. All a tree’s fruit and flowers, branches and leaves depend on its root. If you nourish its root, a tree multiplies. If you cut it root, it ties. Those who understand the mind reach enlightenment with minimal effort. Those who don’t understand the mind practice in vain. Everything good or bad comes from your own mind. To find something beyond the mind is impossible… …They alternate as cause or effect depending on conditions, the pure mind delighting in good deeds, the impure mind thinking of evil. Those who aren’t affected by impurity are sages. They transcend suffering and experience the bliss of Nirvana. All others, trapped by the impure mind and entangled by their own Karma, are mortals. They drift through the three realms and suffer countless afflictions, and all because their impure mind obscures their real self.*\(^{(11)}\)

From the above citation, we can appreciate that how much Bodhidharma emphasized the importance of mind and brought attention to it. Everything of practice and also life depends on the mind. One’s mind is a driver and manager of one’s life and world. Our minds could make peace or war or any conflict depending on our intention to do what we want or need for ourselves and the world.

It seems relevant to remind the well known story about mind between master Bodhidharma and his disciple Hui-k’o: the disciple said, “My mind is not yet at peace. Please set it at peace for me,
Master!” The Master said, “Bring me your mind, and I will set it at peace for you.” The disciple answered, “I have searched for it, but in the end it is unobtainable.” The Master said, “Your mind has been set at peace.” It has been known as Ansimbeommun (the Dharma Gate of Peaceful Mind). If anyone has the problem of mind, one better to appreciate the talk on mind between Bodhidharma and Hui-k’o. As a characteristic of Chan phrase, it can be said that if anyone sees the nature of one’s own mind, one attains Buddhahood. Regarding view of scripture of Bodhidharma, it is noticeable to be reviewed the statement as follows: Bodhidharma told Hui-k’o, “I have with me the Lankavatara Sutra in four scrolls which I will also give to you. This contains the essentials of the Tathagata’s spiritual doctrine and allows all sentient beings to develop enlightenment.” (12) From this saying, it can be said that Bodhidharma encourage to study the Sutra and to practice its teaching. Lankavatara-sutra has been classified as a Mahayana scripture. It is known that Lankavatara-sutra emphasizes the doctrine of inner enlightenment and the philosophy of Tathagata-garbha and Vijnapti-matra or Yogacara. Moreover, it teaches that words are not necessary for the communication of ideas. Therefore, it can be said that Bodhidharma’s philosophy was based on the doctrine of Buddha Nature and the Mind-Only as well as inner enlightenment. (13)

2.3.2. Practice

To point out the way of practice of Bodhidharma, it is good to review the Outline of Practice of his work as follows:

Many roads lead to the Path, but basically there are only two: reason and practice. To enter by reason means to realize the essence through instruction and to believe that all living things share the same true nature, which isn’t apparent because it’s shrouded by sensation and delusion. Those who turn from delusion back to reality, who meditate on walls, the absence of self and other, the oneness of mortal and sage, and who remain unmoved even by scriptures are in complete and unspoken agreement with reason. Without moving, without effort, they

enter we say by reason. To enter by practice refers to four all-inclusive practices: suffering injustice, adapting to conditions, seeking nothing, and practicing Dharma... First, suffering injustice... I accept it with an open heart and without complaint of injustice. The sutras say, “When you meet with adversity don’t be upset, because it makes sense.” With such understanding you’re in harmony with reason. And by suffering injustice you enter the Path. Second, adapting to conditions... while success and failure depend on conditions, the mind neither waxes nor wanes. Those who remain unmoved by the wind of joy silently follow the Path. Third, seeking nothing... All phenomena are empty. They contain nothing worth desiring... The sutras say, “To seek is to suffer. To seek nothing is bliss.” When you seek nothing, you’re on the Path. Fourth, practicing the Dharma... The Dharma is the truth that all natures are pure. By this truth, all appearances are empty. Defilement and attachment, subject and object don’t exist... Thus, through their own practice they’re able to help others and glorify the Way of Enlightenment. And as with charity, they also practice the other virtues.\(^{(14)}\)

From the above, we can say that the message of practice is simple and clear to understand and practice for everyone. It could be apply not only to an individual but also to peoples around the world. Here the Way or Path (Tao) refers to Dharma, Bodhi and Nirvana or Zen.\(^{(15)}\) It is possible that the Path here to adjust for both individual person and communal society in terms of peace and happiness. Practice of Bodhidharma is well harmonized in balance with reason and practice. We should believe and treat others as us considering that “all living things share the same true nature” although “it’s shrouded by sensation and delusion” which could be eliminated and overcome by recovering the original true nature through Chan (Seon/Zen) meditation practice. It is obvious in common sense that if one seeks peace and happiness then, the other one seeks the same things too; if one doesn’t like fighting and unhappiness then, the other one also doesn’t like the same things, because it is the reason of Golden Rule in a situation. If one overcomes ones egoism as well as defilements, one could attain freedom and liberation from the tension and suffering of conflict with others.

\(^{(15)}\) Ibid., p.115.
Regarding the way of practice we should reflect the reality. When those who search for the Path of peace encounter adversity, it is encourage that they should think to themselves, “in the past I’ve wandered through all manner of existence, often angry without cause and guilty of numberless transgressions. Now though I do not wrong, I’m punished by my past. Neither gods nor men can foresee when an evil deed will bear its fruit. I accept it with an open heart without complaint of injustices.”\(^{(16)}\) It is a practice of patience to overcome one’s egoism and hatred as well as to care of others friendly. Generally, as mortals in the situations, we’re ruled by conditions, not by ourselves. All the sufferings and joy we experience depend on conditions. If one should be blessed in peace as reward, it’s the fruit of seed planted by one in the past. If conditions change, it ends. If we want peace, we should build and keep conditions of peace. We should overcome ignorance through realizing reality of conditions.

Most people of the world are deluded and longing for something in greed. However, the wise wake up and choose reason over custom. They fix their minds on the sublime and let their bodies change with the seasons. If one wants peace and happiness, one should overcome one’s greed and share one’s resources with others friendly. The Dharma is the way we should go for peace and happiness. It seems that the Dharma is the law to build and keep peace and harmony in people’s minds and societies around the world. If one wants peace and happiness, one should practice Dharma and to realize them.\(^{(17)}\) Therefore, it can be said that the best way to attain enlightenment, as well as peace and happiness in the individual and people around the world, is practicing Bodhidharma’s teaching, Dharma, without hatred, greed and ignorance.\(^{(18)}\)

In Korea, Jogyejong, Seon oriented order, has maintained the Josaseon tradition and lineage. Nowadays, it has utilized Ganhwaseon, a way of contemplative meditation practice that developed in the

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16. Ibid. p4-5.
17. Ibid. p5-7.
Josaseon tradition. Ganhwaseon is to contemplate and investigate “Hwadu” (a critical phrase of question) through which one could realize the intention of the Josa and eventually to see one’s True Nature. For instance, a Chinese monk asked his master, “What is the intention of Josa came from the west?” (Here Josa refer to Bodhidharma who came from the west, India) Then, the master replied, “A pine tree in front of the garden.” The answer of the master for disciple’s question is Hwadu. The disciple should try to understand the intention of master through the Hwadu, “a pine tree in front of the garden,” contemplating it as “Why the master said so?” Through Ganhwaseon or Hwaduseon one can eventually experience a breakthrough to be one with the master and realized one’s own nature. It can be said that Hwadu functions like a finger to point moon which symbolize one’s original nature. Awakening is attained by solving the Hwadu, which is called “Gyeonseong seongbul’ in Korea, which means ‘becoming a Buddha through seeing our True Nature.’ Buddha is one who attained enlightenment and achieved Nirvana, a state of lasting peace and freedom.

2.4. Josaseon Practitioner’s Leadership and Peace

History of Korea shows that Master Cheongheo Hyeujeong(1520-1604) and his disciple Master Samyeong Yujeong(1544-1610) were Josaseon masters and national leaders during the war time in Korea when Japanese invaded Korean Peninsula in 1592-1598. They fought for saving people from the suffering of the war. Seon Master Samyeong was the chief leader of envoy from Joseon Dynasty to Japan after the war and in charge to make peace agreement. He was successful to complete the mission and brought back several thousand war prisoners from Japan. Seon Master Youngseong Jinjong(1864-1940) and Manhah Youngun(1879-1944) were the two Buddhist representatives of thirty-three members of the March First Movement for Korean Independent in 1919. They were Josaseon masters and led the events in peaceful way in terms of nonviolence. Seon Master Goam Sangeon and Toeong Seongcheol, a disciple and a grand-disciple of Master Youngseong, were the top leader, as Supreme Patriarch of Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism, and showed the mindful leadership and efforts for peace in their community and country.

Masters or practitioners of Josaseon have a special character
and attitude to concentrate certain point or issue for inputting all spirit and energy with mindful attention. They have to be sincere and honest for achieving their final goals. If they hold a issue on the leadership or peace in terms of Hwadu, they should do their best to solve the problems regarding the challenges of the world. They must take the task with mindful practice concerning people of the world. They suppose to be a mindful enlightened leader and to make people the same. They have to try to make peace for people as well as themselves in terms of the inner and outer or social context. Their seeking and achieving peace should be lasting or sustainable for people and themselves as making the world of Nirvana. I believe that those who practice Josaseon concerning leadership and peace as their Hwadu to do their best for achieving them is possible. They would cultivate the mindful leadership and promote sustainable peace around world.

3. CONCLUSION

I have firstly reviewed concepts of ‘leadership’ and ‘peace’ as a working definition. No matter what their fields, including the socio-political, economic, cultural and spiritual, we need a leader of the enlightened mindful leadership for making just sustainable peace. We need more leaders of peace making, for instance, King Asoka and Bodhidharma, Cheongheo and Samyeong, Dalai Lama and Thich Nhat Hanh. Then, I introduced Josaseon as a way to achieve the mindful leadership and sustainable peace. The contemplative characteristics and absorbing attitude or devoted manner of Josaseon masters and practitioners are excellent to develop and improve the quality of leadership as the mindful enlightened leadership for people and society. Josaseon practice could help to achieve the sustainable just peace for everyone and everywhere if anyone seriously wants to it with sincere practice for oneself and people of the society around world. If we share and spread these idea and practice with people around world, there would be appeared many mindful enlightened leaders who lead to achieve the SDGs in just peace. We only have a task for the mission how let people know and practice the Josaseon, one of the best ways for seeing and realizing original true nature of humanity which is perfectly peaceful and compassionate.
References


ABSTRACT

In the modern world one of the main issues that require urgent and complete answers is the conflict among nationals and religions. This has become the main threat to the global peaceful environment and co-existence. To view this position from anthropologically, the human culture is a production of both nationality and religion. Even in modern culture, both of them play very important parts to integrate individuals. This is the time to enlighten them for a global co-existence. In other word to show the world the way to keep the identity while accepting diversity. In Buddhist philosophy one of the theoretical views is the paticcasamuppada or Dependent Origination. This theory has a broad meaning in the Buddhist context. However to put this theory into a simpler form one would call it as the Buddhist Causal Theory. This means that nothing in the world is independent. Everything depends on others. Everything exists on others. This theory clearly emphasizes that there is nothing in the universe separated from others. If somebody thinks he/she can live isolated from other things in the universe according to Buddhism it is the state of ordinary thinking. If somebody can enlighten his/her mind them he/she can have this broad and rational thought. This theory shows that even phenomena like religion and nationality also interdependence. If we imagine that there is only one nationality or religion in the world, the life on earth may become monotonous and dull.

* Prof., Dean, Faculty of Buddhist Studies, Buddhist and Pali University of Sri Lanka.
But because of the diversity in many ways in the universe has brought this beauty. The thing is to integrate this marvelous diversity. For that the Buddhist theory of Dependent Origination can be applied as rational way of thinking.

1. PRELUDE

In the modern world one of the main issues that require urgent and complete answers is the conflict among nationals and religions. This has become the main threat to the global peaceful environment and co-existence. There is no question of loving one’s own religion or nationality because they represent one’s identity among the others. One becomes so special among the others because of his/her particular language or faith. To view this position from anthropologically, the human culture is a production of both nationality and religion. Even in modern culture both of them play very important parts to integrate individuals. However the problem arises when keeping the identities among diversities. To understand the reality of this question and to have a right view on this there should be an intellectual as well as a rational outlook. Unlike in the past the modern youth is well equipped with the knowledge of science, technology and rational thinking. This is the time to enlighten them for a global co-existence. In other word to show the world the way to keep the identity while accepting diversity.

In Buddhist philosophy one of the theoretical views is the paticcasamuppada or Dependent Origination. This theory has a broad meaning in the Buddhist context. However to put this theory into a simpler form one would call it as the Buddhist Causal Theory. This means that nothing in the world independent. Everything depends on others. Everything exists on others. This theory clearly emphasizes that there is nothing in the universe separated from others. If somebody thinks he/she can live isolated from other things in the universe according to Buddhism it is the state of ordinary thinking. If somebody can enlighten his/her mind them he/she can have this broad and rational thought. This theory shows that even phenomena like religion and nationality also interdependence. If we imagine that there is only one nationality or religion in the world, the life on earth may become monotonous and dull. But
because of the diversity in many ways in the universe has brought this beauty. The thing is to integrate this marvelous diversity. For that the Buddhist theory of Dependent Origination can be applied as rational way of thinking. Any particular religion or nationality can be identified identically from others because of their existence. They are interdependent and mutually existence. In more scientific way to say that differences are relative to the others.

2. BUDDHIST THEORY OF CAUSALITY

Paticcasamuppada (hereafter PS) theory is the core concept of Buddhism that interprets the nature of existence by means of a causal theory. However PS as a causal is completely different from other theories of that like as it not only explains the causes of existence but also envisages the cessation of existence. As Buddhism understands the knowledge of PS is very crucial because it paves the way to find the causes and ultimately that helps to eliminate the causes. Through the destruction of causes any types of problem can be solved. Therefore in the Buddhist context the insight and profound knowledge of PS is paramount important especially to overcome man’s basic problem of suffering in the samsaric existence. Until the liberation from this cyclical and longtime existence he should live in a social context. Even in the social context the theory of PS can be very successfully applied especially for a co-existence not only with other humans but also with the nature also.

PS is the philosophical foundation of Buddhism that underlies all main teachings. This terminology is a unique one that the Buddha used to present the Buddhist theory of causation. This doctrine aroused from the critique of Indian theories of causality which belonged either to eternalism or to nihilism. The Pali term, paticcasamuppada is a combination of three words. Here ‘paticca’ means ‘because of’ and ‘dependent on’, ‘sam’ means ‘well’ and ‘uppada’ means ‘arising’ or ‘origin’. Hence it is known in English as the law of dependent origination.

As the theoretical discourse of Buddhism PS plays a pivotal role in keeping Buddhism as a non-contradictory philosophy. Because of this causal theory Buddhism has been able to hold its consistency and commensurability from its outset. Therefore in
early Buddhism there is nothing to find which contradicts each other. D.J. Kalupahana and T.V. R. Murti rightly introduce PS as the central philosophy in Buddhism that gives two distinctive meanings in the Buddhist context. The origin of *dukkha* (suffering) as well as cessation of *dukkha* can be well realized only by the knowledge of PS.

Two formulae that summarized PS doctrine with its sequence and reverse orders go on to explain the universal application of PS. This type of a theory of causation was a new introduction to the Indian Religious and philosophical context. Ven. Assaji clearly emphasized this novelty when he was asked the uniqueness of the Buddha’s teaching by Upatissa.

> “Whatever Firm a cause proceeds, thereof  
> The Tathagata has explained the cause  
> Its cessation too he has explained  
> This is the teaching of the Great Sage.”

This is the reality of everything or all dhammas. This is the nature of everything. Realization of this reality leads to know the things as they are i.e. whatever is of the nature of arising all that insists of the nature of ceasing. Therefore PS as the theoretical basis of Buddhist philosophy can be found in each doctrine of the Buddha. The Buddha has categorically and logically explained all teachings according to PS.

The general formula of PS runs as follows.

> “When this is present, that comes to be;  
> From the arising of this, that arises.  
> When this is absent, that does not come to be;  
> On the cessation of this, that ceases.”

To put into a formula using the PS theory it can be argued that

*Whenever ‘I’ exists ‘others’ exist.*  
*Whenever ‘I’ does not exist ‘others’ do not exist.*  
*Whenever ‘we’ exists ‘I’ exist.*  
*Whenever ‘we’ do not exist ‘I’ does not exist.*

This theory had been more clearly illustrated by one of the
later Mahayanic tradition called Hua-yen Buddhism. It taught the doctrine of the mutual containment and interpenetration of all phenomena, as expressed in Indra’s net. One thing contains all other existing things, and all existing things contain that one thing. This whole universe is covered with this net and threads are joined with a diamond. In all diamonds other diamonds’ reflections can be seen. Therefore this net is interrelated. No diamonds can separate from others. If one diamond separates or divides from others the net will collapse. In the same way without been isolated one another the wise man view everything from the holistic approach. Nothing can be separated each other. Everything is dependent. All are complementary to each other. Thus there is a complex type of relationship. This relationship is a relative one and all are related to all others. So no separation can be found between these dynamic processes. In the social level also according to Buddhism there are many groups. They should perform distinctive and relative functions so that the individual can live happily.

3. INTERCONNECTEDNESS AND INTERDEPENDENCES

One of the main objects behind the Buddhist teaching of dependent origination is to show the relative relationships among human beings. This can be viewed from two stand points. One is from a deep and broad perspective in the context of cyclical existence. The *samsaric* existence according to the Buddhist doctrine is innumerable and empirically cannot be assumed the begging or the end. So that this long cyclical existence had created interconnectedness as well as interdependences in many forms. It is very interesting to note here that it is not only the man but also the other types of animals also had been relations of some forms in this long existence. But it is very difficult to perceive this *samsaric* relative connection as the man in the present situation acquires only a confined knowledge of this world existence. This is the basic problem of knowledge which is called *avijja* or ignorance in the twelve link formula of dependent origination.

The unknown nature of the worldly man or the ordinary personality tends to think that he is identical and independence from the other. Such a person may try to find and understand the reality
within the individual existence and hence to fail. This ultimately leads to many psychological sufferings including frustration. In the social context nobody can live without the other. The ‘other’ (para in Pali) represents all types of existence. Stereological vice the other may be a big hindrance for realizing the truth. So that leaving the household life may be bliss for the path. Therefore Buddhism encourages its disciples to leave homes and become recluses. One can definitely live a happy night if and if only by spending a loneliness life. The sacred longitude is thoroughly admired in the Buddhist context regarding its ultimate purpose. However the Buddha had preached that even a Buddhist monk should keep in mind that his existence completely depends on the other because he is not employed and living on the begged food. Therefore the mutual interdependence is an inevitable fact in the social context. This proves that there is no demarcation between what appears to be an individual creature and its natural and social environment.

4. RECIPROCAL IMPLICATION OF OTHERNESS

Man is considered as a social animal. He cannot live alone except the leavers of household life expecting the spiritual development. For them solidarity is an advantage to eliminate defilements. Yet an average man wants to live in society. He cannot live in solitude. Therefore man is of the society, from the society, and for the society. He derives and maintains his existence from the society that’s why he owns many responsibilities towards the society. While performing these duties he serves the society. This is called the social service in today’s usage. What is evident is that no social service can be done without the other. For instance generosity is a well-known social activity. Yet it cannot be practiced if there are no poor or beggars. Thus the poor helps others to engage in social services.

Mutual reciprocal behaviors play a very important role in the social context. Social psychologists are very keen on this factor as such behaviors influence to the stability of the society. Psychologically and sociologically accepted theory is that no one can live alone. A sentient being’s existence is valued and functioned properly in a social context. Newly born infant is only a biological being. This biological existence becomes a fully
functioned being with the socialization. Therefore the individual’s personality develops with many social influences. This implies that the individual cannot be separated from the other because others had socialized the individual. On the other hand it implies that the individual also has many duties to perform towards the society. While society performs many duties towards the individual in turn the individual also has to show his gratitude towards the society by performing many duties. This two way relationship oneself and the other treats both equally.

The doctrine in the Sigalovada speaks of the reciprocal existence of man by means of social duties. Today man is so keen on what rights are there and what right had been violated by others etc. This implies that in the modern context humans are so concerned on their rights and privileges. The issue is whether they have performed their duties and responsibilities towards others. On many occasions without fulfilling due responsibilities man expects to enjoy his rights very much even in the ultimate sense. However in Buddhism there if no reference to rights of man instead man is associated with duties assigned to him. Man in the society lives with others. Thus he has to perform duties to others. Then only he can enjoy his rights as a by-product of extending duties assigned to him.

Man has basically six relative relationships in the society. Accordingly the role of man also changes in relation to the nature of the relationship. For instance the same man can have dual roles in a family as the father and husband. Therefore man should be aware of the situation. Buddhism explores six such relationships as man’s directions. They are,

i. Children-Parents Relationship : East
ii. Teacher – Pupils Relationship : South
iii. Wife – Husband Relationship : West
iv. Friends – Friends Relationship : North
v. Clergy – Laity Relationship : Zenith
vi. Employer – Employee Relationship: Nadir

Being in the center the individual has to play many social roles which are relative according to the situation and condition. What is
required is the constant mindfulness of the individual. Relationship in the Buddhist sociology is the mutual interdependency. Social institutions function because of these relationships. Here the entire human society has been analyzed into twelve constituents. The individual health depends on the health of the society. So the healthy society in turns results in individual health. Problems among them must be resolve with mutual trust and love. Another significant fact is that the individual is expected to be concern on his or her reciprocal duties towards the other, not the rights of oneself. Human rights are considered privileges gained through the performing of duties. Rights will effortlessly arrive at the individual if he has done duties perfectly towards the other.

5. MORALITY IN OTHERNESS

According to Buddhist moral practice all ethical standards can be practiced and applied in a social context. For example one of the moral teachings in Buddhism is found as four kinds of hospitality namely generosity, pleasant speech, altruism and equality. From outset it very clearly signifies the value of otherness in practicing these moral principles. A man should behave ethically and practice morality without expecting benefits. As Mahayana tradition in Buddha Dhamma believes all human beings are same as they all are Bodhisattvas (to be Buddhas). All are treated same as they all are having same potentiality to become a Buddha (Fully Enlightened One). Therefore all human beings are called Buddha-seeds. The other significant feature is that in the Bodhisattva path all should perform moral standards or perfections with the help of the other. It means that without the contribution of the other no one can reach the ideal. Therefore the final goal in Mahayana tradition completely depends on the acceptance of the other.

Buddhism goes beyond the boundary of the earth (globalization). According to Buddhist cosmology there are innumerable number of worlds and species. Therefore a devotee must extend his or her loving-kindness to all species whether seen or unseen. The method is so clear. This is done by one’s mind. In the Metta Sutta the Buddha says that in spreading love, one must think of all possible kinds of beings. Therefore the Buddhist attitude is to extend love to all beings. This utterance is the Buddhist conception of universalism.
A man should love others in the same way that a mother loves her one and only son.

6. DEONTOLOGY

Duties cannot be performed without accepting the existence of other. The Hindu concept of duty shows that though there are differences among people, duties can be completed if one accepts the other. The concept of duty also becomes a vague one if we reject the other. According to many religious views duties can be performed to others. Moral and spiritual perfection can be achieved with the help of the other. For instance, if somebody wants to practice giving, there must be a giver as well as a receiver. The receiver becomes the other here. Mahayana tradition says that even a beggar is deserved to be respected as without him the Bodhisattva is unable to perform his moral standard.

One of the main social doctrines of Buddhism, the Sigalovada Sutta talks about the value of performing duties towards the others in the society. Here the individual has to play many roles in social relationships such as parents, children, teachers, friends, politicians, employers etc. After identifying the role it is up to the individual to play his or her role by fulfilling all types of duties. In the Buddhist context no reference has been given to rights. Rights are considered privileges gained by doing duties. In other words no issues aroused on rights if duties are completed. Therefore first the individual must do duties and then he or she can enjoy rights. Violations of human rights happen to be a side effect of breaking due duties.

7. GOLDEN RULE

The golden rule is a main religious moral principle that assumes one should treat others as one would like others to treat oneself. This is the direct implication and it has an indirect implication also. That is one should not treat others in ways that one would not like to be treated. Even in Buddhist ethics one of the central themes is that “one should treat others in exactly the same way as one treats oneself” (attanam upamam katva). The Buddha has stated that the basis of the other-regarding principle is an inference from oneself to another. Firstly one can think oneself in terms of others. The
value of oneself or self-personality can be derived from others. Secondly one can consider others in terms of oneself. For example one should consider that the state which is unpleasant to me must be so to others. This reflection brings the abstaining from killing or harming others.

One of the ancient Chinese religion, Confucianism says “Do not do to others what you would not like yourself. Then there will be no resentment against you, either in the family or in the state.” It seems from this great saying that the golden rule should be the foundation of all moral principles.

8. CO-EXISTENCE

Peace at social level should start from the most important social structure i.e. the nuclear family. Peaceful coexistence within the framework of family can be taken as an example. There is no question about the dominance or the superiority of the husband and wife. Both are equally important for the wellbeing and progress of the family. The most important thing is to understand the roles of each other. Both of them should know that one’s existence is the existence of the other. To put the mutual existence of husband and wife in accordance with the Buddhist causal theory.

“When the husband exists the wife exists, when the wife exists the husband exits, when the husband does not exist the wife does not exist, when the wife does not exists the husband does not exist.”

This is also the reality in the social order and structure as well. No one can separate, isolate or live without others because everybody depends on the other. This society as a whole has got a tremendous diversity. This diverse nature can be observed from various dimensions such as the nationality, culture, religion, belief, appearance, behavior, thought, value, morality, response and feeling so on and so forth. Most of these differences had been created by man himself over thousands of years of his civilization. All these differences prove nothing but the potentiality of man. Man among other creatures is superior because of the thinking force behind him. What he had achieved so far in the forms of knowledge, technology and development are best examples and proofs. These differences and distinctions are no doubt beauties of the global society. The
diversity makes the all beauties in the nature including flora and fauna. It is not difficult to imagine if all were alike and same in nature. The life would have become boring and monotonous if all were same. But there is something to note here from religious and philosophical perspective. There is a significant uniqueness and oneness of mankind. While there are many diverse among human beings there are some important unities especially the humanity. Humanity can transcendent all types of verities.

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References


THREE INTERTWINED PATHS
TO LEADING FOR SUSTAINABLE PEACE
by Phe Bach
& W. Edward Bureau

INTRODUCTION

Sustainable peace anchors itself in mindfulness of the present, the people, and the microcosms in which we exist. Rather than existing as a static state, the peace is organic and dynamic, flowing itself around the vagaries of “unpeacefulness.” Thus, being a mindful leader begins with the practice of Noble Eightfold Path and finding peace within oneself and continues by manifesting that peace every day. Doing so is the seed from which systems and circumstances can, themselves, perpetuate peace.

Thinking about how mindful leadership can sustain peace, we must consider how mindfulness can be cultivated within the individual and how he or she can sustain mindfulness everyday despite external challenges. Integrating the practice of mindfulness with an understanding of “systems thinking” opens paths for sustaining peace within and across organizations, governments, and political structures. Yet, leaders, teachers and others must also embrace “the continual flow” and know that a seeming “end” is only a new “beginning.” Peace can sustain us in our circular journeys through systems and time.

*. Ed.D., Founder and CEO of C. Mindfulness LLC, Mira Loma High School, SJUSD, California Teachers Association, USA.
**. Ph.D., Associate Clinical Professor (Retired), Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA, USA.
Thus, there are “Three Intertwined Paths to Leading for Sustainable Peace.”

Learning and Sustaining Peace Based Mindfulness Practice

Leaders who would sustain peace without must find and cultivate it within themselves. Not a matter of will or of a platitude, being mindful begins and continues through daily practice. Mindfulness transforms lives, rewires the brain, provides relief from physical and emotional pain, and enhances learning. Mindful practices in an organization bring about a more respectful, tolerant, and peaceful climate and culture. Teaching others how to live a mindful life and how to practice meditation gives them a lifelong skill for coping with the pressures of modern life in a turbulent world and for harvesting sustainable peace.

Peace, universal harmony, and shared responsibilities start from the within, and the inner peace starts with mindfulness and meditation. Mindfulness and mediation-based practices prior to the start of group sessions or daily work relaxes people, and studies show it helps them improve focus while diminishing anxiety. Mindful organizations can become joyful and stabilized as people learn to relax, to feel appreciated, and to relinquish anxiety.

Systems Thinking as a Path for Sustaining Peace

In times of rapid change and uncertainty, leaders are faced with complexities that will and do challenge peace. Seeing and reacting only to particular parts of a system leads to fragmented responses that solve immediate problems. By seeing and being with the system as an organic whole, the leader can co-create sustainable peace. Understanding that a living system will re-create itself opens the possibility for peace being central to the relationships, processes, and contexts of the system.

Having this broader, richer systems view cannot be left to chance or to a vague commitment. Like mindfulness, systems thinking must be learned and practiced daily. Within the works of Peter Senge and Otto Scharmer (Theory U) are concepts and methods for leaders to become practitioners of systems thinking. Doing so enables them to deliberately cultivate organic change and to create the ethos of peace across and among systems, including Buddhism.

Embracing Continual Flow
Some leaders believe that, when something is sustained, it has reached a static state and continues in that state over time. Leaders and those in a system may try to embrace and hold peace, only to find it slipping away. Peace, in this view, is not sustained. Peace, though, can be perpetuated, if we accept that it has no beginning or end. Rather, it is a dynamic and organic phenomenon, one that continually flows from past to present to future.

Embracing the continual flow brings the phenomenon of peace into a leader’s mindful practice of it on a daily basis. “The O Theory” (Drs. Bach and Bureau) lights the way for leaders to mindfully live the flow of peace. Recursive in nature, “The O” flows circularly through elements of: recognizing, accepting, embracing, learning, practicing, transforming, sharing, completing. Were a leader to be aware of and live these, he or she would live peace, would be peace. “Being peace” sustains peace. It is another proposal to a Buddhist Approach to Global Leadership and Shared Responsibilities for Sustainable Societies.

LEARNING AND SUSTAINING PEACE BASED MINDFULNESS PRACTICE

“We can choose how to live our lives now. We can seize any moment and begin anew” and “You need to wake up from your autopilot mode. You have to live deeply and with more awareness so that you can be attentive to each moment.” - Thich Nhat Hanh

As a Buddhist practitioner and educator, the primary author has been practicing and teaching Mindful Leadership as a model of peace-based mindfulness practice in his way of life and livelihood (see Appendix A, Leading From Compassion). Or as Malala Yousafzai (the Nobel Prize Winner in 2014) put it, “Let us bring equality, justice, and peace for all. Not just the politicians and the world leaders, we all need to contribute. Me. You. It is our duty.” It is our responsibility for us to bring this kind of spiritual leadership, peace, and mindfulness to ourselves and to others.

Being mindful, is being aware of something that may be important. (Merriam-Webster Dictionary) or as the Oxford Dictionary defines it, Conscious or aware of something; Inclined or willing to do something. That willingness to do something is the practice of mindfulness in everyday life. Mindfulness hones focus, concentration, and
awareness; it is the foundation of success and is a skill that requires practice to allow us to feel emotions without reacting, to respond rather than be reactive when it comes to stimulations. In education alone, according to Parker, et al. (2014), mindfulness enhances children’s self-regulatory abilities, showing significant improvements in executive functioning skills significant, and substantial reductions were found in aggression and social problems. Black, D. S., & Fernando, R. (2014) also informed that teachers reported improved classroom behavior of their students (i.e., paying attention, self-control, participation in activities, and caring/respect for others). Furthermore, there are more than hundreds of thousands of studies on mindfulness and its effectiveness. Researchers have reported empirically-supported benefits of mindfulness including: reduced rumination, stress reduction, increase in working memory, more focus, less emotional reactivity, more cognitive flexibility, an increase in relationship satisfaction, increase in emotional intelligence and social connectedness, increased morality, increased fear modulation, increased immune function, improvement in overall well-being, increased information-processing speed, decreased mind wandering, decreased blood pressure, increase in empathy/compassion, decreased anxiety, enhanced self-insight, improved relationships, regulated attention, behavior, and emotion, health and well-being as well as enhanced academic and other intellectual outcomes.

Mindfulness, as in the Right Mindfulness, in the Noble Eightfold Path, is the art of living, a notion of a peaceful, harmonious, and righteous way of life that enhances the safety and happiness of family, community, and society. Thus, the daily practices of mindfulness and meditation are the way of life. In succinctly, as Bach (2014) pointed out, mindfulness is the energy of ‘paying attention’, self-observation, and awareness of the present moment, without judgment, and with an attitude of kindness and compassion, of what is going on around you and within you. Mindfulness brings you back to the present moment. The present moment is the only thing we truly have because of as an old saying goes, “Yesterday is history and Tomorrow is mystery. Today is the gift--the here and now. (That’s why it’s called the PRESENT)”. Thus, the authors use the Four Noble Truth and the Noble Eightfold Path as a way of to live,
teach and lead.

Boorom (2009) suggested that leadership has roots in religion, as there is a direct correlation between leadership and spirituality qualities. Marques (2010) urges that “it is perfectly possible to be spiritual yet not religious. There are many spiritual people who are atheists, agnostics, or that embrace multiple religions at the same time” (p.13). For her, “a spiritual worker is a person who simply maintains good human values, such as respect, tolerance, goodwill, support, and an effort to establish more meaning in his or her workplace” (p.13). DeVost (2010) emphasized that current research in organizations has found a relationship between the spirituality of the leaders and the workplace spirituality. In this study, Devost (2010) found that the practice of ‘encouraging the heart’ – one of the five exemplified leadership values - was significantly positive. According to Kouzes & Posner (1995), the five practices of good leadership are: “Challenge the process, inspire a shared vision, enable others to act, model the way, and encourage the heart” (p. 9).

Meanwhile, leaders often practice their spiritual life as well as their moral belief and ethical values. As Northouse (2004) has argued ethics and leadership are “concerned with the kinds of values and morals an individual or society finds desirable or appropriate” (p. 342). Furthermore, he pointed out that an ethical model of leadership consists of five components: a) show respect, b) serve others, c) show justice, d) manifest honesty and e) build community. In another study, Zhu, May, & Avolio (2004) define ethical leadership as “doing what is right, just and good” (p. 16). Zhu et al., (2004) added that leaders exhibit ethical behaviors when they are doing what is morally right, just, and good, and when they help to elevate followers’ moral awareness and moral self-actualization. Bass and Steidlmeier (1998) suggest that a truly transformational and effective leadership must be based upon: a) the moral character of the leader and their concern for oneself and others, b) the ethical values embedded in the leader’s vision, and c) the morality of the processes and social ethical choices and actions in which the leaders and followers engage.

Rather than a suggestion or an idea for leaders and organizations, mindfulness can be woven into the fabric of the organization.
Doing so must be deliberate and not capricious, but organizations and leaders may need a framework for doing so. One such approach is offered by the Presencing Institute and the works of Otto Scharmer, as seen in his books Theory U and Theory U: Leading from the Future as It Emerges (Schramer, 2017 and 2013). The Institute continues to bring people from across the globe together to learn how to “move through the U” toward sustainable change and peace. Understood from a balcony view, engaging in such deliberate change can transform systems and the people in them, rather than merely hoping for change. Given much of the “un-peacefulness” in systems across the globe, we two authors believe that, through the practice of the processes of the U, people can transform systems.

The notion and practice of mindfulness translates into early phases of the U. We develop the abilities to “suspend” our preconceived notions and judgments. In the language of the U, we become aware of “downloading” notions that prevent us from seeing with fresh eyes, and we learn to observe (mindfully) how such preconceptions shape our views of people, systems, and the human condition. Individually and collectively, we learn to “let go” in order to “let come” what we could not see before, what may be our future selves. As we do, we are “presencing” - the state of being both present in the moment and sensing what could be in the future. Presencing, then, is “the experience of the coming in of the new and the transformation of the old” (Scharmer, 2013).
In the language of Theory U, there are individual and collective “blind spots” that block our abilities to create socially-conscious change and systemic transformation. It is these blind spots that trap us into current ways of thinking and models of behavior, both individual and systemic. These, in turn, prevent us from creating sustainable global peace. If we can be mindful of our blind spots, we can begin to see with an open mind, open heart, and open will. Each of those three are dimensions of being human. How can we be mindful enough to live in the “open states” of them? The processes of Theory U, through mindfulness, offer us deliberate paths to embracing them and finding sustainable peace in systems.

Phe’s journey of practice!

“Mindfulness practice means that we commit fully in each moment to be present; inviting ourselves to interface with this moment in full awareness, with the intention to embody as best we can an orientation of calmness, mindfulness, and equanimity right here and right now.” – Jon Kabat-Zinn

In today’s world, there are trends in moral decline within the leadership ranks. Personal interests, benefits, and greed appear to be outweighing public and/or community values and well-being. Leaders often lack an in-depth understanding of the spiritual leadership practices of the self, so these the authors started looking inward to find a solution to this issue. It starts with living life mindfully, and in this case living according to the Noble Eightfold Path. These qualities of leadership enhance spiritual practices such as, compassion, wisdom, mindfulness, or understanding that may lead to moral and ethical consequences.

For Phe’s journey, it starts with the Vietnamese Buddhist Youth Association at GĐPT Linh Quang in 1991 and begins with a position in leadership in 1994 as a freshman in college at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. He was trained as a GĐPT leader in 1996 at Trại Huấn Luyện A Đức Lộc Uyển in Houston, TX. Since then, he embraced and implemented Lead-by-example (Thân giáo), He wrote an extensive research paper on the leaderships, titled Leadership at Vietnamese Buddhist Youth Association (VBYA) Also known as GĐPT. Here is the last portion of the research article

...Leaders of Vietnamese Buddhist Youth Association (VBYA), also known as GĐPT, must practice and implement the value of leading-by-example (Thân giáo); it is certainly essential for the success of the organization. According to Bach (2012), “Leading by example is just one invaluable lesson the Buddha taught us. It is based upon our mindful thought, speech, and actions in our daily life. His teachings have reached and transformed innumerable people from all walks of life. The peaceful development of humanity is in large part due to the enlightened teachings of the Buddha. Today, Buddhism can be a possible solution for the human crises” (p. 5). He continues to suggest that Buddhist youth leaders should establish these recommendations: 1) Establishing a Moral and Ethical Mindset; 2) Understanding and articulating the principle of cause and effect (Law of Karma); 3) Think Globally and Act Locally – making a difference around you first; 4) Mutual Respect and Mutual Benefit; 5) Being present to each other - (Presencing as in the Theory U), 6) The Power of Unity or the Collaboration with other Organizations for Sustainable change; and 7) Be a (Buddhist) Practitioner, not only a Learner (p.6).

As a leader, especially for leaders in Buddhist institutions, one must be mindful and have a solid foundation in the Dharma (the teaching of Buddha). As Michael Carroll (2008) in his book, *The Mindful Leader*, suggests, the ten talents of a mindful leader are: simplicity, poise, respect, courage, confidence, enthusiasm, patience, awareness, skillfulness, and humility. He continues that bringing our full being to work: synchronizing, engaging the whole, inspiring health and well-being in organizations and establishing authenticity all combine to define a successful leader.

Furthermore, the leaders should live a spiritual life and lead by setting positive examples. Here is another study by Andre L. Delbecq (2008), a professor of Organizational Analysis and Management at J. Thomas and Kathleen L. McCarthy University; and as the director of the Institute for Spirituality and Organization Leadership at Santa University’s Leavey School of Business. Delbecq (2008) suggests that the managers, who are working with
him, possess positive changes through meditation and spiritual disciplines (p. 495):

- Improved capacities to listen—less need to dominate
- More patience with others—less judgmental and self-asserting
- Great adaptability—less desire to control events and others
- Great focus—less distraction and anxiety
- Greater ability to devote self to service through work—less frustration with burdens and irritants at work
- More hopefulness and joyfulness even in times of difficulty—less cynicism and pessimism
- Greater overall serenity and trust
- More confidence in using personal competencies—deeper knowledge of self-limitations, more trust that things will work out
- Persistence and diligence—less withdrawal and self-occupation when under stress

To him, nourishing the soul of the leader and the inner growth certainly matters. Thus, the spiritual dimension of leadership is particularly crucial and vital for success in any organization. In short, once a Buddhist leader, a lifelong leader, and Phe continues to teach Mindful Leadership to fellow educators in the state of California and around the country. He has been training the over 3000 educators for the last 5 years (see Appendix B).

SYSTEMS THINKING AS A PATH FOR SUSTAINING PEACE

“We can never obtain peace in the outer world until we make peace with ourselves.” Dalai Lama

“Hope lives when people remember.” Simon Wiesenthal.

Creating sustainable peace can grow from our explorations of two notions: ‘Peace is a dynamic and organic phenomenon, one that continually flows from past to present to future in systems’ and ‘A living system will re-create itself and open the possibility for peace being central to the relationships, processes, and contexts of the system. Both notions can be framed through “systems thinking.” In this paper we begin to explore both, but precede that with noting
how the seed of the peace process is found in the writing and practices of Thich Nhat Hanh and others. This section concludes on a note of how systems thinking for peace is a bridge from the U-theory to the O-theory.

More importantly, take the work of Vietnamese Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh is an example. He is a peace activist, a writer, a poet, a scholar, and a Buddhist monk, and is the champion of mindfulness. His work has carried mindfulness practices into mainstream culture. His wisdom and practice of mindfulness have provided guidance and a practical approach, which benefit individuals, families and organizations. Thich Nhat Hanh (1993, 2007) emphasizes: “With mindfulness, we are aware of what is going on in our bodies, our feelings, our minds, and the world, and we avoid doing harm to ourselves and others.” He continues: “Mindfulness protects us, our families, and our society, and ensures a safe and happy present and a safe and happy future. Precepts are the most concrete expression of the practice of mindfulness” (p. 2).


In his book, “For a future to be possible: Buddhists ethics for everyday life”, he encouraged us to practice the precepts that we have abided to. The five most basic precepts of ancient times (i.e. do not kill, steal, perform sexual misconduct, lie or use alcohol/intoxicant) still apply for all Buddhists today (Bodhi, 2005; Thich, 1993, 2011). Thich Nhat Hanh (Thich 1993, 2007, 2011) skillfully and compassionately translated these precepts for our modern time and called them “The Five Mindfulness Trainings”. According to him, they “represent the Buddhist vision for a global spirituality and ethics. They are a concrete expression of the Buddha’s teachings on the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path,
the path of right understanding and true love, leading to healing, transformation, and happiness for ourselves and for the world.”

In addition, Thich Nhat Hanh (Thich 1993, 2007, 2011) points out that “to practice the Five Mindfulness Trainings is to cultivate the insight of interbeing, or Right View, which can remove all discrimination, intolerance, anger, fear, and despair.” The five ancient precepts were adapted to our modern time under Thich Nhat Hanh’s vision as the Five Mindfulness Trainings. They are as follows:

The First Mindfulness Training - Reverence For Life

Aware of the suffering caused by the destruction of life, I am committed to cultivating the insight of interbeing and compassion and learning ways to protect the lives of people, animals, plants, and minerals. I am determined not to kill, not to let others kill, and not to support any act of killing in the world, in my thinking, or in my way of life. Seeing that harmful actions arise from anger, fear, greed, and intolerance, which in turn come from dualistic and discriminative thinking, I will cultivate openness, non-discrimination, and non-attachment to views in order to transform violence, fanaticism, and dogmatism in myself and in the world.

The Second Mindfulness Training - True Happiness (Generosity)

Aware of the suffering caused by exploitation, social injustice, stealing, and oppression, I am committed to practicing generosity in my thinking, speaking, and acting. I am determined not to steal and not to possess anything that should belong to others; and I will share my time, energy, and material resources with those who are in need. I will practice looking deeply to see that the happiness and suffering of others are not separate from my own happiness and suffering; that true happiness is not possible without understanding and compassion; and that running after wealth, fame, power and sensual pleasures can bring much suffering and despair. I am aware that happiness depends on my mental attitude and not on external conditions, and that I can live happily in the present moment simply by remembering that I already have more than enough conditions to be happy. I am committed to practicing Right Livelihood so that I can help reduce the suffering of living beings on Earth and reverse the process of global warming.
The Third Mindfulness Training - True Love (Sexual Responsibility)

Aware of the suffering caused by sexual misconduct, I am committed to cultivating responsibility and learning ways to protect the safety and integrity of individuals, couples, families, and society. Knowing that sexual desire is not love, and that sexual activity motivated by craving always harms myself as well as others, I am determined not to engage in sexual relations without true love and a deep, long-term commitment made known to my family and friends. I will do everything in my power to protect children from sexual abuse and to prevent couples and families from being broken by sexual misconduct. Seeing that body and mind are one, I am committed to learning appropriate ways to take care of my sexual energy and cultivating loving kindness, compassion, joy and inclusiveness – which are the four basic elements of true love – for my greater happiness and the greater happiness of others. Practicing true love, we know that we will continue beautifully into the future.

The Fourth Mindfulness Training - Loving Speech and Deep Listening

Aware of the suffering caused by unmindful speech and the inability to listen to others, I am committed to cultivating loving speech and compassionate listening in order to relieve suffering and to promote reconciliation and peace in myself and among other people, ethnic and religious groups, and nations. Knowing that words can create happiness or suffering, I am committed to speaking truthfully using words that inspire confidence, joy, and hope. When anger is manifesting in me, I am determined not to speak. I will practice mindful breathing and walking in order to recognize and to look deeply into my anger. I know that the roots of anger can be found in my wrong perceptions and lack of understanding of the suffering in myself and in the other person. I will speak and listen in a way that can help myself and the other person to transform suffering and see the way out of difficult situations. I am determined not to spread news that I do not know to be certain and not to utter words that can cause division or discord. I will practice Right Diligence to nourish my capacity for understanding, love, joy, and inclusiveness, and gradually transform anger, violence, and fear that lie deep in my consciousness.
The Fifth Mindfulness Training - Nourishment and Healing (Diet for a mindful society)

Aware of the suffering caused by unmindful consumption, I am committed to cultivating good health, both physical and mental, for myself, my family, and my society by practicing mindful eating, drinking, and consuming. I will practice looking deeply into how I consume the Four Kinds of Nutriments, namely edible foods, sense impressions, volition, and consciousness. I am determined not to gamble, or to use alcohol, drugs, or any other products which contain toxins, such as certain websites, electronic games, TV programs, films, magazines, books, and conversations. I will practice coming back to the present moment to be in touch with the refreshing, healing and nourishing elements in me and around me, not letting regrets and sorrow drag me back into the past nor letting anxieties, fear, or craving pull me out of the present moment. I am determined not to try to cover up loneliness, anxiety, or other suffering by losing myself in consumption. I will contemplate interbeing and consume in a way that preserves peace, joy, and well-being in my body and consciousness, and in the collective body and consciousness of my family, my society and the Earth.

Another seed of strong leadership is leading by example. Venerable Thích Minh Đạt (2011) believes leadership influences by: 1) Example: teach through your actions or behavior. One must live a moral and ethical life. Benefit yourself and benefit others, and then influence and contribute positively to our community and society. 2) Teaching by loving speech: seek understanding and wisdom. 3) Teaching by practicing the Noble Eightfold Path: The first one is Right Thought: your thinking must be constructive and always be based on the teachings of the Buddha – Compassion and Wisdom.

To emphasize this point, one should live accordingly to the teaching of the Enlightened One, the Buddha. The author takes that into his everyday life practices. He is applying and implementing by teaching many workshops for teachers in the state of California. Some of the workshops covered are Mindful Leadership: A Mindfulness-based Professional Development Workshop for All Educators; The Neuroscience of Mindfulness: The Art to Cultivate
Understanding, Respect, Academic Success, and Social-Emotional 
Well-Being; Mindfulness in the Classrooms; Mindfulness; Mindful 
Leadership: Mindfulness Practices for an Equitable, Emotionally 
Safe Classroom; Mindful Leadership: “Be Prepared” and “Do 
a Good Turn Daily” in the Spirit of Vietnamese Americans; and 
Social Emotional Skills for Life.

If we know, then, that peace rises from within individuals’ 
daily practices of mindfulness, we are left with wondering how the 
systems humans create can become generators of larger contexts 
of peace. What constitutes a “system” we define very broadly - 
any design created by humans to meet multiple purposes, be they 
spiritual, political, charitable, financial, and so on. How, then, can 
“peace be a dynamic and organic phenomenon, one that continually 
flows from past to present to future - in systems?”

We must, first, see systems in totality and know that they are 
organic and living. While there are many metaphors for seeing 
from broad perspectives, that of the “balcony view” helps us learn 
to see and know the system in all of its complexities, dynamics 
of growth, and seeming stagnations. To be a “systems thinker”, 
though, we must suspend our judgments about the system, and, 
most particularly, the people in it. We cannot see and engage with 
an organic, living system, if our “blind spots” fixate us on what has 
been in the system and on the foibles of humans in it. Such leads 
to the “collective failures” described so well in Scharmer’s works. 
To see from the balcony, to see without judgment gives us the view 
from the balcony and opens up the possibility for moving up the 
right side of Theory U into co-creating and co-evolving with others 
in “systems of peace.”

If there is circularity here, it is this: To see from the balcony, to 
suspend our judgments, to co-create and co-evolve with others, we 
must sustain our practices of mindfulness. Doing so is that “seed of 
leading by example” (Thich Nhat Hanh). For leaders who would co-
evolve with others in a system to sustainable peace, we are reminded 
by Dr. Phe Bach that “The mindful leader is the one who leads inside 
out with understanding, compassion, and wisdom.” Systems can be 
transformed for sustainable peace on by the humans in the systems. 
Within the people and, thus, in the system, “peace is every step” - to
borrow the phrase from Thich Nhat Hanh. By doing so, we come to understand that “a living system will re-create itself and open the possibility for peace being central to the relationships, processes, and contexts of the system.”

As compassionate leaders with a balcony view of a system, we can co-evolve with others to create systems that embody sustainable peace. That we can do by moving through the “U” to create prototypes of emerging systems grounded in peace and compassion. Creating prototypes for peace and assessing them, as would be done through the U, is not a process that ends. Our balcony view and practice would be continual, circular, and flowing, as engendered in the O-theory.

EMBRACING CONTINUAL FLOW

“Iving 24 hours with mindfulness is more worthwhile than living 100 years without it.” - The Buddha

The “O” theory is the continuation of this BuddhaDharma flow. O has no beginning or ending. It symbols for completeness or wholeness and ultimately the emptiness. As Watson (2014) puts it, “a philosophy of emptiness helps us to acknowledge impermanence, contingency and the tragic sense of life and prosper on a middle path between denial and mindless distraction and a nihilistic loss of value.” A beauty of the O theory is centered at the foundation of any Threelfold principles in Buddhism such as Buddha, Dharma, Sangha; (Phật Pháp Tăng); Threelfold Training / Tam Vô Lậu Hóc (Giới Định Tuệ): Higher
virtue (adhisīla-sikkhā), Higher mind (adhicitta-sikkhā), Higher wisdom (adhipaññā-sikkhā); Bi-Trí-Dũng (Compassion-Wisdom-Courage). The “O” theory has the core values of mindfulness, love, understanding, perseverance, diligence, determination, harmony, trust, trustworthiness, joy, gratitude, integrity, honesty, and responsibility.

According to Buddhist Theravada tradition, pursuing the Threefold Training, as Thanissaro Bhikkhu (trans.) (1998b) translated from Buddhist text can lead to the abandonment of lust, hatred, and delusion. Ultimately, anyone who is fully accomplished in this training attains Nibbana (Nirvana).

The “O” theory has 8 components, just like the Noble Eightfold Path; these components are: recognizing, accepting, embracing, learning, practicing, transforming, sharing, completing.

1. **Recognizing:** First and foremost, we must perceive clearly or realize everything as-is. We need to acknowledge that peace within creates beauty without, and that inner peace is the foundation for a more harmonious society. One must recognize the fact. For example, human species won’t be able to solve climate change and/or global warming if we are in denial of it. We have to recognize and examine at both micro and macro levels.

   As if a chemist recognizes that everything is composed of smaller sub-particles and even quarks and how these basic components are interacting and behaving. Looking at the ocean at the first sight, we can see the water, space, its shorelines, and its immenseness. But that is just a macroscopic view of all matters, at a microscopic view, it is all the connection or the bonding, the intermolecular forces and attraction between molecules. We must have a scientific approach to solve any problem and even that starts with the recognition that we have a problem, and it is necessary to define it. We recognize that we have a problem, an issue, and we must state it clearly so that we can make things better for us.

2. **Accepting:** After the realization period, one must accept the fact in order to be able to move on. Accepting is the art of being at ease. For example, if we don’t accept the fact that there is no global warming, then we won’t be able to seek for the solution.
3. Embracing: As the Merriam-Webster Dictionary puts it, embracing is ‘hold (someone) closely in one’s arms, especially as a sign of affection; accept (a belief, theory, or change) willingly and enthusiastically; include or contain (something) as a constituent part.’ Whatever it is, one must be willing to embrace others as if they were a child that is crying, one must hold and comfort first.

Some leaders believe that, when something is sustained, it has reached a static state and continues in that state over time. Leaders and those in a system may try to embrace and hold peace, only to find it slipping away. Peace, in this view, is not sustained. Peace, though, can be perpetuated, if we accept that it has no beginning or end. Rather, it is a dynamic and organic phenomenon, one that continually flows from past to present to future. Embracing the continual flow brings the phenomenon of peace into a leader’s mindful practice of it on a daily basis.

4. Learning: As the Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines it, it is ‘the acquisition of knowledge or skills through study, experience, or being taught.’
In times of rapid change and uncertainty, leaders are faced with complexities that will and do challenge peace. Seeing and reacting only to particular parts of a system leads to fragmented responses that solve immediate problems. By seeing and being with the system as an organic whole, the leader can co-create sustainable peace. Understanding that a living system will re-create itself opens the possibility for peace being central to the relationships, processes, and contexts of the system.

5. Practicing: As the Merriam-Webster Dictionary puts it: ‘Actively pursuing or engaged in a particular profession, occupation, or way of life.’

Sustainable peace anchors itself in mindfulness of the present, the people, and the microcosms in which we exist. Rather than existing as a static state, the peace is organic and dynamic, flowing itself around the vagaries of “unpeacefulness.” Thus, being a mindful leader begins with the practice of the Noble Eightfold Path and finding the peace within oneself and continues by manifesting that peace every day. Doing so is the seed from which systems and circumstances can, themselves, perpetuate peace.

6. Transforming: As the Merriam-Webster Dictionary puts it, ‘make a marked change in the form, nature, or appearance of’, after the stages of learning and practicing, one must transform into the betterment, from something negative to something positive. Transformation is the art of progression. Without it, there is simply no development and advancement.

7. Sharing: Next step after transforming is an art of sharing to making sure others are even better than oneself, as in the Golden Rules. The American’s concepts of Paying It Forward is priceless and makes the world a better place to live.

8. Completing: Lastly, the notion of completeness or wholeness is so essential in our human life. We are just visitors to this planet; we’ll come and go just like everyone else, what we leave behind is our own legacy. Thus, we must do everything that we can while we are here on Earth to make this world more harmonious, peaceful, and kind so that our children and grandchildren can live and excel. Now the whole circle is completed.
This O theory is a meticulously way to remind us that we need to live in the present moment, not worrying about the future since it is yet to come nor stuck in the past. With mindfulness and meditation, using breathing as the anchor, helps us focus on the present moment and allows us to be present or ‘presencing’ as in the U theory. It takes practice to train our minds to be in the presence. Practices make it better over time, just like nerve cells can be rewired and that ‘neurons that fire together wire together’; in other words, ‘what you practice grows stronger’, including mindfulness, peace and inner values. As Ven. Prof. Dr. Phramaha Hansa Dhammahaso, the Director of Office of International Association of Buddhist Universities, in his paper, the Peace Village, recognized that peace brings loving-kindness, happiness, solidarity and harmony to human beings and societies.

Additionally, the primary author wrote a short paper titled, CHANGE: FEAR ME NOT – EMBRACE ME: Five thoughts on fostering change, which is an example of this continual flow, as though there is no beginning and there is no ending.

CONCLUSION

Conclusions expected to be drawn from this paper are to understand our lived-experiences, beliefs, practices, and leadership styles and daily practices. Peace, mindfulness and transformation are happening because of choice not chance. Contemplating the U theory, we learn to “let go” in order to “let come” and that we are “presencing” - the state of being both present in the moment and sensing what could be in the future. By doing so, we engage in O theory - a completion of the circle.

The O theory also reveals a strong, yet simple notion: It is better to be a human being than a human doing. What is embedded in the Vietnamese Buddhist monks’ leadership style is their daily practice that has transformed the lives of those in their communities. It is the idea of living inside out; it is the idea of peace. The findings show that this leadership style is based upon wisdom, understanding, practice, peace of mind, harmony, and compassion. All these elements are associated with a peaceful existence.

We can live, then, “Three Intertwined Paths to Leading for
Sustainable Peace.” We can learn and sustain peace based on mindfulness practice. Systems thinking can be a path for sustaining peace. We can live and embrace the continual flow of the O Theory. Sustaining peace through these three paths can be the best of who we are as humans.

Acknowledgements: A very special thank you and gratitude to our wives Trang Nguyen and Chris Bureau. Thank you Keith Carmona, IB English Teacher of Mira Loma High School, for reading over this paper.
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1. BACKGROUND

There is no doubt that “family” is an important social institution. Its function is to perpetuate society through procreation and socialization. Family structure has changed over the last few decades. Whatever the structure has changed, family is expected to provide stability in a sexual, emotional, intellectual and social way that nothing else can do. OECD has provided an overview of the changes in family formation, household structure, work-life balance, and child well-being. Today, many families are confronting with problems such as separation, divorce, financial problems, issues related to sexuality, alcohol or addiction, abuse between parents and children, and family conflicts. These problems would be deeply distressing and may lead to negative emotions, cognitive and behavior disorders, and mental diseases. Thereby some families are at risks of disintegration. When families are weak, societies begin to break down. The crisis of “family disintegration” and the task of “social integration” are the current challenges to overcome. As one of the most important agents of socialization and social

* Professor. Director, Dhamma Clinic for Psychosomatic Therapy, South Korea.
control, religion has played a significant role in organizing and directing social life. Buddhism exposes the reality of human life and also stresses the mundane happiness for lay people. Accordingly, the main concern in this paper lies in how Buddhism supports harmonious families, boosts the family-friendly society, and ultimately sustains society in the changing world.

2. OBJECTIVE & METHODOLOGY

The prime objective of this paper is to examine the Buddhist approaches to harmonious families for sustainable societies in the contemporary changing society. The research is mainly textual study. The collected data was observed on the historical, comparative, and critical bases.

3. DISCUSSION

3.1. What is meant by Family?

3.1.1. Etymology

Family, etymologically, means servants of a household, from Latin ‘familia’,1 abstract noun formed from ‘famulus’ (servant, slave). The Latin word rarely appears in the sense parents with their children, for which ‘domus’ was used. Derivatives of ‘famulus’ include ‘famula’ (serving woman, maid), ‘famulanter’ (in the manner of a servant), ‘famulitas’ (servitude), ‘familiaris’ (of one’s household, private), ‘familiaricus’ (of household slaves), and ‘familiaritas’ (close friendship).2

3.1.2. Definition

In the most basic definition, family is defined as a group of people who share a legal (or a blood) bond. Families are legally bound through birth, marriages, adoptions, and guardianships including the rights, duties, and obligations of those legal contracts. George Murdock and Talcott Parsons are the main theorists often

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1. This term means ‘family servants’, ‘domestics collectively’, ‘the servants in a household’, ‘members of a household’, ‘the estate’, ‘property’, and ‘the household including relatives and servants.’

mentioned in discussions relating to the family. George Murdock (1965) described that the family is a social group characterized by common residence, economic cooperation and reproduction. Murdock argued that the nuclear family was a universal social institution because it fulfilled four basic functions—the sexual, reproductive, economic, and educational functions—for society. However, his description brought about a stereotype of the family. Although nuclear family is still used as the basic structure for a family in modern society, Murdock’s definition is outdated to cover emerging different types of families. Talcott Parsons (1951) developed the functionalist perspective on the family by focusing heavily on nuclear, heterosexual families to the exclusion of other family forms. He noted that the nuclear family, consisting of only parents and their growing children, predominates in industrialized societies.

3.2. Families in Transition

“Family” is a single word, but it has many different meanings. Moreover, it is often used metaphorically to create more inclusive categories such as community, nationhood, global village and humanism. Recently, the number of family members has fallen and the forms of families have changed. “Family” was today’s important issue, and society was just beginning to accept different types of families—nuclear family, single-parent family, cross-generational family, adoptive/poster family, never-married family, blended family, grandparents as parents, same-sex parents, etc.3

Levine and Levine identified the Fourteen Trends occurring in family structure, family relations, and related phenomena (Levine & Levine, 1996:102-108).4 Those trends have implications for the development of children and their treatment in the educational

4. These are ① increase in single-parent families, ② increase in the percentage of working mothers, ③ smaller family size, ④ child neglect and abuse, ⑤ increase in the proportion of households without children, ⑥ serial-marriage children, ⑦ skip-generation families, ⑧ disappearing fathers, ⑨ increase in cohabitation, ⑩ increased prominence of peer cultures among youth, ⑪ increased influence of television and other media, ⑫ loss of support from grandparents, ⑬ increase in single-parent families headed by fathers, and ⑭ increase of violent crimes among youth.
system and other modern socializing institutions. Ellwood and Jencks addressed the Basic Trends and Eight Hypotheses of the rapid changes in family structure (Ellwood & Jencks, 2001:6).\(^5\) Even though the shapes of families may be changing, the values that make them work need not disappear. In other words, the traditional family system may disappear, but that does not mean it is worthless.

3.3. Families at Risk

In most societies, family is the principal institution for the socialization of children. Recently, family systems are faced with greater challenges arising from a decreasing number of marriages, more divorces, lower birthrates, the soaring population of senior citizens, domestic violence, child abuse and a higher suicide rate. The “families at risk”, in general, means families who may find it difficult to keep their children safe. The risk factors are mainly caused by unemployment, poverty, addiction, violence and mental health issues. These are especially associated with child abuse or neglect.

3.3.1. Single-parents Worldwide

Single-parents were very common in the 17\(^{th}\) and 18\(^{th}\) centuries, and the most common cause is the death of a parent. Approximately 1/3 to 1/2 of all children in this era experienced the death of a parent during childhood. Since then, medical advances and improvements in sanitation and maternal care have significantly reduced mortality of people in reproductive age. Today, the leading reasons for the rising number of single-parents by divorce, accidental pregnancies and single-parenting by choice. According to the OECD database (2014), the number of single-parent households is rising worldwide: 17% of children aged 0-14 live in single-parent households, women head approximately 88% of these households, and the majority of single-parents are employed. The largest increases in single-

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\(^5\) Families have changed in a multitude of ways. Marriage is being postponed and sometimes being eschewed entirely. Cohabitation is up, divorce has risen. Single parenthood has grown. It is the latter trend that primarily motivates this review. If adults were shifting their patterns of commitment, it would probably not be a source of great public concern were it not for the fact that children are often involved. But there is powerful evidence that children in single parent families fare worse than those in two-parent settings. At a minimum their incomes are lower, and they often do more poorly in a wide variety of areas from schooling to criminal activity.
parent households have been in most industrialized countries like America, England, Denmark, Sweden, France, etc. According to the 2016 US Census, single-parents have more than tripled as a share of American households since 1960: 27% of children under 18 live in single-parent households in the US (more than 23% of American children are being raised without a father, and 4% of children are raised without their mother). Among these households, 80% are headed by single mothers. One-third has a college degree and 1/6 have not completed high school. About 60% of single mother in the US live in poverty. Only 29% of single mothers ever received child support per month.\(^6\)

3.3.2. Big Rise in Number of Working Mothers

The continued rise in the number of working mothers had been a “major feature” of the labour market in the world. Working mothers have been striving to carve out a place for themselves in the working world, while balancing motherhood. According to an overview of statistics on working mothers in the United States, labour force is retaining working mothers with children in all age groups at higher rates than they were four decades ago (Statista, 2018). Other findings show there has been a big rise in the number of working mothers over the past two decades in England. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) says 4.9 million women were working in 2017 while looking after children up 1.2 million since 1996. There has been a particularly big jump in the employment rate among mothers with children aged three or four, from 56% to 65%. This comes as the government expanded the provision of free childcare from 15 to 30 hours a week in England. The policy is designed to help boost employment for parents, particularly mothers, looking to return to work or increase their working hours (ONS, 2017).

3.3.3. The Failure of Shared Custody: Fatherlessness and Its Risks

For a long time, fathers have largely guided the marital choices of their children and directly supervised the entry of children, especially sons, into the world outside the home. Most important,
fathers assumed primary responsibility for what was seen as the most essential parental task, viz. the religious and moral education of the young. As a result, societal praise or blame for a child’s outcome was customarily bestowed not (as it is today) on the mother but on the father (Wilson & Neckerman, 1986:239). Currently, increasing numbers of children are being raised without fathers.

Fatherless families stem from the industrial revolution. Industrialization and the modern economy led to the physical separation of home and work. The nineteenth century’s “progressive fragmentation of labor, combined with mass production and complicated administration, the separation of home from the place of work, and the transition from independent producer to paid employee who uses consumer goods” led to “a progressive loss of substance of the father’s authority and a diminution of his power in the family and over the family” (Blankenhorn, 1996:13). During the mid-1960’s, social barriers to divorce started to crumble and the divorce rate began a dramatic upward spiral. Rates of divorce have doubled since the 1960’s in Belgium, France, and Switzerland, while they have risen threefold in Canada, England, and the Netherlands (Furstenberg & Cherlin, 1994).

“Fatherlessness” is the most harmful demographic trend of this generation. Despite its scale and social consequences, fatherlessness is a problem that is frequently ignore or denied. It is the leading cause of declining child well-being in our society. And it is also the engine driving our most urgent social problems, from crime to adolescent pregnancy to child sexual abuse to domestic violence against women (Blankenhorn, 1996:1). Fatherlessness indicates “the failure of shared custody” or destabilized families for parenting. Growing up without a father implies that children are exposing on serious risks.

Above all, there are increased dangers of sexual violence and risks of early sexual behaviour. As universal problem, “Child Sexual Abuse” (CSA) has various adverse effects on the psychological, physical, behavioral, and interpersonal well-being of the victim (Singh, Parsekar, & Nair, 2014). The World Health Organization (WHO) defines CSA as “the involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend and is unable to give
informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared, or else that violate the laws or social taboos of society” (WHO, 2003). The escalating risk of childhood sexual abuse in our society stems primarily from the growing absence of married fathers and the growing presence of stepfathers, boyfriends, and other unrelated or transient males” (Blankenhorn, 1996). Young people often have more opportunities to engage in immoral conduct because of less parental supervision in a single-parent home.

In the United States, 50 percent in female householder families compared to 10 percent of children in two-parent families were in poverty in 1995 (Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 1998). Children living in poverty are vulnerable to environmental, educational, health, and safety risks. Compared with their peers, children living in poverty (especially young children) are more likely to have cognitive, behavioral, and socio-emotional difficulties. Throughout their lifetimes they are more likely to complete fewer years of school and experience more years of unemployment (Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 2018:6). Over a third of the young men and women between the ages of nineteen and twenty-nine have little or no ambition ten years after their parents’ divorce. They are drifting through life with no set goals and a sense of helplessness. Low self-esteem, depression, delinquent behavior, and persistent anger were observed among many children of divorce (Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1996). Numerous studies show that boys are raised without a strong male presence in their lives show insecurity about their gender identity, low self-esteem, and, later in their lives, trouble forming intimate relationships. The problems may develop from living without male role models don’t usually show up until adolescence or later, and include having difficulty forming successful male/female relationships in adulthood (Kennedy, 1994:39).

4. RESULTS

4.1. Where Does Happiness Begin?

According to sociology, SES (Socio-economic Status) including social prestige, job, and educational level is considered as an indicator of success in a capitalist society. People want to succeed by
all means possible. It is hard to deny that most people have rushed to make more money and enjoy more material abundance due to their unlimited desire. Sometimes people may not be satisfied with their wealth and success, but rather their positive thinking brings them inner peace, satisfaction, and happiness. That is the reason why the Buddha tells us “not to be controlled by possessions but to live a free life”. “Pursuit of Happiness” is the fundamental theme of the Buddhism. The Buddha stresses the present or mundane happiness, which may begin at home. Happiness is about cheering up and learning to love ourselves through small pleasures that come from daily life. First of all, it may come from good relationships with families.

4.2. Conditions of the Mundane Happiness

The Buddha said the four kinds of happiness that may be achieved by a layperson who enjoys sensual pleasures, depending on time and occasion: ownership, enjoyment, freedom from debt, and blamelessness. In the Dīghajāṇu-sutta, the Buddha explained the four conditions of welfare and happiness in this present life—accomplishment in industry (ujaṭṭhānasampadā), accomplishment in protection (ārakkha-sampadā), good friendship (kalyāṇamittatā), and righteous livelihood (samajīvitā). The Mahāmaṅgala-sutta expatiates upon those conditions—‘much learning’ (bāhu-sacca) ‘skill’ (sippa), ‘morality’ (sīla), ‘proper training’ (susikkhita), ‘charity’ (dāna), ‘having had meritorious deeds’ (kata-puññatā), etc.—of mundane happiness in more detail as the highest bliss in this life. The Buddha specially accentuated training and skill to be happy in the mundane life for the lay people. These may motivate people to work harder in school and go to college so that they can get a better job. A job is a prerequisite for living in modern society. In order to have a successful career, it is essential to graduate from university.

4.3. Who leads the Harmonious Families?

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8. A. IV. 281–2; NDB, 8:54, WP, pp. 1194-1195.
4.3.1. Husband and Wife: The Best Companions

Men and women who are legally married to one another are given by law specific rights and duties resulting from that relationship. Householder should use the possessions legitimately obtained for happiness and well-being for parents, wife and children, servants and workpeople, friends and relatives.\(^{10}\) According to the Siṅgālovāda-sutta, there are five ways in which a husband should minister to his wife, by not being unfaithful to her, by giving authority to her, by providing her with adornments. And also there are five ways in which a wife, thus ministered to by her husband as the western direction, will reciprocate: by properly organizing her work, by being kind to the servants, by not being unfaithful, by protecting stores, and by being skillful and diligent in all she has to do.\(^{11}\)

Healthy marriage is good for couples in mental and physical health. It is also good for children that growing up in a happy home protects children from mental, physical, educational and social problems. But, the burden of trying to maintain a relationship, caring for a child and holding down a job is often too much for married couple to handle, leading to arguments and often divorce. Bad relationships, which means going to get divorced, probably they might find themselves getting into a spiral of negativity. Over recent years the marriage rate has waned and the divorce rate has waxed. Some Suttas would be good materials for the ‘Marriage Education’ (ME) as well as family counseling. The Uggaha-sutta tells five qualities of wife’s duty for the bride-to-be.\(^{12}\) The Bhariya-sutta states seven different types of wives such as killer, thief, tyrant, mother, sister, friend, and maid.\(^{13}\) The same may be said of husband. There is something inscrutable in women’s heart. Therefore, husband should enter into his wife’s feelings as women’s exceptional situations. The Āvenīka-sutta explains the peculiar sufferings to women which women experience but not men.\(^{14}\)

Getting married to right person is what’s important for both

\(^{10}\) A. III. 45ff; NDB, 5:41, WP, p. 665.
\(^{11}\) D. III. 190; LDB, 31:30, WP, p. 467.
\(^{12}\) A. III. 36ff; NDB, 5:33, WP, pp. 657ff.
\(^{13}\) A. IV. 92; NDB, 7:63, WP, p. 1064.
\(^{14}\) A. III. 239; CDB, 37:3, WP, p. 1287.
of husband and wife. Samajivī-sutta shows requirements for ideal couple. When the Buddha visited the house of Nakulapitā, both Nakulapitā and his wife professed themselves their faithfulness to each other and their desire to be husband and wife in subsequent births not only in this present life. And then, the Buddha said it is possible if they have the fourfold compatibility: faith (saddhā), virtue (sīla), generosity (cāga), and wisdom (paññā). As mentioned above, the Buddha preached a woman’s duties and roles in several Suttas. Herein, one thing to notice is that the same reasoning applies to men compatibly. Modern woman’s rights advocates have promoted gender equality, but it is already taught through the Dhamma 2,600 years ago.

4.3.2. Parents and Children

Parents and children relationship forms a basis for all subsequent human relations. The Sīlovāda-sutta describes their reciprocal obligations in five ways. The parents should minister to their children in five ways such as restraining them from evil, encouraging them to do good, training them for a profession, arranging a suitable marriage, and handing over their inheritance to children at the proper time. Also, children should minister to their parents in five ways such as supporting their parents, performing their duties for them as sons and daughters, keeping the family traditions, deserving their heritages, and offering alms for the late their relatives after parents’ deaths.

Parents: The First Teachers

In the Early Buddhist Scriptures, parents are compared with Brahmā, Devas and the First Teachers. The Brahma-sutta and Sabrahmakāni-sutta of Aṅguttara Nikāya and Itivuttaka of Khuddaka Nikāya state the duty of supporting parents by children. According to these Scriptures, the families where mother and father are respected by their children are like living with Brahmā, Devas and the First Teachers. Mother and father are worthy of gifts from their children because of the earnest devotion of parents towards their

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children with boundless loving-kindness (mettā) and compassion (karunā). Children should revere their parents as sons or daughters, and show them due honor, serve them with food and drink, with clothes and bedding, by massaging and bathing them, and by washing their feet. Because of these service to mother and father, children are praiseworthy in present world and deserve rejoice in heaven after death.\textsuperscript{18} Just as the wife is the best companion of her husband, sons are truly the support of their parents.\textsuperscript{19}

Children: The Supporters of Parents

Generally, parents wish for a son to be born in their family. Putta-sutta of Aṅguttara Nikāya gives an explanation for the reason by the following five prospects: having been supported by us; he will support us; he will do work for us; our family lineage will be extended; he will manage the inheritance, when we have passed on; he will give an offering on our behalf.\textsuperscript{20} Because of the earnest devotion of parents towards their children, mother and father are worthy of gifts from their children. “Filial piety” (Chinese: 孝, xiào) is a tradition and virtue of Eastern society. There is particular emphasis on respect for the elderly in East Asia, associated with Confucius’ doctrine of filial piety, which means obedience, respect and support for elderly parents. It is one of the key elements of Confucian philosophy. Confucius taught that filial piety is “a virtue of respect for one’s parents and ancestors.” According to the Dhammapada, ministering to mother (matteyyatā) and ministering to father (petteyyatā) are pleasant (sukhā) in this world.\textsuperscript{21} Those terms refer to good conduct (samma-paṭipatti) towards the mother or father. In fact, filial piety is the basis of human conduct and the source of all virtues across times and spaces.

5. CONCLUSION

Family system has fundamentally changed over the past few decades. Today modern families are faced with greater challenges. Recent surveys provide an overview of the families in transition.

\textsuperscript{18} A. II. 70; NDB, 4:63, WP, p. 454.
\textsuperscript{19} S. I. 37; CDB, 1:54, WP, p. 128.
\textsuperscript{20} A. V. 43; NDB, 5:39, WP, p. 663.
\textsuperscript{21} Dhp, vs. 332; Dhp, 23:13, CBBEF, p. 258.
Fertility rates have been persistently low in many OECD countries leading to smaller families. With marriage rates down and divorce rates up, there are an increasing number of children growing up in single-parent or reconstituted families. Sole-parent families are of particular concern due to the high incidence of poverty among such households. Important gains in female educational attainment and investment in more family-friendly policies have contributed to a rise in female and maternal employment, but the increased labour market participation of mothers has had only a limited effect on the child poverty rate. Child well-being indicators shows that average household incomes have increased, but child poverty rate has also risen. Family is a basic social unit. We believe “happiness begins at home.” Happy families make up a healthy society, which is necessary for a society to ameliorate human sufferings and to sustainable social world.

Buddhism aims to get rid of sufferings and to attain happiness. The Buddha states the Noble Eightfold Path (atthaṅgika-magga) as the middle way (majjhima-paṭipadā) of moderation, between the extremes of sensual indulgence (kāma-sukhallikānuyoga) and self-mortification (atta-kilamatha). Buddhism can be regarded as an integrative therapy for families by approaches to trans-generational, structural, strategic, experiential, solution focused, and narrative therapies. Āvēnika-sutta, Bhariya-sutta, Brahma-sutta, Dīghajāṇu-sutta, Mahāmaṅgala-sutta, Putta-sutta, Sabrahmakāni-sutta, Samajivī-sutta, Siṅgālovāda-sutta, Uggaha-sutta will further help us understand intricate family relationship and family functioning. They would be a guideline for harmonious family life. Jātaka stories give suitable examples of family therapy Gijjha-Jātaka, Kaccani-Jātaka, Keḷisila-Jātaka, Māhadhammppāḷa-Jātaka, etc. expose various issues, including marital conflicts and family troubles (Harischandra: 1998). Modern people seem to be more isolated, but they are always connected with their families.
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DUTY AND COMPASSION: THERAVĀDA BUDDHIST APPROACH TO HARMONIOUS FAMILIES, HEALTH CARE AND SUSTAINABLE SOCIETIES

by Pataraporn Sirikanchana* 

ABSTRACT

Duty and compassion are essential virtues for all human beings who are social members and want to live happily and peacefully in their societies. In order to secure happiness and peace of one’s life, Buddhist teachings provide a social member with some guidances for harmonious families, health care and sustainable societies in which everyone can be physically and spiritually developed. Some Buddhist principles and practices are mentioned as examples. In addition, the cases of sustainable lives and happiness of people in Thailand are mentioned as examples of the accomplishment of Buddhist lives in a sustainable society.

1. INTRODUCTION

Duty and compassion are two distinguished virtues of “a good person” in Buddhist perspectives which essentially support harmonious families, health care and sustainable societies. While “duty” is a social or moral obligation one is obliged to do, “compassion” is a spiritual consciousness naturally existing and

* Professor, Doctor, International Buddhist Studies College Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Thailand.
arising in human mind. Here, Theravada Buddhist perspectives will be shown to illustrate the points. In the *Dhammapada* of the Buddhist Scriptures, a good person (sappurisa) is a good friend who considers his/her duty of protecting his/her friend with compassion. Since the good and wise person sees one’s faults and declares what is blameworthy, one should associate with him/her since s/he is sincere and give one the chance to do better (Harvey, ed. 2018, p. 301). A good person is wise and always for the better. If s/he sees our faults, s/he will sincerely tell us. S/he is thus like a revealer of treasures who is worth our association. Besides, the monastic life depends wholly on having supportive companions and friendly advisers or teachers (kalyāna-mitta or “good friend”) in the sense of virtuous and wise spiritual friends with the Buddha as the greatest of these.

Throughout the Buddha’s teachings in the *Dhammapada* one can see that ‘a good person’ is the wise one. S/he is wise and clearly know what is good or bad because s/he has spent a long time in studying and practising the dhamma. Since s/he is knowledgeable, s/he properly understands the world, stays in peace and harms no one. Moreover, s/he is free from all evil deeds and self-attachment and always yields proper benefits to others. Those who are friends of a good person are thus accordingly good. On the contrary, those who are ignorant cannot differentiate good from evil. They are somehow led to do evil and thus have to reap the fruits of their bad deeds.

In the seven distinguishing qualities (sappurisadhamma) of a virtuous person, the Buddha preaches, for example, the qualities of knowledge on essential principles and causes and on objectives and effects. Those who possess qualities of knowledge on essential principles and causes (dhammaññutā) know essential principles and causes of the laws of nature. Besides, they know essential teachings, guidelines, and responsibilities which are causes for successful and effective actions toward their goals. This knowledge initiates the sense of duty. For examples, a monk knows the Buddha’s teachings very well that he must study and practice; a ruler knows the righteous principles of leadership and governance. Moreover, those who possess qualities of knowledge on objectives and effects (atthaññutā) thoroughly know objectives and effects. They know
the meaning and purpose of specific teachings, codes of practice, and duties. In other words, they know the desired fruit of specific actions. For example, a disciple know the meaning and purpose of whatever he studies and practises including the good of the goal in his life (Payutto, 2017, p.1026). In theravada Buddhist tradition, the Arahants or the Buddhist saints are exemplars of those who are perfected with duty and compassion since they are free from all defilements and devote themselves for the good of others.

In the Thai context, the late king Rāma IX or King Bhumibol Adulyadej also promoted the virtues of duty and compassion. He told the Thai people to keep doing their duty and to try to accomplish their assigned duties. He urged everyone to do their duty for duty’s sake in order to accomplish the virtues of being human. Being a good person, according to the King, would yield wisdom to himself/herself and the prosperity of his life and his country. (Ministry of Culture, 2005, p.41) Besides, he urged all Thais to be compassionate toward one another through living with sufficient economy. Through the way of sufficient economy, each one should be compassionate to the other. S/he needed to be less egoistic and more generous to others. He explained that when one felt the limit of sufficiency, one did not want to have more than one really needed. One did not want to take advantage of others. Thus, the knowledge of sufficiency is necessary to cultivate compassion toward others (The National Research Committee of Economy of Thailand, 2003, p.19)

2. DUTY AND COMPASSION AS MEANS OF HARMONIOUS FAMILIES

Duty and compassion provide a peaceful and harmonious family which flourishes in happiness and benefits of life. The practices of duty and compassion in Buddhism are dhammic practices for the harmony of our benefits and those of others. These practices can be realized through the leadership of wisdom. According to the Buddha’s teachings, the benefits of the dhammic practices, e.g., giving things to the needy and saving one’s life, are spiritual rather than material gains. These spiritual gains may become causes of virtues, happiness, and the end of suffering of practitioners.

There are many of the Buddha’s teachings concerning means
of harmonious families in the Buddhist Scriptures. Some sets of teachings can be mentioned here as examples:

- The four principles for leading the household life (gharāvā-sa-dhamma).
- The four causes for a family’s prosperity and longevity (kula-ciraṭṭhiti-dhamma).

The teaching of four principles for leading the household life is in the Tipitaka (S.I. 215) and explained by Venerable P.A. Payutto (the present monastic rank is Somdet Phra Buddhaghosacariya) as the teaching for the sustainable household life of a couple. The couple who want to live together peacefully for long need to follow this dhamma:

- **Sacca** (truthfulness) is truthful and faithful to each other in thoughts, speech and deeds.
- **Dama** (training) is the exercise of restraint, training of oneself to correct faults, resolution of differences, adaptation to each other and improvement of oneself.
- **Khanti** (patience) is to be firm, stable and patient with each other. The couple need to endure difficulties and hardship in order to overcome obstacles together.
- **Cāga** (sacrifice) is to be thoughtful and be able to do for the sake of the partner. For example, one may sacrifice his/her good sleep in order to look after his/her partner who is sick (Payutto, 2008, p.54).

The teaching of four causes for a family’s prosperity and longevity, on the other hand, are for the head of a family. They are known as the four Kula-ciraṭṭhiti-dhamma in the Aṅguttara-nikāyā. II. 249 of the Tipitaka. The head of a family who wants to sustain his/her family needs to wisely do the mission as follows:

- **Naṭṭha-gavesanā** (recovery). When things are lost or used up, s/he recovers them.
- **Jiṇṇa-pāṭisaṅkharaṇā** (repair). When things are old and damaged, s/he restores and repairs them.
- **Parimita-pānabhojanā** (moderation). S/he is moderate in his/her eating and using.
• **Adhipaccasīlavantathāpanā** (right appointment). S/he puts the right one on the right job. S/he places the good and capable one in charge of the household. (Payutto, 2008, p.56).

A harmonious family can exist because the head of the family and family members wisely understand their roles, are committed to their duties and treat one another with compassion. Whenever our minds are pure and free from evil, we will be conscious of others’ problems and better understand them. Compassion thus well arises in an undisturbed mind. One can say that the Buddha and the Arahants (Buddhist saints) possess the highest level of compassion because their minds are free from all defilements and are thus best conscious of others’ sufferings. That’s why they play many significant roles in helping all the miserable.

3. DUTY AND COMPASSION FOR THE SUPPORT OF HEALTH CARE

Health care is an essential duty of all living beings, especially of human beings. Health is the most precious property of life and a potential strength of creativity and production. A good health yields happiness and success to it owner. For example, if we are ill, we cannot do the best of our jobs. Similarly, when we have a poor health, we can neither do our work nor earn our living which finally either lead us to trouble and failure in our lives.

Through wisdom, we understand that human beings are composed of natural elements which are subject to change and to which are not worth clinging. Besides, wisdom reveals to us the Law of Cause and Effect which remind us to manage with the cause in order to gain the satisfying effect. Since human beings are composed of body and mind which relate to each other, they are thus the cause of well-being and deterioration of each other as well. Generally, Buddhist teachings guide ways of living simply, keeping a good health, keeping oneself physically and mentally clean, and staying in a good environment for the sake of one’s own self and others. We are able to gain the knowledge of this principle through wisdom.

Through our cultivation of the senses of duty and compassion, we learn to maintain our good health by means of keeping our four body elements in balance, e.g. right eating and right living.
Moreover, we should keep our minds in balance through right thought and meditation practice. Buddhist meditation is aimed at the attainment of spiritual health and mental health. As to the spiritual health, meditation yields wisdom which is useful for both the development of our daily lives and the attainment of the ultimate peace (Payutto, 19997, p. 153).

Apart from cultivating self-knowledge, Buddhist teachings also encourage altruistic attitude toward others. Particularly, the virtues of loving kindness and compassion are emphasized in the practices for health care. Medical doctors and nurses, thus, should be with loving kindness and compassion in order to support the patient against their illness and initiate their cooperation in the process of healing.

In Thai medical principle, keeping oneself in good health is better than having a good medical care. Health maintenance can be attained through keeping the four body elements, i.e. earth, water, fire, and air, in balance by means of right eating and right living. For example, in Thailand, it is believed that if a person has a bad digestion, s/he needs to improve his/her Fire Element in the stomach. S/he should eat hot food and “hot” vegetable such as ginger, chilli, and so on. On the contrary, if s/he has a high fever which is believed to be caused by too much Fire Element in the body, s/he should avoid eating food of high calorie, e.g. sticky rice, durian, and so on (Ratarasarn, 1989, pp. 261-265).

Apart from keeping the body elements in balance, a person should also keep his/her mental balance. The art of health maintenance is based on the Buddhist assumption that the strong mind can support the body through its difficulties. In the Vinaya, the Monastic Rules in the Buddhist Scriptures, one can find the Buddhist methods of holistic treatment. For example, a medical doctor or care assistant should take care of both physical and mental conditions of a patient. The Vinaya reflects the good qualities of a successful medical doctor and a hopeful patient as follows: A medical doctor’s good qualities are 1) being able to prepare proper medicine 2) knowing the suitable food for a patient and being able to prepare it properly 3) taking care of a patient with loving kindness and compassion without greed for more gain. 4) being willing to serve a patient without disgusting his/her
excrement and so on. 5) being able to persuade a patient to follow the suggestion and to encourage a patient to fight against his/her illness. Similarly, a patient’s good qualities are: 1) being ready to take things easy 2) being moderate in life style 3) being willing to take medicine 4) being truthful to the medical doctor or care assistant as to his/her illness 5) being patient with his/her physical pain (Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya university, Vol. 5, 1996, pp. 239-243)

Both medical doctors and patients need to cope with their treatment of illness through their senses of duty and compassion. A medical doctor should be with some ethical values, e.g. loving kindness, compassion and altruistic mind. A patient should take his/her duty to follow the guidance of his/her medical doctor in order to be recover from his/her illness in due time.

4. DUTY AND COMPASSION FOR THE REALIZATION OF SUSTAINABLE SOCIETIES

In order to live happily and be able to survive by one’s own self, one needs to follow the Principles of Right Livelihood. Right Livelihood is a Path toward “The End of Suffering” in human lives. The main purpose of earning a good living in a society is to have an adequate amount of the four requisites, i.e. lodging, clothing, food, and medication. The Buddha’s teachings do not encourage an abundance of material wealth which lures people to more material possessions. This principle of sufficiency can be seen in the Buddha’s teaching of the good or proper governance.

In Kūtadanta Sutta, the Buddha preached the right method of sacrifice in order to obtain utility and happiness. The Sutta narrated that Kutadanta Brahmin advised King Mahā-vijita to improve the economic situation in his country by supporting all necessities of the people, e.g. providing both thieves and the people in his country with food seeds to grow in the field and supporting all civil servants with food and wages. Having done this, the royal property would increase. Thieves and rebels would disappear from the country. All people would feel secure and live happily at home. This principle of sufficiency is included as one of responsibilities of a king. The success of a ruler’s work should be measured not by a full treasury
or abundant wealth but by the absence of poverty in society (Dīgha-nikāya. III.61 in Payutto, 2017, pp. 1250-1251).

In Thailand, His Majesty the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej or the Ninth King of this Dynasty had done much work on the principle of sufficiency. Especially, his theory of Sufficient Economy is primarily based on the Buddhist teaching of self-reliance and a moderate life. This theory was first introduced by His Majesty of his people in order to solve the problems of poverty, morality and environments in Thailand in 1974 when he gave his royal speech on the occasion of the Commencement of Kasetsart University Students. He emphasized that the development of the country should follow a step-by-step plan. It should first provide the people with self-sufficiency by means of an economical way of life and proper management. Then it could proceed to a higher step of economic success and social prosperity (Sirikanchana, 2012, p. 16). Sufficient economy promotes self-reliance. A person who is economically secure can survive and help others. It is the Buddhist way of life which promotes the Middle Path as an overriding principle for appropriate conduct by the populace at all levels. It is a holistic concept of moderation and contentment which can be applied to all conducts in family, community, and nation. Self-sufficiency enables self-reliance. It strengthens economic stability of an individual in order to live harmoniously with his/her natural environment. The Buddha’s teachings in the Tipitalca suggest the Buddhists to divide their income into 4 parts. One part is for supporting themselves, their dependents and for good causes. Two parts are for investments. The last part is for saving for future needs (Payutto, 2008, p. 41). Sufficient economy encourages all human beings to attain sustainable happiness which are as follows:

- Happiness of possessing one’s property which is the outcome of one’s own effort and moral conduct
- Happiness of spending one’s property for the sake of one’s own self, one’s own family, the needy and the public welfare
- Happiness of freedom from debt
- Happiness of blameless conduct (Payatto, 2008, p. 44).

This Theory was recommended by the United Nation (UN)
which honoured his Majesty the King with the Human Development Lifetime Achievement Award in May 26, 2006. In the UN Lecture in honor of him, the Theory of Sufficient Economy was praised as a worthy theory for Thailand and all nations.

5. CONCLUSION

Duty and compassion are essential virtues of all human beings and particularly emphasized in the Buddhist teachings. They support a higher level of dhammic practices based on the development of wisdom and the attainment of final liberation. Consciousness of duty and sense of compassion encourages us to live with other beings and the world of nature in harmony in order to share peace and happiness with one another. Through duty and compassion, we can develop our public mind and share responsibility of human beings, societies, and the world of nature. We are thus enjoy being with our environments and can live with others happily, creatively, and harmoniously.

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LIFE STYLE ENHANCEMENT AND NEW DIMENSIONS OF HEALTH CARE: A FOCUS ON PAIN MANAGEMENT

by Padmasiri De Silva*

ABSTRACT

A very wise thinker in Israeli said, ‘History teaches us that men and nations behave wisely when they have exhausted all other alternatives’. Today, in the area of heart diseases, cancer and mental health, mindfulness practice is used as a cornerstone helping others for making healthy lifestyle changes. When available therapies do not apparently work, mindfulness opens a new entry toward offsetting stress, tension and anxiety. How to make life style changes through meditation with a focus on pain management is a central concern of this paper, an area where I have worked as a counsellor for many years. There has been a radical transformation of the Western psychological tradition which has accepted the Buddha’s perennial insight that the severity of suffering depends on our attitude towards it, reminding us of Freud who said: ‘I am merely converting hysteria into common unhappiness’. The central points in my therapeutic approach are the following (i) Instead of trying to directly change our thoughts, we create a wide, open hearted space for experience—less resistant and non-reactive; (ii) Acceptance, curiosity, tolerance and the ability to embrace pain with friendship. (iii) The mind has to be receptively aware of subliminal tendencies (anusaya) of lust, anger and conceit; (iv) Subliminal base of pain emphasise that pain is never an isolated physical sensation but also a second emotional

* Professor, Monash University, Australia.
level described as STRESS and is the reason why mindfulness as a therapeutic intervention is effective and reduces the emotional reactivity of chronic pain. The second part of the paper presents the contributions of two icons of pain management: “Vidyamala Burch (The Breathworks Program) and of Risa Kaparo’s ground breaking study, through pain and trauma, ‘the art and practice of embodied mindfulness’: See, Padmasiri de Silva, Emotions and the Body In Buddhist Contemplative Practice and Mindfulness Based Therapy, Palgrave Macmillan, 2018). The use of Mindfulness, for Lifestyle Enhancement comes under, “Call for Innovative Ideas for Sustainable Development” in UN programmes.

1. PERSPECTIVE: FOUNDATIONS OF MINDFULNESS

CONTEMPORARY REVIEW OF THE SATIPATTHANA: RECENT TRENDS IN PSYCHOTHERAPY & NEUROSCIENCE RESEARCH

A very wise thinker in Israeli said, “History teaches us that when man and nations behave wisely when they have exhausted all other alternatives’. Today in the area of heart diseases, cancer and mental health, mindfulness is used a cornerstone to make life style changes, as available therapies do not work.

There has been a radical transformation of the Western psychological tradition which has during modern times, accepted the Buddha’s perennial insight that the severity of human suffering depends largely on our attitude towards it.

Our relationship to emotional pain is a key factor in how much we suffer. For example, the latest wave of cognitive behaviour therapy understands that trying to directly change our thoughts is less effective than creating a wide, openhearted space for our experience—a less resistant, less avoidant relationship to our thoughts and feelings. This view is expressed in the mindfulness-based cognitive therapy maxim: “thoughts are thoughts not facts”.

Thus opening out and creating a space is important. Second strand is acceptance: curiosity, tolerance, willingness and the ability to embrace pain with friendship, as presented in acceptance, commitment theory. ACT draws a distinction between pain and suffering: when we encounter a painful content within ourselves, we want to do what we always do, fix it up and sort it out, so that we can get rid of it. They
emphasise the danger of experiential avoidance and acceptance is not a heavy, sad, dark thing—it is an active, vital embrace.

Third point is that the Buddhist perspective while endorsing the first two strands, also considers capacities like attention, compassion and empathy are skills that can be learned, rather than a product of good genes and a fortunate childhood. Christopher Germer offers an insightful path for befriending painful feelings through self-compassion (Germer, 2009).

These three points are at the heart of the *Satipatthana*, according to a recent commentary: (i) The contemplation of the mind does not involve active measures to oppose unwholesome states of mind, like anger or lust; the mind has to be receptively aware by clearly recognising the state of mind that underlies a particular train of thought: As the Buddha says, see lust as lust and anger as anger; (ii) This is necessary as there is a tendency to ignore that which goes against the grain of one’s self-importance; (iii) There is also a tendency to use techniques of deception (*vanchaka dhamma*) and these are often fed by (unconscious) subliminal tendencies (*anusaya*) of lust, anger and conceit. Such hidden motives may be clearly seen at three levels: dormant level (*anusaya*); as emerging thoughts (*pariyutthana*) or result in ungovernable impulsive actions (*vitikamma*) or physiological pressure.

A fourth point. If we look at anger/aversion of our pain, as a purely negative emotion to be destroyed, we lose sight of the fact that for Buddhism such an emotion has a *hermeneutical role*, where the cognitive meaning is important, the message in the emotion, and with a little magic we see it’s impermanent nature. The Buddha has said, “see aversion as aversion”, “lust as lust”, do not judge them as good and bad, see them as impersonal processes (as *dhammas*). This attitude keeps off resentment, guilt and in neurological terms, *reactivity*. *Resilience* is the most important emotional style/skill to be developed. Thus both Buddhist contemplative practice and Western psychotherapy are *twin paths to emotional healing*. It may be said from my personal experience as a therapist that therapy is a useful adjunct to meditative practice.

A fifth point: Ven.Nyanaponika says, do not throw away your
negative emotions as they can be transformed and by a little magic converted into their opposites (patience and forgiveness towards yourself/others) or made objects of meditation (dhammanupassana) (liberation by insight); method of remediying one emotion by another (is advocated by the philosopher Spinoza), changing aversion by compassion and kindness towards one self. Philosopher Nietzsche and the Tibetan Buddhist tradition recognise that there is vital power in some negative emotions that can be harnessed—they can endanger illness or show a path to cure. (see, de Silva, 2014, pp163—166), on Mindfulness-Based Emotion-Focussed Therapy (EFT). Tibetan Buddhism advocates “metabolizing anger” with the image of the peacock that eats poison, but generates the splendour of the multi-coloured feathers.

2. THE STORY: THREE ICONS OF PAIN MANAGEMENT

Jon Kabat-Zinn, Vidyamala Burch—Breathworks Program; Risa Kaparo—Awakening Somatic Intelligence. Vidyamala was trained in the mindfulness-based Stress Reduction Therapy by Jon-Kabat-Zinn and MBCT (Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (Williams & Kabat-Zinn), and I shall explain the nature of this therapy. In fact the earliest mindfulness-based therapy, Behaviour Modification Therapy, was initiated by a close Sri Lankan friend, the late Padmal de Silva).

The Structure of Satipatthana and Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy

To bring awareness to body (kaya), feelings (vedana) and thoughts (citta) are three facets covered in MBCT. The fourth item in the satipatthana, dhamma is hard to translate, and at least one meaning is the laws that govern the mind-body linkage, and we will not examine this dimension just now. The body scan practiced in MBCT involves: direct experience of physical sensations, being with the body in the present moment; be intentional about where and how the attention is placed, deliberately engage and disengage as we move through the body; relate skilfully to mind wandering, without judging them; allowing things to be as they are, relaxation instead of restlessness. Feelings: though the range of emotions we experience is vast, like in Buddhism, MBCT recognises at the
experiential gut level, that we constantly register our internal and external experience as pleasant, unpleasant and neutral. Aversive reactions are triggered by unpleasant feelings, and its impact on the body is seen. Tuning in and befriending feelings helps to see linkages between body and feelings. In Buddhist practice, by using the technique of bare attention, any transition from painful feelings to negative emotions triggered by subliminal anger (patighanussaya) or a transition of pleasant feelings to lust/greed, triggered by subliminal lust (raganusaya) are watched with vigilance. It has been observed that in MBCT, the difference between knowing that our experience is made up of body sensations, thoughts and feelings and actually directly experiencing this interplay is huge. The focus on the automatic patterns of aversion and clinging play a crucial role in the eight-week MBCT program.

**Auto-pilot of thinking.**

Our skills with practical activities have become our automatic repertoire, and this way of habitual problem solving has become automatized. Often beyond our conscious awareness, the normal thinking mind is engaged in automatic activity of judging and monitoring, but this habitual turn of mind that takes place automatically makes the person incapable of making conscious choices in responding to experience, and this narrowed activity may have a catastrophic impact on our emotional lives as thought and emotions have an integral relations, as unlike feelings emotions are nourished by our thought patterns. This pattern described as the “Doing Mode”, rather than the Being-mode which is mindful of what is happening, leads to repetitive automatic thoughts: “though I thought that this time I will get the job, I am a failure, I just cannot see any alternative, I have no one to help me...” and so the auto-pilot works, instead of searching for positives and this sort of perspectives are at the center of depression and anxiety. Rumination is an attempt to solve an emotional problem in the most destructive way, as our emotional life is not a problem and the extra dose of suffering is our own creation. For instance, in itself sadness is not a problem as it is an innate part of being human, and we cannot try to fix it, and thus a passing state of sadness may lead to persistent unhappiness, as I have described in an article on the “Lost Art of Sadness”de
sIlva, 2014, pp 164-69). Experiential avoidance to which I have referred earlier makes the condition still worse, as reservoirs of unprocessed material accumulate. When we get to understand negative emotions, the difference between emotional reactivity as different from responding would become clear.

3. PAIN MANAGEMENT

Vidyamala Burch suffered from chronic back pain for over thirty years due to congenital weakness, a car accident and multiple surgeries. She was first trained by Kabat-Zinn following his program (outlined above) and then has over the years helped thousands of sufferers to live more fulfilling lives, using the Breathworks, 8 steps program. Risa Kaparo worked on Awakening Somatic Intelligence—the art and practice of embodied mindfulness.

Risa Kaparo’s story is remarkable: “Somatic learning is not something I learnt from books or teachers but from my own Body”. She was originally an artist who was given an assignment by the government to build a fibre art playground ground on rock, but imagined that the rock ground was soft and possible to handle with a jack hammer; the rock proved to be hard and while trying to use it, the hammer hit back her body with severe injuries, and the injury was so severe, and the suffering she underwent is hard to narrate, unless you read her story. After gradual recovery, she came under the influence of Brother David, who was both a Benedictine monk and a Buddhist monk at the same time and was more intimately open to the influence of Jiddu Krishnamurti and remarkable group of seers—the perennial spring of mysticism. While teaching sculpture to a group of blind students who had a remarkable sense of the vibrations of their body, Risa made it a paradigm experience to access what she called the wisdom of her own body. Her personality-- artist, poet, therapist, mystic nourished this remarkable story of the pioneer of somatic intelligence.

4. THEORY OF PAIN MANAGEMENT

Traditional Sensory neurophysiology that dominated pain research was influenced by a Cartesian Dualism: the brain detects and perceives pathological bodily processes passively and mechanically—they looked at the body and mind as separate entities. According to
the new view, pain is subjective and physical pain is invariably tied to our emotions: “Pain refers broadly to describe any unpleasant experience that has a physical dimension, whether caused by disease injury, stress or emotion” (Burch, 2008). PURE PAIN IS NEVER DIRECTED AS AN ISOLATED SENSATION. PAIN IS ALWAYS ACCOMPANIED BY EMOTIONS AND MEANING UNIQUE TO EACH INDIVIDUAL. There is a difference between primary pain and secondary pain. Secondary pain is beyond mere physical sensations, adding both physical and emotional responses. Craig Hassad points out that mental and emotional responses, the second layer to physical pain may be described as STRESS. (1) Stress increases the output of inflammatory chemicals, we have poured fuel on the inflammatory fire; (2) Secondly, we may be physically tensed when stressed, which may add to the muscle spasms that is present at the site of the pain; (3) When we become hyper-vigilant for the pain (always looking out for it), we sensitise the pain circuits of the brain. This may be an important reason, why mindfulness is so therapeutic for preoccupation about the pain and reduces the emotional reactivity of chronic pain, as it helps to unhook attention from the preoccupation about the pain and reduces the emotional reactivity to it when noticed. (4) Stress seems to change the chemical composition of the nerve endings, making them more liable to fire off pain messages. It is just the unconscious way we anticipate, react and respond to pain, and mindfulness can reverse the situation (Hassad, Mindfulness for Life, 2012, p 132). Chronic pain syndromes are common in the presence of stress.

Buddhism & Mindfulness: Adding Emotional Responses to Physical Pain

The Buddha is in fact saying, Rather than being driven solely by the desire to eliminate suffering, the wise person learns to change the relationship to suffering. The Celebrated Sallaka Sutta, Story of the two arrows/darts (Samyutta Nikaya/Kindred Sayings, Vedana samyutta, 36.6) is a beautiful paradigm illustration.

“When an ordinary person experiences a painful bodily feeling they worry, agonise and feel distraught. Then they feel two types of pain, one physical and one mental. It’s as if this person was pierced by an arrow, and then immediately afterwards by a second arrow,
and they experience the pain of two arrows.” Having being touched by painful feeling, they resist and resent it—sorrows, grieves, laments, beating his breast, becomes distraught—the subliminal anger (patigha anusaya) dominate, and he knows no other alternative except sensual pleasure and such diversions, subliminal tendency to obtain pleasures (raga anusaya) captures his mind; compulsive distractions like alcohol and cigarettes overtakes his mind. Vidyamala Burch also citing this sutta says, people do resort to blocking out the pain, by recreational drugs, shopping, chocolate, work, talking, sleeping and so on. They can also get drowned and overwhelmed, depressed.

My Personal Story

In the context of these three great icons of pain management, I am not giving a narrative of my experience of two months of severe physical pain and the fourfold facets of the therapy which brought me back to normal life, which will be presented at a forthcoming conference, ITMBU conference on Pain Management. The most important component was the practice of Vipassana meditation with a focus on the vibration patterns in the body, briefly summarised below. (Also see, de Silva, 2013 in the footnotes)

The sixth sense

The five senses bring information with the translation of neural impulses to smell, taste, sound, touch and visual image. While the five senses bring information from the outside world, a consciousness independent of the five senses emerge in deep meditative states, which is referred to as sixth sense (In Pali, anindriyapatibattha Vinnana—non-sensory consciousness). When the meditator shifts from samatha (Tranquility meditation) to insight meditation (vipassana), the ‘breath’ is seen as an air draft rather than as breath, and it is seen as a vibration pattern: the air (striker element), that which pushes; the point of touch, tip of the nose or lips, the base element (solidity); the rubbing of the air draft on the nose or lips, ignition (fire element)—the generation of heatness/coolness; the moist element—water. In deep meditation the whole process is seen as an impersonal process (devoid of a person). As the meditation develops (minimum 30
mts), the vibration patterns gradually display more refined qualities, as the gap between in-breath and out-breath becomes smaller, more refined qualities emerge: roughness and softness; flowing, hot-cold; contraction-expansion; and so on. Out of these qualities tightness and looseness, hot and dry, wet and moist are refined vibration patterns. The most important change, as the breath becomes finer and finer we experience what is called the “breath-Body”—the bodily dispositions (kaya-sankhara) and the feverish activity of the body subsides, (passambayam-kayasankhara). Body and mind emerge together and fades of together. The tranquilization of the breath-body generates the contemplative emotions of joy (pity), rapture and well-being (sukha). The sixth sense is described by neurologist as, interoception.

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The pager beeps, the klaxon sounds, or the smart phone rings; and, out of the comfort and warmth of their bed a volunteer first responder (i.e. firefighter, paramedic, emergency medical technician, or search and rescue team member) is rudely awaken. Hearing the 911¹ dispatch information from the radio; the responder pulls on their jump suit², laces up their boots, and reaches over to kiss their spouse goodbye. It is a kiss they both know, but refuse to consider, may be their last memory of their loved one. And, with that, the responder heads out in the dark, cold, rainy night to meet their fate.

In the next moments of this early morning, they may be headed to the heat of a fire; the chill of an avalanche; the devastation left in the wake of a tsunami or a tornado; or, the bedside of a child.

¹. 911 is the emergency dispatch network in the United States. It is analogous to 999 in Hong Kong, 115 in Vietnam, or 112 in many other countries. (As this paper is being presented to an international audience that may not be familiar with the “jargon” of a first responder in the U.S., explanations will be extended where appropriate.)

². A “jump suit” is a specially designed coverall, often made of flame resistant/retardant fabric.
unable to breath. They share within themselves the altruism of the Bodhisattva ideal; but they also share the shock, horror and grief of the dismembered body, the lifeless infant, the elder whose last breath has been expelled, and the suffering of those near and approaching death due to illness or trauma.

We often consider the patient, who has succumbed to illness; or, the homeowner that has lost all that they treasured. But, how often do we consider the physical and psychological toll that their altruism takes upon the first responder. This paper is merely a brief survey of the need for care for the first responder – whether they be in a career/paid position or in a volunteer capacity. However, this exploration will focus more pointedly on the volunteer first responder and how the principles of Buddhism and mindfulness are making inroads in the care and resiliency of these heroes found in every community of our World.

In the United States, 69% of firefighters are volunteers and some 50% emergency medical providers are as well. These numbers increase to well over 90% in predominantly rural areas. Generally, they are trained to the same standards as their career or paid colleagues. While their call volume is far less and often times, they are responding not to some unknown patient or victim of a tragic accident; but they are headed to aid a neighbor, friend or relative – such is life and death in a small town. In many ways, it is this factor which magnifies the impact of events they observe and respond to in exercising their duty.

The repercussions of their selfless service to the community is reflected in alarming statistics and rates. In the United States, more firefighters and police officers during 2017 died at their own hand, than perished in fires or altercations. (Heyman, 2008) It is hard to imagine that this is different than the experience in other countries. Often times, departments and communities focus on the psychological toll a high-profile incident – a terror attack, a school shooting, a bombing at a café – takes upon responders and civilians alike; but what is lost in the discussion of that “CNN Moment” is the suffering, pain, and anguish witnessed by a first responder on a

3. National Fire Protection Association
According to a survey by the University of Phoenix, 34% of first responder personnel report being formally diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), as compared to a lifetime risk among all adults of developing the disorder of just 3.5%.4 “PTSD is marked by unusually strong, and often difficult to control, feelings of anger, guilt, anxiety, fear, or shock. These symptoms create significant difficulty in conducting standard daily activities. Common co-occurring conditions also include: Alcoholism or substance addiction; Anxiety disorders; Personality disorders; Adjustment disorders; and, Depression or bipolar disorder.”5

5. https://blog.grahammedical.com/blog/ems-ptsd-statistics
The symptoms of PTSD in the first responder, however, follow no particular pattern. Just as the coping mechanisms individuals engage in times of stress are highly individualized, so is the manifestation of PTSD related afflictions. Most commonly, the symptomology falls into three categories, which can be manifested singularly or in conjunction: intrusive memories, avoidance behaviors, and the effects of hyper-arousal. Each manifestation carries with it its own set of impacts upon the professional and personal lives of the afflicted.

As the frequency and intensity of disasters increase, whether a result of climate change or human strife, one can only imagine the adverse effect that an ever-increasing operational tempo will have upon the physiological and psychological health of the first responder community.

Understanding the problems faced by first responders only provides framing to the true issue.

Recognition needs to be made that reactive support to first responders, with services such as critical incident stress debriefing, while certainly of benefit to those afflicted by witnessing or participating in traumatizing events, is nothing more than a panacea. It is a valiant effort at attempting to harness the beast, after it has left the barn. The true remedy for the mental health crisis afflicting first responders is recognition of a need for proactive support.

It is in the basic academy training of first responders that they must be provided the tools with which to cope throughout their years of service, whether volunteer or career (compensated). It is here that seeds for immunity, the vaccination if you will, must be administered to provide to first responders the resiliency required to perform their mission. It is here that the Great Physician and the Dhamma provide exactly the medicine which is sought by so many.

In speaking to monks in the Simsapa Forest, it is said that the Buddha instructed about stress.

“And what have I taught? ‘This is stress... This is the origination
of stress... This is the cessation of stress... This is the path of practice leading to the cessation of stress': This is what I have taught. And why have I taught these things? Because they are connected with the goal, relate to the rudiments of the holy life, and lead to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to calm, to direct knowledge, to self-awakening, to Unbinding. This is why I have taught them.

"Therefore, your duty is the contemplation, 'This is stress... This is the origination of stress... This is the cessation of stress.' Your duty is the contemplation, 'This is the path of practice leading to the cessation of stress.'"

With such specific teachings, it is not unexpected that the thoughts of the Buddha would be reflected in various approaches and modalities advanced both for the teaching of resiliency and for the treatment of PTSD.

The beauty and elegance of Buddhism is that it is at once a religion, a philosophy, and a science of the mind. Perhaps this is the greatest gift bestowed upon us by the Buddha. The Dhamma together with the practices and teachings to be derived from it, provide all responders with the jump-kit\(^8\) needed for self-care and the care of our colleagues. To use these tools and interventions does not require one to be Buddhist; nor, does it necessarily have to conflict or challenge the belief system or wisdom path one has chosen.

The Buddha and those that have followed his teachings for all these last few millennia, have provided a wealth of tools to be used to serve the first responder. In the brief format of this essay, it is impossible to address each practice and its various variants. But, by way solely of illustration, the briefest of explorations is offered.

Before the first call a fledgling responder is dispatched to, while learning the techniques of fire suppression, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, or the use of force, we must teach and emphasize self-care. The practice of mindfulness is uniquely suited for developing

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7. SN 56.31

8. A “jump-kit” is an easily carried medical bag used by first responders containing both basic and advance life support equipment and medications. The author’s kit contains splints, bandages, airways, medications, intravenous fluids, diagnostic equipment and equipment for emergency intubation, chest decompression, and cricothyrotomy.
the individual resiliency required to devote oneself to public service.

Of course, today, mindfulness is marketed, packaged and is “in vogue”; it is the new, best thing. It is a phenomenon that has exploded upon the popular culture. Many that practice mindfulness do so with little understanding or connection to its underlying teachings. That said, what is it really? Mindfulness, for the purpose of this essay, is reduced to its simplest and most secular form. It is simply that awareness which arises from purposely paying attention to the World around you at this present moment, without judgement, expectation or bias.

A Canadian firm, MindWell U, markets mindfulness training to various professionals.\(^9\) In 2017, they provided an on-line mindfulness training program to 178 first responders. After 30 days, the participants self-reported that:

- 95% feeling better about their health and wellbeing
- 93% managing stress better
- 92% practicing greater self-care
- 92% focusing better on tasks
- 91% engaging more with work
- 91% managing conflict better
- 89% treating others more kindly
- 88% communicating better
- 83% experiencing improved leadership skills
- 81% collaborating better with others
- 80% managing time better\(^10\)

The survey is certainly not able to withstand scientific rigor; but, as an anecdotal point of reference it does demonstrate the potential

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\(^9\) No endorsement of the products or services of MindWell U is neither expressed nor implied by the author. It is merely offered for its illustrative purpose of the beneficial secularization of mindfulness training.

for real benefit. More scientific studies confirm these results. (Smith, 2011)

For example, the Smith study of firefighters and PTSD found that, “mindfulness was associated with fewer PTSD symptoms, depressive symptoms, physical symptoms, and alcohol problems when controlling for the other study variables. Personal mastery and social support were also related to fewer depressive symptoms, firefighter stress was related to more PTSD symptoms and alcohol problems, and years as a firefighter were related to fewer alcohol problems.” (Smith, 2011) Beyond first responders, resiliency is of critical importance to members of the armed forces. The use of mindfulness in increasing the resiliency of the military has also been the subject of study. (Rice, 2013)

Our educators, whether in the fire service, EMS or law enforcement, are highly skilled and successful in teaching young men and women how to execute their mission. We impart upon our students the skills and training to protect property, save lives, and defend the innocent. In the course of their training, they learn how to physically survive the encounters their calling forces upon them. Yet, we do very little to equip them to survive psychologically. If only mental wellness was considered as seriously as physical prowess in the training academy, with perhaps only moments of each day devoted to the fitness of the mind; the individual cost of being a first responder could be forestalled.

Yet, even with prophylactic training in mindfulness, the most resilient of those among us can reach the point at which we are overwhelmed. Whether through the cumulative impact of a career of service, or a singular incident the horror of which overwhelms the mind; each responder is susceptible to needing tools to aid in their recovery of balance and harmony.

Here again Buddhist practices have been stripped of their religious underpinnings, secularized, and used to aid in the recovery of the responder. The Veterans Administration in the United States deals extensively with service members that have returned from conflicts with profound symptoms of PTSD. Many of the facilities they operate offer instruction in practices which many Buddhists will
recognize, though secularized. Predominantly, these are mindfulness meditations and meditations on a mantra or the breath.

Though devoid of the religious aspects, the practices taught to those that suffer from PTSD are entirely consistent with Buddhist thought and philosophy. Why wouldn’t they be? The Buddha taught that we suffer due to our futile attempts to escape conflict and negative experiences. He taught that through our practice we can open our hearts and clarify our minds. Mindfulness teaches us to be present in the moment. Mediation, when reduced to its essence, is about mindfulness and concentration. It is a perfect tool to be used in aiding others overcome the anguish of PTSD. Research has proven mindfulness practices to be effective and empowering.

This really brings into clear focus the fact that it is us, the practitioners of mediation, who have a critical role to play in caring for our community’s first responders. While we should never seek to proselytize or alter one’s faith tradition; those among us with the confidence and skill to teach mediation and to lead others in the exploration of their mind, should do so. Our first responders deserve to be given the training needed for self-care at the outset of their adventure in public service. And when the invisible wounds of that service afflict them, they need to be offered the tools to alleviate their own suffering, just as they have done for the suffering of so many others.

Ultimately, the one that must care for the responder; is the responder themselves. However, that care need not be a solitary journey; as neither is the injury.

The calling of a first responder takes a toll not only on the responder, but on the family as well. Returning to our opening vignette, the spouse and children of that responder called out into the dark of the night are not unaffected. They, too, suffer from the trauma of separation. Whether it is the uncertainty of not knowing; or, perhaps, even more difficult, the monitoring of the call on a home radio the family suffers alongside the responder.

Moreover, imagine the horror a family experiences if they monitor the radio traffic of a structure fire, knowing their loved one is on the scene, only to hear the radio crackle, “May Day, May Day,
May Day... man down, medics respond to Truck 158.” There are a host of services and seemingly endless news coverage on the plight of the responder afflicted with PTSD; but despite being miles removed from the immediate danger, the family suffers too.

Whether it is styled as compassion fatigue or secondary trauma, the children and spouse are impacted by the strain the life of a first responder places upon them. After the tragic terrorist attack on September 11, 2001, some limited studies were conducted. One study involved children of first responders in New York City and revealed that children in families with emergency medical technician parents had a statistically significant higher incident of probable PTSD symptomology. (Duran, 2006)

This strain has been studied in the literature, though it seems devoid from the popular press. The earliest commentary in the popular literature is from an evangelical Christian organization in 2008. There, Focus on the Family, recognized that the marriages in first responder households were at risk due to a number of stressors unique to the marriage. The long shifts and odd hours of career personnel; the unexpected and unplanned interruptions of family life for the volunteer; the singular focus of responders to their calling; the intensity of the adrenalin rush the responder experiences in going from calm to emergency operations in nanoseconds; and, the financial strain that can accompany either underpaid governmental service or the economic cost of volunteering all are present and exert their negative influences.11

Counseling programs for the children of first responder families is only recently being explored; but its benefit cannot be understated.12 As early as 2002 parenting guides to assist EMS families were developed to aid in explaining the rigors of the first responder life to children. (Vogel, 2005) However, their distribution and publication has been limited and sparse.

The first responder has at least two independent support networks:

their family and their colleagues. Unlike their colleagues with whom they share a common core of experiences; their family members lack that advantage. They either under-estimate the impacts the calling places upon their first responder; or, perhaps more injurious, the family may overly worry about the safety and security of their loved one. All too often, the only time the suffering of the first responder family is considered, is when a chief officer and chaplain make that mournful walk to the door of the responder’s residence to inform the survivors of their loved one’s loss in the line of duty.

Children are especially vulnerable; as they are insightful often beyond their years. They innately pick up on the stress level in the home; their hearing acuity often exceeds their parents’ expectations, hearing what was not intended for their consumption. Yet, they lack the coping mechanism and understanding to effectively process the stressors. This often will manifest itself in behaviors that are undesirable and with which the parents lack understanding. The result is an ever-escalating tension and level of dysfunction in the family.

Once again, it is submitted that the various practices of mindfulness meditation can be successfully brought to bear to aid the family of the first responder as well. They are truly silent victims. It does little to focus on the wellness of the responder; if in the process the responder’s entire family support network disintegrates. We must provide the same levels of prophylactic training in mindfulness and development of resiliency to the family as we do to the responder themselves; and, its provision may even be more critical.

The Buddhist approach to mindfulness, whether practiced in the context of its religious underpinnings or stripped of its religiosity and presented in a secular context, is fundamental to the development of harmonious families in the presence of a family member that is a first responder. Our first responders provide healthcare to the community under the most taxing, arduous and austere conditions. For us to sustain that level of emergency services our communities and society desire, we must be the ones that care for the responder.
Reference list


ABSTRACT

In this twenty-first century when humankind is craving for peace and sublime happiness, proper and caring education is the only succor. Buddhism being the greatest interest drawer for people’s daily religious behavior, its educational elements are therefore sought for enormously. It is also true that the learning/knowledge related terms (jnàna, śikṣha for example) which are found in abundance in an Asian Buddhist vocabulary, cannot be understood properly by mere one word, ‘education’, The subtlety of the Buddhist education is resultanty very important. The ethics and morality which adorn a beautiful human life are embedded in the tenets of Buddhist education which draw people towards it. However, it has been found in recent decades that the modern meaning of education is quite different and market oriented which was never a characteristics of pure education. The Buddhist education system is no exception and has been badly affected by such forces. The present paper looks at the crisis pervading within

* Prof., Dy. Dean, International Relations, University of Delhi, Delhi, India. President of South & Southeast Asian Association For the Study of Culture and Religion (SSEASR).
Buddhist education in general and its status in Southeast Asia. The remedial issues are also explored and discussed in this paper.

1. INTRODUCTION

The role of education in human growth is universally acknowledged. Since early times of mankind, the tools of education have been not only essential part of expressing ideas, knowledge and wisdom but for dissemination of learning and thus nurturing future generation. The evolution of writing, the concept of teacher, and that of writer/composer in every civilization has subsequently led to the mental development, innovation and invention, and healthier mutual socio-culture behavior. While the word ‘education’ according to Cambridge dictionary, is “the process of teaching or learning in a school, or the knowledge that you get from this”, and also, “the study of methods and theories of teaching”, we have to remember that the very word is not the total reflection or essence of the enforced synonyms of terms such ‘vidyā’, and ‘śikṣā’ frequently used in Hindu and Buddhist ‘education’. Hence, while taking the word ‘education’ in our English conversation and writing, we must realize its limitation and inability to express all what the related Indic terms stand for.

Today’s world in the name of ‘development’, ‘progress’ and ‘advancement’ has put the system of education in big trouble. The cut-throat ‘competition’ among students, scoring grades and marks becoming the main aim of the education Teachers are also themselves in a soup, as they are required all the time to ‘produce’ results. In the name of education the students are required to undergo standardized instruction intended to make them efficient servants of a demeaning social system. While such education may be necessary to guarantee societal stability, it does little to fulfil the higher end of learning, the illumination of the mind with the light of truth and goodness. A major cause of our educational problems lies in the “commercialization” of education.

The same is the case in the societies of South and Southeast Asia, where the Buddhism oriented agrarian based population is has been made tool of economic spin. Before Vietnam War, Southeast Asian life was dotted by traditional ways of life. While buffalo culture
was replaced by mechanized agriculture, the evenings at Buddhist Wat featuring discourse on Vessantara Jataka and inspiring socio-religious Lakon (Plays) were replaced by soap opera on television, the education also became prey to the economics. The concept that an education system is to prepare students to turn into productive citizens governed by the drive to maximize profits created an unnerving situation. Such aim of education was quite inconsistent with Buddhist principles and practices. The Buddhist education too therefore was in peril in these wet cultures of Southeast Asia where the rural life and agriculture covered almost 80 percent of the region. Therefore, the Buddhist monasteries which were the main source of shaping the young minds by providing primary education, began a new journey. True, practical efficiency certainly has its place in Buddhist education propounding a middle path. But for Buddhism the practical side of education must be integrated in the educational policy guided by Buddhist principles. The present paper discusses the status of Buddhist education in Southeast Asia both at the monastic level as well as at the level of the laity.

Going back to the antiquity, the origin of Buddhism itself lies in ‘knowing differently’, ‘exquisitely’ and ‘impressively’. Naturally enough, the first elements of Buddhist education were the continuation of the exploration of new ways and methods of learning and imparting knowledge. As expressed by Buddha himself, the purpose of learning and education which culminated in sending the exponents of Bhikṣu sīkṣaka (preachers) to the people was loaded with the intention for a large scale benefit of human beings, creating better persons in the society, making both people and deva happier, and establishing an ideal example of ‘anusaraṇa’ (loosely translated to ‘follow’):

“Caratha Bhikkhave Cārikam bahujana hitāya bahujana sukhāya,lokānukampāya althāya hitāya sukhāya,devamanussānam, mā ekena dve agamittha desetha bhikkhave dhammam ādikalyāṇam, majjha kalyāṇam pariyo- sanakalyāṇam, sattham,sabyañ-janam…”

(Vinaya-Mahavagga, 1.8.32)

The history of Buddhist education begins with the history of the Buddhist Sangha as the latter was the most natural tool for imparting education, first among the Sangha communities, then Upasaka-
Upasika to be followed by the provision of offering education to the masses. The history of the Buddhist system of education is practically that of the Buddhist order or Sangha Buddhist education and learning centered round monasteries. The Buddhist world did not offer any educational opportunities apart from or independently of its monasteries. All education, religious as well as secular, was in the hands of the monks. They hold the monopoly of imparting education and of the leisure to impart it. They were the only custodians and bearers of the Buddhist culture. With the beginning as resorts during the rainy season, the Buddhist monasteries at the next stage turned into great centers of learning. The account of such a transition from residences to seats of learning is a remarkable one in the history of Buddhism in India. Undoubtedly, such a process of transformation was rather slow, but it was steady. The growth of Viharas as educational institutions may also be noticed in the following passage from the Manorathapurani, the commentary of the Anguttara Nikaya “Even if there be a hundred or a thousand bhikkhus practising Vipassana (meditation), there will be no realization of the Noble Path if there is not learning”\(^{(1)}\). Therefore, the Sasana is stabilized when learning endures. The value of learning and proper imparting of education was thus greatly felt. Monasteries used to be the main seats of doctrinally focused education in the Buddhist traditions outside India as well. It is seen even now in major Buddhist countries of Southeast Asia where the Buddhist Monastic complexes offer education in villages and towns.

Learning occupies an important place in the overall doctrinal structure of Buddhism. Canonical textual learning (Pali: pariyatti) is understood to be a necessary condition for the maintenance of sasana (the Buddhist creed). In the tradition of Indian Buddhism after the reign of Emperor Asoka (r.ca. 269–232 b.c.e.), the monastic complexes, or viharas, were the recognized seats of learning. Learning in post-Asokan Buddhism was not necessarily limited to the study of canonical literature.

\(^{(1)}\) Araddha Vipaakanam bhikkhunam satapi sahassepi sagivijjamine ‘myattiya asati ari-yamaggerpativedhnahoti.
The Pali expression *grantha-dura* (the vocation of book), which was used in that era, also included the study of grammar, history, logic, and medicine. As an famous Chinese Buddhist pilgrim who visited a number of Indian *viharas* in the late seventh century, Yijing (635 - 713), could testify, the learning was deemed important as a means of refuting the arguments of the “heretics” (non-Buddhists) and disseminating the Buddhist doctrine among the better educated classes of society.

The method of education in early Buddhism differed with that of then prevalent system in some respects. In Vedic times, we find the Āśrama of Rsi-Guru mostly known as it used to be a particular student specific. Krisna going to Sandipani Āśrama, and Rama-Laksmana being in the Āśrama of Valmiki are very celebrated case. Though, it does not mean that there were no other students in these Āśramas; still Buddhist monasteries or Vihara were not known due to its famed pupil(s). They were centres of learning and teaching was imparted to a large number of students. Both religions and secular subjects were taught to the younger as well as the senior monks therein. The learned Bhikṣu-s carried on all the educational activities inside the monastic complex. In fact, they were really the only custodians and torch-bearers of Buddhist learning and culture. Other than the Buddhist monasteries, there was practically no full-fledged educational institution where education was regularly provided. This system of education and learning was monitored and managed by Buddhist Sangha. This process of rendering education was so well designed by Buddha himself and he made provision of a multi-tiered system. He introduced two kinds of instructors known as Acāriya and Upajjhāya. The Acāriya had one intelligent person attached to him who was called Antevāsika. For the Upajjhāya too,a post of Saddhivihārika was provisioned. The Vinaya texts provide us with minutest details about them. The impressive growth of Buddhist education system culminated to the establishment of great Mahavihara at Nalanda, Vikramsila, Odantpuri and Valabhi as Buddhist Centre of Learning. Literally, the Buddhist education system lasted for almost 1,800 years from its humble beginning as a Sangha with 61 members during Buddha’s time when 54 persons led by Yasa, the Setthi of Varanasi joined it along with Buddha and his five disciples (55+1+5) before it collapsed due to the ransacking
of academic institutions like Nālandā, and the Islamic catastrophe which destroyed the religion-culture fabric of the nation.

The exception was that of Tāmraparṇi (modern Sri Lanka) and Myanmar which could protect Buddhism and Monastic learning when Buddhist activities almost ceased to continue in India. And while India was experiencing a couple of non-Buddhism centuries (merely a bit more than one hundred years), the revival of Sangha was witnessed in Sukhothai in Thailand (middle 13th century) with the cooperation of Lanka, soon to be followed by the Buddhist traits from Myanmar.

However, the present scenario of Buddhist education is no more on the lines of the traditions as the Buddhist education for the beginners in primary stage (be it a Bhikṣu or a layperson) as it has to cope up with the modern education system. The attempt to match with it along with the ongoing process/pressure of modernizing Buddhism itself has thrown many challenges before us. With the demand of gender equality, human rights, and the social order and class gap to be bridged by the modern parameters, entire Asian Buddhism is in ‘repair’ mode! In between, the challenge of Christian proselytism is looming so large, the survival of Buddhism is at stake. The present research delineates the issues and problems in the Buddhist education primarily in relation with the Sangha community.

Buddhist education in Asia is an organic part of the project of Buddhist modernization pursued by a number of Buddhist reformers, often as a response to the challenges of imperialism, capitalism, and Christian proselytism. While in some cases (notably in colonial Burma) the resistance to colonialism could translate into the resistance of the monastery schools to the introduction of “modern” subjects, in most cases Buddhist educational systems attempted to reinvent themselves, using modern techniques of teaching and evaluation as well as modern institutional forms for example, that of a sectarian Buddhist university. Such a reinvention brought considerable successes in many places, notably Japan and South Korea, but modernization success is rife with inherent pitfalls. Once integrated into standardized modern educational marketplace, Buddhist educational institutions risk quickly losing
their specifically religious character, with religion remaining as simply one compartmentalized and professionalized subject. In the countries where modernization has been state-driven (typically, People’s Republic of China), Buddhist educational modernization often implies close cooperation with and ultimately co-optation by the state institutions.

The fate of Buddhist education in modern times in the region of our study faces an uphill task. The development of modern Buddhist education coincided with the rise of Buddhist modernism, definable as a movement that aimed at adjusting Buddhism to the new circumstances dominated by nation-states and capitalist market economy. Modern Buddhist education was aimed at creating Buddhists who were competent enough to ensure the survival of Buddhism on the global religious market, in competition with formidable rivals (Christianity often being perceived as the main rival).

On the newly formed modern religious market, missionary Christianity was often perceived as a strong and threatening competitor, as it was commonly associated with the dominant (Western) culture of the capitalist world-system. Christian missionaries were seen as outrivaling Buddhists by offering their adepts, among other things, high-quality educational services, which combined religious learning as such with more general curricula emphasizing new, modern subjects. This sort of competition led a number of reformist Buddhists in a variety of Asian societies to critically reflect on their own educational tradition, which largely reserved the in-depth Buddhist training for the monastics and in most cases marginalized the non-doctrinal subjects. Consequently, in most Asian Buddhist traditions, religious modernization was equated with the development of modern Buddhist education—available for laypeople (including women) as well as monastics, and equipping Buddhists for functioning in the modern world.

In Southeast Asian countries such as Thailand or Burma; Buddhism was understood to belong to the core of the ethno-national identity. However, the modernization of Buddhist education was no simple issue there, and the resistance offered by more traditionalist elements inside the Sangha. The Sangha (both in Burma and Thailand) was confident enough of its central position in
the society to participate in resisting colonizing powers. In Thailand, the Sangha Act of 1902 centralized the Sangha governance and also instituted a new, coordinated system of exams in Thai and Pali, with uniform texts being used throughout the country.\(^{(2)}\) In Burma, a province of British India in 1886, modern, secular education in vernacular and English complemented by the Christian missionary schools—and the Buddhist *kyaungs* (monastery schools) led a sort of separate, parallel existence.\(^{(3)}\) The tension was so much built up that a compromise between the two divergent educational strategies was made wherein the Buddhist Anglo-vernacular schools were created (1890s). This marked the beginning of a ‘blend’ education system where governmental schools started to include some Buddhist instruction in their curricula, but as one, compartmentalized discipline of “religion” a far cry from the traditional Buddhist education. Nevertheless, Burmese education retained a dual nature, with monastery schools coexisting with the public ones.

Thailand also ended up having a dual secular Westernized and monastic Buddhist education system: a way to circumvent the monastic resistance against the inclusion of “modern” subjects in the curriculum was to establish *rong rien wisaman*, or special schools, in some monasteries, to give the monks the needed general knowledge.\(^{(4)}\)

These schools were abolished in little more than two decades; and only in 1970 was the monastic curriculum revised and supplemented with general subjects. While criticized as too Buddhist by the non-Buddhist minorities (Muslim Malays in the south of the country, etc.), the public school system was still clearly distinguishable from the old monastery education tradition. It appears that the exposure to English the language of colonizers and

\(^{(2)}\) The uniformity of the new educational requirements was to contribute to the creation of a uniform ethno-cultural nationalism that was able to withstand the pressures of the age of high imperialism.

\(^{(3)}\) Monks were resistant even to the inclusion of modern arithmetic in the curriculum, not to mention English, despite pressure from the colonial government.

missionaries in the process of learning was still problematic for the Theravada monastic communities in Burma and Thailand.

2. BUDDHIST EDUCATION FOR THE WESTERN MARKET?

Following the lines of creating Buddhism for the Westerners (as witnessed in Korea and Japan the in 1970 and 1980s). The renewed interest in Buddhism among North Americans and Western Europeans was majorly due to the Vietnam War which was the first war in a country where the cruelties upon a Buddhist population was thrust upon. Millions watched live through television such massive destruction of a Buddhist civilization. Buddhism, previously a rarefied pursuit of the elite, began to grow into a popular force among the young, college-educated. It has certain drawbacks too as the core of Buddhist education gets deviated when you look towards the efforts to make ‘others’ Buddhism-friendly. In this aspect, the creation of an English PhD program in Buddhist studies at Mahachulalongkorn University in Bangkok, one of Thailand’s two public Buddhist universities, is a recent event without precedent in Thai Buddhist educational history: for the first time, a Buddhist university undertakes to train scholars who would treat Buddhism as an object for study aimed at both the Buddhist and non-Buddhist public, and without any obligation to concurrently subscribe to Buddhist devotion.

The idea of Buddhist education changed significantly in recent years compared to the heydays of Buddhist modernism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Then, the emphasis was squarely put on the simultaneous need for both preservation of the traditional, canonical text–based Buddhist learning and exposure to the modern curriculum subjects like English being needed to compete against Christian missionary activity and to bring Buddhism to the world beyond its traditional homeland.

Today, Buddhist textual learning in the language of tradition (Pali, Classical Chinese, etc.) is preserved inside the Buddhist universities in Theravada societies (Sri Lanka, Thailand, Burma, etc.). In these societies, Theravada Buddhism provides the grounds on which modern national identity and nation-state legitimacy are built. Inasmuch as the maintenance of Sasana is understood as a primary national task, Buddhist education tends to preserve much
more conservative character than, for example, in South Korea or Japan, where Buddhism does not play a decisive role in defining national identity and where Buddhist universities largely joined the mainstream of the modern educational market. By contrast, in the case of Theravada societies, even a comparative approach toward Buddhism seems almost impossible inside a system of learning that is predicated on Buddhism's status as the core of ethno-national identity.

Parents sent their sons, usually aged between eight and ten, to a monastery to receive education; these boys were known as kyuang tha, “students” (though this term applies only to “temple-boys” nowadays). They received instruction in reading and writing in Burmese, and served their masters. Shin Mahāsilavamsa, a poet monk at Ava, recorded this tradition in his famous poem, Shin Mahāsilavamsa Sounmasar (The Admonition of Shin Mahāsilavamsa). From this poem we also know that some of the students were residential while others came to classes only during the daytime. After one or two years those in residence were ordained. Many spent a few years in the Order studying, and then left. This temporary ordination became a part of Burmese Buddhist culture. As in all other Theravada countries, a boy was normally initiated as a novice, sāmanera, if he received ordination before he was twenty. A young man of twenty and above would be given a full or higher ordination, upasampadā.

The Buddhist education in Lao PDR has recently improved and developed both in quality and the quantity. It is assisted by the policy of the Buddhist Fellowship Organization of the Lao PDR, the Ministry of Education and Sports of Laos and the Lao government. In 2018, there are total 54 schools in Laos, dividing to 7 primary schools, 32 lower secondary schools, 12 Upper secondary schools, 2 Buddhist college and 1 school of Pali, there 9,122 students and 902 teachers. At present, most of the Buddhist education in Laos is studying two main subjects a. Buddhist studies and b. science & social sciences. Besides these, we are also teaching and studying how to practice Vipassana meditation for monks, novices and laypeople. In the future, we have the plan of the establishment of two new Buddhist college in Northern Laos (Luang Prabang) and in the middle part of Laos (Savannakhet), and try to improve
and develop the Buddhist education to get along together with neighbouring countries in Asia. At the present, there are no women studying in the Buddhist schools in Laos, but women can become Buddhist nuns staying and studying Buddhist in the monasteries, and lay women also can participate the Vipassana meditation retreats to studying Buddhist teachings and practice meditation. There is further need to empower Lao women by providing appropriate position and status in Lao Buddhist life.

3. BUDDHIST MONASTIC EDUCATION IN MYANMAR IN RECENT TIMES

Buddhist education system in Myanmar is an old educational system with a very long history dated back 11th century King Anawratha period. However, at Amarapura, the new Burmese capital, King Bodawpaya, also known as Badon Min (1782-1819), repeatedly made attempts to impose formal examinations as a tool to bring the Sangha under tighter monarchical control. Bodawpaya systematised the existing formal examinations, the Pathamapyan, and introduced new ones, the Vinaya examinations. Material rewards were given to all candidates: after their success and ordination, which followed success in the examinations, the candidates were appointed to posts in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, itself created and controlled by the king. Parents and close relatives of successful candidates were also rewarded: some were exempt from tax; some were elevated in their social status to become royal; and some were given employment in the royal service. But, despite all this monarchical persuasion and pressure, the education of the Sangha until the mid-nineteenth century was still by and large based on informal textual study, the traditional learning method.

After the establishment of the Great Council of Sangha Mahanayaka of Myanmar in 1980, Buddhist monastic educational system in Myanmar went under the guidance of this Great Council, the Educational Working Committee reformed the old education system and laid down a new one with the aims and objectives to its Buddhist community - Bhikkhus and Nuns to meet the demand and to provide lay people with religious education. The examination method was rearranged with its syllabus and curriculums in both basic and high monastic educational institutions. The basic
monastic educational schools are also established to provide the basic educational needs of the country especially for children from needy families and orphans. In these schools, monks and nuns play a pivotal role to provide children with education. In conclusion, monastic education system in Myanmar is based on the traditional approach with some rearrangements and new creations to fulfil the needs of the Bhikkhus and nuns and of the country.

In Thailand, the base of Thai education itself has been this holistic approach based on the three Buddhist principles of learning: *sila sikkha* (moral conduct); *samadhi sikkha* (mind training); and *panna sikkha* (wisdom development). Because the majority of Thai people are Buddhists, such motive helps many dimensions of the life of a Thai at personal, family, school and communal levels. Therefore, the current system of monastic education began to develop towards the end of the nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century during the reign of King Chulalongkorn, or Rama V (1868-1910). That development coincided with the national integration process undertaken by the king, as in Burma, in response to the colonial threat. The main contributor was the king’s half-brother, Prince Vajirayan, who became a monk and Pali scholar. Vajirayan was also the one who introduced primary education to the whole country. Having completed the introduction of universal primary education, he shifted his focus to the Pali examinations, called *Parian*. He wanted to modernise the *Parian*, which had been in existence for two centuries.

From the early nineteenth century, however, in the “new Siam”, which had become “a stable and enduring empire at least in the minds of those who lived within its compass”, successive monarchs sought to encourage the *Sangha* through various measures to accept the formal examinations as a means of promoting the study of the words of the Buddha. In this chapter we shall examine how, from the reign of Rama II (1809-1824), the formal examinations were promoted, culminating in the standardisation of monastic education under Rama V, also known as King Chulalongkorn (1868-1910), who united the whole of Siam with his modernisation and national integration programmes.

The problems in monastic education in both Thailand and Burma through the theme of a conflict between idealism and
pragmatism. In general, a criticism, focusing on the twentieth century, is made of the Sangha as a whole for lack of proactive vision in education. In particular, the discussion emphasises the debate between conservatives and reformists in the Sangha as to how to define the objective of monastic education. When in 1837 Bhikkhu Wachirayan became Abbot of Wat Bovonives, a royal monastery in Bangkok, it saw the growth of Wat Bovonives as a Centre for Buddhist studies in Siam. While trying to learn Latin and English, he came in close contact with European missionaries (esp. British and French), and gave them facilities in his monastery so that they could preach Christianity. Strange enough, very rarely any scholar has talked about its side-effect. Instead, scholars like Reynolds opine that such encounter with these missionaries helped develop his rational approach. The advent of the sect Dhammayuttika, “adherers to the Dhamma” needs to be studied more before we talk about the reforms in Buddhist education in late 19th century Siam. One positive outcome while Bhikkhu Wachirayan was learning Latin was that he sought assistance from the Mon monks of Burma to establish Pali as supreme lingua franca for Buddhist monastic education. No wonder, he emphasised knowledge of the Pali language and study of canonical texts over prevalent Parian curriculum and non-canonical literature. That was the reason, the Pali collection of Anguttara-nikāya was made to be the subject of the regular sermons at Wat Bovoranives in place of the Vessantara-jātaka Atthakathā or the Phra Malai.

In 1892, during the regency of 15 years old King Chulalongkorn, the two Colleges were established, one at Wat Mahathat and the other at Wat Bovonives The objective in establishing these monastic colleges (which later on developed as the two Buddhist Universities) was to promote the study of Buddhist scriptures in Pali but written in Thai script. Training young Buddhist monks was foremost motive which would protect the Dhamma well to the Buddhist population “like the Christian missionaries.”

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5. Reynolds, pp.84; Bradley, “Prince Mongkut and Caswell” Journal of the Siam Society, LIV, 1 (Jan, 1966), p.34.
6. Rachanubhab, Phrarachphongsawadan Krung Ratanakosin Ratchkarn thi ha, p.51
4. THAI BUDDHIST EDUCATION: ISSUES AND SOLUTION

The early twentieth century saw the increase of power of the Supreme Monks Council. This phenomenon was evident both in Burma and then in Thailand. This newly established ecclesiastical hierarchy came along with the non-questionability of any decision of the Council. This Sangha Mahānayaka in Burma and the Mahathera Samakhon in Thailand, controlled both administrative and educational matters. Members of this highest body who are mostly 80 year old plus hardly questioned the curriculum they had inherited. The Nak Tham examinations in Thailand, for instance, have changed little in their curriculum, textbooks or study method since they were introduced by Prince-Patriarch Vajirayan in the 1910s and 1920s. Thus, Buddhist education and reforms became still. This history of the Sangha’s education has shown that it took an interested government and an individual reform-minded monk or monks to make a significant change.

When on May 7, 1963, the chairman of the Parian Examinations Board, Somdetch Buddhaghosacārya set up a committee to reform the curriculum, a new form of curriculum was introduced in 1967 which had the combination of traditional monastic curriculum and the secular subjects. Since its implementation in 1970, it has become popular at the expense of the traditional Parian Tham and Nak Tham examinations. The main purpose was to make the young monk understand the modern world and subjects as many of Thai Buddhist monks leave their monastic life to join the mainstream of society as layman. The critics feel that the aim of the introduction of such mixed Buddhist education study was no longer to understand the words of the Buddha and to end suffering alone, but to help develop the nation and society.

Recently Thai Sangha has persuaded the Ministry of Education to mandate the teaching of Buddhism to all students from grade 1 to 12. Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University undertook the task of producing the formal curriculum on Buddhism for all schools. Local school districts, however, were left to formulate

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7. Payutto, P. A Prawat karn suksa khong khana song thai (The History of the Thai Sanhga’s Education), Mahachulalongkorn University Press, Bangkok, 2532 (1988)..........................
their own curriculum. It is also worthy to mention here that now the Ministry of Education approves the project of ‘Schools in the Buddhist way’ with the purpose to cultivate moral development together with physical, social and intellectual developments in a whole according to the teaching of threefold training vision: through training in morality, school students will be self-disciplined through the observance of the five precepts, through training in concentration, their mind will be calm and inculcated with compassion, friendliness, and love of peace and through training in wisdom, students will develop their understanding and intellect. Monasteries, villages and schools must collaborate in order to bring about integrity and sustainable development of children and society. Now, there are 12,000 ‘Schools in the Buddhist way’ throughout the country. So it is urgent to train monks and lay teachers to be efficient Buddhist teachers for the growing number of such schools. Students in the School in Buddhist way must be trained both morally and academically. Their knowledge from both sides will guide them to live a good and moral life.

5. HOW USEFUL ARE BUDDHIST SUNDAY SCHOOLS?

The Buddhist Sunday School originated in Sri Lanka in B.E.2429 (1886). At the school, monks, novices and some lay people teach various fields of Buddhist knowledge and languages. From B.E.2496-2500 (1953-1957), Phra Bimonladham, the abbot of Wat Mahadhat and the late Second President of the Council of Mahachulalongkornrajavihara University, Bangkok, visited Sri Lanka and witnessed moral and cultural teaching in the Sunday School. He deeply appreciated the success of its work, having returned to Thailand, he decided to establish the first Buddhist Sunday School in Wat Mahadhat. It was said that in those days, Wat Mahadhat was a center of education and discussion about Dhamma. Even too this day, there is a Dhamma discourse on every Buddhist Holy Day and Sunday. While the parents listened to the Dhamma discourse, their children played around the hall, therefore, the concept of Buddhist Sunday School arose, so that the children can benefit from Buddhist teachings and get closer to Buddhism. The Buddhist Sunday School was established for the first time at Wat Mahadhat in B.E.2501 (1958) with the following objectives:
To make young people and children familiar with Buddhism.
To inculcate moral discipline and cultural appreciation in young people and children
To teach young people and children to lead their lives according to Buddhist principles.
To train young people and children to work for public welfare.

The Buddhist Sunday School are still going strong. Now, there are 1,340 branches of the Schools around the country and there are 228,159 students.\(^{(8)}\)

6. THE BUDDHIST INSTITUTE SUNDAY SCHOOL IN MALAYSIA

The Buddhist Institute Sunday Dhamma School (BISDS) was first established as a Religious School in 1929 with an enrolment of 12 Sinhala children who studied the Sinhala language and chanting under the tutelage of Ven. M. Dhammadassi Thera, the incumbent bhikkhu of the Brickfields Buddhist Temple.

To complete the entire course, it takes 12 years. Teachers are monks, novices and some lay people. They teach the Buddhist doctrine, Buddha’s history, English, French, Thai dancing, and Thai musical instrument and so on and work for the programmes on voluntary basis. Buddhist Sunday Schools are much appreciated by all Buddhists and considerably helps improve public morality.

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\(^{(8)}\) At the Buddhist Sunday School of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, class levels are arranged according to student’s grades as follows: 

1) ........ There are 4 elementary classes for primary school pupils of grades 1, 2, 3 and 4.
2) ............. There are 3 intermediate classes for secondary school pupils of grades 1, 2 and 3.
3) There are 3 advanced classes for high school students of grades 4, 5 and 6.
4) There are 2 final classes for the college students.
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For a brief but comprehensive account of Mongkut’s reforms, see Vella, Siam Under Rama III, Chap. IV, pp.38-42.


UNIVERSALLY VALID ETHICAL NORMS OF BUDDHISM APPLICABLE TO GLOBAL EDUCATION IN ETHICS

by Pahalawattage Don Premasiri

ABSTRACT

The greatest conceivable hindrance in determining the basis for global education in ethics is the obvious fact about the diversity involved in ethical norms, principles and attitudes held by different global communities belonging to different regions of the globe, characterized by their own traditional cultural and religious backgrounds. While it may be possible to extract a common core of ethical values from this diversity, there appears to be a sufficient degree of disparity too, reflecting intense dogmatic clinging to certain moral beliefs and attitudes that could result in conflict in societies which are being exposed to the immense influence of the contemporary trend of globalization. Under such circumstances the most significant issue that arises in adopting any approach to global education in ethics seems to be connected with the ways and means of reconciling such diversity. Diversity in ethical standpoints have a proximate relationship with diversity of beliefs relating to very fundamental questions about the nature of existence itself. Historically, Buddhism emerged at a time when the land of its origin was evidently characterized by a diversity of individuals and groups exhibiting a high level of maturity in intellectual engagement with the most fundamental issues relating to the good life. The Buddha

*. Prof. Dr., University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka.
happened to be one of them, and the principles of the good life that he proclaimed cut across all limitations of racial and national identity, being principles meant to promote the wellbeing and happiness of all. When moral principles are the product of dogmatic, authoritative and strictly deontological foundations, serious conflicts relating to the ethical life can be its outcome. In determining the basis for global education in ethics the most important consideration has to be the fact that despite the accidental regional and cultural differences, humanity is characterized by an identifiable body of common needs, and a common sense of what constitutes their long term happiness and wellbeing, discoverable by means of unprejudiced application of human intelligence and empirical observation. An inherent characteristic of the Buddhist teaching is its non-authoritarian approach to the ethical life, emphasizing the importance of the autonomous capacity of each individual to determine what is ethically right and wrong in conformity with the perceptions of all such enlightened humans who may justifiably be referred to as ‘Knowledgeable Persons’ (viśpāṇā purisā). In the present paper emphasis will be laid on the necessity to draw the attention of educators to the need to train the minds of people globally, from a reasonably young age to engage in intelligent self-reflection for establishing a fundamental ethical premise or premises general enough for the determination of human ethical choices when confronted with particular problems calling for appropriate ethical decisions and adoption of patterns of behavior that accord with such decisions. The core elements of such an ethics derivable from such a basis for the edification of the younger generation as well as persons of all strata of society shall be identified. In this process due attention will be paid to matters relating to a common human nature that should be taken into account in determining ethical values.

The sphere of ethics may be considered as one in which great diversity of opinion prevails. As a consequence of this obvious diversity many intellectuals who have reflected on the possibility of identifying a universally valid basis for ethical norms have expressed skepticism regarding the extent to which such a basis could successfully be determined. In philosophical reflections that developed in the English speaking Western world since the middle of the previous century a considerable number of moral philosophers of great repute, in their pursuit of the method of investigation into ethics which they conceived as an inquiry into the
logical features of ethical discourse, maintained that ethical norms have no real rational foundation. Such philosophers attributed them to human emotions, or commitment to purely subjective principles for which no firm basis for their universal validity could be affirmed. The Buddhist stance on ethical norms can be said to be characteristically universalistic and objective, and therefore, stands in contrast to all philosophical theories that have argued for diverse forms ethical relativism, subjectivism, or prescriptivism.

With the development of the empirical sciences a prominent philosophical standpoint came to be established resulting in making a sharp distinction between what was conceived as science and non-science according to which only the empirical sciences were conceived as representing the paradigmatic sphere in which genuine cognitive activity is to be found, and matters of fact could be established. As a consequence, two important forms of human engagement, namely, religion and ethics came to be relegated to the sphere of the non-cognitive. It came to be widely held that we are mistaken in all attempts to find truth and knowledge in the sphere of ethics and religion. Emphasis was given to a logical distinction that could be made between fact and value. It was argued that universally valid judgments are possible only in the sphere of facts, whereas values are to be considered as necessarily relative and subjective. This viewpoint was backed by the observation of the fact about the diversity involved in ethical norms, principles and attitudes of different communities belonging to different regions of the globe, characterized by their own traditional cultural and religious backgrounds. Despite this diversity it is undeniable that there is also the possibility of extracting a core of common ethical values which could be incorporated into a universally valid set of ethical norms. However, there is a significant degree of diversity as well which cannot be ignored, resulting in intense dogmatic clinging to certain parochial moral attitudes and beliefs, having the potential to give rise to conflict in societies that are exposed to the immense influence of the contemporary trend of globalization. The facts mentioned above reflect a situation which could be conceived from the Buddhist standpoint as involving two unwarranted extremes. The first extreme amounts to a kind of resignation to relativism and subjectivity which implicitly promotes the attitude that in the
The second extreme represents a radical form of dogmatic traditionalism and conservatism that could lead to intense conflict in the sphere of values. It is in view of these extremes that we might be able to discover a possible contribution from Buddhist teachings taking a middle position guiding humanity to adopt a system of universally valid ethical norms that could have practical applications in the sphere of ethical education.

The main issue people are faced with, especially in the context of a social environment in which a plurality of worldviews exists pertains to the way in which we could seek to reconcile the diversity of ethical attitudes. Diversity in ethical standpoints has a proximate relationship to diversity of beliefs regarding very fundamental questions about the nature of existence itself. This point was clearly recognized in Buddhism, and when formulating the factors of the Noble Eightfold Path, which may be considered as the Buddhist foundation for the ethical life, right view (sammādiṭṭhi) came to be placed as the first of the eight factors. Right human intentions (sammāsaṅkappa) and right modes of ethical conduct consisting of right bodily action (sammā kammanta) and right verbal behavior (sammāvācā) follow from right view. The Buddha introduced the Noble Eightfold Path as that which avoids the two extreme positions commonly adopted by persons who opt for a way of life. These two extremes were described by him as the extreme of self-mortification (attakilamathānuyoga) and sensuous indulgence (kāmasukhallikānuyoga). The first of these extremes, as pointed out by the Buddha rested on the belief in the notion of eternal life making a sharp distinction between what was understood as the indestructible, spiritual and eternal component (jāva, attā) and the destructible, impermanent and material component (sarāra) in living beings. The Buddha pointed out that people in general are inclined to believe in one or the other of these two extreme world views, the first of which was described as the eternalist view (sassatavāda) and the second as the annihilationist view (ucchedavāda). There is no doubt that even to the present day people have not overcome the tendency to cling to one or the other of these two extreme positions.

Out of the two dominant world views that influence the ethical
life of the global community is the world view associated with theistic religions. The eternalist view about human destiny is usually built into the theistic doctrine. The Buddha did not dismiss it totally as a basis for the ethical life for the reason that it was contrary to the other extreme position that rejected any kind of survival of a person after death. It was the observation of the Buddha that those who totally denied the notion of a life after death and held the belief that there are no long-term consequences of what are to be conceived as wholesome and unwholesome actions (natthi paro loko, natthi kusalākusalānaṃ phalam  vipāko) were more inclined to live a morally irresponsible life. On the contrary those who believed in eternity believed in the reality of the consequences of wholesome and unwholesome behavior. However, the Buddha considered the eternalist view to be unsatisfactory (anassāsika), involving the promotion of certain dogmatic life-styles, subservience to authoritarian codes of morality, unwarranted forms of austerity and adherence to ritualistic practices having no actual ethical value.

The other dominant worldview that influences ethical attitudes of the contemporary global community is that which is derived from empirical science. A similar view had been present even during the Buddha’s time among those who admitted that the only valid means of obtaining knowledge about reality is ordinary sense perception. Those who subscribed to that view were considered in the Buddha’s teaching as the annihilationists. The verificationist and objectivist approach of contemporary empirical science has provided a more solid epistemological justification for the annihilationist world view. Although some persons who accept the utility of empirical science may still not entirely discard the cultural influences of their respective time-honored religious traditions, and continue to adhere to ethical ideals derived from them, a considerable number of contemporary intellectuals desire to sever their connections with tradition, which they consider as being outdated and outmoded by the empirical and positivist approach inherent in the method of thinking characteristic of modern science. It is with a clear understanding of this contemporary background relating to the two major world views that have a global influence on the way of life that people opt to live that we need to consider valid ethical norms of Buddhism applicable to global education in ethics.
It is important at this point to consider the socio-cultural background on which Buddhism emerged in ancient India. Early Buddhist scriptural sources point to the fact that both with regard to matters relating to truth and reality and to the moral life the authority of tradition weighed heavily on the thinking of the people. The Buddha emerged at a time when a sufficient degree of maturity in intellectual inquiry was developing regarding the nature of existence as well as action guiding norms relating to the fundamental principles of a reasonable moral life. As reflected in the canonical Buddhist scriptures, the Buddha was faced with two main sources on which people depended to determine a world view as well as a moral way of life. The most dominant influence had been that of authoritative sacred scriptures that assumed the unquestionable status of divine revelation. Secondly, both among the orthodoxy and independent thinkers there was an attempt to resolve empirical and ethical issues by resorting to mere rational reflection. Rational reflection, either by way of pure self-evident reasoning paying no attention to any conformity of the consequences of such reasoning to observed matters of fact, or rational reflection with an intermixture of empirical data, may have been resorted to particularly by persons who were not willing to tolerate the dogmatism associated with tradition and convention. This perhaps was partly a reaction to the prevalent conservatism associated with dependence on authority. The Buddha appears to have found both those methods as unsatisfactory and advocated a method which in some sense could be conceived as empirical or experiential for determining not only matters relating to fact and reality, but also matters relating to goodness and morality. Clear expression to this method of the Buddha has been given in the discourses on the Dhamma appearing in canonical Suttas such as Kālāma, Saṅgārava, Caṅkā and Vāmaṃsaka. In these instances attention is drawn to the inadequacy of dependence purely on a belief system that one has committed oneself to on the basis of mere faith (saddhā). It was considered equally inadequate to accept any world view or way of life purely due to a natural inclination of the mind, or due to an individual liking or preference (ruçi). Contemplating on a certain view and finding it acceptable (diṭṭhinijjhānakkanti) may also be inadequate. Several other grounds have also been identified by the
Buddha as unsatisfactory such as hearsay (*itikirā*), consideration of something as part of an authoritative body of sacred teachings looked upon as a revelation that has been transmitted from generation to generation (*anussava, paramparā, piṭakasampadā*), and recognition of the authority of a teacher who is looked upon as competent and honoured (*bhabbarūpatā, samano no garu*). As pointed out above, apart from such authoritative sources, others attempted to derive truths about the world as well as the ethical life through mere rational reflection (*takka hetu, nayahetu, ākāraparivitakkena*) without considering whether views so reached were in agreement with observed reality. The Buddha emphasized the need to depend on what one could independently and directly know by means of observation (*yadā tumheva jāneyyātha*). It is this aspect of the teaching that becomes extremely relevant in finding universally valid ethical norms applicable to global education in ethics through an investigation of Buddhist ethical ideas.

A point that needs emphasis is that ethical commitments are widely dependent upon authoritarian foundations. This is increasingly so in the case of theistic systems of ethics usually seeking to derive ethical norms from divine commandments. An obvious problem regarding a system of normative ethical rules conceived to be derivable from the authoritative foundation of divine commandments is the debatable question whether some mode of conduct is ethically right because it is commanded by God. It might sometimes be difficult to determine which set of divine commandments should be adhered to, if it is the case that communities subscribing to alternative systems of theistic belief happen to consider mutually contradictory modes of ethical conduct as being commanded by God. Furthermore, there is the possibility that what is believed to be commanded by God in a particular theistic system may, on the independent consideration of persons with a high degree of ethical consciousness, be found to be offensive from the perspective of their own ethical judgment. A commandment theory is acceptable, provided that there is some assurance that God invariably commands what is good. However, in order to determine that, the independent judgment of intelligent human beings becomes necessary. This consideration points to the fact that the ultimate responsibility for determining a universally
valid system of ethical norms rests on humans themselves who are endowed with clarity of thought and intelligence. This is perhaps why in ethical contexts Buddhism lays stress on what is praised by the wise (viññūpasattha) and censured by the wise (viññūgarahita) as a dependable basis for determining what is ethically right and wrong.

Any attempt to impose upon the global community a system of ethical norms considering it to be having universal validity resting on the respective authoritarian foundations of those who subscribe to diverse belief systems is likely to produce more moral chaos than harmony in the global context. In this regard it is to be noted that the Buddha himself advocated a non-authoritarian approach in matters relating to the making of ethical decisions. The affirmation of such an approach places Buddhism in a relatively more advantageous position in the matter of promoting universally valid ethical norms for the global community. It also helps in avoiding narrow sectarianism due to the fact that the appeal is not to the authority of sectarian principles, not even to the authority of the Buddha as a teacher, but the ethical consciousness of humans who are capable of achieving a sufficient degree of intellectual and emotional maturity enabling them to make independent decisions leaving aside all kinds of sectarian biases, complexes, and prejudices. By such means it should be possible to reach a common ground for ethical education, avoiding the tendency to generate conflict and disharmony characteristically associated with moral dogmatism, having the consequence of negating the very foundations of an ethical life. In this process it might be case that the enlightened ethical principles of different religions would converge obviating the need for any conflict or disharmony.

As indicated in the Buddha’s instruction to the Kāḷāmas, authority, tradition, and mere rational reflection devoid of a consideration of actual observed consequences of adopting certain modes of behavior are inadequate and unsatisfactory as sources for guidance in the ethical life. In any kind of global education in ethics, what is more important is not the authoritative prescription of a pre-conceived code of ethics in terms of which the global community could regulate its ethical conduct, but to educate the community regarding the fundamental principles
involved in making the appropriate ethical decision in a given situation. An actual instance in which the Buddha provided such ethical education for his own son Rāhula who opted to follow the Buddha's path of ultimate liberation may be considered at this point for illustration. The Buddha teaches Rāhula that when contemplating on the performance of a bodily, verbal, or a mental action he should engage in repeated reflection on the probable observable consequences of the action itself, taking into account its consequences on oneself as well as others who may be affected by it. If there is the probability that the action to be performed will lead to harm to oneself (attabyābādhāya samvattati) harm to others (parabyābādhāya samvattati), harm to both (ubhayabyābādhāya samvattati) and could be productive of the growth of suffering (dukkhudrayaṃ) and could have a consequence associated with suffering (dukkhavipākaṃ) such action is unwholesome and ought not to be done (akusalaṃ... akaranāyaṃ). Rāhula is advised to engage in similar reflection while performing an action too and to refrain from continuing with the performance of such action if it is observed to have consequences of a harmful nature. After the performance of an action he is advised to assess the consequences of it in the same manner and resolve not to engage in the future, in the sort of actions that he has observed on previous occasions to have had harmful consequences.¹ This same criterion for determining ethical action is mentioned in another canonical source called the Bāhātika Sutta of the Majjhimanikāya.² It is also closely related to the teaching of the Kāḷāma Sutta where the Buddha instructs the Kālāmas to know by themselves what ought to be done by finding out what actions conduce to well being (hitāya) and happiness (sukhāya) and what actions conduce to harm (ahitāya) and suffering (dukkhāya).³ It is observed in the above instances that actions that are conducive to the well being of oneself, others and both ought to be pursued with diligence.

A second criterion to which the Buddhist teaching draws our attention is one which has been recognized by almost all the major

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It is generally referred to as the Golden Rule Criterion of ethics. The seven forms of ethical conduct applicable to a person's bodily and verbal behavior that have to be cultivated by one who subscribes to the Buddhist way of ethical living are made to rest on the general principle that could be stated as doing unto others as one would want others to do unto oneself. The following passage from the Saṃyuttanikāya which occurs in a discourse of the Buddha within a typically ethical context may be quoted to illustrate the point:

“Here a noble disciple reflects thus: ‘I like to live. I do not like to die. I desire happiness and dislike unhappiness. Suppose someone should kill me, since I like to live and do not like to die, it would not be pleasing and delightful to me. Suppose I too should kill another who likes to live and does not like to die, who desires happiness and does not desire unhappiness it would not be pleasing and delightful to that other as well. What is not pleasant and delightful to me is not pleasant and delightful to the other person either. How could I inflict upon another that which is not pleasant and not delightful to me?’ Having reflected in this manner, he (the noble disciple) himself refrains from killing, and encourages others too to refrain from killing, and speaks in praise of refraining from killing. In this manner his bodily conduct becomes pure in three ways.

Further, a noble disciple reflects thus: ‘Supposing someone should take away from me from thievish intent what was not given, it would not be pleasing and delightful to me. Supposing I too should take away from another from thievish intent what was not given, it would not be pleasing and delightful to the other as well”…

Similar reflection is recommended concerning other spheres of conduct having an ethical significance such as enjoyment of sensuous pleasures particularly related to the sexual life, and the four forms of speech behavior.

In the foregoing discussion attention was drawn to the fact that

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4. It is found in the teaching of Jesus Christ as stated in Mathew 7.12 in the following terms: ‘In everything, then, do to others as you would have them do to you. For this is the essence of the Law and the prophets.’

authoritarianism in ethics may sometimes negate any attempt to establish universally valid ethical norms. Ethical norms identified in Buddhism are established on the basis of the recognition of general standards applicable to ethical evaluation that seem to be in conformity with universal human nature. There is no appeal to any mysterious revelation. A person is called upon to engage in reflective thinking about the requirements of morality. Ethical decisions, in the first instance, have a relation to observed facts relating to the decisions made mainly in terms of their observed consequences. The applicable range of consequences is to be considered in terms of the appropriate ethical standard that is identified as valid. In the second instance, ethical decisions have a relation to legitimate human interests. A decision becomes ethical when it is determined not purely on the basis of self interest but with a sufficient degree of empathy or sympathy, with a keen awareness of the other person’s legitimate interest as well as one’s own. A standard that changes relative to what is expedient from the point of view of a given individual cannot be an ethical standard. If it is wrong for others to inflict any pain upon me when I am innocent, it should be wrong for me to inflict pain upon another who is innocent. This principle is clearly recognized in Buddhism and needs to be used as a cardinal principle in global education in ethics.

Describing an aspect of what is conceived as holding a right view according to Buddhism, the Sammādiṭṭhi Sutta, draws attention to the same modes of conduct mentioned by the Buddha in the passage quoted above as those in conformity with ethical living. They are to be clearly recognized and deeply understood by a person as general norms for making the distinction between what is ethically wholesome (kusala) and ethically unwholesome (akusala). Bodily conduct taking the form of acts of killing, stealing and indulgence in illicit forms of sexual behavior for the gratification of self-centered desire, verbal conduct taking the form of uttering falsehoods with the intention of misleading or deceiving others for the sake of self-interest, harsh speech unpleasant to the hearer, slanderous speech intent on creating dissension and disharmony, and frivolous or meaningless speech that gives rise to unnecessary social problems and having no beneficial effect upon
one’s own moral progress are mentioned here as unethical. In this instance three further items are added to indicate the psychological sources of all the former types of misconduct. They are thoughts of intense greed, thoughts associated with malicious intentions and entertainment of erroneous views.\(^6\) Abstention from such forms of bodily, verbal and mental behavior that have the tendency to negate human well being, constitute the sphere of the ethical. In addition to abstention from unethical ways, commitment of positive acts that are directly in opposition to them such as adopting a caring and compassionate attitude towards all living beings, being satisfied only with possessions legitimately acquired, enjoying sensuous pleasures without violating the established social norms particularly in the gratification sought in connection with the sexual life consist of the basic ethical norms to be adhered to in connection with bodily behavior. Being non-deceptive, truthful, honest and reliable in one’s speech, speaking endearing, kind and compassionate words pleasant to the hearer, speaking words that conduce to unity and harmony and speaking timely, beneficial and meaningful words that enhance overall well being are the basic ethical norms that pertain to the sphere of verbal behavior. Having a mind free of intense greed and avarice characterized by thoughts of charity and generosity, entertaining compassionate thoughts free of malicious intentions, and holding a right view conducive to one’s moral development and purity are recognized as positive ethical patterns associated with mental conduct.

It should become clear from the above discussion how Buddhism derives specific patterns of behavior recognizable as ethical and unethical based on criteria that have no authoritarian foundation. The universal applicability of Buddhist ethical norms can be said to rest on these criteria. In this discussion no attempt is made to list in detail an explicit and elaborate code of ethical conduct for the purpose of global education in ethics. It is considered more important to educate people to use their autonomous ability to discover by themselves the principles of the ethical life. An ethical education that is authoritatively imposed on people is unlikely to produce the desired results. This was precisely the Buddha’s standpoint on

ethical education when he pointed out in the Kālāma Sutta that the tendency of people to depend on the authority of others for matters relating to the moral life was unsatisfactory and emphasized the idea of knowing oneself (yadā tumheva jāneyyātha) what is right and wrong. What becomes necessary in moral education is a kind of enlightened guidance of the manner that is resorted to in modern approaches to psychological counseling whereby people are made to make their own enlightened choices. This appears to have been the role of the Buddha himself as a teacher of morality.

From the Buddhist point of view, unethical conduct (akusala) has its roots or sources (akusalamūla). The sources of unethical behavior are identified in the Buddhist teaching as greed (lobha), hatred (dosa) and delusion or confusion of mind (moha). This point is also made by the Buddha in the Kālāma Sutta where he instructs the Kālāmas to find out themselves the conditions under which unethical behavior proceeds. Acts such as destruction of life, stealing, and sexual misconduct proceed from persons who are overwhelmed by greed, hatred or delusion (luddho lobhena abhibūto and so on).\(^7\) Buddhism considers these as directly observable and personally verifiable phenomena (sandiṭṭhiko dhammo). People could be educated to discover these phenomena themselves so that depending on their direct experience they could ethically transform themselves.

It is important to point out that people are not always competent to determine accurately matters relating to what Buddhism conceives as well being (attha or hita) and harm (anattha or ahita) happiness (sukha) and unhappiness (dukkha) due to the fact that their clarity of judgment is usually hindered by erroneous cognition and unwholesome emotions. The gravest error that is often committed pertains to judgments people make regarding the above notions. For any genuine pursuit in global education in ethics, the global community needs to cultivate the awareness of what real happiness and well being consists in. The widely prevalent opinion that is exerting an influence on the thinking of the global community is that the source of happiness and well being lies in

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the single minded pursuit of material prosperity. Material values are prioritized over ethical values making ethical values subservient to material prosperity. The ill effects of such a pursuit that have already become globally evident such as the deterioration of the natural environment resulting in the continuing loss of the ecological balance that needs to be sustained, climate change, global warming etc. are just a few examples that can be cited as those coming within the Buddhist concept of harm and negation of human well being. Buddhism has incorporated within its ethical concern not only principles concerning the relationship of humans with other humans but also with all other constituents of nature. A view of ethics that considers only humans as ends in themselves whereas other aspects of nature are considered merely as means to human ends does not conform to the Buddhist standpoint relating to ethics. Humans have ethical obligations towards other lower animals, aspects of nature such as trees and forests, rivers and other material things in nature that are connected with the preservation of the balance of nature. An absolutely materialistic outlook that caters to the demands of human greed, is therefore, found to be unethical from the Buddhist standpoint. Therefore, in the current global context where material resources are limited, Buddhist ethical norms relating to the reduction of greed appear to be universally valid. They form a very significant part of universally valid Buddhist ethical norms that should be recognized in global education in ethics. Buddhism never advocated poverty as a virtue, but on the contrary recognized material prosperity as constituting an important element of human happiness. This is evident in the Buddhist teaching concerning the four kinds of happiness that it approves of, out of which the first three are called happiness related to the possession of substantial material wealth (atthisukha), happiness related to the enjoyment of such material wealth (bhogasukha), and the happiness of being free from indebtedness in life relating to material needs (ananasukha). It is the fourth kind of happiness that is prioritized in Buddhism referring to it as the happiness of living an ethically blameless life (anavajasukha). It is further pointed out that the former three kinds of happiness are not worth as much as a sixteenth part of the latter.

The universal validity of Buddhist ethical norms rests on the fact
that they are derived from the recognition of a close relationship between ethics and psychology. We have seen that Buddhism considers unethical action as rooted in greed, hatred and delusion that is inherent in all humans who have not eliminated or reduced their causal potency. It is by a process of education that effectively reduces in gradual stages and absolutely eliminates those roots of unethical conduct that human beings become ethically perfect. Those negative psychological traits need to be replaced by the positive ones, generosity, compassion and wisdom. In addition to the recommended abstentions that the Buddhist ethical training promotes there are positive ethical qualities that are recognized such as the four forms of sublime abiding (cattāro brahmavihārā), consisting of loving kindness (mettā), sympathy (karunā), sympathetic joy (muditā) and equanimity (upekkhā and the four grounds of benevolent conduct (cattāri sangahavatthūni) consisting of charity (dāna), endearing speech (piyavacana), commitment to the well being of others (atthacariyā) and equal recognition of the other person’s interest (samānattatā). All of them can be seen as components of ethical norms that have universal validity in global education in ethics.

In conclusion it could be stated that Buddhist teachings have dealt with matters relating to ethics on a naturalistic basis. Buddhism has recognized the fact that ethics cannot be divorced from our understanding of what kind of living beings humans are, what their natural psychological constitution is, what their needs and aspirations are, as well as what conduces to their happiness, unhappiness, well being, and harm. All these are matters that apply universally to all humans. This is why it is reasonable to say that Buddhism is placed in a unique position to affirm a set of universally valid ethical norms applicable to global education in ethics.

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ABSTRACT

UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) has been mandated to oversee the mobilization, facilitation, and coordination within the UN system of its expertise, programs, and resources toward supporting global, regional, and national strategies to deal with the building blocks of sustainable development. The outcome document of Rio+20 (Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, 2012) - The Future We Want- is a major policy blue-print of ECOSOC that proposes different strategies for the implementation and advancement of sustainable development goals. In this paper, an attempt shall be made to discuss and examine the Buddhist perspective on sustainable development in the light of the Rio+20 document as well as Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. We shall try to show that there are many common grounds between the goals and ideals of ECOSOC and the teachings of the Buddha (Buddhavacana). Hence, it will be proposed that the Buddhavacana has much to offer in terms of sustainable development and can make important contribution toward the efforts of ECOSOC in this regard. Buddhist doctrines relating to respectful attitude toward nature, gender equality, social and economic egalitarianism, non-violence, compassion towards all, simplicity, satisfaction with minimum, non-wastage, tolerance and plurality- are

* Prof. Dr., Head and Professor of Buddhist Studies, Delhi University, New Delhi, India.
all not only fully compatible with the ideals and goals of ECOSOC but are actually contributory toward such an effort. Further, an attempt shall also be made to show that the current globalizing system promotes competition rather than cooperation. Such an attitude has generated conflict and resentment. Thus, we need to seriously examine not only our attitudes and lifestyles but also our policies that govern the use of renewable and non-renewable resources, science and technology, and the scale and direction of industrialization and globalization. An attempt shall be made to show that a society founded upon the Buddhist Dharma recognizes that one should aim at promoting the good of the greater unit to which one belongs, and as a minimum one must not look for one’s own satisfaction in ways that may cause harm to others. Thus, in Buddhist approach to social and economic development, the primary criterion governing policy formulation must be the well-being of members of the society as a whole. By pointing out that the vulgar chase of luxury and abundance is the root-cause of suffering, Buddhism encourages restraint, voluntary simplicity, and contentment. The Buddhist ideal, in fact, is co-operation with nature, not domination. Thus, a new relation must be established between people and nature, one of cooperation not of exploitation. Production must serve the real needs of the people, not the demands of the economic system. An effort shall also be made to show that as compared to globalizing consumer system that causes wastage and greed, Buddhism promotes just the opposite.

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Sustainable development, as defined in The Brundtland Report (1987), is “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (World Commission on the Environment and Development: Chapter 2). This report also talked for the first time of the need for the integration of economic development, natural resources management and protection, social equity and inclusion with the purpose of meeting human needs without undermining the “integrity, stability and beauty” of natural biotic systems. Before The Brundtland Report such an apprehension was well expressed in the influential book Limits to Growth (1972) which examined five variables (world population, industrialization, pollution, food production, and resource depletion) on the computer modelling of
exponential economic and population growth with finite resource supplies. The findings were that even if new resources are discovered over a period of time and the current reserves therefore change, still resources are finite and will eventually be exhausted. The book predicts that changes in industrial production, food production, and pollution are all in line with the economic and societal collapse that will take place within the twenty-first century itself (see Meadows and Meadows 2004; Hecht 2008). To put it simply, “the laws of thermodynamics are absolute and inviolate. Unless phytomass stores stabilize, human civilization is unsustainable.... There is simply no reserve tank of biomass for planet Earth. The laws of thermodynamics have no mercy. Equilibrium is inhospitable, sterile, and final” (Schramskia, Gattia and Brown 2015). How do we come to grips with the problem spelt out above and attain sustainable growth? From Buddhist perspective, humankind has chosen a wrong path (agatigamana) to development and there is the urgent need for two corrective measures. Firstly, there is the need to put a system in place which not only can design and develop non-pollutive alternative technologies needing minimal specialist skills and which use only renewable resources such as wind and solar power but can also minimize the social misuse of such technologies. Secondly and more importantly, there is the need to sensitize humanity to the practical understanding of the issue whereby human weltanschauung can be changed and the revival of spirituality can take place that treats nature with respect.

The present day profit-oriented global economic system in which moral sentiments are viewed as irrelevant is overwhelmingly controlled and run by consumerism and salespersons. In a system such as this, the corporate sector plunders and pollutes on the back of rampant consumerism with the acknowledged goal of profit maximization which in turn almost always degenerates into expropriation of wealth. Organizations of enormous size monopolize production and distribution of goods. Through the use of clever means these organizations create an insatiable craving among the masses to possess more and more. High-consumption lifestyle is aggressively promoted through advertisements and psychological pressure in various forms is employed to intensify the craving
for maximum consumption. One is lured into buying as much as possible irrespective of the fact whether one needs it or whether one has saved enough to pay for it. Thus, goods are bought not because people need them but because they want them. In fact, a consumer society is characterized by the belief that owning things is the primary means to happiness and thus, consumption is accepted "as a way to self-development, self-realization, and self-fulfillment" (Benton 1997: 51-52). As a matter of fact, consumerism has become so ingrained in modern life that it is viewed by some as a new world religion whose power rests in its extremely effective conversion techniques (Loy 1997: 283). This religion, it has been pointed out, works on the principle that not only growth and enhanced world trade will be beneficial to all, but growth will also not be constrained by the inherent limits of a finite planet. Its basic flaw is that it depletes rather than builds "moral capital" (Loy 1997: 283). Fritjof Capra has pointed out that "the health hazards created by the economic system are caused not only by the production process but by the consumption of many of the goods that are produced and heavily advertised to sustain economic expansion" (Capra 1983: 248). Similarly, Erich Schumacher, the author of Small is Beautiful, has warned that materialistic attitude, which lacks ethical inhibitions, carries within itself the seeds of destruction (Schumacher 1973: 17-18, 56, 119). As pointed out by Erich Fromm, the profit-oriented economic system is no longer determined by the question: What is good for Man? But by the question: What is good for the growth of the system? Moreover, consuming has ambiguous qualities: It relieves anxiety, because what one has cannot be taken away; but it also requires one to consume ever more, because previous consumption soon loses its satisfactory character. Actually, this globalizing profit-oriented system works on the principle that egotism, selfishness, and greed are fundamental prerequisites for the functioning of the system and that they will ultimately lead to harmony and peace. However, egotism, selfishness, and greed are neither innate in human nature nor are they fostered by it. They are rather the products of social circumstances. Moreover, greed and peace preclude each other (Fromm 2008: 5-8, 23). From Buddhist perspective, more production of material goods, their increased consumption, and craving (taṇhā) for them does not necessarily
lead to increase in happiness. Buddhism teaches that in order to arrive at the highest stage of human development, one must not crave possessions.

One major flaw of the current globalizing consumer system is that it promotes competition rather than cooperation. Competitive and adversarial attitude or the continuous feeling that one has to work against something not only generates conflict and resentment but also invariably results in unhealthy side effects. At the international level, mutual antagonisms among nations have resulted not only in billions of dollars being wasted each year in the production of armaments but also a major chunk of the scientific manpower and technology has been directed at the war industry. For instance, military activities in the world engage approximately 25 per cent of all scientific talent and use 40 per cent of all public and private expenditure for research and development (see Pavitt and Worboys 1977). Sadly, not only that economists look with some apprehension to the time when we stop producing armaments, but also “the idea that the state should produce houses and other useful and needed things instead of weapons, easily provokes accusations of endangering freedom and individual initiative” (Fromm 1955: 5). However, as Bertrand Russell once pointed out, “The only thing that will redeem mankind is co-operation, and the first step towards co-operation lies in the hearts of individuals” (1954: 204). It has been seen that individuals with cooperative skills are more creative and psychologically better adjusted. With its emphasis on cooperation and interdependence, Buddhist practice can inspire the building of partnership societies with need-based and sustainable economies.

Political leaders and business executives often take self-serving decisions. Moreover, “the general public is also so selfishly concerned with their private affairs that they pay little attention to all that transcends the personal realm…. Necessarily, those who are stronger, more clever, or more favored by other circumstances… try to take advantage of those who are less powerful, either by force and violence or by suggestion… (Conflict in the society) cannot disappear as long as greed dominates the human heart” (Fromm 2008: 10-11, 114). A society driven by greed loses the power of
seeing things in their wholesomeness and we do not know when enough is enough. “The hope... that by the single-minded pursuit of wealth, without bothering our heads about spiritual and moral questions, we could establish peace on earth, is an unrealistic, unscientific, and irrational hope... the foundations of peace cannot be laid by... making inordinately large demands on limited world resources and... (putting rich people) on an unavoidable collision course- not primarily with the poor (who are weak and defenceless) but with other rich people” (Schumacher 1973: 18-19). In the present economic system, points out Schumacher, anything that is not economic is sought to be obliterated out of existence. “Call a thing immoral or ugly, soul-destroying or a degradation of man, a peril to the peace of the world or to the well-being of future generations; as long as you have not shown it to be “uneconomic” you have not really questioned its right to exist, grow, and prosper” (Schumacher 1973: 27). In this regard, it may be said that Buddhism looks at greed (lobha: Morris and Hardy 1995-1900: iv.96) and egotism (avaññattikāma: Morris and Hardy 1995-1900: ii.240; iv.1. asmimāna: Oldenberg 1879-1883: i.3; Rhys Davids and Carpenter 1890-1911: iii.273; Trenckner and Chalmers 1888-1896: i.139, 425; Morris and Hardy 1995-1900: iii.85) as leading to suffering. Real problem lies in the human tendency to have-to possess- which the Buddha called craving (taṇhā). It may be pointed out that Buddhism does not mind wealth and prosperity as long as they are acquired and used in accord with the ethical norms. Moreover, from Buddhist perspective, apart from taking into account the profitability of a given activity, its effect upon people and environment, including the resource base, is equally important.

Another flaw of the current globalizing consumer system is that it is widening the division between the rich and the poor. According to the Credit Suisse Global Wealth Report, the richest 1 per cent people in the world now own half of the planet’s wealth and at the other extreme, the poorest 50 per cent of the world’s population owns just 2.7 per cent of global wealth (Kentish 2017). This type of stark poverty and inequality leading to the marginalization and exclusion of the majority of the world population has implications for social and political stability among and within states. It will be unrealistic to expect spiritual, psychological, and social harmony
in the world till it remains materially divided. As a member of a common human family, each individual must have access to a reasonable share of the resources of the world so that s/he is able to fulfil his/her basic needs to realize his/her potential as a productive and respected member of the global family. This means that there is an urgent need for equitable access to resources not only between nations, but also between humans irrespective of gender and nationality. As desperate poverty of the poor has been responsible to some extent for the overuse of the limited resources, economic justice and social equity are important. However, affluent societies are the real problem children of today’s world. For instance, it has been estimated that the birth of an American baby represents more than fifty times as great a threat to the environment as the birth of an Indian baby (Jones 1993: 14). Well-documented research has shown that world hunger caused by scarcity of food is a myth because the amount of food produced in the world at present is sufficient to provide about eight billion people with an adequate diet. The main culprit is the agribusiness in a world marred by inequalities (see Capra 1983: 257-258). “Without a revolution in fairness, the world will find itself in chronic conflict over dwindling resources, and this in turn will make it impossible to achieve the level of cooperation necessary to solve problems such as pollution and overpopulation” (Elgin 1993: 42). In this regard, it may be said that Buddhism promotes a wide distribution of basic necessities so that no one has to suffer deprivation as deprivation is the root cause of social conflict. Thus, talking about the cause of social conflict, the Buddha pointed out that, “goods not being bestowed on the destitute poverty grew rife; from poverty growing rife stealing increased, from the spread of stealing violence grew apace, from the growth of violence, the destruction of life became common” (Rhys Davids and Carpenter 1890-1911: iii.67). From a Buddhist perspective, an ideal society would follow the motto of happiness and welfare of maximum number of people (bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya: Oldenberg 1879-1883: i.21). In such a society one would not look for one’s own satisfaction in ways that may become a source of pain/suffering (aghabhūta) for others (Feer 1884-1898: iii.189). Hoarding wealth in any form is looked down upon in Buddhism (Morris and Hardy 1995-1900: iii.222) and if a wealthy person
were to enjoy his wealth all by himself only, it would be a source of failure for him (Fausböll 1985: 102). In fact, someone working for the sake of wealth (dhanahetu, Fausböll 1985: 122), craving wealth (dhanatthiko, Fausböll 1985: 987; bhogataṃhā, Sarao 2009: 355), or taking pride in wealth i.e., displaying economic snobbery (dhanatthaddho, Fausböll 1985: 104) is considered as a fallen human being and an ignoramus who hurts himself as well as the others. Thus, in Buddhist approach to social and economic development, the primary criterion governing policy formulation must be the well-being of members of the society as a whole i.e., production should oriented towards serving the real needs of the people instead of the serving the demands of the economic system. As emphasized by Fromm, Buddhism supports every human being’s right to be fed without qualification in a way as nourishing mother who feeds her children, who do not have to achieve anything in order to establish their right to be fed and it opposes the mentality of hoarding, greed, and possessiveness. In such a perception, people’s “income is not differentiated to a point that creates different experiences of life for different groups” (Fromm 2008: 69).

The present system believes that fulfilment of the material needs of humankind will lead to peace and happiness. But this is a mistaken view. As Erich Fromm points out, an animal is content if its physiological needs‒ hunger, thirst and sexual needs‒ are satisfied because being rooted in the inner chemistry of the body, they can become overwhelming if not satisfied. Inasmuch as man is also animal, these needs must be satisfied. But inasmuch as one is human, the satisfaction of these instinctual needs is not sufficient to make one happy because human happiness depends on the satisfaction of those needs and passions which are specifically human. These essential needs which modern civilization fails to satisfy are “the need for relatedness, transcendence, rootedness, the need for a sense of identity and the need for a frame of orientation and devotion” (Fromm 1955: 25, 28, 65, 67, 134). From the Buddhist perspective, economic and moral issues cannot be separated from each other because the mere satisfaction of economic needs without spiritual development can never lead to contentedness among people. By pointing out that the vulgar chase of luxury and abundance is the root-cause of suffering, Buddhism encourages restraint,
simplicity, and contentment. This way of life embraces frugality of consumption, a strong sense of environmental urgency, a desire to return to human-sized living and working environments, and an intention to realize our higher human potential—both psychological and spiritual (Elgin and Mitchell 1977: 5). This type of enlightened simplicity would integrate “both inner and outer aspects of life into an organic and purposeful whole…. outwardly more simple and inwardly more rich…. and living with balance in order to find a life of greater purpose, fulfillment, and satisfaction” (Elgin 1993: 25). Enlightened simplicity is essential to attain sustainable development and to solve global problems of environmental pollution, resource scarcity, socioeconomic inequities, and existential/spiritual problems of alienation, anxiety, and lack of meaningful lifestyles. Thus, need of the hour for the developed nations is to follow what Arnold Toynbee called *Law of Progressive Simplification* i.e., by progressively simplifying the material side of their lives and enriching the nonmaterial side (Toynbee 1947: 198). Taking a position akin to Buddhism, Elgin (1993: 32-35) has suggested that one choosing to live a life of simplicity would not only lower the overall level but also modify the patterns of one’s consumption by buying products that are long-lasting, easy to repair, serviceable, energy efficient, and non-polluting in their use as well as manufacture. Besides believing in deep ecology, one would show an ardent concern for the poor and the needy. One would prefer a smaller-scaled and human-sized living and working environment that fosters a sense of community and mutual-caring. One would shift one’s diet in favour of one that is more natural, healthy, simple, and suitable for sustaining the inhabitants of the planet Earth. One would not only recycle but also downsize by owning only those possessions that are absolutely required. One would develop personal skills to handle life’s ordinary demands for enhancing self-reliance, minimizing dependence upon others, and developing the full range of one’s potentials. One would also spare time on a regular basis to volunteer to help in improving the quality of life of the community. Enlightened simplicity requires having contentment (*samtuṭṭhi*: Rhys Davids and Carpenter 1890-1911: i.71; Trenckner and Chalmers 1888-1896: i.13; Fausböll 1985: 265; Sarao 2009: 204; Morris and Hardy 1995-1900: ii.27, 31, ii.219)
with little, avoiding wastefulness i.e., fewness of desires (appicchatā: Oldenberg 1879-1883: iii.21; Rhys Davids and Carpenter 1890-1911: iii.115; Trenckner and Chalmers 1888-1896: i.13; Feer 1884-1898: ii.202). Contentment, which is viewed in Buddhism as the best wealth (saṃtuṭṭhiparamam dhanam, Sarao 2009: 204), is the mental condition of a person who is satisfied with what he has or the position in which he finds himself (saṃtussamāno itarītarena: Fausböll 1985: 42).

“Private property” as once pointed out by Karl Marx, “has made us so stupid and partial that an object is only ours when we have it, when it exists for us as capital... Thus all the physical and intellectual senses have been replaced by... the sense of having” (Bottomore, 1963: 159). Thus, as pointed out by Erich Fromm, people acquire things, including useless possessions, because they “confer status on the owner” (Fromm 1955: 133). In the Having Mode of Existence relationship to the world is one of possessing and owning, to treat everybody and everything as property. The fundamental elements in the relation between individuals in this mode of existence are competition, antagonism, and fear. In such a mode, one’s happiness lies in one’s superiority over others, in one’s power and capacity to conquer, rob, and kill. The peril of the having mode is that even if a state of absolute abundance could be reached; those who have less in physical health and in attractiveness, in gifts, in talents bitterly envy those who have more (Fromm 2008: 66-67, 91-92).

In the Being Mode of Existence one’s happiness lies in aliveness and authentic relatedness to the world, loving, sharing, sacrificing, and giving. The difference between these two modes of existence is that whereas the having mode is centered around persons, the being mode is centered around things (Fromm 2008: 15, 21, 66).

There is an urgent need to sensitize people to the fact of the interconnectedness and interdependence of all living beings, including humans, and resources. The earth is not only teeming with life but seems to be a living being in its own right. A wide-ranging, objective, well-documented, and value free scientific research shows that each living creature has its place in the biosphere whereby it plays its unique role as part of the collective balance. As pointed out by Capra, all the living matter on earth, together with
the atmosphere, oceans, and soil, forms a complex system that has all the characteristic patterns of self-organization. Thus, “the earth is a living system and it functions not just like an organism but actually seems to be an organism—Gaia, a living planetary being” (Capra 1983: 284-285). From a Buddhist perspective, not only that life is inherently valuable but human and other forms of life are also interdependent and reciprocal. Thus, nature and humanity on the one hand and humans amongst themselves on the other are seen as mutually obligated to each other. A living entity can neither isolate itself from this causal nexus nor have an essence of its own. In other words, as part of the Dependent Origination (paṭiccasamuppāda), humans are seen as affecting their environment not only through the purely physical aspects of their actions, but also through the moral and immoral qualities of such actions. It is thus said that, if a king and his people act unrighteously, this has a bad effect on the environment and its gods, leading to little rain, poor crops and weak, short-lived people (Morris and Hardy 1995-1900: ii.74-76).

This message is also strongly implied by the Aggañña Suttanta of the Dīgha Nikāya (Rhys Davids and Carpenter 1890-1911: iii.80-98) which shows how in the beginning nature was bountiful but it became less so when humans began to take greedily from it. When they began to harvest more rice than they needed, it was not naturally able to grow quickly enough. This necessitated cultivation which in turn caused division of land into private fields, so that property was invented. Origin of private property became the root cause of different social and economic ills. Thus, one is not surprised that from Buddhist point of view, consumer-oriented modernity “is rejected because it is seen as a form of life that has in a short period of time despoiled the landscape and done irreparable damage to the environment” (Lancaster 2002: 1-2).

Just as poverty is the cause of much crime, wealth too is responsible for various human ills. Buddhism views material wealth as being required only for meeting the bare necessities and must only be earned through are righteous and moral means. Generosity (dāna) and liberality (cāga) are always linked in Buddhism with virtue (Sarao 2009: 177). Moreover, by giving one gets rid of greediness/selfishness (macchariya) and becomes more unacceptable to others because “one who gives makes many friends” (Fausböll 1985: 187;
Morris and Hardy 1995-1900: iii.273. v.40, 209; Rhys Davids and Carpenter 1890-1911: iii.234). Above all, it is not necessary to have much to practice generosity because giving even from one’s meagre resources (dajjā appampi) is considered very valuable (Feer 1884-1898: i.18; Sarao 2009: 224). Generosity is one of the important qualities that make one a gentleman (Morris and Hardy 1995-1900: iv.218). The Buddha is the spiritual friend (kalyānamitta) (Feer 1884-1898: v.3) par excellence and the saṅgha members who are his spiritual heir (dhammadāyādo) are also expected to act as such (Rhys Davids and Carpenter 1890-1911: iii.84; Feer 1884-1898: ii.221). The Buddha compares the person who earns wealth righteously and shares it with the needy to a person who has both eyes, whereas the one who only earns wealth but does no merit is like a one-eyed person (Morris and Hardy 1995-1900: i.129-130). In other words, if a healthy society is to be built, liberality and generosity must be fostered as its foundation pillars.

Avoidance of wastage, which is one of the most serious stumbling blocks in the path to sustainable development, is an important aspect of Buddhist enlightened simplicity. The fig-tree glutton (udumbarakhādika) method blamed by the Buddha (Feer 1884-1898: iv.283), the method of shaking down an indiscriminate amount of fruit from a fig-tree in order to eat a few, is exactly the same as the one employed in drift-net fishing, where much more aquatic life is destroyed than utilized. Humanity cannot continue to consume the planet’s limited resources at the rate to which it has become accustomed. Through unbridled expansion, the economy is not only absorbing into itself more and more of the resource base of the extremely fragile and finite ecosystem but is also burdening the ecosystem with its waste. As human population grows further; the stress on the environment is bound to rise to even more perilous levels. Exploding population levels wipe out what little is accomplished in raising living standards. As pointed out by Paul and Anne Ehrlich, considering present technology and patterns of behavior our planet is grossly overpopulated now and the limits of human capability to produce food by conventional means have also very nearly been reached. Attempts to increase food production further will tend to accelerate the deterioration of
our environment, which in turn will eventually reduce the capacity
of the earth to produce food. The Green Revolution “is proving
ecologically unsustainable, dependent as it is on an economically
and socially vulnerable, high cost, petrochemical agriculture”
(Jones, 1993: 13). Its dark side is reflected in crops’ vulnerability
to pest problems, loss of genetic diversity through mono-cropping
and neglect of local varieties, fertilizer-induced increase of weeds,
the threat of fertilizer pollution in fragile soils, toxicity through
pesticides leading to cancer and adverse effects on body’s natural
immune system, erosion accelerated by multiple cropping, and the
mindless squandering of water resources. “Yet these alarming results
have barely affected the sale and use of fertilizers and pesticides”
(Capra 1983: 257). Through the degradation of the environment,
the future is clearly being undermined by the rich in emulation
of the developed world and by the poor to stay alive by salvaging
the present by savaging the future. In fact, we are faced with “the
prospect that before we run out of resources on any absolute basis we
may poison ourselves to death with environmental contaminants”
(Elgin and Mitchell 1970: 5). Global warming is now irreversible,
and nothing can prevent large parts of the planet becoming too
hot to inhabit, or sinking underwater, resulting in mass migration,
famine, and epidemics. “Signs of potential collapse, environmental
and political, seem to be growing…. while politicians and elites
fail to recognize the basic situation and focus on expanding
their own wealth and power” (Ehrlich and Ehrlich 2009: 68).
As suggested by Stephanie Kaza, the environmental impact is
accelerated by the rapidly rising population numbers, increasingly
efficient technologies, and consumption rates beyond the planet’s
capacity. These three have been linked by the equation I=PAT, or
environmental Impact= Population size multiplied by Affluence
(or degree of consumption) multiplied by Technology. Reduce any
one of these and the impact drops; increase one or all three, and the
impact rises, in some cases dramatically (Kaza 2000: 23).

Since human beings are social creatures who naturally come
together for common ends, this means that a social order guided
by Buddhist principles would consist primarily of small-scale
communities with localized economies in which each member can
make an effective contribution. From the perspective of Buddhist economics, “production from local resources for local needs is the most rational way of economic life” (Schumacher 1973: 42). To attain sustainable development, what we need most of all is streamlining and downsizing. Only small-scale and simple technology would not drain natural resources as it production would be aimed principally at local consumption, so that there is direct face-to-face contact between producers and consumers. Large-scale technologies are dehumanizing and morally wrong as they become impersonal and unresponsive making individuals functionally futile, dispossessed, voiceless, powerless, excluded, and alienated. “Wisdom demands a new orientation of science and technology towards the organic, the gentle, the nonviolent, the elegant and beautiful” (Schumacher 1973: 20). The Buddhist values mean that environment should not be over exploited and “non-renewable goods must be used only if they are indispensable, and then only with the greatest care and the most meticulous concern for conservation.... The Buddhist economist would insist that a population basing its economic life on non-renewable fuels is living parasitically” (Schumacher 1973: 43-44). Thus, from a Buddhist perspective, a new relation must be established between people and nature, one of cooperation not of exploitation or domination. The driving force of such an economy would be to make a distinction between a state of utmost misery (daliddatā) (Feer 1884-1898: v.100, 384, 404), being sufficient (yāpanīya) (Oldenberg, 1879-1883: i.59, 212, 253), and glut (accogālha) (Morris and Hardy 1995-1900: iv.282). There would be a balance between material excess and deprivation i.e., avoidance of both mindless materialism and needless poverty leading to a balanced approach to living that harmonizes both inner and outer development. It would be unbuddhistic to consider goods as more important than people and consumption as more important than creative activity. For building a sustainable future affluent members of the society will need to make dramatic changes in the overall levels and patterns of consumption. We must choose levels and patterns of consumption that are globally sustainable, i.e., use the world’s resources wisely and do not overstress the world’s ecology, i.e., consuming in ways that respect the rest of life on this planet. Such an aim was made explicit in the Green Buddhist Declaration,
prepared by members of the international Buddhist community for discussion at the World Fellowship of Buddhism in Colombo (1980): “We believe that since world resources and the ecosystem cannot support all peoples at the level of the consumption of the advantaged nations, efforts towards global equity must be coupled with efforts towards voluntary simplicity, in one’s individual life-style and through democratically-determined policies. The economic structures which encourage consumerist greed and alienation must be transformed.”

From Buddhist perspective, it is also important that policies must be grounded on moral and ethical values that seek welfare of humankind as a whole. As suggested by Alan Durning (1992), the linked fates of humanity and the natural realm depend on us, the consumers. We can curtail our use of ecologically destructive things and cultivate the deeper, non-material sources of fulfillment that bring happiness: family and social relationships, meaningful work, and leisure. Implementation and realization of the spirit underlying the Buddhist Eight-fold Path (aṭṭhaṅgika-magga) encompassing wisdom (paññā), morality (sīla), and meditation (samādhi) in eight parts can truly offer a path leading to sustainable development. Right View (sammā-diṭṭhi) and Right Thought (sammā-saṅkappa) constitute wisdom; Right Speech (sammā-vācā), Right Conduct (sammā-kammanta), and Right Livelihood (sammā-ājīva) constitute morality; and Right Effort (sammā-vāyāma), Right Mindfulness (sammā-sati), and Right Concentration (sammā-samādhi) form the practice of meditation (Rhys Davids and Carpenter 1890-1911: ii.311-315). By following this path of wisdom, morality, and meditation one can grow inwardly and follow a life of enlightened simplicity. By following this path humans can aim at harmonious living (dhammacariya, samacariya) (Trenckner and Chalmers 1888-1896: i.289; Feer 1884-1898: i.101) and compassion (karuṇā) with “the desire to remove what is detrimental to others and their unhappiness” (Fausböll 1985: 73). This would form the basis of the weltanschauung of the well-adjusted and balanced person, who would seek inner peace (ajjhattasanti, Fausböll 1985: 837), and inward joy (ajjhattarata, Sarao 2009: 362; Rhys Davids and Carpenter 1890-1911: ii.107; Feer 1884-1898: i.101).
by exercising a degree of restraint, limiting his/her needs, and avoiding being greedy (ussuka) (Sarao 2009: 199) because one can never become worthy of respect if one is envious, selfish, and fraudulent (issukī maccharī saṭho) (Sarao 2009: 262).

It is time that each of us chooses a way of life that is materially simple, inner directed, and ecology friendly. The fundamental issue is of the Earth’s finite capacity to sustain human civilization. “Lifeboat ethic” must be replaced by “spaceship earth ethic.” Mindful living opens our perception to the interdependence and fragility of all life, and our indebtedness to countless beings, living and dead from the past and the present. Finally, it may be befitting to conclude in the words of Elgin:

“To live sustainably, we must live efficiently— not misdirecting or squandering the earth’s precious resources. To live efficiently, we must live peacefully, for military expenditure represents an enormous diversion of resources from meeting basic human needs. To live peacefully, we must live with a reasonable degree of equity, or fairness, for it is unrealistic to think that, in a communications-rich world, a billion or more persons will accept living in absolute poverty while another billion live in conspicuous excess. Only with greater fairness in the consumption of the world’s resources can we live peacefully, and thereby live sustainably, as a human family” (Elgin, 1993: 41-42).
Bibliography


THE FRAMEWORK OF RIGHT CONSUMPTION

by Gábor Kovács

ABSTRACT

The planet is now in a new epoch of its history, the Anthropocene, in which humanity exerts enormous impact on planetary processes. Human activities put a huge pressure on the earth system's structure and functioning with detrimental consequences.

The beginning of the age of the great acceleration is dated back to the 1950s, as earth systems trends and socio-economic trends accelerate since the middle of the last century. According to the patterns of great acceleration, socio-economic trends have been deteriorating that changes the future of the planet and the future of humanity.

A decisive part of the socio-economic system beside production and distribution is consumption. In the last decades not just world population, but primary energy consumption, water usage, fertilizer and paper consumption, and the consumption of various services have been increased exponentially.

In respect to sustainability, the central role of consumption was recognized by the United Nations as “ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns” is included as one of the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals in the UN Development Programme.

Buddhism should and can reflect on the stressing issue of exponentially increasing consumption patterns in the modern world. According to Buddhism, responsible consumption is right (samma) consumption that

*. Asst. Prof. PhD., Business Ethics Center of Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary.
is understood as local, wise and mindful, which gives an opportunity for practicing the virtues of sharing (dāna), contentment (appicchatā) and moderation (mattaññutā).

According to the teaching of the Buddha and the conceptions of Buddhist economics, right consumption aims at satisfying basic human needs (food, clothing, shelter and medicine) with minimal environmental impact. Furthermore, simplifying desires appears in right consumption as an important factor to alleviate the pressure on earth systems. Thus right consumption contributes to the Buddhist ideal of peace and harmony in the age of the Anthropocene.

1. INTRODUCTION

The paper introduces the Buddhist contributions to the subject of responsible consumption. On the one hand, it presents how the Buddhist approach transcends the traditional notion of sustainable consumption. On the other hand, it demonstrates how Buddhism interprets the notion of responsible consumption. The study recommends some necessary changes in consumption to ensure adaptable consumption patterns for the challenges that humanity faces in the epoch of the Anthropocene.

The first part of the paper introduces the new epoch of the planet’s history, the Anthropocene. It investigates the current Earth System trends that drive the planet into a climate catastrophe, and presents the era of the Great Acceleration, in which the magnitude of numerous socio-economic indicators increases exponentially. The second part of the paper introduces the initiative of “Ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns”, which is part of the United Nations’ Development Programme, and one of the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals. The third part of the paper investigates the Buddhist approach to consumption and gives a framework of responsible consumption, which is regarded as right consumption from a Buddhist perspective. The discussion includes the comparison of the United Nations’ and the Buddhist approaches of the subject of consumption. The paper ends with short conclusions.

In his paper, Apichai Puntasen (2007) analyzes the implementation of Buddhist teachings in economics. He introduces
the main concepts of Buddhist economics on the three spheres of economics, namely production, distribution and consumption. The frameworks of Buddhist production, Buddhist distribution and Buddhist consumption are integrated in the model of Buddhist economic system that highlights a scenario, which makes the realization of peace and tranquility in economics possible.

Although production and consumption is very closely related in the economic system, this paper investigates in detail only the sphere of consumption, and provides some further insights on how responsible consumption is interpreted from a Buddhist standpoint. Consumption patterns and consumption habits are basically determined by personal decisions. As leading a life in accordance with the Noble Eightfold Path is also a personal decision, Buddhism can provide influential contributions to shape the framework of responsible consumption, which can be regarded as right consumption in the Buddhist terminology.

2. FROM CLIMATE CHANGE TO CLIMATE CATASTROPHE

In our days humanity faces with the ever-growing consequences of human-induced changes on the Earth System. Steffen et al. (2015a) identified nine processes and systems that regulate the stability and resilience of the Earth System. These planetary boundaries include climate change, change in biosphere integrity (biodiversity loss and species extinction), stratospheric ozone depletion, ocean acidification, biogeochemical flows (phosphorus and nitrogen cycles), land-system change (deforestation), freshwater use, atmospheric aerosol loading, and introduction of novel entities (organic pollutants, radioactive materials, nanomaterials, microplastics, etc.). Four of the nine planetary boundaries, namely climate change, biosphere integrity, land-system change, and biogeochemical flows have been crossed from a safe operating space to a zone of uncertainty or even to a zone of high risks.

Humanity exerts enormous impact on essential planetary processes and planetary boundaries. Human impact has become so profound that it has driven the Earth out from the epoch of Holocene, in which human societies have developed in the last eleven thousand years (Steffen et al. 2015b). Based on the altered
circumstances caused by humanity, the new geological epoch of the planet is called the “Anthropocene” (Crutzen 2002, Steffen et al. 2011), a fundamentally distinct epoch with anthropogenic markers (Waters et al. 2016), in which human activities put a huge pressure on the Earth System’s structure and functioning with detrimental consequences.

Based on the twelve global socio-economic indicators like population, real GDP, foreign direct investments, urban population, primary energy use, fertilizer consumption, number of existing large dams, water use, paper production, number of new motor vehicles per year, sum of fixed and mobile phone subscriptions, and number of international tourist arrivals per year, Steffen et al. (2015b) arrive to the conclusion that the prime driver of change in the Earth System is predominantly the global economic system. The magnitude of the twelve socio-economic indicators increased exponentially from the 1950s, which delineates a phenomenon, called the “Great Acceleration”. Earth System trends and socio-economic trends accelerate since the middle of the last century. Many of these indicators are related directly or indirectly to consumption. According to the patterns of Great Acceleration, socio-economic trends and the prevailing consumption patterns have been deteriorating, which worsens the chances of the future of humanity.

The interactions of land, ocean, atmosphere and life together provide those conditions, upon which the future of our societies depends. The knowledge that human activity now rivals geological forces in influencing the trajectory of the Earth System has important implications for both Earth System science and social decision-making (Steffen et al. 2018). Adaptation options can reduce the risks of climate change, and have a central role in the survival of humanity in the Anthropocene (Moufouma-Okia et al. 2018).

The patterns of the Great Acceleration show that socio-economic trends have enormous impact on the Earth System and contribute to transgressing planetary boundaries. A decisive part of the socio-economic system, beside production and distribution is consumption. In the last decades not just world population, but primary energy consumption, water usage, fertilizer and paper
consumption, and the consumption of various services have been increasing exponentially. Overgrown consumption, beside the operating mechanism of the prevailing business models is a core factor, fueling detrimental changes in the Anthropocene. Mainstream business and consumption patterns are the primary causes of altered climatic conditions. Thus, introducing and applying alternative business models in production and introducing responsible consumption are at the core of adaptation. Responsible consumption presupposes new consumer behaviors, which contribute to establish consumption patterns that allow to survive the climate catastrophe by adapting to the altered climatic conditions.

3. SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION PATTERNS

Although both production and distribution influence the climatic conditions fundamentally, these stressing issues are exceeding the scope of the paper as it investigates in detail only one part of the economic system, namely consumption. In respect to sustainability, the central role of consumption was recognized by the United Nations (UN) as “Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns” is one of the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the UN Development Programme (Goal 12).

Based on global data, the UN warns that currently the consumption of natural resources is increasing. For instance, in case of water, humankind is polluting rivers and lakes faster than nature can recycle and purify, although more than one billion people still do not have access to fresh water. The excessive use of water contributes to the global water stress. Not just the growing use of natural resources, but bad consumption patterns and consumption habits increase general consumption. In case of food, beside substantial environmental impacts in the production phase, households intensify the pressure on the environment through dietary choices and consumption habits. According to global UN data, an estimated one third of all food produced end up rotting in the bins of consumers and retailers, and more than two billion people are overweight globally. The growth of consumption can also be observed by the increase of vehicle ownership, and global air travel. Should the global population reach 9.6 billion by 2050,
the equivalent of almost three planets could be required to provide the natural resources needed to sustain current lifestyles (Goal 12).

The goal of the twelfth SDG is to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns. In doing so, one of the core objectives is to decouple economic growth from resource use and environmental degradation through improved resource efficiency, while improving people’s well-being (Transforming, 2015). Thus, sustainable consumption and production is about promoting resource and energy efficiency, sustainable infrastructure, providing access to basic services, green and decent jobs and a better quality of life for all. Its implementation reduce future economic, environmental and social costs, strengthen economic competitiveness and reduce poverty. In general, sustainable consumption and production aims at “doing more and better with less” with the assumption that net welfare gains from economic activities can increase by reducing resource use, degradation and pollution along the whole life cycle, while increasing the quality of life. Realizing sustainable consumption needs to focus also on final consumers, which includes educating them on consumption and lifestyles, and providing them with adequate information through standards and labels (Goal 12).

The reports about the progress towards the SDGs depict a sad picture about ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns. Although the core objective is to decouple economic growth from natural resource use, global figures in 2016 pointed to worsening tendencies (Progress, 2017). According to the 2018 report about the progress, more and more countries are developing policies to promote sustainable consumption and production, and more multinationals and other large companies are reporting on sustainability (The Sustainable... 2018). Although there are changes that seem positive at first glance, as the share of renewable energy in final energy consumption has increased, but overall data confirm the Jevons paradox (Alcott 2005), that despite technological advances, energy use continuously grows, as the rate of energy consumption rises due to increasing demand (The Sustainable, 2018).

The UN’s goal to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns operates mostly on national and organizational
level. Only two of its eleven targets correspond to the personal level of consumers, namely reducing waste, and providing people the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature (Goal 12). Reducing waste can be done in many ways, from ensuring not to throw away food to reducing the consumption of plastic. Carrying a reusable bag, refusing to use plastic straws, and recycling plastic bottles are also good ways of waste reduction (Responsible... 2018), but raise the question if these measures will be enough to avoid the climate catastrophe or to adapt to the altered climatic conditions.

4. RIGHT (RESPONSIBLE) CONSUMPTION

Buddhism, like any other spiritual tradition, cannot avoid facing the problems of modernity. It has to provide answers to the most pressing questions, if it wants to remain a living tradition (Schmithausen 1997). Thus, Buddhism should reflect – beside others – on the issue of exponentially increasing consumption in the modern world. The following part of the paper discusses the approach and the contributions of Buddhism to the sustainable consumption debate by introducing the corresponding ideas of Buddhist economics, many of which concern the personal behavior in economic life.

The ultimate goal of Buddhism is to reach enlightenment and put an end to suffering. It is an inner, spiritual development, which requires only a minimum level of material comfort (Zsolnai – Kovács, forthcoming). Buddhism functions on the personal level, as leading a life according to the Noble Eightfold Path means the perfection of oneself to the highest possible stage of perfection.

Fredrick Pryor (1991) argues that in an economic sense there are fundamental differences between wants and needs. Venerable P. A. Payutto (1994) also draws attention to the teaching of the two kinds of wanting, namely tanhā and chanda, both of which have a fundamental role in consumption. According to Buddhism, tanhā means desire for pleasure objects and chanda means endeavor for well-being. The former could be called wanting, while the latter is the aspiration for right and skillful. Consumption fueled by tanhā or desire-driven consumption leads to obtaining and possessing,
but consumption led by chanda results solely the satisfaction of life’s basic needs, which contributes to well-being and forms a solid basis for the further development of human potentialities. Thus, chanda contributes to spiritual development. This point is often overlooked by economists, as modern economic thinking does not make distinction between the two kinds of wanting. Treating them equally leads to a situation in which both of them are to be satisfied by maximizing consumption in the spirit of “the more and the bigger is the better”.

Above life’s basic needs, one should minimize his or her consumption, thus making minimization the objective function of consumption patterns and consumption habits in the case of desires and desire-driven consumption. Modern economic thinking encourages maximum consumption in order to satisfy desires, but does not deal with what happens after one’s desires are satisfied (Payutto 1994). According to the teachings of the Buddha, three kinds of tanhā are inherent parts of human life: they cannot be satisfied, they are ever-emerging, and form the root of suffering (SN 56.11).

Based on the distinction of tanhā and chanda, and on the fact that desires lead to suffering, Buddhism suggests not to multiply but to simplify desires above material needs. It is wise to try to reduce one’s desires, as wanting less could bring substantial benefits not only for the person, but also for the community, and for nature (Zsolnai 2007). Thus, the Buddhist approach to desire-driven consumption understands that non-consumption – or the full minimization of consumption – can contribute to well-being. Furthermore, certain demands can be satisfied only through non-consumption, a position which traditional economic thinking would find hard to appreciate (Payutto 1994).

Buddhism offers the methods of Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration as parts of the Noble Eightfold Path to change one’s preferences and consumption habits. Leading a Buddhist life encompasses meditation practice, which can be used to tackle with ever-emerging tanhā, which is the root of suffering. In his formal model, Serge-Christophe Kolm (1985) connects consumption and meditation. He argues that consumption requires
labor time, as consumers must work in order to earn the necessary money for that. In general, time can be expended on meditation and work. It is recommended that only as much time should be spent with work that allows satisfying life’s basic needs. The rest of the time should be expended on meditation, or could be expended on work for transforming the consumption patterns and consumption habits of life’s basic needs to reverse the symptoms of the Great Acceleration.

Payutto (1994) asserts that training the mind through meditation contributes to achieve some inner contentment, which is a virtue, related to consumption and satisfaction. Buddhism proposes contentment as a skillful objective. The correct definition of contentment implies the absence of artificial desires. When we are easily satisfied with material things, we save time and energy that might otherwise be wasted on seeking consumer goods. The time and energy we save can be applied to the development of true well-being.

According to Buddhism, pursuing desires leads to suffering, while desires cannot ultimately be satisfied. Therefore, the following part of the paper investigates the Buddhist approach to the consumption of life’s basic needs. From now on, the term consumption in the paper is used only in the context of consuming life’s four basic requisites, namely food, clothing, housing and medicine. In doing so, those ideas of Buddhist economics will be introduced that concern consumption and the personal behavior in economic life.

In his book “Small is beautiful” Ernst Friedrich Schumacher (1973) described the two main characteristics of Buddhist economics as simplicity and non-violence. Both contribute to consume less from the scarce resources of the environment, and lead to realize localization. Schumacher was one of the first, who drew attention to the fundamental difference between renewable and non-renewable resources, and urged the utilization of renewables, which is also an important part of today’s sustainability debate.

Pryor (1991) emphasizes the importance of moderation in economics and in consumption, which is in accordance with
the spirit of the Middle Way. Payutto (1994) formulates it even stronger, when he asserts that at the very heart of Buddhism is the wisdom of moderation, and economic activity must be controlled by moderation that consumption for instance is directed to the attainment of well-being rather than maximum satisfaction. According to Peter Daniels (2006), moderation or the willful reduction of the material and energy flows of economy has become vital. The possibility of a successful adaptation depends on reduction, which is consistent with the ethics of Buddhist moderation.

Frugality means low material consumption, simple lifestyle, and the openness of the mind for spiritual goods. Its synonyms are self-restriction, chosen poverty and voluntary simplicity. The Buddha arrived to the conclusion that frugality is a rational virtue, because desires are insatiable in nature, and their simplification contributes to the alleviation of suffering (Bouckaert – Opdebeeck – Zsolnai 2011).

Based on moderation, with the help of meditation practice, the trap of over-consumption can be avoided. One must be aware of how much is enough in the case of life’s basic needs, because today’s society encourages over-consumption. For instance, a great many people damage their own health by overeating, thus making themselves ill in the long run. Some become deficient in certain vitamins and minerals, despite eating large meals. Apart from harming themselves, their overeating deprives others of food. Thus, the social and environmental costs of over-consumption, such as depletion of natural resources and costs incurred by health care are enormous. On the other hand, Buddhism offers the possibility of realize moderation and contentment by which a balance without over-consumption can be achieved (Payutto 1994).

Richard Welford (2006) asserts that the main characteristics of Buddhist economics are moderation in consumption, and creativity or the positive utilization of human mind. Mindfulness and creativity allows the elimination of simplistic thinking, the most serious problems of modernity that leads to environmental destruction and stems from scientific materialism. As Clair Brown (2017) asserts, applying Buddhist economics at the personal level means applying mindfulness in consumption, working
together with others, and taking the right actions. There are fruitful initiatives of applying mindfulness in consumption in the contemporary world. Ethical consumerism (Boda – Gulyas 2006), for instance is one of the initiatives that are consistent with the Buddhist notion of mindful consumption. Thus, mindfulness is a fundamental part of enjoying life without relying on consumerism, since only disappointment and despair comes from wanting more and cultivating desires (Brown 2017).

Based on the basic teachings of Buddhism, responsible or right consumption has nothing to do with the satisfaction of desires. It focuses rather on the satisfaction of life’s basic needs. According to the ideas of Buddhist economics, right consumption gives an opportunity to realize the Buddhist values of non-violence, moderation, frugality (simplicity), mindfulness and creativity. All of these values are constituent parts of the objective function of right consumption in the case of life’s basic needs. Practicing these values regarding to consumption can contribute to facilitate environmental preservation, and minimize the ultimate environmental impact of consumption.

5. DISCUSSION

The approach of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals to sustainable consumption and production patterns is a scientific-technical one (Mitroff 1998), in which economic growth is assumed as an axiom of achieving sustainability by enhancing efficiency through introducing new technologies.

Its core objective is to decouple economic growth from resource use and environmental degradation. It uses the vocabulary of economics like sustainable infrastructure, access to basic services, green and decent jobs, and economic competitiveness. It monitors the progress of sustainability with economic terms like economic, environmental and social costs, and resource and energy efficiency. On the personal level regarding consumption the importance of education and waste reduction is also emphasized by the terms of the economic paradigm like introducing standards and labels.

The goal to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns is executed in a top-down approach from the level of
nations and organizations. Nevertheless, the question still stands if this initiative will be able to help humanity succeeding in adapting to the altered climatic conditions in the epoch of the Anthropocene.

The Buddhist approach of responsible consumption expands the UN’s scientific-technical analysis of the subject with an existential-spiritual dimension, affecting significantly also the systemic and interpersonal-social dimensions of the problem (Mitroff 1998).

The objective of right consumption is twofold. On the one hand, it aims to radically reducing or totally eliminating the desires-driven consumption, and on the other hand, to apply the values of non-violence, moderation, frugality (simplicity), mindfulness and creativity in the case of the consumption of life’s basic needs, namely food, clothing, housing and medicine. Consumption, driven by Buddhist values contributes to environmental preservation, and minimizes the environmental impact.

The starting point of the arguments regarding right consumption is human nature, and the nature of desires. The Buddhist approach of consumption strives to explain the problem and give a possible solution at the personal level, thus presenting a bottom-up approach of the subject. Right consumption complements and transcends the conventional notion of sustainability, as due to the impermanent nature of phenomena, achieving sustainability is hardly possible according to Buddhism (Kovács 2011).

The conventional approaches of sustainable consumption patterns and consumption habits deal basically with the question of how to achieve sustainability. The Buddhist interpretation includes not simply the methods of right consumption, but presupposes a radical quantitative reduction or the total elimination of desire-driven consumption. The contemporary condition of the Earth System and the climatic conditions do not allow human beings to pursue their desires freely, or hardly allow anymore to practice moderation in the case of desire-driven consumption practices. Thus, not simply moderation or contentment, but the complete minimization should be the objective function of the reduction in the case of desire-driven consumption.

The Buddhist approach of responsible consumption proposes
a radical reduction or the total elimination of desire-driven consumption in the first place, than allows people to practice certain Buddhist values regarding the consumption of life’s basic needs, thus effectuating the notion of right consumption in practice.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The possibility of a coming climate catastrophe in the epoch of the Anthropocene makes it necessary for humanity to adapt to the altered climatic conditions of the near future in every possible way. The Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations include some promising initiatives to achieve adaptation, although they have their own limitations.

The paper introduced the approach, by which Buddhism contributes to the sustainability consumption debate. The traditional, primarily scientific-technical approach of the subject is complemented by an existential-spiritual point of view. On the first place, Buddhism urges the radical reduction or the total elimination of desire-driven consumption, by which relieving personal, social and environmental suffering becomes possible. Furthermore, right consumption gives an opportunity to implement the Buddhist values of non-violence, moderation, frugality (simplicity), mindfulness and creativity in the consumption of life’s basic needs. Thus, right consumption does not entail desire-driven consumption, but focuses only on life’s basic needs, thus it can be a significant part of the adaptation model in the altered climatic conditions.
References


SN 56.11: Setting the Wheel of Dhamma in Motion, Samyutta Nikaya 56.11, on-line at:


THE 4TH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION –
A BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVE
FOR SUSTAINABLE SOCIETIES
AND WELLBEING

by Peter Daniels*

ABSTRACT

The effects of the purported global “Fourth Industrial Revolution” (4IR) are likely to be profound – even in relation to the extensive impacts of previous industrial revolutions beginning in the late 18th Century and escalating, since the 1980s, with the pervasion of the microprocessor and the internet. They will cover a multitude of very significant social benefits and costs affecting most of the world’s people, as well as natural and built environments in which they dwell. The Fourth Industrial Revolution is not easy to clearly define and distinguish but is typically characterised by the “blurring” of the physical and digital worlds - with embedding of digital processing and transfer to provide functions in everyday economic, social, and household environments. Interconnectedness and virtualisation are also key in the 4IR.

* Doctor, Environmental Futures Centre, School of Environment & Science, Griffith University, Gold Coast 4215, Queensland, Australia.
There are a diverse range of potential links between Buddhism and the nature of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. However, the focus in this paper is upon matters related to sustainability and human wellbeing. It comprises a preliminary Buddhist-influenced analysis of the 4IR and likely consequences in terms of environmental impacts and also more fundamental aspects of the root causes of samsaric suffering.

This is an exploratory Buddhist analysis of such developments. It includes the positive and negative options and helps to inform recommendations on how Buddhism can pre-empt and sway pending change towards more sustainable societies and higher individual and community wellbeing. Mindfulness and awareness of the real sources of wellbeing (and hence suffering) are key aspects of the Buddhist-inspired analysis of relevant effects and identification of responses to guide the 4IR.

1. INTRODUCTION

It is ironic that hundreds of years of profound technological “success” throughout much of the world now seems to offer limited further gains in social and psychological wellbeing. This may well represent a reaffirmation of the inherent wisdom in Buddhism that enhanced material accumulation and comfort, beyond some basic level, won’t really reduce our suffering (improve our “happiness”). Such a limitation would seem counter to the optimism and excitement surrounding the “Fourth Industrial Revolution” (4IR) which is generally heralded as promising an amazing new world with longer, healthier lives, unlimited access to information and entertainment, massive productivity gains, and the potential removal or arduous, menial and routine labour task - all founded upon accelerated trends emerging with the digital revolution.

It is true that the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) can help continue the substantial reductions in global poverty witnessed over the past 40 years.\(^1\) However, for most people in higher income nations on the vanguard of the 4IR, the benefits (perhaps beyond physical health) are less certain given wellbeing trends measured since the mid-20\(^{th}\) Century.\(^2\) The onset of the 4IR seems premised

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1. The percentage of the world population classes as “extremely poor” has been estimated to have fallen from around 42% in 1981 to less than 10% in 2016 (The Economist 2017).
2. The empirical evidence on the link between subjective wellbeing (SWB) or life satisfac-
on a type of ignorance recognised in Buddhism (avidyā) regarding
the link between wellbeing, and the motives and expected outcomes
that propel an intensification of techno-economic progress
experienced to date.

As described by Schwab (2017), Bloem et al (2014), Jones
(2017) and others, the 4IR is characterised by many dimensions,
However, a significant part of its defining essence is the proliferating
augmentation, fusion, or perhaps even supplantation, of primary
human physiological (including mental/intellectual) functions
with processes and artefacts of digital technology, microprocessors
and related network systems. The new developments in innovation
and adoption are certainly extensions of the Third Industrial
Revolution that were based on the powerful synergies that emerged
from the “digital revolution” and computers and ICT (information
and communication technology). Yet, these developments are
considered to be distinctive enough to be classed as a new “industrial
revolution”. Amongst the diverse descriptions of such a complex
social phenomena, is a distinguishing theme of great relevance to the
topic addressed here – replacement of direct human environmental
experience (including labour, social interaction, entertainment,
empirical and experiential knowledge acquisition activities, and
understanding of the world) with digital media and interfaces,
artificial intelligence (AI), robotics, virtualisation, the Internet and its
countless connected sensors and other devices, and data reservoirs.

While the scale and scope of the 4IR is awe-inspiring, there is no
doubt that it will have very profound and often disruptive changes
with undesirable consequences. Despite the broad economic
gains and people’s recognition of their comforts and material
fortune from technology success, there is a great deal of evidence,
if rather disparate and ad hoc, of the dangers of acquiescence to
unconditional technological optimism (overviewed in Section 3 of
this paper).

Given the potential extent and magnitude of such change from a 4IR
on our life-worlds, it is easily understood why it is widely accepted (by
many leaders in business, government, the media and the community

tion and economic growth is unclear (for example, see Deaton 2008).

in general) that we need to carefully deliberate upon this matter (Huffington 2017). The priority should be positive human wellbeing outcomes – something which is not assured by a technological era driven by profit motives and unconditional technophilia built upon speed (instantaneous demand satisfaction, and expectations thereof), electronic connectivity, comfort, convenience, competitive edges, productivity, output and performance increases, and near limitless time-filling and entertainment choices. Many community leaders now realise the need to question the assumption that these, arguably vestigial, motives and goals will lead to better wellbeing, needs to be questioned.

This paper examines many of the trending effects already observed (and those predicted) for the 4IR, and how Buddhism can help assess these effects and inform societies to choose and act to create better community wellbeing outcomes. Hence, it represents a Buddhism-inspired analysis of the 4IR and the likely implications for humans, using the ancient tradition’s understanding and view of the primary universal sources and “laws” that affect positive wellbeing (and its obverse, samsaric suffering, in Buddhism\(^3\)). This involves a focus upon how the 4IR relates to dukkha and the Four Noble Truths. Environmental effects also play a key role in the discussion.

The general links between Buddhism and the 4IR have been analysed elsewhere (for example, see Jones (2017) and other papers in the Buddhism and the Fourth Industrial Revolution Workshop sponsored by the Korean Association for Buddhist Studies in Seoul in 2017, Bristow (2017), Smith (2015)). However, this paper is unique in its emphasis upon sustainability analysis and the long-term, sustained wellbeing of human beings. This rests on the assumption that people are deeply embedded in a web of interconnectedness with each other, and the natural world of which they are part. A major paper theme is how the 4IR might impact, and best be shaped in view of joint environmental and social (including economic) sustainability. An important topic is the Buddhist analysis of potential influence of the 4IR on ecological footprints.

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3. In Buddhism, \textit{samsara} refers the cycle of birth, mundane existence and death, permeated and perpetuated by desire and ignorance, and its karmic consequences (King 2009).
and material and energy flows, and how Buddhism would be likely to support transformation of the 4IR into a “green” version (known as a “green techno-economic paradigm” (or green TEP) in some areas of science). Of course, this quest necessarily involves consideration of wellbeing aspects and how the 4IR affects the key sources of wellbeing, in accordance with the Buddhist worldview.

The following section provides a brief overview of relevant aspects of the 4IR. Section 3 summarises a detailed list of the potential (and overlapping and inter-connected) effects of the 4IR on the economy, broader society and culture, and the natural environment. It highlights some of most relevant impacts associated with the world view of Buddhism and Section 4 discusses how the this ancient wisdom might help analyse and assess these impacts contribute to guiding communities to best mould the power of the 4IR for long-term good.

“The fourth industrial revolution is in its infancy, and it is far too early to predict what form it will take. But the more we can understand its nature and causes, the more likely we are to reap the benefits and minimize the risks.”

(Thomson 2015)

The essential assumption for this paper is that Buddhism can help understand and evaluate the motives and impacts of the 4IR to achieve Thomson’s proposition.

2. WHAT IS SO SPECIAL ABOUT THE FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION?

The (first) Industrial Revolution is well-known from modern history classes in schools. Its onset marked a momentous change in the nature of economic and broader social systems – change that has evolved and spread with common themes and effects across the world, especially over the past 50-60 years. Beginning in England in the late 1700s with a concomitant capability to use inanimate, often fossil fuel, power, and the invention of machines using this power to greatly mechanise and speed craft production tasks, the wave of accumulating technologies spread quite rapidly across Western Europe and the USA (Deane 1979). The 1st Industrial Revolution also involved a host of complementary and
related innovations in metallurgy, transport, and communications, commerce and banking, The result was a very substantial increase in productivity and overall output, especially in textiles, chemical and metal products. This new industrial economy provided substantial increases in the material standard of living for some but a forbidding and often dire working life for the rural migrants and other working class labourers (caught in the radical restructuring of labour demand and political economic conditions).

What is less known is the series of subsequent “industrial” or technological-economic revolution epochs that have been identified since the classic 18th Century developments. Focusing on the four revolutions that are commonly identified tends to ignore the rather continuous and cumulative nature of these times. However, they are considered to have sufficient unique features to be deemed as separate “industrial” epochs. The term “industrial” (typically associated with manufacturing activity) to describe such profound social and economic transformations is somewhat myopic given the scope and depth of impacts and, in later sections, we will propose that the concepts such as “techno-economic paradigms” are more appropriate for the social scientific analysis of related societal dynamics.

Some of the primary features of each of the four industrial revolutions have been classified into a number of dimensions and are presented and compared in Table 1. In keeping with the approach typical of much of the literature in this field, economic system and socio-cultural impacts are not covered in detail in the industrial revolutions description table.

The first two industrial revolutions tend to be largely about mechanical and energetic assistance in the production of physical goods, while information and knowledge accumulation and access are central to the third revolution. One of the defining features of the 4IR is the move towards integrating information, sensor, virtual reality and decision-making (and physical artefact) systems more directly into human consciousness and even bodies. The 4IR represents a continued move away from an era based on new energy sources towards a technological phenomenon – “digitalization” – where virtual perceptions strongly guide human actions in the physical world (Sentryo 2017).
The 4IR concept was effectively instilled by the work World Economic Forum leader Klaus Schwab in his 2017 book “The Fourth Industrial Revolution”. A principal message of the book was that this latest industrial revolution was likely to involve more profound changes than at any time before, and hence the need for great care and deliberation on the nature of 4IR technologies and their impacts. The scope of earlier revolutions was more localised, if expanding over time. The clearly global nature of the transformations and influence of the 4IR increases its significance.

The primary features of the 4IR have been outlined in the Introduction and are analysed in more detail in the final column of Table 1. This is described a little more in the final part of this section with a preview of some key links between the 4IR and Buddhism.

Overall, one of the most distinctive traits of the 4IR has been described as the rapid innovation and adoption of “cyber-physical systems” (Schwab 2017; Bloem et al 2014) that “fuse networked and connected digital devices with physical and biological systems” (Jones 2017). This biodigital fusion is perhaps the most radical feature of the 4IR and covers a cluster of related technologies based on an intense interplay or even the embedding of digital technology with “fleshy biology” (including close physical connections between sense and cognitive organs) (Jones 2017).

Table 1 Major dimensions of the 4th Industrial revolution and its predecessors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st Industrial Revolution</th>
<th>2nd Industrial Revolution</th>
<th>3rd Industrial Revolution</th>
<th>4th Industrial Revolution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main energy sources (and key materials)</td>
<td>Switch from human and other animate energy to inanimate energy (esp. coal). Coal, water and steam.</td>
<td>Steam power, coal-based electricity, petroleum</td>
<td>Fossil fuels, hydroelectricity, nuclear. Some renewable sources.</td>
<td>Mixed. Coal, petroleum, natural gas but diminishing relative importance. Increasing use of renewables – solar, wind, etc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 1770s to mid 1800s | Late 1800s to mid 1900s | Mid-1900s to 2000 | 21st Century |

569
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key technology change and improvement clusters</th>
<th>Mechanised, if not mass production.</th>
<th>The rise of electronics and computers - microprocessors and memory/storage, then network systems. Software systems.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Internal combustion engine and cars.</td>
<td>“Digital revolution” aiding production (vs directly) producers; shift from mechanical to analogue electronic then digital.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mass production, Fordist and Taylorism (scientific management of production).</td>
<td>Electricity and other energy storage systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shift</td>
<td>Mobile phone and other computing. Robotics.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some analogue electronic.</td>
<td>Biotechnology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vacuum tubes, transistors in later period.</td>
<td>Artificial intelligence; algorithm-driven search, consumption and other analytics; apps and systems for numerous tasks; robotics; the Internet of Things; autonomous vehicles; 3D printing; synthetic biology and genetics, genome editing; distributed ledger technology (DLT), blockchain, quantum computing, nanotechnology; biometrics; renewable energy; peer to peer and shared economies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main sectors affected</td>
<td>Textiles, metals</td>
<td>All manufacturing. Steel, petroleum, electricity, utilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographic extent</td>
<td>Britain, Western Europe, North America</td>
<td>N.America, Western and Central Europe, Russia, Japan, Australia. Spreading Mid East, S.America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous production aspects</td>
<td>Mechanical production based on steam (esp. textiles), rediscovery of cement, sheet glass, gaslight.</td>
<td>Standardisation of machine parts. Paper making, rubber.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 (contd.) Major dimensions of the 4th Industrial revolution and its predecessors
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st Industrial Revolution</th>
<th>2nd Industrial Revolution</th>
<th>3rd Industrial Revolution</th>
<th>4th Industrial Revolution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time Period</strong></td>
<td>1770s to mid 1800s</td>
<td>Late 1800s to mid 1900s</td>
<td>Mid-1900s to 2000</td>
<td>21st Century</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transport System</strong></td>
<td>Canals, slow implementa-</td>
<td>Steam turbine engines -</td>
<td>Automobiles, trucks,</td>
<td>Automobiles, trucks,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tion of railways</td>
<td>railway, the ships; in</td>
<td>aircraft, high speed</td>
<td>aircraft, drones.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>later era, ICE automo-</td>
<td>trains.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>biles and aircraft</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication</strong></td>
<td>Limited.</td>
<td>Telegraph, then radio</td>
<td>Television. Mobile</td>
<td>Internet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Information</td>
<td></td>
<td>and telephone</td>
<td>phones. Internet.</td>
<td>Mobile devices. Cy-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teleworking.</td>
<td>ber-physical systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Human</strong></td>
<td>Industrial urbanisation</td>
<td>Continued migration to</td>
<td>Suburbanisation then</td>
<td>Mixed. Increased density?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settlements**</td>
<td></td>
<td>cities. Sky-scrapers.</td>
<td>some inner city</td>
<td>Globalisation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>redevelopment and rural</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>decentralisation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Integration of</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Physiology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sources:** Adapted and extended from Schwab (2017), John Grill Centre (2018), Khan and Isreb (2018), Huffington (2017); Klugman (2018); The Oracle (2018) and others.

This represents a merging of the capabilities of humans and machines where technology is not just used, but deeply embedded in our lives, and increasingly physically connected or implanted...
into our bodies. It is the mark of change for the transition into the 4IR - technology was physically separate (a kind of extended augmentation) but starts to become internalised (physiologically and, of course, in shaping our lifestyles) (Khan & Isreb 2018). This fusion covers everything from perception (virtualisation) to biological physiology (cyborgism). It is commonly noted as the “blurring” between physical, mental and digital boundaries, between nature and machines, and the physical and artificial, and heralds the integration of the human, biological (non-human) and other physical, and digital realms (Chansoda and Saising 2018; Schwab 2017; Jones 2017).

The current technological epoch is more than biodigital fusion. Virtualisation has many degrees in service consumption, information acquisition, and experience. For example, while gaming and SMS may lack pre-industrialisation human elements, many 4IR communications retain strong physical human connection modes e.g. visuals and voice in Skype and related telecommunications application software, and improved air and high speed train travel can enhance the potential for real human contact.

Perhaps a more universal attribute of the 4IR is an intensification of one of the major trends on the Third Industrial Revolution – marking the onset of a form of extreme connectedness (for example, the “Internet of Things”) linking the virtual and physical worlds. A consequence of this profound connectedness and the AI and processing systems that can manage such “big data” is the capacity for multiplicative, compounding power and speed in information access, learning and decision-making, versus the simple additive models from the past.

As noted earlier in this section, the power and extreme connectivity of the 4IR is widely recognised to have very significant and highly ‘disruptive” impacts – both positive and negative – upon society. Technophiles are often highly optimistic and excited about the 4IR’s prospects to “advance humanity” (John Grill 2018) and the potential economic and recreational gains are superlative indeed (for example, note the beneficial developments of the past half century as espoused by Steven Pinker (2019)). However, unconditional adoption of the 4IR trends will take humanity into
new territory and present many unintended effects or “externalities” and critical socio-psychological and ethical issues that will deeply affect individual and community wellbeing. The changes will continue to transform the way we work, recreate, socially interact, sense the world, eat, move and even sleep, and arguably, think. Past industrial revolutions (IRs) have also had massive impacts on human lifeworlds – for example, electricity and automobiles, but in some ways these impacts were more physical regarding human activity (e.g. travel and household chores) while the 4IR has a strong perceptual and cognitive dimension and may have deeper influence in terms of mental impacts and issues.

The 4IR is far from simply a technological phenomenon that will fill all our present unmet needs and make us happy. Indeed, it is open to question exactly what the 4IR will bring and why we want these outcomes – including the presumed eternal beneficial effects such as economic gains. The 4IR won’t be stopped but the transformations in train (and the inevitable powerful unintended effects) call for careful consideration and assessment. What is it that needs to be addressed or improved by the 4IR - health, longer lives, poverty, diversity of experience, life and lifestyle choice, more entertainment, free time, an easier life, inner and peace and contentment? How have these goals been achieved in earlier IRs?

Buddhism has considerable wisdom to offer in terms of evaluating these goals and questioning and evaluating the real value and direction of changes likely to come with the 4IR. It has a contribution to make in terms of fundamental questions about what we want and what will give us lasting wellbeing, and can relates these to underlying assumptions and motives (and desires and choices) that will propel and direct the 4IR.

3. IMPACTS OF THE FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

The effects of the 4IR have been widely discussed. There is often considerable excitement about the promise of technology marvels in brave new worlds, perhaps with some trepidation about the associated dangers for employment. However, it must be emphasised that deeper, more insightful analysis suggests that the potential future effects of the 4IR are much more extensive and unpredictable
than portrayed in popularist accounts. The far-reaching impacts certainly have the potential for both “good” and “bad” and, while the value and evaluation of many of these effects can be highly subjective, careful consideration and wisdom will surely help provide better outcomes for local to global communities.

Some impacts, such as longer life expectancy and improved health, seem to be clear-cut wellbeing wins, but it is much more difficult to assess the eventual wellbeing effects of change such as continued increases in entertainment choice and realism, information and communication access, integration of cyber systems into the human psyche and body, and artificial intelligence (AI) guiding individual and collective decisions. Indeed, extended analysis would reveal that even substantial life expectancy improvements will present some formidable challenges to future societies.

Nothing is as simple as it seems, and one of the main lessons learned from science and society studies over the past half century has surely been that there are always very substantial unintended consequences of every major human intervention. Furthermore, these unintended consequences can have very significant effects on wellbeing. They are known by many terms (including “externalities”, “spillover effects”, “flow-on effects”) and have become a major feature of study across the natural and social sciences, and policy studies (Thiele 2011). The pervasive influence of unintended effects is still often forgotten in the heady exhilaration of ushering in new technological systems and this is evident in the retention of the technologic notion of “industrial revolutions”. Recognition of the far more profound importance of the full range of economic and other socio-cultural (and environmental) impacts is explicitly embraced in related approaches such as the evolution of “techno-economic paradigms” (Freeman et al 1986). We will return to this concept in the next section.

Table 2 presents a detailed list of the positive and negative, direct and more indirect social and economic spillover, effects that have been linked to the 4IR. The reader is strongly advised to check these impacts closely, or at least refer to the table as needed, as the basis for the discussion of Buddhist-related contributions to positively shaping the 4IR in Section 4 of the paper. Key
elements of these impacts, sometimes with more detailed notes, are summarised in the table. It must be recognised that many are complex, multiple dimensions, with considerable overlap between many of the impacts, and some ambiguity regarding their relative and net benefit or cost. The impacts been ordered in their rows to reflect a general logic of similarity.

The 4IR will continue to bring many of the positive contributions to society that have been provided by the previous “industrial revolutions”. In the benefits section of Table 2, the inter-related impacts (1 to 3) of economic and income growth, productivity growth and transaction cost reduction (e.g. transport, information access, and communication), and to a lesser extent the consumer choice and supply-side efficiencies and (5,6,7 and 8) are all related to the great potential that the 4IR has in further alleviate poverty and reduce suffering for poorer humans. The data-based problem-solving power of the 4IR and its ability to supply information, and visual, audio and other data, and other services at zero or very low marginal cost, further reinforces the spectacular growth in output available for consumption by those already economically advantaged. Indeed, as I write this paper, the 4IR-related efficiency increase from an ability to source references, and check ideas and concepts (let alone create a systematic, readily disseminatable document) is phenomenal and an enormous boon to personal research productivity.

We will return to explore some of the Buddhist-inspired views on these economic gains and other effects in the next section. However, it is worthwhile to pre-empt that Buddhism questions the veracity of the link between wellbeing and material accumulation and consumption abundance beyond that required for economic security. More important is the underlying intent of actions, compassion in the distribution of benefits, and nature of spill-over harm generated by the actions leading to this abundance. This is a common theme throughout the rest of the paper.

4. Kahn and Isreb (2018) note how technology developments associated with the 4IR have been estimated to boost to global economy by $US (2017) 15.7 trillion by 2030.
Table 2: Social and Economic Impacts of the 4th Industrial Revolution – Positive and Negative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPACT</th>
<th>POSITIVE IMPACTS OF THE 4IR</th>
<th>Closely Related to IMPACT</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>increased incomes, quality of life (material or expenditure based)</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>Excess wealth has also led to notable increases in philanthropy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>increased productivity - in a wide range of areas; do same with less (labour, total factor, time); very strong price reductions and associated real increases in real income (purchasing power).</td>
<td>1,3</td>
<td>Closely linked to increased incomes. Productivity is not good at capturing price reductions from better technology (it uses the value of output) that is, it ignores service productivity. A better measure for labour productivity should be hours to produce an equivalent service or benefit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>enormous reductions in transaction costs and waste - reduced transport/travel, time and communication costs and constraints (and demand); trade facilitation</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>Convenience, time-saving Transport efficiency – optimal routes, congestion info, cycling route info</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>greatly enhanced knowledge accumulation capabilities/efficiency and education potential</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Process</strong></td>
<td><strong>Category</strong></td>
<td><strong>Notes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>☑ improves consumer decision-making (so that expenditure item functions at least match consumer demands); efficient choice and consumer information; more informed, customised consumption - DEMAND-side</td>
<td>2,4</td>
<td>Choices that potentially increase satisfaction (holidays, recreational activity; location/timing); assuming consumers have true preferences (informed choices lead to improved subjective wellbeing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>☑ optimised service delivery (e.g. transport) -SUPPLY-side efficiency</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>Closely related to transaction cost reductions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>☑ facilitate problem-solving e.g. household and vehicle maintenance information and tasks, GIS, social/meeting logistics</td>
<td>ALL</td>
<td>Most of the positive effects listed here relate to problem-solving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>☑ zero or very low marginal cost of many goods and services, knowledge and know-how for solving questions, problem-solving</td>
<td>4,7</td>
<td>Especially quaternary sector services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>☑ more entertainment; diversity; stimulation; learning; experience</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>☑ good and services demand and expect wellbeing from are services/info that can be completed or consumed without physical connection – just information transfer.</td>
<td>4,11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>References</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>environmental efficiencies – natural resource input productivity and waste treatment technology improvements</td>
<td>1-8, 10</td>
<td>Many of the sources for this are flagged in previous items – e.g. savings in need and efficiency of travel, energy management. 4IR technologies can continue to enhance material and energy-saving (and increase consumption service) e.g. less travel, less time, quicker problem-solving (increase service-intensity of goods and services)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>health diagnostics, treatment, ill-health prevention</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>creativity potential</td>
<td></td>
<td>The 4IR can enhance the skills, means and possibly the time for greater creativity for people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>governance improvement – feedback, coordinate, engage with governments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 15 | Social media, blogs, fora, gaming, social network sites (e.g. dating) that increase interaction, relationships and social belonging in peer networks and social networking | 1. useful information; problem-solving  
2. belonging to a community (if virtual)  
3. meeting and social interaction with real (more compatible?) people – so potential direct contact enhancement (e.g. Pixel Buds)  
4. cross-cultural understanding and cohesion but may facilitate extremism, manipulation, etc |
| 16 | Increased collective awareness and moral consciousness; encourage honesty and sincerity | However, this can also facilitate possible manipulation and mass propaganda. |
| 17 | Reduced conflict and warfare | Close to 4. in (15) above. Better communication and understanding among the community vs. nationalist elitist profiteering and propaganda for benefit of national elites. Cultural barriers reduced. |

### NOTES

1. Potential increases in inequality and unemployment
| 2 | • lifestyle/mismatch diseases – physical and mental (many of the possible relevant mental dysfunctions are noted below) | Negative health effects [many of these are since 2IR not just 4IR] – obesity including childhood and reduced outdoor activity among children, diabetes etc from tech-economic “success”; processed food, sugar, social media, TV & computers, sedentary lifestyle, chronic stress; temptation opportunity and intimate relationships (ease of infidelity)

Sugar & Processed Food – hunter-gatherers ingested 30 -450 teaspoons sugar per year; now we average 22-32/day

Sedentary lifestyles => pre-industrialised humans used to walk 9-15 kms a day; now less than 0.5kms |

| 3 | • evolutionary mismatch between human physiology and new environments and ways of life. Mental and social dysfunctions from dislocation from nature in the urban, built environment. | Modern society (and the built and transformed natural environment) are very different from what we became over 100,000s of years of slow evolutionary processes; so, there is a mismatch or maladaptation. Humans not changed much biologically in 25,000 years. |

<p>| 4 | • stress and worry from rapidity and extent of change related to the 4IR |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5</th>
<th>• on-line presence as a narcissism vehicle; un-real hedonistic/attention status and stress/depression from addiction to this and loss of attention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>• information/sensory overload (over-stimulation); busyness—close to evolutionary mismatch below; and also distraction/education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>• the 4IR may lead to psychological pressures by confronting an ultimate limit from the finite human mental capacity to evaluate large quantities of complex info</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>• environmental costs—productivity gains leading to increased income and consumption and material, energy and waste flows (the “rebound effect”); complex, toxic, new materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>• globalising technologies leading to cultural homogenisation and loss of cultural meaning and diversity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Option paralysis – everything is so complex and full of information, decision-making and choice becomes almost incomprehensible.

This is very close to information overload and may be a cost or a self-regulating constraint on the 4IR.

Loss of richness and bonding and meaning of cultural experience in a highly connected rather homogenous cyborg world full of semi-immortals.
10  | **• removal of sense of freedom, stimulation, joy and serendipity given losses from the “quantified self” – cyberborgism/cybernetics/human augmentation; and perfection and high predictability** | Closely related to (9) and disconnection (19) |
11  | **• expectation of efficiency, constant access for work duties, and instant gratification** | Related to most of the following 4-5 effects, the 4IR represents a big leap in bolstering the apparent control and manipulation of lives and our lifeworlds – especially nature and natural processes. Expected external control of fundamental life aspects such as birth, death, emotions by technology is probably unrealistic and a cause of wellbeing loss. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF THE 4IR</strong></th>
<th><strong>Closely Related to Impact</strong></th>
<th><strong>NOTES</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
12  | **• expectation of ease and comfort and ability to avert pain and ill-health** | As in previous negative impact (11) |
| 13 | • increase distraction capability – attention economy Close to negative impact (3). | Though the 4IR offer great potential for knowledge access and accumulation at personal level it can also induce laziness and distraction – games, messages, videos; poor attention span and concentration/ control required for smart brains; brain exercise; impulsive behaviour. Potential education disruption. |
| 14 | • the 4IR may bring increased good and service benefits that are “adaptive” | In economic science, adaptation refers to the fact that new, better, increased consumption often tends to become the new norm and people adjust and expect continuation. The result is limited sustained gains in well-being. |
| 15 | • the 4IR can increase vulnerability to powerful and mass subversive/insidious influence, and warfare
   
   This capability also has the potential for very substantial benefits. |
|---|---|
| 16 | • can facilitate exploitative governance – surveillance, control, brainwashing, social control and filtering; privacy loss
   
   Relatedly closely to (15) | Potential for deceit and manipulation by leaders/elite; inequality maintenance, potential for horrific and pervasive cyber-attacks. Easier for fake perception to become reality. Military technology attacks; biological weapons, autonomous weapons, robot wars, mass harm facilitation by anonymous small groups. Related, increased ability of individual and collective power to affect others (with knowledge).

   Fears of generating the trajectory towards the forbidding onset of the momentous “Singularity” (see Kurzweil 2010). | Conventional democracy models may suffer and be less workable (especially with (15) as well); may be offset by citizen engagement advantages of new 4IR technologies; also amenable in autocratic governance societies

   Cyberbullying; sexting; loss of privacy in general and ability to lead lives desired (but this may also be a positive social check) |
| 17 | • social media – a microcosm of the digital reality; has heaps of good and bad (too much to cover) | Has many potential good and bad effects – complex and pervasive and too difficult to cover in detail here. One the negative side, the virtualised, symbolic somewhat unreal basis of interaction is proposed as significant source of loss of real physical connection. Of course there are many offsetting potentially positive connection effects as well. |
| 18 | • arguably, the limited ability to raise and sustain real wellbeing via economic progress benefits assumed in the 4IR (at least beyond some point). | Increased wealth and entertainment increase but not substantive related gains in wellbeing for the “typical” high income nation citizens. The adaptive nature of new goods and services (see (14)). |
| 19 | • disconnection – wellbeing losses form reduced direct connection with other people and nature | Virtualisation of social and natural environment connections. Time use, lifestyle and deferment capability accompanying 4IR effects can significantly reduce physical interaction and immersion in social and nature worlds. |


Other major benefits of the 4IR will include the sustained increase in problem-solving support information (7) – an efficiency gain which has ramifications for almost every part of economic and
other life activities, by reducing production input costs such as material, energy and time. The 4IR also promises ever-increasing entertainment options and depth, diversity, audio-visual and other information stimulation, and potential learning experience. We will return to propose a Buddhist view of these developments in the next section.

Positive environmental impacts linked to (10) and (11) in Table 2 are significant and worth highlighting for the upcoming discussion of the contribution from Buddhism. One major set of outcomes of the 4IR is the general increase in resource efficiency that its associated information and communication technologies bestow. Technological gains in direct labour productivity as well as reduced transaction costs and need for physical connections and travel to perform many economic, household, and recreational activities all lead to less materials, energy and time (and often waste emissions) for each unit service of output. Examples of reduced need for physical connection include ordering taxis, booking flights and accommodation, selecting, buying and delivering products, watching films and series, playing games, family logistics, and social meeting arrangements and timing.

Of course, the overall effect of these trends upon environmental pressures depends upon ongoing changes in the level and nature of consumption (and population change).

A quick list of some other 4IR advantages includes:

- Improved health diagnostics, treatment, ill-health prevention
- Enhanced learning, means and possibly more time for creative activities (given that the anticipated increase in free time from economic productivity gains with previous IRs has not happened)
- Governance improvement – improved potential feedback, coordination, engagement of communities with governments
- Social media, blogs, fora, gaming, social network sites (e.g. dating) that may increase interaction, relationship effectiveness and opportunity, and social belonging in peer networks and social networking
• Increased collective awareness and moral consciousness; encouraging honesty and sincerity

• Reduced conflict and warfare from better communication and understanding across peoples and cultures.

In terms of existing or impending negative impacts from the 4IR, the list is just as extensive.

One of the major concerns, expressed during any period of marked technological innovation, is the fear of labour-saving automation and job loss. The 4IR, with its remarkable capacity for robotics, AI and information access and processing to perform any routine mechanical or decision-making task, certainly seems to have great potential to eradicate a significant portion of existing occupations. Coupled with the consequences of winner-takes-all scenarios from monopolisation of 4IR technologies, widespread unemployment is also seen to possibly contribute to deepening and troubling inequality. This is a complex topic and beyond the purview of the paper to discuss in detail. However, two important observations need to be noted regarding the 4IR and inequality.

First, historically, the “creative destruction” of automation has not led to lasting unemployment. Substantial disruptive structural unemployment does occur as a result of rapid changes in the nature of demand outpacing skills, but the labour market, eased with appropriate policy, tends to adjust. Unfortunately, it may well lead to deepening dual labour markets polarised into low skill, low paid jobs, and high-skill and demand higher pay jobs – the “digital economic divide” (Chandsoda and Saising 2018). Relative inequality has grown – notably at global levels (but at very different rates across countries) (Savoia 2017).

Second, while deepening relative inequality and increasing gaps seem unfair and objectionable and may lead to discontent and social conflict, the broad wellbeing consequences will depend upon compassionate and ethical redistribution and access to essential food, housing and other services, and the perceived fairness of political economic systems. Technology change productivity gains should allow increased overall output and surplus and balanced and fair distribution, and raising the economic “floor” for all, may maintain
social stability and community wellbeing. These are complex issues and cannot be explored in more detail here but will be re-visited in a Buddhist-inspired context in the next section.

Moving on from inequality impacts, there are a range of lifestyle and ‘mismatch” physical diseases and mental illnesses that can be associated with the 4IR (though many have these have growing since the Second Industrial Revolution). They concern inter-related problems such as obesity, diabetes, excess sugar and processed food and growing meat consumption, sedentary lifestyles for work and entertainment, lack of exercise, repetitive actions and related injuries from the use of digital technology equipment. Some more detail and examples are provided in (2) of the negative impacts section of Table 2.

These health issues are also closely related to the “evolutionary mismatch” problems (3) that are seen to occur when human's physical attributes no longer “fit” environmental changes created by rapid technological change. The idea is that human bodies (including their brains) evolve slowly (over 10,000s of years or more) while physical and energetic world around us has been very totally transformed over the past 300 years (e.g. in a multitude of ways from lighting and circadian rhythms, to shelter and other built urban forms, transport modes, posture, entertainment sources, food composition, social interaction, to name a few) (Sunstrom 2015; Wisnioski 2015). Alternatively, many human cognitive functions may well suffer a kind of neurological atrophy from lack of use and full, more efficient servicing by AI and internet systems. The relatively new scientific and social movements of eco-psychology and biophilia focus on the problems proposed as a result of removing a large part of most human lives from natural environment settings where they have been embedded for 100,000s of years (Wilson 2017).

In turn, these mismatch problems have a clear counterpart in the capacity of the human mind to deal with enormous amounts of diverse and instantly available information. The 4IR can provide people with as much information as they want. Information and sensory overload with mental over-stimulation and extreme busyness (see impact (6) presents a challenge to the human mind (see (7) and its development based on countless centuries of low, slow
levels of information and simple ways of living. This can lead to “option paralysis” where everything is so complex and full of information that decision-spaces are almost incomprehensible (Sunstrom 2015; Alinsky 1989). It can easily involve excessive accountability, contactability, distraction, and information and loss of the ability to go slow, rest, reflect, and engage in meaningful conversation and other social interaction and creative release (Schwab 2017). This would tend to exacerbate stress levels and threaten healthy social lives and mental processes (see (4), (5).

Some other likely negative effects of the 4IR, that are of lesser relevance to Buddhist perspectives, are listed in Table 2. These include:

- loss of bonding and a sense of meaning and belonging from cultural homogenisation in a predominantly shared cyber world of experience (9)
- narcissism dependence via social media (5)
- loss of the sense of freedom, and the stimulation, joy and serendipity lost from the “quantified self” (cyborgism, cybernetic, human augmentation) and high predictability and control of life in a 4IR world (10)
- increased vulnerability to powerful and mass subversive/insidious influence, and warfare (15)
- possible facilitation of exploitative governance – surveillance, control, brainwashing, social control and filtering; privacy loss. (16).

Some of these do have at least partial links to key Buddhist interests in the effects of the 4IR (e.g. (9) the loss of shared unique culture upon direct inter-connectedness).

However, there are several other impacts of more direct relevance to Buddhist-inspired perspectives that may help beneficially shape the 4IR. The latest two IRs have certainly helped bring about enormous growth in environmental resource productivity – including natural capital demands for inputs and waste assimilation functions for the human economy. However, productivity here is measured as environmental pressure per unit of output and unfor-
Fortunately there is a strong offsetting effect (the “rebound effect” or Jevon’s paradox) from ongoing increases in consumption due to higher income, that can offset these gains. We will return to these and other issues in the following section.

Another relevant outcome of the 4IR is the greatly increased expectation of efficiency, constant access for work duties, and instant gratification (negative impact (11)). The 4IR represents a big leap in creating a feeling of apparent control and manipulation of lives and our lifeworlds – especially regarding nature and natural processes. There has certainly been an increase in the power of humanity to be able to transform and impact nature (on global scales) in intended and unintended, positive and negative ways via science and technology and the scale of the human population and economy (especially since the Enlightenment & First IR)(Smith 2015). Buddhism has considerable reservations about the net wellbeing effects of taking refuge in this chimera of controlling life events (see Section 4).

On a similar level, the 4IR has brought major levels and increases in expectations of comfort and ease in life and relief from pain and ill-health (12), a topic which is also central to Buddhist thinking about the true path to reduced suffering.

One other major impact area relevant to Buddhism is the immense growth in potential for presenting information and peripheral activities that can distract them from central life functions and peaceful mind conditions (13). As noted in Table 2, although the 4IR offers vast knowledge access and accumulation capabilities, it can also induce laziness and distraction and poor learning – through interrupting messages, games, videos; poor attention span and concentration and control required for smart brains; lack of brain exercise; and encouraging impulsive and “unmindful” action, habits and behaviour.

Although not really a negative impact in its own right, a major failing of the 4IR seems to be occurring with a core promise and motive. Given there are many clear adverse effects of this revolution for society, it is troubling that perhaps the primary expected set of benefits does not appear to be forthcoming. The technology changes of the past 100 years have had many positive impacts for a
substantial part of the world’s population – providing economic security, improved health, pain management, deferring sickness and death, and information access, diversity of experience and rapid and efficient problem-solving. However, the productivity, wealth, health and entertainment/experience gains can be seen to have not substantially reduced fundamental existential suffering for those already beyond some moderate level of income (see impact (18)).

The evidence on the relationship between subjective wellbeing and life satisfaction (“happiness”) and income levels is complex and mixed (for example, see Drabsch and Wales (2012), Deaton (2008) and Sacks, Stevenson and Wolfers (2010). Other studies have found that levels of happiness generally go up as income rises, but not past a certain point (often cited as around $US 75,000 (2015) annual income). However, there are many complex biasing and confounding factors in assessing this relationship – especially for stated levels of wellbeing.

One “objective” indication that suggests that the benefits of the IRs are failing to deliver in terms of alleviating overall inner personal suffering, can be identified in Figure 1. While there are sure to also be measurement biases involved here, this evidence shows that depression rates (per capita) have little to do with the comparative purchasing power of people across nations. If anything, depression levels are lower in the lower income nations.

Wealth and entertainment (amidst the technology revolutions) do not seem to bring sustained wellbeing at the deepest levels. It is likely that lifestyles have not responded so people work less and connect more, but rather people have turned to accumulating more stuff to amuse, entertain, stimulate, comfort or gain status. Such assumed time use and activity sources of joy rest on a spurious theory of “happiness” but these assumptions still dominate in our present system and are inculcated in the young – “get educated and a great job, work hard and maximise your income and expenditure and you will be happy”. Productivity and profit maximising underpinnings will raise the (consumer) “standard of living”, but this does not translate to better subjective wellbeing past some point (Smith 2015). As expected, Buddhism has much to say about this resilient, and arguably vestigial, consumer market assumption.
The final negative impact is probably the central point for the potential contribution of Buddhism to shape the 4IR. It is actually closely related to many of the previous effects which tend to feed into this condition. This is “disconnection” impact (19) which is meant to encapsulate the effects of the various ways in which the 4IR tends to reduce direct connection between individuals and both (a) other people and (2) nature. Much of the influence can be linked to the “virtualisation” of social and natural environment connection, contact and interaction, and the possibility that the substitution of reality by representations or virtualisations (and attendant “fakeness”), may not be in the long-term interest of human wellbeing. It hints at some kind of “realness = wellness” link. This is foremost a physical issue and has many related physical health consequences (as discussed previously) but at the deepest level the effects are manifest as a source of mental suffering in the Buddhist perspective (the focus of the next section).

Figure 1 - Cross-Country Plot of Depression Disorders by Income Per Capita 2016

Source: WHO (2017)
4. CONTRIBUTIONS FOR POSITIVE OUTCOMES FROM 4TH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION FROM THE BUDDHIST WORLD VIEW

It is ironic that it can be claimed that a major outcome of the 4IR – (network) connectivity that greatly expands the potential linkages between humans and at least ‘windows’ on the external world – can present as a very troubling impact in the form of disconnection. These issues, spread across a range of effects, have been pre-empted in the previous section and have been identified in other papers on this topic (e.g. see Jones 2017). Together, they can be analysed to share much in common with Buddhist perspectives on the nature of suffering (and its obverse, wellbeing).

We will return to the disconnection-Buddhism topic soon. However, it is useful to list a selection of the most relevant 4IR general effect areas that will be addressed, at least briefly, in the Buddhism-inspired contributions noted in this section. As expected, the topics overlap considerably and the separation is primarily for heuristic purposes. They include:

- disconnection – of a direct and immersive form; from other people and nature (and its related physical and health problems)
- the questionable link between material standard of living, abundance, comfort and convenience, and sustained physical, and especially mental, wellbeing
- natural environment impacts and related non-violence, minimum intervention, peace and harmony
- distraction, diversity and entertainment
- very high levels of information, knowledge and indirect communication access
- information overload versus mindfulness
- inequality and economic redundancy
- expectations of control and desirable situational permanence.

The central role of the Four Noble Truths and Eightfold Path in Buddhism lay out much of the basis for its potential wisdom for informing strategic wellbeing change in the 4IR. The primary
goal is relief from “suffering” (dukkha). The Buddhist path to achieve this, personally and collectively, lies in the recognition and appropriate mental and behavioural responses that recognise some universal principles or “laws” that explain the “effect” (on suffering/wellbeing) from their dependent source origins.

Pervasive, profound inter-connectedness between all phenomena is probably the mainstay of Buddhist thinking and the notion from which most of its principles and practical wisdom are derived. This “Indra’s net” of cause-effect relationships connecting all things, clearly accommodates, or actually demands, the careful consideration of intent and consequences of intent and resultant action. Despite a tendency by humans for optimistic reductionism, we can never “do just one thing”; there are no singular causes or effects.

In Buddhism, the law of dependent origination explains how all outcomes, results or effects (vipaka) of speech, action or body arise from multiple causes or actions with intent (kamma). In turn, these causes arise from other vipaka, and phenomena cease when the pre-conditions change. This is basis of the law of kamma-vipaka. It adds the qualitative aspects by identifying how ignorant action with “unskilful” or bad intent will lead to adverse results across the three realms of existence (from individual, to society, to nature and back on the self). “Skilfulness” is gauged by the extent to which craving, greed, delusions or aversion are embodied in the underlying motive and intent of the original action (Attwood 2003). The law of kamma-vipaka suggests that disruptive action, with selfish intent, will inevitably result in adverse wellbeing consequences back upon the instigators. Hence, there is a need for accepting a kind of “universal responsibility” to guide one’s presence in this world. This is a result of the highly inter-connected effects of actions on all others (sentient beings, and arguably all of nature), as well as the re-assessment towards a rational of “intelligent self-interest” where actions to improve one’s wellbeing consider consequences on other’s welfare, given dependence of the former upon the latter (Dalai Lama 2001).

This is also closely tied to the need to minimise intervention or at least disturbance, harm or violence to the natural world, manifest as environmental pressures or ecological footprints (and also social
impacts). Empathetic actions founded on inter-connectedness will inevitably be based on compassion, loving-kindness and care for others will help bring us what we really want from the 4IR – wellbeing.

The Four Noble Truths and notions of impermanence also explain why there will always be limits to craving and clinging to material sources of selfish demands and desire, and the positive outcomes of science, technology and economic systems predicated upon such goals.

It is not possible to provide a more detailed overview of relevant underlying general Buddhist ideas here but there will be more elaboration in the subsequent discussion of some specific potential contributions inspired from this ancient wisdom.

Moving back to 4IR social and nature disconnection impacts proposed as a major potential cost of the 4IR, many of the negative effects in Table 2 can be linked to this general proposed outcome (for example impacts (3), (5), (6), (9), (13), (17)). As noted, it can’t be denied that the last two IRs have dramatically increased the capability for broadcasting information about oneself and, conditionally, two-way communication for social and economic purposes. It seems odd to propose that disconnection can be a major consequence of such technologies. However, the main justification for this proposition is that the social and nature-related interaction facilitated by the 4IR tends to indirect, and can often replace more direct forms. The tools people use to interact in the 4IR often use social or virtual constructions (e.g. see the social media negative effect) that can be image or status-based and focused upon perception building rather than reality. The complexities of these technology effects can’t be explored in detail here but one important outcome can be increased connectivity (visual, word, audio), but reduced connection in a deeper sense where there is physical interaction, immersion, body language and full sense awareness, empathy and warmth – some of these factors also applying to natural environment connections. Arguably, direct physical person-person and person-nature interaction and the associated slow immersion promotes deeper bonding and “deep brain” experiences.
The range of interaction media vary in terms of these capabilities but simplified, insipid symbolic communication modes would promote more shallow, peripheral, “incomplete” and short-term friendships and relationships (such as from online social media or gaming worlds) (Henderson et al 2010; Kidslox 2018) and possibly loss or poor development of social skills for face-to-face and other more complete interaction activity. This could easily be seen to lead to loss of wellbeing and social isolation, and mental health and other lifestyle and evolutionary “mismatch” problems that increase suffering.

The 4IR can also provide so many other distractions and options that change time use or encourage deferral of more real contact and social interaction. Meaningful relationships have been consistently shown to be critical for wellbeing and this is likely to depend on people’s shared real world experience (Henderson et al 2010). Digital “villages” are probably poor replacements for the lost tribal closeness, stability and animal connection of the 100,000s of years of human existence.

Hence, the 4IR can help people connect and communicate on many levels and in many roles in their daily life, but there is danger in the “ghostly” or shadow nature of this contact modus operandi diffusing through livelihood, family and social world dimensions of personal reality. It can increase separation in many important physical and psychological ways and this is troubling given the evidence and case for social connection (and increasingly nature connection) for mental health, emotional wellbeing, and physical healing (Bristow 2017; Wilson 2017).

Buddhist wisdom would explain this deep connection loss as increasing our suffering (dukkha) in at least two ways.\(^5\) Firstly, such disconnection can intensify dukkha from our internal belief that

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5. Dukkha, in Buddhism, is a difficult concept to translate into English. The popular meaning of the “suffering” that permeates life has often been deemed as somewhat inaccurate with more appropriate descriptions like “unsatisfactoriness”, dissatisfaction, or pain in the form of bodily discomfort and mental distress (Jones 2017). However, even these are often considered lacking and better replaced by metaphors like an ill-fitting grindstone wheel that continues to give imperfection and niggly annoyance and disruption to one’s expectation of comfort, security and freedom from pain and distress.
we separate from other people and the natural world (rest of the universe). Thus delusion of ego-separation and an objective external world (subject-object dualism) where we act to manipulate the world to fill desires, with simple cause-effect relations, is considered to be the essence of samsaric existence and attendant suffering. As inferred from the Second Noble Truth, attempting to appease our craving and clinging with sensual fulfilment, distraction and acquisition in the objective world, will intensify dukkha and feelings of alienation (Loy 2003).

A second reason for the 4IR disconnection reducing our wellbeing may be that virtual worlds or cyberspace may remove or reduce causal sequence or (at least immediate) apparent consequences of one’s choices and actions. This is akin to nullifying feedback and awareness of the law of kamma-vipaka – a Buddhist principle that is key to reducing inter-connected suffering. However, this is not necessarily the case as the information access power of the digital age can also greatly increase awareness of the impacts of one’s actions and may alter behaviour in a positive way.

Actual wellbeing outcomes depend on many factors including the intent and motives, balance and underlying wellbeing or “happiness” theories that guide markets, and technology change and adoption, and the choices of people who face these new technological worlds. The character and extent of 4IR effect will be guided by the nature of demand and desires. In Buddhist thought, motives based on selfish greed, ill will and delusion will shape the 4IR and have very different impacts from motives and goals based on generosity, inter-connected wellbeing, compassion, loving-kindness and wisdom. As with most of the 4IR impacts identified here, the new technologies underway present both problems, and opportunities for community wellbeing.

Now we look at how Buddhist wisdom can help modify or offset negative effects, or enhance the benefit potential of some of the major 4IR effects identified.

Buddhism can help offset deeper-level disconnection impacts of the 4IR in many ways – especially in relation to building awareness and acceptance of the virtues of tangible social and nature
interaction focused on direct contact and the realisation of inter-connected wellbeing. We will introduce other relevant factors in remaining discussion in this section.

One major contribution to the 4IR from Buddhist wisdom would be to **promote the environmental sustainability potential of its associated technologies.** The resource efficiency gains, emissions and transaction cost reductions, and alternate energy and other sustainable economic activity offerings of the 4IR are enormous (as discussed). Minimising environmental pressures and footprints is closely aligned with one of the fundamental derivatives of Buddhist conceptions of profound inter-connectedness and the law of *kamma-vipaka* – the virtue of minimum intervention or disturbance, and non-harm to the social and natural worlds in which we act. In Buddhist wisdom, less resource-intensive and disruptive lifestyle choices, and the often under-estimated potential enjoyment from untransformed, natural reality are favoured in the situation of inter-connected wellbeing (Daniels 2008).

Of course, reduced nature and social impacts assume that material and energy-intensive (and even time-intensive) “consumption” does not grow with productivity savings (the “rebound effect”) or change into forms that lead an increase in overall levels of harm or violence to the external world.

Buddhism would also favour viewing the 4IR as a “techno-economic paradigm” (TEP) rather than an “industrial revolution” given that such technology clusters have very extensive and profound external effects (beyond industry) across the social, cultural, economic, and environmental realms. Hence, the importance of a “green TEP” has been promoted as a major potential Buddhist-inspired contribution for real gains in community wellbeing (Daniels 2003; Hayter 2008). A green TEP would soften the “destruction” (social, economic and environmental) in Joseph Schumpeter’s notion of “creative destruction” in such waves of technology change. Renewable and low impact energy source technologies would typically fit well as a core cluster in the Buddhism-compatible 4IR or green TEP.

A related Buddhist contribution to shaping the 4IR for the better
lies in its ability to **re-orient economic goals and underlying “theories of “happiness”** (given the failings of the growth-happiness thesis already discussed in Section 3). The major source of wisdom comes from the Four Noble Truths and the identification of well-being as actually been negatively impacted by increased economic activity when based on craving and clinging to objects in the external world. Moderation and restraint in desire and expectations are seen as vital for to control dukkha. A revised deep understanding and at least partial acknowledgement of this principle would help inhibit the rebound effect, alleviate both work obsession and lack of free time, sensory overload and stress, and loss perception for those afflicted by 4IR economic restructuring. Acceptance of the virtues of moderation and consumption and moral restraint, would also help relieve the disappointment and suffering from habitualised instant gratification.

Another area where Buddhist wisdom offers great promise to improve 4IR outcomes would be its **practical techniques for achieving inner peace, stillness and awareness** as balancing means or an antidote to the mental exertion and strain associated with dealing with the ocean of information available for education, problem-solving, entertainment, communication, and distraction. These include a wide range of mindfulness, breathing, mantric and other general contributions to positive psychology. Mindfulness has also been directed towards increasing empathy (and hence connection) (Bristow 2017) and can be seen to be highly appropriate to offset the rush, overload, and disconnection of the 4IR by creating awareness and joy from the fullness of existence in the moment, helping people slow down amidst the pressures of instant information and immediate response and service, and acquire contemplative practice skills to consider the interconnected consequences of our intent and actions on ourselves and others. Meditation is also proposed as a means of managing desire (Smith 2015) and the massive array of temptations to induce craving in the 4IR.

Buddhism can also be a major fountain to **engender and disseminate some of its primary ethical guides that would enhance 4IR outcomes – notably compassion and loving-kindness.**
Combined with empathy and wellbeing inter-dependence, these ethical guides would promote the equitable distribution of the fruits of the 4IR and counteract emergent inequality problems. These ethical underpinnings would have a wide range of influences such as deepening social connections, promoting non-violence and non-harm to nature, and support and care for those suffering from other pressures of the 4IR.

If we acknowledge that the 4IR is unlikely to ever really bring complete control and a predictable external world life full of material and sense-based pleasures and perfect social relations, then Buddhism can make another positive contribution. This derives from the essence of Buddhist understanding about the nature of dukkha in samsara and the inevitability, and hence need to accept peacefully and with equanimity, that everything in the external world is impermanent, imperfect and ultimately beyond our control. This stands in marked contrast to the general goals and promise of the 4IR, but the evidence for its technologies’ success in being able to provide control and permanence, so as to enhance wellbeing, is unconvincing. Acceptance of impermanence and lack of control of external world object desire fulfilment has a wide range of wellbeing resilience effects to help deal with other vulnerabilities of the 4IR – including the induced expectation of ease and comfort, and ability to avert pain, ill-health, aging, loss of loved ones and death, as well as the limits to economic accumulation theories of wellbeing.

5. CONCLUSION

The Fourth Industrial revolution (4IR) will continue to bring enormous social, cultural, economic and environmental changes. While there are many undeniably positive outcomes from such developments, oddly, there is limited evidence for the success of the digital revolutions to date in terms of ultimate goals and wellbeing for humans (Sunstrom 2015).

This promotes the case for caution and careful scientific scrutiny of unconditional technological optimism, and “solutionism” ideology (Morozov 2013; Jones 2017) that assumes that technology change will naturally involve to solve past and new problems.
Hence, there is a need for careful anticipation, recognition, study and assessment of socio-technical impacts of the 4IR – what are its goals, do these goals translate into actual wellbeing improvements, and how have changes to date performed in terms of achieving laudable wellbeing goals?

Buddhism has much to offer towards this exercise. This paper has discussed some of social, economic and environmental effects of the Fourth Industrial Revolution most relevant to Buddhist wisdom including:

- disconnection – of a direct and immersive form; from other people and nature (and related physical and health problems)
- the questionable link between material standard of living, abundance, comfort and convenience and sustained physical, and especially mental, wellbeing
- natural environment impacts and related non-violence, minimum intervention, peace and harmony
- enormous increases in distraction, diversity and entertainment options and capability
- profound growth in information and indirect communication access and knowledge potential
- information overload versus mindfulness
- inequality and economic redundancy
- expectations of control and the permanence of desirable life situations.

A primary goal has been to identify how Buddhist perspectives can help contribute to creating better outcomes from these and other more positive effects. Some of these main actions and goals have included:

- offsetting deeper-level disconnection impacts
- promotion of the environmental sustainability potential of the 4IR’s associated technologies.
- re-orientation of economic goals and underlying “theories of “happiness”
• practical techniques for achieving inner peace, stillness and awareness
• engendering and dissemination of some of Buddhism’s primary ethical guides that would enhance 4IR outcomes – notably compassion and loving-kindness
• help people accept peacefully and with equanimity, that all external world phenomena are impermanent, imperfect and ultimately beyond our control.

As noted by Chansoda and Saising (2018, p104), the outcomes of the 4IR will surely “all come down to people and values” and Buddhism is well-suited in providing its ancient and enduring wisdom to help inform personal choices and related assumptions and theories about wellbeing.

It is easy to be cynical about whether humanity can broadly adopt new sources of wisdom so fundamental to our motives and actions. For hundreds, or perhaps thousands, of years the dominant social system models that have propelled us into the 4IR have been founded on the maxim that personal and isolated actions for self-interest and material accumulation are good, and that this is the path to real wellbeing. However, there are good reasons for optimism and hope for a new age of wisdom. For instance, while a large part of the world’s population races into middle class consumerism, there also clear signs of disenchantment and loss of faith in economic accumulation with trends towards “new age” post-materialism, environmental awareness, voluntary simplicity, and other movements that have much in common with Buddhist principles or world views (Delhey 2009).

There is certainly one simple but very significant realisation in terms of societal goals that does not seem to be acknowledged in the 4IR techno-optimism. Although “intelligence” is a complex concept with limited consensus on its real meaning, artificial intelligence (AI) and the core motives for the 4IR seem to be predicated upon the ultimate virtue of being able to make effective rule-based decisions utilising (maximum quantities) of data. If the rule-based decisions are devoid of actual dimensions known to generate well-being then machines can be considered, in the words of Lennon
and McCartney, very “Nowhere Man” (who “knows not where he is going to”). There is no real defined target for the rules for intelligence to operate. The “intelligence” of an individual, social unit or society, surely means the ability to problem solve and get what really gives us desired beneficial changes in lifestyles, possessions and environments. Presumably these involve change that lead us to improved wellbeing.

Hence, the critical aspects of true intelligence are to (i) know what we want and will give us higher (sustained) wellbeing, and (ii) to be able to effectively assess how our actions and their flow-on effects will affect this goal.

This absolutely fundamental question has been grossly simplified to the economic growth assumption in neo-classical economics, and is largely forgotten, with some neo-classical economic basis as a subtext, in the technophilic world.

Buddhism can play a great role in helping to enhance the benefits of the immense and potent changes that will come with the progress of the 4IR. An important starting point will be more integration of contemporary social, economic, political, and environmental developments and responses into Buddhist analysis and dhamma (as is taking place in this conference). This will require the presentation of Buddhist wisdom with a strong scientific, empirical and non-doctrinal secular outlook and respect. This approach is very compatible with Buddhism. Trans-disciplinary perspectives that consider the full range of potential effects and wellbeing impacts will be critical. The communication and analytic power of the 4IR can certainly provide a very powerful vehicle for disseminating this wisdom.
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ABSTRACT

The Fourth Industrial Revolution (‘4IR’) is a conventional label for some new technologies. A complicated discourse about our human future has crystallised around it.

This paper touches in passing on the ill effects of the smartphone/social-media combination, but is not so concerned with such details. It focuses on the discourse of techno-economic determinism.

This is not new. Since civilisation began, humans have felt themselves dependent on mechanical systems, both technical and administrative. Their resultant suffering has come out in discussions of fate and free will. The 4IR reiterates an old story.

In the Buddha’s time, the wound was fresh. Wandering teachers depended heavily on personal charisma, but all had to offer a story about how people’s fates were decided and whether/why/how to try to be good.

Bauddhas have always distrusted questions about determinism. Plenty of wrong answers are current, but few good answers. Why keep worrying how predetermined our lives? The point is not to decide the
facts but to make choices, to choose and develop our behaviour in helpful ways. Some choices, some ways of thinking-and-feeling, are helpful, and others are not.

Still, causality was a hot topic. Did your actions affect your future experiences, and if so how?

The Bauddhas focused on the continuity between the agent and the person experiencing its effects. Is there some permanent Self? No! Will there then be nothing left when we die? Again, no.

Such speculation does not help us in what matters. What matters is to break the causal chains that bind us.

That is how we can understand and react to the 4IR. It may take a lot of work.

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper presents the ‘Fourth Industrial Revolution’ (“4IR”) in a long-term historical context. It sees the 4IR as emerging from the Scientific Revolution and ultimately from the project of civilisation itself.

1.1 Civilisation And Science

Coeval with civilisation is the great human project to understand the physical environment so as more thoroughly to exploit it. Since before the Buddha’s time we have been developing technically — and we have had to make sense of each new level of technical understanding, and of what it allows us to do.

The 4IR emerges from such historical processes. It is infused with a sort of Futurism, like the techno-modernism current in Europe over a century ago. Going further back, it seeks to reproduce the intellectual experimentalism of early-modern science. Ultimately, this is a civilisational project, a continuance of what was started in the first millennium BCE.

It reflects an ideology, whereby humanity triumphs, and progresses towards a scientific utopia, by mechanically subordinating itself to certain mathematical laws (algorithms, roughly). This is deeply entrenched in our global society — it is hegemonic in economics and in policy-making generally, for instance in the management of science. It is mechanistic and determinist, and it
encourages people to be self-seeking and self-absorbed. Many espouse it, eager to believe that this will justify and secure their enjoyment of technology and of consumption generally.

It has drawbacks. Industry, intended to liberate humanity by mechanising drudgery, also enslaves people, turning them into mechanical drudges. The 4IR represents a culmination of this trend.

1.2 Bauddha reflections

We then relate this historical analysis to reflections on the early Bauddhas. Their civilisation was taking off, the economy was booming, but people were quite messed up. Language and life alike were more prosaic than they used to be and people felt unsettled. The complexities of production and administration in a civilised society imposed new constraints. There were some hard-core materialists around — today’s most simplistic philosophers and most self-absorbed oligarchs would have felt at home. The Buddhists were keen to avoid that thinking — and they were equally keen to avoid the standard alternative, which was to take flight into idealism.

Humanity easily gets caught in binary traps. For instance, either you see yourself as eternal (sassatāvāda) or you think you are due for the chop any time (ucchedavāda). Our ideas of causality, in particular are geared to one or other of those assumptions, both of which Bauddhas reject.

Their idea was to get some perspective on these questions, to see them in context. The context was the way we all of us fill our lives from moment to moment, and can do so more or less helpfully. One thing we can usefully do is to try not to respond automatically, and so we pay attention to how we get tripped in to such automatic responses — the up-front reason to be interested in causal sequences is so as to be able to break the ones that can trap us.

2. THE FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

2.1 Long-term Context: Science & Scientism

The Buddha-dharma emerged, with the Sāsana, when civilisation (also known as history) started to take off in a big way. People call
that time the Axial Age.\(^1\)

In places, population densities increased sharply, and socio-economic systems became stratified, (and knowledge systems likewise) — cities developed, and writing. People used language more denotatively, and also more abstractly — so the world was now fuller of things and concepts than it was of beings. In that great economic boom, a certain materialism took hold, both philosophical and practical, and also a countervailing tendency towards abstract idealism.\(^2\)

In the two-and-a-half millennia since, settlement patterns, social organisations, power structures, and so on have developed steadily — as has culture. Materialistic/idealistic thinking has been a recurrent theme.

In the last 500 years, human efforts to understand and control the physical environment have crossed a threshold. Culture has been dominated by science, society by industry.

Gradually, our species has been transformed. The complex of thinking, behaviour and institutional forms that many now refer to as STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) has been important here, as has Economics. Computers have reinforced our resultant algorithmic bias.

There can be a place for all this. If, by making judicious measurements, we build data sets that we can analyse to identify regularities, then we can hypothesise causal connections, which we can test. In this way, we can find out what works, i.e., what happens if we do this or that, and so how to produce specific effects. We can, in effect, form if...then statements, masses of them, nested in complex ways.\(^3\) Taken together, these can offer a valid description of the universe — a picture of the world, which is true inasmuch as it does reliably help us to manipulate elements of our physical environment.

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2. See on. For Materialism, refer to the Samaññaphala-sutta and the Pāyāsi-sutta; for Idealism, the Upaniṣads etc.
3. This is, roughly, what philosophers of science call an instrumentalist view, as associated for instance with Pierre Duhem — see Duhem (1962). It seems to the present author eminently compatible with a Buddhist approach.
Still, no picture gives a complete understanding of what it represents. Also, though mathematical modelling helps us to deal with the material world, it is less relevant, (and certainly not sufficient), when it comes to living our lives — to monitoring and modulating our behaviours, individually and in society.

That is a great truth. Unfortunately, since is quite unlike Newton’s Laws of Motion, we tend to lose sight of it — to our detriment. All too easily, we get locked in to mechanistic, deterministic, alienated thinking, whereby I am as I am because of my DNA\(^4\) and because of how the species evolved\(^5\), and if I think I experience a particular quality of living (an ‘emotion’, say), then that is an illusion — two chemicals are just mingling in my brain.\(^6\)

We deny and so cramp ourselves. Projecting our deterministic vision onto our material and social environment, we then create for ourselves a technical world which assumes that humans lack agency, and so ensures they will lack it. Finally, we take this to be the natural order of things.

This is a problem for us. It has been creeping up on us for ages.

Since the first stirrings of civilisation, the social and cultural change associated with what we now call science and technology has seen humans lose touch with experiential processes and become less capable of making wise choices spontaneously. This degeneration has accompanied the advances that we have made in short-term control over the physical environment — what from one angle is progress appears from another as regress. We are split, and that split is becoming ever more marked — it now threatens the survival of our species, indeed of the entire biosphere.

The trouble is, we have tried too hard. Europeans, for instance, had a struggle at first to motivate people to apply their blessed Scientific Method, so forced themselves to disregard all else. Now, across the globe, educated people repress the subjective dimension.

\(^{4}\) See Dawkins (1976) and the memorable critique in Noble (2006)
\(^{5}\) See Wilson (1975)
\(^{6}\) See Crick (1994)
of lived reality — and, in so doing, we surrender much of our ability to mould our own lives.

To develop our industrial and consumer society, we have abandoned those skills, (cognitive and physical, natural and conditioned, ‘moral’ and ‘religious’), which, through earlier history, used to prevent us from harming ourselves — so we are hitting barriers. Externally, this appears in the ecological crisis. More fundamentally, we are discovering that there are limits to our psychological adaptability.

2.2 Short-term context: revolutions and singularities

Those steering our development are dimly aware of this, though rarely unwilling to acknowledge it openly. That may help explain why they are keen on the 4IR.

Ideologies of science, etc, have often encouraged élitist denials of what most people know as their humanity — but it is happening on a grand scale now. Humanity, as so far known, is officially no longer fit for purpose — incapable of adapting fast enough, we are now to be supplemented by quasi-human machines with Artificial Intelligence (AI). Indeed, we are to be transformed by continually closer and more intense interaction with these robots. That, in a nutshell, is the 4IR.\(^7\)

It seems to some to offer an escape. Perhaps we need no longer strain so hard to sustain our scientific-technical project — instead, we can transfer responsibility to the very machines that our efforts thus far have produced. Instead of struggling to adapt ourselves to the machine environment, we will now have the machines change us directly.

The first Industrial Revolution was no fun — ‘dark, satanic mills’ spread over the land, while malnourished children worked themselves into squalid, early graves. The second, which involved electricity, chemicals and production lines, proved still more disquieting — needing some distraction, humanity was prepared to do almost anything, so invented World War. The third, with its computers and internet, has offered many glittering baubles, but stories of increasing depression and dissociative disorders will not

\(^7\) See on
go away — and of how the smartphone/social-media combination saps our capacity for subjective experience.\(^8\)

The global consumer society has seduced many people into living life as a series of multiple-choice tests/surveys. Now, however, that appears no longer to be enough — instead of seducing, it is now time to force people. Welcome to the 4IR.

Till now, our efforts to quantify social processes, to reduce them to a game we could score, have all involved some sort of interpersonal exchange. When a customer rings a call centre, or when Facebookers decide to cross-post their videos, humans are involved with one another — albeit distracted with their individual machine-environments, nonetheless they try somehow to communicate humanly. No longer — now, it is time for widespread, unmediated human-machine interaction. Or, perhaps that ought to be: machine-human interaction. Progressively, the machines are being programmed to take the initiative, so as to produce desired behaviour changes — changes in our, the users’ behaviour. This is likely to put people under pressure in ways that no one may at first recognise, let alone understand.

As more and more of our lives unfold in the world of algorithmic eye-candy, we become more self-absorbed, bored and obsessive. At the macro level, our society fails to address glaring anomalies in finance, ecology and so on. It is as if some collective psychological crisis were brewing.

Hence the rhetoric of ‘singularity’. Towards the turn of the millennium, well-known figures in IT began to wonder what evolution might hold for humans. Given our triumphal progress thus far, they expected something big — we would come to exist in some totally new sense, intellectual and abstract.

The ‘hive mind’ created by brains linked across the internet might somehow take on a life of its own. Or, with judicious use of genetics, AI, chip implantation, Virtual Reality (VR), and what have you, we might consciously direct our evolution so as to produce a new superhuman race. In any case, a dramatic evolutionary leap was in prospect — a ‘singularity’.

\(^8\) See on
This naïve thinking was baked into Silicon Valley and remains remarkably influential. People have commented how it resembles the fundamentalist-Christian doctrine of the Rapture, whereby True Believers will suddenly be snatched into Heaven to prepare Christ’s Second Coming.9 It is interesting how the two belief-systems complement one another — just as the Bible-thumpers imagine Believers’ bodies being snatched from their cars while they drive along, so techno-fundamentalists long for the day when their minds will be absorbed into some quasi-mechanical mental heaven in a similarly inexplicable way. Just as Believers will leave behind what used to be their minds, being instead filled with the Holy Spirit, so the nerd élite will no longer be encumbered with a body. This has something to do with the mind-body split, evidently.

2.3 Current developments

The expression ‘Fourth Industrial Revolution’ (“4IR”) has been popularised by Klaus Schwab, a German economist who is the moving spirit behind the World Economic Forum.10 It describes the confluence of ... artificial intelligence (AI), robotics, the internet of things (IoT), autonomous vehicles, 3D printing, nanotechnology, biotechnology, materials science, energy storage and quantum computing...”

This “revolution”, we are told, ... entails nothing less than a transformation of humankind.

Professor Schwab says ... [the 4IR] is fundamentally changing the way we live, work, and relate to one another”.11

That last formulation is striking. It attributes agency to an abstract entity. We are told this entity will change us fundamentally, and are invited to approve. It is almost a formula of worship.

Schwab would doubtless claim that this is a mere rhetorical appearance, and that in truth he is simply following the conventional

10. held annually at Davos in Switzerland
principle that we must adapt to our environment. Still, some barely explicit ‘refinements’ of that principle are in evidence here.

It is assumed that the environment changes with our developing technical capacities, so we have no choice but to go wherever the latest technical innovations may lead. The development of new techniques is seen as a process which goes by itself.

It is not subject to human choice — to the choice of those who do the developing, or of those who fund and direct it. This is how we come to understand ourselves as surrendering our human agency to an abstraction like the Fourth Industrial Revolution - for thinkers like Schwab, scientific understanding is beyond human discretion. It unfolds according to its own dynamic, and technology follows automatically.

There is some truth in this, of course. There is hype as well.

Top-flight researchers, doing original work, are often surprised at the results of their scientific enquiries - and, if so, they follow where the newly revealed facts lead. Yes - and, at the same time, most scientists work to orders from the funding agencies.

Those agencies may claim to allocate funds ‘objectively’, i.e. in line with a developing scientific consensus (which, again, is said to follow where the findings lead) - and this may even be true, sporadically. Often, though, the consensus reflects political processes in professional institutions, which in turn respond to external pressures from the wider political arena, above all from corporate interests. Even the best, most original researchers may be constrained — as when Barbara McClintock was prevented from continuing her work on ‘jumping genes’, work which 30 years later attracted a Nobel prize\(^\text{12}\).

If even work we classify as pure science does not just follow the facts, then we can imagine how much less that is the case when scientific findings are applied in developing new technical devices and systems — commercial products. In discussions of the 4IR, this process, too, is assumed to be automatic, subject to human choices only peripherally — we have some scope to steer

the autonomous forces driving the revolution, and to compensate for some undesirable side-effects, but in the main we must simply submit to the logic of the market.

Like science, the economy is conceptualised as a force which follows its own inherent, inexorable laws, and moves us with it, willy-nilly - a monstrous divinity, effectively, which holds humanity in its maw. The 4IR, similarly, starts to look like a dark deity, potentially helpful yet threatening.

We have had a foretaste of what we can expect. The last gasp of the Third Industrial Revolution, we are told, was the simultaneous advent of the Smartphone and of ‘social media.’ There is evidence that this development has adversely affected the mental health of the generation who grew up since.

They lack a sense of autonomy — well, fancy that! Going on from there, it seems that we are raising people less and less capable of intimacy, and hence of producing further generations, (a remarkable comment on the promise that social media would make it easier for like-minded folk to connect). Progressive infantilization seems the Order of the Day.

The problem thus revealed appears still more acute when we read that the 4IR is not just seen as an independent force, beyond human agency, but in fact, according to the prevailing view,

[n]ew ways of using technology to change behaviour... offer the potential for supporting ... natural environments.14

Those steering this process evidently want us all to embrace change imposed by means of AI-driven quasi-autonomous, quasi-personal machines — in this way, they hope to make people accept reforms supposedly dictated by ecological imperatives.15 (This has something in common with the drone story).

15. Schwab (2016) It is necessary to piece his argument together carefully here.
The change in prospect is presented as non-discretionary, a historical given. All are urged to join the best minds in making it work. To make it work, we must first overcome our difficulties in accepting the pre-determined course of events, and then must channel the 4IR's capacity for re-engineering humanity in appropriate ways, managerially expedient ways. This programme generates tons of media output, like what surrounds the launch of a new electronic device only bigger.

Behind the brouhaha, what is really at issue? The current combination of AI high-profile product launches and intensive discourse management, (4IR in embryonic form, so to say), serves to lock us in to certain unstated assumptions:

- human life is
- a product of material factors, and hence
- determined by forces remote from our experience; and that
- those forces drive an evolutionary process;
- so our current social and economic arrangements approximate to the optimum — the status quo is the culmination of:
  - human progress through civilisation,
  - intellectual progress through science and
  - material progress through technology/industry.

It is obvious that things are as they are because they have to be that way - and the same goes for us. Ergo, we are fated to experience what the 4IR has in store for us.

That is the story. Let us consider that in the light of Bauddha traditions - and consider how humanity could learn from this episode.

Would we then be better able to address the deterministic ideology which holds us all in thrall? If we try to follow and emulate Bauddha thinking, could we even undercut it entirely?

3. WHAT CAN WE GET FROM THE TIPIṬAKA?

3.1 General reflections

3.1.1 Traditional resources

The ideology of techno-determinism masks patterns of
economic and political power. That helps to explain why the 4IR is presented as fact, something outside ourselves, to which we must react. Still, that problem is in a sense secondary.

It is true that people manipulate and exploit each other, and civilisation encourages it. Equally, survival is a stronger imperative than any — and, as human civilisation reaches this flexing-point, we are all in many ways similarly confused about how to want to survive. That goes for exploited and exploiters alike.

The 4IR is a social/political/economic project, subject to human agency, which serves particular interests and reflects specific attitudes and assumptions. At the same time, many of the relevant assumptions are deeply embedded in everyone’s thinking — they are common to all sorts of people.

It is useful to notice those assumptions, and, where necessary, to pick them apart. Bauddha traditions offer resources we can use in so doing.

3.1.2 Linguistic

In responding to the challenges of civilisation, Bauddhas have focused on states of mind. This has led to a concern with language, and how it can misguide us.

Language usage shapes the way we think, and the way we experience our lives. It often encourages us to divide reality into discrete entities, things and people with essential characteristics which (we assume) cohere and persist and can be relied upon. The archetypal entity is ‘me’ — I think of myself as permanent, fixed, irreducible, a given, a unique feature of the world, a landmark to steer by. Other entities then seem to follow the same model.

If we have a name for something, we suppose it must exist in this substantial way. Bauddhas were among the first in history to suggest that this might be a problem (Lao-tzu and his people may be compared).

Have all people at all times been subject to these same compulsions? Perhaps not exactly. Consider those who lived a few hundred years before the Buddha’s time — they may not have been so focused on fixed entities.
That is at least plausible in view of what we know of their language usage. We have oral records from the Indo-Aryan speech-community of that time. It comes to us in the Vedic verses.

Vedic language compares strikingly that of the Pali canon. It favours verbal forms, and it is overtly polysemic — allusive and associative, poetic and symbolic. By the time of the Pali, conventions of language usage had evidently changed, and become less fanciful — substantival constructions, unfamiliar from the earlier period, are common, and the language is generally much more clear-cut and denotative. Binary categorisations are more in evidence.

It makes sense. The Vedic peoples led a more mobile, extempero life, herding and foraging, but Magadha/Kosala in the Buddha’s time was becoming more settled and organised. They were using metals to clear forests and irrigate valleys, so output exploded, with population not far behind — and state structures and administrative systems were of course developing too. People were focused on manipulating their material and social environment to gain wealth. Substantial economic advances went along with a substantialist metaphysic, reflected in substantival language and thought processes.

This was the situation Gotama was addressing. Language was less and less well adapted to non-material human needs.

In that context, some wanted to reject the practical idiom of everyday contemporary life and to cleave instead to those magical Vedic verses. The Bauddhas understood that those people were deceiving themselves, for that magic was gone — whatever it may once have been, it was now just an idea.

The only thing left, it seemed to them, was to say what you can. Say what you can — and no more. Significant silences convey much that is important.

3.1.3 Civilisation, materialism and practical discourse

In some ways, people of Gotama’s time had it easy compared with their Vedic predecessors. Civilisation was thriving in the early-historical Ganges valley.

There was a cost, though. Their language reveals a world of
things rather than of forces, entities rather than processes, fixed ties rather than fluid associations — a world of determinate, quasi-mechanical relationships rather than of interactive, negotiated, quasi-personal relations.

Then as now, clearly, many felt that reality is out there. It follows its own rules, independent of us - and it governs our lives, so our role is to fit in, to pursue self-interest modestly as best we can.

Then as now, this thinking evoked mixed reactions. People went with it on a practical level, almost out of necessity no doubt - populations of such density could sustain themselves only if everyone followed the programme, so techno-economic development was clearly top priority. At the same time, the market for psychotherapy, spiritual sustenance or what have you was booming - so we may deduce that, as today, people were feeling the strain.

It all seems weirdly ‘modern’. The Ājivikas and others reflect a strong climate of determinist thinking. The protagonist of the Pāyāsi Suttanta is a caricatural, hard-line materialist - if reincarnated in contemporary California, once can imagine him as a strong promoter of the 4IR\(^{16}\).

To preserve productivity and consumer gains, the general idea was to keep civilisation progressing - and that meant minimising individual and collective mental disorder, and coping with what could not be minimised. That in turn meant developing new patterns of thought and behaviour, and new framework-stories, new ways to speak and to think about the context of human life.

In the public discourse, two poles emerged. We see them in India. There are theorists and practitioners of power who are recognisably materialist.\(^{17}\) Then we also see idealists - abstract/speculative thinkers in a Vedāntic style.

The Bauddhas claimed a middle ground. Closely considered, their aim was, actually, to undermine the whole discourse.

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\(^{16}\) Pāyāsi sutta Dīgha Nikāya 23 See Note 27

\(^{17}\) Lokayatās and carvākas were theorists, and among practitioners of power we can cite Pāyāsi and the courtly readership for whom the Arthaśāstra was composed.
3.1.4 Practical anti-binarism

The Middle Way (majjhima-paṭipadā) appears in the Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta, traditionally the Buddha’s first teaching. The Buddha recommends avoiding extremes of sensual indulgence and self-mortification.\(^{18}\)

That is the context for other usages, for instance in relation to uccheda and sassatā. It is not about how you understand the world - it is about how you handle yourself.

It is true that there are theoretical aspects to these teachings. Yes, the Bauddhas want to say that continuity, for instance between one life and another, does not imply an entity that continues, and that is quite a theoretical point - and, at the same time, in practice the key is not to get too puffed up or brought down. Sometimes, your life will suggest to you that the world is for your eternal benefit, sometimes that there is nothing worth relying on - and neither impulse helps. If drawn too far towards one pattern of thinking, you may perhaps entertain the other so as to steer back towards the middle.

Effectively, in every contrast like that between materialism and idealism, both alternatives are rejected. So is the choice between them - neither option applies, and to select is meaningless.\(^{19}\) Anyhow, it is a question of practice, not of philosophy. It is not so much that some arguments are right and others wrong - it is more that some ways of thinking help us stay in a good place in our minds. It is worth avoiding conceptual habits which pull us in directions where we do not properly want to go - and developing more helpful habits instead.

This basic Bauddha approach applies widely. It extends to all binary contrasts.\(^{20}\)

Often, our language almost forces us to think in terms of a

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18. Saṃyutta Nikāya 56:11 (in the Sacca Saṃyutta)
19. The only thing to say at this point would be the logic-defying catuṣkoṭi — ‘it is neither so nor is it not-so, nor is it both-so-and-not-so, nor neither-so-not-not-so’. The same would apply to all too-simple binary choices — determinism versus randomness, for instance (order versus chaos).
20. The understanding of vedanā presented in e.g. the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta, for instance, centres round a basic like/dislike contrast, although a third position is then added, indifference
two-state logic, and this sets up tensions, (which may be partially resolved by taking sides, but only at the cost of sinking further into the binary trap). It is not helpful to assume that, in a debate, one side must be right and the other wrong. When it comes to what matters, neither ‘eternalists’ nor ‘annihilationists’ are ‘right’ - and the point is not to argue correctly, it is to live life so we learn from it.

That is not something we can readily pin down in referential, denotative language. It is, if you like, a qualitative standard that, implicitly, everyone is aware of, and tries to apply. We might call it dharmic.

3.1.5 Anti determinism

The problem of deterministic thinking is connected. If everything is determined by external, material forces then at some point those forces must cease to apply, so we think of annihilation.

aṇño karoti, aṇño patisaṃvediyatiti ...
paraṃ kataṃ dukkhan ti.

Iti vādaṃ
cchedam etam pareti\textsuperscript{21}

One (being) acts and another experiences (the consequences) ...

Suffering is produced by someone other (than the sufferer).

If we put it that way,
it is the same as (believing in) annihilation.

This suggests why deterministic thinking attracts us. It offers an excuse for the lack of confidence that leaves us alienated from our own lives, unable actively to live our own momentary experience. It does not matter what we do, we tell ourselves — nothing can change (my suffering). This would seem to reflect a social world in which people feel a lack of control over their lives.

3.2 Buddhist Causation

3.2.1 Connectivity

\textsuperscript{21} S 2 20 Kalupahana (1975) p 43
The S 2.25, we read:

Uppādā và tathāgatānam
anuppādā và tathāgatānam
thitā va sā dhātu
dhammathitatā dhammaniyāmatā idappaccayatā

Kalupahana comments²²

[T]here are no accidental occurrences; everything in the world is causally conditioned or produced

Certainly this passage suggests that our experiences are not isolated, but instead are all intimately connected in complex ways. That is not precisely what it is talking about, though. It focuses instead on dhammas.

Dhamma is a complex term. One important usage is in the Satipaṭṭāṇa Sutta²³, which outlines four stages in a key meditative practice called sati. Dhammas are what the meditator focuses on in the fourth stage.

So it hardly seems likely that we are not dealing here with causality in any straightforward sense. In the Pali literature, for instance, the basic metaphors for connectivity are organic

Just as a seed that, when sown in a field, will grow if it is supplied with the essence of the earth and moisture, so that [five] aggregates, the [eighteen] elements and the six senses come into being on account of a cause and disappear when that cause is destroyed.²⁴

‘Cause’ is the accepted rendering of the Pali here — and yet earth and moisture are not necessarily what we might ordinarily think of as causes for the growth of a seed. They are conditions under which the other causes operates, which arise from the molecular and cellular structuring and functionality.

One point we might take from this is that mechanical, ‘billiard-ball’ causality is a special case. Then there is the wider category of causal-or-conditional connectivity to which that special case belongs.

²². Kalupahana (1975) p 89
²³. M A 19
²⁴. S 1.134 hetum paṭticca sambhūtā hetubhaṅgā nirujjhare
3.2.2 Chains of origination

Consider next the classic formulation:

Imasmiṃ sati
idaṃ hoti,
imassa uppādā
idaṃ uppajjati.
Imasmiṃ asati
idaṃ na hoti,
imassa nirodhā
idaṃ nirujjhati\(^{25}\).

‘This being so, that happens’, it say - events are chained. What does that imply?

Does it imply ‘closed-system’ thinking - was the Buddha concerned with situations where, ‘all else being equal’, a single input variable can be seen as responsible for changing a single target variable? No, that is clearly not the sort of causal analysis that the Bauddhas were offering.

Where the scientific impulse is to isolate specific causes, the Bauddhas look at how influences pile up, as when bhikkhuni Selā says that the body grows only if a whole pattern of causal factors are in play at the same time - so you cannot straightforwardly put it down to the way bodies are in themselves, nor to remote actors or forces.\(^{26}\)

The overriding Bauddha project was that people should be able to follow the subtle movements of their own minds (so as not to get carried away). A causal connection in this context would be if a certain cognitive behaviour tends to induce unhelpful experiences. Understanding it will help you to avoid falling into that behaviour - if you notice when that behaviour is starting, then you will not get trapped in it. The point, therefore, is not to anatomise how such-and-such a behaviour may produce its effects, just to avoid behaviours unlikely to be helpful.

\(^{25}\) M 1.262-64; S 2.28, 70, 96; Ud., p. 2.
\(^{26}\) S 1.134
So the classic *imasmiṃ sati* formula can be understood without any causal connotations:

Whilst this is in existence,
that comes into being

After this has emerged,
that emerges

For as long as this is in not existence,
that does not come into being

After this has broken up,
that breaks up

Yet it is commonly seen as an example of advanced, causal thinking. Kalupahana is typical here.

Consider his comment on the Saṁyutta text which says:

Avijjāpaccayā bhikkhave sankhārā.

*Iti kho bhikkhave*  
yā tatra tathatā,  
avitathatā anaññathatā idappaccayatā,  
ayam vuccati bhikkhave paticcasamuppādo

He says

Causality or causation (*paticcasamuppada*), as described in the Samyukta, is synonymous with the causal nexus, for example, as between ‘ignorance’ (avijjā) and ‘dispositions’ (saṅkhāra). This causal nexus is said to have four main characteristics,

(1) ‘objectivity’ (tathatā),

(2) ‘necessity’ (avitathatā),

(3) ‘invariability’ (anaññathatā), and

(4) ‘conditionality’ (idappaccayatā).

Is the Buddha here talking of causality in a modern sense? Is he even presenting an analysis of the world? Or is he offering tips for how to handle our human attitudes and expectations? Another way to take this passage would be:

27 S2.26 Kalupahana (1975) p 91
Our dispositions (all) go back to the way we lose our understanding (of what is happening with us). That is what we call conditioned origination — it happens that way, it doesn’t happen differently, and nothing else happens.

This would hardly seem to be about abstract causality.

Yet the scientific method was alive and well in the Magadha/Kosala of those days - the Pāyāsi sutta describes an impeccably Popperian test of whether any non-material vital spark (jīva) exists in a human.28 This was an increasingly administered and technically progressive society, so mechanistic models of causation were all the rage - they even invaded the sphere of psychology/philosophy/religion, as we see in the Sāmaññaphala sutta, where the doctrines of the various teachers cited focus quite closely on ideas of straight-line causation. Some accept it - others reject it. Some say strict causal laws determine what happens to us, and how we react - for others, however well or badly people behave it has no influence on how well they get on.

In the middle, the Bauddhas resist false dichotomies For them, material/mechanical patterns of causation are all very well, but not so important. What matters, they suggest, is the causal understanding that can help a person to live life more fully, moment to moment.

It is one thing to achieve instrumental control over external circumstances. It is another to develop psychological resilience by weighing your states of mind in full awareness of how they have developed.

You look at what is there. It happens that way (tathatā), so why kick against it, complaining it is random or rigged? Instead, we can look at how it happens (avitathatā anaññathatā) — and, in particular, at what purchase we may have on it.

CONCLUSION

The point of causal chains, in a Bauddha perspective, is to break them. A cause is not a distinct, measurable input to the system, such as may be applied so as to produce a specific output. Instead, it is a

28. Pāyāsi sutta Dīgha Nikāya 23
combination of factors, not measurable but otherwise available to experience, which a person can watch out for, and can counteract.

The teachings constantly come back to the same point - humans have agency, if they can only think straight. Unafraid to be accused of circular argument, the Buddha also explicitly justifies his approach precisely on that basis - we know this must be right because it leaves scope for human agency.

Now, we face a powerful, global movement to fill our lives with robots and robotic thinking (4IR). How do we understand this?

First, let us think of the people running this campaign. They had a dream, but it is not working, so now they push too hard.

Business-friendly technocracy was supposed to the magic formula. Suddenly, the formula does not work anymore. What do they do, the technocrats and their business friends? They get scared and try too hard - there is an edge of desperation in this 4IR story.

The big money has spoken, so something will happen - but no one knows how the story will develop. People may be talking of the 4IR for some time, alas - freighting this construct down with all sorts of meanings.

What sort of problem are we dealing with here? People are getting too closely focused on an obsessive, decontextualized understanding of cultural, social, and economic processes.

The context they lack is, if you like, practice. Or, if you like, it is how we all struggle to get by, to cope with boredom, exhaustion, demons or even undeserved good luck. Or, it is the understanding that the perfect plan is no good unless people will go along with it.

The causes-and-connections that matter are those that describe and affect how people actually behave, whatever their stated rationale. Lived realities matter - more than abstract analyses.

The causes and connections that matter most of all are those that trip you up - the ones you can break. There may be work to do, though, to break them.

Bibliography


BUDDHISM IN MONSOON ASIA: DIGITAL/SPATIAL HUMANITIES AND CONSERVATION OF HERITAGE

by David Blundell

ABSTRACT

This article brings together studies that illustrate digital/spatial approaches for the conservation of heritage across regional economies and bridging distinctions between cultures. Crosswalks for information from multiple sources and in multiple formats of spatial humanities – a sub-discipline of the digital humanities are based on geographic information systems (GIS) and timelines – to visualize indexes for diverse cultural data and provide an effective integrating and contextualizing function for spatiotemporal attributes. Geography continues to play an important role in dynamic global environments of multicultural diversities ranging...
across very different regions that increasingly find heritage as common denominators. We are looking at anthropology as a mandate the holistic understanding of human integrity at every level and time. Therefore, we are crafting a time map meaningful to our daily lives.

As nations develop their history in the present for its interpretation of the past, we have a commonality of heritages acting as political tools for making sense in our daily life (Buckland 2004). Our models are envisioned as multi-cultural and transnational. In our globalization, peoples acknowledge one another moving in a circulation of ideas, knowledge, and goods across spatial dimensions. Merchants have traded to East Asian ports, through river systems across China and Southeast Asia (Ecom 2017), and navigated to Pacific islands, and returned with trade (Sitnikov 2011).

The research includes early historical evidence of trade networks of Austronesian navigators circulating in the dharma in the Indian Ocean, mainland and island Southeast Asia, and China. This coincides with work on Lewis Lancaster’s Atlas of Maritime Buddhism as a project of the Electronic Cultural Atlas Initiative (ECAI) with Jeanette Zerenke and our other Austronesia Team member utilizing geographic information systems (GIS).

We are finding meaning and innovation to enrich what scholarly efforts have already achieved in historical mapping across time particularly interests us. At National Chengchi University, Taipei, Taiwan, in 2015, we initiated our Asia-Pacific Spatiotemporal Institute (ApSTi, http://apsti.nccu.edu.tw). Here we have created an environment for synergies to occur between researchers based on research and sharing advanced technologies in digital/spatial humanities (see Blundell and Jan 2016; Blundell, Lin, and Morris 2018).

1. INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL/SPATIAL HUMANITIES

What is the worth and value of mapping ancient archaeological space in modern societies? Malaysia is struggling with this issue. Pre-Islamic societies are inscribed in historical artifacts and archaeological sites (Blundell 2015, 2018 a). Yet, in our contemporary civil society, there is increasing awareness and respect to the ways people lived and their aesthetic perception in their time. Are we slaves to modernity? What about the ancient legacies of a country?
Pursuits in anthropology mandate the holistic understanding of human integrity at every level and time, therefore – we are crafting a time map meaningful to our daily lives. We are looking at historical continuity, starts and stops, across time as heritage transitions and transformations in terms of modern societies. How is this done? When visiting museums, what do you expect? Museum installations, dioramas, paintings, artifacts – yes, how is historical information viewed by the public? Is this of interest to you? We suppose as history comes into daily life it’s meaningful, and does it makes sense?

This article brings in studies that illustrate different approaches to regional economies, bridging distinctions between the humanities and social science using digital solutions. Crosswalks for information from multiple sources and in multiple formats of spatial humanities – a sub-discipline of the digital humanities based on geographic information systems (GIS) and timelines – creating visual indexes for diverse cultural data and provide an effective integrating and contextualizing function for spatiotemporal attributes.

As nations develop their history in the present for its interpretation of the past, we have a commonality of heritages acting as political tools for making sense in our daily life. In recent years, regional economies have expanded based on world trends and historical networks. Yet, today we have more national barriers ranging across geographies that increasingly find heritage a common denominator.

Our models are envisioned as multi-cultural and transnational. In our globalization, peoples acknowledge one another moving in a circulation of ideas, knowledge, and goods across spatial dimensions. Merchants have traded to East Asian ports, through river systems across China and Southeast Asia, and navigated to Pacific islands, and returned with wares of their trade, stories, and geographic information.

Finding meaning and innovation to enrich what scholarly efforts have already achieved in historical mapping across time particularly interests us. In 2015, we initiated our Asia-Pacific Spatiotemporal Institute (ApSTi, http://apsti.nccu.edu.tw) at National Chengchi University, Taipei, Taiwan (Blundell and Jan 2016). Here we have
created an environment for synergies to occur between researchers serving to facilitate studies as a home for innovative geographic information systems (GIS)-based research and sharing advanced technologies in the digital/spatial humanities.

Our institute offers a range of project services to facilitate new ways of configuring data based on geospatial tools. Interfacing of spatiotemporal systems, dynamic maps of unique informational possibilities are generated. Researchers in various disciplines contribute to dialogues about techniques, challenges, and the results of digital humanities research. In short, we are facilitating capacity-building and innovative ways of sharing information via digital methods for visualizing spatiotemporal aspects of the human experience.

A far-reaching goal is to further standards in cartographic strategies through the utility of digitization and animation of map content giving new possibilities in the hands of local and international collaborators. This allows the uniting of the context of environmental landscapes with cultural data for making enhanced possibilities in spatial humanities with scales of data–large and small–with humanistic and scientific results. Our information across regions is based on a commonality of symbols and motifs of unconscious mutual heritage. We track sources from prehistoric linkages into the realm of early historical connections traced through nomadic legends to the present day (Sitnikov 2011; Blundell and Sitnikov 2018). Our case studies are based on applications of theory supporting holistic approaches to understand stability across diversity.

This research shows that economies are transmitters for rapidly transforming global environments of multicultural diversification to trans-regions from very different geo-cultural areas that could increasingly find common denominators utilizing best scientific practices that produce new paradigms. We view the geographic regions by understanding local changes and global impacts across time.

Here we weave a story of Southern Asia maritime Buddhism through GIS digital and spatial mapping through Southeast Asia. I am working on projects with Gauthama Prabhu for developing a progressive paradigm of ecology and heritage that incorporates a sense
of place in South India imbued with Buddhist heritage, yet politically ignored by mainstream society (Blundell and Prabhu 2018).

Using anthropology and digital/spatial humanities, there is a potential to activate grassroots by communities to re-appropriate and link back their own heritage cultivating local leadership of farsighted outreach. Our interest is based on the ancient heritage of South India and through maritime voyaging of merchants and monks of the dharma.

It is widely believed that fast development of East Asia in the late 20th century could be explained in terms of the traditional Asian cultural norms, which are supposed to be one of the main factors to ease the adaptation of struggling economies to the fast globalizing world. It was often suggested that such features of traditional philosophy of Confucianism as “the close family ties, sense of social discipline and respect for hard work” were the engine of economic growth in those countries (Aikman 1986:5).

However, the philosophy of Confucianism is not the only Asian tradition. Cultural norms of many popular beliefs have played a significant role in economic and social activities across the region for centuries. Cultural norms of many faiths also had long periods of successful influences on the processes of regional integration, social and economic development, and stagnation. Why is it that the same beliefs, religions and traditional cultural norms sometimes could be generators, but sometimes hamper social and economic development? What has Buddhism contributed?

We suppose that the findings in cultural anthropology and even its more specific subfields such as religion, folklore, and mythology could be an important contribution to the understanding of socio-economic exchange. It seems that periodic environmental changes and technical innovations are the main forces of transformations in social structures which in their turn determine the mechanisms and levels of cross-cultural activity—either integration or isolation.

It is important to notice here that besides the cultural diversity, such as in the Eurasia-Pacific region there is the opposite phenomenon of cultural similarity in spite of the fact that nowadays people have different beliefs and are separated by various nation-
states. Cultural similarity in what peoples share could be explained in terms of former heritage unity or regular longtime contacts among them in the past. For example, wide beliefs and diversity among the Austronesian speaking peoples could be explained by their ability to adapt easily to outside influences.

The main reason for easy adaptation to outside influences is to derive profit from integration through the exchange of goods and other worldviews. Ancient peoples’ cultural traditions sustaining over space and time is interesting and useful as a task because it can help to discover mechanisms of cultural integration in the region, which took place in the past and probably could be explained nowadays in terms of inter-religious tensions across regions.

To discover such traditions and effective integration mechanisms we need address to Carl Jung’s concept of collective unconscious (see Jacobi 1959). According to Jung, the collective unconscious is a part of the individual unconscious mind, shared by a society, and is the product of ancestral experience. It is concentrated in traditions, beliefs and moral norms. The study of mythologies, beliefs, rituals, and cults in combination with particular objects of material culture and archaeological artifacts across Eurasia-Pacific regions could help to analyze peoples and find sets of commonalities, which can help to reconstruct the ideology of initial integration phase in the region and its patterns.

Jack Goody (1996) in his The East in the West suggests that similarities in inheritance patterns indicate that the term ‘Eurasia’ is more valid than either ‘Europe’ or ‘Asia’. We suppose that unification of these two separate concepts into an indivisible one gives opportunity to observe the phenomenon of sociocultural change and stability in its dynamic variations across continuous geographical and historical arenas of cross-cultural interactions.

Common heritage denominators are hidden under layers of different variants of popular beliefs in different cultural traditions. Many scholars believe that religious and mythological patterns could be spread in the vast territories along ancient trade routes. For example, Carla Musi (1997) studied parallels between the Finno-Ugrian shamanism and European mediaeval magic, explains
the phenomenon of cultural similarities due to ancient trade routes. She concludes that from the most distant past, Western and Eastern Europe were much closer to each other than could be imagined. Cultural elements, myths and beliefs could be spread along the ‘trade routes of Baltic amber’ across vast geographic distances.

This idea of Musi supports our supposition that the stable mythological elements that have traces in mythologies all over the Eurasia-Pacific could be a product of regular cross-cultural exchange and contacts among peoples along prehistory trade route networks, which long ago connected Eurasia by rivers and seashores, creating and supporting a sense of cultural unity from Scandinavia and British Islands in the West, ranging across to the Far East; from Kamchatka in the North to New Guinea in the South.

2. RESEARCH

Our current work is based on disciplines of comparative mythology and folklore combined with data of geography, ethnography, archaeology and linguistics to discover new knowledge concerning the phenomenon of cultural transformations and stability. As a data source we use, the first known among written texts and oral narratives was collected by previous generations of ethnographers, anthropologists, and folklorists.

We look for “native logic by which various peoples make sense out of life and to understand it on its own terms” (Babbie 2010). We are collecting data relevant both from the transfer and worth of mythological symbols and objective phenomena of economic daily living. Why is this important? It is to study the interplay of ancient cultural pursuits in the archaeological record and mapped with advanced geographic information systems (GIS). The question is relevant today to better understand ancient ocean transport networks of the dharma from ports of Southern Asia to eastern shores.

The research components are based on documentation of merchants and pilgrims and their routes, ship technology, navigation, and archaeology (Ray 1994). Methodological questions were created on issues of research design and strategy as an empirical science.

In recent decades we have entered an age where digital tools are
ever increasing in capacity to help us with daily life. In the academic realms of text mining, network analysis, public history, heritage studies, and mapping we are coming of age in digital humanities and related disciplines (Blundell and Hsiang 1999). Among these areas, many specialties focus on analyzing digital space through time. We call this area spatiotemporal research—mapping across time with digital computational methods providing a large array of information. This enhances our ability to observe data beyond an individual’s abilities to perceive all the possible components.

The possible data stems from aerial mapping, remote sensing, photometric imagery, random sampling archaeology, statistical programming with languages such as R, and contemporary software development for innovative methods to see beyond what we can see. When conducting fieldwork, you may find there are occasions when digitizing data becomes necessary. Whether this is due to limitations such as time or access, mobility issues requiring light travel, or due to chance, such as the occasional lucky find, digitization is an excellent method to collect spatiotemporal data. This chapter outlines several varying projects and methodologies in the digital humanities incorporating integrated approaches to spatial humanities and spatiotemporal research. We invite you to participate in this field of spatiotemporal methods to enhance your research. With this chapter we hope to inform, instruct, and inspire more research in this new and exciting area (Blundell, Lin, and Morris 2018). Mapping is one of the most commonly used techniques in reviewing our “sense of being” in space (see Cosgrove 2004; see Blundell 2011, 2012).

Our time maps research contributes to important academic discourse in many ways. Time maps are utilized to trace stories by the way people move through time. These visualized spatiotemporal displays contribute to discovering knowledge, answering questions, and seeking other questions. Spatial humanities produce a cycle of questions creating layers of maps portrayed in different ways.

The question is to what extent did international religious systems, such as beliefs in the dharma, beginning about 2,300 years ago facilitated by Austronesian speaking Malay/Indonesian navigators? This is to say there was a range of influence stemming
from Southern Asia across the Bay of Bengal to island Southeast Asia. The region became receptive to the *dharma* in peninsula and island Southeast Asia. How could routes be traced?

The supposition is the *dharma* as a literary belief system was carried as far as writing could be traced on palm leaves, metal, and stone. In the 2nd century CE, my hypothesis is that the *dharma* moved out by sea travel onboard ships with seasoned mariners who we suppose were indigenous, now know as Austronesian speaking voyagers (Blundell 2014 a, b) and in stone relief imagery depicted at Borobudur in Java (Figure 1). Yet, there are gaps in the record. So to remedy this, we are taking stock of old knowledge, and new technologies within today’s academic networks to further trace the extent of seemingly unrelated cultures intersected, and its periphery (Blundell 2016).

![Stone relief panel of voyaging outrigger ship on the Buddhist monument Borobudur, Java, Indonesia, 9th century.](image)

*Figure 1. Stone relief panel of voyaging outrigger ship on the Buddhist monument Borobudur, Java, Indonesia, 9th century.*

This project owes its existence to Lewis Lancaster who established the Electronic Cultural Atlas Initiative (ECAI, http://ecai.org), University of California, Berkeley, in 1997. At that time, Lewis Lancaster invited scholars of Austronesian languages and cultures to be part of this international collaborative reaffirming and furthering the United Nations Millennium Goals by the indispensable common house of the human family, “through which we will seek to realize our universal aspirations for peace, cooperation and development. We therefore pledge our unstinting support for these common objectives and our determination to achieve them” (United Nations Millennium Goals 8th plenary
meeting, September 2000).

For public museum displays, our team thought of producing modular units of the story intersecting early Buddhism with Austronesian voyaging. Theses components include visually documenting ports, ship construction, and sailing routes. Our research illustrates a range of ways to facilitate configuring social science data with geospatial tools featuring Taiwan research with GIS point locations, migration and historical trade routes, and religious sites of the region linked to enriched attribute spatial information (Blundell and Zerneke 2014).

Today’s current advances in GIS computing and information infrastructures offer researchers the possibility of reconsidering the entire strategy of analysis and dissemination of information. It “enables humanities scholars to discover relationships of memory, artifact, and experience that exist in a particular place and across time” (Bodenhamer 2010 et. al.).

Documentation includes merchants and pilgrims and their routes, ship technologies, ports, and remaining artifacts. The current project, ECAI Atlas of Maritime Buddhism has a first phase goal of providing GIS mapping of archaeological sites along the coast lines of India and Sri Lanka extending to Southeast Asia and ending with the Chinese river and canal systems, coastal Korea, and Japan (Figure 2).
Geographic information is required by a wealth of scientific research for various disciplines. Due to much progress of geospatial technologies in recent years, acquisition of high-quality spatial and temporal information has become much more efficient and cost-effective than past few decades. Remote sensing provides massive high resolution imageries about Earth surface, which can be analyzed by image processing tools to automatically derive valuable information for various applications such as climate change, land resources inventory, environmental monitoring, and urban sprawl.

We are challenged to imagine new methods for doing research and making results available to broader user communities. Can we find meaning and innovation digital humanities beyond what has been traditionally part of scholarly efforts? We examine GIS point locations tracing routes and networks imbued with historical meaning across the region linked to enriched attribute information. These are charted and visualized in maps and can be analyzed with network analysis, creating an innovative digital infrastructure for scholarly collaboration and creation of customizable visualizations.

The Atlas helps to show Buddhist related artifacts and sites clustered at seaports in India as well as a number of regions of Southeast and Eastern Asia. The network of Indian seaport merchants was a primary support for the dharma. Today these
were classified as Hindu or Buddhist as they coincided at the time. The respect for Buddha was prevalent from the 2nd century CE, if not before. What form of Buddhism? At the time, the respect for Buddha was based on the individual. This is known as bhakti or to share, partake in, with your deity, such as Buddha or Siva.

The seafaring nusantara traders of the islands of Southeast Asia created trading centers facilitating Hindu/Buddhist propagation in Southeast Asia, which proved of the existence of Buddhism with Pala Mahayana influences from South India. This faith was brought in and practiced by these Indic merchants. The respect shown to the Buddha was a more inclusive of an overarching belief system.

Buddhism diminished in India, as it was supported by kings who were politically replaced by kings devoted to Siva, etc. by about the 10th century CE. It was seen as the raise of Hinduism. Yet, the term Hinduism did not exist. Our view in the present day is to divide and classify those beliefs as Hindu and Buddhist.

3. TRACING HISTORY THROUGH MAP LAYERS

Today, with our current geographic technologies we are able to trace this historical process as map layers—from prehistory to early history into the era of written inscriptions. Paul Wheatley (1961) brought this to my attention in his publications. His methods and terminologies were based on his ability to translate texts from both early Indian and Chinese writings. He mapped the historic Southeast Asia showing layers of settlement. The ancient texts of Wheatly’s Golden Khersonese comment on the trade relations with the Malay Peninsula and across Southeast Asia.

Our research shares ideas about early historical Indian Ocean destinations to seats of kingdoms and trade centers where the word of the dharma and its faith developed in a healthy vigorous way, especially in particularly congenial regions of Southeast Asia. We have traced early evidence of trans-ocean sailing craft across Monsoon Asia.

An important element in this research includes the role of the Monsoon winds and the annual shift of wind direction that determined the trade calendar for ocean shipments (Figure 4). The time and
distance from Africa to India or from India to Malaysia or further out across the seas to East Asia depended on seasonal wind directions.

Figure 4. Historical Monsoon wind seasons, Wheatley 1961, xviii.

A corresponding resource is our ECAI map of Austronesia that overlaps with the Buddhist distribution of materials and providing a local context for ocean shipping lanes and ports. From East Asia some of the earliest cultural linkages were based on the innovation of ocean going navigation, sailing out of Taiwan about 4,500 to 3,500 years ago carried a linguistic dispersal known as the Austronesian trade languages incubating across the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, and to Micronesia initiating Malayo-Polynesian languages (Figure 5.).

Figure 5. Out of Taiwan seafaring routes between 4,500 to 3,500 years ago. Map displayed at the Austronesia Exhibition of Bentara Budaya, Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia, July 20, 2016.
4. HISTORICAL ATLAS OF MONSOON ASIA

Our knowledge derives from various research fields, and integrates many different types of data and analytical styles developing new research methodologies, creating paradigm shifts and multi-vocal views in the humanities. Our aim is interdisciplinary for producing narratives from ancient evidence; thus we are recounting timelines of religious transmissions, aesthetics, and trade partnerships.

This data is collected for the Atlas, it can be a resource for museum installations that can be interactive, animated, and augmented or installed in immersive 3D display environments. The development of Apps allows for our information to be available on handheld devices.

Geographic information and timelines provide an effective integrating and contextualizing function for cultural attributes. As cross walks for information from multiple sources and in multiple formats they create visual indexes for diverse cultural data. The system is based on GIS point locations linked to enriched attribute information. We are able to chart the extent of specific traits of cultural information via maps using GIS gazetteer spreadsheets for collecting and curating datasets. Through methods in spatial humanities, history reaches new dimensions, with state of the art opportunities while gathering and analyzing data. With our advanced spatiotemporal tools, it is exciting to research multidimensional pathways of Monsoon Asia.

Our ECAI Atlas of Maritime Buddhism efforts include the development of a touring 3D immersive museum exhibit. This exhibit is in part supported by the efforts of a diverse group of ECAI affiliates and teams. A wide range of contributors are collecting and cataloging data, which can be used in various ways for different audiences.

One of the organizing themes of the atlas is Atlas modules. These modules are curated by an author, or team, to document a story, event or theme. Each is supported by multiple forms of data and visualization. Historical kingdom map overlays on Google Earth give time-enabled layers of information within a specific geographic region, time period or cultural era, trading system,
person or group of people (Figure 6). This approach is supported by an infrastructure to capture and archive content and is expected to grow.

![Image](image_url)

**Figure 6.** Maps of historical kingdoms in Southern Asia, their associated trade routes, and other information are used to construct geo-registered layers by time in Google Earth.

5. CONCLUSION

Origins of this research began with my thesis written from the perspective of India and Sri Lanka to explore sources and expansions of regional cultures. This work was based on translations of Indo-European, Dravidian, and Chinese early historical literature. It has increased my understanding of growth and dynamics of the ancient cities and trade routes across mainland and island Southern Asia from Neolithic cultures to early history making connections with East Asia and Pacific Ocean island cultures (see Blundell 1976, 1984, 2003, 2009, 2014 b, 2016, 2017, 2018 b).

A far-reaching goal is to further standards in cartographic strategies through the utility of digitalization and animation of map content giving new possibilities in the hands of local and international collaborators. We provide examples for developing best practice standards applied to databases giving interactive multimedia utility aspects. This allows uniting the context of
environmental landscapes with cultural data for making enhanced possibilities in spatial humanities with scales of data, large and small – with humanistic and scientific results.

For comprehensive developments in spatial humanities we consult Jo Guldi’s introduction of the spatial turn for eight academic disciplines, “What is the Spatial Turn?” (2016) and Richard White’s essay “What is Spatial History?” (2010). Digital mapping today gives resource affordability to researchers. Availability to digital resources allows novice or advanced researchers who are not cartographers, abilities to chart information.

Now historiography has fresh and innovative tools (Robertson 2012), and not about literary text mining. GIS provides history “the most exciting developments in both digital and spatial humanities” (Gregory and Geddes 2014) with advances in computing and information infrastructures offering researchers possibilities of reconsidering the entire strategy of analysis and dissemination of information. It features ‘deep mapping’ acknowledging multiple meanings in a place that “enables humanities scholars to discover relationships of memory, artifact, and experience that exist in a particular place and across time” (Bodenhamer et. al. 2010).

Why is this important? We connect with a continuum of religious transmissions across Monsoon Asia. This article highlights our research for the development of a digital Atlas based modules featuring maritime Indo-Pacific and Indic dharma influences with a focus on historical Buddhist outreach.
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THE BUILDING BLOCKS FOR OPEN ECOSYSTEMS OF ONLINE RESOURCES SERVING BUDDHIST COMMUNITIES

by Alex Amies*

ABSTRACT

The paper gives an overview of the state of the art of the software building blocks for development of online resources serving Buddhist communities and how those are driving new capabilities and broadening access. Possible choices of technologies that take advantage of the efficiencies denoted by economists as part of the Fourth Industrial Revolution are explained. The central theme described is the huge scale and rapid evolution of the open source movement and modular package management systems that are built on open source. Illustrative examples are given from the author’s experience developing web applications for the study of Buddhist texts, including translation projects for Fo Guang Shan. The changes brought by these technologies in the last five years are great and further impact is still to come. The author hopes that the evolving technologies can bring more improvements to Buddhist resources, including large scale translation of the Chinese Buddhist canon and the collected works of Venerable Master Hsing Yun to English. Large scale translation of historic texts will not necessarily be based on machine translation but machine translation will be important nevertheless. An additional impact is the broadening of access to high quality scholarly resources beyond the academic community to the monastic and lay Buddhist communities.

*. Google Inc., California, USA.
1. INTRODUCTION

This paper describes building blocks of open systems at two levels: the level of user experience for people accessing online resources and the development of those resources. The software systems described include websites, dictionaries, and online text collections. The theme of this track of the conference is the Fourth Industrial Revolution. In his book *The Fourth Industrial Revolution*, Schwab explains that the most revolutionary impact is not just the new technologies themselves but it is the amplification of the interconnectivity between these technologies (Schwab 2017, pp. 1-3). This amplification is most important at the level of development of software systems due to interconnectivity between both the developers of the systems and of the software components making up the ecosystems. In the now classic book on open source *The Cathedral & the Bazaar*, Raymond describes the how some of the best and brightest minds in the world were attracted to the computing industry in the 1960s-1990s and evolved an early “hacker culture” (Raymond 2001, p. 9-17). The open source community developed from this early computer science culture. However, it was not until the rise in popularity of cloud computing over the last ten years that open source became widely used by businesses. There are two ways that the amplification described by Schwab is seen in the open source community: 1. the opportunity to contribute visible artifacts in large communities and free communication drives a high level of engagement among skilled software developers; 2. the software modules themselves via the package management systems, which are continuously automatically downloaded, compiled, tested, repackaged, and deployed to create new software.

What is meant by an open ecosystem and why should project sponsors care? Software projects serving the Buddhist community are sponsored by Buddhist temples, universities, and lay people. At the level of end user experience a linked collection of simple websites is a great example of an open ecosystem. An important aspect of this open ecosystem is the links from external locations to specific content within a website. A project sponsor should care

about enabling inbound links because it will enable more users to discover content and navigate directly to the most relevant location. Closed systems, in contrast, present user with a link to install new software or no link at all. Such closed systems lock up resources, inhibiting communication and innovation.

Buddhist teachings have had a large impact on many people’s lives, from being able to think beyond ideas of self to dealing with impermanence of the loss of one’s loved ones. However, most people in the 21st century have access to tertiary education and multiple religions and do not necessarily take Buddhist teachings at face value. Lay Buddhists and interested people from other belief systems often want access to authentic canonical texts and scholarly analysis of those. The use of open ecosystems is critical in extending open access to high quality, scholarly content beyond the academic community to communities of monastic, lay people, and the public in general. Barriers locking of academic publications in closed digital libraries and open alternatives will be discussed below.

Open discussion amongst end users is not the intended sense of ‘open.’ It is a possible interpretation but is outside the scope of this paper.

The Diamond Sutra states, “If a bodhisattva gives without abiding in any notion whatsoever, then his merit will be immeasurable” (Fo Guang Shan International Translation Center 2016, p. 17). The goals of open source movement in freely publishing software to the global community are mostly compatible with Buddhist ethics. While the individuals and business publishing the software have not necessarily been free of expectations of gaining something in return, the impact in many cases has been extremely large.

At the level of software development an open ecosystem is one that is based on publicly available software, such as open source, and also publishing the software developed under an open source license. Schwab writes, “when firms share resources through collaborative innovation, significant value can be created for both parties as well as for the economies in which such collaborations take place” (Schwab 2017, p. 60). The open source community is the largest such collaborative community today. As an illustration
of the unprecedented size that successful open source ecosystems have become, the open source repository management platform GitHub currently reports 31 million developers with 96 million repositories. Even the resources of the largest corporations and governments cannot match this. In contrast to the opaque silos created by closed ecosystems the transparency of open source drives massive, unplanned innovation, and often disruption. The disruptive aspect should also be considered. The disruption has mainly been to businesses that depend on sales of packaged software for revenue since their products are now in competition with freely available software.

The transformation that is occurring today with open source ecosystems is a combination of three things: 1. the transparency and free access of the open source model; 2. the availability of free services to distribute digital assets via open source repositories; and, 3. package management systems for the automated download, deployment, and use of software modules. It is not just the existence of open source software, it is the convenience and version control structure of free hosted services for open source repositories, such as GitHub and GitLab, that makes the difference. The version control structures imposed are typically rigorous. These consist of an ownership model enabling participation from the public in general, a review and approval process, revision history and rollback, and optionally format checking and testing. There has also been an explosion of free package management systems including the Debian package management system for Debian Linux, npmjs for JavaScript modules, Python Package Index, iPython (interactive Python) scripts, and Docker containers. Examples of modular package management systems that leverage these hosted services are the Debian apt-get install command, pip command for Python packages, and Colab for iPython. A recent change is building access to open source repositories directly into tools provided with programming languages, such as the ‘go get’ command for the Go language, which automatically downloads Go packages and their dependencies from GitHub. 

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The NTI Reader\(^4\) website developed hosts the text of the Taishō canon and the Humanistic Buddhism Reader (HB Reader)\(^5\) website hosts the text of Venerable Master Hsing Yun’s collected works. Both websites include an integrated Chinese-English Buddhist dictionary. These websites, developed by the author, use many of the open source and modular systems listed above. The code for the projects are hosted in GitHub published with an Apache 2 open software license and and text assets with a Creative Commons license. The NTI Reader and HB Reader depend on open source at every level. This includes software that is written in the open source programming language Go that runs in Docker containers. Container images for the web application are stored in a container repository that can be downloaded and deployed on demand. The text search application is based on a machine learning application is trained for document relevance using Colab. The text assets would not have been possible to develop without the use of text assets from other institutions published with a Creative Commons license.

These websites are among the resources used by teams of translators at Fo Guang Shan for translation of Chinese Buddhist texts to English. These teams of translators use other collaborative tools, such Google Docs, that allow multiple authors to collaborate and write publications in real time. Besides the NTI Reader and HB Reader, the group makes use of new resources developed by other Buddhist groups, from both temples and academic institutions. Some of the popular tools include the SAT Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō Text Database 大正新脩大蔵経 from the University of Tokyo,\(^6\) the Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association CBETA 中華電子佛典協會,\(^7\) the Digital Dictionary of Buddhism,\(^8\) and the Fo Guang Dictionary of Buddhism.\(^9\) These new tools and online resources are enabling faster translation of Chinese texts, which is very important considering the enormous volume to be translated. It now finally seems like there is hope for a complete translation to

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English of the historic body of Chinese Buddhist literature with or without the aid of machine translation.

There are several points that make Chinese Buddhist literature unique.

The long literary history of Chinese Buddhism provides opportunities and challenges. One opportunity is that the expired copyright enables free reuse of the text. A challenge is in processing and understanding the archaic language, some of which dates back two thousand years. We have lost much of the historic context and understanding of the languages, which needs to be reconstructed by a limited number of expert scholars.

Chinese has no spaces for delimiting words. This leads to more challenges in NLTP for text segmentation. Historic Chinese texts have no punctuation, which is even more difficult.

The use of traditional versus simplified Chinese characters and historic character variants provides even more challenges in text processing.

The religious nature of Chinese Buddhist texts fosters a large lay community.

The implication of these unique points is that Buddhist studies has its own unique challenges to solve and cannot completely rely on the tools and resources of other communities.

2. ECOSYSTEMS AND COMMUNITIES

Buddhist and humanities academic communities have benefited from both open and closed ecosystems of software and online resources. Some of the building blocks of open ecosystems that are central to the online resources used by the Buddhist are described.

3. OPEN ECOSYSTEMS

There are a number of key elements that enable the openness of the World Wide Web but are easy to take for granted. Open access on the world wide web depends on the use of hyperlinks as defined in the Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) standard from the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). Users can navigate from one site

10. https://www.w3.org/html/
to another by following these hyperlinks, crossing site ownership boundaries in the process. A development that may surprise users is that many large applications are now ‘single page applications’ (Mansilla 2018, pp. 162-163) written entirely in JavaScript. In these applications there is only one HTML page with JavaScript that dynamically manipulates the Document Object Model (DOM) to display new content to users and to handle incoming requests to different links. These applications are most frequently powered by web application frameworks like Angular, React, and Vuejs. These web application frameworks can help provide better user experience by minimizing the time spent going back and forth to the remote servers and still enable hyperlinks in the traditional way, if considered in the design of the application. With HTML5 local storage they can act like installed native applications. Careful thought is required in the design to retain the original flavor of the Web as a network of interlinked web pages.

At the other end of the spectrum are closed monolithic systems, including many digital libraries where access to the digital library requires login via a user account that is granted via membership in an organization, such as a university, or via a credit card. In many of these closed systems the links terminate at site ownership boundaries, such as a login screen. Some of this variety of ecosystems are not fully closed, for example incoming links to books in online bookstores to a specific book may be supported. However, the ebooks do not contain any outbound links or prevent export of data, say via disabling cut-and-paste. Other examples of closed ecosystems are mobile applications or single page web applications that do not handle inbound requests linking to specific resources. The closed nature of these systems can be avoided if the project owners take appropriate design and care in development. Some digital libraries are exemptions. For example the arXiv digital library developed by Cornell University and the Internet Archive digital libraries, allow inbound links to ebooks without login required and allow exporting of data out, via downloading in unlocks formats.

The academic community is now encouraged to move to a more open model for publications by the open access movement. The concentration of publication of academic journals in control
of small number of publishers has created an economic barrier for readers of academic literature outside of large universities (Eger and Scheufen 2018, ch. 1.1). This has especially been a problem for Buddhist monastics and lay people seeking to access academic literature on Buddhist subjects. Open access refers to making academic publications available free of cost online. An example of an open access publisher is Frontiers Media, which is an Open Access publisher of peer reviewed academic journals. Frontiers Media also enforces a Creative Commons license to allow free copying of publications. The free availability of open source software is one of the enablers of this. A compromise that allows authors to choose to self-archive their own articles with free public access is called ‘green open access’ (Eger and Scheufen 2018, ch. 1.3). In summary, open access is one of the building blocks of open ecosystems.

In the past and still continuing into the present, support of software by vendors was considered a major cost. Today the cost of that support is reduced by many vendors via online forums, such as Stack Overflow. According to their own survey, in 2018 about 50 million people visit Stack Overflow each month to seek and give answers to technical questions. One of the great benefits of participating in a technical community like Stack Overflow is in avoiding antipatterns. An antipattern is a solution to a problem that has negative consequences (Brown 1998, pp. 7-8). A common antipattern found in web applications is serving of dynamically generated web pages of data with in a way that prevents indexing by search engines. For example, if a web application framework, such as .NET or Java Servlets, retrieves data from a database and uses that to generate web pages behind a small number of URLs then search engines and their users may not be able to discover the content, even if login is not required. This related to prevention of linking described above. Therefore, public technical forums like Stack Overflow are another of the building blocks of open ecosystems.

4. BUDDHIST RESOURCES AND COMMUNITIES SERVED

The Buddhist online community is a union of the Buddhist

11. https://www.frontiersin.org/
monastic community, the lay community, the Buddhist academic community, and the interested public at large. The University of Tokyo has sustained a tradition of the study of East Asian Buddhist literature for over one hundred years. The University of Tokyo created the Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō 大正新修大藏經 (Taishō canon), the main version of the East Asian Buddhist canon used by scholars today, over the period 1912-1926. Nearly a hundred years after that effort began in 2008, the University of Tokyo released the SAT digital version of the Taishō canon (Muller, Shimoda, and Nagasaki 2017, pp. 175-179). This effort was driven almost entirely by scholars. The Buddhist community in Taiwan has included more participation from monastics and lay people. Wilkinson describes the community of monastics, scholars, and lay believers who joined forces in the large effort for the development of the CBETA project for the initial scanning of the Taishō Tripitaka and development of the online canonical texts in Taiwan (Wilkinson 2017, pp. 160-162). Digital versions of the Korean Buddhist canon have been published as well (Lancaster 2010).

The initial digital versions of the Taishō canon took over ten years to develop, chiefly because the creators had to overcome challenges with coverage by the Unicode standard and also lack of optical character recognition (OCR) capabilities for Chinese characters at the time. Now that those initial foundational standards and capabilities are established subsequent capabilities are taking place more quickly. Both the SAT and CBETA allow integrated dictionaries and both inbound and outbound links to encyclopedic and bibliographic resources. The Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai (BDK) or ‘Society for the Promotion of Buddhism,’ founded by Yehan Numata (1897-1994) sponsors the translation to English of many of the texts in the Taishō.13 These are integrated into the SAT website in the form of a parallel corpus.

Fo Guang Shan has published a number of online resources as well. These included print and online versions of the collected works of Venerable Master Hsing Yun, the founder of Fo Guang Shan; the Fo Guang Dictionary of Buddhism, a dictionary of over

32,000 terms with both print and online versions, and a set of canonical writings including later period writings from the Ming and Qing not available elsewhere. Fo Guang Shan has assembled a large team of translators that includes lay volunteers, monastics, full time staff, university faculty, and graduate students. General online tools that have recently become available, such as Google Docs and video conferencing, are enabling teams to scale out. The online resources mentioned are enabling more rapid progress.

5. PLATFORMS, STANDARDS, AND BUILDING BLOCKS

Free hosting services for open source repositories have been one of the most important building blocks for the open source movement. GitHub is based on the open source version control system git, first released by Linus Torvalds in 2005 in order to host the source code for the Linux kernel (Loeliger and McCullough 2012, loc. 254). GitHub was founded in 2008 and acquired by Microsoft in 2018 (Microsoft 2018). The unit of hosting on GitHub is the repository. A repository can be freely and instantly created by anyone with Internet connection. Changes to source code can also be pushed freely and instantly. However, the highly structured process defined by the git is critical in maintaining software quality. An ownership and review process enforced and the record of changes maintained are central to the release process. The software and base digital assets for the NTI Buddhist Text Reader is an example of a Buddhist project is maintained on GitHub.14

5.1 Standards

Developers of web platforms have been aware of the importance of standards since the beginning of the web. Standards for basic web development include HTML, extensible markup language (XML), and JavaScript Object Notation (JSON) emerged and evolved with the development of the web. At a higher level standards like the Text Encoding Initiative (TEI),15 and Resource Description Framework (RDF) where developed for needs closely related to digital libraries. TEI is a standard that has been adopted the digital

humanities community. TEI gives recommended structures for text corpora, bibliographies, and dictionaries. The Digital Dictionary of Buddhism (DDB) uses TEI for storage of the dictionary terms (Muller, Nagasaki, and Soulat 2012). The DDB benefited from a number of other standards, including XML and Unicode, since its initial creation in 1986.

The standards mentioned have been critical enablers for projects, such as DDB. However, standards and the committees that lead them move relatively slowly compared with the rapid movement of the open source community at large. Nevertheless, standards have been critical for the development of open ecosystems of modules.

5.2 Breaking Down Monolithic Systems

Software modules, also called components, are not easy to design. According to Bevacqua, the most important principle in module design is that a module should have a single responsibility (Bevacqua 2018, pp. 38-43). In addition, a module should be accessed via a well defined interface that is not coupled to its implementation. Also module should also be testable. When modules have these simple but hard to achieve properties and they are stored in publicly accessible package management systems then a high degree of automation is possible in a continuous integration / continuous delivery (CI/CD) pipeline. That is, software developers are continuously pushing software that is automatically downloaded, integrated, tested, and deployed in stark contrast to previous generations with waterfall processes where release cycles often took years.

In thinking about the requirements for various projects that the author has worked on for Fo Guang Shan, the author proposed building a digital library. A digital library would be able to combine many requirements into a single consistent home for users to discover and access everything necessary for their work. However, the problem with the proposal was its monolithic nature. Fo Guang Shan has many projects, which made a large project like a digital library a distraction. Digital libraries include a large set of requirements for submitting, cataloging, searching, and accessing collections of books and other digital assets (Xie and Matusiak
2016, loc. 569-700). However, modularity and participation by the software development community is not prominently discussed in the digital library literature. Today is not common for ebooks to link to specific pages in other ebooks. Rather ebooks are still using traditional citations. These points are in contrast to open systems of websites, many of which today are implementing features overlapping with digital libraries. However, digital libraries maintained by other parties are important tools for translators of canonical Buddhist texts especially for research of historic context. In summary, a digital library may be too big of a building block for practical development.

The principles of modular design can be illustrated using the author’s experience with Buddhist dictionaries. There are many different types of dictionary: monolingual dictionary, bilingual dictionary, historic dictionary, specialist dictionary, and others (Atkins and Rundell 2008, pp. 24-26). The goal of the NTI Reader project is to aid Chinese users to read and translate Chinese Buddhist texts. Therefore the type of dictionary selected is a Chinese-English bilingual dictionary.

Human language is complex and historic texts are more complex but coping with this can be made efficient if the user tasks can be modelled with software components. An entry in a dictionary can have multiple word senses, which are nearly the same as lexical units as defined lexicography (Atkins and Rundell 2008, pp. 130-131). One requirement for the online dictionary software is also to underline or otherwise highlight certain terms, such as Buddhist terminology or proper nouns, in a passage of Chinese text to let the reader know the key terms. Another requirement from the dictionary software stakeholders is to display entries from multiple dictionary sources for a given word. Combining these requirements into a model, the author developed the object model for the chinesedict JavaScript component described in Table 1.

**Table 1: Object Model for the chinesedict-js JavaScript Component**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DictionaryBuilder</th>
<th>Retrieves dictionaries from the server, parses them, and makes the data available to the browser</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DictionarySource</td>
<td>The source of a dictionary, including file location, the name of the creator, and a title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DictionaryView</td>
<td>Presents the dictionary to the user, such as for looking up a term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DictionaryEntry</td>
<td>The term to be looked up and the data in one of the dictionary sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WordSense</td>
<td>One word sense for the term, including the pronunciation, part of speech, English equivalent, and notes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The developer of an application that uses the dictionary will supply multiple DictionarySource objects to the DictionaryBuilder, which build the dictionary and return a DictionaryView showing the highlighted words. When the user clicks on one of the words the DictionaryView will present a dialog showing the Term with one or more DictionaryEntry objects, each of which will have one or more WordSense objects. Although this appears complex, it is simpler that the TEI recommendation for dictionaries, for which a dictionary entry can include orthography, pronunciation, part of speech, senses, quotation, usage, etymology, related entries, and notes ("P5: Guidelines for Electronic Text Encoding and Interchange" 2018, ch. 9). This is somewhat analogous to a person reading a printed text. The person would have a collection of dictionaries: specialist Buddhist dictionaries, bilingual Chinese dictionaries, monolingual literary Chinese dictionaries, and specialist dictionaries of historic people and places. For interesting words encountered in the text, the person would consult the various dictionaries to decipher the meaning intended in this context. In summary, if user actions are modelled and developed as components, reading and translation of difficult texts can be made very efficient.

5.3 Modular components

Modular software development allows for convenient re-use
of software in the form of libraries. The value of this has been recognized for many decades. What is new in the last several years is the combination of modular software systems with open source software and the emergence of platforms for hosting the modules. Various languages and platforms use terms other than ‘module’, often ‘package’ or ‘container.’

Besides enabling source code revision control for Linux and related projects, git has been also been an enabler for modular software development in general. For example, the Go language, which was initially released in 2012, uses a package management system allows importing of third party packages retrieved from remote sources using git. This can be done using the ‘go get [URL]’ command.\footnote{https://golang.org/cmd/go/#hdr-Module_aware_go_get} This makes it very convenient to reuse open source Go packages hosted on GitHub. The Chinese Notes software\footnote{https://github.com/alexamies/chinesenotes.com} that powers the NTI Reader uses Go and is hosted on GitHub. However, the software is not organized in a way that allows other developers to access the packages with the go get command. There is an opportunity to refactor the code in a way that is more reusable by others. The step that is missing here is illustrative of one challenge of software reuse: it takes extra effort and careful planning to make your software reusable by other developers.

Container systems are another technology that has exploded in the last several years. The most prominent of these is Docker, first released in 2013. Containers have been revolutionary in enabling dependency management and efficiency in deployment and running of systems with open source software. The NTI Reader makes use of Docker containers but does not provide a container for other developers to conveniently reuse. The benefit to the NTI Reader of using contains are that they allow reliable operation of the web application in a cluster and easy rollback in case a code change is rolled out that breaks the application.

JavaScript module systems are one of the newest and most important developments impacting web application development. There has been rapid evolution of JavaScript or ECMAScript in the
last few years via the ECMA standards body. In 2015 the ES2015 release included major changes, such as changes in scoping, arrow syntax, classes, template strings, Maps, Promises and modules. These new features have been a substantial enabler of more complex and more powerful JavaScript applications and driver of change in the JavaScript ecosystem. Modern browsers have now adopted most of the recommendations in ES2015. However, the most startling phenomenon has been the rapid rise of the ecosystem of JavaScript modules. At the time of writing this paper, there were 883,140 modules hosted on the Node Package Management service npmjs.org with 8,897,268,546 downloads in the previous week. The number of downloads is startling as an indication of the degree of automation in downloading by CI/CD pipelines.

In addition to ES2015 modules there are other JavaScript module systems, including CommonJS and the AngularJS module systems (Bevacqua 2017, pp. 296-297). NPM leverages the package.json format that is used to describe publication of JavaScript modules. This greatly helps structure the download and use of the modules. The UNPKG system freely distributes JavaScript packages to make them directly accessible to websites via a content distribution network (CDN). This is exactly the kind of amplification described Schwab above by enabling low cost, universally available, structured automated download and distribution of software.

5.4 Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence, specifically machine learning, is becoming an important tool that can be leveraged for digital humanities projects, especially with natural language text processing. Three recent developments in machine learning are having a large impact on the development of Buddhist resources and digital humanities in general: (1) the improvement of deep learning methods for processing natural language, (2) the release of open source machine learning frameworks, and (3) the ‘democratization’ of machine learning.

learning through application programming interfaces (APIs) and services that do not require deep specialization in the field by the developers using them. This is really the same pattern as described for open source software in general as described above.

TensorFlow is an deep learning (artificial neural network) library released to open source by Google in 2015 and in 2016 became the most popular machine learning project on GitHub (Dean 2017). Keras is an open source project that wraps TensorFlow and other deep learning libraries to make them easier to use by software engineers not specializing in machine learning (Chollet 2018, pp. 29-30). The Colab service hosted by Google provides a free hosted solution for running iPython programs that leverage machine learning software, particularly TensorFlow. The iPython programming model encourages an iterative programming style where code and data can be viewed and save together. Colab sheets can be saved to GitHub and the output viewed directly by other users. Together TensorFlow, Keras, and Colab enable software engineers and data scientists to conveniently and cheaply develop machine learning applications and collaborate in a global community.

The NTI Reader uses machine learning for document search. The NTI Reader text search feature classifies documents as relevant or not-relevant with a combination of vector space model document similarity scores (Zhai and Massung 2016, pp. 90-92). The scores are based on word and bigram frequencies. The scores are combined using machine learning with a technique called logistic regression by the open source library Scikit-learn (Pedregosa et al. 2011). The resulting Colab sheet was saved to the author’s GitHub project to allow anybody to review the data re-run the code.

The Buddhist academic community is investigating the use of machine learning to scale analysis of historic data beyond individual scholars manually examining data. For example, Bingenheimer discusses the use of named entity recognition for the discovery

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23. https://github.com/tensorflow
of the identities and references to people and places from corpora of historical East Asian texts, in particular the Digital Archive of Buddhist Temple Gazetteers (Bingenheimer 2015). There are many obstacles to machine learning with historic Chinese text sources, including lack of digitization and lack of punctuation in the stream of text. An example of machine learning in Buddhist studies to overcome this is the automatic insertion of punctuation and optical character recognition in historic Chinese texts by researchers working with Longquan temple (Liu 2018).

While the early digital versions of the canon were manually typed from print editions (Muller, Shimoda, and Nagasaki 2017, pp. 177) later versions have been able to be digitized using OCR. Early OCR techniques worked adequately for printed Chinese texts enabling scanning of the Taishō, Yongle Northern, and the Qing Dragon canons (Fang, p. 210). Correction of scanning errors was a large task for these scanning projects. Recently, OCR techniques based on machine learning have been used to scan handwritten historic texts that were not able to be scanned with early generations of OCR technology.

Although important, the use of machine learning by the Buddhist academic community is trivial in comparison to the highly dynamic community of data scientists in competitions, such as those hosted on Kaggle. 600,000 new users joined Kaggle in 2017 for a total of 1.3 million members. Such a large community will certainly drive improvements in machine learning that will have an impact on Buddhist studies.

To date machine translation has not been useful for translation of canonical and other historical texts. However, it is not inconceivable that this will change in the near future. Today, machine translation is already having an impact in the translation of academic publications in modern languages other than English. Medieval Chinese literary scholar Knechtges describes the challenges of

translating historical texts in his essay on the translation of the important and large historic text *Wen Xuan*, which took over 14 years (Knechtges 1995, pp. 41-42). One problem was the variety of styles encountered considering the long historic period that the work covered. The sources for understanding the background to these styles themselves are untranslated historic texts. This resulted in the need to establish translations for large number of new terms. However, much of the historical context of these works is also discussed in modern Chinese sources, which can be accessed via machine translation.

In Buddhist studies, many Western Buddhist scholars have learned Japanese to access the large body of modern Japanese academic literature on Buddhism. Translation of this body of literature from Japanese to English and other languages is also possible with machine translation. Starting in 1984, Japanese journal articles on Buddhism have been indexed in INBUDS and these are linked from SAT (Muller, Shimoda, and Nagasaki 2017, p. 176).

Some Fo Guang Shan translation team members have experimented with machine translation for modern text. While the results is not directly suitable for publication, it can be helpful as a first step.

5.5 Mobile Accessibility

For online resources to be accessible to a wider community they should be accessible on mobile devices. One issue that has arisen is the accessibility of web sites to mobile devices. For example, some websites display very small text on mobile devices or rely on behavior, such as mouseover, with no mobile equivalent. This led to an explosion of mobile applications. However, native mobile applications behave as islands and do not work well in open ecosystems. Responsive web applications are websites that can be accessed on both workstations and on mobile devices without substantial degradation of experience. In the last several years responsive web application frameworks, such as Material Web from Google, have been developed and released to open source. A best practice is to develop web applications rather than native mobile

28. https://material.io/develop/web/
device applications and leverage web component frameworks to enable use on mobile devices. In that way, the websites can function as building blocks for open ecosystems on mobile devices as well as workstations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author is employed by Google in Mountain View, United States and volunteers at Fo Guang Shan. None of the views in this paper represents either organization. The author wishes to thank Fo Guang Shan for encouragement and including him in the translation team. All of the costs for the projects mentioned as created by the author were provided from the author’s own financial resources.

ABBREVIATIONS

API: application programming interfaces
CBETA: Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association 中華電子佛典協會
CI/CD: Continuous integration / continuous delivery
DDB: Digital Dictionary of Buddhism
ECMA: European Computer Manufacturers Association
ES: ECMAScript
HB: Humanistic Buddhism
NPM: Node Package Manager
NTI: Nan Tien Temple
OCR: Optical character recognition
SAT: Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō Text Database
TEI: Text Encoding Initiative

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References


BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Alex Amies has started working as a strategic customer engineer, specialized in Google Cloud since 2013. His specialties are cloud computing, software development, application performance management, data analysis, security, identity management, natural language processing, machine learning and Linux. From 2008 to now, he has volunteered as a Chinese-English translator in translating tools and web designing and worked in translation teams for Encyclopedia of Buddhist Arts, 365 Days for Travelers, and FGS Buddhist Dictionary. His web site design works are hbreader.org and paradeofthebuddhas.org.

Phe Bach received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology from the University of Nebraska, Lincoln; Master Degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies University of California, and Doctoral Degree in Educational Leadership and Management from Drexel University. He is a Chemistry teacher and has been a mindfulness practitioner and educator, teaching Mindful Leadership and Mindfulness to educators in California since 2014. Dr. Bach has facilitated a variety of workshop topics across the academic curriculum, including educational pedagogy, management, educational leadership and mental well-being. Dr. Bach has given his lectures on Mindfulness Meditation and educational pedagogy around the world.

Geoffrey Bamford works on Buddhism in relation to history and business. After taking Buddhist Studies in the 1960s, Geoffrey had run his business from 1975 to 2000 as a private consultancy, training practice by focusing on cross-cultural communication, under the name “Good Business Approaches”. In 2001, Geoffrey joined the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies (OCBS), had served as Executive Director from 2003 to 2011. Geoffrey established the Oxford Mindfulness Centre in 2008 and had served as both Board Chair and Executive Director until 2011. Geoffrey’s goal is to
enhance the Society for the Wider Understanding of the Buddhist Tradition (So-Wide).

Peter van den Berg born in 1950 in the Netherlands, graduated in psychology in 1978 and used to be a Catholic priest lost his faith in God. He then learned various meditation techniques, such as Zen meditation and transcendental meditation and he studied Buddhist texts. He worked on various research projects and in 1990 as an assistant professor of occupational and organizational psychology at Tilburg University. In 1994 he came to Nichiren Buddhism and in 1996 he was initiated as a member of the Soka Gakkai International and became district leader in 1999. He traveled to Japan to explore the origins and background of the Soka Gakkai. After his retirement in 2014, he founded a meditation group of 10 pupils meeting every month. Peter gives them his knowledge and practice meditation. His presentations are now collected in a book that will be published by Amazon.

Prof. S.R. Bhatt is an eminent philosopher and Sanskritist. He was General President of Indian Philosophical Congress, Akhil Bharatiya Darshan Parishad and held important positions at the University of Delhi, Delhi before his retirement. He is internationally known as an authority on Ancient Indian Culture, Buddhism. His research areas include Indian Philosophy, Logic, Epistemology, Ethics, Value-theory, Philosophy of Education, Philosophy of Religion, Comparative Religion, etc. He had lectured in many universities and research institutes. He has published and edited 21 books and more than 200 papers in particular to Value Theory and Business Ethics; Buddhist Thought and Culture in India and Korea; Buddhist Thought and Culture in India and Japan; Glimpses of Buddhist Thought and Culture. He is an editor of an International Journal of Holistic Vision and the Editorial Board of many international journals.

Prof. David Blundell admitted to the degree of doctorate in anthropology, University of California and Associate Professor in Social Sciences for Taiwan Studies, and Languages and Cultures, at National Chengchi University, Taiwan. He is simultaneously a Visiting Scholar in the UCLA Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Mapping Languages, Cultures of the Asia Pacific, and
Editor at the Electronic Cultural Atlas. Professor Blundell is currently Director of the Asia-Pacific Spatio-Temporal Institute, Research and Innovation-Incubation Center, National Chengchi University, Taipei. He conducts research with the Electronic Cultural Atlas Initiative, University of California. David Blundell received the United Nations Day of Vesak 2014 Award for Best Documentary. His publications concern the anthropology of belief systems, anthropology of religions, visual anthropology, aesthetic anthropology, geographic information systems, languages and cultures, and cultural Southern Asia.

Dr. Devin Combs Bowles is the Executive Director of the Council of Academic Public Health Institutions Australia, the region’s representative organization for universities and other institutions of public health. He is also a lecturer in the Australian National University, where he completed his Ph.D. and the President of the Benevolent Organization for Development, Health and Insight Australia. His research includes the role of Buddhism in environmental protection, religious conversion, indigenous health, the socially-mediated health effects of climate change, conflict prevention, and prosopagnosia (face-blindness). Devin has spent nearly a decade working for the Australian government and had lots of experience in the non-profit sector.

Meena Charanda is a Professor, Head of the Department of Political Science and a lecturer, Researcher on Girl Students’ Equality & Empowerment of the University of Delhi. She has become a lecturer since 2006. She organizes Youth Parliament in the college every year in coordination with the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, Government of India. Professor Meena organized North India train tour for the students, visited different universities and trained them in the inter-disciplinary subjects. She had served an Academic Council member at the University of Delhi for four years (2007-2011). She has also published 03 books and several articles.

James Bruce Cresswell born in 1959 in the UK, trained as an actor has pursued a career as an actor in theatre film and television. He is the Director of the film production and works in intra-Buddhist activities in the UK, Europe and internationally and
also in Interfaith dialogue and inter-Religious action. Jamie has practiced Buddhism for 35 years. He carried out some courses in Buddhism. In 1995 Jamie set up the Institute of Oriental Studies, European Centre and Library a research center, covering all schools and traditions of Buddhism, history, art and culture. In 2012 he established the Centre for Applied Buddhism. His interested topics are Buddhism and creativity, conflict transformation, dialogue techniques, Buddhist action and the SDGs, Global Citizenship and value-based education.

Prof. Peter Daniels is an ecological economist at the School of Environment and Science, Griffith University, Australia. His research covers many fields centered on the central theme of integrated social and environmental sustainability, particularly the relationship between sustainable societies and the economic and ethical dimensions of the Buddhist world view. Dr. Daniels has an extensive interdisciplinary background with degrees in environmental science, economics, sociology and human geography. He has published widely in the fields of ecological, environmental, welfare, and social economics and has contributed to many international conferences and agencies such as the European Environmental Agency and the United Nations. Peter is an editor of the International Journal of Social Economics and a reviewer for many other journals.

Prof. José A. Rodríguez Díaz, Ph.D. in Sociology at Yale University (USA) is a Full Professor and has been Director of the Doctoral Program in Sociology and Chairman of the Department of Sociology, at the University of Barcelona. He has been Visiting Professor at the Center for European Studies of Harvard University, at Yale University and the University of California Santa Barbara. His present research and publications focus on the role of Social Networks in organizations and societies, Future studies, and the social dimensions of Happiness. These lines of research converge in the study of the processes of transformation and articulation of Buddhism in modern society.

Benjamin Joseph Goldstein received the Master of Arts degree at International Buddhist College and Master of Arts degree in Religious Studies with languages focusing on Indo-Tibetan
Buddhism at Naropa University in Boulder, Colorado. With a solid foundational ability in Pāli, Sanskrit, and Tibetan, Benjamin is very interested in Buddhist history, philosophy, and Buddhist religious practice in society. Benjamin is planning to get a Ph.D. soon for teaching and generating benefits to humankind.

**Samatha Ilangakoon** is a professor and the Dean of the Faculty of Buddhist Studies at the Buddhist and Pali University of Sri Lanka, Homagama, Colombo. He conducts lectures for both undergraduates and post-graduate students. He obtained his first degree from the University of Peradeniya in Sri Lanka by following Philosophy in specialized. He has authored more than 25 books and participated in many international conferences. He has compiled about thirty research articles and monographs on various subjects related to Philosophy, Psychology, Religious Studies and Buddhist Studies.

**Prof. Gábor Karsai** is a professor of philosophy and religious studies, being Rector and Lecturer at the Dharma Gate Buddhist College in Budapest. As a well-known CEO of the philanthropic project (KOGART), he manages international initiatives, including the Spirit of Humanity Forum, a Board Member of the Elijah Interfaith Institute, Israel. He is a member of Mind & Life Europe Association, Switzerland, and Chairman member of the Higher Education Committee at Dharma Gate Buddhist Church, Hungary.

**Most Ven. Luangpor Khemadhammo** born 1944 in England but went to Grammar school and worked as a professional actor from 1964 to 1971 used to be a member of the National Theatre Company from 1966 till 1969. In 1971, he began traveling overland to the Buddhist Holy Places in India and he ordained to be a samanera by Ven. Chao Khun Dhep Siddhimuni in December 1971 at Wat Mahadhatu in Bangkok, and Bhikkhu in May 1972 in Warimchamrab. He came back to England and the Hampstead Vihara with Ajahn Chah in 1977. He has been the Abbot of The Forest Hermitage since 1985, Spiritual Director of Angulimala, the Buddhist Prison Chaplaincy since its founding in 1985. He is also a Buddhist Adviser to HM Prison Service & NOMS.

**Prof. Dr. Gábor Kovács** is an assistant professor at the Business Ethics Center of the Corvinus University of Budapest. He
successfully presented his Ph.D. thesis ‘The Value-orientations of Christian and Buddhist Entrepreneurs’ in 2017 after he completed his Master’s degree at Budapest Buddhist University in 2010. He has participated in the research projects of the Business Ethics Center about the ethical value-orientations and the ecological value-orientations of Hungarian entrepreneurs. He is researching Buddhist economics and the role of spirituality in business. He is the secretary of the Hungarian Bhutan Friendship Society since its foundation in 2011. He is a member of the Pali Translation Group that aims at the translation of Buddhist Scriptures from the Pali Canon to the Hungarian language since 2008.

**Most Ven. Prof. Le Manh That** obtained his Ph.D. degree in 1973 in Wisconsin, USA. His fields of teaching include Sanskrit, History of Indian philosophy, History of Vietnamese Buddhism. He is specialized on Indic languages and Philosophy, and Vietnamese Buddhism History. From 1998 until now he has been working as a Vice Rector of Vietnam Buddhist University responsible for Directing research on Vietnamese of Buddhism and Indian Buddhism.

**Prof. Pahalawattage Don Premasiri** is Emeritus Professor of Pali and Buddhist Studies, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka. He obtained Bachelor of Arts degree in 1967, Master of Arts from the University of Cambridge in 1971, Ph.D. from the University of Hawaii at Manoa in 1980 for Comparative Philosophy. Prof. Premasiri had served the Department of Philosophy of the University of Peradeniya for 20 years and the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies for 23 years before his retirement in 2006. He is still a visiting lecturer for courses on Theravada Buddhism and Buddhist Ethics in the Intercollegiate Sri Lanka Educational and India. Prof. Premasiri's main research interests are in the areas of Buddhist Philosophy, Buddhist Ethics and Buddhist Psychology. Prof. Premasiri has published nearly twenty-five articles in the Encyclopedia of Buddhism, Buddhist Ethics, Buddhist Philosophy, and Buddhist Psychology.

**Prof. G.T. Maurits Kwee** was awarded the Doctorate degree in Medicine from Erasmus University Rotterdam and Honorary Professor at University of Flores, Buenos Aires, the president of the
Transcultural Society for Clinical Meditation (Japan) and Board Member of the Society for Constructivism in the Human Sciences (USA). Professor Kwee has given lectures worldwide, promulgating cutting-edge Buddhism as Psychology and Psychotherapy beyond the traditional denominations and disseminating psychological Buddhism as a groundbreaking method for mental hygiene and stress-inoculation. He empowers audiences by sanity promoting processes with coaches, teachers, clinicians, trainers, managers, clients, students and the public at large. His publications cover topics like Psychology in Buddhism and Buddhist Psychology of Happiness, Horizons in Buddhist New Horizons in Buddhist Psychology: Relational Buddhism for Collaborative Practitioners; Relational Buddhism and Rational Practice and Buddha as Therapist: Meditations.

Dr. Kyoung-Hee Lee is a Director at Dharma Clinic for Psychosomatic Therapy. She received Ph.D. in Sociology of Education, Ewha Woman University, Korea in 2003 and Ph.D. in Buddhism, PGIPBS University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka in 2016. She has many years of professional experiences at Ewha Woman University, Korean Educational Development Institute and International Safety New for All Foundation.

Ven. Dr. Jinwol Dowon (Jinwol Y. Lee), a Korean Buddhist monk and the Seon (Chan/Zen) Master, was Chair Professor of Buddhist Studies at Dongguk University, Korea. He practiced meditation in the mountains for six years and took Ph. D. in Buddhist Studies at UC Berkeley. He established the United Religions Initiative of Korea and worked as a Global Council member of URI (2000-2010). He was appointed as a member of the Presidential Committee on Sustainable Development in the Korean government (2004-2006). He worked as a Vice-President of WFB (2012-2016) and EXCO member of ICDV (2013-2018). He is now Abbot of Gosung Monastery in California.

Prof. Amarjiva Lochan grew up in the ancient city of Gaya. He has a Ph.D. in Southeast Asian History and Culture and teaches History at the University of Delhi. Prof Amarjiva is the President of SSEASR (South and Southeast Asian Association for the Study of Culture and Religion). He is also a Visiting Professor, School
of Asian Studies, University College Cork (UCC), Ireland; a Consultative Committee Board Member of International Association of Sanskrit studies, Paris. He has not only worked in all Southeast Asian countries but also delivered lectures, keynote addresses and plenary speech at over 60 universities and institutions in around 45 countries.

**Arpita Mitra** is pursuing Ph.D. on “Women in Buddhism from Socio-Religious Perspective” from the Department of Pali, University of Calcutta. She is an aspiring Research Scholar (Ph.D.) and her aims to be a devoted Buddhist Studies Research Scholar. She wishes to attend the international conference at the 16th United Nations Day of Vesak (UNDV) Celebrations as a Research Scholar and she focuses on “Gender Equality and Sustainable Society: A Buddhist View for Modern World”. She wishes to gather vast knowledge of Buddhist Studies from the eminent scholars who will attend and present their papers in this conference.

**Venerable Amrita Nanda** was born in the year 1986 in Bangladesh then went to Sri Lanka in 1999 and had received both Buddhist monastic and academic training for over ten years. Awarded Ph.D. in Buddhist Studies in 2017 he is a lecturer at the Centre of Buddhist Studies the University of Hong Kong. His research interest area includes early Buddhism, Pāli commentarial studies with particular interests in Buddhist Sociology and Buddhist Soteriology. He teaches courses like BSTC 2008 Sanskrit I, BSTC 2020 Sanskrit Language II for students to understand Sanskrit Buddhist Texts, Chinese, Theravada, Tibetan and Western Buddhist Liturgy and Rituals for Master of Buddhist Counselling students.

**Ven. Nguyen Ngoc Tien** is a Vietnamese monk whose lineage belongs to Hoang Phap Monastery, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. He received his BA in Buddhist Studies from International Buddhist College, Thailand. He earned his MA in Contemplative Religions from Naropa University, Colorado, USA. He is a first-year M.Div. student (Master of Divinity) at Harvard Divinity School, Harvard University, Massachusetts, USA.

**Dr. Nguyen Thi Que Anh** was born in Lai Chau, Vietnam.
She graduated with a Master degree in Education, majoring in “Methods for Teaching Literature”. Her Ph.D. thesis is in “Theories and Methods for Teaching Literature – Vietnamese”. Currently, she teaches at the University of Culture and National Institute of Politics in Ho Chi Minh.

Manish Prasad Rajak is currently working on the Ph.D. thesis entitled “A Study on Ancient Indian Buddhist Thoughts on Management”. He worked for Kolkata- American Consulate, before venturing into research work under the guidance of Prof. Apurbananda Mazumdar, an India renowned scholar. Despite of a Hindu family background, his knowledge of different India cultural perspective makes him strongly believe in all religions especially in Buddhism. His life motto is based on the philosophy of ‘Bahujan Hitaya, Bahujan Sukhaya’ (For the welfare of many, for the happiness of many).

Prof. Dr. Karam Tej Singh Sarao received the degrees of BA (Hons) in History with Economics, MA (History), M.Phil. (Chinese and Japanese Studies) and Ph.D. (Buddhism) from Delhi University. He was awarded the prestigious Commonwealth Scholarship in 1985 to study at the University of Cambridge from where he received his second Ph.D. in Archaeology in 1989. He began his teaching career in 1981 at Delhi University’s KM College. In 1993, he joined the Department of Buddhist Studies, Delhi University as a reader wherein 1995 he was selected to occupy a professional chair. Professor Sarao is a visiting fellow/professor at many famous universities. He has written sixteen books and published more than 250 research papers and articles.

Rev. John M Scorsine was ordained as a Buddhist Minister in 2009 through the International Order of Buddhist Ministers and the Los Angeles Buddhist Union. He holds a Juris Doctorate from the University of Wyoming; Master of Arts degree from the University of Sunderland. He is the owner of Kanthaka Group, a law firm and consulting business; founder of the Kanthaka Dharma Center and Animal Rescue. A retired member of the United States Army Reserves, after 22 years, he was recognized as a legal expert in the law of defense support to civilian authorities, emergency management, and domestic intelligence law. John has intimately
involved in disaster responses, locally, regionally and nationally. He frequently lectures on these fields by emphasizing an approach rooted in Buddhist thought and practice.

Leena Seneheweera is a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Fine Arts, Faculty of Arts, teaching Sri Lankan, Chinese and Indian Music, Music Therapy, Art and Aesthetics, Art in Early Human Societies, Art and Disability, performing art, Research, Inclusive Education Methodology for Fine Arts, Buddhist Music, Buddhist philosophy and Buddhist Art. Leena’s research interests include Buddhist Art, Music therapy for Disabilities, Music Psychology, and Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities.

Prof. Padmasiri De Silva works at Faculty of Philosophical, Historical & International Studies, Monash University, Australia. Padmasiri De Silva is a Professor and used to be the Head Dept. of Philosophy & Psychology University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka in 1980s. Padmasiri De Silva is a Coordinator of “Environmental Education Program” in Singapore. Padmasiri De Silva was nominated for the Best East-West Centre Student, the Greenleaf Award, and Asia Foundation Award for Research & Fulbright Award for Teaching and granted by UNESCO for Environmental Ethics. Padmasiri De Silva has had many Publications in relation to Philosophy & Ethics in Buddhism, and Explorers of Inner Space.

Asst. Prof. Dr. Pataraporn Sirikanchana is a long-time professor of Philosophy and Religious Studies at Thammasat University, Bangkok, Thailand. Having received the Harvard-Yenching scholarship and graduated with a Ph.D. Degree in Religious Studies from the University of Pennsylvania, U.S.A., she has written many articles and books in both Thai and English, including an academic contribution to Religions of the World: A Comprehensive Encyclopedia of Beliefs and Practices, published in the U.S.A. She is also a prize-winner of the Chamnong Tongprasert Foundation award for the Best Contribution of Work in Philosophy in B.E. 2552/2009. At present, in addition to being a professor at Thammasat University, she is an Associate Fellow of the Royal Institute of Thailand, Vice-Rector of the World Buddhist University and is a member of many academic committees at Thammasat University and other educational institutions.
Dr. Rajni Srivastava is presently working as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Philosophy, University of Lucknow, Lucknow, India. She has done Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Lucknow and has specialized in social and political philosophy, gender studies and Buddhist studies, her interest in Indian and Western philosophy refers to social and political issues and presented papers in many national as well as in international conferences and seminars.

Robert Szuksztul was awarded a Ph.D. in 2010. Main research interests are early Buddhism including abhidharmic thought and the Pure Land tradition.


Most Ven. Thich Vien Tri born in 1961 in Hue City, Vietnam became a Buddhist Novice at Linh Sơn Pagoda, Dalat city, Lam Đồng Province, Vietnam in 1969. He received B.A Degree in Vietnam Buddhist University in 1992 and Ph.D. Degree at Delhi University, India in 2001. He is a member of The Executive Council of Vietnam Buddhist Sangha (VBS), Deputy Director of National Committee of Buddhist Education Department and Deputy Rector of Vietnam Buddhist University. He is also a Lecturer at Vietnam Buddhist Universities. He has published many books such as “The Concept of Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva”, “Khái Niệm Về Bồ Tát Quán Thế Âm”, “Đại Cương Văn Điển Phật Giáo”, “Phật Giáo Qua Lăng Kính Xã Hội”.

Dr. Vu Khoan is a well-known politician and diplomat in Vietnam. He was the Secretary of Central Communist Party of Vietnam and had served as Vice Prime Minister in Vietnam from August 2002 until 2006. He has made significant contributions to the negotiation of the Vietnam – US trade agreement and the process of Vietnam joining WTO. For his accomplishments, he has received several honored awards from the State of Vietnam and Governments of other countries including Russia, Laos, and Japan.

Jeff Wilson is a research consultant in the academic field of
Buddhist Studies. He began studying languages at the University of Sydney in 1985 and continued his studying Cultural and Religious Studies at Southern Cross University until he graduated with a Ph.D. in 2004 for his thesis The Relevance of Buddhism to Child-Development Theory. He has worked as an editor for the Diri Journal and various editions of the Sermons of Phramongkolthepmuni. He has published articles in the SCU Law Journal and online publications and chapters in books such as Great Spiritual Leaders (Barton Books, 2013). His latest study of Narrative Form in the Writing of Meditation Manuals is in the publication process. It involves the meditation techniques of traditional Thai Buddhism before the mid-nineteenth century.

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ABOUT THE EDITORS

**Most Ven. Dr. Thich Duc Thien** obtained his Ph.D. in Buddhist Studies from Delhi University in 2005, currently is Vice President-Secretary General of Executive Council of National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha (VBS); Vice Chairman of Vietnam – India Friendship Association; Head of the Department of International Buddhist Affairs of VBS; Vice Rector of Vietnam Buddhist University in Hanoi; and Senior Lecturer of Vietnam National University, Hanoi (Tran Nhan Tong Academic Institute).

He served as Secretary General of the 2014 United Nations Day of Vesak in Vietnam and continues to hold a major role in UNDV 2019. He has published, edited, and translated many books in Buddhist studies and history. He has received many prestigious recognitions from the Government of Vietnam (the Third-Class Labor Order), from the Royalty of Cambodia (the General Order), and from the Government of India (the Padma Shri Order).

**Most Ven. Dr. Thich Nhat Tu** obtained his D.Phil., in Philosophy from Allahabad in 2002, is the Founder of Buddhism Today Foundation since 2000. He made valuable contribution as an editorial member of Hue Quang Encyclopedia of Buddhism (9 volumes, 1992-2007). He is editor-in-chief of the first ever audio Vietnamese Tripitaka, of the ongoing Vietnamese Tripitaka Translation project and Buddhism Today Series (over 250 books), as well as editor of more than two 200 CD albums on Buddhist music. He has authored more than 80 Vietnamese books on applied Buddhism. He has traveled extensively around the world to give public Dharma talks to Vietnamese communities in Vietnam, Canada, America, Australia, and Europe and has produced over 4,000 VCDs on various dharma topics.

Master Thich Nhat Tu now serves as Vice Rector of the Vietnam
Buddhist University and Vice Chairman of the National Department of International Buddhist Affairs. Several universities conferred upon him the title of Doctor Honoris Causa in appreciation of his excellent contributions to Buddhist education, his works on Buddhist academic research and leadership in international Buddhist communities. He has received many recognitions, awards, and titles from the Government of Vietnam, Myanmar, Thailand, and Cambodia.

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VIETNAM BUDDHIST UNIVERSITY SERIES
Advisor: Most Ven.Prof. Thich Tri Quang
Editor: Ven.Dr. Thich Nhat Tu
ISBN: 978-604-61-6256-8

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750 Nguyen Kiem, Phu Nhuan, TP.HCM, Vietnam
Tel (Only in Vietnamese): +84-8-3847-8779 • Fax: +84-8-3847-8779
Email: thichnhattu@gmail.com • Website: www.vbu.edu.vn

BUDDHISM TODAY PUBLICATIONS
(A non-profit charitable organization and a part of Buddhism Today Foundation)
92 Nguyen Chi Thanh, P3, Q10, TP.HCM, Vietnam
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RELIGION PUBLISHER
53 Trang Thi, Hoan Kiem Dist., Hanoi

Publishing Liability: DR. BUI THANH HA
Editors: Le Hong Son, Nguyen Thi Ha, Vu Van Hieu
Designer: Ngoc Anh
Cover design: Nguyen Thanh Ha
Publication Coordinator: Giac Thanh Nha

Printed for Free Distribution by
Buddhism Today Foundation
Giac Ngo Temple, 92 Nguyen Chi Thanh, P3, Q10, HCM City, Vietnam