The Legal Consequences of Pārājika

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Introduction

In this article I explore the legal consequences a fully ordained monk (and by implication a fully ordained nun) incurs on violating a pārājika rule. I begin with the relevant indications given in the code of rules (prātimokṣa/pātimokkha) itself, before turning to the story of a monk who had apparently violated such a rule and still tried to participate in the uposatha observance, the fortnightly recital of the code of rules.

Next I take up the difference between being no longer considered part of the community of fully ordained monks and the residential right to live in a particular monastery, since I believe that keeping in mind this distinction can avoid possible confusions about the significance of being “in communion”, saṃvāsa. Based on this distinction, I then examine which of these two meanings corresponds to the legal consequences of a breach of a pārājika regulation and evaluate the śikṣādattaka observance mentioned in a range of Vinayas, together with the conclusions that can be drawn from its absence in the Theravāda Vinaya.

Reciting the Code of Rules

In what follows I take as my example the case of a fully ordained monk who voluntarily engages in sexual intercourse without having beforehand given up his ordained status. According to a stipulation that forms part of the formulation of the first pārājika in the code of rules of the different Buddhist monastic traditions, acting in this way turns a monk into one who is “not in communion”, asaṃvāsa.

The idea of a monk who is not in communion can be illustrated with an episode that depicts an immoral monk seated in a gathering of monks assembled for the recital of the code of rules. Below I translate one of two similar Madhyama-āgama accounts of this episode.

Versions of this event can be found in several discourses from different transmission lineages, among them also two discourses in the Aṅguttara-nikāya and the Udāna respectively, and as well in various Vinayas, including the Theravāda Vinaya. This situation exemplifies a general overlap between discourse and Vinaya texts in the Theravāda tradition and elsewhere, which makes it advisable not to consider Vinaya literature on its own as the only source for supposed in-house information on what took place on the ground in the Indian Buddhist monastic traditions. Instead, both types of text are best read in conjunction.

In the present case, the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya in fact does not report the episode and instead refers to the Poṣadha-sūtra of the (Mūlasarvāstivāda) Madhyama-āgama for the full story.

Again, whereas Buddhaghosa’s Manorathapūraṇī and Dhammapāla’s Paramatthadīpani offer detailed information on this episode, this is not the case for the Vinaya commentary Samantapāśādikā. This implies that the reciters both of the Mūlasar-
vāstivāda Vinaya and of the Pāli commentaries expected their audience or readership to use Vinaya material alongside discourse material, rather than in isolation.

Translation (1)

At that time, it being the fifteenth of the month and the time to recite the code of rules, the Blessed One sat in front of the community of monks on a prepared seat. Having sat down, the Blessed One in turn entered concentration and with the knowledge of the mind of others he surveyed the minds in the community. Having surveyed the minds in the community, he sat silently until the end of the first watch of the night.

Then one monk got up from his seat, arranged his robes over one shoulder and said, with his hands held together towards the Buddha:
“Blessed One, the first watch of the night has already come to an end. The Buddha and the community of monks have been sitting together for a long time. May the Blessed One recite the code of rules.”

Then the Blessed One remained silent and did not reply. Thereupon the Blessed One kept sitting silently further through the middle watch of the night.

Then that one monk got up again from his seat, arranged his robes over one shoulder and said, with his hands held together towards the Buddha:
“Blessed One, the first watch of the night has passed and the middle watch of the night is about to end. The Buddha and the community of monks have been sitting together for a long time. May the Blessed One recite the code of rules.”

The Blessed One again remained silent and did not reply. Thereupon the Blessed One kept sitting silently further through the last watch of the night.

Then that one monk got up from his seat for a third time, arranged his robes over one shoulder and said, with his hands held together towards the Buddha: “Blessed One, the first watch of the night has passed, the middle watch of the night has also come to an end, and the last watch of the night is about to end. It is near dawn and soon the dawn will arise. The Buddha and the community of monks have been sitting together for a very long time. May the Blessed One recite the code of rules.”

Then the Blessed One said to that monk: “One monk in this community has become impure.”

At that time the venerable Mahāmoggallāna was also among the community. Thereupon the venerable Mahāmoggallāna thought in
turn: ‘Of which monk does the Blessed One say that one monk in this community has become impure? Let me enter an appropriate type of concentration so that, by way of that appropriate type of concentration, by knowing the minds of others, I will survey the minds in the community.’

The venerable Mahāmoggallāna entered an appropriate type of concentration so that, by way of that appropriate type of concentration, by knowing the minds of others, he surveyed the minds in the community. The venerable Mahāmoggallāna in turn knew of which monk the Blessed One had said that one monk in this community had become impure.

Thereupon the venerable Mahāmoggallāna rose from concentration and went in front of that monk, took him by the arm and led him out, opening the door and placing him outside [with the words]: “Foolish man, go far away, do not stay in here. You are no longer in communion with the community of monks, since you have now already left it, no [longer] being a monk.” He closed the door and locked it.

Study (1)

After Mahāmoggallāna has taken the culprit out, the Buddha explains that he will no longer recite the code of rules for the monks and, in the version translated above, describes how someone might falsely pretend to be a true monk until his companions recognize him for who he truly is. In most of the versions that I will be considering below, the Buddha instead delivers a comparison of qualities of the monastic community with those of the ocean.

Except for the Madhyama-āgama tradition, an individually translated discourse, and the Sarvāstivāda Vinaya, other accounts of this episode do not mention that the Buddha had surveyed the minds of the monks in the community, information that is found, however, in the Pāli commentaries. This concords with a general pattern of a commentarial type of information making its way into some canonical texts during the course of transmission until these texts reach a point of closure.

The two Pāli discourse versions that report this episode, together with several parallels preserved as individual translations, a discourse quotation in the Abhidharma-kośopāyikā-ṭīkā, as well as the Mahīśāsaka, Mahāsāṅghika, Dharmaguptaka, and Theravāda Vinayas, identify the monk who requested the Buddha three times to recite the code of rules as having been Ānanda.

According to the Aṅguttara-nikāya version (together with the Udāna discourse and the Theravāda Vinaya), an Ekottarika-āgama parallel, and a version preserved as an individual translation, Mahāmoggallāna had first told the monk to leave, and only when the culprit did not take any action did Mahāmoggallāna put him outside forcefully.

In a version preserved as an individual translation the Buddha himself encourages
Mahāmoggallāna to survey the assembly in order to identify the culprit,¹³ and in another individually preserved discourse the Buddha even asks Mahāmoggallāna to take the immoral monk out.¹⁴

Alongside such variations, however, the parallel versions agree on the basic denouement of events. In spite of repeated requests, the Buddha does not recite the code of rules because an immoral monk is present in the community. Mahāmoggallāna spots the culprit and puts him outside of the building in which the uposatha ceremony was to be held. The fact that in all versions the immoral monk is removed from the location where the code of rules is to be recited makes it clear that he must have committed a breach of a pārājika rule. In fact the Pāli versions, for example, qualify him as one who pretended to be celibate but did not practise celibacy.¹⁵

The account of this episode in the Aṅguttara-nikāya version has been taken by Juo-Hsüeh Shih (2000: 144 and 148) to convey the sense that the guilty monk “remained in the community”, a supposed inconsistency that then leads her to the assumption that perhaps

at the very outset of Buddhist monasticism, even the gravest offence may not have incurred expulsion from the Saṅgha in the sense of permanent excommunication involving loss of monastic status.

The passage from the Aṅguttara-nikāya version on which she bases this conclusion describes that the ocean washes any corpse ashore, comparable to how the monastic community does not associate with an immoral person.¹⁶ The relevant passage states that

even though he is seated in the midst of the community of monks, yet he is far from the community and the community is far from him.

The idea that this implies some sort of leniency for even the gravest offence appears to be based on a misunderstanding of this passage. It simply reflects the situation that prevailed throughout the night before Mahāmoggallāna took action. In fact the previous part of the discourse employs the same expression “seated in the midst of the community of monks” to refer to the immoral monk spotted by Mahāmoggallāna.¹⁷

Even though this immoral monk was seated among the community of monks, due to his moral failure he was already not in communion and for this reason was far from the monastic community already at that time.

Instead of implying some sort of leniency, the passage rather helps to clarify that not being in communion does not depend on an action taken by others to expulse an immoral monk, but is something that happens as soon as the pārājika rule is broken. From that moment onwards, the monk is de facto no longer a fully ordained monk and de facto no longer in communion, even if he pretends otherwise and goes so far as to seat himself among a congregation of monks at the time of the recital of the code of rules.¹⁸

This is in fact self-evident from the formulation in the different versions of the
pārājika rule quoted at the outset of this article. The condition of asamvāsa is incurred right at the time of the moral breach. The principle behind this is that communion obtains only for the morally pure with others who are also pure.19

An additional argument by Shih (2000: 141) involves another discourse in the Aṅguttara-nikāya, which according to her assessment implies that “one can make good by atonement even for an offence of Defeat.”

The passage in question states that “one who has committed a pārājika offence will ‘paṭikaroti’ according to the Dharma.”20 The key for understanding this passage is the term paṭikaroti, which I have on purpose not translated in order to leave room for first ascertaining its meaning. Another occurrence of the term paṭikaroti, together with the same qualification of being done “according to the Dharma”, can be found in the Sāmaññaphala-sutta, after King Ajātasattu had just confessed that he had killed his father. The Buddha replies that in this way the king has performed an action described as paṭikaroti “according to the Dharma”.21

Although this verb on its own can at times convey meanings like “make amendment for”, “redress”, or “atone”, since the king was not a monastic (in fact previous to this visit not even a lay follower of the Buddha), in the present context the whole phrase cannot stand for making amendments for a breach of a monastic rule. Nor does it seem to imply a successful atoning for the evil done, since as soon as the king has left the Buddha tells the assembled monks that, due to being a patricide, Ajātasattu had become unable to realize even the first of the four levels of awakening.22 Instead, in the Sāmaññaphala-sutta the phrase paṭikaroti “according to the Dharma” has the simple sense of a confession.23

The same sense is also appropriate for the Aṅguttara-nikāya passage, which on this understanding describes that “one who has committed a pārājika offence will confess it according to the Dharma.” This fits the context well, since the immediately preceding part speaks of not even committing a pārājika offence. Thus the remainder of the passage conveys the sense that, if such persons should nevertheless commit a pārājika, at least they will confess the moral breach according to the Dharma.

Besides, the same Aṅguttara-nikāya discourse uses the identical expression also in relation to one who has committed a pācittiya or else a pāṭidesanīya offence. Since committing a simple pācittiya offence only requires confession, as is the case for a pāṭidesanīya offence, the phrase paṭikaroti “according to the Dharma” here must mean precisely that, namely that the breach is being confessed.

Such confession then marks the difference compared to the monk in the Madhyama-āgama passage translated above, who did not confess and instead pretended to be still in communion by joining the community for the recital of the code of rules. In such a case an “expulsion” is required, as quite vividly exemplified by the course of action undertaken by Mahāmoggallāna. The same is not the case for one who confesses “according to the Dharma” a breach of a pārājika rule. In other words, such a breach invariably entails loss of communion, but does not necessarily require expulsion.24 As explained by Hüsken (1997: 93),
if an offender is aware of his pārājika offence and leaves the order on his own initiative, the Vinaya describes no concrete act of expulsion.

The commentary on the Aṅguttara-nikāya discourse explains that a monk who confesses according to the Dharma in this way will be able to continue the monastic life by establishing himself in the condition of being a novice. The commentary does not mention other alternatives, giving the impression that this was considered the appropriate course of action in such a situation.

In sum, the suggestions by Shih are not convincing. Contrary to her presentation, a monk who has committed a breach of a pārājika rule is indeed “not in communion”, as indicated explicitly in the various codes of rules, and such loss of communion has been incurred at the very moment of the breach of morality. Even if such a monk should be seated among the community, as in the passage translated above, in actual fact he is far away from it in the sense of no longer being in communion with them. The question of expulsion is relevant to such a case, not to one who honestly confesses and in this way acts “according to the Dharma”.

The idea that a breach of a pārājika rule somehow should have only limited consequences has also inspired Kovan (2013: 794), who proposes that “the pārājika rules (initiated in and) structured around a communal body are attenuated in solitude.” Kovan (2013: 794 note 27) bases this suggestion on contrasting individual suicides of monks like Channa to a mass suicide of monks disgusted with their own bodies.

In the case of the mass suicide, according to his assessment in that communal monastic context the Buddha’s condemnation of suicide is unequivocal and suggests nothing of the ‘particularism’ of the responses he appears to bring to the solitary monks in the other cases.

Now the pārājika rule common to the different Vinayas concerns killing someone else as well as inciting someone else to commit suicide or actively assisting in it, and this sets the context for the story of the mass suicide of monks and their receiving assistance in killing themselves. In contrast, Channa as an example of “the solitary monks in the other cases” only killed himself. Thus cases like Channa cannot reflect a restricted scope of pārājika rules, simply because what he did was not a breach of a pārājika offence in the first place. Kovan’s idea turns out to be as groundless as the suggestions by Shih.

**The Community of the Four Directions**

The idea that somehow the pārājika rules must have a more limited scope than usually believed leads me on to a suggestion made by Clarke (2009b), according to which committing a pārājika offence might only result in a loss of communion with a specific local community.

His main case study is a tale from the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya about a matricide whose status as a fully ordained monk is revoked by the Buddha when this becomes known. The matricide decides not to return to lay life, but goes instead to a remote place, where a lay supporter builds a dwelling for him that is subsequently also used.
by other monks. Clarke (2009b: 135) interprets this story as implying that the matricide monk was only no longer a member of the Buddha’s local monastic community. His membership in the Community of the Four Quarters, however, seems not to have been revoked. Accordingly, he was able to go down the road and join (or even start) another (local) monastic community, a place in which he would be ‘in communion’.

When evaluating such stories, it needs to be kept in mind, as pointed out by Silk (2007: 277) in his study of this tale, that caution would suggest that such stories be read and interpreted in terms other than as reports of actual incidents which historically led to the promulgation of particular rules of the Buddhist monastic codes.

This pertinent observation reflects a basic requirement when studying Vinaya narrative, namely a clear recognition of the type of information that such literature can and cannot yield. As I have argued elsewhere, Vinaya narrative is not comparable to a record of case-law precedents in modern judicial proceedings, but much rather serves teaching purposes in the context of legal education in a monastic setting. Keeping this function in mind helps appreciate why in Vinaya literature legal discussions and jātaka tales go hand in hand.

This in turn implies, however, that caution is indeed required before taking such tales as reliable records of what actually happened on the ground and then drawing far-reaching conclusions, based on them, regarding the significance of being in communion.

Moreover, it seems preferable not to base any conclusions on what is found in a single Vinaya only. As succinctly formulated in a different context by Kieffer-Pülz (2014: 62), “general statements on the basis of only one Vinaya should belong to the past” of the academic field of Buddhist Studies.

Besides the need for caution when drawing conclusions based on a single Vinaya narrative, even taking the tale of the matricide at face value does not give the impression that it was acceptable for a monk who had lost communion to settle this by just proceeding to another local community. The point rather seems to be that the matricide on his own and without any explicitly mentioned precedent or permission decided to go to a distant place, quite probably just because nobody there would know him as a matricide. That a lay supporter builds a vihāra for him has no implications regarding the matricide’s status as a fully ordained monk, nor does it imply that he is truly in communion with other fully ordained monks.

The same holds for the circumstance that other monks come to dwell in that vihāra. All this could equally well have happened if he simply pretended to be a regular monk in front of his supporter and the visiting monks, similar to the monk in the passage from the Madhyama-āgama translated above, who pretended to be still in...
If loss of communion had indeed applied only to a local community, one would expect stories reflecting this understanding to be reported in the different Vinayas. Take for example a monk obsessed with seducing women, who could continue having sex with any women he is able to approach as a monk by simply moving from one local community to the next, as soon as he is discovered. Records of such monks, together with the vexation their behaviour caused to well-behaved monks and the outraged reaction of the husbands in particular and the laity in general would surely have stood good chances of inspiring the narrative imagination of the reciters of the different Vinayas.

Moreover, given the peregrination of monks from one monastery to another, the idea of communion with a local community would not be particularly practicable. In concrete terms it would mean that the culprit would be barred from staying at the monastery in which he was dwelling when committing his breach of conduct. A ruling which envisages only loss of residential rights in the local monastery for one who has committed a pārājika offence would have failed to fulfil its purposes, which the Vinayas indicate to be restraining badly behaved monks and protecting well-behaved monks, inspiring non-Buddhists and increasing the faith of Buddhists.

In sum, the consequences that Clarke’s suggestion entails on a practical level make it safe to conclude that the idea that a pārājika offence only entails loss of communion with a local community is unconvincing.

Besides, the present tale is not even a case of having committed a pārājika offence, as noted by Clarke (2009b: 126) himself. The killing of the mother took place when the protagonist of the tale was still a lay person. Therefore he had not committed an infraction of any pārājika rule, which only applies to fully ordained monastics. The present case thereby seems similar in this respect to the suggestion by Kovan, which was also based on drawing conclusions about the scope of pārājika based on stories that do not involve a breach of a pārājika rule.

In the present case, as a matricide the monk was held unfit for higher ordination, presumably due to not standing a chance of realizing awakening (comparable to Ajātaśatru as a patricide). This leaves hardly any room for considering this story as hinting at loss of communion being only relevant to a local community.

Instead of the approach taken by Clarke, it seems to me that a proper appreciation of the significance of loss of communion for a monk who has committed a pārājika offence lies in the opposite direction, namely by setting aside as irrelevant to this topic the issue of being allowed to live in a particular monastery. This has no direct bearing on the question of being considered a full member of the community of the four directions, since these two are distinct matters. As explained by Nolot (1999: 59f note 9),

absolute a-samvāsa is incurred by monks and nuns who have committed a Pār[ājika] offence and are, as a consequence, deprived of
their very status: they are said not to belong to the (universal) Saṃgha anymore.

When Clarke (2009b: 132) reasons: “whether or not one can be expelled from the Community of the Four Quarters is not clear, at least to me”, then perhaps a simile from the modern living situation of an academic might help to clarify the situation. Suppose someone passes his PhD exam and starts teaching as an assistant professor, but then is found out to have plagiarized his thesis, whereupon he loses degree and position. Expressed in Vinaya terminology, he is not in communion with the community of PhD holders of the four directions. He no longer has the right to apply for a teaching or research position at a university anywhere in the world, claiming to hold a PhD degree, not only at the university where he originally received his degree.

Nevertheless, this does not mean he is forbidden to enter the university grounds. Even at his own university he could still use the library or listen to lectures; if the university has a hostel he might stay overnight or even live there for an extended period of time. But he will not be recognized as holding a PhD degree. Conversely, someone else can be barred from entering the university grounds for a variety of reasons that need not be related at all to undertaking PhD research or to the degree to be obtained on properly carrying out such research.

The rather distinct situation of residential rights in a local monastery can be further illustrated with an excerpt from another discourse in the Madhyama-āgama, which I translate below as a complement to the passage rendered in the first part of this article.33 Whereas the first discourse showcases loss of communion with the universal community of the four directions, the present passage rather concerns loss of residential rights in a local community.

Translation (2)

At that time the venerable Dhammika was an elder in his native region, being in charge of the stūpa and in a position of seniority towards others. He was fierce, impatient, and very coarse, cursing and condemning other monks. Because of this, all the monks of his native region left and went away; they did not enjoy staying there.

Thereupon the male lay disciples of his native region, seeing that all the monks of his native region left and went away, that they did not enjoy staying there, thought in turn: ‘What is the reason that all the monks of this native region leave and go away, that they do not enjoy staying here?’

The male lay disciples of his native region heard that the venerable Dhammika, who was an elder in this native region, being in charge of the stūpa and in a position of seniority towards others, was fierce, impatient, and very coarse, cursing and condemning other monks. Because of this the monks of his native region all left and went away; they did not enjoy staying there. Having heard it, the male lay
disciples of his native region together approached the venerable Dhammika and expelled him. They evicted Dhammika from all monasteries in his native region and made him depart.

Then the venerable Dhammika, having been expelled by the male lay disciples of his native region, having been evicted from all monasteries in his native region and made to depart, took his robes and bowl and went travelling.

**Study (2)**

A parallel to this discourse preserved in the Aṅguttara-nikāya differs in so far as Dhammika is first told by the lay disciples to go to another monastery still within his native district.\(^34\) Once he is there, he behaves as earlier, so that the same happens again and again, and this eventually results in him being expelled from all monasteries in his native region. Another difference is that the Aṅguttara-nikāya version does not refer to stūpas, a topic to which I will return at the end of this article.

Although Dhammika had been expelled from all monasteries of his native region, he remained a fully ordained monk. Expressed in Vinaya legal terminology, he remained “in communion”. In whatever monastery outside of his native region he went to stay next, he had the right to act as a fully ordained monk and would have been not only allowed, but even expected to participate in the recitation of the code of rules. Although what he had done led to his expulsion from the monasteries of his native region, his behaviour as such did not involve a breach of any pārājika rule.

Another noteworthy feature of this case is that those who expelled the monk Dhammika were laymen. In other words, not only are residential rights in a local monastery quite different from loss of communion, but decisions regarding such residential rights need not even be taken by monks, as according to the present episode the laity can do so as well.

In fact, dwelling in a monastery is not an exclusive privilege of fully ordained monks (or fully ordained nuns in the case of a nunnery). Monasteries can also serve as a residence for novices, for example, and at times lay people also live in a monastery. Due to the restrictions placed on fully ordained monastics by their rules, they require the assistance of the laity for certain tasks that they cannot perform themselves, which makes it convenient if such a lay helper also stays in the same monastery.\(^35\)

Thus a fully ordained monk who has lost his status of being in communion can still continue to live at the very same monastery in which he was staying when his breach of morality happened. His being no longer in communion only refers to his inability to function any longer as a fully fledged member of the monastic community in legal matters, such as participating in the recital of the code of rules, to stay with the earlier example. Having lost the right to consider himself a fully ordained monk, he can either live at the monastery as a lay disciple or else, as mentioned in the commentary on the Aṅguttara-nikāya passage related to the phrase paṭikaroti “according to the Dharma”, he can do so having become a novice.
Clarifying the basic distinction between residential permit in a particular monastery and legal permit to perform legal actions as a fully ordained monk also helps to put into perspective the śikṣādattaka observance, a provision found in the Dharmaguptaka, Mahāsaṅghika, Mahiśāsaka, Mūlasarvāstivāda, and Sarvāstivāda Vinayas applicable to the case under discussion in this paper, namely a monk who has committed a breach of the pārājika rule on celibacy. Clarke (2009a: 27), to whom we are indebted for a detailed study of this topic, reports that the “śikṣādattaka is effectively reduced to a position of subservience and humility”. In several Vinayas, such relegation to a lowly, but still clearly monastic, position is likewise evident in the requirement that he sit below the most junior of the monks, and above the novices … he is not to take charge of a novice, ordain a monk, or admonish nuns … [or else] not permitted to discuss the Vinaya, recite or listen to recitations of the Prātimokṣa.

If this is the case, then it is not clear why Clarke (2009a: 8) concludes that the śikṣādattaka “is most certainly not expelled (or ‘no longer in communion’ [asamvāsa])”. As I hope my earlier discussion would have clarified, being expelled needs to be differentiated from being no longer in communion. The former only applies to certain cases, the latter to all instances of a breach of a pārājika rule. Regarding the latter, restrictions of the type mentioned in the quote above do imply that the śikṣādattaka is no longer in communion, asamvāsa. Since the status of being śikṣādattaka does imply a loss of communion and a demotion in status, this in turn means that, if a fully ordained monk voluntarily engages in sexual intercourse, this still results in his loss of being in communion. Such loss in turn affects the institutional reality of Buddhist monasticism in its internal and external dimensions, inasmuch as he can no longer legitimately perform the function of perpetuating this monastic institution by conferring valid ordination on others and would also no longer be reckoned a meritorious recipient of individual gifts by lay donors comparable to the way in which this was the case before he had broken a pārājika rule.

Now as Clarke (2009b: 116) rightly notes, “a monk who has sex does not necessarily commit a pārājika offence.” An example would be when a monk is mentally deranged or possessed and therefore not considered accountable for what he does. But when Clarke backs up his statement in his note 6 by stating: “Take, for instance, the case of the pārājika penitent or śikṣādattaka”, followed by reference to his paper on this topic, then this does not seem to work as a case of sexual intercourse not being considered a breach of the respective pārājika rule.

The śikṣādattaka observance, in the way summarized by Clarke based on what is common among the different Vinayas that recognize this procedure, only institutionalizes the way in which a monk who has offended against a pārājika rule can continue to live in robes at a monastery in a position situated between novices and fully ordained monks. It does not change the nature of the pārājika offence itself. One who has actually committed a pārājika offence is still no longer considered a
fully ordained monk according to these Vinayas. In fact, if these Vinayas did not recognize that having sex, etc., entails a breach of the pārājika rule, there would hardly have been any need for them to get into devising the śikṣādattaka option in the first place.

The institution of the śikṣādattaka is in this respect comparable to the option of becoming a novice, mentioned in the Pāli commentary, by confessing that one has lost one’s status as a fully ordained monk. In its treatment of the first pārājika, the Pāli Vinaya mentions that one of several ways a fully ordained monk can disavow his status is by declaring himself to be a novice.⁵⁹ Since at the time of ordination he had received first the going forth, corresponding to novice ordination, and then the higher ordination as a monk, this means he is giving up only the higher ordination, not the going forth. This straightforward option does not appear to have been felt to be in need of further legislation.

The same option is found in the Dharmaguptaka, Mahāsāṅghika, Mahīśāsaka, Mūlasarvāstivāda, and Sarvāstivāda Vinayas.⁶⁰ All of these Vinayas recognize that a fully ordained monk, if he wishes to disavow his higher ordination, can do so simply by declaring himself to be a novice from now on.

This is similar to what can happen when a fully ordained monk confesses according to the Dharma that he has violated a pārājika rule. The main difference is that when a monk just decides to become a novice, for whatever reason, he can in principle at a later time take full ordination again and thereby become once more one who is in communion. If he becomes a novice after having committed a breach of a pārājika rule, however, the option of becoming a fully ordained monk again is not open to him. He will no longer be able to become one who is fully in communion.

Thus what happened with the śikṣādattaka observance appears to be that some Vinayas carved out a more institutionalized version of the basic option of remaining in robes at a level below that of a fully ordained monk. This might have occurred in response to an increase in the number of such cases, leading to a felt need for more explicit legislation that also ensures that one who is willing to confess and thereby incur the resultant loss of status as a fully ordained monk can ensure that, following his demotion in status, at least he will be placed within the monastic hierarchy above the level of a novice. In several Vinayas the attractiveness of admitting a breach of a pārājika seems in fact to have been increased by offering a few additional privileges, while at the same time keeping the śikṣādattaka observance still clearly distinct from the condition of being fully in communion.

This in turn gives the impression that the difference between the Theravāda Vinaya, which does not know the śikṣādattaka observance, and the other Vinayas, which do contain this option, is mainly one of increasing degrees of institutionalization. It does not appear to be a difference in principle.

Therefore Clarke (2009a: 26) is probably right when he envisages, as one of several possibilities, that

the Pāli Vinaya’s apparent ignorance of this ecclesiastical provision
Clarke (2009a: 31) compares the case of the śikṣādattaka observance to that of monastic regulations related to stūpas. Similarly to the discourse on Dhammika translated above, where the Pāli version did not mention the role of its monk protagonist in relation to stūpas, the Pāli Vinaya also has no reference to regulations in this respect. This has led Schopen (1989: 95) to the proposal that

the total absence of rules regarding stūpas in the Pāli Vinaya would seem to make sense only if they had been systematically removed.

This suggestion earned him immediate criticism. Instead, the absence of any such reference rather shows that the Theravāda Vinaya was already closed by the time stūpas acquired sufficient importance to require monastic legislation. The same suggests itself for the śikṣādattaka observance, in that the move to institutionalize the monastic status of a monk who had broken a pārājika rule would have occurred only at a time when the Theravāda Vinaya was already closed.42

Lest I be misunderstood, with the foregoing suggestion I do not intend to promote the attitude of considering the Pāli Vinaya as invariably earlier than its parallels. In fact in my comparative studies of the narratives related to the first and third pārājika I have argued that the Theravāda account has incorporated later elements and is therefore definitely not the earliest version at our disposal.43

However, these are narratives shared by the different Vinayas, which thus stand good chances of representing a common early core, unlike stories found only in some Vinayas.44 Such instances show that the Theravāda Vinaya is as much a product of the appropriation of later ideas and the embellishment of stories as the other Vinayas. Yet, due to the idiosyncrasies of its transmission, in the case of this particular Vinaya the process of incorporation appears to have come to a comparatively earlier point of closure than in the case of its Indian brethren.

This in turn is significant for evaluating material not found in the Theravāda Vinaya at all, such as regulations concerning stūpas and the śikṣādattaka observance. Recognizing the significance of such absence makes it possible to construct a reasonable chronology of developments in Indian Buddhist monasticism.

In other words, it seems fair to conclude that rules on stūpas and the śikṣādattaka observance are not found in the Theravāda Vinaya quite probably because they reflect comparatively later concerns. They can certainly be considered as later concerns than, for example, the notion that committing a pārājika offence equals immediate and definite loss of communion with the community of fully ordained monastics in the four directions, a notion reflected explicitly already in the code of rules of the different Vinaya traditions.

Conclusions

A fully ordained monk who willingly engages in sexual intercourse, without having
given up his ordained status, is no longer in communion. Such being no longer in communion happens right at the time of the moral breach and does not have a necessary relationship to the monk’s residential rights in a particular monastery. It is only when the distinction between residential rights and membership in the community of the four directions is lost sight of that the clear-cut connection between a breach of a pārājika and the ensuing loss of communion becomes blurred.

The Aṅguttara-nikāya does not recognize a form of atonement for pārājika, just as the ṣiksādattaka observance does not imply a re-evaluation of the nature of a pārājika offence. Instead, the latter only involves an institutionalization of an option already available earlier, namely to continue to live at a monastery in robes but without all the privileges that come with full ordination.

Similarly to the case of stūpa regulations, the absence of references to the ṣiksādattaka observance in the Theravāda Vinaya points to the relatively later date of the corresponding legislations.

Abbreviations

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>AN</td>
<td>Aṅguttara-nikāya</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>Derge edition</td>
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<td>DN</td>
<td>Dīgha-nikāya</td>
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<td>MĀ</td>
<td>Madhyama-āgama (T 26)</td>
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<td>Manorathapūraṇī</td>
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<td>Vin</td>
<td>Vinaya</td>
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**End Notes**

Acknowledgement: I am indebted to Bhikkhunī Dhammadinnā, Eric Greene, and Jonathan Silk for commenting on a draft version of this article.


3. The translated extract is found in MĀ 122 at T I 610c⁵ to 611a²². The same episode occurs in MĀ 37 at T I 478b¹⁶ to 478c¹₃.


5. Dutt 1984: 107.2 and its Tibetan counterpart in D 1 ⁴ga 182a³ or Q 1030 ⁴nge 174b⁵; Chung and Fukita 2011: 18 report that this Mūlasarvāstivāda discourse version is “not yet known to exist in any language”. Dhirasekera 1982/2007: 300f seems to have misunderstood this reference in the Sanskrit version, leading him to conflate it with the ensuing text that concerns another episode and then to conclude that the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya account differs substantially from the other versions. Shih 2000: 142 note 40 repeats these mistaken conclusions, even though p. 146 note 49 she shows awareness of the fact that the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya does not report the episode.

6. Cf. below note 9. Regarding the authorship of the *Samantapāśādikā*, von Hinüber 2015: 425 explains that, “though attributed to Buddhaghosa, his authorship can be safely ruled out. The form and content of the introductory verses are quite different from the beginning of both the *Sumanāgalavilāsini* and the *Atthasālīni*, and so is the method followed in this commentary”; cf. also Kieffer-Pülz 2015: 431. On aspects of the interrelation between the *Samantapāśādikā* and the commentaries on the four *Nikāyas* cf. Endo 2013: 244–247.

7. This part of MĀ 122 has parallels in AN 8.10 at AN IV 169.1 (preceded by a different episode) and T 64 at T I 862c²⁰ (preceded by the same episode); cf. also SHT IV 412 fragments 1 to 5, Sander and Waldschmidt 1980: 21–23.

8. MĀ 37 at T I 478b¹⁷, T 64 at T I 862b¹⁰, T 1435 at T XXIII 239b⁸; for a juxtaposition of MĀ 37 and the relevant part in T 1435 cf. Chung and Fukita 2011: 320f.

9. Mp IV 112.5 and Ud-a 296.1₄.


11. AN 8.20 at AN IV 204.2³ (= Ud 5.5 at Ud 51.2¹ and Vin II 236.4), T 33 at T I 817a¹⁰, T 34 at T I 818a¹³, T 35 at T I 819a⁸, D 4094 ⁴ju 223a² and Q 5595 ⁴tu 254b², T 1421 at T XXII 180c²⁷, T 1425 at T XXII 447b¹⁶, and T 1428 at T XXII 824a⁸; cf. also Gangopadhyay 1991: 46.

12. In AN 8.20 at AN IV 205.2⁶ (= Ud 5.5 at Ud 52.1⁹ and Vin II 237.2) and EĀ 48.2 at T II 786b²¹ Mahāmoggallāna told him three times to leave; in T 35 at T I 819a¹⁴ he did so only once. In T 1421 at T XXII 181a⁸ and T 1428 at T XXII 824a²⁹ Mahāmoggallāna also first told him to leave and then took him outside, but as the narrative does not mention that the culprit did not react to the verbal
command to leave, it remains open to conjecture whether this should be seen as implicit in the narration.

13 T 34 at T I 818a23.
14 T 33 at T I 817a28.
15 AN 8.20 at AN IV 205,23 (= Ud 5,5 at Ud 52,15 and Vin II 236,25): *abrahmacāriṁ brahmacāri-paṭiṭṭhāṇām* (or *brahmācāri-paṭiṭṭhāṇām*); although in T 1425 at T XXII 447b15 he has rather committed a theft, as already noted by Shih 2000: 146.
16 AN 8.20 abbreviates, wherefore the required passage needs to be supplemented from AN 8.19 at AN IV 202.2; the same is found in Ud 5,5 at Ud 55,14 and Vin II 239,10.
17 AN 8.20 at AN IV 205,24 (= Ud 5,5 at Ud 52,16 and Vin II 236,26).
18 The nuance of pretending things is otherwise is reflected in the commentarial explanation, Ud-a 297.25, which glosses the expression “seated in the midst of the community of monks” by explaining that he is seated among them “as if he belonged to the community”, *saṅghapariyāpanno viya*.
19 Cf. Sn 283: *suddhā suddhehi saṃvāsam*.
20 AN 4.242 at AN II 241,22: *āpanno vā pārājikam dhammaṁ yathādhammaṁ paṭikarissati*.
21 DN 2 at DN I 85,23: *yathādhammaṁ paṭikarosi*. This passage and the significance of *paṭikaroti* have already been studied in detail by Derrett 1997 and Attwood 2008.
22 DN 2 at DN I 86,2; cf. also Attwood 2008: 290f.
23 Rhys Davids 1899: 94 translates the phrase as “confess it according to what is right” and Walsh 1987: 108 as “confessed it as is right”; cf. also Radich 2011: 19. In his detailed study of the present episode in relation to the significance of confession, Derrett 1997: 59 explains that those in front of whom such *paṭikaroti* according to the Dharma takes place “do not forgive or pardon him, nor is the offence atoned for, or washed away. No ‘amends’ are made … [even] condonation is not in point here … [but] an acceptance occurs like a creditor’s issuing a receipt.”
24 This goes to show that there is no need to consider the lack of explicit reference to expulsion in *pārājika* rules problematic, as done by Shih 2000: 132ff, in reply to which Heirman 2002: 439 clarifies that “the idea of an exclusion is prominently present … [which] the use of the image [of] ‘decapitation’ further points to as being … permanent”; as noted by īnṇatusita 2014: cv, the image of decapitation indeed conveys the gravity of a *pārājika* breach.
25 Mp III 216,14: *sāmaṇerabhāmiyam ṭhassati ti attho*.
27 I already expressed my reservations in this respect in Anālayo 2012a: 418f note 42.
30 For a case study cf. Anālayo 2016b.
31 In fact Silk 2007: 281 reports that the story continues with one of the disciples, after the death of this monk, trying to ascertain through supernormal powers where his teacher “has been reborn. Using his supernatural sight he is able to survey the realms of transmigration (*samsāra*), beginning with that of the gods and, when he does not locate him there, descending through the realms of humans, animals and hungry ghosts. It is only when he examines the lowest realm, that of hell, that he discovers his teacher in the great Avīci hell, and upon seeking the cause of his fate learns of his master’s earlier crime of matricide.” This denouement of the narrative makes it fair to assume that the monk hid his matricide and pretended to be a fully ordained monk.
32 Cf. the Mahāsāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 3c1, the Mahāsāṅghika *Vinaya*, T 1425 at T XXII 228c25, the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 570c4, the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1435 at T XXIII 1c17, the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1442 at T XXIII 629b22 and D 3 ca 28b5 or Q 1032 *che* 25a6, and the Theravāda *Vinaya*, Vin III 21,17.
33 The translated extract is taken from MĀ 130 at T I 618b21 to 618c5.
34 AN 6.54 at AN III 366,23.
35 One example, discussed in Silk 2008: 42ff, is the accepting of donations.
36 On the *sīksādattaka* observance cf. also Greene 2017.
This has already been pointed out by Sujato 2009: 122 note 192: “the sīkṣādattaka (sic) is not, contra Clarke, ‘in communion’.” Wood 2012: 157f and Kaplan 2016: 261, however, unreservedly accept Clarke’s conclusions.

This would also hold for the case story related to the sīkṣādattaka observance in the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya where, according to the detailed study by Clarke 2009a: 16, the narrative unfolds in such a way that the monk is not considered to have committed a full breach of the pārājika in the first place. Therefore his being depicted as eventually becoming an arhat and with such attainment then being reinstated from the sīkṣādattaka level to that of a fully ordained monk would have no consequences for our understanding of what an actual pārājika breach implies, comparable in this respect to the matricide story from the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya discussed earlier. Since neither involves a breach of a pārājika, they have no direct bearing on what such a breach entails. The present story only implies that in the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya the sīkṣādattaka observance could also be conferred on those who, due to the circumstances of their deed, were not reckoned as having committed a full breach of the pārājika rule prohibiting sexual intercourse.

Vin III 27.7: sāmaṇero ti maṃ dhārehī ti, preceded at Vin III 24.28 by the expression sāmaṇerabhāvaṃ patthayamāno. Thanks to the discussion by Kieffer-Pülz 2015/2016 of the different situation for nuns in this respect, I became aware of the proposal by Paṇḍita 2016 of two modes of disavowal of one’s higher ordination, of which the supposedly earlier one did not involve any of the ways described in the passage under discussion. Now the function of a word explanation (padabhājanīya) in the Vinaya is to explain and define, not necessarily to promulgate something new. Thus the present word explanation only implies that the listed ways of disavowal of one’s higher ordination are from now on those considered legally valid from the viewpoint of pārājika casuistic. It does not imply that these ways had never been in use earlier and only came into existence with the arising of this commentary. Besides, the two examples Paṇḍita 2016: 2f gives for the supposedly earlier mode of disavowal concern a monk who mistakenly believes he has lost communion and a nun who has lost communion and concealed it; neither is a case of a successful disavowal of the higher ordination.

The Dharmaguptaka Vinaya, T 1428 at T XXII 571b19, the Mahāsāṅghika Vinaya, T 1425 at T XXII 236a1, the Mahīśāsaka Vinaya, T 1421 at T XXII 4c2, the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya, T 1422 at T XXIII 630b10 and D 3 ca 31b4 or Q 1032 che 27b6, and the Sarvāstivāda Vinaya, T 1435 at T XXIII 2c2.


Sujato 2009: 234–237 comes to the same conclusion regarding stūpa regulations and the sīkṣādattaka training. However, he also brings in the sikkhumāṇa training in this conclusion, where I find his overall treatment of this topic unconvincing; for two points of disagreement cf. Anālayo 2015: 412 note 11 and 2016a: 97f note 23.


On the principle that parallelism points to a common early core, contrary to the position taken by Schopen 1985, cf. Anālayo 2012b.
Did King Asoka have the Qualities of a Wheel Turning Emperor? 
An Investigation with Special Reference to the Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta of the Dīgha-nikāya

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Did King Aśoka have the Qualities of a Wheel Turning Emperor?
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Iromi Ariyaratne

Abstract

King Aśoka, was the third Emperor of the Maurya dynasty in the third century B.C. He is considered by some historians as the greatest ruler of ancient India. In accordance with historical and textual evidence, he was converted to Buddhism after conquering the country of Kāliṅga, eight years after his coronation. The most reliable evidence such as edicts shows that Emperor Aśoka had inspiration from Buddhist teachings to rule righteously. Moreover, the third Buddhist Council was also held under his patronage. Because of the righteous way he adopted to rule his kingdom, the Buddhists believe that he was the greatest emperor who possessed the qualities of a Wheel Turning Emperor (Cakkavattirājā) who is the ideal king described in Buddhism.

The Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta of the Dīgha-nikāya is the major sutta in which the Buddha has expounded the qualities of a Cakkavatti monarch. Hence, the prime objective of this research paper is to examine whether Emperor Asoka practiced the qualities of a wheel turning monarch and also how far he was successful in imitating the ideal of a Cakkavatti king. Therefore, the methodology used in critical examination of the Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta and other relevant suttas, aṭṭhakathās (commentaries), chronicles and archeological evidence such as edicts, seeks to promote this massage.

The Concept of Wheel-turning Monarch and the Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta

The Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta is an early discourse which is found in the Vol. III (the Pāthikavagga) of the Dīgha-nikāya as the 26th sutta. The sutta could be introduced as the major sutta in which the concept of Cakkavatti has been introduced. The ideal kingship which is introduced by Buddhism is the Cakkavatti-popularly known as the Wheel-turning Monarch. The sutta gives an account on the Cakkavatti concept through a legend which happened in the periods of the wheel turners, King Daḷhanemi and eight of his successors.

The story relates that a righteous king conquers the authority of the earth by practicing the Dhamma. According to the story, the wheel-turning monarch, Daḷhanemi¹ was a powerful sovereign who ruled the world. He was a righteous monarch of law, a conqueror of the four quarters, who had established the security of his realm and possessed the seven treasures. Those treasures are;

01. The Wheel Treasure (Cakkaratana)
02. The Elephant Treasure (Hatthiratana)
03. The Horse Treasure (Assaratana)
Further, he had more than a thousand sons who were heroes of heroic stature, conquerors of the holistic army. He dwells by the law of the Dhamma, having conquered this sea-girt land without stick or sword.

It is clear that the above treasures appeared as a result of his practicing the ‘noble codes of the wheel turner’ during his rule. In the afore mentioned legend, it is further explained that after thousands of years when the sacred wheel treasure slips from its position, the wheel turner should know that he had not much time left to live. Therefore, having the knowledge that he has already had all the human pleasure and that it is time to seek heavenly pleasures, he summons his eldest son, the crown prince and tells him to take over the control of the land. And, he is supposed to keep away from all the worldly happiness and become a homeless sage donning a robe, with his hair and beard shaved off. Then seven days after departure of the royal sage, the sacred wheel treasure disappeared.

Then the new king was instructed by the royal sage to practice ‘noble codes of the wheel turner (Ariyāṃ Cakkavattivattam)’ for bringing back the Cakkaratana as follows;

01. Depending on the Dhamma, honoring it, revering it, cherishing it, doing homage to it and venerating it, having the Dhamma as your badge and banner, acknowledging the Dhamma as your master, you should establish guard, ward and protection according to Dhamma for your own household.

02. Depending on the Dhamma... for your troops in the kingdom.

03. Depending on the Dhamma... for your nobles and vassals in the kingdom.

04. Depending on the Dhamma... for your Brahmins and householders in the kingdom.

05. Depending on the Dhamma... for your town and country folk in the kingdom.

06. Depending on the Dhamma... for your town and ascetics and Brahmins in the kingdom.

07. Depending on the Dhamma... for your town and beasts and birds in the kingdom.

08. Letting no crime prevail in your kingdom

09. Giving the property to those who are in need and,
10. whatever ascetics and Brahmins in your kingdom have renounced the life of sensual infatuation and devoted to forbearance and gentleness, each one taming himself, each one calming himself and each one striving for the end of craving, from time to time you should go to them and consult with them as to what is wholesome and what is unwholesome, what is blameworthy and what is blameless, what is to be followed and what is not to be followed, and what action will in the long run lead to harm and sorrow, and what to welfare and happiness. Having listened to them, you should avoid evil and do what is good.3

The *sutta* further says that after having performed the duties according to the above codes, when the king had washed his head and gone up to the verandah on the top of the palace on the full moon (*poya*) day, the sacred wheel wheel treasure will reappear with the thousand-spokes, complete with felloe, hub and all appurtenances.

Then the new *Cakkavatti* monarch (*muddhābhīsitto*), rising from his seat, covering one shoulder with his robe, took a gold vessel in his left hand, sprinkled the Wheel with his right hand saying: “May the noble Wheel-Treasure turn, may the noble Wheel-Treasure conquer!” The Wheel turned to the east, and the King followed it with his fourfold army. And in whatever country the Wheel stopped, the King took up residence with his fourfold army. And those who opposed him in the eastern region came and said: “Come, Your Majesty, welcome! We are yours, Your Majesty. Rule us, Your Majesty.” And the King said: “Do not take life. Do not take what is not given. Do not commit sexual misconduct. Do not tell lies. Do not drink strong drink. Be moderate in eating.” And those who had opposed him in the eastern region became his subjects.4

Analyzing the contexts of Buddhist canonical examples, the Pali-English Dictionary defines the word *Cakkavatti* as; ‘he who sets rolling the Wheel, a just & faithful king’5. It is derived from the Sanskrit word ‘cakra’, meaning the ‘wheel’ and ‘varti’ one who turns it (*cakra+varti > cakravarti = Cakkavatti* (Pali)).6 The common translations of the term *Cakkavattirājā* are ‘wheel turning monarch or wheel rolling monarch. According to Wijesekara, who has done a critical analysis on the *Cakra* concept says that both the Pali and Sanskrit terms *cakkavarti* and *cakkavatti* mean the ‘turner of the cakra’ or ‘wielder of cakra’. However, the concept of the *Cakkavatti* has been brought into Buddhist context from the Vedic concept of ‘Cakravarti’ with the meaning related with dominion.7 But there is no doubt that the Buddha has given an alternative interpretation to it as he has done with most of the concepts such as *Kamma*, Causality, etc. Although the Buddhist concept of *Cakkavatti* is also used with regard to the sovereignty of a ruler, it is obviously an attempt to drag the ruling system into the righteous path. The ‘Universal Monarch’ is also one of the English translations of the term *Cakkavattirājā*, yet it would not be used here as there are some controversial ideologies pertaining to it.

Considering all the contexts which explain the *Cakkavatti* concept, it could be said that there are three main ideas which include all the qualities of the *Cakkavatti* monarch. They are:
01. Thirty-two signs of his physical body

02. The seven treasures (Sattaratana)

03. The noble codes of the wheel turner (Ariyam Cakkavattivattam)

In the Lakkhaṇa-sutta and Mahāpadāna-sutta of the Dīgha-nikāya as well as in the Brahmāyu-sutta of the Majjhima-nikāya, it is elaborated that the person who has 32 special marks on his body would become either a world monarch or a world renunciant. Moreover, the suttas further explain that, the teaching of 32 marks is mentioned in the early Vedic texts too. Most of the time, the Brahmins, when they wanted to know whether the ascetic Gotama is the real person who has been mentioned in the Vedic literature, have instructed their disciples to check the Buddhahood of him by studying the 32 signs of his body. For example, the Brahmāyu-sutta has stated that Brahmin Brahmāyu asked one of his disciples, Uttara, to check Buddha’s 32 signs.

However, the Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta has not illustrated the 32 signs of the wheel-turner other than the seven treasures and the noble codes. The Mahāsudassana-sutta of the Dīgha-nikāya III, which has a significant legendary account on one of the wheel turners, doesn’t mention the 32 signs. Elaborating all the accounts on 32 signs, Piya Tan has stated that “the passages on the universal monarch were probably composed or finalized during Asoka’s time in response to its imperial culture, though the tradition of the 32 marks probably went back to an earlier date.” If 32 signs were compiled in the texts at a later time, here our point is that it would have been done as a result of the doctrine on the physical features of a king which are included in some of the suttas. The Buddha, especially in the Aggañña-sutta and the Kūṭadanta-sutta, has explained the importance of what physical appearance a king should have. But, it is clear that the physical appearance with 32 signs could be less significant when a king practices the Cakkavati qualities as stated in Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta.

However, as our main concern is to find out whether the king Aśoka practiced and cultivated the Cakkavati qualities in his ruling system, the most important features of the above three facts will be further discussed. Before starting the discussion on that, it would be better to examine King Aśoka’s biography briefly.

King Aśoka, his Governing System and the Cakkavati Concept

Aśoka, referred to as Devānampiya piyadassi in his own edicts, was the 3rd emperor of the Maurya dynasty of ancient India in the 3rd century BCE. His ruling era was 304-232 BCE. In accordance with the Pali chronicles and legends, Aśoka was born in a royal family as the second son of king Bindusāra among his 101 sons. Although he was not the crown prince, he was able to be the ruler after his father’s death. The Divyāvadāna, the Samantapāsādhikā, the Aśokāvadāna and several other works mention that he was a king who wanted to enlarge the territory by defeating the neighboring countries. As a result of his harmful way of capturing countries, he was named as Caṇḍāsoka. The Kaliṅga war was a remarkable turning point of his life. According to his own words,
“...When he had been consecrated eight years the Beloved of the Gods, the king Piyadassi, conquered Kalinga. A hundred and fifty thousand people were deported, a hundred thousand were killed and many times that number perished. Afterwards, now that Kalinga was annexed, the Beloved of the Gods very earnestly practiced Dhamma, desired Dhamma, and taught Dhamma, on conquering Kalinga the Beloved of the Gods felt remorse, for, when an independent country is conquered the slaughter, death, and deportation of the people is extremely grievous to the Beloved of the Gods, and weighs heavily on his mind.”

After winning in the Kāliṅga war, he stopped his policy of capturing countries and he was converted to Buddhism. The Samantapāsādikā, the Vinaya commentary states that the king heard the message of the Buddha Dhamma from novice Nigrodha. As a Buddhist, emperor Aśoka rendered a commendable service to Buddhism. As the Samantapāsādikā explains, the third Buddhist council was held under his patronage. Because of his practice of the Buddhist principles to shape up the way of ruling the country and his righteousness, he was called ‘Dharmāśoka Cacravartīn’ in Buddhist Literature. His righteous vision and mission is broadcast by his own rock epigraphs which are found not only in his kingdom but also in some neighboring countries, too.

It is clear that there is a particular righteous practice to become a Cakkavatti monarch according to the Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta. As stated previously, there are three sub concepts to identify the characteristics of the concept of Cakkavatti. As mentioned earlier, it is clear that the 32 signs were not considered as an important feature that a Cakkavatti king should have. Here, the most significant fact is, there is no evidence, apart from the Tatiyasaṅgītikathā of the Samantapāsādikā, to show that king Aśoka had a physical appearance endowed with 32 signs. The statement in the Samantapāsādikā also cannot be considered as reliable evidence because of its legendary pattern which tries to explain the idea. Hence, further attention will be paid to the discussion on the other two facts which are mentioned above.

The second characteristic of the Cakkavatti concept is seven royal treasures (Sattaratana). There is no historical evidence to show that emperor Aśoka possessed the sattaratana which the king Daḷhanemi and his seven successors had. But, it is important to find out the symbolism way of the concept of sattaratana in order to shed light on this aspect. The first of the seven treasures is the wheel treasure (cakkaratana). It is said to be the most valuable symbolic treasure of the king. As the Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta stated,

“When a Cakkavatti is born into the world, the Cakkaratana appears before him from the cakkadaha, travelling through the air. It has its nave, its tyre and all its thousand spokes complete. An ordinary king becomes the wheel-rolling monarch with the appearance of the wheel treasure. The wheel executes authority only after the king sprinkles water. Then the wondrous wheel rolls onwards towards the regions of the East, South, West and North, in that order, with the king and his fourfold army, elephants, horses, chariots and infantry. As soon as the king takes up his abode where the wheel stops, all the regional kings come to him and request:” come, Oh Mighty king! Welcome. Oh, Mighty king! All is
The *sutta* explains that the noble wheel is not a heritage (*na pettkam dāyajjāṃ*) of the new king. After granting the kingship, it disappears within seven days and the king should practice the noble codes to get it back. Many scholars have interpreted the symbolic meaning of the noble wheel. Among those interpretations, there are some ideas to clarify that it represents the solar disk of the Sun as it asserts the entire operation of the system.\(^{18}\)

However, it is clear that King *Aśoka* didn’t have a *Cakkaratana*. But, if it symbolizes the authority and domination, it could be definitely said that he had adequate authority and power in his era. According to historical evidence, he ruled almost the whole of the Indian subcontinent under his authority. His dynasty stretched from the Hindukush mountains in Afghanistan to the areas of modern Bangladesh in the east. It means that his kingdom covered the entire Indian subcontinent except parts of present Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Although he captured the neighboring territories by war before converting to the Buddhism, there is some evidence to prove that he used the *Dhamma* mission to ask all rival regions to join him. For example, in the 13\(^{th}\) rock edict, he has pointed out the places where he sent the massage of the *Dhamma*.

“The Beloved of the Gods considers victory by *Dhamma* to be the foremost victory. And moreover the Beloved of the Gods has gained this victory on all his frontiers to a distance of six hundred yojanas [i.e. about 1500 miles], where reigns the Greek king named Antiochus, and beyond the realm of that Antiochus in the lands of the four kings named Ptolemy, Antigonus, Magas, and Alexander; and in the south over the Colas and Pandyas as far as Ceylon. Likewise here in the imperial territories among the Greeks and the Kambojas, Nabhakas and Nabhapanktis, Bhojasand Pitinikas, Andhrs and Parindas, everywhere the people follow the Beloved of the Gods’ instructions in *Dhamma*. Even where the envoys of the Beloved of the Gods have not gone, people hear of his conduct according to *Dhamma*, his precepts and his instruction in *Dhamma*, and they follow *Dhamma* and will continue to follow it.

What is obtained by this is victory everywhere, and everywhere victory is pleasant. This pleasure has been obtained through victory by *Dhamma* yet it is but a slight pleasure, for the Beloved of the Gods only looks upon that as important in its results which pertain to the next world.”\(^{19}\)

Hence, it could be considered that he has used the same method to conquer the rival and subordinate countries according to his capacity and adjusting the concept into the contemporary period. The *Cakkavattisihanāda-sutta* mentions that the dhammic advice of the wheel turner contains the ethical based doctrines with the *Pañcasīla*.\(^{20}\)
The main feature of his Dhamma mission is addressing the ethical behavior of the people of the country.

As the *sutta* explains, the king should apply the noble codes to redeem the wheel treasure. As Prof. Nandasena Rathnapala says, the noble wheel symbolized the public opinion by explaining five features of it.\textsuperscript{21} If the wheel treasure has the meaning of public opinion, it illumines our discussion too. Caṇḍāshoka was the nick name was given by the citizens. Aśoka’s expectation was to win back public opinion, by converting into the righteousness. Therefore, he has mentioned about the disappointment about the war in his edicts.\textsuperscript{22}

As for the Cakkaratana, many scholars have tried to elaborate that the other six treasures also have symbolic meanings analyzing the interpretations of the Bālapandita-sutta of the Majjhima-nikāya. As a summary of all the scholarly ideas, the following could be indicated as symbolic meanings of the other treasures.

- **The Elephant Treasure** (Hatthiratana) – Army, authority over the entire kingdom and fertility of the kingdom, favorable climate condition- clouds and thunder
- **The Horse Treasure** (Assaratana) - Army, authority over the entire kingdom and fertility of the kingdom, favorable climate condition- rain
- **The Jewel/Gem Treasure** (Maṇiratana) - natural resources which bring the light of prosperity to the kingdom and the financial basis of the country
- **Woman Treasure** (Itthiratana) - family life of the wheel turning monarch
- **The Householder Treasure** (Gahapatiratana) - economy of the country
- **The Counsellor Treasure** (Parināyakaratana) – advisor/s of the king\textsuperscript{23}

It is certain that King Aśoka had the expected symbolic treasures and he tried to develop them in his country. No doubt that he could conquer other countries because of the strong army he had. On the other hand, he launched a program to plant trees and developed a suitable surrounding for people and animals not only in his country but also the other neighboring countries such as Coḷa, Pandyas, Satyaputras, Keralaputras.\textsuperscript{24} In addition, the financial basis and the natural resources of King Aśoka’s country were highly established as historians indicate that he was the best and ideal king who ruled in the Mauryan Empire India. According to the Sri Lankan chronicle, the *Mahabodhivamsa*, his chief consort was Vedismahādevī. Her son and daughter, Mahinda and Saṅghamittā, were granted to the Buddhasāsana and they became arahants. Arahant Mahinda brought the Buddha’s message to Sri Lanka and established Buddhism in the Island. Arahant Saṅghamittā brought a branch of the sacred Bodhi tree to Sri Lanka. They both did a commendable service to Buddhism. After his conversion to Buddhism, King Aśoka had as his advisors Buddhist saṅgha. In his edicts, he clearly points out the change which he achieved after his association with the saṅgha.\textsuperscript{25}
The *Samyutta-nikāya* Commentary introduces another interpretation of the Sattaratana in accordance with the Buddhist viewpoint of the seven awakening-factors as follows:26

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treasure</th>
<th>Factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Wheel Treasure</td>
<td>Mindfulness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(Cakkaratana)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Elephant Treasure</td>
<td>Dhamma-discernment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(Hatthiratana)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Horse Treasure</td>
<td>Effort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(Assaratana)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Jewel/Gem Treasure</td>
<td>Zest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(Maniratana)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woman Treasure</td>
<td>Tranquility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(Itthiratana)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Householder Treasure</td>
<td>Concentration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(Gahapatiratana)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Counsellor Treasure</td>
<td>Equanimity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(Parināyakaratana)</em></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As a good dhammic follower, it is no doubt that King Asoka had the above qualities which should be practiced and cultivated by a wheel turner.

According to the noble codes stipulated in the *Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta*, the king must protect the country depending on the *Dhamma*, honouring it, revering it, cherishing it, doing homage to it and venerating it, having the *Dhamma* as his badge and banner, acknowledging the *Dhamma* as his master. The protection of the country, according to the *Dhamma*, has been interpreted in the *sutta* as “*Dhammikam rakkhāvaranaguttim*”. The commentary of the *sutta* has indicated the meaning of the term as ‘when the king has the *Dhamma* it says the *rakkhāvaranaguttim*’. Therefore, the king protects people by practicing the patience, non-violence and loving kindness. Then, the people protect the king vice versa.27

In his edicts king Aśoka proclaimed the victory of the *Dhamma* and explained the significance of victory by *Dhamma* more than the victory by war. In the 13th rock edict he says that “The Beloved of the Gods considers victory by *Dhamma* to be the foremost victory.”28 The king has attempted to explain about the significance of the *Dhamma* and his practice in the 1st Pillar Edict as follows.

> “Thus speaks the Beloved of the Gods, the king Piyadassi: When I had been consecrated for twenty-six years, I had this inscription of Dhamma engraven. It is hard to obtain happiness in this world and the next without extreme love of Dhamma, much vigilance, much obedience, much fear of
Further, he wished to convert his citizens to Dhamma. In the Dhauilig inscription he says that all the citizens of his country are his children. Moreover, he taught them to practice Dhamma, considering it as discharging of the debt of the king. The Aṅguttara-nikāyas mentions that a wheel turning monarch is born into the world for the benefit, happiness and welfare not only of humans but also of gods. There is some evidence to prove that King Aśoka also had attempted to be such a king. In the 6th Rock edict, king says that, whether he is having meals, or he is in the woman’s apartment, or in the inner apartments, or at the cattle-shed, or in his carriage, or in the garden- wherever he might be, his informants should keep him in public businesses. By practicing that policy, the king wanted to promote welfare of the world. And, he says that he works for the happiness of citizens in this life and the next life. Therefore, it can be said that he was a king who could sacrifice his own pleasure for the public welfare of the country.

The 7th pillar edict is the most significant proof of the king’s attempt in serving people by Dhamma as Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta recommended with the noble codes of a wheel turning monarch. In accordance with his own words, he had found his own method to transmit Dhamma and to increase the interest of it among country people. He made the arrangement to hear the proclamation of Dhamma and instruct them with Dhamma and let them have the progress in their lives with the dhamma education. Moreover, he had introduced a systematic way of serving people and for the mission of Dhamma. Dhamma ministers (dharma-mahāmātrās), surveyors (rajjukas) and other officials have been appointed to audit the progress every five years. The state officials were systematically trained and empowered with the necessary resources and competencies. They were also authorized to read out the king’s words on regular public gatherings. In the Sārānāt pillar edicts, the king has let his officers spread the way to solve the Vinaya matters of the Buddhist order. Specially, the banyan trees were planted to provide shade for humans and beasts, mango groves were planted. Wells were dug and rest houses were built at every eight kosas. Also, the watering places were made everywhere for humans and beasts. He said that he had done the above things in order that the country people might confirm Dhamma.

Apart from those, the above mentioned 7th pillar edict further shows the evidence for how King Aśoka attempted to protect his kingdom by the dhammic way as suggested by the Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta with the rest of the points of noble codes of a Wheel Turning Monarch. First, he had appointed officials to provide public benefits for both ascetics and householders. As the commentary of the Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta indicates he had instructed his ministers to arrange all the meritorious deeds including the dāna with the participation of his household. And,
they were asked to endorse his household about mercy, charity, truthfulness, purity, gentleness, and virtue.37

The King’s attention was not only for Buddhist monks but also for all the other sects such as Brahmans, Ājīvakas, Jainas and other sects. There were many categories of offices with a variety of duties.38 In the 12th Major Rock Edict he clearly points out the religious tolerance which was practiced by the king.39 He directly intervened for religious harmony in the country even if it occurred in the order of Buddhist monks. For example, Sāñci and Barbarā inscriptions inform of his mission for cleansing the order of Saṅgha and correcting their conduct in strict terms.

Although the edicts do not mention everything about his method of governing the kingdom, such evidence shows Aśoka’s systematic way of ruling the country by sharing all the benefits among the members of every social class. Like a wheel turner, first of all he was concerned about his own household. According to the 7th pillar edict, he had appointed chief officers for distribution of charity on behalf of the king, queens, his harem, his sons, and princes.40

It is clear that the king was not concerned with the social hierarchy when he served people. He always expected happiness and comfort of the citizens. He paid equal attention to all the social classes. Even the prisoners were also given the chance to be released from the prison. The king expected self-control and distribution of charity as the major dhamma practice of people.41 In the 4th Pillar Edict he mentions that he appointed Rajukas for the welfare and the happiness of the country people. Therefore, it could be pointed out that he expected to provide protection of all the classes of the society as included in the doctrine of noble codes of the Cakkavatti king.

As stated in the Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta, the Cakkavatti king protects not only the people but also birds and beasts of his country. The commentary of the sutta mentions that protection of beasts and birds means protecting their lives without killing.42 There is a lot of evidence to prove that King Aśoka took measures to protect animals. Especially in the 5th Pillar edict the king has commanded that animals not be killed,43 not only by the citizens, but also, he stopped the killing of animals in his palace, too.

In addition, he had made arrangements to reduce crime in his kingdom as a Cakkavatti king does. His officers were instructed not to harass people but to develop the Dhamma practice to cultivate the charity, nonviolence and all the righteous practices. Although there is no considerable evidence to show that the king had given property to poor people as the noble codes points out, there is no doubt that he had collected taxes from his people. He was asking people to practice the dhamma considering it is discharging of the debt of the king.44

As previously indicated, according to the last noble code, the Wheel turning monarch should go to ascetics and Brahmins to consult them on righteous practices. In the 6th Pillar edict, the king had mentioned that although he provided them with all the requisites, he wished to meet them personally from time to time.45 And, he
has declared in the Rupnath edict that he had been a Buddhist layman for more than two and a half years, but for a year he had not made much progress. Then for more than a year he had moved closer to the Order and become more ardent in his faith.\textsuperscript{46}

By way of this discussion based on the \textit{Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta}, the other relevant texts and Aśoka's edicts here, our attempt was to find out whether King Aśoka followed the Noble codes of the Wheel-turning monarch and tried to build up the qualities of wheel-turner.

**Conclusion**

The Buddhist concept of ideal kingship is the wheel-turning monarch. As previously observed, Emperor Aśoka had been honored as the ideal king who practiced the Buddhist ideals to rule the biggest ever empire in ancient India. The prime objective of this research paper was to examine whether Emperor Asoka displayed the qualities of a wheel turning monarch and also how far he could demonstrate by practice the qualities of \textit{Cakkavatti} king.

It has been pointed out that there are three basic characteristics of the \textit{Cakkavatti} Concept that could be traced in the \textit{suttas} such as;

01. Thirty-two physical signs
02. The seven treasures (\textit{Sattaratana})
03. The noble codes of the wheel turner (\textit{Ariyaṃ Cakkavattivattaṃ})

Out of these three, the last two features were examined as they are included in the \textit{Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta}, the inner and outer characteristics and qualities which a wheel-turning monarch should observe and practice. When compared with the ideas of King Aśoka the evidence is clear that he endeavored to cultivate noble codes and the qualities expected in the seven treasures as much as possible.

**Abbreviations**

D \textit{Dīgha-nikāya}
M \textit{Majjhima-nikāya}
A \textit{Aṅguttara-nikāya}
S \textit{Saṃyutta-nikāya}
DA \textit{Dīgha-nikāyaṭṭhakathā}
SA \textit{Saṃyuttanikāyaṭṭhakathā}
PTS Pali Text Society
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DA III, Cakkavattisuttavanaṇṇanā, Chaṭṭhasaṅgāyanā version 04.

SA, III, London: PTS.

A. I, Dukanipāta, Chaṭṭhasaṅgāyanā version 04.

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**End Notes**

1 Meaning of the name is strong wheel. 
https://www.dhammafarer.org, Cakkavattisīhanādasutta, Translated by Tan, Piya (2008), 06. 09. 2016, 10.30 a.m.


However, Piya Tan has given 12 codes in his critical translation on the Cakkavattisīhanādasutta as follows;

"From the Cakkavatti Sīhanāda Sutta, we can list a total of twelve duties of the wheel-turner, constituting the wheel-turner’s code of duties (cakka vatti vatta), that is, as follows (put in somewhat modern terms)

(1) the supremacy of the Dharma (dhamm’ādhipateyya), or supremacy of the law
(2) providing just care, shelter and guard for his own household (the royal family)
(3) providing just care, shelter and guard for his armed forces;
(4) providing just care, shelter and guard for the nobility (including the civil service);
(5) providing just care, shelter and guard for his colonial administrators;
(6) providing just care, shelter and guard for the socioeconomic elite (the learned and the affluent, especially the propertied);
(7) providing just care, shelter and guard for city-dwellers (especially business class) and the rural populace (the source of food and labour);
(8) providing just care, shelter and guard for the monastic and religious communities;
(9) providing just care, shelter and guard for living beings and nature (the environment);
(10) not conducting himself “against the Dharma” (adhamma), ie, unjustly or immorally §5.3];
(11) providing welfare for those who are subject to him §5.3; and
(12) from time to time consulting the wise and morally virtuous for the sake of high moral and spiritual standards in society"

http://www.dhammafarer.org, Cakkavattisīhanādasutta, Translated by Tan, Piya (2008), 06. 09. 2016, 10.30 am


8 “Imehi kho ayaṃ devakumāro dvattīmsamahāpurisalakkhañehi samannāgato yehi samannāgatassa mahāpurisassa dveva gatiyo bhavanti anaññā, sace agāraṃ ajjhāvasati, raja hoti cakkavatti dhammiko dhammarājā cāturanto vijitāvi janapadattācariyepatto sattaratanasamannāgato. Tassimāni swattaratanāni bhavanti: seyyaṭidham cakkratanaṃ hatthiratanaṃ assaratanāṃ maniratanaṃ ithiratanaṃ gahapatiratanaṃ parināyakaranatammeva sattaman. parosahassam kho panassa putṭa bhavanti sūrā vīraṅgarūpā parasenappamaddanā. So imāṃ paṭhāvīṃ sāgaraṇapiyantam adādana asatthena dhammene abhivijaye ajjhāvasati. sace kho pana agārasmā anagaṇīyam pabbajati, arahaṃ hoti sammāsambuddho loke vivattaccadatto ti.”

9 Many of the suttas has been stated the following marks as 32 signs of the physical body of a great person such as the Buddha and the Cakkavatti monarch

1. He has feet with a level sole.
2. He has the mark of a thousand-spoked wheel on the soles of his feet
3. He has projecting heels
4. He has long fingers and toes
5. His hands and feet are soft-skinned
6. He has netlike lines on palms and soles
7. He has high raised ankles
8. He has taut calf muscles like an antelope
9. He can touch his knees with the palms of his hands without bending.
10. His sexual organs are concealed in a sheath
11. His skin is the color of gold.
12. His skin is so fine that no dust can attach to it
13. His body hair are separate with one hair per pore
14. His body hair is blue-black, the color of collyrium, and curls clockwise in rings.
15. He has an upright stance like that of brahma
16. He has the seven convexities of the flesh.
17. He has an immense torso, like that of a lion
18. The furrow between his shoulders is filled in
19. The distance from hand-to-hand and head-to-toe is equal.
20. He has a round and smooth neck
21. He has sensitive taste-buds
22. His jaw is like that of lion's
23. He has a nice smile
24. His teeth are evenly spaced
25. His teeth are without gaps in-between
26. His teeth are quite white
27. He has a large, long tongue
28. He has a voice like that of Brahma
29. He has very blue eyes
30. He has eyelashes like an ox
31. He has a white soft wisp of hair in the center of the brow
32. His head is like a royal turban


19. “Come, Your Majesty, welcome! We are yours, Your Majesty. Rule us, Your Majesty.” And the King said: “Do not take life. Do not take what is not given. Do not commit sexual misconduct. Do not tell lies. Do not drink strong drink. Be moderate in eating.”


21. 1. The celestial wheel is the symbol of public opinion or wishes of the people.

2. When a ruled or ruler strays away from public opinion, the wheel automatically moves away thus symbolizing the absence of people's support for the ruler.

3. The people themselves kept vigil over the celestial wheel, and whenever the ruler or rulers acted contrary to public wishes, they reacted immediately, indicating their displeasure. There were ways and means of expressing their reactions to their rulers on such occasions when the law of the land was flouted.

4. A king or ruler could not ignore such public opinion.

5. A ruler or king was able to make his exit (when not wanted by the people) in a manner that does not hurt or damage his position in life. Very often the king or ruler would go to the forest to a life of quiet meditation after abdication. As a result of his exit, he does not loose the respect and honour he once enjoyed as the ruler. On the contrary, by being ancestor, respect and veneration for him naturally increased over that which he enjoyed as sovereign monarch. When not popularly desired by the people, a king, thus could graciously retire to the forest, keeping his status, respect intact, and suffering no humiliation.


22. Afterwards, now that Kalinga was annexed, the Beloved of the Gods very earnestly practised Dhamma, desired Dhamma, and taught Dhamma. On conquering Kalinga the Beloved of the Gods felt remorse, for, when an independent country is conquered the slaughter, death, and deportation of the people is extremely grievous to the Beloved of the Gods, and weighs heavily on his mind.


26. “Beloved-of-the-Gods speaks thus:[33] It is now more than two and a half years since I became a lay-disciple, but until now I have not been very zealous.[34] But now that I have visited the Sangha for more than a year, I have become very zealous. Now the people in India who have not associated with the gods do so. This is the result of zeal and it is not just the great who can do this. Even the humble, if they are zealous, can attain heaven. And this proclamation has been made with this aim. Let both humble and great be zealous, let even those on the borders know and let zeal last long. Then this zeal will increase, it will greatly increase, it will increase up to one-and-a-half times. This message has been proclaimed two hundred and fifty-six times by the king while on tour.”


27. *SA, III*, PTS, P. 154
“You should wish to avoid such faults. The root of all this is to be even-tempered and not rash in your work. He who is slack will not act, and in your official functions you must strive, act, and work. So he who approves this should say to you, 'Think of clearing the debt—thus and thus, does the Beloved of the Gods instruct.' There is great advantage in conforming to this instruction and great loss in not conforming to it. For by disregarding it you will gain neither heaven nor the favor of the king. Why do I devote my mind to this matter so extensively? Because by conforming you will reach heaven and will discharge your debt to me.”

Dhauli Inscription, http://www.katinkahesselink.net/tibet/asoka1.html, 27. 11. 2016, 11.30 p.m.

“And whatever may be my great deeds, I have done them in order to discharge my debt to all beings. I work for their happiness in this life, that in the next they may gain heaven. For this purpose has this inscription of Dhamma been engraved.”


“Thus speaks the Beloved of the Gods, the king Piya dassi. In the past, kings searched for means whereby people’s interest in Dhamma would increase, but the people did not respond accordingly with a greater devotion to Dhamma. Hence the Beloved of the God the king Piya dassi says. This idea occurred to me. In the past kings sought to make the people progress... but they did not. ... How then could people be made to conform to Dhamma and increase their interest in it? ... How could I elevate them through devotion to Dhamma? I shall make them hear proclamations of Dhamma, and instruct them with the knowledge of Dhamma. When they have heard this, the people will endorse it and will be elevated, and will progress greatly in Dhamma...”

7th Pillar Edict, http://www.katinkahesselink.net/tibet/asoka1.html, 15. 11. 2016, 6.30 p.m.

“For this reason there have been proclamations of Dhamma and many instructions of Dhamma were ordered, and my administrators were appointed over many people; they will admonish them and explain Dhamma to them. The rajukas [rural officers] are appointed over many hundreds of thousands of people; I have instructed them duly to encourage those people devoted to Dhamma.”


7th Pillar Edict, http://www.katinkahesselink.net/tibet/asoka1.html, 20. 11. 2016, 10.00 p.m.

“The Beloved of the Gods, the king Piya dassi, honours all sects and both ascetics and laymen, with gifts and various forms of recognition. But the Beloved of the Gods do not consider gifts or honour...”
to be as important as the advancement of the essential doctrine of all sects. This progress of the essential doctrine takes many forms, but its basis is the control of one's speech, so as not to extoll one's own sect or disparage another's on unsuitable occasions, or at least to do so only mildly on certain occasions. On each occasion one should honour another man's sect, for by doing so one increases the influence of one's own sect and benefits that of the other man; while by doing otherwise one diminishes the influence of one's own sect and harms the other man's. Again, whosoever honours his own sect or disparages that of another man, wholly out of devotion to his own, with a view to showing it in a favourable light, harms his own sect even more seriously. Therefore, concord is to be commanded, so that men may hear one another's principles and obey them. This is the desire of the Beloved of the Gods, that all sects should be well-informed, and should teach that which is good, and that everywhere their adherents should be told, 'The Beloved of the Gods does not consider gifts or honour to be as important as the progress of the essential doctrine of all sects.' Many are concerned with this matter - the officers of Dhamma, the women's officers, the managers of the state farms, and other classes of officers. The result of this is the increased influence of one's own sect and glory to Dhamma."


Thus speaks the Beloved of the Gods, the king Piyadassi: These and many other chief officers are busy with the distribution of charity both on my behalf and on that of my queens; and in all my harem, in various forms, they . . . assist in the recognition of virtuous deeds, here and in all regions. And I have ordered them to be concerned with the distribution of charity, on behalf of my sons, and of the other princes, that they may glory in Dhamma and conform to it.

7th Pillar Edict, http://www.katinkahesselink.net/tibet/asoka1.html, 22. 10. 2016, 4.05 a.m.

"This is my instruction from now on. Men who are imprisoned or sentenced to death are to be given three days respite. Thus their relations may plead for their lives, or, if there is no one to plead for them, they may make donations or undertake a fast for a better rebirth in the next life. For it is my wish that they should gain the next world. And among the people various practices of Dhamma are increasing, such as self-control and the distribution of charity."


"Thus speaks the Beloved of the Gods, the king Piyadassi: When I had been consecrated for twenty-six years I forbade the killing of the following species of animals, namely: parrots, mainas, red-headed ducks [?], cakravaka-geese, swans, nandi-mukhas [birds encountered in rice fields?], pigeons, bats, ants, tortoises, boneless fish, vedaveyakas, pupulas of the Ganges [fish?], skate, porcupines, squirrels, deer, lizards, domesticated animals, rhinoceroses, white pigeons, domestic pigeon and all quadrupeds which are of no utility and are not eaten. She goats, ewes, and sows which are with young or are giving suck are not to be killed, neither are their young up to the age of six months. Capons must not be made. Chaff which contains living things must not be set on fire. Forests must not be burned in order to kill living things or without any good reason. An animal must not be fed with another animal.

On the first full moon days of the three four-monthly seasons, and for three days when the full moon falls on the star Tisya, and the fourteenth and fifteenth of the bright fortnight, and the first of the dark, and regularly on fast days, fish are not to be caught or sold. And on these same days in the elephant-park and fisheries, other classes of animals likewise must not be killed. On the eighth, fourteenth, and fifteenth days of the fortnight, on the days of the star Tisya and Punarvasu, on the three first full moons of the four-monthly seasons, and on festival days, bulls, goats rams, boars, and
other animals which it is customary to castrate are not to be castrated. On the days of the stars Tisya and Punarvasu, on the first full moon days of the four-monthly seasons, and on the fortnights following them, cattle and horses are not to be branded.”

5th Pillar Edict, http://www.katinkahesselink.net/tibet/asoka1.html, 16. 11. 2016, 2.05 pm.

44 “You should wish to avoid such faults. The root of all this is to be even-tempered and not rash in your work. He who is slack will not act, and in your official functions you must strive, act, and work. So he who approves this should say to you, ‘Think of clearing the debt- thus and thus, does the Beloved of the Gods instruct.’ There is great advantage in conforming to this instruction and great loss in not conforming to it. For by disregarding it you will gain neither heaven nor the favor of the king. Why do I devote my mind to this matter so extensively? Because by conforming you will reach heaven and will discharge your debt to me.”


45 “Thus do I provide for the welfare and happiness of the world - in the same way as I bring happiness to my relatives, both close and distant and work for it, so do I provide for all sects. I honour all sects with various kinds of reverence, and I consider visiting them in person to be most important. When I had been consecrated for twenty-six years I had this inscription of Dhamma engraved.”


A Three Dimensional View of Karma in Early Buddhism

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Abstract

Detailing the connection between the various functions of Buddhist karma theory and rebecoming is a profoundly difficult aspect of Buddhist philosophy. While there is no definitive answer to these questions, suggestions can be found in early Buddhism that may help to reconcile the early Buddhist interpretations of karma with other philosophical and scientific theories.

A great difficulty in analysing the functional aspects of Buddhist karma theory is the conflation of karma as causality with karma as ethics to create a strongly deterministic ethical theory of karmic retribution which de-emphasises notions of free will and personal responsibility that are fundamental to Buddhist practice. This research is intended as a new model to evaluate karma in light of early Buddhist karma theory.

Following this model may allow karma theorists to shed our accumulated assumptions from the Abhidharma and western philosophy that bring substance metaphysics into the analysis of Buddhist karma doctrine. This essentialism is an unnecessary obstacle to understanding. When karma as causality is located within early Buddhist process metaphysics it can easily be analysed in a practical fashion and is found to accord with contemporary thought. Karma as ethics is more properly analysed as a satisfactory, but underdeveloped ethical theory. Only with these conceptions in place can the connection between karma and rebecoming can be detailed.

Introduction

Few things have been as contentious in Buddhism as karma (kamma) and rebecoming (punabbhava). In fact, the connection between the two was at the centre of the controversies addressed at the 3rd Buddhist Council in 250 BCE. While there is still no definitive answer to the questions raised, the theories of karma and rebecoming are of great importance to Buddhist thought. The Buddhist concept of karma, much like rebecoming, encounters great resistance in the west where it is not an integral part of what we refer to as the “cultural metaphysics”. A society’s cultural metaphysics are the cosmological, eschatological and metaphysical/mythical presuppositions underlying the ideological worldview of any particular culture. In this view, cultural metaphysics are comprised of beliefs pertaining to first causes, cosmology, purpose, meaning, eschatology, ontology and epistemology upon which the culture’s historically changing worldview (German: weltanschauung) and cultural hegemony are founded. An example of this is the move towards secular liberalism in western societies in which a messianic warrant and eternalist eschatology of eternal salvation or oblivion that is derived from Christian theology still prevails. The cultural metaphysics underlying Buddhism often conflict with their counterparts in the west, which leads to fundamental
misunderstandings of the Buddhist concept of karma when it is viewed in the light of modernist western cultural metaphysics.

Along with the problem of differing cultural metaphysics, we agree with Richard Gombrich in saying that the coherence of the Buddha’s system of thought means that key concepts considered in isolation from the whole will certainly lead to misunderstanding. However, we contend that the greatest difficulty in understanding the early Buddhist conception of karma is a failure to isolate the functions of karma within its broader context, thereby resulting in it being conflated with the karmic theories of other religions and of later Buddhist schools. Although the Buddha himself is often thought to have held karma as “self-evident, requiring no speculative defence,” speculative metaphysical defences of karma were added to the practice of Buddhism early in its history. This has resulted in incoherence among various Buddhist karma theories and it is hoped that a thorough analysis of the early Buddhist conception of karma can remove many of the misconceptions found in Buddhist scholarship.

**The Indic concept of karma**

The definition of the Sanskrit word karma is action, particularly action of a ritual variety. The incorporation of karma into rebirth eschatologies appears to be a distinct feature of Indic thought and it is thought to have arisen from the ritual actions and sacrifices of the Brahmins dating back to the Vedic period. In its simplest terms, or what Karl Potter called the “Classical Karma Theory of India”, karma theories declare that certain fundamental features of one’s present life, particularly “one’s birth, length of life and type of experiences”, are conditioned by one’s actions in previous existences and can only be outcomes of “one’s own past actions and no one else’s”.

Rebirth eschatology is found in many cultures throughout the world in forms such as reincarnation, metempsychosis, and transmigration. However, what Obeyesekere calls the “ethnicisation” of rebirth eschatology took place primarily in India. These theories depended upon a transmigrating soul (Sanskrit: ātman), life monads (Sanskrit jīva) or variations on the idea of a “subtle body” to transmigrate and ensure continuity across lives. Even the fatalist, naturalistic rebirth doctrines of the Ājīvikas recognised the existence of karma, although they denied the efficacy of ethical action. Only the Cārvakās denied both rebirth and karma.

The relation between the Buddhist conception of karma and the doctrine of rebecoming differs from other rebirth eschatologies due mainly to the doctrine of non-substantiality (anatta), or no-self /no-soul. When we seriously consider the problem of karma, it is unsurprising that it has proven so difficult to examine philosophically, the main reason being that there is no single theory, let alone “law”, of karma in Indian thought generally, or in Buddhist thought in particular.

The difficulties brought about by the existence of multiple karmic theories and their relations to rebirth eschatologies have been recognised by many scholars. In response to the primacy of karma among many Buddhists, Melford Spiro goes as far as to postulate two distinct soteriological systems in Buddhism: the nibbanic
(primarily concerned with obtaining the release of nibbāna) and the kammatic\textsuperscript{13} (primarily concerned with obtaining a desirable rebirth).\textsuperscript{14} Gombrich also examines karma from multiple levels: the cognitive level (philosophical logic of karma), the affective level (the psychological and affective impact of karma)\textsuperscript{15} and the behavioural level; or “between ‘typical’ karma, which is overt and has some effect on the external world, and ‘dogmatic’ karma which is “any morally charged physical, vocal or mental action, with the latter subsuming the former.”\textsuperscript{16}

This method of analysing the various aspects of Indian karma theories led to Wendy Doniger O’Flaherty identifying three essential constituents of a karma theory:\textsuperscript{17}

1. Causality (ethical or non-ethical, involving one or several lives and an explanation of present circumstances with reference to previous actions towards future ends, including [possibly] actions prior to birth);
2. Ethicisation (the belief that good or bad acts lead to certain results in one life or several lives and orientation of present actions towards future ends, including [possibly] those occurring after death as amoral basis on which action past and present is predicated;
3. Rebirth.

Wilhelm Halbfass uses a similar model, adding to rebirth a broader model of liberation in which karma acts as the “counterpart of and stepping-stone of final liberation;”\textsuperscript{18} Gananatha Obeyesekere identifies four common features in all karmic rebirth eschatologies:\textsuperscript{19}

1. A postulated cyclical theory of continuity;
2. A theory of karma that postulates that one’s present existence is determined for the most part by the ethical nature of one’s past actions;
3. A theory of the nature of existence known as samsāra, which includes all living things in the cycle of endless continuity;
4. A theory of salvation (nibbāna), the salient characteristic of which is the view that salvation must involve the cessation of rebirth, and must therefore occur outside of the whole cycle of continuity (samsāra).

Of these, he classifies three issues, karma, salvation and rebirth, as the most essential parts of the karmic eschatology, with rebirth as the most critical aspect. We intend to analyse the early Buddhist conception of karma by analysing it in three of its dimensions:

1. Karma as causality;
2. Karma as ethical theory;
3. Karma and rebecoming/ salvation from the cycle of rebecoming.

We contend that the main cause of misunderstanding regarding karma is a conflation of multiple karmic functions into one overarching and unwieldy karmic theory. This is probably due to the use of the vocabulary of karma and rebirth in a great variety of diverse religious and philosophical teachings.\textsuperscript{20} In Buddhism, karma is primarily based on intention (cetanā) and produces conditions of existence rather than consequences in the form of “rewards and punishments”.\textsuperscript{21} In some traditions,
such as Advaita Vedānta, karma is considered to be absolutistic and deterministic, while among the Jains, karma was conceived of as a substance working in the physical realm; among the Ājīvikas, past karma was impossible to expiate and irrelevant to the escape from the rebirth process. Just as there is a conflation of the Buddhist doctrine of rebecoming with reincarnation, Buddhist karma is often conflated with different Indic karma theories.

**Karma as causality in early Buddhism**

In order to understand the Buddhist doctrine of karma we begin with an analysis of karma as causality, or “causal karma”. The bracketing of causal karma from the ethical aspects of karma theory is important for the purpose of analysis. Causal karma is viewed as part of the mechanism of dependent arising (paṭiccasamuppāda) in which it is a causal conditioning factor in the continuity of experience, while the ethical aspects of karma and its effect on rebecoming may be better understood as a “metaphorical, instrumental, illustrative explanatory tool, or even as a ‘plot device’ / ‘karma ex machina’ [that] explains what cannot otherwise be justified.” For this reason, we will bracket out the ethical dimensions of karma theory to bring into sharper focus the workings of karma as causality in early Buddhism. Causal karma is a descriptive concept that vividly illustrates principles of causality and continuity that are essential to Buddhist philosophy.

The philosophical basis for the Buddha’s “middle way” (majjhimāpatipadā) is dependent arising. According to Nāgārjuna in the “Fundamental Verses on the Middle Way” (Mūlamadhyamakakārikā), dependent arising (pratītyasamutpāda), emptiness / void (Śunyatā) and the middle way (madhyamapratipadā) are synonymous, not three different things:

“We state that whatever is dependent arising, that is emptiness. That is dependent upon convention. That itself is the middle path.”

When focus is placed on dependent arising, it is seen that the causal kamma stands in a conventional relation to pratītyasamutpāda, śunyatā and madhyamapratipadā as one follows Nāgārjuna in refuting the inherent nature (svabhāva) of all things in order to better understand the core of the Buddha’s teaching. Even causal karma has no inherent nature of its own, but simply a conventional, instrumental truth value (sammuti sacca). Causal karma in paṭiccasamuppāda becomes part of “a relation between experiential processes rather than substances,” as Buddhism “recasts the whole concept of causation in line with its process-oriented epistemology.” Even the terms “cause” and “effect” are conventional constructs “conditioned by the cognitive process through which we make sense of all the factors of our experience.”

Causal karma cannot be analysed separately from this broader process metaphysics without being misinterpreted as a deterministic law of nature that renders human deliberation and effort inefficacious. When causal karma is properly situated in the Buddha’s broader philosophy it affirms the efficacy of human activity in contrast to doctrines such as those of the Ājīvikas. The Buddha is explicitly opposed to the Ājīvika theory precisely because it is completely deterministic, with Makkhali
Gosāla denying the efficacy of all human action. The Buddha claims that the Ājīvikas do not provide a valid reason for living a moral life (D.I.47; A.I.286; M.I.517) and declares that Gosāla’s doctrine is the worst of all doctrines because it denies “karma, deed and energy” (A.I.287). This is an adamant denial of strict determinism and the inefficacy of volitional action; The Buddha proclaims in (M.I.483) that no Ājīvika has made an end of suffering and the only Ājīvika who was reborn in heaven over 99 aeons was a believer in karma (kammavādin).

Of all the contemporaries of the Buddha, it is likely the Ājīvikas who made the strongest challenge to the Buddha’s teachings, with A. L. Basham going as far as to contend that it was Makkhali Gosāla, rather than Mahāvīra, who emerged as the Buddha’s “chief opponent and most dangerous rival.”32 The reasons for this will become apparent when we consider the naturalistic doctrine of rebirth. The Ājīvika metaphysics was one of a supremely orderly universe33 that appeals to the seeker of objective truth in a material universe determined by natural laws. In this appeal, there is a parallel with the modern scientific outlook. While both the Jains and Ājīvikas advocated inaction / immobility as the solution to the problem of karma,34 the Ājīvika notion of karma was not ethicised like that of the Jains and the Buddhists. As Basham points out, the Ājīvika’s “absolute determinism did not preclude a belief in karma, but for Makkhali Gosāla the doctrine had lost its moral force. Karma was unaffected by virtuous conduct, by vows, by penances, or by chastity, but it was not denied.”35

Note that it is the “moral force”, the ethical aspect of karma that is denied by the Ājīvikas, not karmic causality. Similarly, when we bracket out the ethical aspects of Buddhist karma theory, we are left with causation, exemplified by paṭiccasamuppāda, and the role of karma within that scheme. Buddhist causality recognises the role of non-intentional and external causes in our experience and comprehends the existence of limits on freedom of action, with karma as only one of many causal factors involved in the present and possible future states of the individual (S.IV.230). However, the Buddhist view of karma as a process rather than a substance allowed for a life of action, rather than one of inaction as advocated by the Ājīvikas and Jains. This was achieved by the Buddhist conception of karma as “neither random nor wholly determined… [thereby ensuring that] karma both provided a principle of individuation and asserted the individual's responsibility for his or her own destiny”,36 thus providing a space for volitional action and ethics. Just as it is thought that the Buddha redefined karma as intention in response to the Jainism,37 it is likely that the Buddhist conception of causal karma creating a space for freedom of action was a direct response to the Ājīvikas.

While the Buddhist theory of causality accepts a certain amount of determinism in regard to non-intentional causes, causal karma is limited to intentional action. This does not mean that there is no room for the unintended consequences of intentional action or that the results of our intentional action will necessarily overcome other non-intentional causes or the results of past karma (possibly extending into former existences), but it does allow for the efficacy of intentional action within the larger process of paṭiccasamuppāda. This space for intentional action is used to emphasise
the ability of man to lead a moral life and the ethical dimension of Buddhist karma theory. However, we contend that this is not simply a pragmatic doctrine to justify moral effort, but a profound metaphysical conception of human action as it is presented to us in our experience of the world.

In Buddhism, as well as other Indic karma theories, karma functions as an organic metaphor for causation. A karmic act is likened to the planting of a seed which needs many other conditions like rain, sun and appropriate temperature to bear fruit. In our present experiences, we often see the fruits (phala) of one’s previous intentional actions as well as how circumstances (conditions) beyond one’s direct control may hasten, delay or even halt the process of past acts coming to fruition in one’s present life. One experiences the world as partially determined, fatalistic and beyond one’s control while at the same time having experience of intentions producing mental states and intentional actions producing results, both pleasant and unpleasant. The appeal of karma theory is not solely in its function as a metaphor or as an ethical doctrine; it describes the reality of phenomenological experience.

Karl Potter describes his “Classical Karma Theory of India” as a theory that “would not have held any particular attraction for those whom it did attract were it not that they viewed karmic conditioning to be on the one hand strictly confined to certain features, but on the other hand conditioning which to a great extent permeates our understanding of what we are… If karma were everything or nothing to us, no one would be interested in it.”

The contention that no one could be interested in a theory in which karma was everything or nothing sounds plausible. However, it does not accord with lived experience. Even in a universe in which all actions were determined by karma alone or predominantly by karma in association with other factors, our inability to account for the countless effects of karma and / or these innumerable other factors would cause one to act in the world as if one were free with a potential for moral responsibility. This is an example of Spinoza’s illusory free will as exemplified in Ethics, where he states, “Experience teaches us no less clearly than reason, that men believe themselves to be free, simply because they are conscious of their actions and unconscious of the causes whereby those actions are determined.” Furthermore, as John Searle notes, “We are unable to act against the presumption of free will, as we experience freedom of the will whether we actually possess it or not.” This presupposition of free will indicates that people could still be very interested in a theory where karma is everything. On the other hand, a theory in which karma is nothing would be inconceivable except in the abstract and philosophically uninteresting. Nevertheless, Potter’s statement is correct in reflecting the reality that no Indian philosophy that accepts karma assigns it an all or nothing position. Potter also demonstrates that an important aspect of evaluating any karmic theory is in locating the position of karma along the continuum from “everything to nothing”.

Buddhist karma theory follows the Buddha’s “middle way” (majjhima āpatipadā) in locating causal karma along this continuum. The Buddha acknowledges that there are many factors outside an individual’s control that affect one’s life without
necessarily being the result of karma and that karma has a role in conditioning that same individual’s differences, tendencies and dispositions separately from others. What this means for an analysis of causal karma is that whether it plays a disproportionately large role or an infinitesimally small role in conditioning one’s experience when compared to other factors, the role of causal karma is necessarily of the utmost interest to the Buddhist. This is because karma is the “field of action”, the place in which the individual has control of and personal responsibility for one’s own destiny. While an individual cannot control the innumerable external events that impact one’s existence, even those which are said to have been the result of past karma such as circumstances and place of birth, that same individual does have a measure of control available to him if he chooses to change his intentions and his resulting actions. Using the metaphor from the Bhava-sutta (A.I.223), while a villager has little control over the seed or rain necessary for his crop, he does have a great, if ultimately limited, influence on the field in which the seed is planted. This is the field of causal karma.

An objection to the causal aspect of karma theory is that it is immoral and insufficiently sensitive to the human predicament because it precludes undeserved suffering or because it is a retributive theory that gives men “too much responsibility” for their state of existence. The idea of causal karma as a retributive theory in Buddhism is shaky at best, as karma in the Buddhist tradition acts to set conditions of existence, rather than simply dispensing rewards and punishments (M.III.203). While these conditions may be painful or lead to the affliction of oneself, others or both, they are the impersonal products of a larger causal scheme and these conditions can be changed through personal effort (M.I.414). Only in a world in which there is no suffering, or in which there is a powerful deity or deities apportioning suffering, can the existence of suffering, disadvantage, impermanence and unsatisfactoriness be construed as retributive. The Buddha explicitly taught unsatisfactoriness and impermanence as marks of existence, not as a doctrine of retribution.

The objection to karma giving people too much responsibility for our conditions of existence mirrors Gombrich’s assertion that karma entails a “strict normative doctrine that each man is solely responsible for his own fate could not survive in its full rigour at the behavioural level, because it is too oppressive.” However, this objection is untenable when one realises that the “strict normative doctrine” being objected to is a conflation of ethical notions of karma with causal notions of karma that leads to a shift of emphasis away from causal karma and other causal conditions working to determine one’s present and future conditions and towards ethical responsibility for those conditions. At the behavioural level, karmic effects are usually invoked as an “ultimate explanation of suffering to explain events beyond human control”. Therefore, a non-abstract sense of immediate ethical responsibility is rarely attributed to events deemed to be caused by karmic forces, not only at the behavioural level, but also at the doctrinal level. While man is ultimately responsible for his actions, Buddhist doctrine is well aware of the limits of one’s freedom in the world, and does not ascribe all of these limitations to karmic causes. Instead, doctrine also usually reserves karmic effects for the otherwise
inexplicable. Failure to recognise this leads to an overemphasis on the ethical aspects of karma, acting as the main, if not sole, conditioner of one’s present experience and future rebecoming. We contend that this is an overstatement when one takes into account the role that non-karmic causation plays in conditioning experience. It is this equating of a larger causal process, including causal karma, with the ethical doctrine of karma to be analysed later that leads to objections that karma immorally or unfairly places the burden of all conditions in the life of an individual on the shoulders of the individual.

Owen Flanagan makes this mistake in his separation of karma into “tame” and “untame” varieties. Flanagan deems his tame interpretation of karmic causation, essentially what we refer to here as causal karma, as depicting “the causal intricacies of the lives of sentient beings, especially when they act intentionally, in the right way”. However, he interprets untame karmic causation as “an ontologically unique kind of causation that accounts for how the psyches of future beings are determined by a set of causal processes that involve more than the environmental cum psycho-social-political-economic effects of previous occupants of the earth”. This misinterpretation is based on a fundamental misunderstanding of the metaphysics of *anatta*, evidenced by Flanagan’s statements pertaining to an assumption that a person’s consciousness survives the person’s body (and presumably transmigrates or carries forward a personality of sorts), and that Buddhism attributes causal effects to “immaterial properties” of mind. While a type of substance dualism may be accepted in the Tibetan Buddhism studied by Flanagan, it is not a component of early Buddhism.

It is true that Buddhism has always accepted that volitional action, or karma, conditions one’s present and future existence. However, this should not be overstated to the point where one falls into an extreme of “ethical determinism” in which all conditions of life are caused primarily by an individual’s ethical intentions and behaviours. A belief in limited ethical determinism may be a pragmatically useful metaphor for the ethical doctrine of karma underlying Buddhist morality; however, this ethical formulation cannot be elevated to the status of a deterministic causal principle without distorting the concept of karma. This tendency to overemphasise an ethically deterministic karma at the expense of the larger, interdependent causal processes of dependent arising is attested to in the *Devadaha-sutta* (M.II.214), where the Buddha refutes the theories of the followers of Niganṭha Nāṭhaputta (Jains), who assigned a far more deterministic role to karma in their teachings. That the Buddha would address these questions in such a manner indicates that attributes of Jain karma theory were being conflated with the Buddha’s doctrine even at this early date.

When the causal aspects of karma are put into perspective as one part of a larger process, critiques of it as an inaccurate, immoral or insensitive description of causality are invalidated. This is reinforced by the fact that to achieve enlightenment in Buddhism is to render karma irrelevant. The Buddha does not preach immobility in the manner of the Ājīvikas or Jains who see no other way to render deterministic karma inoperable. Instead, the goal of the Buddha’s teaching is
primarily an ethical one, to remove unskilful intentions (akusala kamma) and replace them with skilful intentions (kusala kamma) (M.I.414).

When we consider causal karma, we usually see it working as an explicatory factor for one’s present circumstances. As Gombrich points out, “karma retains its interest mainly in relation to past lives rather than as a predictor of the results of present conduct”. In this sense, causal karma is often employed as an explanation of disparities in fortune among human beings at the cognitive level, while the ethical dimension of karma is often interpreted, or misinterpreted, as a justification for those disparities at the affective level. The idea that these are two ways of looking at a single set of facts applies not only to the Buddhist concept of two truths, but also to Spiro’s nibbanic and kammatic types of Buddhism, Gombrich’s analysis of the levels at which karma is seen to operate, and also to the differentiation between the causal and ethical doctrines of karma found here.

The concept of two truths is important to the analysis of causal and ethical karma in early Buddhism because karma is can be analysed practically at the level of conventional truth (sammuti sacca) and ultimate truth (paramattha sacca). While causal karma is an unverifiable theory based on authority if postulated as an objective truth or as part of an “ultimate reality”, it moves from the realm of speculative to pragmatic when it is viewed as a relative and conventional truth derived from individual phenomenological experience. This shift from an emphasis on positivist verificationism to a pragmatic analysis allows causal karma to be examined critically while avoiding the creation of unfounded speculative opinions that are derived from outside the context of the classical Indian traditions.

This pragmatic view, when applied to causal karma, answers the objection that karma theory is unrealistic and unverifiable by removing the speculations and metaphysical ideals of an objective reality, a type of Buddhist noumena or transcendence that slips into some interpretations of Buddhist karma; particularly those found in the Abhidhammic “dhamma theories”. Instead, causal karma can be seen as a realistic, if conventional, description of a process within the larger scheme of dependent arising and can be pragmatically verified by its effects in our experience. Rather than misperceiving causal karma as a mystical force, an underlying metaphysical order, general law or other type of noun, karma comes closer to its original meaning as a verb; a verb signifying action within the process of dependent arising and possessing a function leading towards an ultimate end of karma by rendering karma inoperable (an ethical function, not a causal one) and attaining enlightenment. While the transference of karma from life to life may remain unverifiable except through inference for the unenlightened, the karmic explanation of one’s present circumstances and ability to create wholesome (kusala) or unwholesome (akusala) karma can be accepted pragmatically within this lifetime by virtue of its results in bringing one closer to, or further from, the things that lead to the ultimate goal of liberation (A.IV.280).

Liberation is ultimately attained by seeing “reality as it is” (yathābhūta), the seeing of dependent arising. The process of dependent arising follows a method similar to contemporary science, in pursuing a reductionist methodology to reveal the
underlying nature of phenomena. However, Buddhist empiricism limits its reductionism (by virtue of necessity as well as its chosen methodology, given the lack of technology at the time) to what can be directly perceived by the individual. This allows for a coherent and pragmatically useful explanation of a world increasingly revealed by physics to be mostly determined, but in which we must act with the presupposition of free will and in accordance with the open possibility that we can make some free choices and thereby causally influence our own well-being as well as the external world.

The subject of causality itself has been debated philosophically and scientifically for centuries with no clear result, but it is obvious that whether causality exists “objectively and necessarily” or not, humans think in terms of causation. All human rationality is based on notions of causality and the consequent ability to make predictions, and this includes contemporary science. However, it is precisely this cognitive bias towards essentialist ontology with inherent cause and effect relations that stops human beings from seeing the “reality as it is” and leads to the linguistic assignment of inherent nature and substance to processes that are inherently empty (suñña). While Buddhist doctrines, including those of karma and rebecoming, can be demonstrated to be in accord with contemporary science, or at least to not directly challenge science, doctrines like karma or dependent arising will not be proven scientifically, nor do they specifically pose scientific questions, precisely because Buddhism rejects the mechanistic notions that underlie substance metaphysics. Although dependent arising and karma do answer metaphysical questions, they are not merely metaphysical speculations, but instead are descriptions of phenomenological perceptions as experienced by Buddhists over millennia.

In the case of causal karma as a conditioning factor in the process of dependent arising and its effects in the external world, there is little that can be objected to by critics on scientific grounds. The theory of dependent arising is not meant as a definitive description of the physical processes of nature in the manner of the physical sciences. Instead it provides a limited reductionist psychological account and a pragmatically useful description of reality that is used to orient oneself to the fundamental problems of existence at the phenomenological level. In the same way that one does not need to lay out a mathematical proof of gravity to understand that it is dangerous to walk under a scaffold without a hard hat, one does not need to engage in reductionism beyond that provided by early Buddhism\(^55\) to understand how to navigate the world of dukkha. Provided that one accepts the fundamental Buddhist teaching of non-substantiality (anatta) the descriptive processes of dependent arising and causal karma producing effects in external causal relations are logically and empirically supported without contradiction.

**Karma as ethical theory**

Ethical karma is derived directly from dependent arising and the three characteristics of existence, impermanence (anicca), unsatisfactoriness (dukkha) and non-substantiality (anatta). This framework posits a world in flux in which phenomena are interdependent processes in a continual state of arising and ceasing.
This continues without a discernible beginning or end. However, it is indisputable that human beings naturally perceive change as being something that is not “haphazard or accidental”, which leads to the postulation of causal principles or at least Hume’s “constant conjunctions”. In keeping with the empirical nature of Buddhist thought, ethicised karma is based on individual perceptions of the world. In simplistic terms, one perceives that “wholesome/ skilful” behaviour in society tends to bring about wholesome or otherwise positive results for the individual in society and vice-versa. This perception validates both consequentialist and intuitive ideas of a necessarily metaphysical moral order underlying society.

A common critique of the ethical theory of karma is that it is a retributive doctrine and therefore immoral and insensitive. The concept of causal karmic conditioning is undoubtedly a part of ethicised karma. However, in the same way that legal doctrine idealises “blind justice”, karmic conditions that could be classed as “retribution” are theorised to be products of impersonal causal relations and ethicised karmic conditions and therefore, these “consequences” cannot be held to be “unjust” or “immoral”.

Ethicised karma theory presupposes a type of metaphysical moral order in the world. In this supposition of an orderly moral universe, ethicised karma differs little from suppositions of “natural law” and the ethical systems derived from natural law theory, including human rights doctrine. Therefore, it is important to analyse ethicised karma, not as a metaphysical force working physically in an objective and mind-independent reality, but as a psychological and ethical theory that makes use of intuition, metaphor and conceptual/ legal fictions in order to guide human behaviour. It is a fundamental misinterpretation of this aspect of Buddhist karma theory to judge it as something other than a psychological and ethical theory with the aim of replacing unskilful/ unwholesome intentions with skilful/ wholesome intentions and having these intentions guide one’s acts. This is a moral exercise by any measure and therefore cannot logically be deemed immoral. The teaching that karmic conditions can be changed by anyone willing to make the moral effort also displays a great sensitivity to the human condition in direct contrast to the objections raised.

The misunderstanding of Buddhist karma theory as retributive or fatalistic occurs when ethical karma that appeals directly to the efficacy of human intentional action is de-emphasised while causal karma is overemphasised, given a retributive warrant or an overly deterministic role in human destiny. It is only when the balance is tilted away from other factors and towards an overly broad conception of karma that the interpretation of karma as fatalistic or deterministic can be raised as a viable objection. This is not sustainable when causal karma and ethical karma are bracketed in order to properly analyse these aspects of the theory.

This leads to an important point of distinction. Causal karma as found in Buddhist doctrine is related to the monastic practitioner of “nibbanic Buddhism” attempting to gain enlightenment and see “things as they are”, necessarily including the causal aspects of karma, in this lifetime. The monastic has no need of an ethicised karma. A “controlled, ethicised universe is the polar opposite of the solitary seeker for
salvation”, embodied by the follower of nibbanic Buddhism, and it is this fact that results in the development of ethical karma for the use of the lay follower who is not seeking nibbāna in this lifetime and is not bound by the monastic discipline of the Vinaya. It is this ethical karma, or typical karma, rather than doctrinal or causal karma that is the basis for practical morality in Buddhist societies. This difference between two levels of Buddhist practice not only justifies the bracketing of karma as causality from karma as ethics, it makes this bracketing necessary in order to properly understand karma in early Buddhism.

The ultimate irrelevance of karma to the nibbanic practitioner leads to the objection that the Buddhist theory of karma is ultimately egoistic and causes one to turn inward without regard for their fellow man. It is true that Buddhists are encouraged to turn inward in order to understand reality as it is, which includes the contemplation of karma and the process of dependent arising, but this cannot be rightly deemed egoistic or selfish as the inward turn is geared towards the elimination of the illusion of self. The objection that karma theory leads to a disregard of one’s fellow man can be countered by appealing to the very development of the ethical aspect of karma doctrine, which grew out of the need for a Buddhist social ethics for “kammatic” Buddhists living in lay society.

The objection that Buddhist karma precludes undeserved suffering is a meaningless objection. The Buddhist concept of unsatisfactoriness (dukkha) [itself often translated as “suffering”], is considered as one of the three characteristics of existence in early Buddhist metaphysics along with impermanence (anicca) and non-substantiality (anatta). When suffering, subsumed in the larger sense of dukkha, is thought of as a characteristic of existence, one cannot apply judgements such as undeserved or deserved to it. While Buddhism’s ethicised karma theory can indeed be said to place great responsibility on individuals, in fact this emphasis on personal responsibility may be one of the theory’s great strengths; responsibility for the unsatisfactory nature of personal or collective existence cannot be laid at the feet of any individual. It is merely a truth (Sanskrit: satya) of existence or being (Sanskrit: sat). A theorist who accepts the three characteristics of existence cannot judge the effects of impersonal causal/conditional relations as being deserved or undeserved, any more than Job can accuse God in the Old Testament of injustice. To judge existence itself, or a God who serves as the basis for one’s existence, is to illogically assume that existence or God somehow acquires a personal duty to the very individuals whose existence it sustains. This argument cannot be maintained.

The moral problem of “just deserts” has been analysed at the levels of conventional truth (sammuti sacca) and ultimate truth (paramattha sacca) as well. Sidertis addresses this matter, stating:

But such claims as, "Infant and adult are the same person," and "Unless I mend my ways, I will be reborn as a starving peasant," are true only at the conventional level. At the ultimate level we can only describe the constituents of person-series and their causal interrelations. And herein lie the seeds of the illusion of no desert. Because it is ultimately true that there are no persons that endure through distinct life stages, we are
tempted to conclude that ultimately nothing deserves to be rewarded or punished for deeds performed earlier. But in fact it is ultimately false that nothing deserves to be rewarded or punished. It is ultimately false because the concept of desert as we are using it here applies only to persons, and persons are conceptual fictions. Such a claim could be true only at the conventional level of truth. But in fact it is false at that level as well: at least some persons do deserve to be rewarded or punished for their earlier deeds.

Care should be taken in understanding the two claims I have just stated. The Buddhists maintain that at the ultimate level of truth there are no persons and thus the question of desert does not arise. They also claim that at the conventional level of truth at least some judgments of desert are true, since there are persons at least some of whom are responsible for their earlier deeds. This is not to say that we live our lives at two distinct levels of reality, a level of impersonal entities and events devoid of moral significance and a level of enduring persons rich with moral meaning. There is just one set of facts here, which we can describe in either of two ways

Sidertis continues:

Nor should we be surprised that the concept of desert should be applicable only at that level at which we employ the term "person." In making judgments of desert we are interested in affecting the future behaviour of person-series. This aim is frustrated if we are unable to treat relatively long stretches of such series as enduring wholes. Again, the concept of desert is intimately connected with the concepts of agency and responsibility, and these too require us to think of certain causal series as persons. Desert seems to disappear when we speak the ultimate truth only because the illusion of a person disappears, to be replaced by a causal series. Without this illusion, our familiar concept of desert has no application. But the facts remain the same, only our way of describing them has changed.61

Indeed, we agree that the facts remain the same, but the way of describing these facts has changed depending on whether emphasis is placed on causal or ethical karma as well as conventional and ultimate truth. It is likely a simple cognitive tendency to assign a disproportionately large role to karmic processes (probably due to the fact that it is one area in which individuals exercise a large measure of control) while discounting other conditioning factors. It is this tendency, rather than an inherent weakness in Buddhist karma doctrine, that produces most objections. As an ethical theory, karma is rather underdeveloped. This is likely due to the fact that the soteriology trumped philosophy62 in the Buddha’s teaching. In fact, karma is not a prominent teaching in early Buddhist canonical texts,63 which is most likely due to the emphasis on soteriology and obtaining nibbāna in this life that was found in early Buddhism. The later emphasis on doctrines of karma (and rebecoming) in Buddhist Scholasticism can be seen as an attempt to provide more systematic explanations for these doctrines.
Unlike in other karmic theories where the emphasis is placed on deed and activities, Buddhist karmic theory ethicises karma by placing emphasis on desire and intention. Bronkhorst points out that “Buddhism psychologised the notion of karmic retribution.” It is this move from karma as action to karma as intention that is the key to Buddhist soteriology. The usual Indic view of karma as action and latent substance leads to theories of liberation through inaction and austerities to avoid making new karma and to annihilate existing karma. In contrast, the Buddhist theory of karma avoids inaction and focuses on the elimination of mental defilement (kilesa) through psychological practice rather than the elimination of karma via austerities. This is the essence of the Buddha’s “middle way”. Bronkhorst details the difference in Buddhist karma and the continuing influence of non-Buddhist theories of karma that lead to much contemporary confusion:

Buddha’s path to liberation was essentially different from that of his contemporaries, because his concept of karma was different from theirs. I do not know whether he was the only one in his time to think of karma in this way. It seems however certain that his followers kept having difficulties accepting this different concept of karma. This I conclude from the fact that practices and ideas related to the other concept of karma keep on popping up within the Buddhist tradition.

This emphasis on intention as the basis of karma and the resulting ethical goal of cultivating wholesome intention should make it clear that the “law” of karma is not a law of causality along the lines of those found in substance ontologies or the laws of the physical sciences. Instead, ethical karma in Buddhism is better thought of as similar to the “laws of Sri Lanka”, in that they are a manifestation of collective moral intentionality on the part of a community. In practice, an everyday citizen may only have a vague idea of the abstractions of law or the workings of the complex legal mechanisms in their state, while still knowing enough to avoid breaking the law. A jurist would be expected to have a more detailed knowledge of the law and its technical application. The understanding of ethicised karma also differs among different Buddhists, peasants and scholars, laymen and monastics, but it is at its base an agreed upon ethical theory among Buddhists that serves to ground their morality.

Ethical karma is a satisfactory, if underdeveloped, moral theory that provides a strong incentive to do what is good, but is less adequate for deciding what is good. This has resulted in vast differences in the type of social structures and acceptable behaviours tolerated or repressed on karmic grounds. This weakness in ethical karma theory can also result in karma “being forged into a weapon against non-believers” and to justify oppression. However, in this sense ethical karma is no worse than any other ethical school and could be considered to have a stronger social component than more individualised western ethical theories.

A point in favour of ethicised karma is that it encourages the person to consider the consequences not only of their actions, but to cultivate kind intentions towards others. It also cultivates humility and selflessness by encouraging one to contemplate the innumerable factors in the process of dependent arising and how
they necessarily produce consequences in the continual rising and cessation of all phenomena. It also takes away emphasis from abstract ethical thought experiments, instead focusing efforts on producing compassionate ethical actors through the cultivation of wholesome intentions that inform their actions as situations are presented to them.

It is when we analyse ethical karma in Buddhism as a system of hypothetical ethical imperatives that we can dispense with the objections put forth by critics. To throw out the ethicised Buddhist theory of karma is akin to advocating for anarchy because a state’s legal system does not adjudicate every case perfectly. Ethicised karma in Buddhism is no different from Kant’s Categorical Imperative or Bentham’s Hedonic Calculus. Therefore, an idea that Buddhism must reject karma to “modernise” is untenable. It is true that, unlike the doctrine of rebecoming, ethicised karma is not necessarily essential to the practice of Buddhism. However, it does have the advantage of being the ethical theory that accords most closely with Buddhist practice.

**Karma and rebecoming**

Obeyesekere points out that it is easy for Buddhists to deny the existence of supernatural beings, whether they exist or not, because they have little to do with Buddhist soteriology or ethics. It is the position of some Buddhists, especially those raised in the western cultural metaphysics, to believe that the doctrines of karma and rebecoming are also easily denied because they too have little to do with Buddhist soteriology or ethics. This is clearly not true of the doctrine of rebecoming as it is essential to the concept of samsāra, but the case is often made against karma using the objection that karmic continuity is unrealistic and unverifiable and that “the theory can only hope to explain events by invoking God or fate since a simple connecting of actions with results cannot possibly succeed given the complexity of nature”.

In addition to the replies to the objection from fatalism found earlier in this article in the section on causal karma, another reply from the point of Buddhist karma theory is the great value placed on birth as a human being. Implicit in canonical references to the rarity of rebirth as a human being (S.V.456; S.II.263) is the idea that human beings “who regularly act selflessly are few in number”. At the practical level of ethical karma, this idea emphasises the importance of behaving ethically in order to gain another human birth, or even birth as a deva in the heavenly realms for practitioners of “kammatic Buddhism”. Ethical incentives such as these, whether ultimately “real” or not, once again indicate that Buddhist karma doctrine cannot be considered fatalistic. Likewise, dependence on God is easily dispensed with in Buddhist tradition due to the lack of a creator God and the relative lack of power among supernatural beings in Buddhist cosmology. While the Buddha himself likely believed in gods, these beings neither serve as the ground of being nor as “karmic bookkeepers” dispensing reward and punishment according to a karmic system that they are themselves bound to.
The only aspect of karma that is difficult to pin down with any degree of certainty is karma as a mechanism of continuity between distinct existences, although even here the issue is not found in the ideas of causal or ethical karma but in the metaphysical question of what constitutes continuity. If continuity is simply a matter of “the succession of the last moment of consciousness in one life by the first moment of consciousness in the next”, a concept that follows directly from non-substantiality (anatta), no objection to karma as continuity can be sustained.

It is anatta that allows Buddhist rebecoming to withstand scrutiny on empirical, inferential and phenomenological grounds. A logical and purely naturalistic account of rebecoming can be put forth provided that one accepts anatta. Accepting that one is not in possession of a permanent self or soul (M.I.138) is not an overly controversial stance from the contemporary point of view, and once this is accepted, the idea of rebecoming follows logically.

For the average unenlightened person, there is no memory of previous existence. Furthermore, there is no memory of our earliest childhood and surprisingly few specific memories of the years following. As Spinoza pointed out, we only know our date of birth and who our parents are because they are reported to us. In fact, one only knows they existed for the first few years of our lives because one is told that they existed. This validates the idea that self and personal identities are constructed entities in keeping with anatta and dependent origination. Phenomenologically, it is as if one came into existence from nothingness. The physicalist would also accept this description as accurate, and is likely to add that one shall return to nothingness at the moment of death. On this we can agree, but the physicalist overstates his claim when he deems this nothingness to be eternal oblivion. If one’s “self” emerged and existed without his knowledge from apparent nothingness once without choice or explanation, there is no good reason to believe it cannot happen again. With that experience in mind, it is more likely that a succession of ultimately empty, constructed “selves” will emerge again and again from apparent nothingness rather than be consigned to eternal oblivion.

The naturalist objection to this is that the newly emergent “selves” are different from the “self” one is now. However, in making this objection, the naturalist is postulating the existence of a substantial self from what was already demonstrated to be a mere conventional description. The naturalist will usually make this move by equating “self” (implicitly or explicitly) with consciousness and consciousness with the brain that eventually dies. This objection ignores the fact that consciousness is explicitly stated not to cross over or transmigrate. This use of consciousness as a “self” is essentially the same as a “person” (puggala) in the sense used by the Pudgalavādins (a heretical, personalist school of Buddhism). The Pudgalavādins were universally opposed by the other schools of Buddhism, and this indicates that early Buddhism held to anatta quite strongly. This objection also misunderstands the Buddhist conception of continuity in claiming that newly emergent selves are different from previous selves. As James McDermott points out, “it is sufficient
that the locus of points in the causal chain of existence maintains its identity for the possibility of *kamma* to be explained.\(^{78}\)

In early Buddhism and modern Theravāda, the causal chain of existence is continuous, as no intermediate state (*antarābhava*) between death and rebecoming is admitted. The final moment of consciousness of one existence is immediately followed by the first moment of consciousness of the next, just as one conscious state follows another in our present experience. The necessarily conventional, nominal identity of this causal chain is given by its karma. Karma does not “cause” the chain of existence. Karma merely names it and is one factor among many that condition the chain of existence which is without discernible beginning and without foreseeable end. This is *saṃsāra*.

It is easy to see why the Buddha would place such a high priority on escaping *saṃsāra*. While rebecoming is often taken by those raised in the western cultural metaphysics as a consoling belief, the Buddhist vision of potentially infinite existence in a continual cycle of birth and death over which we have very limited control (by way of our karma) is anything but comforting. The circumstances in which we find ourselves now are impermanent and there is no guarantee that the king in one life will not be a pauper in the next. Even the Buddha lived in animal states at various points according to the *Jātakas*.\(^{79}\)

Even the physicalist accepts that actions in the present have effects in the future. The mistake the physicalist makes is in thinking \(x\) will not be there to experience those future effects, instead it will be \(y\) or \(z\). What the physicalist fails to grasp is that the first-person perspective of \(x\) is not qualitatively different from the same phenomenological perspective as \(y\) or \(z\). Since Joe Q. Person is simply a nominal designation for the continuity of experience that he thinks of as his “self”, when Joe dies today, the last moment of “Joe consciousness” is followed by the next moment of “Jane Doe consciousness”, potentially in vastly different circumstances. However, just as the previous consciousness known as Joe Q. Person, erroneously, but quite certainly, came to take the chain of conscious events/ states, with each event / state conditioning the next as his “self”, so too will Jane Doe. There is no difference in first-person perspective, only in the conventional description of it.

Given the doctrine of *anatta*, a cycle of becoming and rebecoming without beginning and potentially without end is the inference to the best explanation when compared to an eternal supernatural reward / punishment or eternal oblivion. The eternal existence of a substantial “self” or the annihilation of a substantial “self” are unlikely given the experience of existence in which the substantial self is illusory. Thus, a phenomenological and naturalised conception of rebecoming in early Buddhism can be put forth and supported strongly against modern theories of annihilationism when the doctrine of *anatta* is accepted. The last question to be addressed is how karma fits into this scheme.

The idea that actions, both intentional and non-intentional, produce effects is uncontroversial. Therefore, causal karma is quite secure. Control over actions we do intentionally, our karma, is likewise uncontroversial and by following the Buddha’s
path through focused attention one is able to make an ever-larger number of one’s actions intentional, and presumably wholesome. In keeping with the Buddha’s “psychologised” karma, these intentional and wholesome karmas will lead one to a wholesome state of mind and increase mental and physical well-being. A mentally and physically healthy, moral person is more likely to act in ways that better his surrounding environment and it is likely the person will reap some benefit from this.

However, there remains the question of the acts of others, and how their wholesome and unwholesome actions will impact on other beings. It is obvious that the actions of others impact on one’s own life, but this does not make these impacts karmic. This is due to the aforementioned psychologising of karma whereby karmic effects are generally subjective. Another response to this issue arose in the 20th century with the idea of “collective” or “group” karma. Collective karma is appealing in the sense that it implies that one should make the world a better place and encourage others to do so as well, as one will almost certainly inhabit it again. However, the idea of collective karma de-emphasises the ethical doctrine of personal responsibility and does not fit with the early Buddhist efforts directed at attaining nibbāna in this life. Instead, collective karma appears to be an innovation that may come to be accepted in Buddhism in the future, much like the transfer of merit.

When considering the impacts of karma on future existences, it is also important to remember the three types of karmic result attributed to Potter’s Classical Karma Theory of India: birth, length of life and type of experience. If karmic results are limited in this manner, the time of one’s death necessitates the time of one’s rebecoming, which must occur without a break in continuity. In the same way that the child of a husband and wife is one of hundreds of millions of potential children (dependent on which sperm and egg meet and at precisely what moment), one’s birth as a karmic result is necessarily conditioned by the moment of one’s death. The time and circumstances of birth determine one’s genetic make-up, abilities, dispositions, material circumstances and countless other factors, which in turn condition one’s type of experiences in life; all of these factors then condition one’s time of death and therefore one’s time of rebecoming, as the cycle continues.

Causal and ethical karma as presented in this model of rebecoming are relatively uncontroversial, but in what other ways do these karmas carry over into the next life? The Buddha himself classified this as one of the four incomprehensibles (acinteyya) in the Acintitā-sutta (A.II.80). Karmic continuity has been claimed by some, notably K.N. Jayatilleke, to have been verified empirically on the basis of the extrasensory perception of the Buddha. However, this is not a satisfactory answer to the problem of karma from the perspective of modern philosophy or science. While there may be few, if any, sources of wisdom on par with the Buddha, this argument is not philosophically satisfying because it is an appeal to authority disguised as an appeal to empirical verification. This attempted appeal to empirical verification is unsurprising given the prominence of logical positivism at the time Jayatilleke was writing.
The influence of the positivists was particularly strong in post-colonial South Asia and many prominent intellectuals, including Jayatilleke himself, were educated in the United Kingdom under prominent philosophers of the school. Although the influence of logical positivism waned by the 1970s and even Jayatilleke was forced to concede that Buddhism could not conform to the positivist ideal of dissolving all metaphysical questions, his anti-metaphysical, verificationist account of karma still holds considerable sway in Theravāda Buddhist scholarship. However, the scholars who have attempted to verify karma have failed to provide a wholly satisfactory answer. It should be recognised that there is a tradition in Indian philosophy of proofs being derived from the reliable authority (Sanskrit. \textit{aptavacana}) of a person (Sanskrit. \textit{aptapurusa}) “free from attachment to the world and beyond affection and hatred,” but such proofs are not generally accepted in modern philosophy. Therefore, a comprehensive and coherent account of the Buddhist conception of karma here must depend on what we can infer from our present analysis.

We have established that sequential continuity of conscious experience is enough to establish a firm link between causal and ethical karma and rebecoming. However, there are other issues brought forth by our naturalisation of the rebecoming process, including that the extent of the contribution of karmic causation to rebecoming is ultimately unknowable and inexpressible. While we can demonstrate that some karmic contribution to rebecoming does exist and it is an area over which we have direct control and for which we have moral responsibility, the connection between karma and the escape from the cycle of rebecoming is uncertain. If the ultimate goal of Buddhism is \textit{nibbāna}, fundamentally “all other births are void of value”. However, the idea that attainment of \textit{nibbāna} entails escape from the cycle of rebecoming must ultimately be taken on faith in the Buddha’s teaching, as it cannot be demonstrated. This opens the door logically to the possibility of \textit{samsāra} as potentially inescapable. This is a conclusion even the Ājīvikas found unpalatable, but it cannot be glossed over.

Interestingly, it is the Ājīvikas who seem to have grasped this possibility of a potentially unending cycle of birth and death in the days of the Buddha. Therefore, it is likely that the problem of there not being a demonstrable link between attainment of \textit{nibbāna} and an ending of the cycle of birth and death was likely known to the earliest Buddhists. In fact, although the Ājīvikas had faith in eventual liberation, they also believed the emancipated soul could be brought back into \textit{samsāra} for future rounds of determined existence. The Ājīvika account of \textit{samsāra} differs substantially from the Buddha’s in postulating the existence of souls, but this does not negate the logical clarity of their exposition of a potentially inescapable cycle of birth and death. Perhaps this is why the Ājīvikas were considered such dangerous rivals to the Buddhists that the Buddha himself is presented as declaring of Makkhali Gosāla that he knows of no other person acting more for the harm, ruin and suffering of both gods and men (A.I.33).

One potential answer to this possibility of an infinite and inescapable \textit{samsāra} may have emerged from within Buddhism itself in the concept of the Bodhisattva. The
Bodhisattva is concerned with the liberation of all sentient beings and vows to continue in *samsāra* until this occurs. Yet, since *samsāra* is necessarily without beginning and most likely without end, this means that by taking the Bodhisattva path, one is implicitly acknowledging the likelihood of never-ending existence in *samsāra*. The vow of the Bodhisattva could be interpreted as a volitional act (karma) of acknowledging the inescapable nature of the cycle of birth and death while at the same time taking some measure of control over it. Interestingly, many Mahāyāna tendencies arose concurrently with what McDermott calls “the move-away from the arahant as man perfected” among many Buddhists. This movement away from the idealised arahant is not only an embodiment of the influence of an increasingly lay-oriented popular Buddhism; it also mirrors the Ājīvika conception that, potentially, even emancipated souls return to the cycle of existence. This Ājīvika idea that “liberation could not be forced” and that liberation may not be a final liberation after all, suggests that the concept of the Bodhisattva could be a response to both the logical implications of the Buddhist theory of rebecoming and possibly the Ājīvika theory itself. It is difficult to demonstrate this due to the fact that the Ājīvikas left behind no records, but we contend that this potential connection should be explored further.

**Conclusion**

It must be concluded that the functions of karma as causality, ethics and a conditioning factor in the process of rebecoming are strongly supported in our evaluation of the theory. There is no need to stretch the verification principle to “prove” the existence of karmic continuity. Instead, karma can be considered instrumentally as an ethical tool and empirically as part of a larger causal process verified through phenomenological means.

The Buddha’s revolutionary teaching of non-substantiality coupled with a naturalistic theory of rebecoming is more plausible than the annihilationist assertion of eternal oblivion put forth by modern critiques from the west. Furthermore, the method of bracketing the causal and ethical aspects of Buddhist karma theory allows one to examine karma without falling into linguistic traps or resorting to decontextualized speculations. This type of analysis focuses on the perspectives of early Buddhism and provides us with ways of better answering contemporary objections to Buddhist karmic theories.

*Paṭiccasamuppāda* and *anatta* are the key principles underlying Buddhist process metaphysics and both can be verified experientially. While these fundamental doctrines of Buddhism accord with scientific truth, it must be remembered that they are not, in and of themselves, scientific truths about an objective world outside us. Instead they are phenomenological descriptions that serve as soteriological tools with a goal of attaining enlightenment.

Ethicised karma is of fundamental importance to Buddhism in the modern world as a conceptual tool to encourage moral behaviour and as a foundation for a system of Buddhist ethics. It should not be understood as an actual physical or metaphysical force / moral order. Causal karma is best understood in relation to the process of
Karma’s link with rebecoming becomes problematic only when there is an over-emphasis on ethical karma applied at the expense of the causal aspects of karma within the framework of *paṭiccasamuppāda*.

The ethical aspects of karma, such as the belief that one is in control of his karma and responsible for his actions, should be further developed, even though the effects of skillful karma on future lives are uncertain when other conditioning factors are added into the equation. In spite of this, we believe this analysis confirms the central importance of karma within Buddhist philosophical thought while providing more satisfying answers than are found in the antiquated perspectives of Buddhist modernism as influenced by logical positivism and the innovations in some strands of western Buddhism.

Having focused on specific aspects of Buddhist karma theory, we can use this model to address particular concerns as they arise instead of attempting to fit these concerns into an overly broad and unwieldy conception of karma. We have also situated karma in the realm of the practical and demystified it to better support the theory functionally in a modern context. This is especially important as most criticisms of the doctrine of karma are based on the imposition of western metaphysical concepts onto Buddhist thought in order to advance a view of an nihilationism that was condemned explicitly by the Buddha over 2500 years ago.

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End Notes

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5 Gombrich, What the Buddha Thought, 34.
9 Obeyesekere, Gananath. Imagining Karma, 1-71.
13 In reality, it could be claimed that Buddhism as practiced in Asia today is completely kammatic, while western and other Buddhists with backgrounds based in non-Asian cultural metaphysics also appear to be practicing a kammatic version of Buddhism, even going so far as to completely discard the doctrines of karma and rebecoming in order to create a “therapeutic Buddhism”. It is likely that only an infinitesimally small number of Buddhists are actually trying to obtain nibbāna in this life through the practice of “nibbanic Buddhism”.
16 Gombrich, What the Buddha Thought, 52-55.


I follow Prof. Asanga Tilakaratne in extending the definition of early Buddhism to include Nāgārjuna for the same reasons as those given in *Nirvana and ineffability: A study of the Buddhist theory of reality and language*. (Kelaniya: Postgraduate Institute of Pali and Buddhist Studies, 1993): 10.


*Yaḥ patīyasamutpādaḥ śūnyatām tāṃ pracākṣmahe, sā prajñaptir upādāya pratipat saiva madhyamā”*

Ibid., 339.


Ibid., 202.

Potter, Karl. “How many karma theories are there?”, 231


Ibid., 6.


Basham, A.L..*History and Doctrines of the Ājīvikas*, 225.


Ibid., 51


Potter, Karl. “How many karma theories are there?”, 231


Ibid., 78.

Ibid., 78.


Gombrich, “Buddhist Karma and Social Control,” 216
The reductions found in Abhidhamma and dhamma theory are also useful to the meditator in conceptualising the workings of dependent arising. However, the problem of language resulted in metaphysical ideas of “substance” being brought into Buddhism in spite of protestations of non-substantiality. It was this tendency that inspired Nāgārjuna’s dialectic approach and orientation towards “emptiness” that is more in line with early Buddhist doctrine.

Some would dispute the metaphysical nature of morality, but so long as it cannot be demonstrated that there is a naturalistic grounding for morality in the physical sciences I do not consider these objections to be convincing. Likewise, I see no move away from fundamentally metaphysical conceptions of morality in “humanistic” ethics, but a simple substitution of “humanity” for “God-given”, “natural” or “rights-based” metaphysical moral orders.

In spite of its relatively common use, I generally avoid the referring to a “law of karma” in order to emphasise the fact that karma is not a “law” and does not depend on a type of general law of moral causation regarding action and / or intention.
79 Ibid., 7.
80 Ibid., 87.
81 Ibid., 151.
83 Ibid., 110.
     Kalupahana, Karma and Rebirth, 28.
87 Kalupahana, Karma and Rebirth, 44-45.
91 Basham, A.L. History and Doctrines of the Ājīvikas, 258-261.
94 Bronkhorst, Karma, 15-16.
Applying Motivational Strategies Used by the Buddha in Teaching English as a Second Language

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Applying Motivational Strategies used by the Buddha in Teaching English as a Second Language

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Abstract
Motivation is a predominant factor that decides the effectiveness of second language learning. The psychological hold that motivation possesses increases its significance in second language learning. Because of this vital impact of motivation as a factor that variously affects other affecting factors too, the linguists and scholars perpetually study the various aspects of motivation and its effects on second language learning. They have introduced various motivational strategies, yet owing to the diminishing nature of motivation with time and age, it is a field that should be continuously updated. It is partly the teachers’ responsibility to utilize innovative motivational strategies in the teaching process. The Buddha, who was undoubtedly the greatest teacher ever, has used various motivational strategies to inspire people who were absolutely blind and ignorant of spirituality due to being fully engrossed in worldly pleasures. Accordingly, the current study examines the motivational strategies used by the Buddha and studies the possibility of applying them in teaching English. In spite of the contradictory objectives that the two disciplines have, motivation being a psychological factor can be commonly applied in any context.

Keywords: Motivation, Motivational Strategies, the Buddha, Teaching English

Introduction
Motivation is a principal contributing factor in second language learning. Motivation, in addition to providing primary drive for second language (L2) learning, props up the learning process without being affected by other external factors. Not only that, the other factors like attitudes towards L2, learner beliefs, and learner preferences are also affected by motivation to a certain extent and even with the provision of a favourable learning environment, appropriate curriculum, and learning situation, when lacking learner motivation the goals of L2 learning cannot be achieved. Language aptitude dominates in creating differences in language learning but motivation supersedes aptitude. Because of this central importance of motivation in L2 learning it has become a predominant focus of researchers and scholars. Further, being a psychological construct, motivation is a complex factor compared to the other factors, and this complexity has also necessitated widening the body of research related to it. And despite being widely researched and theorized about, the fast-developing nature of the field of L2 constantly creates research vacuums in the field urging the teachers and researchers to undertake further research. Motivation needs to be researched in further depth, updating and broadening its avenues, especially because motivation diminishes as the learner ages. Even though Buddhism and language learning are distinct
disciplines, the Buddha as the world’s foremost teacher, has used various motivational techniques to impart his extremely profound philosophy to various categories of people and to attract them to his philosophy. With regard to the heterogeneity of the two disciplines, the motivational strategies employed by the Buddha could be used effectively in teaching English.

**Research Problem**

The research problem is to study whether the motivational strategies used by the Buddha can be applied in teaching English as a second language.

**Objectives**

The objectives of the study are to;
- study motivational strategies used by the Buddha in teaching the Dhamma
- examine their applicability in teaching English as a second language

**Methodology**

This study was conducted as a library research collecting data from various sutras in the Buddhist canon. In analyzing data, qualitative research methods have been used, and as for the procedure of the research, first the motivational methods used by the Buddha were collected referring to Tripitaka, PTS and other related books. After analyzing the collected data, they were further considered in order to look for the applicability of them in teaching English.

**What is Motivation in L2 Learning?**

Motivation lies in the bottom of any work in which people engage, giving them energy to complete the work effectively. Motivation in daily life differs from motivation in language learning. In Gardner’s terms motivation in L2 learning is; “The extent to which an individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity.” While Gardner basically defines motivation showing its major function in learning an L2, Dörnyei and Ottó capture its complexity in their definition of motivation as, "the dynamically changing cumulative arousal in a person that initiates, directs, coordinates, amplifies, terminates, and evaluates the cognitive and motor processes whereby initial wishes and desires are selected, prioritized, operationalized and (successfully or unsuccessfully) acted out.” The changing nature of motivation and its fluctuating effects relative to the output of language learning shows the fundamental significance of motivation on learning. It shows that motivation is the key factor that decides the effectiveness of learning a language. In Gardner’s terms a “motivated learner” in the Socio-educational model of Gardner is defined as one who is: (a) eager to learn the language, (b) willing to expend effort on the learning activity, and (c) willing to sustain the learning activity. Accordingly, the important emphasis is that motivation is more than simply arousing interest but it is also involved in sustaining that interest and investing time and energy into putting the necessary effort to achieve certain goals. It is clear that sustaining motivation is
important to the learning process and the learner should dedicate some time and labour in line with motivation in achieving the goals of learning. These definitions of motivation encapsulate its subtlety as well as its vital importance in effective language learning.

The expectancy theory of motivation also identifies motivation in terms of the learner’s expectancy of success and the value the individual attaches to success in that task. The theory emphasizes that motivation is inherent in people and what is important is the factors and impetus that the learners gain to sharpen the inherent traits of motivation. So, this support and sharpening have to be done by the teachers. The attribution theory supports the expectancy theory assuming that the past failures and successes will determine the level of motivation of the learner and their future achievement. Another influential theory called Self-efficacy theory refers to motivation with regard to the learner’s judgements on their own capabilities. Goal theories discuss motivation in relation to goals. Setting goals and attempting to achieve them show the level of motivation in the learners. Self-Determination theory is an expansion of Gardner’s intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. In the light of Self-Determination theory, the motivation is intrinsic in the learner to achieve self-satisfaction whereas motivation towards achieving goals, awards and other external benefits is extrinsic.

All these theories conceptualize diverse aspects of motivation, demonstrating its complexity as well as the its fundamental importance in L2 learning.

Further, it is clear that the researchers have concluded that teachers are one of the most determinant factors of L2 learners’ motivation. Studies have been set out to investigate how as the counterparts of teaching-learning process, the teacher and the learner become the staple sources of motivation. Further investigations have been made on how teachers positively affect the learner’s motivation. Among the roles that teachers play in L2 classes are as an initiator, a facilitator, a motivator, an ideal model of the target language speaker, a mentor, a consultant, and a mental supporter. Each role of the teacher, in addition to teaching, affects the learner’s success of achieving the set targets of L2 learning. Because of this vital role played by the teachers in learning an L2, it is the teacher’s responsibility to employ strategies to motivate the learner and to help the learner to persist with motivation. As a result, the teacher’s creativity in using motivational strategies and updating them are essential in order to maintain the learner’s motivation as unfluctuating towards the achievement of learning targets. For the teachers, the learner’s motivation is a key variable that frequently is of concern and presents a challenge in language classrooms. Dörnyei and Csizer (1998) have studied the use of teaching strategies to motivate learners among Hungarian teachers of English and “assigned 51 motivational strategies and studied the significance attributed to each strategy by the teachers and how often teachers employ each strategy in their classes”. So, the large existing body of research on the field of motivation has to be constantly updated in line with current trends of language learning because the teachers should know how to “whet the students’ appetite” and attract their attention to learn the
language\textsuperscript{18}. Instructional interventions are applied by the teacher to elicit and stimulate the student’s motivation and the self-regulating strategies that are used purposefully by individual students to manage the level of their own motivation.\textsuperscript{19} Among various motivational strategies employed by the modern linguists as explained by Williams and Burden (1996) are to recognize the complexity of motivation, be aware of both initiating and sustaining motivation, recognize people as individuals, develop internal beliefs, enhance intrinsic motivation, build up a supportive learning environment, and give feedback that is informational, etc. Dörnyei (1994) also states the importance of setting a personal example with the teacher’s own behaviour, creating a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere in class, developing a good relationship with the learners, increasing the learner’s linguistic self-confidence, promoting learner autonomy, etc. In addition to these motivational strategies, every language teacher throughout the world uses diverse arrays of motivational strategies in their teaching. Introducing these motivational strategies Dörnyei (ibid) agrees that these motivational strategies are “not rock-solid golden rules, but rather suggestions that may work with one teacher or group better than another and that might work today but not tomorrow as they lose their novelty.” Accordingly, the learners get fed up with language learning when the teachers use the same method over a long period. This highlighted quest for motivational strategies broadens the research opportunities of the field. Accordingly, creating new motivational strategies is a pivotal aspect of teaching.

**Motivational strategies used by the Buddha**

The Buddha, as the best teacher ever, was able through his teaching methods to attract the masses to his fresh and broad philosophy. In addition to his “extraordinary ability” as the Buddha, the motivational strategies he has employed also supported to a great extent the popularizing and realizing of his philosophy by others. A study of the Buddhist canon demonstrates various strategies used by the Buddha on various occasions in motivating and educating people. Even though all those methods cannot be used in language teaching there are highly effective techniques that can be used in language teaching. Some of these methods have been suggested by modern linguists as a result of broad researching. But what is extraordinary is that the Buddha had already used these methods more than 2500 years ago. Among the many motivational strategies of the Buddha, a few are listed below that have been selected from various places of the Buddhist canon. They are, preachen the Dhamma based on individual differences, preaching the Dhamma depending on the level and understanding the appropriate time, preaching based on the background of the disciple, preaching by understanding the attitudes of the disciple, explaining through synonyms, using repetitions, starting with disciples’ ideas and finally presenting the Buddha’s view based on that, using questions and answers, holding discussions, explaining through stories, using analogies as illustrations, showing appreciation of the disciples, showing weaknesses and using visual aids. The following section discusses the applicability of the above motivational techniques in teaching English.
Motivational strategies in Buddhism in teaching English

1. Preaching the Dhamma based on individual differences

The Buddha has used various teaching methods based on the individual understanding of the disciples and devotees. The Buddha had a special knowledge to understand others’ minds, their level of Paññā and the strength of merits. So, understanding the capacity of the various individuals, the Buddha changed his teaching methods respectively. For instance, in helping Ālavaka, Kisagotami, Ven. Nanda, and Ven. Cullapantaka realize the Dhamma, the Buddha uses diverse techniques and strategies depending on the person and situation. In the Ālavaka Sutta, the Buddha silently obeys the orders of the demon Ālavaka several times, and later on when the Buddha rejects his commands the demon goes berserk and asks questions. Hearing Buddha’s answers to his questions, he realizes the Dhamma. Kisagotami, who goes mad after the death of her only son behaves crazily and one wise person who knows that the Buddha is the best teacher directs her to him. Understanding her mentality, the Buddha selects the best way to motive her and to make her realize the truth. Going in search of a handful of mustard seeds to cure her son, she understands that the death is destined to everybody. The Buddha employs another strategy in control of Arahant Nanda’s worldly desires. The Buddha takes him to heaven and by showing the divine mates has him compare the beauty of Janapada Kalyani with divine mates and gradually he understands the truth and rejects sensual pleasures. The Buddha motivates Cūḷḷa Panthaka Thero by letting him rub a piece cloth and helping him understands anicca. These few examples out of many explain how the Buddha attracts various individuals to his great philosophy using various strategies. Even the people who were totally distracted, utterly helpless, utterly neglected, etc. find refugee in the Buddha and his unconditional compassion relieves them all.

In applying this to teaching English, it is obvious that at the beginning of the English teaching, the teacher should have a prior knowledge of the levels and standard of the students. A pre-test is acceptable in understanding the level of the students and in grouping the students. As the Buddha followed individual methods to motivate his disciples, the English teachers can change teaching method, material and content depending on the level of the students. Even though these methods are followed nowadays in many instances, it is clear that what the Buddha has seen from his knowledge can never fail and could be effectively used in language teaching as a highly methodical technique.

2. Teaching the Dhamma at the appropriate moment

All the above examples also evidence how the Buddha waits for the right moment and correctly judges how to use the right method. Another excellent example is in the Aṅgulimāla Sutta. Aṅgulimāla is brought into full control before he commits an ānathariya kamma by killing his mother. This approach of the Buddha has been developed into language teaching by Krashen in the Natural Order Hypothesis of the Monitor Theory, suggesting that the language structures should be taught from
the easier to the harder. This is also a good way of creating motivation by starting teaching with simple rules and then continuing to the complex ones as the students improve.

3. Preaching based on the students’ background

In the Kasi Bhāradvāja Sutta,23 when Bhāradvāja asks the Buddha to plough and plant his own food and eat, the Buddha replies, “Faith is my seed, austerity the rain, wisdom my yoke and plow, modesty is the pole; mind the strap, mindfulness is my plowshare and goad”, explaining with imagery extracted from paddy field and farming. Here the Buddha explains the path to nirvana and because of the simplicity and applicability of the imagery, Bhāradvāja understands it easily. In the same manner, English teachers should teach English based on the situation and taking examples from the relevant situation. Normally, many English grammar books are written based on the British and American life context. In teaching to Sri Lankan students, this rule should be applied to our context by taking examples from our daily lives and surroundings. Further, using authentic material is interesting and motivational. For example, in teaching English to young people, material like songs, love stories, adventures, biographies, etc, that catch their interest can be used motivationally. In teaching English to Buddhist monks, interesting Jātaka stories, stanzas and sutras can be used to inspire, as they are familiar and comprehensible.

4. Explaining through synonyms, similes and repetition

The Buddha uses synonyms in abundance in simplification and illustration of the complex facts. Talking about the hell he uses “apāyam”, “duggathin”, “vinipatam” and even English teachers can use synonyms in order to confirm that every student understands what she/he is teaching. Using similes is also another effective technique of motivation. The Alagaddupama Sutta (MN) is about clinging to views, which is conveyed by using two similes, the simile of the water-snake and the simile of the raft. Taken together, these similes focus on the skill needed to grasp Right View properly as a means of leading to the cessation of suffering, rather than an object of clinging. Further, sense desire is compared to a bare bone, lump of flesh, torch of straw, pit of burning coal, a dream, borrowed goods, fruit bearing tree, slaughter house, stake of swords, etc. Likewise, in English teaching, when similes are taken from the surroundings it will help reduce monotony, boredom and the reluctance of the students. In the same manner, the Buddha repeats the facts in many Suttas like he does in Dhammacakkappavattana24. By repeating the important facts, the teachers will be able to attract the students to the lesson. Sometimes repetition may be boring for the clever students but repeating with synonyms will enhance the vocabulary while refreshing the memory of students.

5. Using questions and answers/ discussions

Student-centered teaching has become the norm in second language teaching in the modern world. But the Buddha had developed this method more than 2500 years ago, which is valid even today. In his preaching the Buddha constantly asks questions from others, he replies to others’ questions and has discussions with them.
to encourage them to practice the Dhamma. These are good techniques that can be used to get active participation of the students in the lesson. When the students get answers to their questions, when they interact with the teacher, and engage in pair and group activities, these activities and learning strategies will intensify their interest and motivation.

6. Offering new designations

Offering designations is another highly motivational approach that the Buddha practiced in attracting people to his philosophy. The Buddha offered various designations in his order of monks and nuns, that confirmed the organization of the Order while motivating the novices to join the Order. For instance, in Cula-Vedalla Sutta the Buddha praises Dhammadinna the nun and appoints her as the foremost Dhamma teacher among his nun disciples. In the same manner, English teachers also can appoint subject leaders and group leaders, encouraging them and creating a sense of responsibility to learn English.

7. Using visual aids

The modern language trainers emphasize the importance of using visual aids in language teaching. The Buddha has used visuals for making the matters clearer. For instance, the Buddha removes Magandhiya’s excessive pride by making her see how extremely beautiful women lose their beauty as they gradually become older. Here, the Buddha uses visual aids, demonstrating its great effect on learning.

8. Pointing out mistakes

The Buddha pointed out the mistakes and faults of the Bhikkus whenever he saw any in them. The Buddha has the special ability to see past lives and shows how to correct the mistakes made during the long cycle of births and deaths. Error correction is essential in teaching a second language. The theorists of the L2 teaching have pointed out the ways of correcting errors and agree that it is clear that errors should be shown at the very moment they are made before allowing them to fossilize. When the errors are pointed out, the learners will be motivated to correct them, thus enhancing language improvement.

Conclusion

As far as the above discussion is concerned, it is clear that the motivational techniques used by the Buddha in attracting various types of people to his philosophy, can also be successfully applied in teaching English. The effectiveness of these strategies can be increased by applying them in teaching English, especially to Sri Lankan learners and to Buddhist monks. Accordingly, the current study concludes that the motivational strategies used by the Buddha can be effectively utilized in teaching English.
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End Notes

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2 Gardner,1985; Clement and Dornyei, 2001
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4 Munoz, 2006, Dornyei, 2009
5 Gardner, 1985, p. 10
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21 Therī Gāthā
22 MN
23 SN
24 SN
25 MN
Buddhism and Reconciliation: Linking Buddhist Analysis of Conflict Transformation to the Western Notion of Post-war Reconciliation

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Buddhism and Reconciliation: Linking Buddhist Analysis of Conflict Transformation to the Western Notion of Post-War Reconciliation

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**Abstract**

The Western notion of post war reconciliation suggests an approach which consolidates peace, breaks the cycle of violence by preventing the possibilities of the use of the past as the seed of renewed conflict. It brings about the personal healing of survivors, the reparation of past injustices, the building or rebuilding of non-violent relationships between individuals and communities, and the acceptance by the former parties of the conflict to a common vision and understanding of the past. Since the Buddhism is a well known religion, with nonviolence and empathy, it provides a strong foundation for peaceful coexistence among ethnicities. The paper argues that the western notion of conflict analysis and conflict transformation is in line with the Buddhist analysis of conflict and violence due to three main reasons. Firstly, Buddhism shows the potential of breaking down the vicious circle of violence. Secondly, by rejecting the structural violence, Buddhism provides space for the restorative justice. Thirdly, Buddhism promotes forgiveness, which can be an essential feature of reconciliation in post conflict societies. Hence, Cambodia provides a promising initiative for using Buddhism as a tool of post conflict peace building.

1. Introduction

Buddhism is a religion well known for its teachings about nonviolence and compassion. Hence, Buddhism can be well utilized in the post-war peace building since the Theravāda Buddhism provides a strong foundation for peaceful coexistence. Analyzing the above theme, this paper has been divided into four major parts. In the first part of the paper, it discusses theoretical dimensions on reconciliation. The second part discusses utilization of religion as a tool of post conflict reconciliation. In the third part, it analyses the potentiality of using Buddhism as a mechanism of post-war peace building and reconciliation. In the last part, the paper analyses the Cambodian Experience of Reconciliation.

2. The Concept of Reconciliation

Reconciliation is a broad concept and there is no uniformity among the academics on the definition of reconciliation. Johan Galtung admits defines: “Reconciliation is a theme with deep psychological, sociological, theological, philosophical, and profoundly human roots – and nobody really knows how to successfully achieve it” (Galtung, 2001: 4). Simply, reconciliation can be defined as an approach which consolidates peace, and breaks the cycle of violence by preventing the possibilities of the use of the past as the seed of renewed conflict (Jayathilaka and Rajendran, 2010:78). Ledarach argues that reconciliation is the meeting point of four elements, justice, truth, mercy and peace (Ledarach, 1997). In his view,
reconciliation is a process of internal peace building by learning from the past and not to carrying conflict into the future. The IDEA handbook defines reconciliation as “a process through which a society moves from a divided past to shared future” (Bloomfield et al., 2003: 12). And, reconciliation can generally be viewed as the building and/or restoration of relationships in divided societies (Smith, 2005: 156). Lederach views reconciliation as a way of relationship building. In his words, “Reconciliation is the first and last about people and their relationships” (Lederach, 2006). As he says, reconciliation is a process aimed at building and healing the torn fabric of interpersonal and community lives and relationships. Reconciliation is a societal process. It should involve mutual acknowledgment of past suffering. In this way, reconciliation assists for changing of destructive attitudes and behavior into constructive relationships toward sustainable peace (Brounéus, 2007:6).

Among the various literatures on reconciliation, this study views it as a step of bringing ‘Positive Peace’. Johan Galtung invented the term ‘peace building’ and it means that achieving positive peace after the conflict. By positive peace, it intends to address the ‘structural violence’. According to him, the visible part of a conflict is just a tip of a huge ice berg. The hidden part is larger than the visible tip. In general, the attention is always paid to the visible part. However, Galtung emphasizes the importance of going beyond the visible surface level, when expecting a long-lasting resolution (Jayathilaka, 2011:574). By following the above theoretical facet on structural violence, some theoreticians hold a view that post conflict stage aims to bring structural adjustment for addressing the structural violence. ‘Development’ has been considered as a way of bringing structural adjustments in the post conflict societies. Consequently, peace building aims at durable peace solutions and sustainable development approach in post conflict situation. Immediately after the conflict, the peace building focuses on economic recovery, removal of small arms from the society and rebuilding of governance institutions and launching of reconciliation, releasing of land for agriculture, rebuilding of social capital (Bloomfield et al, 2003).

The post-conflict situation is considered as one of the important stages where the peace building activities are carried out. Nicole Ball (1996) has mentioned that the post conflict society’s healing of social wounds created by war and giving a chance for coexistence are the most important steps. In his view, during a war, the growing trend of the conflict wastefully exploits resources and reduces the long term potential for development. While reducing the potential of a country, it reduces the cooperation among people. Ball highlights the importance of national reconciliation as a priority of peace building tasks. More positive relationship-building will hopefully develop with time, but just the “negative peace” of an absence of overt violence between the previously warring communities may well be enough to hope for. It is also the minimally fertile ground in which the fragile reconciliation process, having been planted, must now be nurtured and maintained.

There are a number of examples from contemporary conflicts, where war has ended but peace has not been secured. In Norbert Ropers words “giving up the
reconstruction might also be interpreted as giving up the right to return to resettle and to rebuild the homes and livelihood for all those affected by war” (Ramsbotham et al. 2005:376). Here it is said that there is a stage of withdrawing from the post-war reconstruction which helps to distinguish that from post-war peace building. That process is generally called ‘intervention reconstruction and withdrawal’. Ramsbotham et al. (2005) offers a post-war reconstruction/ withdrawal matrix which is a combination of reconstruction and reconciliation approaches. This is composed of different phases such as security, law and order, government, and economy and society respectively.

Reconciliation is formed with four dimensions as follow;

- Accepting the status quo → ending violence
- Correlating accounts → overcoming polarization
- Bridging opposites → managing contradictions
- Reconstructing relations → celebrating differences

Justice is the core of reconciliation (Rigby, 2001). There are three kinds of justice which help to legitimize rule of law in the society again. Those are called to be public justice, rectifactory justice and distributive justice. Neither the concept of peace nor that of justice is as monolithic as often made out (Ramsbotham et al. 236). According to some analysts story telling is an essential element of the reconciliation since it really works in inter-ethnic conflicts (Bloomfield et al., 2003). This helps people who were part of the conflict in voicing their experience and healing from the past conflict which culminates in a better future. Hence, storytelling is a democratic, interdependent, grassroots practice which leads social cohesion for which external parties should not intervene in order to stop such storytelling. Further, it promotes cross cultural understanding and builds peaceful communities (Lederach, 2005).

2.1 Religion and Reconciliation

Among the different views of the meaning of reconciliation, some of definitions clearly hold religious connotations (Brounéus, 2007). Academics, who identify forgiveness as the basic element of the reconciliation view religion as a fruitful tool for having a good reconciliation process. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of South Africa was based on idea of forgiveness which was originated from Christian Philosophy (Bloomfield et al., 2003). Reconciliation between God and humanity through Jesus is a fundamental theme in the Christianity (Brounéus, 2007).

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the TRC’s chair tried to promote the forgiveness in reconciliation processes on the religious basis. According to him, Christianity can be well utilized for the post-war peace building with a reconcile approach since the forgiveness is a core value of it. In 1999 he published a paper titled ‘No future without forgiveness’ by analyzing the connection between religious beliefs and
reconciliation. For him culture of forgiveness is extensively rooted in the most of religious beliefs. He brings the example of the notion of ‘Ubuntu’ in the African culture. Tutu says that a person with the African world-view of Ubuntu is open and available to others as the religion provides space for everyone. As Tutu says, “A self-sufficient human being is subhuman. I have gifts that you do not have, so consequently, I am unique--you have gifts that I do not have, so you are unique. God has made us so that we will need each other. We are made for a delicate network of interdependence” (Battle and Tutu, 2009:35). For Lederach religious leaders play a pivotal role in the post-war peace building since they can act as the “critical yeast” in the peace process. In the term of critical yeast he refers to key actors in the civil society who can work as mediators for helping to establish informal meetings between political opponents. For him academics, trade unionists, business community and religious leaders have this ability and the capacity of mobilizing the masses into the peace (Lederach, 2005:36).

2.2 Using Buddhism as a Way of Reconciliation

When analyzing the potentiality of using Buddhism as a mechanism of post-war peace building, I would like to bring three main points. Firstly, Buddhism shows the potential of breaking down the vicious circle of violence. Secondly, Buddhism promotes forgiveness which can be an essential feature of reconciliation. Thirdly, by rejecting structural violence Buddhism provides space for the restorative justice in the post conflict societies.

Buddhist explanation of violence is very much in line with the Galtung’s definition of violence. He identifies two types of violence as visible and invisible violence. A deep structure that is based on asymmetry of power between different segments of society with denial of the basic needs of some groups leads to structural violence, including discrimination and exploitation. The social fault-lines, much like geologic fault-lines, are where violence occurs most readily. Violent deep structures include slavery, colonialism, and patriarchy. One of major characteristics of the structural violence is the denial of the Basic Human Needs (BHN) of certain groups. Survival, Well-being, Freedom and Identity are the basic human needs and no one can exist without these. Therefore these are fundamental and non-negotiable (Galtung, 2005:10-15). Structural violence can also occur in a society if institutions and policies are designed in such a way that barriers result in lack of adequate food, housing, health, safe and just working conditions, education, economic security, clothing, and family relationships. People affected by structural violence tend to live a life of oppression, exclusion, exploitation, marginalization, collective humiliation, stigmatization, repression, inequities, and lack of opportunities (Galtung, 2005:14).

Buddhist analysis also shows the relationship between structural violence and direct violence. One of Buddhist dialogues, the ‘Cakkavattisihanāda-sutta’ well analyzes the linkage between the poverty and the violence. If the income is not distributed reasonably among all the communities, the potential for crimes increase among the poor and as a result, communities encounter various forms of violence. In other words poverty can be a one of main root causes of the conflict. Even though rulers
provided rightful shelter, protection and defense, if a ruler failed to provide financial assistance to the poor they tend to commit violence (Collins 1998: 606). In such a context, traditional ruling structures led by the kings use counter violence for suppressing these violent uprisings. This will lead to a never ending circle of violence. There is a causal chain between these two phenomena. When poverty increases, theft increases; because theft increases, weaponry flourishes; because weaponry flourishes, murder increases; because murder increases, social values are decreased (Palihawadana, 2006).

This *sutta* says the decreasing of social values lead to a miserable and inhuman society.

“When people will see each other as animals; sharp swords will appear in their hands and they will murder each other, each thinking this is an animal.” (Collins 1998: 607) According to Galtung structural and cultural violence lead to dehumanization and can create an inhuman situation. Various atrocities in war occur as a result of this dehumanization (Galtung, 2005).

Galtung’s suggestions on the transformation of this violent context are in line with the Buddhist suggestions. In one hand, violence created by war and the impact of the war atrocities should be addressed in the post-war stage. On the other hand, structural violence should be overcome by bringing necessary structural adjustments. When healing the wounds created by war atrocities, it is necessary to develop empathy among the communities. The Buddha suggests this violent context can be transformed through self-reflection. ‘Let me kill no-one, let no-one kill me’ (Collins 1998: 606–11). ‘It is because we have undertaken Bad Deeds that we have for so long been murdering our (own) relatives. Why don’t we start doing good?... Why don’t we abstain from killing?’ (Collins 1998: 606–11). This is the beginning point of transcending the vicious circle of violence. According to Galtung, it is vital to bring structural adjustments in the post conflict stages for protecting the basic human needs of the certain groups (Galtung, 2005). According to the Buddhist analysis also it is important to bring social justice in the society for achieving the positive peace. As an example, income of the country should be distributed fairly among all the communities (Palihawadana, 2006).

Therefore, reconciliation aims to break a cycle of violence and ameliorates peaceful co-existence. In the ‘Protracted social conflicts’, there are few chances to see it as a ‘Constructive Way’. Protracted conflicts always take place in a ‘Destructive Way’, destroying the whole society. Thus, the economic cost, human cost, physical cost and mental cost of war is incalculable. Therefore, when the war finishes, the post war environment creates a challenging space for reconciliation to be initiated. Desmond Tutu remarked “There is no shortcut or simple prescription for healing wounds and divisions of society in the aftermath of sustained violence.” (Bloomfield *et al*, 2003:02). Conflict ravaged societies are full with challenges, opportunities, threats and weaknesses. Thus, if the issues are not addressed properly definitely there is chance of re-escalation of violence. So, the reconciliation process is the biggest factor to prevent such renewal of violence. It builds the road from ‘Negative
peace’ to ‘Positive peace’. Root causes of conflict must be addressed maximally in this stage. By analyzing causes, which lead to violence, and transforming violent contexts into non-violent social realities, Buddhism too shows the potentiality of breaking down the vicious circle of violence.

Moreover, Buddhism provides a vast space for forgiveness. The Buddha has viewed victory in war as a breeding ground for the hatred. Hence the Dhammapada demonstrates that Buddhism has a sound basis in denouncing violence and its condemnation of violence. According to the Dhammapada, the relationship between violence and human reactions in the face of suffering can be viewed in different ways. Firstly, all sentient beings fear being the objects of violence. When any form of violent act is directed towards human beings, they become frightened. Secondly, all living beings value their own lives. Fourthly, when one is faced with violence, one has to reflect that one’s situation is similar to that of others because of the fact that as human beings we want our own lives to be secure. Finally, the motivation to avoid violence and protect the lives of others comes from the conviction that one’s life is also ‘sacred’ or precious (Palihawadana, 2006). Further, the Buddha emphasized the fact that hate never yet dispelled hate. Therefore, there is no crime like hatred. “The slayer gets a slayer (in his turn), the conqueror gets a conqueror . . . Thus by evolution of kamma, he who plunders is plundered” (Palihawadana, 2006:68). Forgiveness is the only way which has the potentiality of ending hate. “Those who attempt to conquer hatred by hatred are like warriors who take weapons to overcome others who bear arms. This does not end hatred, but gives it room to grow (Treasury of Truth, Verse 5).

Some analysts nevertheless doubt Buddhism’s capacity for usefulness in the reconciliation process. “The Bible’s concept of justice emphasizes interpersonal reconciliation, and focuses on compassion, mercy and forgiveness. In contrast, in the Buddhist tradition for example, compassion rather than forgiveness is stressed.” (Brounéus, 2007:14). Further he shows the fact that Buddhist Middle Path contradicts the Christian notion of compassion. The fundaments of the Buddhist Middle Path are acceptance, tolerance, and above all compassion. He refers a study done by Lambourne in Cambodia. One interviewee has explained that it would not be applicable to Cambodian tradition where, in accordance with Buddhism, “people who have committed crimes will always be held responsible for them – there is no God who will ultimately forgive” (Lambourne, 2002 in Brounéus,2007:15). Further some interviewees in this study suggested that truth commissions are a Christian concept as they are based on “confessing and forgiving” (Lambourne, 2002 in Brounéus,2007:15). However, some of interviewees in the same research argued on the same lines but drew the opposite conclusion, saying that it would be easy for Cambodians to forgive because they believe in “Karma and rebirth”. People need not bother about punishing the perpetrators because they will be punished in their next life according to their Karma (Lambourne, 2002).
3.3 The Cambodian Experience of Reconciliation

Over the past thirty years, Cambodia experienced a protracted social conflict which resulted in a number of politically violent movements, counter violence from the state and creation of a violent culture in all over the country. Under the Khmer Rouge government led by Pol Pot from 1975 to 1979 Cambodia was recognized by the world as a ‘Killing Field’. It is reported that around 1.7 million were killed by war atrocities, disease and starvation during this time period. Further, out of an estimated population of eight million, five million were displaced (Fitzgerald, 1997). Under this regime, Pol Pot tried to abolish utterly the existing culture by destroying all the institutions of state - the education, financial and legal systems - as well as religious and other social institutions.

In December 1978 the Vietnamese Army entered Cambodia and, mounted a decisive military campaign against Democratic Kampuchea forces, which resulted in a new Vietnamese-sponsored government being declared in January 1979. However, the conflict still continued during the 1980s among the various groups. The Paris Peace Agreements of October 1991 were meant to end the war in Cambodia. Due to the atrocities done under the regime of Pol Pot, Cambodian Buddhism was hard hit, with the country's 3,600 temples totally shut down, and many members of what had once been a 60,000-strong Buddhist clergy victimized and slain. Maha Ghosananda was one of the key figures among those who were remaining after this genocide (Poethig, 2002).

Dhammayietra (The Pilgrimage of Truth) was born in 1992 under the spiritual leadership and the guidance of Rev. Maha Goshanandha. Dhammayietra movement has aimed at teaching and exemplifying active nonviolence as a way to peace and reconciliation. The first accomplishment of the movement was to allow hundreds of refugees who had been living in camps along the Thai–Cambodian border return to their homeland as they marched for four weeks from Battambang in the north-west to Phnom Penh in 1992 (Khemacaro, 1998). Thereafter Dhammayietra movement conducted annual peace walks through armed conflict zones. Maha Ghosananda led the first of the Dhammayietra Walks for Peace and Reconciliation in emulation of Lord Buddha, who led his disciples to places of strife and warfare while practicing meditation and preaching detachment from suffering and the way to peace. Maha Ghosananda tried to develop a vision and mission based on the Buddhist philosophy for the reconciliation process for the Cambodia. His vision is well reflected by the following statement made by him

“The suffering of Cambodia has been deep. From this suffering comes great compassion. Great compassion makes a peaceful heart. A peaceful heart makes a peaceful person. A peaceful person makes a peaceful family. A peaceful family makes a peaceful community. A peaceful community makes a peaceful nation. And a peaceful nation makes a peaceful world. May all beings live in happiness and peace”

(Ghosananda,1992)
Dhammayietra program was not being restricted only to the Walks in the conflict zones. It was associated with a lot of planning and preparation for various activities. Under the Dhammayietra program there were many grass-roots trainings in conflict resolution and nonviolence for many Buddhist monks, nuns and others. Trainings have included theory and practical disciplines of nonviolence and conflict resolution. Rev. Maha Ghosanandan utilized a Buddhist concept called khanti (forbearance) in these trainings. This concept has been associated with prevention of conflict or violence (Ahimsā). Preparation for the 1996 walk included twelve training workshops in eight provinces for about 600 people. Maha Ghosananda tried to create a bridge of peace for bringing together people who had been separated by war. When a procession led by Maha Ghosananda passed through villages, thousands, of people are said to have followed it (Fitzgerald, 1997).

Though the Dhammayietra program basically focused on post conflict reconciliation, it also focused on sensitive socio-political issues from time to time. As an example, it brought attention to a wide range of peace threatening issues such as deforestation and the use of land mines. For Maha Ghosananda, the reconciliation process should not be limited to dealing with the direct violence but structural factors also should be addressed. For him there are three gaps that should be taken into consideration such as the material gap, social gap and relationship gap.

(Ghosananda, 1992) If the reconciliation process is unable to deal with these gaps there is always a threat that violence might happen. “... retaliation, hatred and revenge only continue the cycle of violence and never stop it... Reconciliation does not mean that we surrender rights and conditions, but rather that we use love. Our wisdom and our compassion must walk together. Having one without the other is like walking on one foot; you will fall. Balancing the two you will walk very well, step by step ”(Ghosananda, 1992).

In his campaign, Rev. Mahagoshananda further utilized the concept of ‘Santipheap’ (Non-violence and peace). Traditionally, Buddhist understandings of Santipheap begin with inner peace, borne of compassion and loving-kindness in the individual mind. Through example and teaching, peace within the individual radiates outward to the family, to the community, to the nation and to the world. Peace is also tied to the individual practice of the five Buddhist precepts against killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, wrong speech (including lying), and intoxicants. Breaking the precepts causes conflict. In this way, Rev. Mahagoshananda emphasized that the fact that a peace builder’s role might be to conduct education toward the goal of a critical mass of peaceful individuals within society (Poethig, 2002).

According to some critiques, the non-accommodative nature of Buddhism, which was caused as a result of the Buddhist monastic tradition, has not provided any room for development of a civil society characterizing such virtues as pluralism and universalism (Seneviratne, 1999). However, with the arrival of UN peace approaches in Cambodia, many Buddhist monks have enthusiastically learned and taught about human rights. As an example, Senior Cambodian monk, Ven. Yos Hut Khemacaro, reconciles Western ideas of public participation, democracy and human
rights with compatible ideas found in *Dhamma*. He inclines the western concept of good governance and democracy with the essence of Buddhist teachings. As he says, the Buddha himself advocated democracy within the community of monks, citizen participation in government and opposition to tyranny (*Morris, 2000*). Buddhist nuns and Buddhist women also had a positive role in the post war reconciliation attempts in Cambodia (*Adams, 2011*). Further, in Cambodia, Rev. Maha Ghosananda was an ideal leader since he has had a profound influence upon movements for peace around the globe through his advisory role in such NGOs as the International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB), the Buddhist Peace Fellowship (BPF), and the Ponleu Khmer, the citizens’ advisory council to the Cambodian Constitutional Assembly. Further he has been a leader in inter-religious communication, as evidenced by his attendance at the sixth World Conference on Religion and Peace held in Italy in 1994 (*Poethig, 2002*). The peace work he inspires even resulted in his nomination for the Nobel Prize four times between 1994 and 1997.

The peace process in Cambodia nevertheless faced a number of challenges. Firstly, there was a lack of influential and active Buddhist leaders to encourage and direct Buddhist education. Some Buddhist leaders were seen by the public to be working for a political party and were thought to have a low level of Buddhist education. Some of the key monk leaders suffered from the lack of knowledge of Buddhist philosophy. Even though some Buddhists monks made efforts for the post conflict peace building in Cambodia, some of efforts carried out by the ordinary citizens hadn’t a proper knowledge of Buddhism. Further the importance of spiritual education was not being well identified by certain NGOs and funding agencies. The resistance from the government was also identified as another limitation on the peace process. Though some Buddhist monks had great skills in conflict resolution the political situation of the country prevented their entering the field of conflict resolution (*Sotha, 2001*). However, when their peace attempt faced challenges due to the highly-politicized conflict in Cambodia, Buddhist leaders tried to develop a mechanism for handling them. The *Dhammayietra* movement has had to guard peace walks from the presence of government soldiers protecting the walks, which they found attracted shots that killed some walkers in 1994. Thereafter walkers were asked not to wear anything that could be taken to be military clothing, political insignias or political slogans. To avoid politicization, Yos Hut Khemacaro advised them to follow the “Middle Path”, the traditional metaphor for the Buddhist way - neither joining the fight nor hiding from it. By mentioning the Middle Path of non-violence and compassion, he provided a model for solving undoubtedly political problems outside the adversarial framework implicit in partisanship. As these ideas arise from traditional Khmer concepts, it was very helpful for Cambodian people to find their own peace instead of feeling that their problems can only be solved by outsiders (*Morris, 2000:52*).
4. Conclusion

This paper highlights the fact that Theravāda Buddhism has a negative view towards violence. Therefore, the vision of a peaceful life portrayed in Buddhism is useful for contemporary Buddhist communities in understanding the nature of human conditioning and in realizing the danger of emotional involvement in conflicts. The Buddhist message can be transform violent contexts into more positive actions that are suitable for creating positive peace. In this way, Buddhism can be a useful tool for the post conflict reconciliation. In this task greater attention should be paid to broadening the training of Buddhist monks regarding conflict transformation and peace building. Further, since there is an insistent need of Buddhism to go beyond the ethnic boundaries, and interreligious linkages should be further strengthened. Finally, Buddhist scholars also have an ethical as well as an academic responsibility to promote the clear meaning of the Buddhist message, which creates genuine peace in society.

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The Authenticity of the *Anupada-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*

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The Authenticity of the Anupada-sutta of the Majjhima-Nikāya

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Abstract

Objections have been made to of the authenticity of the Anupada-sutta of the Majjhima-Nikāya. In the Anupada-sutta, the Buddha recounts how his disciple, Ven. Sāriputta went through all the jhānas in the period of two weeks and attained nibbāna. Significantly, this sutta seems to indicate that Ven. Sāriputta was open, aware and relaxed in each of the jhānas and that he was able to have insight culminating in nibbāna while practicing jhāna. His experience indicates a union of samatha and vipassanā. This is a very different approach from the method outlined in the Visuddhimagga, so this sutta is key for those who are restoring the suttas as the main instructional guides for samatha-vipassanā meditation. Due to the widespread assumption in the world of Theravāda that the Visuddhimagga clarifies the original meditation instructions of the Buddha and is true to the sutta account, the Anupada-sutta creates a problem as it does not fit into the scheme of the Visuddhimagga. Thus, the Anupada-sutta is often ignored by meditation teachers or considered to be inauthentic by scholars who propound the Visuddhimagga. The consideration of inauthenticity is based on five arguments, only the first of which seems to bear close examination. That argument alone is not conclusive. Therefore, our conclusion is that the Anupada-sutta bears the same degree of authenticity as most other suttas in the Majjhima-nikāya, and should not be dismissed as inauthentic. With the sutta holding up positively as an authentic teaching of the Buddha in the light of critical examination, it is to be taken as an important text in understanding the original meditation method as taught by Gotama Buddha.

The Question of Authenticity

In their book The Authenticity of the Early Buddhist Texts, Bhikkhu Sujato and Bhikkhu Brahmali define authenticity in relation to Buddhist texts as follows: ‘An authentic text is one whose provenance is what it says it is. In this case this means that texts that purport to be the words of the historical Buddha and his immediate disciples were in fact spoken by them.1

Scholars differ about how much of the Pali Canon is considered to be authentic according to this definition, but a broad consensus has been reached that there was, in fact, a historical Buddha, and that much of what is in the sutta-piṭaka and vinaya-piṭaka is either his direct teaching (or that of his immediate disciples) or an edited version of that teaching. Within the sutta-piṭaka, with which we are concerned in this paper, exactly how much of the suttas can be directly attributed to the Buddha and how much to later editors is an open question. Certainly, no single part of the sutta-piṭaka can be proven to be part of the original teachings, but that does not mean there is not authenticity to the texts.2
Typical of the critical attitude maintained by mainstream scholars is the view of A.K. Warder,

“Do the ancient texts available to us contain any of the actual teaching of the Buddha? Many of them purport to do so, but there is a certain amount of conflict among them in matters of doctrine, and in any case, we are not prepared to accept them at their face value without checking their authenticity.”

Warder is calling for careful checking of authenticity, which is fair enough. Much recent research, bolstered by the comparison of the Pali suttas to the Chinese Āgamas, have shown the likelihood of a core of fairly reliable Early Buddhist Texts (EBTs) that can be considered authentic. The translator of the Dīgha-nikāya, Maurice Walsh, states it in such a way that most scholars can agree,

“Certainly, not all parts of the Pali Canon are equally old or can literally be taken to be the Buddha’s precise words. This is plain common sense and does not mean completely rejecting their authenticity. Recent research has gone far to vindicate the claim that the Pali Canon holds at least a prime place among our sources in search for ‘original’ Buddhism, or, in fact, ‘what the Buddha taught’…Personally, I believe that all, or most doctrinal statements put directly into the mouth of the Buddha can be accepted as authentic, and this seems to be the most important point.”

The majority of the material in the four Pali nikāyas and some small portions of the Khuddaka-nikāya (such as Sutta-nipāta) are now taken to be authentic by most scholars. This would include the Majjhima-nikāya among which suttas is found the Anupada-sutta, the subject of our study in authenticity.

However, within the Majjhima-nikāya itself and even within particular suttas, there may be material that is early or late. So the inclusion of the Anupada-sutta in the Majjhima-nikāya is a point in its favor in terms of consideration as early (authentic) material, but such inclusion alone is not conclusive. We must have a closer look. Before doing so, let us consider the message of the Anupada-sutta and have a look at its importance in terms of Buddhist theory and practice.

The Importance of the Anupada-sutta

The question of the authenticity of the Anupada-sutta, which is sutta 111 of the Majjhima-Nikāya, is not only of academic interest. This sutta is an important instructional sutta as pertains to Buddhist meditation. Whether it is considered to be an authentic teaching of the Buddha or not may affect how it is used (or ignored) in meditation instruction.

The Anupada-sutta tells of how the Buddha recounted the attainment of arahantship by his renowned disciple Sāriputta in the brief time of two weeks. The Buddha explains how Sāriputta went through all of the jhānas and thereby attained nibbāna. The Buddha tells how in each successive jhāna, Sāriputta is aware of the arising and cessation of phenomena. By not clinging or identifying with what arose in his mind, he purified his mind and attained deliverance. Near the end of the Anupada-sutta,
the Buddha gives the following description of Ven. Sāriputta to the assembled monks,

“Bhikkhus, rightly speaking, were it said of anyone: ‘He has attained mastery and perfection in noble virtue, attained mastery and perfection in noble concentration, attained mastery and perfection in noble wisdom, attained mastery and perfection in noble deliverance,’ it is of Sāriputta indeed that this rightly should be said.” 7 8

From the account given by the Buddha of Ven. Sāriputta’s experience in each of the jhānas, and from the above quote, a number of interesting points emerge. First, in each of the jhānas, Ven. Sāriputta is aware and open to the arising of phenomena. Second, by not clinging to what arises, he gains insight leading to liberation. Ven. Sāriputta is having insight while in jhāna. Third, Ven. Sāriputta is practicing both samādhi (rendered as ‘concentration’ in Bhikkhu Bodhi’s translation) and insight at the same time. In other words, his practice is a union of samatha and vipassanā.

When Ven. Buddhaghosa wrote the Visuddhimagga, he separated samatha from vipassanā, and created a practice where they would be done in a sequential manner. He laid out a method of samādhi that was a state of intense concentration on one object to the exclusion of all else. He developed a vocabulary to describe the successive stages of intense concentration, words such as ‘access concentration’. The result of the Visuddhimagga method is a state of absorption concentration not described in the sutta-piṭaka and clearly not the method described by the Buddha in the Anupada-sutta.

In contrast to the method of the Visuddhimagga, the account given in Anupada-sutta makes it clear that Ven. Saripputto’s practice as recounted by the Buddha and recommended by him to the assembled Bhikkhus is a union of samatha and vipassanā, which he practices synergistically at each step of the way, through the jhānas, leading to nibbāna. In the Anupada-sutta, the samādhi practiced by Ven. Sāriputta is not a state of intense concentration to the exclusion of various phenomena, but rather open, aware, and relaxed, allowing phenomena to arise, and without attaching to such appearances, allowing phenomena to disappear.

In general, Theravādin meditation has followed the method of the Visuddhimagga and it has become standard method of meditation to gain power of concentration through the practice of samatha, followed by insight or vipassanā practice. In fact, samatha practice may be skipped over altogether in ‘dry vipassanā’. 9 Typical of the approach taken by methods which are primarily based upon the Visuddhimagga rather than the suttas is the method taught by Ven. Uda Eriyagama Dhammajiva, which can be considered a variation on the Visuddhimagga-based methods that have arisen in Myanmar such as that of Ven. Mahasi Sayadaw. He lays emphasis upon the absorption of the mind in the object of meditation, which in this case is the in and out flow of the breath (ānāpānasati). He explains as follows,

“With well-established mindfulness, a yogi will have sustained attention on the in-breath and on the out-breath. Throughout the period of meditation, the noting and observing mind will be directly focused on the object. When mindfulness is aligned with the object, a yogi has a certain
level of security and hindrances such as sensual desire (kāmacchanda), anger (vyāpāda), sloth and torpor (thīna middha), doubts (vicikicchā), and restlessness and worry (uddhacca kukucca), will no longer be present, because the mind is now occupied with the object of meditation.”

This can be considered Ven. Buddhaghosa’s great innovation, to lay out a “Path of Purity” based upon strong concentration (absorption concentration) based on strongly holding the object of meditation to the exclusion of all other phenomena. That this is only a temporary sort of purity based upon repression of the hindrances is clear from William Hart’s book *The Art of Living*, which is based upon the teaching of Mr. S.N. Goenka who learned the method from Sayagyi U Ba Khin in Myanmar. Mr. Goenka shows how the mindfulness of breath is to be used to gain strong concentration. Referring to ānāpānasati, he explains,

“...This is not a breathing exercise; it is an exercise in awareness. The effort is not to control the breath but to remain aware of it as it naturally is: long or short, heavy or light, rough or subtle. For as long as possible, one fixes the attention on the breath, without allowing any distractions to break the chain of awareness.”

When a student asks Mr. Goenka why it is that *samādhi* alone is not sufficient for liberation, Mr. Goenka answers thusly,

“...Because the purity of mind achieved through *samādhi* is achieved primarily through suppression, not elimination of conditioning...These latent impurities must be removed in order to reach liberation.”

In contrast to methods based upon absorption concentration and suppression of the hindrances, the *Anupada-sutta* demonstrates a method taught by the Buddha and used by Ven. Sāriputta in which there is no suppression and no absorption concentration. Other suttras also follow this method, but the *Anupada-sutta* is especially explicit in showing the method of open, aware *jhāna* which results in insight and liberation.

An example in the *Anupada-sutta* of Ven. Sāriputta’s open and aware meditation while in *jhāna* is the account given by the Buddha of the fourth *jhāna*. The Buddha recounts Ven. Sāriputta’s experience as follows:

“...Again, bhikkhus, with the abandoning of pleasure and pain, and with the previous disappearance of joy and grief, Sāriputta entered upon and abided in the fourth *jhāna*, which has neither-pain-nor-pleasure and purity of mindfulness due to equanimity.

And the states in the fourth *jhāna*-the equanimity, the neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling, the mental unconcern due to tranquility, the purity of mindfulness and the unification of mind; the contact, feeling, perception, volition and mind; the zeal, decision, energy, mindfulness, equanimity, and attention- these states were defined by him one by one as they occurred; known to him those states arose, known they were present, known they disappeared. He understood thus, ‘There is an escape beyond,’ and with the cultivation of that attainment he confirmed that there is.”
Upon examining this passage, it is evident that Ven. Sāriputta, while in jhāna, is open and aware. His samādhi is of the nature that phenomena rise, abide, and cease, while he maintains full awareness without indulging in craving or identifying with what appears. He is also abiding in ‘mental unconcern due to tranquility’, in other words he is relaxed. His mind while in jhāna is thus open, aware, and relaxed.

This *sutta* may be puzzling to those who view or experience jhāna only through the method of absorption concentration. It is generally held that jhāna is a state of supreme concentration in which phenomena are excluded due to the power of concentration on one object. This is clearly not the case in this *sutta*, and there are claims that the Anupada-sutta represents not the original teaching of the Buddha, but an add-on from a later time. In other words, it is viewed by some scholars and practitioners as being not authentic, and that its characterization of the jhānas as being levels of understanding and states of mind in which the meditator is open, aware, relaxed and balanced are not an authentic teaching of the Buddha, nor presumably do they represent the actual meditative experience of Ven. Sāriputta.

The Anupada-sutta is not the only place in the *sutta-piṭaka* where an open, aware, relaxed jhāna is described. In the Ānāpānasati and Satipaṭṭhāna suttas there are also teachings by the Buddha concerning this type of jhāna. We can designate these jhānas as ‘tranquil wisdom jhānas’ in order to differentiate them from the jhānas associated with absorption concentration methods. So pervasive is the influence of the Visuddhimagga method within Theravādin tradition, that it is assumed that jhāna is no other that a state of absorption concentration. It is to correct this that the term ‘tranquil wisdom jhāna’ is introduced, but in fact, there is no other type of jhāna described in the *sutta-piṭaka* other than tranquil wisdom jhānas, so the phrase is only necessary as a corrective measure.

In keeping with the teachings in Ānāpānasati and Satipaṭṭhāna suttas, the Anupada-sutta recounts an open, aware, relaxed state of mind which can also be termed a ‘tranquil wisdom’ jhāna. This *sutta* is very instructive and explicit in some of its teachings and proves to be quite helpful to the meditator following the method of tranquil wisdom jhānas such as meditators who are following the Tranquil Wisdom Insight Meditation (TWIM) method. Thus, this *sutta* assumes not only theoretical but also practical importance to meditators who are following the *sutta* instructions for meditation rather than the instructions as given in the Visuddhimagga.

The question of whether the jhānas as taught by the Buddha are a state of deep absorption concentration as opposed to an open, aware, relaxed mind is a notion that can affect how one views the Anupada-sutta. If the account of absorption concentration jhāna as given in the Visuddhimagga is in accord with the instructions in the *suttas*, then the five aggregates will not appear to the deeply absorbed meditator. Thus, in this view, the Anupada-sutta would not make sense.

However, the Anupada-sutta as well as the Ānāpānasati and Satipaṭṭhāna suttas indicate that the meditator is, indeed, aware of the five aggregates. Anupada-sutta is especially clear in this account of open awareness of the five aggregates into the arūpa jhānas and this inconsistency with the account given in the Visuddhimagga
can be confusing to those who assume the *Visuddhimagga* is in accord with the *sutta* teachings. This inconsistency between *Anupada-sutta* and *Visuddhimagga* may lead those who assume the *Visuddhimagga* method to be the correct one to view the *Anupada-sutta* as confused and perhaps as inauthentic, not an original teaching of the Buddha.

The evidence given in the *Anupada-sutta* is especially important as the inconsistencies between the *Ānāpānasati* and *Satipaṭṭhāna sutta* and the *Visuddhimagga* can be less than clear. This is due to the fact that Ven. Buddhaghosa effectively reinterpreted the original meditation instructions as given by the Buddha in these two *suttas* and made numerous changes and introduced innovations without any critical voices being raised. Ven. Buddhaghosa’s account has been looked upon as completely reliable, and when it comes to the actual practice of meditation within the Theravādin tradition, it may be said that the *Visuddhimagga* actually supersedes the *suttas*. Until recent times it has never been considered that there might be any kind of contradiction between Buddhaghosa’s work and the *suttas* themselves.¹⁶

Yet the inconsistencies are there. This becomes apparent with a careful comparison of the *Ānāpānasati* and *Satipaṭṭhāna sutta* with the *Visuddhimagga*. It is beyond our scope to carry out such a comparison here, but we can summarize Buddhaghosa’s treatment of the two *suttas* as follows:

The *Ānāpānasati-sutta* is adapted by Ven. Buddhaghosa to create concentration on the breath as a method whereby to attain deep absorption concentration. With such intense absorption concentration form of *samādhi*, there will be no arising or ceasing of the five aggregates for the meditator. Therefore, there will be no attending insight. Rather, once absorption concentration is attained, the meditator shifts to insight meditation (*vipassanā*). Thus, the *Ānāpānasati-sutta* is given a very different treatment in the *Visuddhimagga* than what the text of the *sutta* itself suggests. The aspect of concentration on the breath is selected from the *sutta*, and the majority of the *sutta*, which includes the observation of the arising and passing of the aggregates, is set aside.

The *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* is treated by Ven. Buddhaghosa in a similar way. Clearly, this *sutta* is concerned with the development of insight, but in the *Visuddhimagga* method, it is treated solely as insight, and no attempt is made to integrate it with *samatha* practice. Rather, it is practiced after the requisite concentration is attained, that is *samatha* and *vipassanā* are practiced sequentially in Ven. Buddhaghosa’s account.

Thus, for Ven. Buddhaghosa, the *Ānāpānasati-sutta* becomes the method for *samatha* and the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* becomes the basis for insight, or *vipassanā*. There is no attempt to integrate the two practices, and the result is that the methods based on the *Visuddhimagga* separate *samatha* from *vipassanā* and the methods are practiced sequentially rather than in harmony, as in the *Anupada-sutta*.

We will note that for those with unquestioned loyalty to the *Visuddhimagga* method, the easiest solution to resolve the apparent inconsistencies between the *sutta* instructions and those of the *Visuddhimagga* is to uncritically adopt Ven.
Buddhaghosa’s reinterpretation of the Ānāpānasati and Satipaṭṭhāna suttas and to ignore the Anupada-sutta or to discount the Anupada-sutta as inauthentic.

This is not a case of intellectual dishonesty, but rather a case of not being able to make sense of the instructions as given in the Anupada-sutta if the preconceived assumption is that the jhānas are a state of concentration absorption in which the five aggregates do not appear. To those who are inclined to the absorption concentration view of the jhānas, Ven. Sāriputta’s experience as recounted in the Anupada-sutta will contradict the experience of absorption concentration. The lists of factors that arise and pass with each jhāna will likely appear to be a confused mishmash of factors edited in by later generations. In such a view, the Anupada-sutta is not to be trusted as being the authentic teaching of the Buddha and cannot be relied upon for meditation instruction.

In view of the above, it should be clear that there is more at stake in the view of this sutta than pure academic research. The Anupada-sutta can be taken as meditation instruction, or not, due to whether we take it as an authentic teaching of the Buddha or consider it as a rather confused addition of later generations. Therefore, we will turn to some of the criticisms of the sutta and consider whether it should be considered aside from other, presumably more authentic suttas. Then we will have a look at how Anupada-sutta is instructive to the meditator who is following the method of tranquil aware jhānas.

The Content of the Anupada-sutta

Anupada-sutta is Majjhima-nikāya number 111. It is titled One by One as They Occurred in Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi’s translation. In this sutta, the Buddha describes the Venerable Sāriputta’s development of insight when he was training for the attainment of arahantship. The title is suggestive of the process, for the sutta recounts how Venerable Sāriputta proceeds from the first jhāna, one by one all the way to the cessation of perception and feeling at which point the sutta says, “and his taints were destroyed by his seeing with wisdom.” Within two weeks of practice, Ven. Sāriputta had attained arahantship.

What is instructive about this sutta is that it shows how, in seven of the eight levels of jhāna that Ven. Sāriputta went through, he saw the arising and cessation of the aggregates, states of mind, mind objects, and remained “unattracted, unrepelled, and detached”, and thereby gained understanding, insight, and wisdom leading to freedom (nibbāna). Ven. Sāriputta went through this training while maintaining tranquil aware jhānas. To see this arising and cessation of mental states with such clarity and openness would have been quite difficult in a state of deep absorption. In this sutta, by recounting Ven. Sāriputta’s experience, the Buddha is demonstrating the use of tranquil aware jhānas to attain the deathless.

The Question of Authenticity of the Anupada-sutta

Ven. Bhikkhu Sujato and Ven. Bhikkhu Brahmali in their book The Authenticity of the Early Buddhist Texts question the authenticity of the Anupada-sutta. Their book is an excellent defense of the authenticity of the bulk of the sutta-piṭaka and they
are formidable scholars whose opinion warrants consideration. They discuss Anupada-sutta in their chapter Later Texts Are Obvious and use it as an example of the texts that are not to be attributed directly to the Buddha. They give five reasons:

1. No known parallels in non-Pali EBTs [Early Buddhist Texts];
2. Extravagant praise of Sāriputta, not found elsewhere in the EBTs and akin to flowery and exaggerated language of other Buddhist texts;
3. Textual duplication and redundancy, such as upekkhā being mentioned twice as a jhāna factor for both the third and the fourth jhāna;
4. Abhidhamma type vocabulary, not found elsewhere in the EBTs, such as the compound word anupadavavaṭṭhita;
5. Juxtaposition of different literary styles, specifically of sutta style list of jhāna factors connected with “ca” and of an Abhidhamma style list of factors without the connecting word “ca”.

It is certainly possible that in the light of the above evidence Ven. Bhikkhu Sujato and Ven. Bhikkhu Brahmali are correct, and that this sutta is a later addition. However, I find their case to be unpersuasive and will consider their arguments point by point below. This sutta seems a genuine teaching of the Buddha, and its inclusion in the Majjhima-nikāya warrants it being taken as authentic unless the evidence to the contrary is very persuasive.

It may be noted that Venerables Sujato and Brahmali are not the first to challenge the authenticity of this sutta. Mrs. Rhys-Davids in the 1920’s suggested points 2-5 above to which the venerables have added point number one reformulated and reformulated the others.

Research of recent decades has enabled us to compare the Pali sutta-piṭaka with the Chinese Āgamas. This research was not available to Mrs. Rhys-Davids in the early twentieth century so she was unaware that there is no counterpart to the Anupada-sutta in the Āgamas. Thus, point number one among the five listed by Venerables Sujato and Brahmali is one they have added due to the perspective offered by comparison of the Pali and Chinese literature. In our opinion, it is the strongest of the five points they have offered in arguing against the authenticity of the Anupada-sutta, with the other four points being less than persuasive.

Using criterion such as the above is how scholars attempt the very difficult job of determining what is early and what is late in the collections of suttas. It is amazing that we even have either the Pali suttas or their Chinese Āgama counterparts. the Pali suttas were passed on through centuries of oral tradition and then written down on palm leaves in Sri Lanka and then faithfully and diligently copied and recopied due to the ravages of humidity, insects, and war.

The Āgamas, which are the Chinese versions of these early suttas were transmitted to China across dangerous seas, rugged mountains, and deserts from India to China, where they were translated and preserved through tenuous times in that country. At one point all the wood blocks on which the sūtras (Pali: sutta, Sanskrit: sūtra) were
carved, along with all the copies of the sūtras, were burned along with their temples by an anti-Buddhist emperor and the sūtras had to be retrieved from Korea once conditions were again peaceful.

The suttas as we have them are the product of more than two millennia of transmission, which speaks to the dedication of those who understood the preciousness of these teachings and labored for their preservation. Lacking original manuscripts or reliable dating systems, scholars must piece together what tenuous clues they have into a viable picture. Of course, any such picture may be controversial, and Venerables Sujato and Brahmali have written their book largely to answer those who present a case that we can’t really know what the Buddha did or didn’t say, and to argue that what we have in the suttas and Āgamas is largely the product of later generations.

The venerables have written their admirable book in response to this skepticism of the authenticity of the suttas. They believe in the reliability and authenticity of the bulk of the sutta-piṭaka. On this point, we are in agreement, and I thank them for their carefully considered book.

Let us consider their arguments against the authenticity of Anupada-sutta, MN 111. Their point number one is that there is no equivalent sutta to Anupada-sutta in the Chinese. Suttas that appear in both the Pali and the Chinese are usually considered “core” material from an era of early Buddhism that predated the geographical divergence of Buddhism and its development into various schools. Thus, any sutta that appears in a similar form in both the Chinese and the Pali is considered part of the earliest material in the Buddhist tradition and is likely either the direct teaching of the Buddha or a close rendition of such teaching that may have been edited by later generations.

In the case of the Anupada-sutta, the Chinese is lacking. As far as creating doubt about the authenticity of the Anupada-sutta, this seems the most telling of the five points listed, but caution is needed before rejecting the authenticity of a sutta solely on this account.

The lack of an equivalent sutta in Chinese is not unusual, as there is a considerable amount of material in the Pali Suttas that does not appear in the Chinese Āgama literature. There are six suttas in the Pali Majjhima-nikāya for which no direct equivalents can be found in the Chinese, and others for whom the equivalents are not exact or considerable amounts of material are missing. However, the comparison of the Pali Suttas with the Āgamas overall gives a picture of a coherent and reliable core of materials that can be considered as early Buddhism. We would agree with Venerables Sujato and Brahmali that it is most likely that this material can be traced directly or indirectly to the Buddha himself.

Considering the difficulties of the transmission of this material over the centuries, it is very possible for authentic material to be in one tradition but not the other. In his introduction to The Questions of King Milinda, Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi has pointed out that both the Milindapañhā and the Nettipakarana contain a great number of
quotations and references to the *suttas* that cannot be found in the Pali *suttapiṭaka*. In referring to those missing references, he states,

“To account for these passages we might be equally justified in assuming that the Pali canon, in an older recension, contained texts that have somehow been lost except for a few preserved fragmentarily in some extra-canonical works.”

In light of the above suggestion of the possibility of lost material, we need to be cautious in assuming that any *sutta* not appearing in both the Pali and Chinese traditions is inauthentic.

There is also the possibility of sectarianism having affected what we find in the various collections. As we have noted above, those devoted to the absorption concentration method of meditation may not want to deal with the *Anupada-sutta* and may prefer to set it aside. This setting aside of this *sutta* could have happened as the *sutta* was transmitted over vast geographical distances.

So point number one alone does not disqualify *Anupada-sutta*. But if the other evidence in points two through five appears to be against the authenticity of the *sutta*, the weight of point number one becomes more considerable. Let us examine those points.

In criticism number two the authors are claiming the praise of Sāriputta is exaggerated in the *Anupada-sutta*, and it contains language more characteristic of later times than of the time of the Buddha. However, we must keep in mind that even the *suttas* which are widely attributed to the Buddha also sometimes exhibit a change in language and styles. For instance, sections of the *Sutta-nipāta* use a more archaic form of Pali, and may be traceable to a very early period of time in the teaching career of the Buddha. The language of the *suttas* changed even during the time the Buddha was still alive, and it is difficult to use the presence of only one or two words to give a definite date to a *sutta* as early or late.

As far as the presumed “extravagant praise of Sāriputta”, let us quote that section of *Anupada-sutta*:

> “Bhikkhus, Sāriputta is wise; Sāriputta has great wisdom; Sāriputta has joyous wisdom; Sāriputta has quick wisdom; Sāriputta has keen wisdom; Sāriputta has penetrating wisdom; During half a month, bhikkhus, Sāriputta gained insight into states one by one as they occurred.”

My disagreement with the skepticism of the authors on this point is twofold. First, the Buddha’s admiration for his great disciple Sāriputta is well known and such language of praise is not out of place, especially considering that the Buddha was using this occasion to tell of Ven. Sariputta’s attainment of arahantship and to use the narrative to clarify some important points regarding the union of *jhāna* and *vipassanā* practice. We find praise of Sāriputta and of other accomplished monks and nuns, some of it lavish, throughout the *suttas*.

Sāriputta was known for his wisdom as his *dhamma* brother Moggallāna was known for his miraculous power. It is precisely this attribute of wisdom that is here being
praised by the Buddha. His wisdom is described variously as “great”, “joyous”, “quick”, “keen”, and “penetrative”. This appears to be neither repetitive nor flowery, but rather descriptive in the kind of way we find the Buddha bringing out various facets of a subject. All of these are useful attributes to have with reference to wisdom leading to nibbāna, and would be attributes to recommend Ven. Sāriputta and for others to emulate. Such a list of positive attributes is a teaching tool in the hands of the Buddha.

Ven. Sāriputta was one of a handful of monks and nuns who were trusted by the Buddha to give teachings in his stead. For instance, we have in the Sangīti-sutta of the Dīgha-nikāya an instance where the Buddha had a backache and told Sāriputta,

“As soon as the Mallas had gone the Lord, surveying the monks sitting silently all about, said to the Venerable Sāriputta: The monks are free from sloth and torpor, Sāriputta. You think of a discourse on dhamma and give it to them. My back aches and I want to stretch it.”

And at the end of the same discourse,

“And when the Lord had stood up, he said to the Venerable Sāriputta: “Good, good, Sariputta! Well indeed have you proclaimed the way of chanting together for the monks!” These things were said by the Venerable Sāriputta, and the teacher confirmed them. The monks were delighted and rejoiced at the Venerable Sāriputta’s words.”

An instance of elaborate praise being heaped on Ven. Sāriputta occurs in Rathavinīta-sutta of Majjhima-nikāya. In this sutta, Ven. Puṇṇa Mantāṇiputta is discussing dhamma with Ven. Sāriputta, not knowing the identity of his fellow monk. Upon discovering with whom he has been talking, he says,

“Indeed, friend, we did not know that we were talking with the Venerable Sāriputta, the disciple who is like the teacher himself. If we had known this was the Venerable Sāriputta, we should not have said so much. It is wonderful, friend, it is marvelous! Each profound question has been posed, point by point, by the Venerable Sāriputta as a learned disciple who understands the Teacher’s Dispensation correctly. It is a gain for his companions in the holy life, it is a great gain for them that they have the opportunity to see and honor the Venerable Sāriputta. Even if it were by carrying the Venerable Sāriputta about on a cushion on their heads that his companions in the holy life would get the opportunity to see and honor him, it would be a gain for them, a great gain for them. And it is a gain for us that we have the opportunity to see and honor the great Sāriputta.”

This praise from a fellow monk may be considered by some as “flowery”, but we would consider it to be very descriptive in that the Ven. Sāriputta is being acknowledged as a teacher such as the Buddha himself. That this praise is coming from a monk points out the reputation held by Ven. Sāriputta within the saṅgha. Such reputation could only rest on the attainment of great wisdom by Ven. Sāriputta and praise to that effect by the Blessed One himself, in the presence of the saṅgha. It is only natural that the Buddha would publicly praise a disciple who was acting as a teacher with the Buddha’s approval. In fact, there are six suttas within the
Majjhima-nikāya that are taught by Ven. Sāriputta, three of which are basic texts for the study of monastic doctrine throughout the Theravādin Buddhist world.\textsuperscript{31} \textsuperscript{32}

Other instances of the Buddha praising his prominent disciples are too numerous to list but here is another pertinent passage for comparison from the \textit{Saccavibhanga-sutta},

\begin{quote}
“Cultivate the friendship of Sāriputta and Moggallāna, bhikkhus, associate with Sāriputta and Moggallāna. They are wise and helpful to their companions in the holy life. Sāriputta is like a mother; Moggallāna is like a nurse. Sāriputta trains others for the fruit of stream-entry, Moggallāna for the supreme goal. Sāriputta, bhikkhus, is able to announce, teach, describe, establish, reveal, expound, and exhibit the Four Noble Truths.”\textsuperscript{33}
\end{quote}

Notice that in this passage another impressive list of attributes is given by the Buddha to describe his great disciple. The previous list is similar to this one. The assertion that this kind of language does not occur elsewhere in the early Buddhist texts (EBTs) seems inaccurate.

Ven. Vimalaramsi, who is a teacher of the open, aware method of \textit{jhāna} within the Tranquil Wisdom Insight Meditation (TWIM) form of \textit{samatha-vipassanā} points out the significance of the Buddha using so many descriptions of wisdom as a description of Ven. Sāriputta in one of his \textit{dhamma} talks. Quoting the \textit{sutta} and then commenting on it, he points out,

\begin{quote}
“Monks, Sāriputta is wise; Sāriputta has great wisdom; Sāriputta has wide wisdom; Sāriputta has joyous wisdom; Sāriputta has quick wisdom; Sāriputta has keen wisdom; Sāriputta has penetrative wisdom.” ...
\end{quote}

BV: All of these different qualities that he’s talking about for Sāriputta, who was his first chief disciple, he was second to the Buddha in wisdom. If you’ll remember last night, I said anytime you hear about “wisdom” in the \textit{suttas}, it’s talking about seeing, knowing, and understanding Dependent Origination, and you will be able to see that at the end of this \textit{sutta} also.\textsuperscript{35}

Therefore, we think point number two, criticism based on presumed ‘unusually flowery language that does not occur elsewhere in the EBTs (Early Buddhist Texts), is not a persuasive criticism of \textit{Anupada-sutta} and not grounds for rejecting its authenticity.

In raising point number three, the authors feel that redundancy in language is grounds for dismissal of this \textit{sutta} as being an Early Buddhist Text (EBT). They point out that the word \textit{upekkhā} (equanimity), is mentioned twice in each of the third and fourth \textit{jhānas}. The authors point to this as a case of textual redundancy and duplication.

Let us quote the Buddha’s account of Ven. Sāriputta’s experiences in the fourth \textit{jhāna} as an example.

\begin{quote}
“Again, bhikkhus, with the abandoning of pleasure and pain, and with the previous disappearance of joy and grief, Sāriputta entered upon and abided
in the fourth *jhāna*, which has neither-pain-nor-pleasure and the purity of mindfulness due to equanimity.

And the states in the fourth *jhāna*—the equanimity, the neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling, the mental unconcern due to tranquility, the purity of mindfulness, and the unification of mind; the contact, feeling, perception, volition, and mind; the enthusiasm, decision, energy, mindfulness, equanimity and attention—those states were defined by him one by one as they occurred; known to him those states arose, known they were present, known they disappeared. He understood thus: “So, indeed, these states, not having been, came into being; having been, they vanish.” Regarding those states, he abided unattached, unrepelled, independent, detached, free, dissociated, with a mind rid of barriers. He understood: “There is an escape beyond,” and with the cultivation of that [attainment], he confirmed that there is.”

Above is the text that is under discussion in English translation with the Pali original footnoted. The Buddha’s teaching as given in the *sutta*s, often used duplication and redundancy. There are numerous cases in which he lists all of the salient factors, even more than once, as necessary. This particular *sutta* has a profound teaching that justifies the usage of the lists of factors as they occur. As the Buddha is demonstrating how aware *jhāna* works, he is using the language in a way to enhance his illustration of this point.

In assessing the implications and purport of this passage, it is important to understand that in aware *jhāna* the meditator can see the five aggregates, the four foundations and the *jhāna* factors as they occur. In a *dhamma* talk, Bhante Vimalaraṁsi, explains it thus,

“No, this next little bit is very interesting because this is the description of the five aggregates. OK? The five aggregates and the four foundations of mindfulness are just different ways of saying the same thing. You have five aggregates: you have the body, you have feeling, you have perception, you have thoughts, you have consciousness. You have the four foundations of mindfulness: you have body, the same in both the aggregates and four foundations; feeling, the same in both; perception is part of feeling and it is also part of consciousness; and you have *dhammas*; and you have consciousness. So those four foundations of mindfulness and the five aggregates are just different ways of saying the same thing. So the point being - these states in the *jhāna* - while you’re in the *jhāna* you are able to practice the four foundations of mindfulness at exactly the same time. Now, the way that this is described is a little bit different than the five aggregates. Instead of “body” it says “contact” here because when you get into the later *jhānas* you don’t feel your body unless there is contact. OK?

When you get to the fourth *jhāna*, you’re not going to be able to radiate loving kindness from your heart anymore because you won’t feel it. The feeling of loving kindness will come up into your head. The only thing that you will feel in your body is if there is contact, if something touches. So he just uses “contact” and changes it with... changes “body” into “contact” because of the later meditations.”

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The *sutta* is listing what was seen by Ven. Sariputta, “one by one as they occurred”. It is also listing the factors in addition to the usual list of *jhāna* factors that are helping Ven. Sāriputta to be deep enough in meditation and sharp enough with mindfulness to see these things occur one by one. Ven. Vimalaraṁsi explains,

> “MN: 111. “And the states in the fourth *jhāna*—the equanimity, the neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling, the mental unconcern due to tranquility, the purity of mindfulness, and unification of mind;...

BV: Your mind begins to stay on your object of meditation for a longer period of time, and your mind becomes very tranquil, very much at ease. Any little movement of mind’s attention you’re able to see, and when you see that is... when your mind is on your object of meditation, what happens is - a thought, or sensation, or whatever a distraction is - will start your mind to wobble. And then it wobbles, and it gets bigger and bigger until finally there’s a distraction. But now, when you get into the fourth *jhāna*, you’ll start to see your mind wobble, and you 6R right then, and then your mind stays on your object of meditation. You’re starting to learn what it is to have a still mind, a composed mind.”

Bhante is pointing out how staying on the object of meditation produces tranquility and ease. There is a clarity that allows one to see HOW mind’s attention begins to move, what it looks like and feels like when that happens. In a tranquil aware *jhāna* this is what happens. It happened to Ven. Sāriputta, and it happens to anyone who with diligence pursues the practice.

What is being seen here through practice of *satipaṭṭhāna* while in the fourth *jhāna* is impermanence, *anicca*. Bhante Vimalaraṁsi explains how that works while reading from the *sutta* and offering commentary,

> “MN:111: “And the states in the fourth *jhāna*—the equanimity, the neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling, the mental unconcern due to tranquility, purity of mindfulness, and unification of mind; the contact, feeling, perception, formations, and mind; ...

BV: You still have the five aggregates here, and this is important to realize because if you’re practicing a one-pointed kind of concentration where your mind stays on one object only, you’re not able to see these five aggregates because your mind is glued to that thing, whatever you put your attention on.

MN:111 ... the enthusiasm, decision, energy, mindfulness, equanimity, and attention - these states were defined by him one by one as they occurred; known to him those states arose, known they were present, known they disappeared. ...

BV: So he’s still seeing impermanence. You’re seeing change continually; you’re seeing it with a very balanced mind. Now, for people that practice straight vipassanā, seeing impermanence is a major thing, and they focus on seeing impermanence, suffering, and the impersonal nature of things, and when they do that, they don’t see how dependent origination arises, they don’t see Dependent Origination at all. But when you’re practicing the way that I’m showing you, you are able to see more deeply how these
links arise, and how they are there for a moment and disappear. So what you’re seeing is Dependent Origination, and you’re seeing the impermanence at a much finer level. It’s not this big, gross level up here (gesture), it’s at a much deeper level that you’re seeing impermanence happening all the time, and it happens with each link of the Dependent Origination.”41

In light of the above points, we can understand why the Buddha compiled these lists of factors in the way that he did. It fits the purpose of this teaching. Hence, criticism number three seems to be inaccurate.

The fourth point made by the authors as criticism of the sutta is that there is abhidhamma type vocabulary not found elsewhere in the EBTs. The word they are referring to is anupadavavatthita. They claim this as a word not belonging to the time period in which the authentic suttas were composed, that the use of this word indicates language from a later time period. Hence, in their view, the sutta is a product of later times. Mrs. Rhys Davids in her book also makes the same point, so the venerable authors seem to be following her analysis.

The word they characterize as being unlikely for the Buddha to have used is a compound word composed of anupada and vavatthita. Anupada appears three times in the beginning of the same sutta, as the title, as part of the compound word anupadadhhammadvipassanā in verse two, and as part of the compound word, the word under examination, anupadavavatthita in verse three.

Let us have a look at these words. First, the title of the sutta is Anupada-sutta. Anu is a prefix which is commonly used. Some of the compound words formed by using anu can be quite long and complex, and are found in numerous places in the suttas, for instance, the prefix anu begins the compound word anupubbābhisañña āt送来asampajānasamāpatti, which is found in the Poṭṭhapāda-sutta and is translated by Maurice Walshe as “proceeds from stage to stage till reaching the limit of perception”.42 This word gives us a clue as to how ‘anu’ is often used to give the idea of going from one thing to the next thing, or step by step. It would be difficult to find this particular compound word outside of this one sutta, yet this sutta, the Poṭṭhapāda-sutta, seems an authentic teaching of the Buddha.

When combined with pada, step, we have anupada, with the meaning of “step by step” or “one by one”. This is a very appropriate title for MN 111 as it is about letting go of mental states one by one as they occur. The connection with Poṭṭhapāda-sutta is interesting, as we also have a complex compound word using the prefix anu in that sutta denoting how the illusory “I” is let go of at every stage (“one by one”) until it ceases altogether. So we have two examples of the Buddha giving teachings and constructing compound words including the prefix anu to get his meaning across. These teachings both have the “one thing at a time” aspect and the Buddha employs the prefix anu in both cases to get a similar but slightly different meaning across.

In the second verse of the Anupada-sutta, anu is again used in the compound word anupada and in this case combined with two other very common Pali words to give
a unique meaning. The word is *anupadadhammavipassanā*, and here we can consider *anupada* to mean at every step, continuous, repeated, and uninterrupted. The next word, *dhamma* means phenomena or in this case “mental states”. The next word is *vipassanā*, insight. The compound word *anupadadhammavipassanā* is followed by an active verb, *vipassati*, which is related to *vipassanā* and means to “have insight”. Putting the components together with the active verb that follows, we have “insight into states in a continuous, uninterrupted manner”. Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi translates this as “insight into states one by one as they occurred”.

That brings us to the next passage, where we again find usage of *anupada* in a compound word, and this is the particular Pali word, *anupadavavatthita*, that the authors are referring to. Here, *anupada* is combined with *vavatthita* which can mean, “alternatively arranged”, “fixed”, “determined” or “separated”. It is a past participle, indicating something that has been done. It has the idea of having sorted things out.

If we put it all together, we get a word which means something like “having defined or sorted out things in a continuous manner”. Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi translates it as [these states] “were defined by him one by one as they occurred”.

As far as I know, these particular compound words are unique to the *Anupada-sutta*. Does this mean the *sutta* is not an authentic teaching of the Buddha? This seems an unwarranted assumption. Similar to *Poṭṭhapāda-sutta* and many other *suttas*, we have a teaching here that is not without parallel in other *suttas*, but that contains enough unique elements to warrant some creative use of vocabulary and compound words befitting the particular emphasis of the teaching.

As Richard Gombrich points out, uniqueness should not disqualify a *sutta* teaching as authentic as long as the sentiment is broadly in harmony with teachings in other parts of the *suttas*. He states it thusly,

“If the Buddha was continually arguing *ad hominem* and adapting what he said to the language of his interlocutor, this must have enormous implications for the consistency, or rather the inconsistency, of his mode of expression. He had a clear and compelling vision of the truth and was trying to convey it to a wide range of people with different inclinations and presuppositions, so he had to express this message in many different ways.”

This variety of expression that Gombrich refers to would presumably include the creative usage of language, at which the Buddha was especially adept.

There is also the chance the word was grafted onto the *sutta* by a later generation, but this explanation seems unnecessary.

Venerable Nyanaponika Thera devotes an appendix to his book *Abhidhamma Studies* to the defense of the authenticity of the *Anupada-sutta*. Ven. Nyanaponika is responding to Mrs. Rhys-Davids as the book by Venerables Sucitto and Brahmali was not published at that time. He specifically takes up the argument that the use of the word *anupadavavatthita* suggests, as Mrs. Rhys-Davids puts it, “a latter editing”. He writes,
“Though anupada does not occur frequently in the Piṭakas, it is also not at all and expression characteristic of any later period of Pāli literature; so we cannot draw any conclusions from the mere fact of its rare occurrence. With regard to the other word, it is true that derivatives of the verb vavatthetiti, vavatthita, and particularly vavatthāna are found very frequently in later canonical books such as the Patissambhidāmagga and the Vibbaṅga, and especially in the commentaries and the Visuddhimagga. But vavatthita, “determined” or ‘established,” is likewise not such a highly technical term that the dating of a text could be determined on that evidence alone. There are many other words too which occur only once or sporadically in the Sutta Piṭaka. Even if one of these words, for example vavattheti, became the fashion in later idiom in preference to its synonyms, such a development (very frequent in the history of words) does not exclude the occasional use of the same word in an earlier period too…

In conclusion, we repeat that we do not see any reason why the Anupada-sutta should not be regarded as an authentic discourse of the Buddha.”

Whether the word anupadavavatthita is an original word used by the Buddha in this sutta, or this word dates from a later time period, it communicates exactly what Buddhist practice is all about. That is, whatever arises, the practitioner must let it go. One by one as they occur, whatever mental states that arise, they are let go. In the process, the practitioner sees how they have arisen, and how they disappear, and through direct observation and experience understands how to escape them. If the meditator continues doing this, the practice brings insight wisdom. For Ven. Sāriputta, it resulted in his rapid attainment of Nibbāna.

In a dhamma talk on this sutta, Ven. Vimalaraṁsi makes clear the language of this sutta is precisely pointing out what happened to Ven. Sāriputta and what happens to a meditator who maintains his practice through tranquil aware jhānas. Reading from the Anupada-sutta, he explains,

“MN 111: ... the enthusiasm, decision, energy, mindfulness, equanimity, and attention— these states were defined by him one by one as they occurred;....

BV: They didn’t all happen at the same time, they happened separately.”

Which leads us to the final point the authors raise in objection to the discourse being included in the EBTs. This has to do with how the lists are tied together with or without linking words.

The authors believe the use of “ca” (and) in one series and no use of “ca” in the next shows inconsistency. This would be akin in English to saying “We ate with plates and bowls and spoons, but then we had to clean up the plates, bowls, spoons.” The authors believe to use the “ca” in one list and not in the following list indicates a different source for the two lists. They are saying, the use of “ca” is characteristic of sutta and Early Buddhist Texts, and a list without “ca” indicates the passage dates to a period of time after the passing of the Buddha.
I don’t think it is quite so cut and dried as that. In reading works that were composed after the passing of the Buddha, such as *Paṭisambhidāmagga*, a proto-abhidhammic work in the Khuddaka-nikāya, it is true that the lists rely less on the usage of “ca” and more on mere listing. However, “ca” does occur in some of the lists in that work, so the division between sutta and later works is not so strict in that regard.

I think there is a very obvious reason for using “ca” in the list of jhāna factors in *Anupada-sutta*, and dropping it in the second list in the same passage. The Buddha (or the reciters of the Majjhima-nikāya) first gave the usual jhāna factors as a series linked with “ca”. In jhāna, these factors are co-dependent and synergistic. The word “ca” can denote things that are linked together in time and space. It is a good word to indicate factors that arise simultaneously. The latter list has a different purpose. It is designed to indicate sequence, not simultaneity. By listing factors without ‘ca’ the effect of communicating a sequence (rather than simultaneity) is enhanced. Hence the title of the *Anupada-sutta*, with the idea of sequence of mental states being one of the main points being taught. They occurred one by one, not at the same time. I would not consider *Anupada-sutta* to be inauthentic due to “ca” not being used in both lists. Rather, this seems a skillful use of language, and can explain any redundancy of factors in the lists.

Rather than focusing on such small details which do not seem to be very persuasive in this case, it is worth reading the sutta as a whole. When the Anupada-sutta read in this way does not have any of the feel of a later work. I find the sutta to be as authentic as other suttas in the Nikāyas, and will take it as such.

The *Anupada-sutta* as a guide to practice;


Now that we have described the importance of the Anupada-sutta, laid out our case for its authenticity, and contrasted it with the meditation methods based on the Visuddhimagga, it may be helpful to have a look at how the sutta is actually used in the practice of tranquil wisdom jhānas leading to liberation. To accomplish this, we will again turn to the teachings of Ven. Vimalarāṁsi who has brought forward one of the most prominent methods that are primarily based on the suttas rather than on the Visuddhimagga.

Whether this sutta is a reliable guide for meditation and jhāna, ultimately must be decided by practice rather than by scholarship. In light of the above discussion, I find it most plausible to take the sutta as the words of the Buddha, perhaps slightly altered by later generations of reciters as many suttas were. It is certainly a guide for practice in the TWIM tradition. In talking of the Anupada-sutta, section 4, and of Ven. Sāriputta’s experience, Bhante Vimalarāṁsi comments (Vim.2012-13),

“A “mind rid of barriers” means the mind has become pure and has no hindrance or personality belief in it. When Sāriputta got into the first jhāna, he knew there was still more work to be done. But while he was in the jhāna, he was seeing impermanence. Anyone that sees impermanence sees a lot of unsatisfactoriness because we want things to be permanent, and when they are not, there’s this little dissatisfaction that arises.

We’re seeing the impersonal nature of all these different states as they arise and pass away. You don’t have any control over these; they happen when the conditions are right for them to arise. There’s no “me”, there’s no “my”, there’s no “I”.

You’re seeing anicca, dukkha, anattā while you are in the jhāna. You’re also seeing the Five Aggregates. This is very key. Seeing these things, and we shall see that Sāriputta saw these things all the way up to the Realm of Nothingness.

About seeing the Five Aggregates; in the Saṃyutta Nikāya, there’s a section on the Five Aggregates, and it says that the Five Aggregates and the Four Foundations of Mindfulness are the same thing. When you’re practicing and getting into the jhāna, by adding that extra step of relaxing, you’re practicing the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, while you’re in the jhāna.” (pp. 130-131)

We can see from the above why Anupada-sutta is such a valued text in the TWIM method. Using Ven. Sāriputta’s experience as example, Bhante is showing how an aware meditator in jhāna sees anicca, dukkha and anattā as well as the Five Aggregates and is practicing the satipatṭhāna while in jhāna. That Ven. Sāriputta was practicing while in aware jhāna is clear from the sutta. For those who have no experience of abiding in an aware jhāna, this can be quite difficult to understand. It may be that the sutta is rejected by the aforementioned authors in part because it is nonsense to them. It may be outside of their realm of experience.
As Bhante Vimalaramsi says, “This particular *sutta* is very important because it’s showing you that there is full awareness while you’re in *jhāna*.” (ibid, p. 132) This idea of open, aware *jhāna* is going against the stream of those advocating absorption concentration *jhānas*. That the content of this *sutta* was challenging to the prevailing methods of meditation at the time might explain why it was not transmitted to China. There could have been sectarianism at work.

Bhante makes it clear that all of this understanding and insight comes as the meditator begins to see clearly the links of Dependent Origination. In discussing Ven. Sāriputta’s experience of self-confidence in the second *jhāna*, Bhante asks,

> “Why do you have self-confidence when you’re starting to develop your deeper stages of meditation? Because you’re really starting to understand the process of Dependent Origination and you’re starting to see it as being an impersonal process; you’re starting to see. Yesterday [during a dhamma talk at a retreat] I was telling everyone I want you to see how the movement of mind’s attention works. What happens? How does it happen? As you start seeing that, you start seeing individual parts of Dependent Origination, and you see that there is a cause and effect; when this arises then that arises.

When you let go of the craving, when you let go of that tension and tightness caused by mind’s attention and its movement, then there’s no clinging. There’s no habitual tendency (*bhava*) arising. At that moment, you have a very clear mind. It’s alert, there are no thoughts, and you bring your mind’s attention back to your object of meditation.

You can see how Sāriputta’s experience, while he was in each one of those *jhānas*, is a lot different than the ones that are being described as absorption concentration.” (ibid, p. 132-3)

Bhante is showing us that we must have acute mindfulness and full awareness in the *jhānas* in order to see the arising and passing of phenomena and how that happens, which is seeing the links of Dependent Origination. It is this seeing of mental states one by one as they arise, not grasping them but rather letting them go, that leads on progressively deeper and deeper into the *jhānas*.

As in *Poṭṭhapāda-sutta*, each of these illusory selves is in turn abandoned. Each is in turn realized to be the illusory appearance of compound phenomena. Only with the attainment of the base of neither perception nor non-perception and the attainment of cessation of perception, feeling, and consciousness, does awareness of phenomena drop away. All the *jhānas* up to that point are aware *jhānas*. *Anupada-sutta* states that up to those two *jhānas*, there is awareness of the rise and fall of the five aggregates and of additional factors (such as enthusiasm, decision, energy, mindfulness, equanimity, and attention) that arise in the *jhānas*. Seeing this with insight wisdom is the practice of *satipaṭṭhāna* through understanding the Four Noble Truths, the links of Dependent Origination, and the Three Characteristics of Existence.

For instance, in the *jhāna* of the Base of Nothingness, it is said,
“And the states in the base of nothingness—the perception of the base of nothingness and the unification of mind; the contact, feeling, perception, volition, and mind; the enthusiasm, decision, energy, mindfulness, equanimity and attention—these states were defined by him one by one as they occurred; known to him those states arose, known they were present, known they disappeared. He understood thus: ‘There is an escape beyond.’ And with the cultivation of that [attainment], he confirmed that there is.”

Even in the Base of Nothingness there are the five aggregates and the five factors of enthusiasm, decision, energy, mindfulness, equanimity, and attention. States of mind and mental factors arise and subside.

**Conclusion**

We consider that the evidence shows that the *Anupada-sutta* is an authentic teaching of the Buddha and represents the meditative experience of Ven. Sāriputta in his attainment of *nibbāna* in a mere two weeks of practice. It seems prudent for scholars to accord the *Anupada-sutta* the same authenticity as they would other *sutta* in the *Majjhima-nikāya*. For those meditators intending to follow the original instructions of the Buddha as their guidance in their practice this *sutta* is a key guide for practicing the method of tranquil, aware *jhāna*.

**References**


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**End Notes**

2. Pande’s *Studies in the Origins of Buddhism* devotes a chapter to ‘The Stratification of Sutta-Nipāta & Other Texts’ in which the parameters for dating texts as early or late are well laid out. However, his work, first published in 1957 is now dated and not all his conclusions are fully acceptable.
5. Bhikkhu Sujato and Bhikkhu Brahmali (2014), p.11-12
6. Japanese scholars such as Hirakawa Akira generally agree with the assessments of Warder and Walshe quoted above. See, for instance, Hirakawa’s *A History of Indian Buddhism*, p.38-39 for his assessment of ‘Early Buddhist doctrine’.
7. *Anupada Sutta*, Bhikkhu Bodhi translation, p.902
8. *Yaṃ kho tam bhikkhave, sammā vadamāno vadeyya: vasippatto pāramippatto ariyasmiṃ sīlasmiṃ, vasippatto pāramippatto ariyasmiṃ samādhīsmin, vasippatto pāramippatto ariyāya paññāya, vasippatto pāramippatto ariyāya vimuttiyāti*. Sāriputtameva taṃ sammā vadamāno vadeyya vasippatto pāramippatto ariyasmiṃ sīlasmiṃ, vasippatto pāramippatto ariyasmiṃ samādhīsmin, vasippatto pāramippatto ariyāya paññāya, vasippatto pāramippatto ariyāya vimuttiyāti’.
9. See Chapter VIII of Buddhaghosa’s *Path of Purification*, to see how he uses *ānāpānasati* as a tool to go into *jhāna* (that is, as a method of *samatha*) by way of one-pointed concentration on a single sensation leading to absorption.
11. Hart (2008), p.73
12. Ibid, p.79
15. An account of how the *Ānāpānāsati-sutta* relates to the *jhānas* is given in Ven. Vimalaramsi’s book *The Breath of Love*, p.81 relates the jhānas to the practice of *ānāpānasati*, and p. 106 etc. explains how *jhāna* relates to the Four Foundations of Mindfulness.
16. For instance, here is the view of Ven. Nānanomli. In his forward to his book *Mindfulness of Breathing* (Nānanomli, 2015) he explains, ‘In the *Vinaya* and *Sutta Piṭakas*, the description, or as it might be termed, “the statement,” of *ānāpānasati* appears as a fixed formula; it is repeated unchanged in many different *suttas*. Instructions for the “practice” are detailed in the *Vinaya* and *Sutta Piṭakas*. The canonical work, the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*. The technical work dealing with the analysis of different kinds of knowledge, devotes a self-contained treatise to it, the *Ānāpānakathā*, which could be called “the Theoretical Analysis”.’ (p. vii) Thus, Ven. Nānanomli upholds the *Visuddhimagga* explanation as the one to be actually practiced, not the *sutta* version.
17. MN 111, BB trans, p. 899 (PTS iii 25)
18. Ibid, p. 902, verse 19
19. *Paññāya cassa disvā āsavā parikkhīnā honti*. 

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115
Saccavibhaṅga Sutta, MN 141:5, BB trans., p.1097 (PTS iii 248), also at SN 17:23

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https://suttacentral.net/mn The other five suttas in Majjhima-nikāya that have no equivalent in the Chinese are: MN 48 Kosambiya-sutta, MN 53 Sekha-sutta, MN 71 Tevijjavacchagota-sutta, MN 103 Kinti-sutta, MN 110 Cāḷapaṇṇama-sutta. These suttas appear to be authentic teachings of the Buddha. It is unclear as to why they do not appear in the Chinese Āgamas.


20 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sutta_Nipata

21 MN 111:2, Anupada Sutta, BB trans., p. 899, (PTS iii 25)

22 MN 141:5, MW. Trans., p.480, (PTS iii 211)

23 Pāṇḍito bhikkhave, sāriputto, mahāpañño bhikkhave, sāriputto puthapañño bhikkhave sāriputto, hāsuspañño bhikkhave sāriputto, jāvanapañño bhikkhave sāriputto, tikkhaspañño bhikkhave sāriputto, nibbedhikapanño bhikkhave sāriputto. Sāriputto bhikkhave, addhamāsaṃ anupadadharmavipassanaṃ vipassati.

24 Sangīti Sutta 3.4, DN 24:17, BB trans., p.245, (PTS i 151)

25 Rathavinīta Sutta, MN 24:17, BB trans., p.245, (PTS i 151)

26 "Saththukappa vata kira bhā sāvakena saddhiṁ mantayamānaṁ na jāminī 'āyasmā sāriputto'ti. Sace hi maṇīmaṁ jāneyayāma 'āyasmā sāriputto'ti ekaṁkampi no nappatehitvāya. Acchādhiyaṁ āvuso, ābhubatto āvuso, yathā taṁ svavātā sāvakeva sammadheva satthussasanāṁ ājānanti, evaṁevaṁ āyasmāt sāriputtena gambhīraṁ gambhīraṁ paṁ法官 anumāsāṁ āyamissāmī"ti.

27 Sangīti Sutta 3.4, DN 33.3.4, MW trans., p.510, (PTS iii 271)


29 Rathavinīta Sutta, MN 24:17, BB trans., p.245, (PTS i 151)

30 Of the 152 suttas in the Majjhima Nikāya, the nine suttas spoken by Ven. Sāriputta are: Anagama Sutta (MN 5), Sammādādhīthi Sutta (MN 9), Mahāتاحthipadopam Sutta (MN 28), Gulissāni Sutta (MN 69), Saccavibhangha Sutta (MN 141), Anāṭhapindikovāda Sutta (MN 143). Ven. Sāriputta also participates in significant dialogues in other suttas.

31 Bodhi (2009), p.20-21

32 Of the 152 suttas in the Majjhima Nikāya, the nine suttas spoken by Ven. Sāriputta are: Anagama Sutta (MN 5), Sammādādhīthi Sutta (MN 9), Mahāتاحthipadopam Sutta (MN 28), Gulissāni Sutta (MN 69), Saccavibhangha Sutta (MN 141), Anāṭhapindikovāda Sutta (MN 143). Ven. Sāriputta also participates in significant dialogues in other suttas.

33 Saccavibhangha Sutta, MN 141:5, BB trans., p.1097 (PTS ii 248), also at SN 17:23


36 Bhante Vimalaramsi favors “enthusiasm” as a translation of chanda rather than Bhikkhu Bodhi’s “zeal”, as the word zeal in English has strong Christian overtones.

37 Anupada Sutta, MN 111:9-10, BB trans., p.900, (PTS iii 27)

42 DN 9:17, MW trans. p.162, (PTS i 184)
43 Gombrich (2007), p.18
44 Nyanaponika (2007), pp.126-127
46 Anupada Sutta, MN.111.16, BB trans., p.901, (PTS iii 28)
An Analytical Study of Constructivist Approach in Buddhist Education

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An Analytical Study of Constructivist Approach in Buddhist Education

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Abstract

Constructivism is a recent theory introduced to the educational sphere by western educationists in the second half of the 20th century. Though it became the leading theory among western and eastern scholars in the 1930s and the 1940s it is not a new approach to Buddhist education since the Buddha applied constructive learning approach 2500 years ago. Even western psychologists accept the view that the constructive learning approach is an aspect of Buddhist education. Therefore, the main aim of this paper was to study the constructive learning approach reflected in Buddhist educational psychology. Here, the Sutta-pitaka was used as the main source with adequate reference to secondary sources. Research findings of this paper have been discussed through critical and analytical perspectives using descriptive and explanatory methods. According to this research, the Sutta-pitaka proves that Buddhist education consists of fruitful constructive learning teaching strategies. In Buddhist constructive learning too, the learner is at the centre of the learning/teaching process. Moreover, constructivism in Buddhist and western education psychology cannot be considered as two distinct methods. The constructivist approach in Buddhist education can lead to the creation of a sound background to strengthen both Buddhist and modern education psychologies in the light of both traditions.

Introduction

Presently, educational psychologists motivate teachers and teacher educators to practice constructivist principles in classroom situations to produce more suitable people for the world of work with 21st century competencies. Hence, it has become a contemporary need to examine how far the teachings of the Buddha can be utilized to enhance the use of constructivism in western educational approaches in the light of Buddhist teachings. Therefore, in this paper, it will be examined how Buddhist constructivist elements have contributed in many ways to develop constructivism in modern education as a learning theory by providing rich principles in many dimensions over hundred years. The research paper is elaborated with especial reference to the Sutta-pitaka by comparing constructivist teachings in Buddhism with approaches in modern education.

Literature Review

The earliest recorded proponents of some form of constructivism are Lao Tzu (6th century BC), Gautama Buddha (560-477 BC), and Heraclitus (540-475 BC), in the east, and Giambattista Vico (1668-1744), Immanuel Kant (1852-1933) in the west (Mahoney, (n.d.). Constructivist pedagogy is informed from the work of many scholars from east and west; examples are, to name a few, John Dewey, Jean Piaget,
Jerome Bruner, and Lev Vygotsky in modern psychology and Gautama Buddha, Nagarjuna, Dalai Lama, Thich Nath Hanh, and Suluk Sivaraksa in Eastern Education (Keerthirathne, 2015:31a). Buddhist educational psychology consists of the constructive approach and those constructivist teachings in Buddhist psychology have contributed to the development of the western constructive approach (McMillion 2010:79). The Gautama Buddha is the greatest among those who promoted the principles of constructivist learning (Ibid). Many Suttas in Sutta-piṭaka have been framed in a constructive way (Nimnong 2006). The content of similes and metaphors was used by the Buddha to help his disciples to construct knowledge by themselves (Rambelli, Undated). To McMillian, (2010:80) not only in the academic sphere but also in the therapeutic process the Buddha used the constructive approach. Constructivism in psychology is a method of Buddhist education that focuses on both the internal and the external systems of meaning-making. In Buddhist education, the Buddha used the client-centered method. Moreover, meditation-based Buddhist education intervention helps the learner to actively minimize awareness of their mental process (Ibid). Buddhist and constructivist educational psychology can fertilize each other and enrich each other’s insights (Keerthirathne 2015:8b). Views of constructive learning in western educational psychology are very close to Buddhist educational psychology where learner-centered education is promoted. When analyzing the Buddhist and western psychological constructive learning, western psychologists have developed the concept of constructive learning in the light of Buddhist psychology (Ibid: 10).

**Constructive Learning in Western Educational Psychology**

Constructivism is a modern psychological school which has emerged since the second half of the 20th century and both eastern and western scholars have contributed to its development in many ways. In constructive learning theory, the learner constructs knowledge out of his/her experiences and they are encouraged to view themselves as active participants in their lives. Moreover, constructivism postulates that knowledge cannot exist outside the mind, truth is not absolute, and knowledge is not discovered but constructed by individuals based on experience (Fosont, 1996). Here, the learner is not a passive object and he is actively present in the teaching learning process. Since the learner is actively involved in the learning/teaching process, constructivists rejected traditional spoon-feeding methods. Here, teachers should find the most appropriate teaching methods and strategies as he or she can awake intellectual potentialities of the learner in constructive way. The teacher is not the sole agent of the classroom but s/he should think that learning does not occur in a vacuum while she or he is playing a major interactive role with both the learner and the learning environment. In a classroom setting where constructive learning teaching process appears, the teacher performs his/her role as a facilitator, helper, mentor and guide. The following are major characteristics of constructivist learning as being discussed in western education psychology (Open Educational Research of USD, n.d).
1. Constructive learning opportunities create multiple representations of reality
2. Avoiding oversimplification and representing the complexity of the real world is the task of multiple representations
3. Constructive learning stresses construction of knowledge instead of the reproduction of knowledge
4. Constructive learning stresses meaningful real learning situations rather than abstract instructions
5. In a constructive learning environment the learner experiences case-based learning (real world settings) instead of predetermined sequences of instruction
6. Constructive learning motivates thoughtful reflection on the learning experience with reference to what the learner has received
7. Constructive learning situations “enable context- and content-dependent knowledge construction”
8. Constructive learning supports construction of knowledge collaboratively through social negotiation

Constructivist Approach of Religions Contemporary to Buddhism

As a preliminary discussion, it is useful to examine the availability of constructivist elements in other religions contemporary to Buddhism. The religious background at the time of the Buddha can be discussed under two traditions: Brāhmaṇic and Śramaṇic. While Brāhmaṇic trend was influenced by Vedic system of thinking the Śramaṇic was influenced by non-Vedic thinking and to the latter belongs the Jain, Buddhist and other similar ascetic traditions. According to the teachings in Vedic literature, man has gained knowledge by listening to someone. On the contrary, in Buddhism, knowledge received by listening to someone is incomplete due to four reasons: (a) Susutampihoti (knowledge gained by listening may be correct) (b) Dussutampihoti (knowledge gained by listening may be incorrect), (c) Tathāpihoti (knowledge may be the same), (d) Aññathāpihoti (knowledge may not be the same) (MN II: 513). The Vedic people believed in a powerful God who created the world and this was an almighty god surpassing all human capacities. The almighty God was regarded as not only the creator of whole animate and inanimate world but also the giver of ideal set of ethics for living good life. People did not have opportunities to criticize the teachings of the religion, and, as they were not allowed to express criticism of what god had said, constructive ideas could not be seen among people. On the contrary, the Buddha rejected such a concept of divinity as he respected the cognitive ability of man. Some followers of the Buddha who needed to increase the Buddha’s popularity said that the Buddha was omniscient. In the Vaccagotta-sutta, the Buddha said that if someone says that the Buddha has omniscience, it is an exaggeration. He says it is something that the Buddha had not preached, and was not one of the three knowledges of the Buddha (MN II: 71). The most appropriate word to introduce the Buddha is the “tevijjosamano Gotamo” (threefold-lore).

The Brāhmmins sought external purification by submerging in rivers Bāhukā, Sundarikā, Sarasvatī, Payāga and Bāhumati in order to wash out sins they had done
instead of internal purification which could be received by developing constructive learning experiences. The Buddha rejected these religious observances followed by the Brahmins and preached them to have internal purification instead of external purification by using their constructive human capabilities (MN I: 36).

Āranyaka and Upaniṣadic eras were somewhat different than the Vedic and Brāhmaṇic eras because people started finding the truth behind the world without the limitations of the traditional teachings (BU I.3:27). Creative ideas of people in Āranyaka era led the foundation for intellectual awakening that emerged in Upaniṣadic era. Monism was the dominant feature in the Upaniṣadic era. These people questioned the nature of the world in order to awaken their critical mind. “What is the truth regarding man?”, “Is there any truth regarding the external world?”, “What is the relationship between man and the world?” were some of the basic questions they asked. This intellectual environment proves that a human’s cognitive ability was accepted in the Upaniṣadic era to a greater extent than in the Vedic, Brahmin and Āranyaka eras.

The six heretical teachers: Pūraṇa Kassapa, Makkhali Ghosāla, Ajita Kesakambala, Pakudha Kaccāyana, Nighanta Nāthaputta and Sañjaya Bellaṭṭhiputta who lived during Buddha’s time did not evaluate human ability since their teachings were extreme. Pūraṇa Kassapa expounded Akiriya or the doctrine of non-action. He who valued non-causation (ahetuappacchayavāda) discarded the intentional actions (DN I: 47). Where intentional actions are denied, admiration of human potentialities cannot occur. Makkhali Ghosāla’s teachings belong to determinism. According to him, everything in the world exists in accordance to laws of Kamma, so no one can have any effect upon such a strictly fated course of Kamma. Here, it is clear that Makkhali Ghosāla rejects the validity of moral actions and responsibility (Ibid). The problem is how disciples can make use of their cognitive abilities under the guidance of this type of a teacher when he has uprooted human capabilities? Ajita Kesakambala presented materialistic annihilationism (uccedavāda) teachings by rejecting human effort, as well as not accepting a life after death (paraloka). According to Ajita Kesakambala, it is clear that there is no place for human capabilities in knowledge construction in his teachings too (Ibid). The Buddha’s opinion regarding Pakudha Kaccāyana is the same as what he said about Makkhali Ghosāla since he rejected the moral behavior (Ibid). In the Theory of Past Determinism (pubbekatahetuvāda) of Niganthā Nāthaputta, he asked his disciples to practice severe austerity (self-torture) and four-fold restraints (catuyāmasamvara) in order to free oneself from bonds (Ibid). Niganthā Nāthaputta’s teachings revealed that he accepted human capability to some extent and more than the other five teachers. Nevertheless, it was still not recommended by the Buddha since he believed in the Kamma accumulated from what we have done previously and in previous births. Thus, Niganthā Nāthaputta instructed his disciples to practice self-torture to get free from sins and he was unable to direct his disciples in the right way. Such meaningless guidance was devalued by the Buddha as a perfect teacher who motivated disciples towards constructive learning. Sañjaya Bellaṭṭhiputta rejected giving a direct answer to any doctrine or statement positively or negatively or both or neither which was put to him in question (Ibid). According to the
information above, teachings of the six teachers were not good enough to promote students’ abilities in the learning/teaching process. It is clear that those teachers have not accepted the students’ capabilities in the process of knowledge construction. In the Samgārava-sutta, the Buddha divides his contemporary religious leaders into three groups: traditionalists, rationalists and experimentalists. Ājīvaka, Jaṭila, Acelaka and Muni who lived during the time of the Buddha followed various religious observances including self-torture to achieve the ultimate goal they upheld. As these methods were inappropriate in knowledge construction the Buddha rejected them. To the Buddha, “Not going naked, nor having matted hair, nor smearing oneself with mud, nor fasting, nor sleeping on bare ground, nor covering oneself with dust, nor striving by squatting can purify a being, who has not yet overcome doubt” (Dham:142). An accusation leveled against the Buddha from Śamaṇa was that he rejects all the ascetic observances. The Buddha, who answered their accusation said that if any religious observance supports the eradicating of Rāga (lust) Dosa (hatred) and Moha (delusion), such an observance would not be rejected (MN I:68). One who is in standing posture cannot defeat those who run. Similarly, Ājīvaka, Jaṭila, Nighanṭha could not defeat the Buddha since their spiritual attainment was not enough to attain the ultimate goal introduced by the Buddha (SN: 376). Buddhism differs from other religions that existed in ancient India due to the constructive learning environment it has introduced. In the Śamaṇa tradition, students including those of Niganṭha Nāṭhaputta were more active relative to those who believed in the Vedas, Brāhmaṇas, Āranyakas and Upaniṣads, but their active participation did not help them reach a meaningful goal since the methods they followed were not skillful. Moreover, the above discussion suggests that we think of Buddhism as an anthropocentric religion.

Constructivist Approach in Buddhist Psychology

Kusala and Sakko are two words used in Buddhism to imply the cognitive abilities of the learner. In the commentaries, the ability to build up Śīla (morality), Samādhi (concentration) and Paññā (wisdom) is known as Sakko (PJ: 137) and effort taken to understand wholesome thoughts and eradicate unwholesome thoughts is called Kusala (kusalaṅca pajānati akusalaṅca pajānāti) (MN II: 248). Usage of one’s ability to get rid of evil thoughts is also known as Kusala (DhaS: 63). In the process of knowledge construction, the learner is guided to remove evil thoughts and establish wholesome thoughts in his/her spirituality (Ibid). Here, the Buddha asked the learner to refrain from constructing knowledge to cultivate actions that lead evil thoughts and to take up actions that lead to wholesome thoughts (Dham: 183). When achieving Nibbāna the learner constructs knowledge to know what s/he should know (pariññeyyāṁ), to eradicate evil thoughts (pahāṭtabbam) and to develop what he/she should practice (bhāvetabbaṁ) (Dham:383) for the attainment of the sublime.

Buddhism is for those who construct knowledge in a critical manner (SN I: 117) through reflection (MNI: 414). In the Alagaddūpama-sutta the Buddha taught his disciples not to grasp the doctrine incorrectly since it brings bad results. Incorrect understanding of Dhamma is similar to catching a cobra using an inappropriate
method. When a cobra is caught by an untrained person without applying the proper method, obviously, the cobra would bite the person. Similarly, if someone understands the Buddha’s doctrine inappropriately, it does not help him to acquire the way to Nibbāna. Therefore, the Buddha aimed at creating a group of learners who would construct knowledge in critical manner without clinging to the traditional methods that prevailed among contemporary religions.

According to the Buddha, there is no one in the world to protect us. The world is unprotected. We have to safe guard our own skin (MN II: 54). At this point, the Buddha explains that the construction of knowledge should be made by the relevant person him/herself when reaching the ultimate goal (Nibbāna). There is no any other person to save our lives or to take us to the blissful state. Therefore, the Buddha asks his disciples to be the light for their own sake (DN II: 137). Through these explanations, the Buddha intended to encourage his disciples to act in creative ways in order to win their supra mundane life as well as improve their mundane life. For that, the Buddha explained the way which had not yet been created for attaining Nibbāna. He introduced the way which had not been introduced by anyone and explained the way which had not been explained by anyone. He saw the way. He was clever in finding the way. Anyone who is not crafty can understand (MN II: 80) and follow his constructive teachings (SN III: 65). The Buddha’s teaching, of Kusala (wholesome) and Akusala (unwholesome) can be understood only by knowledgeable persons (SN I: 200) as preached by the Buddha. If the learners are not in a position to comprehend both Kusala and Akusala, they are unable to reach Nibbāna (DN: 126). Thus, the anthropocentric form of teachings found in Buddhism help the learner in awakening his or her cognitive skills.

The Buddha’s doctrine was opened to anyone and he explicitly invited his disciples to ‘come and see’ (ehipassiko) (MN I: 622) what he had taught and to examine whether it was correct or not. Having understood the teachings, the disciples can decide whether the teachings should be studied or left aside. This implies that learning should be achieved by the students themselves through active participation (paccattaṃ veditabbo) (AN I: 270). The Buddha’s task was guiding the learner to follow the correct path. The Buddha says that when learners are curious and investigate his teachings due to their critical studies, it is then that his doctrine starts to shine (MN II: 80).

In Buddhism, the learner can initiate any action (ārambhadhātu) he or she likes. In this case, s/he avoids laziness and increases his/her efforts to engage in that task productively (nikkhamadhātu). Moreover, s/he engages in the task with effort (parakkhamadhātu) and, then, this effort becomes more powerful (thamadhātu). The learner who intensifies his/her effort perseveres to continue the task (hitidhātu). Finally, he/she follows strategies to continue the task until he/she reaches the goal (upakkhamadhātu). According to this explanation in Attakāra-sutta, it is clear that the learner participates actively in the process of knowledge construction from the beginning to the end.

The Kālāmas who lived in Kesaputta had a problem: “How to distinguish wholesome thoughts (Kusala) and unwholesome thoughts (Akusala)”. The Buddha,
who went to Kesaputta of Kālāma, taught them to use introspection when deciding the difference between wholesome and unwholesome thoughts (AN: 188). Here, the learner reflects on what he has learned. The Buddha further explains that, if the action is done with non-greed (Alobha), non-hatred (Adosa), and non-delusion (Amoha), such thoughts are rich in Kusala. If the action follows from greed (Lobha), hatred (Dosa) and delusion (Moha), it belongs to thoughts which are not suited to good values (Akusala). The nature of thoughts should be decided by the doer him/herself according to their results.

A fine example to show constructivism in Buddhist educational psychology is the Ambalaṭṭhikārāhulovāda-sutta which the Buddha asks Venerable Rāhula to reflect on what he has learned by taking the example of a mirror. When the Buddha asked Rāhula to describe the use of a mirror, Rāhula answered that the mirror is used to see the face in order to correct anything wrong on it. Following that answer of Rāhula the Buddha asked him to reflect on what he does, like a person who uses the mirror to see his face in order to correct if there is something wrong in his face. Furthermore, the Buddha explained three criteria one can use when selecting something wholesome and unwholesome. They are: a) the action which is beneficial to the doer, b) the action which is beneficial to others around the doer and c) the action beneficial to the doer as well as to others around him. Therefore, these types of actions should be practiced and they can be considered as actions rich in Kusala thoughts.

The Adipatteyya-sutta of the Aṅguttara-nikāya is also important when discussing the Buddhist conceptualization of constructive learning (AN: 528). In this Sutta, the Buddha explains three methods one can use to select good from bad. First, if someone has to lose his dignity because of his action such action should be avoided, because it is not value-oriented (attādhipateyya). Second, if our action is criticized by someone who notices it, such action should be avoided too (lokādhipateyya). Third, if the action is recommended by Dhamma such action is liable to be undertaken (dhammādhipateyya).

The life of ascetic Gotama too is a great example to prove the constructive nature of Buddhist education. His life is a model for present-day students. As is explained in the Suttas, the way followed by the ascetic Gotama to find the truth is critical and creative. The word “Ariyapariyesana” itself implies the critical and analytical nature of truth found by the ascetic Gotama. On his way in the noble search the ascetic Gotama constructed knowledge to comprehend the difference between two searches: ignoble and noble. Here, firstly, the Gotama went to Alāra Kālāma, a distinguished ascetic, in order to learn the truth (MNI: 160). Since Alāra Kālāma’s teachings did not lead to disgust or detachment, nor to cessation, tranquility, intuition, enlightenment, or Nibbāna, the ascetic Gotama left him even though he was invited to be together as a co-teacher. After that, the ascetic Gotama found another teacher who was more competent than the former. He was Uddaka Rāmaputta. Since his doctrine too did not provide the expected support to eradicate unwholesome; Raga (lust) Dosa (hatred) and Moha (delusion) except in the final stage of mental concentration, the Realm of neither Perception nor Non-perception
Finally, he who understood that all those bitter and difficult austerities would not help him to reach excellence, worthy of supreme knowledge and insight and transcending those of human states, started to follow the middle path. As a result of that great effort, he gained perfect one-pointedness of the mind (Samadhi) and comprehended the reminiscence of Past Birth (Pubbe-Nivasanussati), the perception of the disappearings and reappearings of beings (Cutūpapāta ñāṇa), and the comprehension of the cessation of corruptions (Asavakkhayā Nāna), which paved the way for him to attain Nibbāna: “This is sorrow”, “This, the arising of sorrow” “This, the Cessation of sorrow” and “This, the path leading to the cessation sorrow”(Ibid). The Buddha represents the highest state in the Buddhist constructive learning which is referred to as sampannakusala and paramakusala (MN II: 374).

One who studies this learning process of ascetic Gotama carefully can see how far he has been active in exploring the truth. Though present-day students receive support from their teachers in knowledge construction, the ascetic Gotama did it by himself without the guidance of a teacher. He himself explains it in his own words as “na me ācariyo atthi- sadiso me navijjati” (MN I: 160). This is a big positive feature regarding the constructive learning in both ascetic Gotama’s life and Buddhism.

**Constructivist Elements as Reflected in Buddhist Education in Many Dimensions**

In the constructive learning process of Buddhist psychology, the Buddha performed his role as a facilitator. He provided the necessary mental and physical assistance to the learner so that s/he can achieve learning outcomes. This can be seen in the incident of Venerable Chulla Panthaka. He was punished by his teacher, Venerable Mahā Panthaka who had been his elder brother in lay life. In this case, he was excommunicated since he was unable to study even a line of a stanza (Ghata) for three months. The Buddha, who saw this incident, went to the small monk Chulla Panthaka in order to help him and took him to his monastery. After that, he was given a simple activity: to touch a piece of pure white cloth and say “Rajoharanam, Rajoharanam” in order to realize the nature of the changeable world by himself (TheG: 59). With this learner-centered exercise he understood the changing nature of the world.

As a constructivist teacher the Buddha guided his students to explore their target learning experiences. He merely provided the necessary instructions with limited intervention. The way the Buddha taught the nature of the world to Kisāgotami tells us that guided discovery learning is not formulated by the Western educational
psychology. Kisāgotami, who had lost her one and only baby infant, came to see the Buddha with eyes full of tears in order to find a solution to her burning problem. In this case, the Buddha gave her a small piece of guidance to help her find solution to her sorrowful problem. The Buddha asked Kisāgotami to go around the village and find a fist of mustard from a house where a person had not died. The lesson to her was to reach a better understanding of reality, because she could not find any home where no person had died (DhaA: 270).

Since the constructivist teacher acts as a helper (assistant) as well as mentor in constructive learning, the Buddha too illustrated the idea that the teacher helps and performs the role of mentor when the students have problems in knowledge construction, as is shown in the case of the character of Rev. Nanda. He loved his betrothed, Janapada Kalyāni, while being a monk, without completing the necessary spiritual requirements to attain arahanthood, so he was motivated by the Buddha who took him to heaven to persuade him to give up his idea regarding his lay life lover. The Buddha allowed him to see a beautiful goddess in heaven and then the Buddha asked Nanda whether Janapada Kalyāni or that goddess was more beautiful. Hearing the question, Rev. Nanda's answer was that the goddess was more beautiful than Janapada Klayāni. After this reply, the Buddha promised Nanda that he would be given the goddess if he completed the necessary spiritual achievements to reach arahanthood. In this case, the Buddha had known that there was no need to give him the goddess since he was in a destined position to attain Nibbāna. It is said that, in order to gain the goddess, Venerable Nanda was more enthusiastic in his effort to become an Arahant. As the Buddha expected, he could take Nanda to an expected spiritual level in a short period of time because of the strategy he followed (Uda: 3; 22).

The Buddha had understood that the teacher’s task should be to enhance the capacities of thinking and feeling in relation to relevant learning experience. Students should be motivated to construct knowledge from the lessons they are taught. When Aṅgulimāla, who followed the Buddha to collect a finger, asked Buddha to stop, the Buddha replied ‘I have already stopped, you stop’. Aṅgulimāla, who heard this answer started to think ‘while he was going, he asked me to stop’ - what does it mean? Finally, he understood that it was because the Buddha had stopped the rebirth, he said ‘I have stopped’. Still, I am to end rebirth (samsara). Therefore, he asks me to stop. The statement made by the Buddha motivated Aṅgulimāla to complete his understanding to its maximum.

In western education, Peer Learning is an important strategy a teacher can implement in the learning teaching process for a successful knowledge construction. This Peer tutoring method can be seen in Buddhist education too. Allowing Rev. Mahā Kassapa to offer advice to other Bhikkus, is similar to cross-age peer tutoring in western psychology. In cross-age peer tutoring, the peer is older. According to psychologists, cross-age peer tutoring usually works better than same age peer tutoring. Once, the Buddha went to the place where the Bhikkus, including Venerable Nandaka, were discussing Dhamma and praised their discussion. This is an example for same age peer tutoring. Here, the Buddha also told them that there
were two things that could be done by Bhikkhus who gathered: first, to discuss Dhamma (Dhammiyakathāya), and, secondly, to protect silence and avoid pointless talking (tunhibhāvo) (MNIII: 270). The implication here is that the Buddha admired peer learning as well as prohibited discussing immoral things, since he saw these as an obstacle in constructive learning.

One strategy followed by the Buddha in constructive learning is filling knowledge gaps. In such situations, the Buddha encouraged other Bhikkus and Bhikkunis to assume the role of more knowledgeable others. One such occasion is the discussion had between Visāka and Dhamma Dinnā (MNI: 299). Because of this strategy, the disciples could reach different cognitive stages according to their dedication to learning. These stages are the following: Sotāpanna (the stream-winner), Sakadāgāmi (the once returner), Anāgāmi (the never returner) and Arahat (the perfected one).

Consideration of individual differences is an important feature in Buddhist constructive education. Learning situations were planned by the Buddha according to the intellectual capabilities of the learner. In the Aṅguttara-nikāya, there are many explanations about individual differences, and, according to Tika-nipāta, there are three types of students. Some students listen to the teacher, from the beginning to the end, but do not keep the teacher's words in mind. Such learners are called Avakujjapañña (the empty head). The second types of students listen to everything the teacher says, in the beginning, middle and end but they retain nothing once they leave the classroom. This type of students is referred to as Uccaṅgapañña (AN III: 10). The third type of student listens to everything carefully and grasps it in the same manner. This type of student is known as Puthupañña. Catukkha-nipāta in Aṅguttara-nikāya presents four more types of students, namely Ugghatthatapañña, Vipacitapañña, Ēyya and Padaparama. Some students are capable enough to understand the lesson when they are given a short guidance. They are called Ugghatitannu in Buddhist education psychology. The one who comes under the second category (Vipatitannu) understands the lesson when it is explained to a certain extent. The third type of student understands the lesson when the lesson is analyzed in detail in addition to learning much from peers to apply what he/she has learned from the teacher. Students of this type are called Ēyya. The student of the fourth category (Padaparama) is not in a position to grasp the lesson though it has been explained descriptively (AN IV: 3). To the Buddha, some students can understand the lesson but they cannot apply what they have learned in practical or real life situations (yuttaṇīpitbhāno na muttanīpitbhāno). Some students can make use of their learning experiences for problem solving but they are unable to grasp the lesson meaningfully (muttanīpitbhāno na yuttaṇīpitbhāno). There are some students who can construct knowledge as well as apply learning experiences in real world problem solving (yuttaṇīpitbhāno ca muttanīpitbhāno ca). Students who can neither understand nor use in practice are introduced as neva yuttaṇīpitbhāno ca neva muttanīpitbhāno (AN IV: 2). Another two divisions can be seen in Catukkha (AN IV: 5) and Tika-nipāta (AN III: 10) in Aṅguttara-nikāya.
Mahākhandhaka in Mahāvagga-pāli presents about eight types of students who had come to the Buddha: Apparajakkha (beings whose mental eyes were darkened by scarcely any dust), Mahārajakkha (beings whose eyes were covered by much dust), Tikkhindriya (beings sharp of sense), Mudindriya (blunt of sense), Svakara (of good disposition), Duvakara (of bad disposition), Suviṇṇapaya (easy to instruct), Duvīṇṇapaya (difficult to instruct). The Visuddhi-magga, which is considered as a Buddhist book written in a later period, distinguishes individuals according to their intellectual qualities: with Raga (lust), Dosa (hatred), Moha (ignorance), Saddhā (faith), Buddhi (intellect), and Vitakkha (reflective thinking) (VM: 157).

Questioning and answering were a significant feature in Buddhist constructive education. When the Buddha responded to the questions presented by his students, those questions were answered according to the nature of the question and the learner i.e. he provided only a brief answer as a stimulus towards construction of knowledge, if the students asking the question were knowledgeable, whereas more analytical replies were given to those students in need of more explanation. Some questions were not answered since those questions did not provide any support towards knowledge construction. Given below are the four types of creative methods followed by the Buddha when answering questions.

1. Ekaṃsaa (answering it straight away)
2. Vibhajjā (giving an analytical explanation)
3. Patipuccha (answering it through another series of relevant questions)
4. Ṭhapaniyya (refraining from answering) (AN II:90)

Whatever the teaching method he used, the Buddha matched it with constructive learning situations in order to make learning situations more meaningful. The lecture method, which is considered as a less effective method at present, was a more effective method to the Buddha in the learning teaching process. Since the Buddha was so successful in the lecture method, by the end of the lesson there were more effective changes in students: Sandassetvā (presenting concrete and abstract ideas), Samādapetvā (acknowledging learning experiences), Samuttejetvā (arousing curiosity among students to study further), Sampahansetvā (keeping the interest among student throughout the lesson) (AN V: 66). When the Buddha used the lecture method, every part of the lecture from the beginning to the end was successful (MN: 19). The Buddha added new meaning to the lecture by practicing the following strategies in constructive way.

1. Ācikkhana (giving a short explanation or naming what he wants to say)
2. Desanā (explaining the lesson descriptively)
3. Paññapanā (allowing the student to understand the lesson as it is)
4. Paṭṭhapanā (explaining relevant facts in a deep manner)
5. Vivaranā (presenting the lesson by showing reasons)
6. Vibhajanā (analyzing the lesson)
7. Utthānikammam (conducting the lesson as appropriate to the learner’s cognitive level, giving a total explanation ) (Ana:546)
Similes, metaphors, and stories were used by the Buddha in a constructive way to enrich the content of the lesson as well as to minimize the lecture method or teacher’s interventions (MN I: 382). It was the view held by the Buddha that similes help students in the process of knowledge construction to understand the meaning of the lesson (MN I: 368). Aggivcchagotta (MN II: 256) and Vammika (MN I: 354) are two Suttas that can be taken as examples for usage of similes in Buddhist teaching learning process. Specifically, whenever the smile is used as a teaching strategy the Buddha matched it with the life experience of the learner. For example, Soṇakolivisi was a clever lute player in his lay life. The Buddha who needed to explain adverse effects of extreme effort to Soṇakolivisi used the simile of tuning the lute since it was more appropriate with his life experience. Here, Soṇakolivisi understood the adverse effects of extreme effort because of the simile the Buddha used (ANV: 152).

The Kasībhāradvāja-sutta shows how far the Buddha was successful when using metaphors in a child-centered learning situation. Once, the Buddha went to Kasībhāradvāja for alms. Then, Kasībhāradvāja asked the Buddha to plow, sow and eat since he himself does so. Here, the Buddha answered Kasībhāradvāja that he too plows sows and eats. Then, Kasībhāradvāja replied, you claim to be a plowman, but I don't see your plowing. The Buddha who answered that discernment is his yoke & plow, conscience is his pole, mind is his yoke-tie, and mindfulness is his plowshare and goad (SN:28). This conversation, between Kasībhāradvāja and the Buddha proves how the Buddha was successful when using metaphors in learning teaching process as the learner can construct the knowledge relevant to the lesson objectives.

The Buddha was an expert teacher in displaying visual aids creatively. Because of this capability which the Buddha had, there were some disciples who attained Nibbāna during the course of the lesson. The characters of Rūpa Nandā and Khemā testify to this claim. Rūpa Nandā was proud about her figure. First, the Buddha allowed her to see a beautiful young girl. Then, he showed the way that the female figure changes into Jarā (decaying), Vyādhi (becoming old) and Marana (death). Here, according to the changes that took place in the bodily figure, the Buddha explained the changing nature of life to Rūpa Nandā (DhaA: 392). It was enough for her to understand the real nature of human life. The method followed by the Buddha with Khemā was the same as Rūpa Nandā (Dha A: 593). Visual aids were used by the Buddha according to the intellectual nature of the learner so he/she could create new knowledge with them (MN I: 414).

The child-centered lesson approach used by the Buddha in a discussion would create an active learning environment for the learner. Before starting the discussion, he would ask the Bhikkus ‘what was the discussion about before I came here’ (MN I: 396). The discussion which had started as a dialogue in this way, provided a sound background in knowledge construction. For the Buddha, discussion is the best way to understand one’s wisdom (AN II: 366). Discussion took place in two ways: teacher-student discussions and students-students discussion. Devadaha (MN III: 2) and Cūlasaccaka-sutta (MN I: 540) in Majjhima-nikāya are two examples of
teacher-student discussion. Since the teacher can understand the real nature of the student’s cognitive abilities through discussion he/she can arrange a feedback session for the further development of the learner (DN I: 134). The Nandaka-sutta (MN I: 299) and the Cullavedalla-sutta (AN V: 378) are two examples of student-student discussions. The Buddha paved the way for student-student discussions in teaching in two ways:

1. The Buddha would start the discussion and then ask a senior student to continue. For example, in the Saccavībhāṅga-sutta, the discussion started by the Buddha was continued by Venerable Sāriputta (MN III: 512).
2. The Buddha presented the lecture briefly, and, then, the disciples were asked to learn the rest from a senior monk (MN I: 272). Most of the times, these senior monks were Venerable Sāriputta, Mahā Kassapa or Ānanda.

As the Buddha believed, the learner constructs knowledge step by step (Dham: 239), moving from simple to complex (MN I: 370). A fine example of gradual learning can be seen in the Kīṭāgiri-sutta. According to the Kīṭāgiri-sutta, the student who visits the teacher and constructs knowledge gradually until s/he reaches Nibbāna (MN I: 473).

When the lesson was done in this way the learner was very satisfied and contented. Once, a learner who became happier due to cognitive changes that took place because of the Buddha's lecture, expressed his heartiest salutation in the following way: “Most excellent; O Gotama, is thy teaching, most excellent, just as man would set upright what is overturned, reveal what is concealed, point out the way to one gone astray, bring an oil lamp into the darkness. So that those with eyes could see objects, even so the Dhamma (doctrine) has been declared in many manners by the venerable Gotama”

According to above discussion, it can be concluded that though there is no similar term which implies the meaning “constructivism” as discussed in western education psychology, Buddhist education is rich in characteristics of constructive learning theory in western educational psychology. These similarities motivate us to think that constructive approach in Buddhist and western education psychology cannot be considered as two distinct traditions since western psychologists have developed constructive learning theory as an extension of constructive approach in Buddhist education. The Buddha’s view regarding the learner, admiration of one’s cognitive abilities, implementation of teaching methods and strategies as appropriate to the learner in Buddhist education testifies that Buddhism has provided many insights when developing constructive learning theory in western psychology. In Buddhist educational psychology, too, the learner is at the centre of learning teaching process. The Buddha rejected passive learning and wanted to take the disciples towards the ultimate goal with the active participation of the learner under his guidance, using the process of facilitation, since only creative disciples can reach the ultimate goal shown by him. Therefore, most of the time, the Buddha asked his students to examine the meaning of teachings by themselves.
Conclusion

Characteristics of constructive learning which are discussed in western education psychology can also be seen in Buddhist education psychology. Hence, it can be argued that antecedents of constructivism in western education appear in the teachings of Buddhist education. In later periods, western psychologists have developed theoretical frames of constructive learning in western education psychology under the light of the constructive approach in Buddhist education. In both Buddhist and western constructivist education, the learner is at the centre of learning teaching process. In Buddhist education, the Buddha facilitated and guided the learner to achieve not only mundane but also supra-mundane happiness in a constructive way. There are many occasions where the cognitive ability of the learner is appreciated by the Buddha in *Suttapiṭaka*, since it is the core of the constructive learning teaching process. Whatever the teaching method the Buddha used, he planned the learning/teaching process creatively with constructive teaching strategies. Contemporary teachers, teacher educators, curriculum developers, and theory and policy makers can learn many lessons from the Buddha to implement the constructive learning teaching process in the present educational system. Finally, it can be argued that constructivist approach in Buddhist education is much older than constructivism in western education psychology and Buddhist constructivist approach has contributed immensely to strengthen the constructive learning theory in western education psychology.

Abbreviations

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<td>VM</td>
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**Endnotes**

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A Brief Introduction to the Date and the Authorship of the *Atthasālinī* (Part I)

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A Brief Introduction to the Date and the Authorship of the 
Atthasālinī (Part I)

S. Vijitha Kumara

Proposition

“The foregoing notes may prove useful when the times are ready for a full inquiry into the history of the Buddhist Commentaries.”

- C. A. F. Rhys Davids, (Dhamma-Sangani – xxiv.)

[This article brings forward only a brief discussion on the date and authorship of the Atthasālinī. In fact, the research is still going on and all the findings in the part II are expected to be published. I intend to address by this short article, “what” and “when” only, not “why” and “how”]

Abstract

The historical records have entrusted the commentary of the Dhammasaṅganī or Atthasālinī (henceforth AS) to the commentator Buddhaghosa and it is believed that it was compiled in India. Particularly, the AS itself, the Gandhavamsa and the Mahāvamsa ensure that the author of the AS was Buddhaghosa. However, the inside facts of the text unanimously lead to the suspicion of the authorship and the place of its compilation. Particularly, the AS discloses only reference speaking of Ceylon. The above fact could lead to affirm the view that the AS was compiled in India. Similarly, the references to other commentaries in the AS conducive further to raise doubts on the date and the authorship of it. Especially, this paper aims to widely inquire the aspect of the historical records as well as varied views of the modern scholarship.

Keywords: Buddhaghosa, Atthasālinī, Authorship

Introduction

The AS, the commentary to the Dhammasaṅghaṇī, is known as the initial compilation of Buddhaghosa. Particularly, the established view is that it was written by him before his arrival in Ceylon. In this regard, the historical records such as the Mahāvaṃsa, the Gandhavamsa and the AS itself insist the Buddhaghosa’s authorship. However, the researchers are invariably suspicious of the date, place where the text was compiled and the authentic authorship of the AS. In this respect, the interior facts of the text also unanimously affirm that the incertitude of the authorship and the place of compiling the AS could be justifiable.

The only reference to Ceylon found in the AS itself, except the historical records, might perhaps be the reason to grip a view that it was compiled in India. Besides, the references to other commentaries that we come across in the AS also lead to uphold doubts on the date and the authorship of the text. Therefore, it would be more constructiveto review the literature carefully.
Literature Review

After analyzing the historical records and the facts in the text itself, Prof. Norman notes “The Mahāvamsa states that Buddhaghosa wrote the Atthasālinī in India, before going to Ceylon. If this was so, then he must have re-written it there, because he refers to commentarial material from the Mahāvihāra.”

Hinüber, in this same connection, suggests “Because of the introductory verses it was difficult, however, to ascribe this text directly to him. Consequently he could have written only some sort of first edition and requested someone else to write an updated version.”

B. C. Law without hesitation admits that the AS was a work of Buddhaghosa. Though Law recognizes that the text contains references to the Visuddhimagga (vism), Samantapāsādikā (Sp) and Vibhaṅgatthakathā (Vib-a), he has not pursued analyzing the facts thoroughly. Editing the AS and publishing it as a Sinhalese script, Yagirala Paññānanda therā suggests that it was composed by Buddhaghosa. Nevertheless, after scrutinizing the references to the other commentaries encountered in the AS, Ven. Yagirala Paññānanda firmly says that it was compiled in Ceylon. Tin, who translated the AS to English does not try to offer in the least a viewpoint of his own but claims that he agrees with all the points Mrs Rhys Davids has discussed in her translation of the Dhammasaṅghanī. In fact, Mrs. Davids has widely studied the historical background of the AS and presented some important evidence primarily based on the internal facts which have no correspondence with historical records. Apart from the above views, Prof. Endo pointing out the rejection of a teaching of Mahasivathera, presents a different opinion that there was a Sinhalese AS.

Discussion

The significance of Norman’s view is that he critically takes into account the commentarial materials relating to the Mahāvihāra found in the AS. As I understand, the argument that he has presented does not fortify his conclusion inasmuch as it is disputable on the ground of the solid evidence to the effect that even southern Indians had the source materials that the Mahāvihārians had in Anuradhapura. Probably, Norman’s view that the AS was re-written by Buddhaghosa is acceptable though the basis he applied in his argument is disputable. My dissent against Prof. Hinüber is based on the suggestion he presented: “Consequently he could have written only some sort of first edition and requested someone else to write an updated version.” However, Law presents a few important points relating to the AS that may have a bearing on a rectification of views about the date and the authorship of the text. The earliest study on the authorship and the date of the AS was by Mrs. Davids and she disagreed to the existed historical records by bringing out 18 factors. The commentator of the AS used to refer to “atṭhakathāyaṃ” and “atṭhakathā” throughout the text and the scholars infer that by using “atṭhakathāyaṃ” he might have referred to the great commentary (Mahāṭṭhakathā.). In addition to that, he from time to time has cited the varied interpretations of the other commentators (atṭhakathācariyā). These factors perhaps led to motivate Prof. Norman to present an argument that the commentator had followed the materials of the Mahāvihāra and consequently this
was re-written in Ceylon. In other words, he thinks that if Buddhaghosa wrote it while staying in India, it is impossible to refer to the source materials of Mahāvihāra. However, I do not agree that southern Indians did face any difficulty to use the commentarial materials of Mahāvihāra because there were three Sinhalese temples and Sinhalese monks who migrated from Ceylon to India and dwelt there with the source material brought by them, especially, in the time of King Vaṭṭagāmini Abhaya when a severe drought took place.\(^{18}\)

**Which commentaries have referred to the AS?**

The other most interesting fact we found in the AS is the references to the Vism,\(^{19}\)Sp\(^{20}\) and Vib-a.\(^{21}\) If the Vism was written by Buddhaghosa after his arrival in Ceylon, how did he refer to the Vism in the AS, which was compiled in India? Hence, this time gap testifies that the AS was compiled in India and later on revised in Ceylon. The view of Yaṭṭagāmaṇīnandathera that the AS was completely written in Ceylon, takes less validity here, because Dhammapāla, who compiled early commentaries also has referred to the AS in his works. Similarly, Buddhadatta in his Bv-a also has referred to the AS. And the other most interesting thing is a reference to the AS found in the Sp, which was compiled by Buddhaghosa even after the Vism. It means that the AS was both an early and later work to Sp. Thus, it is obvious that complicated facts are there to be analyzed before coming to a conclusion. The references to the AS found in the Nett-a are also relevant to infer that the AS was written at a time later than that of the Nett-a.\(^{22}\) Moreover, a reference to the AS is found even in the Sn-a.\(^{23}\) Besides, the commentary of the Apadāna\(^{24}\) and the Carīyāpiṭaka\(^{25}\) also referred to the AS and so that, they too would be earlier than the AS. Taking into account the facts alleged above, it is unjustifiable to conclude with certainty which commentaries were later or earlier to the AS because the serious issue here is that while the AS quotes the Sp, the Sp also quotes the AS. In that case, to adduce a clear cut suggestion, it is necessary to study the content, context and the purpose of citing while comparing the language style and contexts of different commentaries.

**The monks’ names found in the AS**

Though the author has referred to Ceylon only once by name, analyzing the names of the monks that we come across in the AS, it is plausible to say that more than 80% of them may have been from Ceylon. Except Nāgasena and Assagutta almost all the other monks lived in Ceylon.
As the above facts reveal, the view that the AS lacks references to Ceylon is a fallacy. While a few doubts still remain, the only point that is conclusive is that the AS was a re-written commentary. Yet, the view that the author was the same Buddhaghosa or someone else (as Hinüber suggested) should be explicated by a deep analysis of the language and the content of the AS.

**Possibility for a Sinhalese AS**

The first scholar who presented this viewpoint was Prof. Endo in his Studies on Pali Commentaries. He, referring to a note of a sub commentary (abhidhammatthavikāsini), as the tīkā has rejected the view of the elder Mahāsīva, infers that there was a Sinhalese AS in Anuradhapura. Further, he suggests that the Sinhalese AS was developed with amendments up to 2 century AD. In this circumstance, yet a few questions are to be raised such as whether it was followed by Buddhaghosa earlier or later. Or, did he compile his first version without following the SAS? Then is it possible that he himself understood the deficiencies of explanations or disagreed with views in his early version and decided to revise? However, the elements that Prof. Endo has pointed out could be further expanded in order to come out with credible information as to why the AS was re-written.

**Conclusion**

Particularly, the Sp and AS referred to each other, while the Ap-a, Nett-a, Sn-a, Bv-a, and Nidd-a refer to the AS. Hence, it would be reasonable to concede that the AS was a re-written or revised commentary. Under such circumstances, it could be concluded that the current interpretations should further be revised in order to find
out a true date and authorship of the AS. The full research outcomes will answer to
the aforementioned points comprehensively.

Acknowledgements
Hereby, I would like to thank Dr. Waruni Thennakoon and anonymous reviewers
for their insightful feedback on an early draft of this article.

Abbreviations
Ap-a   Apadāna-aṭṭhakathā
AS     Atthasālinī
Bv-a   Buddhavaṃsa-aṭṭhakathā
Cp-a   Cariyāpiṭaka-aṭṭhakathā
It-a   Itivuttaka-aṭṭhakathā
JPTS  Journal of Pali Text Society
Mhv    Mahāvaṃsa
My     Myanmar
Nett-a Nettippakarana-aṭṭhakathā
Nidd-a Niddesa-aṭṭhakathā
Sn-a   Suttanipāta-aṭṭhakathā
Spk    Samantapāsādikā
Vib-a  Vibhaṅga-aṭṭhakathā
Vism   Visuddhimagga

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Buddhist Studies.
Vipassana Research Institute. Uttaravinicchaya. CSCD.
Aññāsa

An examination of the Atthasalini shows that it was composed after the Samantapasadika to which it
Buddhaghosa wrote a commentary on the Dhammasangani known as the Atthasalini, B. C. Law,
O. von Hinuber, K. R. Norman, I. P. Minayeff, (1886)
Tatthañā

"attha" means "meaning" (artha>attha). Nevertheless, According to some of commentaries, “attha”
means "the commentaries" and Dhamma means "the Buddhavacana”
(Atthañcadhammañcapabāhānātipiṣugghitāsuttattanamaththañcadapiṇḍapaṭibhantī. M. Walleser,
Society, 1967) 143. Did Buddhaghosa strive to elaborate or make shine the commentaries (attha)?
Or did he comment on the Buddhavacana? This point should be studied with the support of semantic
of ‘sālinī’. Sālinī in Sanskrit means “shining”, (Endowed with, Possessed of, possessing, shining or
resplendent with- Practical Dictionary – 915p). So, “attha” here, might give the meaning of “the
ed. (London: Pali Text Society,1979) 22] Thus, it cannot be taken in that the “attha” implies merely
“meaning”. It is the meaning of the Dhamma or Buddhavacana. Therefore, this could be translated
as “Master of the Buddhavacana.” Also, the Atthasālinī, Paṭisambhidā commentary and
Sammohavinodanī define the “attha” to be “causality-
hetuphalal[Atthaatthothitisakhepatohetuphalam]-Vibha-a]. In this manner, the translation would be
the master of the causality”. Moreover, other commentaries give other varied definition on the
“attha”. As they have defined, “attha” means that which possessed of five facts: paccayasamuppannañ,
 nibbānañ, bhāsitatho, vipāko, kiriyā

[Paṭhedatopayanamkiṃcipaccayasamuppannañ, nibbānañ, bhāsitatho, vipāko, kiriyāttimepañcadhammañcapativeditabbā, A. P. Buddhadatta, Vibhaṅgaṭṭhakathā, ed. (London:
Pali Text Society, 1980) 386] is the attha. The text Atthasālinī also contain all above five facts in the
structure. As the commentaries have explained, these five are the detailed facts of the causality. In
this sense, I suggest that the “master of the causality” would be the most appropriate translation of
the Atthasālinī.

1 Tatthaññadavannāma - katvāpakaraṇam-adānakhamasanganiyākāśi - kaccham so aṭṭhasālininā. Mhv 37:225
3 mahāvihāravāsīnan vamsālankārabhātēnapihivivulapulavisuddhabuddhinā

buddhaghosādīrīgharōhanāmadheyyanatherenakātāyana-
attahināmadhammasangāhaṭṭhakathā. E. Mullar, (1979) 430
5 K. R. Norman, Pali Literature. (Wiesbaden: Harosowitz, 1983) 120
7 Buddhaghosa wrote a commentary on the Dhammasangani known as the Atthasālinī, B. C. Law,
History of Pali literature. vols. II. (London, 1933) 468
8 An examination of the Atthasālinī shows that it was composed after the Samantapasadika to which it
refers in pages 97 and 98 of the P.T.S. edition., ibid, 471
9 Aññāsambhānavānattathākathāhāmānvisāsattāsāliniyā pi

kattāsabbatthavivutatayasagghasūcoṭhupuddhaghosovahoti. Y. Paññānandathera,
Dhammasanganiyāpakkaranṭṭhakathā. ed. (Colombo: Hewawitarana Publishers, 1940) iii
10 Tatioṭṭhārāgantabātēnācaññarnāṣikāṭṭhevasattāsālinīnakatātikālaṃkādiṇāgamavissudd
himaggarañcaṇātamevakavatītā. Ibīd. v
Asiatic Society 1900) xx-xxvi
13 T. Endo, (2013) Studies in Pali Commentarial Literature, (Hong Kong:Centre for Buddhist Studies
2013 ) 27
14 As the historical texts recorded, at the time of a severe drought that took place in the 1st century AD
in Ceylon, some group of monks have brought the poraṇṭṭhakathā to India. The inscription
found at Sri Parvata in Andhra also confirms that there were three Sinhalese monasteries in
Andhra after Amaravati period. S. Vijitha Kumara, A Chronological Approach to the Pali
Commentaries, SIJBS, (Kandy: SIBA 2015) 47
15 C. A. F. Rhys Davids, (1900) xxiii-xxiv
“Vuttañheta maṭṭhakahāyam” Muller (1979) 108/ "Avīcāritameta maṭṭhakahāyam." Ibid. 113/ "Aṭṭhakahāyampana - ākāśagacchātomaḥāsakunāsasāthbhohi...ibid. 115"

Aṭṭhakahākāyīyāpanāḥ – nālīyāminamāṇotinyaśa" ibid. 123 See the same statement of the Patisambhida “nālīyāminamāṇotinya Patti-ā, 85
See the foot note 14

/saṭṭhāyaṁsabbanāmaṭṭhahānayenagathetvāvisuddhimaggevuttithārim ibid. /Tasamvīthārakahāvīvīsuddhimaggevuttīyeva ibid 186.

Vīthāropanasamantapāḍikāyam ibid. 98
21 Sābbākārenapanesavībhāṅgatathāyamāvibhavissati ibid 368
22 Īdānumuppādeṇānantīdāhipupbhavutamaṇevayenaarāhappālaṇāṇavasenaatthoyojettabbo.

Aṭṭhasāliniyampana “khayeṇāṇāṃkilesakkhayakareṇaṃyaggeṇāṇantivuttā. Vipassana Research Institute.CSCD.Netti-a My 69/

Hadayaṁhaccatiṭṭhānicittassabhbhanasaṅkhātāṁhadayaṁhantvātiṭṭhanti. Tathā hi vuttamāṇaṇīyaṁ “abhantaranatthenaḥadaya’’nti. 201
Yathāvuttāsupanadvīdāsayyāyakāyacitiyāti, ayaṃvipaṇcitānūtiyaayametthaṭhappāyō. Yasmānpānasaṅkāpanīyaṁ patippadācalatīna/calatīvicārānīyaṃ “calati” tīvuttām, tasmaṇkekaśapiṣippagalaṇanānantaraṇaṣaṅkāpanāsaṭṭhipadāṭhappadoṭṭhavojettabōvā. Ibd. 206


E. Mullar, (1979) 419
26 Ibid 229, 284, 230, 267
28 Ibid 268
29 Ibid 114, 119, 120,127, 142,
30 Ibid 267
31 Ibid 268
32 Ibid 30
33 Ibid 12
34 Ibid 116,200,
35 Ibid 267
36 Ibid 221,266,405
37 Ibid 187
38 Ibid 31
39 Ibid 399
40 T. Endo, (2013) 27-28
41 Ibid 28
Implications for a Philosophy of Life
in the Sabbāsava-sutta

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Implications for a Philosophy of Life in the \textit{Sabbāsava-sutta}

Ven. Le Quang Le

In our everyday life we always encounter āsavas (cankers) which cause us a lot of dukkha (suffering). The Buddha taught: \textit{“Spiritual deliverance is attained by the elimination of the cankers”}. So, we should know clearly what the cankers are, and what we should do to overcome them. These matters are explained very profoundly in the \textit{Sabbāsava-sutta} in \textit{Majjhima-nikāya} II as noted by many scholars. Buddhism is a path that conduces to benefits in the practical life. Only when we understand the nature of cankers, we can overcome them through the proper methods as the Buddha taught in the \textit{Sabbāsava-sutta}. According to the way of practicing the Buddha’s teachings, the main goal is to destroy cankers so that we can not only improve our noble characters to live happily in this world, but also ensure the continuous spiritual evolution of ourselves in the future.

It is absolutely necessary for us to understand that the path to spiritual deliverance is a strenuous one. That is particularly true for those who discipline themselves cautiously, intent solely upon Nibbāna, so that their cankers will be overcome. The philosophy of the \textit{Sabbāsava-sutta} is very valuable for us to cultivate every day and its application is entirely effective. According to the \textit{Sabbāsava-sutta} the Buddha taught the monks the means by which all cankers could be abandoned:

\begin{quote}
“Bhikkhus\textsuperscript{1}, I say that the destruction of the taints is for one who knows and sees, not for one who does not know and see. Who knows and sees what? Wise attention and unwise attention. When one attends unwisely, unarisen taints arise and arisen taints increase. When one attends wisely, unarisen taints do not arise and arisen taints are abandoned.”\textsuperscript{2}
\end{quote}

\section*{1. A brief introduction to the \textit{“Sabbāsava-sutta”}}

The Buddha teaches the methods of restraining the mind from all desires, through knowing and seeing, not without knowing and seeing. When attending unwisely non-arisen desires arise, and arisen desires grow. When attending wisely non-arisen desires do not arise, and arisen desires fade. The Buddha teaches the \textit{Bhikkhus} seven methods for restraining and abandoning the desires, the fundamental defilements that maintain bondage to the round of birth and death. Seven methods of eliminating all cankers are:

\begin{enumerate}
\item The cankers to be abandoned by reflecting wisely,
\item The cankers to be abandoned by restraint,
\item The cankers to be abandoned by indulging,
\item The cankers to be abandoned by enduring,
\item The cankers to be abandoned by avoiding,
\item The cankers to be abandoned by dispelling,
\end{enumerate}
2. An Explanation of the Buddhist Concept of Āsava (Cankers)

Āsava is a Pali term (Sanskrit: Āśrava) which is used in Buddhist scripture, philosophy, and psychology. The glossary of the Companion Encyclopedia of Asian Philosophy defines āsava as: inflow, influx, influence; mental bias or canker, cankers that keep one bound to the world of Samsāra; used particularly in Jainism and Buddhism. Āsavas signify defilements considered in their role of sustaining the forward movement of the process of birth and death. The commentaries derive the word from the root “su” meaning “to flow”. Scholars differ as to whether the flow implied by the prefix “ā” is inward or outward; thus, some have rendered it as “influxes” or “influences”, others as “outflows” or “effluents”, which according to the Mahāsaccaka-sutta (Majjhima-nikāya XXXVI) indicates the term’s real significance independently of etymology when it describes the āsavas as:

“The taints that defile, bring renewal of being, give trouble, ripen in suffering, and lead to future birth, ageing, and death.”

Thus, other translators, by passing the literal meaning, have rendered it as “cankers”, “corruptions” or “taints”. The Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines says that the āsavas are cankers, taints and intoxicants or biases. Through the path of Stream-Entry, the canker of views is destroyed; through the path of Non-Returning, the canker of sense-desire; through the path of Arahantship, the cankers of existence and ignorance. The Sabbāsava-sutta shows how to overcome the cankers, namely, through insight, sense-control, avoidance, wise use of the necessities of life, etc. Khīnāsava, ‘one whose cankers are destroyed’, or ‘one who is canker-free’, is a name for the Arahant or Holy One. The state of Arahantship is frequently called ‘āsavakkhaya’ - ‘the destruction of the cankers’. The Suttas concluding with the attainment of Arahantship by the listeners often end with the words:

“The hearts of the Bhikkhus were freed from the cankers through clinging no more.”

The Ottawa Glossary of Buddhist Terms says that āsava is a canker that obstructs progress toward Enlightenment. The Abhidhamma lists four āsavas: sensual desire, desire for continued becoming, dogmatic view and ignorance. The Suttas usually list only three āsavas, omitting explicit mention of the canker of dogmatic view.

3. Classification of Āsavas (the Cankers)

3.1. Kāmāsava (The Canker of Sensual Desire)

Kāmāsava is that sensual desire, the lust for indriyāsattaparitāsana (sensuous gratification), the delight in sensuality, the taṇhā for kāmarati (sense-pleasures), the carnal love, the fever of passion, the infatuation with indriyāsattā-ahirati (sensuous enjoyment), the holding on to objects of the senses through the six sense-doors (i.e. the delectable sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and idea), the drive for the satisfaction of taṇhā. All these constitute the first category of canker. This is called Kāmāsava (The canker of sensual desire) which can be divided into two groups:
1. The desire to enjoy the delightful - *indriyāsatta-paritosanā,*

2. Pleasurable things found in the sentient sphere of existence and the objects that induce delight - *indriyāsatta-abhirati.*

They are the desire for *cakkhus*patha (the range of vision), the desire for *sadda* (sound), the desire for *gandha* (smell), the desire for *rasa* (taste) and the desire for *phassa* (tangibles). Human beings intoxicated with the *abhirati* of these sense objects, lose all sense of proportion and behave like lunatics, and chase after these sense objects to enjoy them. Corresponding to the *Kāmūpapatti-sutta* of *Itivuttaka 95,* the Buddha taught the monks the following three ways of obtaining the objects of sensual desire:

1. There are those objects of sensual desire already existent;
2. There is the way of those who delight in creating them;
3. There is the way of those who gain control over objects created by others.

“Those who enjoy what exists 8.
Those devas exercising control,
Those who delight in creating,
And others who enjoy sense-objects
Being in this state or another
They cannot pass beyond Saṃsāra.
Understanding this danger
In objects of sensual enjoyment,
Let the wise person abandon all sense pleasures,
Those both heavenly and human
By severing the flow of craving,
The flow so difficult to overcome
Of greed for pleasing, enticing forms,
They attain to final Nibbāna
And overcome all suffering.
The noble seers, masters of knowledge,
Wise ones with perfect understanding,
By directly knowing the end of birth
Come no more to renewal of being.” 9
3.2. Bhavāsava (The Canker of Continued Becoming)

That desire for continued becoming, the lust for, the delight in, the taṇhā and the love for, the fever of, the infatuation with, and the holding on to existence, in the various planes of existence. This is called the canker of continued becoming.

The canker of continued becoming is the tendency to cleave to, hold on, or get stuck to the objects, but then the object this time is to continue to exist. The nature of the canker of continued becoming is the atikkammaññatā-balaññīra (survival-compulsion)\textsuperscript{10}. Corresponding to Cūḷasuttra-sutta (Magha-nikāya CXXI), the Buddha taught:

\begin{quote}
“He understands thus\textsuperscript{11}: ‘This signless concentration of mind is conditioned and volitionally produced. But whatever is conditioned and volitionally produced is impermanent, subject to cessation’. When he knows and sees thus, his mind is liberated from the taint of becoming. When it is liberated there comes the knowledge: it is liberated.”\textsuperscript{12}
\end{quote}

3.3. Diṭṭhāsava (The Canker of Dogmatic View)

Those who are affected by “Diṭṭhāsava” as a result think that the world is eternal, or that it is not eternal; that the world is finite, or that it is infinite; that the soul is the body, or that soul is different from the body; that the Tathāgata (Perfect One) exists after his death, or that the Tathāgata does not exist after his death, or that the Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist after his death. This is a kind of dogmatic view, a holding of a wrong religious creed, a thicket of perverse understanding, a wilderness of wrong belief, a twisted faith-pattern, a wrangling over wrong ideology, a fetter of perverted view, a dogmatic grip, a tenacious wrong persuasion, a fanatical fixation, a wrong adherence to a dogma, a blind alley, a misleading path, a falsehood, a bigoted belief, a distorted grasp of actuality. The Mahātaṇhāsaṅkhaya-sutta (Magha-nikāya XXXVIII: The Greater Discourse on the Destruction of Craving) talks about a monk named Sāti, the fisherman’s son with his wrong diṭṭhi (views) on the Buddha’s teachings. He thinks:

\begin{quote}
“As I understand the Dhamma taught by the Blessed One\textsuperscript{13}, it is this same consciousness that runs and wanders through the round of rebirths, not another.”\textsuperscript{14}
\end{quote}

K. R. Norman states: “This would appear to be a recollection by Sāti of some such statements as those found in the Brhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad that viññāṇa continues: ‘Idam mahad bhūtān anantaṃ apāraṃ viññāṇaghana eva’, (This great being, endless, unlimited, consisting of nothing but intelligence); ‘Sa viññāṇo bhavati, sa viññāṇanam evaṁvavakrāmati’, (He becomes one with intelligence what had intelligence departs with him); ‘Sa vā eṣa mahān aja ātmā yo ’yam viññāṇamayah prāṇeshu’, (Verily, he is the great unborn Self who is this (person) consisting of knowledge amongst the senses).”\textsuperscript{15}
3.4. Avijjāsava (The Canker of Ignorance)

What is the canker of ignorance? The non-comprehension of the truth of dukkha, the non-comprehension of the truth of the cause of dukkha, the non-comprehension of the truth of the cessation of dukkha, the non-comprehension of the truth of the path leading to the cessation of dukkha, the non-comprehension of the past lives, the non-comprehension of the future lives, the non-comprehension of the both the past and the future lives. i.e., as related to present life, the non-comprehension of the Paṭiccasamuppāda, this kind of non-comprehension, this non-seeing, this non-understanding, this non-awakening, this non-enlightenment, this non-penetration, this non-grasping, this dimwittedness, this absence of wisdom, this lack of insight, this delusion, this stupidity, this obtuseness, this ignorance, this flood of ignorance, this bond ignorance, this predisposition of ignorance, this barrier of ignorance, this obstruction of ignorance, this root of evil. This is called “Avijjāsava” which is synonymous with the tanhā mind in arūpa-dhātu (formless-elements) where the Paṭiccasamuppāda and the Four Noble Truths are never present. This is a kind of canker which is very subtle. The Buddhist monks, who nearly attain enlightenment, but have not eliminated the avijjā, still fall into Saṃsāra.

4. Analyzing the Term “Yoniso Manasikāra” (Wise Attention)

First, we analyze the term “yoniso”. It originates from “yoni”, which symbolizes a “womb”, a “matrix”, or a “place of origin”. Hence, yoniso is able to communicate the sense of doing something thoroughly or penetratively, in the sense of going down to its origins. The sense of doing something in a penetrative manner may be seen in a simile which signifies how examining a lump of foam in a manner that is yoniso leads to the realization that this lump of foam is empty of any substance. In the background of this simile, yoniso communicates the opinion of penetrating through the outer surface of phenomena, in this case the surface of a lump of foam and realizing the true essence of what is found below this surface. The sukhumanānatta or thiratta, in the sense of doing something intensively seems to be prominent in an expression of somebody who is stirred by the prospect of disease or death and thereon thoroughly endeavours, “saṃviggo yoniso padahati”, in order to progress on the path to deliverance. In the Itivuttaka 30: Tapanīya-sutta of Khuddaka-nikāya indicates that to be stirred and to thoroughly endeavour are two conditions that are a source of abundant happiness here and now, and that lead to the destruction of the influxes. Here someone has not done what is good, not done what is wholesome, not done what is beneficial, but has done unwholesome, callous, wrongful deeds. He is remorseful on thinking, “I have not done wholesome” and is remorseful on thinking, “I have done unwholesome”:

“Here someone has not done what is good¹⁶, not done what is wholesome, not done what is beneficial, but has done evil, callous, wrongful deeds. He is remorseful on thinking, ‘I have not done good,’ and is remorseful on thinking, ‘I have done evil’.”¹⁷

Sometimes, yoniso can also communicate the sense of “attention”, “proper” or “appropriate”. This meaning underlies a passage where a king finds out that the Buddhist monks make good use of robe material given to them, as once their robes
becomes worn, they use the cloth as mattress coverings, foot-wipers etc., and the shreds left over after such usage are kneaded with mud and used for construction work. This convinces the king that the monks make use of the cloth they receive in a “proper” manner, which according to the Pañcasatikakkhandhaka states: “Sabbevime samaṇā sakyaputtiyā yoniso upanenti, na kulavaṃ gamenī”. The sukhumanānatta of yoniso is also related to a passage in the Bhūmija-sutta, according to which it is not beneficial to live the holy life in an ayoniso manner.

An essential function of yoniso manasikāra, in line with its nature as a form of attention that goes to the very origin of things, is to do research into the conditioned nature of phenomena.

The practical implications of yosino manasikāra and its relevance to Paṭiccasamuppāda are explained clearly in several sermons such as Dutiyaariyasāvaka-sutta (Saṃyutta-nikāya XII. 50); Ariyasāvaka-sutta (Saṃyutta-nikāya XII.49); Natumha-sutta (Saṃyutta-nikāya XII.37); Tatiyabodhi-sutta (Udāna I.3); etc, which clarify that such wise and penetrative attention focuses on the specific conditionality of phenomena. According to the Nidāna-saṃyutta XII 62: Dutiyaassutavā-sutta of Saṃyutta-nikāya, the Buddha taught the monks:

“Therein, bhikkhus, the instructed noble disciple attends closely and carefully to dependent origination itself thus: ‘When this exists, that comes to be; with the arising of this, that arises. When this does not exist, that does not come to be; with the cessation of this, that ceases.’”

Yoniso manasikāra is necessary preparation for bringing about effectively the benefits of meditation. Without yoniso manasikāra, the practitioner will cling on to vipallāsas (perversions) preventing the development of pañña.

“When one attends unwisely, unarisen taints arise and arisen taints increase. When one attends wisely, unarisen taints do not arise and arisen taints are abandoned.”

Yoniso manasikāra is understood as the attention to truth, reality, the noble truths or the attention of pañña because this attention makes kusala mind arise.

5. Seven Methods Proposed in the Sabbāsava-sutta for the Elimination of All Āsavas (Cankers)

5.1. Dassanā Pahātabbā (Elimination through Seeing Clearly)

The first method is the elimination through seeing clearly (dassanā) which refers to the cultivation of vipassanānāṇa (ability of attaining insight), into the basic facts or realities of anicca (impermanence), dukkha (suffering) and anattā (no-self) which show the characteristic of all things. In practical application dassanā means the practice of wisdom-meditation and besides cultivating the three characteristics of all things as mentioned. When pañña (wisdom) into the characteristics (anicca, dukkha and anattā) becomes a direct experience, as different from an intellectual one, our mind is freed from the distortions and impurities, and the pañña into the Four Noble Truths flash to light the current of the consciousness. This is such a great experience that it shakes one’s very being and makes all āsavas that were deep-rooted weaken.
After having developed all the stages of *vipassanā* (insight), the practitioner finally attains to the summit of spiritual experience and at the same time succeeds in breaking the *samyojanas*\(^{25}\) (fetters) which tie human beings to *Samsāra*. It is then that the *āsavas* are destroyed forever. The most important stage of overcoming is known as Arahanthood characteristically described as the stage of *khīnāsava* (one who is canker-free). This is the highest state of spiritual excellence and the purpose of all spiritual effort. Only *khīnāsava* can be a true refuge for all human beings in the world. Since, he alone, having transcended the sāṃsāric bondages, can help others to do similarly. Only he who knows can teach, not the one who does not know.

Here, ‘*Dassanā pahātabbā*’ (elimination through seeing clearly) is very important. The main point of the Buddha is to teach his disciples to practice developing *paññā* (wisdom) which leads to the realization of the true dhamma. When we have wisdom, we will have *sammā diṭṭhi* (right view). In cognitive thinking, beyond misleading view of the ordinary person, not letting the current of desire in mind, always observes our life like bubbles, shadows, illusion. All *dhammas* are impermanent. So, the Buddha’s emphasis was on the attainment of *sammā diṭṭhi* which helps people to see the true nature of things leading to the elimination of all delusion, attachment, anger and the eradication of all *āsavas*.

### 5.2. *Saṃvarā Pahātabbā* (Elimination through Restraint)

The second method is to abandon cankers through the practice of restraint. The Buddha advised the monks to restrain the six sense-organs: eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind (*Sadāyatana*). By restraint of the senses the Buddha did not mean not letting objects to come into contact with the senses, for instance restraint of eyes does not bear the meaning of not letting dust go into either eyes or prohibiting the monks from looking at *rūpa* (form); their ears should not hear, their nose should not smell, their tongue taste, their body should not touch, their mind should not cognize all things. The Buddha’s view of sense restraint is expressed clearly in the *Sekha-sutta*, as follows:

> “On seeing a form with the eye, a noble disciple does not grasp at its signs and features. Since, if he left the eye faculty unguarded, evil unwholesome states of covetousness and grief might invade him, he practises the way of its restraint, he guards the eye faculty, he undertakes the restraint of the eye faculty. On hearing a sound with the ear … On smelling an odour with the nose … On tasting a flavour with the tongue … On touching a tangible with the body … on cognizing a mind-object with the mind, a noble disciple does not grasp at its signs and features. Since, if he left the mind faculty unguarded, evil unwholesome states of covetousness and grief might invade him, he practises the way of its restraint, he guards the mind faculty, he undertakes the restraint of the mind faculty.”\(^{26}\)\(^{27}\)

Restraint in *Sabbāsava-sutta* is a reference to restraining the six sense-organs because they are the six gateways for entry of all the cankers into the mind.
5.3. *Paṭisevanā Pahātabbā* (Elimination through Proper Use of Requisites)

The third method is adopting the practice of the proper use of material requisites. The Buddha taught his disciples how to use *catupaccaya* (four requisites: food, clothing, medicine and lodgings) in the right way. Such use could be conducive to a healthy life. According to the teachings of the Buddha, human suffering could be a result of the lack of the basic needs of life. It is necessary to avoid such suffering in order to develop higher spiritual states of mind. Material requisites can lead to suffering when one goes beyond the actual need for satisfactory living and develops a craving for them. The Buddha, therefore, recommends contentment regarding these requisites.

The third method refers to the *catupaccaya* which are to be used with “yoniso manasikāra” considering why they are essential needs and how they are to be used in the best possible way. The practitioner is required to be cautious in the use of the essential material requisites of life. To be cautious, the practitioner should stop and think, before and during using any requisites of life and do so with proper attention.

5.4. *Adhivāsanā Pahātabbā* (Elimination through Endurance)

The fourth method is to endure with firm determination difficulties and afflictions caused by external circumstances. In general, endurance may be treated harshly by others thinking it to be a weakness. The practitioner can set oneself right, but not always and everywhere. So as to face a hostile and disagreeable environment imperturbably, it is essential that the practitioner must learn to be forbearing, forgiving and patient. The people who lack courage can never make the best use of life to overcome āsavas. Thus, the Buddha spoke highly of endurance as one of the most exalted virtues and a *pāramī* (perfection) which must be completed necessarily if the practitioner wants to attain Nibbāna.

5.5. *Parivajjanā Pahātabba* (Elimination through Avoidance)

According to the Buddha’s analysis, the fifth way of preventing the arising of āsava is adoption of the practice of avoidance. According to this method there are some situations that one need not face by consciously avoiding them. Pathways that pose danger such as the possibility of having pits and holes into which one could fall dangerous road ways inhabited by fierce wild beasts and cruel persons could be consciously avoided. The Buddha advised the Buddhist monks to avoid the dangers that may occur to them and even the normal people. These kinds of danger cannot be overcome by methods such as chanting suttas, reciting the Buddha’s name, or having endurance. We must apply the method of avoiding. For example, when we meet a madman, we cannot use arguments to analyze a wrong or right thing to teach them. In this case, the best way is to avoid. When we see a fierce dog, a war area, etc, the most effective method is that we should stay away from danger. We cannot use arguments or any other method to avoid it.
5.6. *Vinodanā Pahātabbā* (Elimination through Dispelling)

Elimination through dispelling is to make our mind put away, release or get rid of unwholesome states. If there is greed arising in the mind one should abandon it immediately.

The Buddha advised the monks to remove the roots of all unwholesome conduct, *lobha, dosa, moha* because they are the root causes of a psychological nature that a human being encounters. They are not physical in nature. To remove them, we must apply the mind itself by lighting the lamp of wisdom. It is a method to remove the inner causes which give rise to *āsava*, and when they are removed, human beings can be free from the resulting suffering. In connection with this way of abandoning taints the Buddha says:

“While taints, vexation, and fever might arise in one who does not remove these thoughts, there are no taints, vexation, or fever in one who removes them.”

5.7. *Bhāvanā Pahātabbā* (Elimination through Development)

The seventh method is one of abandoning through development or cultivation of the mind. The Buddha advised the monks to practice the *Satta Sambojjhaṅga* (The Seven Limbs of Enlightenment). Practising the Seven Limbs of Enlightenment, the monks train their mind to be weary of the world and abandon it with the six external bases because they have seen that their reality is *Paṭiccasamuppāda* and *anicca*. With this realization, they are not attracted by them. The following factors bringing about enlightenment are to be cultivated:

1. **Sati (Mindfulness)**: mindfulness of bodily and mental states keeping one’s alertness regarding what goes on within and outside oneself in the spheres of mentality and materiality.

2. **Dhammavicaya (Investigation of dhammas)**: discrimination of the true and the false. It is wisdom through selection. One must choose the proper method to practice. In the Buddha’s time, there were many philosophical systems, many religions advocating different ways and practices, each religion itself believing that their own teachings were true, and others false. In this case, a person who wants to achieve the ultimate goal of enlightenment, must have a clever mind to distinguish between wholesome and unwholesome, and choose the best way for him to practice. Investigation of all objects of mind, with mindfulness well established is important.

3. **Viriya (Energy)**: Putting forth effort to maintain the wholesome states and to get rid of unwholesome states.

4. **Pīti (Joy)**: Cultivate a sense of spiritual joy which is conducive to attaining bodily and mental calm and tranquility.
5. **Passaddhi (Tranquility of body and mind):** riddance of all passions and ignorance and grossness or weight of body or mind, so that one becomes physically and mentally relaxed, free and at ease.

6. **Samādhi (Concentration):** power to keep the mind steady, concentrated and one-pointed.

7. **Upekkhā (Equanimity):** Attaining a balanced state of mind prevents it from bias and partiality and attraction towards what is pleasant and aversion towards what is unpleasant. It is defined as the mind in equilibrium, i.e. transcending all discriminations based on attachment and aversion.

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6. **Relevance of the Sabbāsava-sutta to the Daily Life of Both Monks and Laypeople in dealing with Āsavas (cankers)**

In the daily life of both Buddhist monks and laypeople many simple and complicated situations have to be faced leading to the arising of āsava. It is difficult for monks and laypeople to put into practice the Buddha’s teachings if they do not know how to eliminate the āsava. In this section an attempt will be made to give some indications regarding how it could be done. P. D. Premasiri states:

“āśava(s) together with latent tendencies (anusaya), fetters (saṃyojana) and hindrances (nīvaraṇa) constitute the unwholesome cognitive and emotive aspect of mind.”

The unwholesome cognitive and emotive aspect of mind which, exists in the mind of human beings who are not enlightened, flows out to the external world through the six sense-organs of the body. Hence, it makes human beings lose their sense of judgment and fall into *Saṃsāra* (the cycle of repeated birth and death). To get rid of the cycle of repeated birth and death, we must get onto the raft of dhammas such as “reflecting on the loathsomeness of the body, food etc. contemplating on impermanence and death; following the Noble Eightfold Path; cultivating Five Faculties (Indriya); practicing Four Establishments of Mindfulness (Cattāro Satipaṭṭhāna); and cultivating the Four Noble Truths” and eliminate all āsava. In the *Sabbāsava-sutta*, the Buddha taught us the seven methods to eradicate the āsava which are systematically enumerated.

In our everyday life, when we constantly encounter āsava, we should apply the appropriate methods to eliminate those āsava. The elimination of āsava is often used in the sense of eradicating by way of substitution or replacement. That is, eradicating something by bringing in another thing. Here the principle of substitution by a positive alternative, namely substituting or replacing anger by love is meant. In the *Sabbāsava-sutta*, five of the seven methods, that is, except the first and the seventh, use this term “pahāna” (overcoming) in the sense of substitution by a positive alternative, for example, substituting the mind-defiling negative factors by positive alternatives or opposite virtuous conduct (sadācāra). At whatever time dosa (hatred) begins the process of ruining someone’s life by expressing itself in the form of acts of killing or violence, at that time, one needs to exercise the restraints contained in the moral rule of *paññātipāta* veramaṇī.
(abstaining from the killing of living beings). In this case through the substitution of inoffensiveness and non-violence, he gives up violence and dosa. It is comparable to reprocessing a sluggish economy, where there is the policy of “import-substitution” to conserve foreign exchange and make the country’s finances grow by stopping avoidable drainage in other areas. In the same way, due to substituting a negative, unwholesome factor with a positive, wholesome one, one can conserve spiritual energy, attain growth in the power and stop the wastage of precious potential of our mind. It is just as, a sympathetic doctor (anukampa-vejjā) will use his skills better than a cold, and unsympathetic doctor to heal a suffering mind. A humane engineer (dārunika-yantasappī) will enhance output invariably by bringing about wares, interpersonal relationships between labor and management. An honest civil servant (mahājanika-sevaka) will bring better welfare and justice in society than one who is corrupt. A helpful policeman (upakārī-rājapurisa) is more effective a protector of the commons people than an oppressor. A contented shopkeeper (santuṭṭha-āpanika) creates a balanced economy and enables everybody to obtain what they need. A humble politician serves his country and public far more purposefully and efficiently than a crafty person, yet he may be successful in holding on to power, etc. Elimination of the āsavas creates a very marvelous emancipation of mind (cetovimutti). In this sense it is the equivalent of vimokkha a state of liberation which occurs at various levels such as the conditionless (or signless) liberation (animitta); the desireless liberation (apanihita); the emptiness (or void) liberation (suññatā). They are also called the triple gateway to liberation (vimokkha-mukha), as they are three different approaches to the paths of holiness.

When one attains the supramundane purification known as the stage of an Ariya (Noble one), one has realized one of the eight stages of holiness consisting of the four supramundane Paths (magga) and the four supermundane fruitions (phala) of these paths, described as follows:

1. The path of Stream-winning (Sotāpatti-magga).
2. The fruition of Stream-winning (Sotāpatti-phala).
3. The path of Once-return (Sakadāgāmi-magga).
4. The fruition of Once-return (Sakadāgāmi-phala).
5. The path of Non-return (Anāgāmi-magga).
6. The fruition of Non-return (Anāgāmi-phala).
7. The path of Holiness (Arahatta-magga).
8. The fruition of Holiness (Arahatta-phala).

The seven methods of eliminating the āsava are taught by the Buddha for those who are keen to know and see, not for one who does not care to know and see (Jānato passato āsavānam khayam vadāmi, no ajānato no apassato). This teaching shows that if we are not aware of our present condition it is not possible for us to overcome āsava. It is not just ordinary awareness, but awareness with yoniso manasikāra that is necessary. In the Sallekha-sutta (Majjhima-nikāya VIII), The Buddha taught:
“This speculative view, Bhikkhus, is called the thicket of views, the wilderness of views, the contortion of views, the vacillation of views, the fetter of views.”

Ordinary human beings wander about in Samsāra and experience all kinds of dukkha because of being fettered by the fetter of views. The only way to eliminate such a fetter as this is by attending wisely to the Four Noble Truths. When applying the elimination through seeing clearly, one needs to understand samuccheda-pahāṇa - overcoming by destruction of fetters. The Sabbāsava-sutta mentions only the first three samyojanas such as personality-belief (sakkāya-diṭṭhi), sceptical doubt (vicikicchā) and clinging to mere rules and ritual (sīlabbata-parāmāsa), which are destroyed by the supramundane path of the stream-entry (sotāpatti-magga). Since seeing is the indispensable condition (āvassaka-sabhāva) at every level of the process of elimination of the āsava, replacement and restraining effects can also be easy to accomplish through it, in the same way as a long-distance runner (dhāvaka) can easily cover short distances. The Paṭisambhidā (analytical knowledge) mentions some methods of eliminating the āsava which are the same as replacement and restraining by the application of seeing. For example, it is said that through the application of seeing as a nāṇa- saṁvara (virtue of restraint), we eliminate possible transgressions relating to paṭca-sīla (five rules) such as killing, stealing, sexual misconduct and lying, or lobha (greed), dosa (hate), moha (delusion) and wrong view. Through seeing, we can eliminate the propensity to lust and acquisitiveness; or through goodwill, loving-kindness (mettā) and compassion (karuṇā), we can eliminate resentment and cruelty; or by arousing the perception of light (āloka-saṁñā) and a sense of exigency for practice, we can eliminate inertia and laziness of our mind ; or through mindfulness and meditative absorption (samāpatti), we can eliminate distraction and fragmentation of our mind; or by right view (sammā diṭṭhi), we can eliminate doubt (vicikicchā). These are methods of replacement and restraining established by seeing.

The Sabbāsava-sutta is very clear and forthright in explaining the contents of “seeing” in the form of the Four Noble Truths. “This is suffering, this is the cause of suffering, this is the cessation of suffering, this is the path leading to the cessation of suffering, so he wisely attends”. The seeing of the Four Noble Truths is the meditative experience of insight, leading to self-transformation. No matter how the meditative experience is cultivated, even as a purely intellectual training the outcome should be the same. If we were to train and familiarize our mind, a time would certainly come when this seeing of the Four Noble Truths would be grasped and conceptualized clearly, and our mind would not be influenced by the delusions that mistake the unreal to be real, and imagine life to be stable and happy. This is a wonderful accomplishment in a world characterized by the absence of this seeing.

7. Conclusion

In the Tipiṭaka (The Three Divisions of Buddhist Canon), we have been able to see the Buddha’s profound and practical teachings. All the teachings in the Tipiṭaka concentrate on the four main issues: explaining suffering clearly, showing the origin of suffering, the cessation of suffering and the way leading to the cessation of
suffering. That is “Ariya-sacca” (the Four Noble Truths). We can say that “Sabbāsava-sutta” belongs to “Magga-sacca”. The fourth truth of the Aṭṭhaṅgika-magga (the Eightfold Path) indicates the means by which suffering is overcome.

Although the Buddha teaches seven methods, all lead to the same end. The endless vast sea that originates through thousands of canals and rivers, have one homogeneous taste – salty taste. The Buddha’s teachings consisting of more than eighty-four thousand dhammas they all lead to the taste of liberation. He taught:

“This is suffering”; “This is the origin of suffering”; ‘This is the cessation of suffering’; ‘This is the way leading to the cessation of suffering’.

The Buddha taught us the Four Noble Truths because this is beneficial, relevant to the fundamentals of the holy life, and leads to revulsion, to dispassion, to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nibbāna. In order to attain insight into these truths, we must apply the seven methods of eliminating the āsava mentioned in the Sabbāsava-sutta. The first method - Dassanā pahātabbā (Elimination through seeing clearly) symbolizes Sotāpatti-magga (the fruit of entering the Stream). The last method - Bhāvanā pahātabbā (Elimination through development) symbolizes the seven remaining lokuttara-ñānas (supramundane insights). The five methods in-between symbolize a preparatory process of cleansing and strengthening of viññāna (consciousness). But how are the enlightenment-factors developed? Basically each enlightenment-factor is a cetasika (mental factor). Out of the seven Enlightenment Factors, three i.e., viśīva, pīti and samādhi are common to all states of consciousness (aññasamāna). The remaining four, i.e., sati, dhammavicaya, passaddhi, upekkhā, pertain only to kusala (wholesome) states of consciousness. The development of these cetasikas, which co-exist with viññāna, should be understood only in the sense of repetitive action or arising. In other words, these cetasikas should be repeatedly aroused by proper spiritual practice.

Once the āsava are made ineffective by not being fed, their power is attenuated, so much so that with the cultivation of Vipassanā, these greatly weakened mental effluents – the āsava and fetters get destroyed with the arising of the lokuttara Magga. So, clearly there are two very practical goals which are aimed at by the practice. One is to prevent the arising of āsava and the other the attainment of āsava-free state by removing those that are already there. The āsava look like fires in the mind. We need to stamp out this fire. If we do not extinguish promptly, it is going to grow into a very strong conflagration and swallow everything that falls on its raging path: becoming destructive and consuming. The visuddhi (purification) or upakkilesa (impurity) of a person, depends on the mind. It is the truth. In the Mahāparinibbāna-sutta (Dīgha-nikāya XVI), the Buddha taught Venerable Ānanda as follows:

“Thus, Ānanda, a monk lives with himself as an island, himself as a refuge, with no other refuge, with the Teaching as an island, the Teaching as a refuge, with no other refuge. For whoever, Ānanda, whether at present or after my passing, lives with himself as an island, himself as a
refuge, with no other refuge, with the Teaching as an island, the Teaching as a refuge, with no other refuge, those monks of mine, Ānanda, will go from darkness to the highest—whosoever likes the training.\footnote{38}

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End Notes


5 “Ye āsavā saṅkilesikā ponobbhavikā sadarā dukkhavipākā āyatiṃ jātijaraṃmarañyaṃ appahīna”.


7 “Bhikkhūnaṃ anupādāya āsavethiti cittāni vimuccimsātī”.


9 “Paccupaṭṭhitakāmā ca, ye devā vasavattino; Nimmānaratino devā, ye caññe kāmabhogino; Ithabbhāvanaṁṭhabhāvam, samsāram nātiyattare. Etamādānaṃ ēṭvatvā, kāmabhogesu paṇḍito;
Sabbe pariccaje kāme,
ye dibbā ye ca mānusā.
Piyarūpasātagadhitaṃ,
chetvā sotāṃ duraccayaṃ;
Asesaṃ parinibbanti,
asesaṃ dukkhamaccagum.
Ariyaddasā vedaguno,
sammadānāya paṇḍitā;
Jātikkhayamabhiññāya,
nāgacchanti punabbhavan ti.”


It is said that while the canker of sensual desire arise in the eight lobha-mūlika-cittas (greed-rooted-consciousness), the canker of continued becoming arises only in the four diṭṭhi-vippayutta-cittas (unaccompanied by perverse views) which also belong to lobha-mūlika-cittas. This implies that these four diṭṭhi-vippayutta-cittas have the māna (conceit) as the fundamental driving force, so the atikkammajīva-balakkāra mainly is a struggle of the self to atikkammajīva. In other words, māna is the driving force underlying the canker of continued becoming. (Source: A.P. Buddhadatta Mahathera, Concise Pali-English and English-Pali Dictionary).


“So evaṃ pajānāti: ‘ayampi kho animitto cetosamādhi abhisaṅkhato abhisaṅcetayito’. ‘Yam kho pana kiñcī abhisaṅkhatam abhisaṅcetayitam tadaniccaṃ nirodhamman’ti pajānāti. Tassa evaṃ jānato evaṃ passato bhavāsavāti cittam vimuccati. Vimuttasmiṃ vimuttamiti nānaṃ hoti. ‘Khīṇā jāti, vusitaṃ brahmacariyaṃ, kaṭaṃ karaṇīyaṃ, nāparaṃ ithhattayaṃ ti pajānāti’.”


“Tathāhaṃ bhagavatā dharmam desitaṃ ājānāmi yathā tadevidaṃ viññāṇam sandhāvati saṃsaratī anaṅnān ti”.


The idea of attending to something in a penetrative manner, down to its very origins, can also be seen in a literal manner when Mahāmoggallāna directs yoniso manasikāra to his own body in order to find out what is afflicting his bowels (M. I, 332).


There are 4 perversions which may be either of perception (saññā-vipallāsa), of consciousness (citta-v.), or of views (diṭṭhi-v.). And which are these four? To regard what is impermanent (anicca) as permanent; what is painful (dukkha) as pleasant (or happiness-yielding); what is without a self (anattā) as a self; what is impure (ugly: asubha) as pure or beautiful (A. IV , 49). (Source: Buddhist Dictionary, Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines, by NYANATILOKA MAHATHERA).


“Ayoniso manasikaro anuppānā ca eva āsavā uppaṭjantī, uppaṭhatī ca āsavā pavaṭḍhanti; yoniso ca kho manasikaro anuppānā ca āsavā na uppaṭjantī, uppaṭhatī ca āsavā pahiyantī”.


There are 10 fetters tying beings to the wheel of existence, namely: (1) personality-belief (sakkāya-diṭṭhi, q.v.), (2) sceptical doubt (vicikicchā q.v.), (3) clinging to mere rules and ritual (sīlabbata-parāmāsa; s. upādāna), (4) sensuous craving (kāma-rāga, 4.v.), (5) ill-will (byāpāda), (6) craving for fine-material existence (rūpa-rāga), (7) craving for
immaterial existence (arūpa-rāga), (8) conceit (māna, q.v.), (9) restlessness (uddhacca, q.v.), (10) ignorance (avijjā, q.v.). (Source: Buddhist Dictionary, Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines, by NYANATILOKA MAHA THERA).


27 “Ariyasāvako cakkhunā rūpaṃ disvā na nimittaggāhī hoti nānubyañjanaggāhī. Yatvādhikaraṇam etam cakkhundiyaṃ saṃsārana pāpakā akusalā dhammā anvāssaveyyuṃ tassa saṃvarāya patipajjati, rakkhati cakkhundiyaṃ, cakkhundiye saṃvaraṃ āpajjati. Sotena saddaṃ saṃvarāyāya paṭipajjati, rakkhati manindriyaṃ, manindriye saṃvaraṃ āpajjati”.


28 One of ten virtuous qualities mentioned in Pāli sources that are said to lead to Buddhahood. The ten qualities occur frequently in the Jātakas, and are also found in the Buddhavamsa and Cariyā-piṭaka. The list of ten pāramīs is: (1) generosity (dāna); (2) morality (sīla); (3) renunciation (nekhamma); (4) insight (paññā); (5) energy (viriya); (6) patience (khanti); (7) truthfulness (sacca); (8) resolution (adhiṭṭhāna); (9) loving-kindness (metta); (10) equanimity (upekkhā). (Source: A Dictionary of Buddhism, Oxford University Press, 2003, 2004).


30 “Yañhissa, bhikkhave, avinodayato uppajjeyyuṃ āsavā vighātapariḷāhā, vinodayato evaṃsa te āsavā vighātapariḷāhā na hotti.”


31 Premasiri, P.D. Mind in ‘Encyclopaedia of Buddhism, p. 06, (14th April 2015, 01:05 AM).


33 'analytical knowledge' or 'discrimination', is of 4 kinds: analytical knowledge of the true meaning (attha-paṭisambhidā), of the law (dhamma-paṭisambhidā), of language (nirutti-

34 The recurring canonical passage reads: "Here the monk contemplates the perception of light. He fixes his mind to the perception of the day; as at day-time so at night, and as at night, so in the day. In this way, with a mind clear and unclouded, he develops a stage of mind that is full of brightness." It is one of the methods of overcoming drowsiness, recommended by the Buddha to Mahā Moggallāna (A. VII, 58). According to D. 33, it is conducive to the development of ‘knowledge and vision’ (s. visuddhi), and it is said to be helpful to the attainment of the ‘divine eye’ (s. abhiññā). (Source: Buddhist Dictionary, Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines, by NYANATILOKA MAHATHERA).


38 “Evaṃ kho, ānanda, bhikkhu attadīpo viharati attasaraṇo anaññasaraṇo, dhammadīpo dharmasaraṇo anaññasaraṇo. Ye hi keci, ānanda, etarāhi vā mama vā accayena attadīpo viharissanti attasaraṇā anaññasaraṇā, dhammadīpo dharmasaraṇā anaññasaraṇā, tamatagge me te, ānanda, bhikkhū bhavissanti ye keci sikkhākāmā ti”.

The Examination of the Cosmic Effect of Yakṣas and Buddha Images in Buddhist Iconography

Ranjana

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Abstract

This paper broadly explores the cosmological analysis of Yakṣa and Buddha images in Buddhist art. In Buddhist art, images and symbols are done in such a way that it conveys certain religious ideas, and are capable of representing the philosophy of Buddha and showing also the interconnection with the supernatural world, which at the same time gives a spiritual quality. Buddhist cosmology can be said to be most similar to or to resemble the multi-dimensional cosmology. The primary Buddhist symbols throughout all Buddhist countries are associated with biographical scenes preceding the Buddha’s life. In the early phase the image of the Buddha was understood in a universal cosmological sense. This accords not only with ancient Indian concepts but also with the later philosophical ideas of the Buddha as conceived in Mahayana thought. The development of religious thought gave an additional dimension of meaning to the symbols used in the scenes of the Buddha biography. Yakṣa and Yakṣhini fill the early Buddhist monuments of Bhārhut and Sānci and the former serve as prototype for the first iconic representation of the Buddha and associated with cosmological effect. In this homogenous system of cosmological and universal concepts, many of the Buddhist symbols, having completely divergent origins, acquire a high degree of ideological unification. The physical encounter with Indian culture led to an awareness of the extent to which the use of sculptural forms and images has played an integral part in the religious life of the people. The purpose of this paper will be to trace the manifold connections and transformations that pertain to the cosmological characteristic and iconography and mythology of the Yakṣa.

Keywords: Biographical Scenes, Mahayana, Cosmological, Symbols,

Introduction

The overall focus of this paper is not specifically only on Yakṣa images, but it also deals with the cosmic effect of Buddha images, predominantly with reference to historical and doctrinal considerations, which disclose the contextual and ideological background of the cosmic effect of the Buddha image. Historically cosmology has had quite a broad scope, and is found in different religions (i.e. Vedic, Jainism, and Buddhism). Every religion addresses many questions related to space, time and the universal existence and its origin. However, Buddhist cosmology approaches these questions using philosophical method (e.g., dialectics) and this can be seen and analyzed through Buddha images and symbols. Thus the act of transcending both of cosmic space and cyclic time is formulated by a symbolism that is both cosmological and spatial. In the Buddhist Sutta (the scriptures containing the Buddhist sermons), a consistent Buddhist cosmology is presented with the final analysis and reconciliation of cosmological comments. In several Suttas, the Lord Buddha described other worlds and states of being, and one
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Sutta described the origin and destruction of the universe, the Agganna Sutta of the Dhiga Nikaya. This Sutta was presented by two novices, Bharadvaja and Vasettha. Buddhist cosmology can explain the structure of the universe and focus on how all beings have relations with its existence. Being proficient in the study of cosmology will tell us why we are born and how to develop ourselves into a better life. The picture of the world presented in Buddhist cosmological descriptions cannot be described literally, with a literal description, or by any scientific experiment. This picture may be inconsistent with astronomical data that has been used up to the present day. However, it can be perceived by everyone through the means of meditation: the entire universe has been seen through the Dibbayacakkhu (the divine eyes) by the Lord Buddha and people who have trained the mind enough to perceive the existence of all worlds and their interrelatedness.

The Beginnings of the Yakṣa image in Buddhism

The Yakṣa is one of the most powerful images that has undergone change according to the historical evolution of Indian religion and society. The Indian non-Buddhist art that we have evidence of as the oldest Indian sculpture in the age of Aśoka and before the period of Āsoka, is chiefly concerned with the cult of nature-spirits, the earth goddess, the Nāgā or Serpent kings of the waters, and the Yakṣa kings who ruled the four quarters. The Vedic literature lays out a world of popular beliefs including the worship of Yakṣa and Nāgā as tutelary divinities or genii loci, and of feminine divinities, powers of fertility. Buddhist and Jaina texts contain many references to the cult or shrines of Yakṣa or Nāgā. In the Mahabharata, a yaksini is referred to as receiving a daily service and cult at Rajagrha, and another Yaksini shrine was “world-renowned.” The city of Nandivardhana in Magadha seems to have been named after the tutelary Yakṣa Nandi and Vardha. The Mahavamsa, Chapter X, describes the cult of Yakṣas in Ceylon. Yakṣas are usually gentle; sometimes they act as familiars or guardian angels of individuals. The Yakṣa Kuvera (Vaisravana, Vaisramana), who is closely associated with Siva, and Regent of the North, thus one of the Four Great Kings, the Lokapalas, is a very powerful genius. The early Buddhist art at Bhārhut and Sānci, probably slightly later, reflects the prevalence of the animistic cults in placing low-relief figures of the Yakṣa, guardians of the four quarters, as protectors of the entrance gateways, besides the guardians of the quarters we find at Sānci, figures of beautiful yakshini or dryads, whose function may be partly protective, but is also in large degree honorary and decorative. The oldest Indian sculpture so far known appears to be the well-known ‘Parkham statue’ of the Mathura museum which bears, according to recent readings, an inscription referring to Kunika Ajatasatru, of the Saisunaga dynasty, who died in 618 B.C.E. closely related to the female figure perhaps a Yakshi, from Besnagar. Two statues found at Patna bear the names of other Saisunaga emperor, Udayin and Nanda Vardhana, both of the 5th century B.C.E.

Yakṣa images represent a being that is incorporated with cosmic and metaphysical concepts, and certain elements of Buddhist and Yakṣa-related iconography come to be linked in sculptural representations. The Yakṣa is expressed in terms of images drawn from nature. The first comprehensive analysis on the Yaksha was done by
Ananda Coomaraswamy, who traced the development of the cult of the Yakṣa. Ananda Coomaraswamy concluded that elements of the later anthropomorphic iconography already exist in the 3rd and 2nd centuries B.C.E. He gives an account on the basis of archaeological remains and literary evidence which prove that images of divinities and human beings both were depicted in relief and existed already in 3rd and 2nd centuries B.C.E. He pointed out examples in Buddhist art, the representation of Bodhisattvas in human form which is illustrated in Jataka with the symbolic indications of Gautama as Bodhisattva (Siddhartha) or as Buddha (Tathagata). According to him “craftsmen capable of producing the Parkham and Patna images, and the reliefs at Bhārhut and Sānci would have had no difficulty in representing Gautama in human form had they been required to do so.” A. Coomaraswamy demonstrates the antiquity of the imagery of Yakṣa, and sees them as origin of Buddha images that were later modelled on the same pattern as those of the Yakṣa images. The Buddhist artists were inspired by this art. He discusses the Aryan as well as the non-Aryan elements in the evolution of the iconography and religious history of the cult. The images of Yakṣa, Yakshi, Nāgā, and Kubera have been found in different parts of India belonging to the 3rd to 2nd century BCE, or perhaps even earlier if one takes into account the various terracotta figurines that occur as early as 400 B.C. They not only coexisted and flourished in Mathura, but also in other parts of India along with the many other religious sects. Yakṣas and Nāgas, along with the worship of and offerings made to domestic household deities. Yakṣas and Yakshis fill the early Buddhist monuments of Bhārhut and Sānci, and the former serve as prototypes for the first iconic representations of the Buddha. It shows the popularity of Yakṣa worship and how it became part of figure representation in Buddhist and Jaina religious monuments.

Despite certain apparent conceptual contradictions between, on the one hand the ascetic ideals and metaphors associated with the world-renouncing Buddha and, on the other hand, the life supporting sensual Yakṣa, the use of such nature deities in Buddhist art represents a grounding of new religious ideas in current popular symbolism. Yakṣa and their attendant iconography were employed in the aniconic stage of Buddhist art, in which certain symbols were drawn from the life of the Buddha. Large statues of Yakṣa and Yakshinis are found at many places like Patna, Mathura. With Yakṣas as a prototype, it can be observed that the Bodhisattvas seem to have developed into two broad categories, either represented as free standing or seated figures carved in round, or in relief, that would have served as independent cult images, and as figures associated with the Buddha. The second are the Yakṣa that occurred either as guardian deities or as attendents to worshippers in early Buddhist art, are represented with a flower, cauri-bearers, or folded hands. Early depictions of the Yakṣa, such as the freestanding sculptures from Parkham, have a massive body, with turban and umbrella as a royal prince or hero. Among the earliest sculptures of this type are two Yakṣas from Patna, a Yakṣi from Besnagar, and the Didarganj. Because of the characteristic use of highly polished chunar sandstone in the Patna and Didarganj sculptures, they are thought to have been carved during the Mauryan period (322-183 B.C). The other categories of female Yakshis, depicted on the architectural sculpture, occur in various poses. The
Mathura artists depicted the shalabhanjika figures on the railing pillars and reliefs. In most of these specimens, the female figure is depicted in a graceful attitude, standing on a prostrate dwarf under a tree, with one hand clasping a branch, while the other is resting on the hip. Most of these figures are depicted with heavy girdle and the usual ornaments like an elaborate headdress and necklaces and anklets. Both the Nāgās and the Yakṣas were worshipped under similar conditions in the early historical Period, and both were depicted by the main religious movements.

Certain elements of Buddhist and Yakṣa-related iconography come to be linked in sculptural representations. For instance, on top of the north torana at Sānci, one can see a triad consisting of the central symbol of the Dharmacakra flanked by two Yakṣas carrying cauris. Both flowers and cauris are iconographic emblems associated with the Yakṣa. The flower links the Yakṣa with the domain of nature and fertility; the cauri is a symbol drawn from a vocabulary of social referents and has meaning particularly within the context of a political, courtly setting, in which king is being attended by his servants. By implication, the use of these cauri-bearing Yakṣa casts the Buddha in the role of a worldly monarch.

Nature cosmology effect of Yakṣas

In the earliest references, the Yakṣas is expressed in terms of images drawn from nature. Yakṣa and Buddha images are associated with nature and trees. These ancient Yakṣas may be seen to embody a nexus of natural principles and abstract metaphysical concepts, in other words, a nexus of the cosmic facets is featured in an important verse from the Atharva veda, with the Yakṣa being compared with a primeval cosmic tree. The tree of life, synonymous with all existence, all the worlds, all life, springs up, out or down into space from its root in the navel centre of the supreme being, Varuna, Mahayaksa, Asura, Brahman, as he lies extended on the back of the waters, the possibilities of existence and the source of his abundance. Varuna, Prajapati, or Brahman manifesting as the moving spirit in the cosmic tree is called a Yakṣa (Atharva veda, 10,7,38). As a kind of “Microcosm”, trees may shelter stone altars dedicated to village fertility deities (often Yakṣa); they may be utilized as image or metaphor of the entire cosmos; or they may symbolize the absolute center of the world and support of the cosmos.

Cosmic effect of the Buddha image

Every particle of matter in the entire universe, seen and unseen, is accounted for in Buddhist cosmology. In the early phase the image of the Buddha was understood in a universe cosmological sense. These accords not only with ancient India concepts but also with the later philosophical ideas of the Buddha as conceived in Mahayana thought. This universalization implied also imperial authority, since the Buddha, being the spiritual ruler of the universe, was taken as a counterpart of world-ruler (cakravartin). The Buddha’s birth is compared to the triumphal rising of the sun, which lights the whole world. In the Pali texts the Buddha is “the kinsman of the sun”; he is also the “Eye of the world”, evoking the recurrent Brahmanic identification of the sun and cosmic eye, which “surveys the whole” and “sees all things” from its solar centre the whole circumference of the cosmic wheel is visible;
the Buddha, like the sun, see all things simultaneously. The Buddha was equated with the Brahmanic mahapurusa, the primordial man or personified cosmos, whose body identical with the world-body which originated from him.

The first case implies a slow and laborious temporal process; in the second, the Buddha and Bodhisattvas can travel to other far-away worlds (such as pure land of the Buddha Amitabha) at the speed of light. The first case implies individual nirvana dominated by temporal metaphor, the second, a cosmic nirvana dominated spatial metaphor. The multi headed God or Bodhisattva, a commonplace in both Hindus and Buddhist iconography, expresses the emanation to the four directions from their point source of origin. The four heads of Brahma face the cardinal direction to represent the expansion of existence into space from its cosmogenetic centre. A similar concept is conveyed by the eleven-headed Avalokitesvara and the numerous other examples of multicephalous divinities that appear in the Brahmanism and Buddhist pantheons. The eleven headed Avalokitesvara is an aspect of compassion emanated to the eleven directions space. Vajrasattva, who represents Enlightenment innate within the person, has four heads facing the cardinal directions, he carries a five prong vajra and his Stupa-like crown which shows Buddhas emerging in the four directions. The Buddha Mudrās give meanings to the five fingers as well. Each finger, starting from the thumb, represents elements that surround us: sky, wind, fire, water, and earth. Humans can appeal to the deities by using any combination of finger poses. The “cosmic man” another possible origin of the tradition of the thirty-two bodily marks of the “great man”, was incorporated with cosmic effect. The trees associated with the previous Buddhas are:

- Asvattha with Gotama, Kakusandha and Koṇḍañña, Sirīsa with Dīpaṅkara; Nāga with Mangala, Sumana, Revata and Sobhita; Ajjuna with Anomadassī; Mahāsāna with Paduma and Nārada; Salala with Padumuttara; Nimba with Sumedha; Bamboo with Sujātā; Kakudha with Piyadassī; Campaka with Atthadassī; Bimbajāla with Dhammadassī; Kanikāra with Siddhattha; Asana with Tissa; Āmanḍa with Phussa; Pātalī with Vipassī; Puṇḍarīka with Sikhī; Sāla with Vessabhū; Udumbara with Konāgamma; Banyan with Kassapa.

The cosmological imagery reflects two main objectives, i.e., to show Buddha’s lives (past and present) in a compendium, and the phenomenal world where he lived to fulfill his mission of savior from the endless cycle of reincarnation. The cosmological iconography can only be linked to the historical Buddha. It is more likely that the cosmological imagery was used to indicate a higher form of Śākyamuni and it is fitting that its
formation should take place at the end of centuries of devotion to the historical Buddha. The textual sources backing the cosmological iconography favour also a Śākyamuni identification. There is an theory that the cosmological Buddha iconography originated in Khotan and spread to the northern sites of the silk route. The Khotanese cosmological imagery may refer to the Buddha Vairocana. The imagery of the cosmological Buddha developed in Khotan seems to interpret visually the Avatamsaka Sutra’s text; the imagery of the cosmological Buddha, especially in Chinese version, seems to derive from the sutra of cosmology. Finally, the identity of the cosmological Buddha should be considered in the frame of reference of the entire development of Buddha image-making. This iconography reflects a visual and doctrinal summary of preceding trends. The cosmological Buddha images were formed in Central Asia by adopting and adapting iconographic and visual motifs which were already use in late Gandhāra stelae. The complex cosmological imagery depicting this concept of oneness cannot be accepted as the product of the rising cult of Buddha Vairocana. The cosmological Buddha is, indeed, the highest celebration of the historical Buddha Śākyamuni, as an individual icon, at the summit of the development of exoteric Buddhism. The image of Buddha, painted or sculpted, bearing cosmological scenes on the robe the wear, are without doubt representations of Śākyamuni as the cosmological Buddha.

In the Vajrayana the identity of the Buddha and the Sun is explicit. The supreme Tathagata is termed the “Great Sun” (Mahavairocana), the supreme eye of all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. The cosmological domain was predominant in Tantric Buddhism. The early Buddhist “genesis” (which is both cosmogenesis and psychogenesis) was also perceived to be a process emanation, yet this implies a degree of degradation, of falling into the flow of existence (samsara) where “everything is suffering”. In Buddhist art, the artistic treatment of the human body is performed in such a way that it conveys certain religious ideas, that of the Buddha and also certain other principles, of arrangement and construction in architecture as well as in pictorial compositions capable of representing the Buddhist view of the terrestrial and supernatural world, which at the same time gives a spiritual quality. The doctrinal and geographic dimensions have revealed much in regards to the nature of artistic representation of Buddha. However, it is only through the culminations of both that the socio-cultural dimension can arise to have any effect on the significance and emergence of the anthropomorphic Buddha. The artists in the Gandhāra region fused Greek realism which had Hellenistic origins with the more naturalistic inspired Indian mysticism. In essence, the art created in the Gandhāra region during the Hellenistic period derived its content from Indian mysticism while the form was that of Greek realism. This true hybrid art form was the product of almost two centuries of interactions between Indo-Greek culture. Evidence of Indo-Greek interaction in Gandhāra can be proven through numismatic evidence. The anthropic principle, categorically evaluates human beings or intelligence. This principle standpoint is different from that of Buddhism by evaluating intelligence or human beings only, because Buddhism formulates a life-centric view. The perspective of life and the universe in Buddhism positions life at the center of everything. In Buddhism, since the universe and the
Earth are the environment for sentient beings, they are constructed by the common karma of the sentient beings themselves. These diverse cultural interactions owe much of their credit to the Silk Road transmission of culture. The Silk Road is a term used to describe a large trade network that connected Eastern and Western Asia with the Mediterranean regions and Europe. Only in Mahayana Buddhism is the Buddha represented in human form. Interestingly, the shift to Mahayana Buddhism shares parallels between its more theistic Greek counterparts. It was at this point in time that the concept of salvation was introduced through the creation of the bodhisattva. The concept of bodhisattva implies salvation through delivering oneself and others from a life of suffering through adoption of this ideal.

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Dealing with Anger through Mindfulness-based Practice

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Dealing with Anger Through Mindfulness-based Practice

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Abstract: Finding inner peace, happiness, joy, comfort and worldly success in daily living is the first priority need and want of mankind. Of course, the Buddhist practice is aimed at reaching final emancipation from the samsāric-suffering. The truth and direct path gaining both worldly achievements and success and the highest spiritual attainment will be possible through the elimination and eradication of the three roots of the unwholesome through practicing mindfulness in Buddhism.

Anger is the second of five hindrances and it is said to be the gross hindrance that hinders from achieving a calm mind, a peaceful and happy mind as well as worldly and spiritual achievements. Moreover, anger is seen to be one of three evil roots of every kind of unwholesome deeds, words, and thoughts, of anti-social behaviors, suffering, and the breakdown of family and social harmony, peace, and happiness. Therefore, the prime objective of this article is to investigate the Buddhist concept of anger by explaining its nature, its dangers, the benefits of patience, and the applicability of Noble Eightfold Path as the direct path leading to the eradication of anger. Anger is the outcome of paying unwise attention to angry objects. Hence it is to be removed by establishing wise attention.

Key words: Anger, Wise Attention, Mindfulness Meditation, Noble Eightfold Path.

Introduction: Anger is a destructive emotion that can suddenly arise when there is a threat, mistreatment, when something arises that goes against our self-esteem, goes against our bodies, our feelings, our desires, our possessions, or against our ways of seeing and believing the world. However, our responses to anger differ vastly and greatly. Some people perceive an event as threatening, while others see no threat in the same event. Some people are able to use angry feelings as a way of solving problems rationally and effectively. Others turn their anger inward and engage in self-destructive behavior. Other people strike out when they feel angry. And some refuse to acknowledge their anger.¹ We also experience the feeling of anger when we think we have been betrayed, mistreated, ill-treated, have been treated unfairly, have been treated unjustly, or when we encounter problems and difficulties that directly or indirectly keep us from getting what we desire or obtaining a personal goal.

Anger results in life stress that lead to stress-related illnesses such as depression, insomnia, cancer, heart attack, stroke, high blood pressure, diabetes and perhaps even directly to immediate death. The outcome of anger, which is stress, can also affect our work, family, relationships, and quality of life.

Buddhism has remedies for such mental and physical illnesses. According to Buddhism the attainment of lasting and peace and genuine happiness is attainable and possible for one who has eradicated all psychological roots of unwholesome (akusalamūla) and all cankers (āsava) that promote misery and pain in individual’s life and human suffering and hinder the attainment of spiritual achievement.
In the *Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya* it is vividly said that all sorts of destruction, such as troubles, the breakdown of social harmony, social and political conflicts, world and civil wars, disagreement, killing, vengeance, misunderstanding, sorrow, misfortune, psychical pain, mental grief, suffering and lamentation, deterioration of moral and ethical conduct, and decline of life span stem mainly from the three unwholesome roots: greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*) that are also often compared in Buddha’s teachings to the fires: the fire of lust that burns morals infatuated by sensual pleasure, the fire of hatred that burns malevolent people who kill other living beings and the fire of delusion that burns bewildered people who are ignorant of the Noble One’s Truth-*Dhamma.*

The distinction or difference between these three unwholesome roots has been made by the Buddha thus: “Lust or greed is less blamable but hard to remove because it is always associated with pleasure and it is not apparent. Hatred or anger is more blamable and dangerous than desire or greed but easier to remove, for it has only harmful consequences and suffering of it is obvious. Delusion or ignorance is very blamable and hard to remove.” This statement shows that greed is less blamable in regard to its kammic consequences, whereas the hatred and delusion are considered to be as blamable in society and have dire kammic consequences, for they lead to rebirth in states of misery. Anger is a state of mental and unpleasant suffering. Therefore, as a human being who longs for worldly happiness, ultimate freedom from unhappiness, he or she ought to get rid of anger, hatred, ill will, resentment, and aversion.

**Etymology of Kodha:** Anger is the repulsion felt in opposition to all selfish tendencies. It is a kind of repulsion that rejects whatever may weaken or attack this self-delusion. Etymologically, the Buddhist Pāli term “kodha” (Sanskrit *Krodha*) is rendered into English as anger which is said in Buddhism one of the obstacles to attaining the final stage of enlightenment (i.e. Arahantship). In other words, holding onto anger is of no use for gaining mental calmness, happiness or for reaching the final emancipation of ultimate peace (i.e. *Nibbāna*). Buddhist texts state that anger has the characteristic of irritation and when one’s mind is irritated and angry a person does not see Truth and Reality (*Dhamma*). Not only in Buddhism, but in every religion, not having anger is seen as something beneficial, for anger creates unbenefficial results and manifold problems.

The *Puggalapañatti* (Description of Individuals), the fourth text of the seven Abhidhamma texts, in the division of human types into two (*Dukapuggalapaññatti*), presents the numerous expressions and intensities of “kodha” anger in the following words:

“What then is anger?

“That which is anger, being angry, and the state of being angry, hatred, hating, hatefulness, malice, the act of being malicious, maliciousness, hostility, enmity, rudeness, abruptness, resentment of heart- this is called anger.”

Continuously, in the same text, an angry person is also defined as one who has not got rid of this anger.
“What sort of person is angry?
“He who has not got rid of this anger is said to be an angry person.”

An person who is angry by nature (kodhano) is also one who always shows a grudge, revenge, envy, jealousy, slander, pride, stubbornness, and resentment.

The Buddhist concept of anger: In Buddhism (lobha) greed, (dosa) hatred and (moha) delusion or confusion are introduced as the three roots of unwholesome (akusalamūla)\(^{11}\) which are causes of committing all unwholesome types of conduct through deeds, words and thoughts. Of these, the Buddha said anger and bitterness are both a blemish.\(^{12}\) According to the Antarāmala-sutta\(^{13}\) of the Itivuttaka, anger is a source of harm, it brings unrest to an individual’s mind, it block one from seeing facts and understanding the Truth (Dhamma), and it makes a hateful person blind. Anger, therefore, is not good. psychologically, nor socially, nor good for ethics. At the ethical level, from the Buddhist standpoint, anger is seen to be a defilement that blocks to the Path of Deliverance. At the social level, anger is considered as a generator of conflicts, disagreements, and all types of violence. At the psychological level, anger generates agitation, frustration, depression, stress, fear, worry, guilt, anxiety, arrogance, boredom, loneliness, and all other negative psychological emotions or manifestations of stress. There is no emotion more destructive than anger because it destroys our inner peace and happiness, is a downfall in this very life, and impels or stimulates us to engage in committing negative and unreasonable actions and reactions that undoubtedly lead to untold pain and suffering in the future.

The Dhammapada stanza reads: “There is no fire like lust, no crime like anger. There is no ill like the body, no bliss higher than peace (Nibbāna)”\(^{14}\) Buddhists view that anger is the root of all kinds of crimes: killing each other, not excluding animals, creating conflict, including violent conflict, between groups, and destroying and hurting the feelings of other people, either physically or psychologically. The venerable Sāriputta\(^{15}\) one of the Chief Disciples of the Buddha explicitly said that ill will and intentions of hate are the very cause for increasing the unwholesome states of mind and diminishing the wholesome mental states. One of the Dhammapada stanzas reads: “Hatred is the bane of mankind, just as the weeds are the bane of fields.”\(^{16}\) Therefore it suggests to be free of anger and hatred for the well-being of all mankind.

Different forms of anger: In the Buddhist Pāli language, there are different words for various forms and degrees of anger. They are namely, vera (hatred or rage), makkha (disdain or ingratitude), palāsa (insolence or spite), māyā (deceit), and sāṭheyya (fraud), Upanāha (resentment or grudge), dubacca (arrogance or disobedience), kukkucca (remorse or regret), issā (envy or jealousy), macchariya (miserliness or stinginess). What is more, in the Abhidhamma, envy (issā), miserliness (macchariya), remorse (kukujjha) are considered to be the companionship factors that arise together with anger.

Vera: The term ‘Vera’\(^{17}\) is translated as anger, hatred, or enmity and its antonym is ‘Avera’ meaning non-hating but non-enmity or loving friendliness. It is one variety
of anger that becomes very strong, so strong that it makes your blood boil, face become red, body shaking, teeth grind, fists clench, and muscles tight and shaking when you are abused or mistreated by other people.

**Makkha:** The term ‘Makkha’ is defined as “depreciation of another’s worth, derogation, derogatory action.” It means ingratitude or being blind to the good turns of others. It implies ingratitude to those to whom one should be grateful and thankful for help or good deeds done by others through a loving and compassionate mind.

**Palāsa:** The term “palāsa” insolence, spite, or malice, is also a kind of anger and ill will. The nature of palāsa is to compete with superiors. A hateful person is not able to tolerate and bear other people who are superior to him in regard to, at social level, positions, status, wealth, beauty, relations, company or friendship, or reputation, and at an ethical level, superior in morality, concentration, knowledge, wisdom or insight and meditation practice, so on and so forth.

**Māyā and Sāṭheyya** The term “māyā” deceit is compared with a magician or a conjurer. Just as the magician picks up a stone and makes the people think and believe it to be a gold nugget; just so māyā conceals one’s faults and pretends to be faultless. On the other hand, fraud (sāṭheyya) pretends to have qualities, achievements or other abilities which do not really existed. A person who is called fraudulent pretends to have certain qualities and through deceit attempts to make other people think highly of him.

**Upanāha:** The Pali term ‘Upanāha’ can be translated into English as resentment or grudge and is a lasting form of anger that can persist for hours, days, months, years, or even an entire lifetime. We should not be stuck in mental states of anger and resentment by being not able to forgive and forget.

**Kukkucca:** The word ‘Kukkucca’ is also a form of anger and is the eleventh unwholesome mental factor that colors our mind. It is translated as regret or remorse. That is, regret in relation to having done that ought not to be done (i.e. unwholesome actions), and not having done that ought to be done (i.e. wholesome and beneficial actions).

**Dubbacca:** Another form of anger explained in Buddhism is arrogance. In Pali language it is called ‘Dubbacca’ which literally means not having a readiness to listen and obey the guidance of people with understanding. An arrogant person commits actions that are against society. For this reason, arrogance is one way in which anger can be maintained and manifested by way of actions, words and mind.

**The manifestations of anger:** To clarify the whole range of meanings of “kodha”, we have to analyze it more thoroughly by dividing it up into different perfectives, levels, manifestations and categories. In many discourses of the Buddha recorded in the Theravāda Pāli Canon, anger and hatred manifests in a number of categories and places that are described as: a root of an unwholesome mental state (dosāmōla), an unwholesome mental factor (akusalacetasika), an unpleasant feeling (domanassavedanā), an underlying tendency (paṭighānusaya) a defilement
(dosakilesā), a hindrance (vyāpādanīvaraṇa), an imperfection (upekkilesa), a fetter of anger (paṭighasamyojana), a bodily knot (vyāpādokāyaghando), a way of hateful action (dasaakusala-kammapatha), a root of dispute, and so on.

Causes of anger: One of the most important teachings of the Buddha is the Law of Dependent Arising, which in Pāli is “Paṭiccasamuppāda”, meaning that all phenomena in this whole universe are interrelated and are conditioned states, and do not arise independently of supportive conditions. All phenomena arise due to a combination of supportive conditions that are present to support their arising. When the supportive condition that supports their arising ceases, the phenomena will also cease. Anger, the Buddha teaches, is like all other phenomenon causally conditioned, arising and subsiding in correlation with other things which serve as its supports. In the twelvefold formula of Dependent Arising, anger can be categorized in the second link: the link of disposition (saṅkhāra) that has ignorance (avijjhā) its root or condition. Anger itself does not arise and grow independently without a cause or causes. When its supports and conditions are present anger springs up and grows. The converse is also true. When the supports causing anger to arise are removed and fade away, anger also fades away and disappears. As far as the dealing with anger and the elimination of anger is concerned, knowing the conditions that underlie the presence and absence of anger is of importance.

Unwise attention: The first and foremost ground of arising anger as explained by the Buddha is paying unwise attention towards repulsive objects (i.e. an undesirable form, sound, smell, taste, and touch, or feelings). The Madhupiṇḍika-sutta and in many other suttas explain how angry feeling arise due to unwise attention to the sense-impressions. In this case of anger, it refers to unwisely paying attention to repulsive objects. Depending on eyes and form, eye consciousness arises [similarly with the rest of the five senses]. The meeting of the three is contact. With contact as a requisite condition, there is unpleasant feeling. Starting with the unpleasant feeling, one perceives. When he perceives and labels in his mind, he mentally proliferates, thus thinking: that makes me (the ‘represented conceited “I”’) angry. A sense of ‘myself’ (a represented view) and ‘mine’ (representing craving) arises in connection to the sense of ‘me’. There arises the notion of an agent. At this level one who feels angry reacts in an unwholesome way to the repulsive object with respect to past, future and present form cognizable to the eye.21 According to the Buddha, the non-arisen anger arises and arisen anger increases and expands when there is unwise attention and the reflection of repulsive sensory objects or repulsive objects.22

If someone makes us displeased and angry through wrongful behaviors for some or no reasons, at that very moment, if we have unwise attention, we might feel angry and react impulsively with anger and hatred, perhaps by screaming, attacking that person or by breaking things. The Buddha himself clearly said; ‘A repulsive object. For one who attends carelessly to a repulsive object, unarisen anger arises and arisen anger increases and expands. This is the reason non-arisen anger arises and arisen anger increases and expands.’23 Again the Buddha said, ‘Just as this body, monks is sustained by nutriment, stands in dependence on nutriment, and does not
stand without nutriment, in the same way the anger is sustained by nutriment, stands in dependence on nutriment and does not stand without nutriment. In the discourses, it is recorded that habitual unwise consideration of repulsive objects is the nutriment for the arising of non-arisen ill will, and for the growth and expansion of ill will that has already arisen."

The above text suggests that we not feed anger with unwise attention or heedlessness. It we do so, it will activate and expand. Mindfulness (sati) and wise attention (yonisomanasikāra) therefore should be firmly established at all times in order not let anger and ill will arise and control us, because if we are controlled and dominated by anger our future would be a very miserable and unfortunate one. When we become mindful persons who always pay attention wisely and mindfully to the persons who are causing us displeasure and anger, and pay attention wisely to repulsive or desirable objects that disgust or please us, there will not be any room for anger in our mind. Thereby our mind will be purified and calm. Only the mind that is calm and tranquil can maintain peace and happiness.

**Nine grounds for anger:** According to the Āghāṭavatthu-sutta, the Buddha said, there are nine grounds for arising anger and resentment. These nine grounds can be categorized into three groups. Anger and resentment arise in one’s mind thinking:

1. He has done harm to me,
2. He is doing harm to me,
3. He will do harm to me.
4. He had done harm to those who are pleasing and agreeable to me,
5. He is doing harm to those who are pleasing and agreeable to me,
6. He will do harm to those who are pleasing and agreeable to me.

The first three grounds causing anger deal with a person who misguidedely thinks that someone or something caused harm and misfortune with regard to the past, with regard to the present and with regard to the future. The truth is that nothing is happening to us but everything is coming from within us, which means no one is harming us, nor can harm our mind, but we ourselves are causing harm and unpleasantness to us by thinking thoughts of ill will and resentment. In connection to this, the Buddha said in the Dhammapada thus; “Whatever harm an enemy may do to an enemy, or a hater to a hater, an ill-directed mind inflicts on oneself a greater harm.” We should not allow ourselves to get lost in regrets about the past thinking: ‘he abused me, he struck me, he overpowered me, he robbed me.’ If we do so the Buddha said, the angry thoughts will still remain within. Thinking over the past events which have already passed and over future events which have not yet come is one of the reasons for the arising of anger, from which the Buddha recommended us to refrain. He clearly said in this connection; “Let one not trace back the past or yearn for the future-yet-to-come. That which is past is left behind. Unattained is the "yet-to-come", but one is advised to be aware of the present moment with a mind of mindfulness, love and compassion, not a mind influenced by anger, hatred and resentment. It is here good to note that mindfulness practice is crucial for overcoming anger and its conditions. Anger also arises at the thought of harm, actual or imagined, to those who are dear to one by thinking:

1. He had done harm to those who are pleasing and agreeable to me,
2. He is doing harm to those who are pleasing and agreeable to me,
3. He will do harm to those who are pleasing and agreeable to me.
The above fourth and sixth conditions cause anger to arise due to thinking about someone or an event that causes harm and misfortune towards one’s relatives, friends or beloved ones. Let us here take the story of prince Dīghāyu, recorded in the Mahāvaggapāli, as an example. The story tells that his parents, Dīghāti and his wife, were killed by the King of Kosala. Harboring grudges, the prince Dīghāyu was seeking revenge on the king of Kosala thinking that: ‘This Brahmādatta, King of Kāsi, has done us much mischief, he has stolen our troops and vehicles and territory and store-houses, and granaries, and he has killed my parents. This incident shows how anger arises thinking about someone who causes harm to those who are pleasing and desirable to oneself. In this regard, one should not harbor anger and grudges towards others, instead one should reflect that they have to repay the debt for what they have done in the past.

Another ground for the arising of anger and resentment is due to the thought of benefits and good for those whom one does not like, thinking:

(7) He had done something for the benefit of those who are displeasing and disagreeable to me, (8) he is doing something for the benefit of those who are displeasing and disagreeable to me, and (9) he will do something for the benefit of those who are displeasing and disagreeable to me. A person who cannot practice sympathetic joy and is accustomed to harboring anger and ill will towards others may plot to destroy their wealth and success. Not only does he hate successful people but he is also displeased with those who support others to attain success by way of either material and/or spiritual support. Indeed, anger does not come from others, but it arises from our mind, from an impure mind.

In addition to these nine grounds for anger and resentment, in accordance with the Āghāṭavatthu-sutta and the Dhammasaṅgaṇī it is said one becomes displeased and angry groundlessly, without a reason (aṭṭhāne ca kuppati). Sometimes, in our daily life, we unnecessarily get angry at natural changes of the weather. We complain when it rains too much and when does not rain, when it is too windy or when there is not enough breeze, when it is too hot and when sun does not shine. We may get angry when we have to wait for a long time for someone or something, and we may complain about that too.

Thereby it should be understood that there are ten grounds for anger and resentment in the Pāḷi Canon. If one pays unwise attention to those nine grounds, the Buddha says, anger can arise quickly and easily in that person. The last ground for the arising of anger seems not easy to control and deal with it. Sometimes one gets angry at trivial things or events. In Pāḷi it is called (Athānakopa). However, in order to control this habit right away, the Buddha advises to be mindful at all times. With the help of wise consideration (yonisomanasikāra) and mindfulness (sati) one is able to overcome anger arisen due to trivial things. Therefore, we should be mindful of those proximate grounds of arising anger and resentment in order to prevent the future arising of anger, because knowing the conditions that underline the presence and absence of anger is said to be one way of removing anger.
Dangers in anger: When one is overwhelmed and controlled by anger and ill will and when one does not know how to eliminate and get rid of it, then he cannot understand and differentiate between what is good and what is bad, what is beneficial and what is unbeneficial, and what is wholesome and what is unwholesome and what should be done and what ought not to be done and so on. The Buddha said:

“Anger is a cause of harm, unrest of mind it brings. This danger that has grown within, blind folk are unaware of it.”

“A hateful man cannot see the facts, nor can he understand the Dhamma. When anger has overpowered him, in complete darkness he is plunged.”

“But he who does not become angry or hateful, and can forsake this anger and what incites to anger, from him quickly anger falls off as from a palm tree falls the ripened fruit.”

In the Kodhana-sutta of the Aṅguttara-nikāya, the Buddha spoke about the wretchedness of anger and said when people get angry seven things gratifying and advantageous to an enemy that befall one who is angry, whether a woman or a man. The wretchedness of anger explained in this discourse and listed as follow:

1. An angry person is ugly
2. An angry person sleeps poorly
3. An angry person does not succeed
4. An angry person loses wealth
5. An angry person loses reputation
6. An angry person loses friends
7. An angry person will be reborn in hell

The Buddha said that an angry man or woman is an ugly person. Even the so-called most beautiful woman and handsome man can become an ugly person when he or she is getting angry for one or for many reasons. When someone becomes angry at so and so person for such and such reason, his face become red like a demon and he is prone to shout and make a scene. At that very moment of getting angry he looks ridiculous and feels very miserable. Sometimes an adversary or one with whom he is angry may find his anger entertaining. In the Visuddhimagga, it is mentioned that: “Here, bhikkhu-s, an enemy wishes thus for his enemy, “Let him be ugly!, for an enemy does not delight in an enemy’s beauty. Now this angry person is a prey to anger, overpowered by anger, though well bathed, well anointed, with hair and beard trimmed and clothed in white, yet he is ugly, being prey to anger. Thus, the first thing gratifying and helpful to an enemy is when either a woman or man becomes ugly with anger.”

When we are angry, we are unable to sleep well because anger results in insomnia. This sutta says that when an angry person is overcome and oppressed by anger, though he may sleep on a couch spread with rugs, blankets, and covers, with an
excellent covering of antelope hide, with a canopy and red bolsters at both ends, still he sleeps badly. In this world, the person who can curb his anger does not have to worry and be even a little miserable.

A person who is overcome by anger will do things that give rise to harm, misfortunes, failures, and suffering by mistaking bad for good and vice versa. The presence of anger and ill will in the mind, says Buddhism, obstructs knowing what is beneficial for oneself and for others. When a hateful person gets what is beneficial, he thinks I have gotten what is unbeneﬁcial and when he gets what is unbeneﬁcial, he wrongly thinks he has gotten what is beneﬁcial. This wrong way of thinking and understanding leads him to harm and suffering for a long time. When a person gets displeased and angry, he is subject to quarrels, disputes and talk contentious talk towards others. By so doing, he will not achieve what he has not yet achieved and falls away from what he has already achieved.

Due to his anger, a person will lose his wealth and property which he has earned righteously and with difficulty by the sweat of his brow. A hateful person who is driven by anger does not know how to keep his wealth from external dangers and how to increase proﬁts. In the Pattakamma-sutta, the Buddha says that one who is overcome by anger would do what should not be done and fail to do what should be done. Anger distorts and confuses one’s mind, so that he or she fails to fulﬁll his or her duties, responsibilities, and daily activities. The bad consequence for neglecting his duties is that his fame and happiness will be spoiled.

“If one dwells with a heart overcome by ill will, one does what should be avoided and neglects one’s duty, so that one’s fame and happiness are spoiled.”

What an angry person can expect when he gets angry is losing his good reputation and fame. As long as we do not counter with unpleasant reactions when people make us displeased and angry, we are thought by others to be gentle, kind, and understanding. But when suddenly we meet with unpleasant people and experience unpleasant feelings, our latent unwholesome tendency of anger or hatred arises and expresses anger by ways of wrongful deeds, such as attacking, hitting, throwing a ﬁt, using unpleasant words—abusing, scolding, yelling, and swearing, and by thinking unwholesome thoughts—wishing others to suffer and so on. By doing so, people who had praised and appreciated us for our reputation of kindness, gentleness, patience, compassion, forgiveness, selflessness, understanding, and other good qualities will quickly be changed their minds and our reputation will be ruined in their views and thoughts.

Anger also has the power to disrupt and break up close relationships and mutual friendships. There is no doubt that no one in this world wants to be friends with an angry person. By the same token, if we are angry and furious persons, people including our friends and relatives, associates, relatives and even family members will avoid us from afar. The hateful person is compared to a half-burned log of wood left in a funeral pyre. Both ends of this log are burned and turned to charcoal and the middle is covered with ﬁlth. Nobody would like to pick it up for ﬁrewood or for any other purpose because it can dirty the hand of the person who handles it.
Similarly, the hateful person will be avoided by all means, if possible, by everybody. Therefore, we should not get angry with people for any reason.

The Āṅguttara-nikāya makes clear: “Drunk with pride and anger, they will gain disrepute. Relatives as well as friends shun one who is angry.” We ourselves carefully try to avoid people who are angry and furious because we do not want to associate with someone in the grip of anger. Associating with an angry person causes one’s wholesome roots to diminish and one’s unwholesome roots to develop and increase. It will be a cause for one’s downfall and finally, the attainment of Nibbāna will be impossible.

According to Buddhism a person who is controlled by anger performs unwholesome actions through body, speech and mind that will bring about unfavorable and ill results to one here in this very life and even after the dissolution of the body. After his death, his rebirth will take place in a unfortunate states of existence. In the Āṅguttara-nikāya, the Buddha clearly stated thus; “Bhikkhu-s, possessing two qualities, with the breakup of the body, after death, someone here is reborn in the plane of misery, in a bad destination, in the lower world, in hell. What two? Anger and hostility.”

To sum up the harmful results of anger, let us carefully listen to the discourse on “The Dangers of Anger” expounded by the Buddha:

An angry person is ugly & sleeps poorly. Gaining a profit, he turns it into a loss, having done damage with word & deed. A person overwhelmed with anger destroys his wealth. Maddened with anger, he destroys his status. Relatives, friends, and colleagues avoid him. Anger brings loss. Anger inflames the mind. He doesn't realize that his danger is born from within. An angry person doesn't know his own benefit. An angry person doesn't see the Dhamma. A man conquered by anger is in a mass of darkness. He takes pleasure in bad deeds as if they were good, but later, when his anger is gone, he suffers as if burned with fire. He is spoiled, blotted out, like fire enveloped in smoke. When anger spreads, when a man becomes angry, he has no shame, no fear of evil, is not respectful in speech. For a person overcome with anger, nothing gives light. I'll list the deeds that bring remorse, that are far from the teachings. Listen! An angry person kills his father, kills his mother, kills Brahmans and common people. It's because of a mother's devotion that one sees the world, yet an angry run-of-the-mill person can kill this giver of life. Like oneself, all beings hold themselves most dear, yet an angry person, deranged, can kill himself in many ways: with a sword, taking poison, hanging himself by a rope in a mountain glen. Doing these deeds that kill beings and do violence to himself, the angry person doesn't realize that he's ruined. This snare of Mara, in the form of anger, dwelling in the cave of the heart: cut it out with self-control, discernment, persistence, right view. The wise man would cut out each and every form of unskillfulness. Train yourselves: 'May we not be blotted out.' Free from anger and untroubled, free from greed, without longing, tamed, your anger abandoned, free from fermentation, you will be unbound.”
Scientific findings of negative effects of anger: Medical doctors, psychologists and scientists also have proven that anger has serious consequences for our health, such as--insomnia, nightmares, high blood pressure, angina, depressed hypertension, peptic ulcer, stroke, depressed immunity, irregular breathing rate, spasm of arteries, tense facial muscles, back-pain, headaches or migraines, too much adrenaline and cortisol in the system, irregular or abnormal heart rate, and premature heart attack and heart disease. Anger has become a serious cause of heart attacks. Dave Montgomery, MD, cardiologist of Piedmont Hospital in Atlanta, says (2007) that; “If you have a destructive reaction to anger, you are more likely to have heart attacks.” Dr. Charles Raison, Georgia said; "It is just indisputable that negative emotionality -- especially anger and misery, depression -- are terrible for your heart.”

A person who is chronically angry is one and a half times more likely to face death, over a period of twenty-five years, than a person who is not angry. Dr. Redford Williams has done research among a group of 2,000 factory workers who happened to have taken a test about twenty-five years earlier that included a measure of their level of hostility. About 30 percent of those with a high level of anger had died, from causes such as heart disease, cancer, other diseases, and from causes not even related to health, such as an accident. His research shows that unfortunate accidents among people are often caused by nothing but anger. He reported that angry people seem to die young, comprising most of the deaths among the people who died before the age of fifty.

Benefits of patience: By understanding the dangers of anger, in a converse way, the benefits of patience are to be understood. Here the eleven benefits of loving-kindness are to be discussed. The eleven benefits are what can be expected as benefits and of them, the first ten benefits can be attained in this very life time and the latter is to be attained hereafter by one who develops loving-kindness (mettānisamsa). The benefits are listed as follows:

1. One sleeps well;
2. One wakes happily;
3. One does not have bad dreams;
4. One is pleasing to human beings;
5. One is pleasing to spirits;
6. Deities protect one;
7. Fire, poison, and weapons do not injure one;
8. One’s mind quickly becomes concentrated;
9. One’s facial complexion is serene;
10. One dies unconfused; and
11. If one does not penetrate further, one fares on to the brahmā world.
One who lacks loving-kindness cannot have a sound and good sleep. They sleep uncomfortable, turning over and snoring as other people do. Cultivating of loving-kindness (mettābhāvanā) is strongly recommended to be cultivated by one who is suffering from insomnia. The Visuddhimagga explains thus: “One who develops loving-kindness is subject to falling asleep as if entering upon a meditative attainment.” On being asked by Brahmin Bhāradvāja “Having slain what does one sleep soundly and happily? Having slain what does one not sorrow no more? What is the one thing, O Gotama, whose killing you approve? The Buddha answered his question thus: “Having slain anger, one sleeps soundly; having slain anger, one does not sorrow no more; the killing of anger, O Brahmin, with its poisoned root and honeyed tip: This is the killing the noble ones praise, for having slain that, one does not sorrow.”

When someone awakes from his sleep after sleeping with an angry mood from the previous night, instead of waking up like a flower blooming in the morning, he awakes up groaning or yawning or stretching his limbs. He is very moody and grouchy. Then he makes others unhappy and feeling unpleasant. A cultivator of loving kindness wakes up very comfortably without contortions. His mind is pure like clean water and his face is beautiful like a flower.

A hateful person has disturbing, bad dreams such as: being chased or bitten by poisonous snakes, being threatened by a ferocious dog, tiger, or other fearsome animals, falling over a cliff or into a hole or into the sea, wanting to run but being unable to move and run when trying to escape from bandits or enemies, or from ghosts who are haunting or chasing him in order to harm or kill him, and so forth. This causes his mind to be tired and sad. On the other hand, loving people have very pleasant, auspicious and beautiful dreams such as worshipping the Buddha and holy persons, listening to the Dhamma, doing meritorious deeds, seeing pleasant sights and views, meeting with old and beloved friends and family members, playing in a beautiful garden, and so forth.

One who is full of love never does anything that causes harm and pain to others, never speaks words that are not pleasant to listeners, and does not think to harm and destroy others. Instead, he does with mettā by way of helping others, speaks with mettā by way of speaking pleasant and sweet words and thinks with mettā by way of wishing others to be happy and peaceful and free from internal and external dangers. For these good qualities, he will be lovely loved, admired, respected and protected by people friends and enemies alike. Not only will he be loved by human beings but he will also be loved by non-human beings such as spirits, ghosts, and animals. Such beings all respond to one who lacks an angry mind but instead has a loving mind.

One who abides in loving-kindness is protected by deities as a mother or father protects his or her own child. While protecting her own child, a mother would sacrifice even her life for the sake of her child. A related example can be understood as in the case of some meditating monks who were initially frightened and disturbed by the spirits of trees while they were meditating in a large forest. After winning over the spirits of trees by way of radiating mettā-loving-kindness, those mettā-
meditator monks were protected and guarded by the spirits of trees in order that they all could practice meditation and attain the final stage of enlightenment (Arahanthood).

Fire, poison, and weapons such as swords, bullets, knives, spears, arrows, and even bombs will not affect and enter into the body of one who always abides in loving-kindness.

The fire here meant by the Buddha is not ordinary fire but the fire of greed, the fire of hatred and the fire of ignorance. According to this discourse, when you practice mettā- loving-kindness meditation, the fire of hatred or anger (dosaggi) will not arise and affect your mind because the opposed emotions of anger and loving-kindness cannot co-exist together. Similarly, one who develops mettā- loving-kindness meditation, is free from the fire of greed that is the nearest enemy of mettā, and is free of the fire of delusion. Thereby, the poison of greed, (rāgavisa), the poison of hatred (dosavisa), and the poison of delusion (mohavisa); the weapon of fire (rāgasattha), the weapon of hatred (dosasattha), and the weapon of delusion (mohasattha) will not affect the mind and enter into the body of the mettā practitioner.

The mind of one who abides in pervading all the directions with a mind imbued with loving-kindness is quickly and easily concentrated; there is no sluggishness about it. The Buddha said whoever wants to gain concentration quickly, the first thing he has to start is practicing loving-kindness (mettā). When we develop loving-kindness to same extent saying mentally, not verbally: “May all beings be free from suffering, worry, grief and anxiety”, our body becomes relaxed, calm, peaceful, and tranquil, joy and rapture are aroused, and we gain concentration.

The face of one who abides in loving-kindness becomes a serene countenance, like a palmyra fruit loosed from its stem. One whose mind is full of anger and ill-will and lacks loving-kindness naturally becomes an ugly person, despite being well-groomed and well-dressed. No matter how much one is prettily made-up, beautified with the latest and the best cosmetics, one is subject to becoming ugly when anger flares up. That is why the Buddha said ugliness and repulsiveness have anger, hostility, resentment and grudges as their roots.46

“Life is uncertain but death is certain (maranam me dhuvam-jīvitam me adhuvam)” said the Buddha. One day all of us must die even though we do not want to die. All of us must face this inevitable and natural phenomenon whether we like it or not. We want to die well: die calmly, peacefully, mindfully, and with a smile on our face and without pain, grief, sorrow, lamentations, worry, fear, or attachment. To die well is an important goal, according to the Buddha’s teachings, since one’s next life is mainly dependent on one’s last moment of thought. If one dies with attachment, hatred, delusion, fear, worry, pain, and a bad thought in his mind, his future destination will be a bad and unfortunate destination and he will be reborn in a plane of misery (niraya). Conversely, if one dies with a good thought, mindfully and peacefully, he will get a favorable rebirth.
If a mettā-meditator is unable to achieve higher than the attainment of loving-kindness and the final stage of enlightenment, Arahanthood here and now, he will be reborn in the plane of Brahmā-world as if one awaking up from sleep. The way to be reborn in the blissful state is by eradicating anger by cultivating loving-kindness in Buddhism. “Telling the truth, not getting angry, and contributing something for the well-beings of others, are the three ways to be with deities in heaven”47 said the Buddha. These are the benefits of practicing loving-kindness.

Anger and Nibbāna: Nibbāna is the summum bonum of Buddhism and it is the ultimate goal of practicing the teachings of the Buddha. It can be attained and experienced by eradicating and eliminating all fetters and defilements which are firmly rooted in greed, hatred, and delusion in Buddhism. As long as our mind is filled with defilements and fetters rooted in greed, hatred, and delusion, experiencing peace and happiness, and obtaining Nibbāna is, says the Buddha, impossible and not-attainable. We have to try to reach the third stage of enlightenment (i.e. Anāgāmi-non-returner) by eliminating and eradicating anger. Anger, says the Buddha, can be completely eliminated and removed only by one who becomes an anāgāmi-non-returner.48

In the Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha, it says: “To the individual who is a non-returner, there are no javanas associated with aversion. Non-returners have eliminated the defilements of aversion, and therefore no longer experience cittas rooted in aversion.”49 A non-returner is the one and only person who never gets angry due to either external reasons or due to no reasons at all, because he has abandoned anger and hatred once and for all. This is what we are asked to achieve or become in order to experience peace and happiness within and without. In accordance with the Abhabba-sutta of Aṅguttara-nikaya, one is capable of realizing arahantship through the abandonment of anger (kodha) including eight other impurities.50 In other words, the attainment of peace and happiness and the complete liberation from dissatisfaction is possible only through the abandoning and eliminating of anger.

Ways of eradicating anger: According to psychologists, it is assumed that there are two ways of working with anger when one gets angry. One is to express anger and another is to suppress it. Some psychologists say to deal with anger by repressing it. But, according to Jim Platt, (2005), repressing anger is also an underlying cause of the occurrence of both anxiety and depression. From the Buddha’s point of view, both these ways of dealing with anger, namely expressing and suppressing anger, are unhealthy. By suppressing anger, one will be able to control anger for a moment, but later it will arise again.

According to medical doctors, a number of physical ailments are often brought on by suppressed anger. Al Duncan (2009) says that both suppressing anger and over expressing of anger can negatively affect significant relationships and lead to bad health.51 And it also destroys one’s inner peace and quality of life. Because the root of anger is still there in mind and so long as the root of anger is not uprooted from the mind, it will cause physical ailments and mental illness again and again. Expressing anger to release one’s pain is also not a good solution for anger. Because when anyone expresses it in inappropriate ways or through unwelcome actions and
unpleasant words, it will harm another person’s feelings or even their body, and the person who is expressing the anger is creating bad Kamma as well. The Buddha’s way of dealing with anger is neither through expressing it, nor by suppressing it, nor through pushing it away, nor by ignoring it, nor by repressing it. But rather, the Buddha’s way is by effectively dealing with it with the help of mindfulness, understanding the very reason of the arising of anger, and through dissolving and eliminating the root of anger.

Anger has to be seen as an evil and unwholesome that will bring about evil consequences. The Itivuttaka says that the way to make an end of human suffering is to recognize evil as evil (pañnapapāpakatopassatha) and having seen evil as evil, make an effort to overcome it (pañnapapāpakatodisvātatthanibbindatha), be detached from it (virājatha), and be freed from it (vimuccatha). The recognition of anger as an evil or an enemy that causes suffering is of importance in overcoming anger in order to become a happy and peaceful person here and in the future.52

**Observance of precepts:** Anger is common and unavoidable for us but is manageable and removable if we understand the ample ways of dealing with it and put them exactly into practice in our daily activities. We should know how to manage and take care of our anger so that we do not face problems and difficulties with related pain and misery born of anger. The very basic mean of dealing with anger in accordance with the teachings of the Buddha is to observe the five moral precepts (pañcasīla), namely - avoiding killing living beings, avoiding stealing, avoiding indulging in sensual pleasures, avoiding false speech, and avoiding taking intoxicants and drugs. One who breaks the five precepts is like a man who digs up his own root even in this world.”53

The five moral precepts are to be observed by lay Buddhists.54 These sīlas are to be kept and acted on in one’s daily life; they are not for mere recitation, for lip-service or for applying to others.55 The primary purpose of observing moral principles is to control ourselves in order not to commit all forms of unwholesome actions through bodily behaviors and verbal behaviors.56 Through observing five precepts with mindfulness, aggressive action and angry speech are prevented.

**Five ways of removing anger:** According to the Pathamaāghatapāṭivinayasutta57 of the Aṅguttara-nikāya, there are five ways of eliminating anger taught by the Buddha. These include: removing anger by developing loving-kindness, compassion, appreciative joy, by paying no attention to people or things, and through recognizing the ownership of one’s own Kamma.58

**The Four Noble Truths and Anger:** The Buddha said that the Four Noble Truths are called Noble Truths (ariya-sacca) because they are actual and unerring, not otherwise.59 The Four Noble Truths are a unique teaching of Buddhism because all wholesome states are included in it. With regard to this, the Buddha said: ‘Just as the footprints of all animals can fit within the footprint of an elephant, so too, all wholesome states can be included in the Four Noble Truths.’60 Not only do these teachings on the Four Truths embrace all that is wholesome, elsewhere the Buddha also explicitly said that the understanding of the Four Noble Truths is an
indispensable foundation for awakening.\textsuperscript{61} The above statements show the central importance of the understanding of the Four Noble Truths in the Path of Realization.

Here in regard to dealing with anger, I intend to rearrange the Four Noble Truths into my own words but in a manner not to deviate from the original teachings of the Buddha. The Four Noble Truths can be rearranged into the following words in regard to dealing with anger

1. Anger
2. The Arising of Anger
3. The Cessation of Anger
4. The Paths that Lead to the Cessation of Anger

The Buddha has shown the direct way for us to develop and cultivate, leading to the abandoning of anger once and for all. That is known as Noble Eightfold Path which we are examining here. The Buddha said the Noble Eightfold Path is to be developed thoroughly and mindfully for one who really has the desire to eliminate anger, which causes many miseries and sufferings for the agent of the anger as well as for the receivers of the anger. Developing the Noble Eightfold Path is nothing but developing and training in perfect morality (sīlasikkhā), training in perfect concentration (samādhisikkhā), and training in perfect wisdom or insight (paññasikkhā) which enable the practitioner to firmly uproot anger and its roots. The Buddha made a clear statement in explaining that the Noble Eightfold Path is only the safe and good path productive of joy.\textsuperscript{62} The ‘Middle Path’ (majjhimapatiipadā), told by the Buddha, that leads to vision (cakkhu), wisdom (ñāna), peace (upasamāya), insight (abhiñāya), enlightenment (sambodhāya) and Nibbāna is to be practiced and developed (dukkhanirodhāmināriyasaccāmabhāvetabbam) in order to get rid of dissatisfaction and attain peace and happiness.\textsuperscript{63} The Middle Path consists of eight components, they are namely;

1. Right Understanding (sammādiṭṭhi)
2. Right Thought (sammāsaṅkappa)
3. Right Speech (sammāvācā)
4. Right Action (sammākammanta)
5. Right Livelihood (sammāājīva)
6. Right Effort (sammāvāyāma)
7. Right Mindfulness (sammāsati)
8. Right Concentration (sammāsamādhi)

**Right Understanding:** Right understanding\textsuperscript{64} (sammādiṭṭhi) is the first factor in the Noble Eightfold Path in Buddhism. The Venerable Śāriputta in the Sammādiṭṭhisutta\textsuperscript{65} of the Majjhima-nikāya explained that Right Understanding is involved in
sixteen different ways, which can be reduced into the four categories thus: the understanding of (1) the distinction between wholesome and unwholesome (kusala, akusala) and their bases (kusalamūla, akusalamūla); (2) the nutrients (āhāra) of life along with their origin (āhārasamudaya), cessation (āhāranirodha) and the way leading to the their cessation (āhāranirodhagāminiminpaţipada); (3) the Four Noble Truths; (4) and the twelve factors of the Dependent Arising (patițcasamuppāda). Of the Noble Eightfold Path, the Buddha assigned the Right Understanding at the very first place because of its significance. The Sutta says that because of right understanding, there arise successively right thought, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration. Due to the arising of those Noble Eightfold factors, right knowledge comes to beings, in dependence upon right knowledge, right deliverance comes to beings.

Dealing with anger with respect to understanding cause and effect is a very important consideration in our daily life. Without considering or perhaps without understanding the nature of cause and effect we act wrongfully and speak badly as a response to the person with whom we feel displeased and angry. The Buddha clearly says that acting or speaking out of hatred and anger always leads to unhappy and bad results, while acting and speaking out of love and compassion invariably leads to happy and good results.

The above statement explicitly tells us that anger and ill will is not the outcome of Right Understanding, rather of Wrong Understanding. The Mahācattārīsaka-sutta states that many evil unwholesome states originate with wrong view as condition, whereas the many wholesome states originate with right view as condition. The two conditions: the voice of another (paratoghosa), and wise attention (yonisomanasikāka) are necessary to be fulfilled for the arising of Right Understanding. Above all, anger and hatred can be completely eliminated and eradicated through the development of Right Understanding and Wise Attention. It is Right Understanding that gives one insight into one’s own kamma, cause and effect, and the Four Noble Truths.

**Right Thought:** Right Thought (sammāsāṅkappa), the second factor in the Noble Eightfold Path. The Buddha told us that Right Thought consists of abandoning negative and unwholesome thoughts: the thought of sensual pleasure (kāmasāṅkappa), the thought of ill will (vyāpādasaṅkappa) and the thought of cruelty (vihimasaṅkappa), and cultivating or replacing them with positive and wholesome thoughts- the thought of renunciation (nekhammasaṅkappa), the thought of loving-kindness (avāyāpādasaṅkappa), and the thought of non-cruelty (avihimasaṅkappa). In the Discourse on the Twofold Thoughts, the Buddha advised the three negative thoughts: Thought of Sensual desire, thought of anger and thought of cruelty to be abandoned by cultivating the positive thoughts: the thoughts of renunciation, the thought of loving-kindness, and the thought of compassion that does not lead to one’s own affliction, or to others’ affliction, or to the affliction of both’ it aids wisdom, does not cause difficulties, and lead to Nibbāna respectively. The fastest way to overcome and dispel the thought of anger,
perception of anger, or the element of anger, advised by the Buddha is, simply to develop the thoughts of non-anger, perception of non-anger and the element of non-anger.\textsuperscript{71} We should constantly be aware and mindful of our thoughts because whatever good or bad actions done by bodily action and pleasant speech or harsh language spoken by verbal actions, they have either pure or impure mind as their roots. Every action, as told by the Buddha, comes from thinking mind. It is thoughts that are translated into actions and speech. If the thought is pure and wholesome the actions that follow from that thought will be wholesome and pure actions. Conversely, if the thought is impure and unwholesome the actions that follow from that thought will be unwholesome and impure and harmful actions.\textsuperscript{72}

\textbf{Right Speech:} Right Speech, (\textit{sammāvācā}) the third factor in the Noble Eightfold Path, as related by the Buddha, includes the avoidance of: (1) false speech (\textit{musāvāda}) and in positive term, the cultivation of truthfulness and trustworthiness; (2) slanderous speech (\textit{pisuṇavācā}) that intent on causing dissension and friendship, which in positive terms means the cultivation of speech which will promote cohesion and concord between two parties; (3) harsh speech (\textit{pharusavācā}) that might bring about hatred, enmity, disputes, quarrels, misunderstanding, disharmony and dis-concord among individuals or groups of people and in positive terms, the cultivation of gentle and pleasant speech which will bring about harmony, unity, friendship, and peace and (4) idle speech (\textit{samphappalāpa}) which would not promote the good, welfare and benefits for oneself and of others as well as the cultivation of meaningful, useful and timely speech.\textsuperscript{73}

Words are very powerful tools because they can unite and heal people and can divide and harm people. In explaining the importance of cultivating Right Speech, Thanissaro Bhikkhu (2011) retold what his teacher said thus: “If you can’t control your mouth, there’s no way you can hope to control your mind.” This is why right speech is so important in day-to-day practice (p.28). Controlling our mouth here does not mean we have to always close our mouth and keep silent for good. Instead, we have to be mindful of our speech before allowing it to come out from our mouth, to ensure that our words are trustworthy, harmonious, comforting, meaningful, kind, soft and gentle, rather than being negative. On the one hand, by speaking using untrustworthy, divisive, harsh and meaningless words, we are hurting the feelings of others. On the other hand, we are also accumulating unwholesome consequences by creating angry and thoughts of ill will in our mind. The converse is also true that by means of speaking in manner that are trustworthy, harmonious, comforting, meaningful, kind and gentle, anger can be blocked from arising, and also, we are contributing invaluable gifts to society. The Buddha says that stabbing each other with verbal daggers is an expression of anger and resentment because it is accompanied by a wish to harm or hurt others’ feelings. This kind of angry speech, says the Buddha, will lead to your harm and suffering for a long time, rather than being conducive to love, respect, cohesion, harmony, peace and unity among your relationships.\textsuperscript{74} Whether we are angry or not, we should not use harsh speech-abusive speech, scolding, reviling, insulting, using profanity, speaking hypocrisy, using sarcasm, belittling, expressing criticism, or using excessively blunt words which are not gentle, soothing to the ears, pleasant, courteous, welcoming, friendly

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Another way for overcoming anger is by using profitable or stimulating talk that is considered to be communication (known as non-violent communication) that assists in the development of thoughts of love and compassion and the overthrowing of anger as well as of our mental and spiritual development. This, indeed, is the opposite of angry communication or violent communication that involves harsh speech, offensive speech, false and malicious speech and which leads to disunity, disharmony, and discord. Most of the time in daily human life, anger arises due to the miscommunications – poor and ineffective communications often lead to quarrels, disputes, arguments, and misunderstandings and finally they can break up human relationships. If we are not able to communicate effectively it causes anger and frustration in ourselves as well as in others. Healthy and effective communication, so-called ‘Right Speech’ is to be cultivated in order to prevent anger from arising. Good communication or compassionate communication is what Right Speech is all about. Therefore, whenever and whatever we speak with whomsoever, the Buddha advised that we should speak:

1. At a proper time, not at an improper time,
2. Truthfully, not falsely,
3. Gently, not harshly,
4. In a beneficial way, not in a harmful way,
5. With a mind of loving-kindness, not while harboring hatred.

**Right Action:** Right Action (*sammākammanta*), the fourth factor in the Noble Eightfold Path, as told by the Buddha, involves abstention from wrongful and unwholesome bodily actions: destroying life, stealing what is not given, committing sexual misconduct, and the cultivation of right modes of righteous and wholesome bodily actions—cultivating love and compassion for others, giving charity and generosity, and controlling the senses and practicing self-control. Whatever actions intentionally or unintentionally are done by an angry person out of anger and hatred, they will lead to profound worry, misery, pain and unhappiness for him and for everyone around him, now and in the future. A negative mental state of mind influences a person to engage in doing other unwholesome actions that would bring about unwholesome consequences. Whatever actions we desire to do through body or speech should be done with the mind filled with full of love, compassion and understanding or wisdom. We should cultivate right actions that are the causes for peace and happiness. According to Buddhism right actions are actions freed from greed, anger, hatred and delusion or confusion and motivated by loving-kindness, compassion, sympathy, appreciative joy and impartiality. Any actions which come from a mind not currently filled with greed, hatred, or delusion, but full of love, compassion, sympathy bring about peace and happiness to the agent and to the receiver, here or in the future. Buddhism says Right Action is mindfully to be practiced by every person who wants a calm and happy and peaceful mind, and wants his life to be a harmonious, peaceful and healthy and happy life. As he states in the *Dhammapada*;
“Guard against evil deeds, control your body. Giving up evil deeds, cultivate good deeds.”

**Right Livelihood:** The fifth factor in the Noble Eightfold Path is Right Livelihood (sammaajiva) that emphasizes the necessity to adopt the moral and righteous ways of earning or livelihood avoiding any occupations or job which might be materially rewarding but ethically reprehensible. According to Buddhism any occupations or job that cause harm to the person engaging in job or to someone else can be considered as a wrong means of livelihood. Elsewhere in the Majjhima-nikaya, the Buddha said dishonest ways and means of pursuing and gaining wealth and requisites by practicing scheming, talking, hinting, and belittling are also considered as Wrong Livelihood.77 Wrong means of livelihood one way or another encourages people to engage in committing unwholesome and wrong actions that generate bad consequences to the agent and receivers as well. If one engages in wrong means of livelihood because of his greed, hatred and delusion, unimaginable chaotic situations will be created society. Therefore, we should not earn business and seek prosperity and property by wrong means. As the Buddha clearly said:

“Neither for the sake of oneself nor for the sake of another; one should not desire for children, wealth, or a kingdom, by unjust means he should not seek prosperity. Only then is one virtuous, wise and righteous.”

There is no doubt that if everyone in this whole universe were to mindfully and faithfully uphold the practice of Right Livelihood, the environment in which they are living will be a peaceful and happy environment to live in without any hatred, anger, fear, worry and sorrow. In this regard, the Buddha exhorted us to lead a righteous life, not a base life. The righteous live happily both in this world and the next.

**Right Effort:** Right Effort (sammaavayama), the sixth factor in the Noble Eightfold Path, says the Buddha, recommends constant vigilance concerning one’s character and in making effort to prevent the arising of unarisen evil dispositions and the growth of arisen evil dispositions, as well as cultivating the arising of unarisen wholesome dispositions, and developing the arisen wholesome and skillful dispositions.80 The Buddha in the Mahasatiipatthana-sutta said Right Effort consists of fourfold namely:

1. To prevent the non-arisen of unarisen evil mental states
2. To remove the arisen evil mental states
3. To cultivate the arising of non-arisen wholesome mental states, and
4. To develop the wholesome mental states that have already arisen.81

As explained by the Buddha what is the actual meaning of the above statement is as follows:

1. To practice the Noble Eightfold Path with the intention of preventing unarisen unwholesome and evil dispositions from arising, is meant that whenever one sees, hears or notices unwholesome acts of taking life, stealing what is not
given, sexual intercourse, lying, malicious speech, harsh speech, and useless speech done by others, one must make efforts to put oneself above these unwholesome and evil acts just like trying to safeguard oneself against contagious diseases for his own good.

2. To practice the Noble Eightfold Path making efforts to overcome or eliminate unwholesome and evil dispositions that have already arisen is meant that one must strive to observe moral principles to eliminate unwholesome mental states which are responsible for evil deeds and speech, to develop concentration to dispel the unwholesome mental states which arise as thoughts of lust, anger and cruelty, and to develop insight wisdom in order to uproot the unwholesome mental states which have not yet arisen but are lying dormant and will arise as and when an opportunity offers. Arousing effort to abandon unwholesome states that have already arisen comprises unwholesome actions volitionally committed in the interminable series of past lives. When one remembers the unwholesome actions he has done in his past, he will acquire fresh unwholesome states because he does so with remorse (kukkcca) that causes the increase of unwholesome states. With regard to anger, we should not recall the persons or situations that caused us anger and resentment. If we re-think over them thinking: ‘So and so has said or done something unkind to me.’, by so doing, we not only multiply our anger, but also we are accumulating unwholesome states that will come to fruition as bad consequences. By not thinking over someone or a situation that caused us to be angry, the anger and resentment that have already arisen in us can be abandoned. The effective way of abandoning unwholesome states done in the past, from the Buddhists standpoint, is performing and cultivating more and more good deeds. In this regard, the Dhammapada states:

“Whosoever, by a good deed, covers the evil done, such a one illumines this world like the moon freed from clouds.”

3. To practice the Noble Eightfold Path striving to develop the wholesome things which have not yet arisen is meant that one must make a great effort to develop the wholesome noble qualities such as loving-kindness, compassion, patience, humanity, generosity, moral shame and moral fear and wisdom - insight meditation which contribute peace, happiness, now or in the future. Furthermore, to make an effort to develop the unarisen wholesome things includes: the development of the Serenity Meditation and Insight Meditation, the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, the Noble Eightfold Path, the Seven Factors of Enlightenment, etc.

Of them, the Buddha, however, emphasizes the cultivation of the Seven Factors of Enlightenment (satta-bojjhaṅga): mindfulness (sati-saṁbojjhaṅga), investigation of phenomenana (dhammavicayasambojjhaṅga), energy (vīryasambojjhaṅga), rapture (pītisambojjhaṅga), tranquility (passaddhisambojjhaṅga), concentration (samādhisaṁbojjhaṅga), and equanimity (upekkhāsambojjhaṅga).

4. To practice the Noble Eightfold Path making effort to maintain and increase the wholesome mental states which have already arisen is meant that one must make constant and mindful efforts to perform more and more good deeds and meritorious
deeds by removing and preventing the arisen unwholesome thoughts and unwholesome mind states which are not yet arisen respectively. As far as dealing with anger is concerned, with the help of Right Mindfulness and Right Understanding, striving not to become displeased, angry, hateful and fearful, and to develop the Seven Factors of Enlightenment along with love, compassion, sympathy, understanding and knowledge and wisdom and other wholesome qualities are called Right Effort in Buddhism.

**Right Mindfulness:** According to the Buddha, Right Mindfulness is cultivated through a practice called "The Four Foundations of Mindfulness"\(^{84}\) (*cattarosatipatthāna*); the mindful contemplation of the body, feelings, states of mind, and Dhamma, ardent, clearly comprehending and mindful, having put away covetousness and grief concerning the world.\(^{85}\)

The Buddha says that the Four Foundations of Mindfulness are “the direct path (*ekāyano*)"\(^{86}\) for the attainment of purity, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the disappearance of pain and grief, for the entering upon the right path and for the realization of *Nibbāna*."\(^{87}\) The Buddha stressed the importance of mindfulness in the *Sabbāsa-sutta* saying that wise attention is the condition of removing arisen taints and preventing for future arising of unarisen taints whereas the unwise attention causes to arise the unarisen taints and the increase of the arisen taints.\(^{88}\)

The above statement points out that in order to remove and eliminate anger and ill will, mindfulness and wise attention is something to be cultivated and developed in our day-to-day activities. Mindfulness indeed is the key to abandoning evil, doing good and gaining fully liberation according to the Buddha.

“*Bhikkhu-s, I do not see a single thing that so causes unarisen wholesome qualities to arise and arisen unwholesome qualities to decline as heedfulness. For one who is heedful, unarisen wholesome qualities to arise and arisen unwholesome qualities to decline as heedfulness.*”\(^{89}\)

As for dealing with anger, a very basic requirement to establish and develop right mindfulness is the ability to see and recognize anger as anger when it arises in our mind and to pay manifold attention to the impermanence, dissatisfaction, and selflessness of all forms of experiences either they are physical or psychological. Anger in our daily life arises in various forms even we cannot notice their presence. In order to overcome anger, we are asked to establish mindfulness so we can recognize the arising and passing away of anger and its presence and absence just at it is. Anger can be abandoned with the practice of mindfulness.

The contemplation of mindfulness of the categories of experiences or phenomena (*dhammānupassanā*) comprises, knowing the presence of hindrances, knowing the absence of hindrances, knowing the causes that lead to arisen of the unarisen hindrances, knowing the conditions that lead to the passing away of the arisen hindrances and knowing the conditions that prevent the future arising of the hindrances.
“If ill will is present in himself, a monk knows that it is present. And he knows how unarisen anger comes to arise, and he knows how the abandonment of arisen anger comes about, and he knows how the non-arising of the abandoned anger in the future will come about.”

Five steps of overcoming anger: This understanding and the explicit instruction in the above text itself mention that there are five steps of working with the anger when it arises in the mind. They are, namely:

1. Be mindful of anger when it is present
2. Recognize when it is absent
3. Know what conditions underline the presence or absence of anger
4. Know what conditions underline the removal of anger
5. Know the conditions that prevent future arising of anger

Be mindful of anger when it is present: The first step of working with anger as taught by the Buddha is the simple recognition of the angry state of mind when it is present in the mind. We might experience the angry state of mind in many different ways for many different reasons or conditions. When anger arises due to inner experience or thinking about someone with whom we have quarreled in the past and towards whom we feel displeased and anger and resentment, we must mindfully aware of the presence of anger in our mind and acknowledge and note; “anger, anger, anger” or say mentally; “Ah! I have anger. There is anger in me. Anger is arising in me.” We should not judge the anger and we ourselves should not judge for having it. Just simply notice its presence in the mind. When we don’t recognize when anger is present, it will activate and multiply. But, by the time we note or acknowledge anger as anger or the arising of anger, anger is spotted and its presence is recognized. Thereby, anger or ill will weakens and finally disappears.

Recognize anger when it is absent: The second step to cope with anger mentioned in this discourse is to know or recognize the absence of anger when it is absent in the mind. When anger is vanished, the Buddha said, we also must be aware of its disappearance and note or acknowledge; “Wow! There is no more anger in me. I have no anger. My mind is free from anger and ill will” and so on. When we know that we are free of anger, at the same time, our mind will be calm and ease, then we feel a peaceful statement of mind. The Buddha gave a simile illustrating the absence of anger like recovering from physical illness. Most importantly, when the arisen anger is absent, we will also be able to realize the impermanence nature of anger, the unsatisfactoriness of anger and selflessness of anger. The objects of anger and ill will are also in Buddhism of the nature of impermanence, dissatisfaction, and selflessness. Therefore, it is not wise to think that: ‘I am angry, I am angry.’ Then the angry feeling will find no place to make feel agitated, displeased, sad and upset. When, without judging and condemning the angry feeling, yet simply recognize, we observe anger as anger, and its arising and passing away, anger from our mind will be removed because we no longer pay attention to the inner feelings or the person.
with whom we feel resentment, repulsive objects or unpleasant conditions. This is the direct path of removing and eliminating anger, ill will and hatred in Buddhism.

**Know what conditions underline the presence or absence of anger:** The third step in working with anger in the instructions is to know the causes or conditions leading to the arising of anger or an angry state of mind. In the third section of this article, it was mentioned that there are many conditions or things that lead to the arising of anger. Let us take here one example for the understanding of how anger arises in the mind. It is easy to understand that when we are not mindful, painful and unpleasant feelings or unpleasant people or situations, at that time the habitual conditioning of anger automatically arises. We unmindfully react to these conditions - such as unpleasant people, with dislike, fear, frustration, impatience and contraction. This reaction leads the arising of more anger. It is important to be aware of conditions or causes leading to the arising of anger in the mind. The Buddha clearly points out the danger of the lack of awareness or attention to the conditions underline the arising of anger as follow:

“Bhikkhus, whatever a bhikkhu frequently thinks and ponders upon, that will become the inclination of his mind. If he frequently thinks and ponders upon thoughts of ill will, he has abandoned the thought of non-ill will to cultivate the thought of ill will, and then his mind inclines to thoughts of ill will.”

**Know what conditions underline the removal of anger:** The next step of working with anger as explained by the Buddha in this discourse is to know how arisen anger can be abandoned and removed. The fastest and most effective method is, as the Buddha said, to cultivate and develop loving-kindness which is the direct antidote of anger. The development of loving-kindness, mettā, will help us remove arisen anger and aversion because when mettā is practiced well, the practitioner ignores the negative qualities and faults of others, but rather mainly focuses on the good in them. When loving-kindness becomes stronger and stronger, we feel more tolerance and patience, and then the degree of anger will become weaker and weaker. In the section 5 of this article, we discussed in detail the conditions or ways that underline the removal of anger. Those conditions are also to be known and developed to remove and abandon anger and aversion. And also here in this context, the Buddha encouraged us to practice mindfulness and wise reflection as conditions lead for the removal of anger in the mind. When anger arises, we have to simply be mindful of its present not judge the anger or judge ourselves for having it in our mind. When we notice its presence it will weaken and disappear after some time. With wise reflection, we have to consider the negative consequences of anger here in this life and hereafter. This practice of being mindful of anger through reflection on its bad results can be helpful for the removal of anger.

**Know the conditions that prevent the future arising of anger:** The last step to coping with anger instructed in this *sutta* is to know the conditions that retard or prevent the future arising of anger, ill will and aversion. By knowing how anger arises in the mind, we can practice applying some wise instructions given by the Buddha. As a matter of fact, to prevent the future arising of anger and ill will, the Buddha is here highlighting for the development of loving-kindness, compassion,
sympathetic joy, equanimity and mindfulness practice frequently in our day to day life. When we are not mindful to the unpleasant situations or people that cause us irritation, and angry, the anger can arise in the mind of unmindful person, just as rain breaks through an ill-thatched house, due to lack of the practice of four sublime truths and mindfulness. Converse is also true, said the Buddha, if our mind is full of mindfulness and well developed; the anger cannot arise easily, just as rain does not break through a well-thatched house.

The Buddha had made an immutable assurance that if one should devotedly and properly practice and develop these Four Foundations of Mindfulness for seven years……or even for seven days, one of two fruits can be expected for that person: even final knowledge here and now, of if there is a trace of attachment remained, the state of non-returner (anāgāmi).

**Right Concentration**: Right Concentration (sammāsamādhi), is the eighth factor in Noble Eightfold Path and it is the last member of the concentration group (samādhi-khandha). Right Concentration, says Buddhism, stands for the clear and an intensification of mental conditions which promotes to the dawning of insight resulting in the final eradication of all evil and unwholesome dispositions and culminating in the perfection of moral character. The Visuddimagga says non-distraction as characteristic of concentration, eliminating distraction as its function, non-wavering as its manifestation and blissful as its proximate cause. Concentration, from the Buddhist standpoint, is the chief of all good qualities. With this regard, the Milindapañhā reads: “As the rafters of a house incline and lead up to the ridge-pole and the ridge-pole is the highest point of the roof. So too all good qualities incline and lead up to concentration.”

**Conclusion**: As a matter of fact, dealing with anger, while getting angry with someone or something that against to his or her self-esteem, bodies, feelings, desires, possessions, his ways of seeing and believing the world, is not very much easy to manage it. And also it is not very easy for many of us to uproot anger completely within in this very life. Therefore the best way to deal with anger and hatred is try to be always mindful in order that we would not get irritated and angry with so and so for such and such reasonable reasons or trivial situations. After all, mindfulness practice is the very key to overcome greed, anger, delusion and other defilements. Though we have different potential, ability, understanding and effort, we can be free from anger if all of us take the first step to remove our defilement of anger and make a continued effort till it is curbed. By saying this, the readers are desperately recommended and advised to put the guidelines discussed in this whole thesis into daily activities not only to be able to deal with anger for the moment but also for the attainment of the highest happiness, Nibbāna, which is recommended by Buddhism.

2 DN.26

3AggiSutta. Iti: 44-43

4 AN.3.68


7 Kujjhana lakkhano kodho

8 Kodho dhammañna pañcatattā


10 Katamo ca puggalo kodhano? Yassa puggalassa ayaṃ kodho appahīno—ayaṃ vuccati puggalo “kodhano” Ibid. P.28

11 “Lobho akusalamūlaṃ, doso akusalamūlaṃ, moho akusalamūlaṃ—idaṃ vuccatāvuso, akusalamūlaṃ.” MN.9

12 “kopo yo ca appaccayo—ubhayametam aṅgaṇaṃ.” MN.5.10

13 It.88

14 “Nātthī rāga samo aggi, nātthī dosa sama kāli, nātthī khandha samā dukkhā, nātthī santi paramaṃ sukhaṃ ” Dh.v.202

15 MN.114. iii.50

16 “Tiṇadosāni khetūni, dosadosā ayaṃ pajā………….” Dh.v.357

17 Dh.v.5

18 Vism.I.214

19 It is defined in the Puggalapaññatti (Translated as “A Designation of Human Types” thus: “What sort of person is said to be vengeful? What then is vengeance? First (comes) anger, after that (comes) vengeance. That which is vengeance as this is, the act of revenging and the state of being vengeful, the fixing, settling, establishing, grounding and following up, the violent act of anger is called vengeance. He whose vengeance remains unremoved is said to be vengeful.” Translation is adapted from B.C. Law, (2011), Designation of Human Types, p.28


21 MN.19. For detailed useful observation with regard to this list, read ‘Concept and Reality in Early Buddhist Thought’ by Bhikkhu Nanananda, 1971, BPS

22 “Nāhāṃ, bhikkhave, aṅñaṃ ekadhammampi samanupassāmi yena anuppanno vā byāpādo uppajjati uppanno vā byāpādo bhīyobhīvāya vepullāya saṁvattati yathāvīdāṃ, bhikkhave, paṭiṭhānimittām. 201
Paṭighanimittaṁ, bhikkhave, ayoniso manasi karoto anuppanno ceva byāpādo uppaññati uppanno ca byāpādo bhīvyobbhāvāya vepullāya samvattati’’ti. AN.I.II.12

23 AN.III.68.8. p.290

24 SN.V.51.1. p.1597

25 “Diso disam yaṁ taṁ kayirā, verī vā pana verinaṁ; Micchāpanihitaṁ cittaṁ, pāpiyo naṁ tato kare.”

Dh.v.42. Trans. Achraya Buddhakirika

26 MN.131


28 AN.9.29.9

29 AN.10.9

30 It.88.

31 AN.7.64

32 Ibid

33 Vism. IX.p.294

34 AN.VII.64.11. p.1066

35 Ibid.p.1066

36 AN.V.212.2

37 AN.4.61

38 “Kodhasammadasamatto, āyasakyaṁnigacchati, Ṛṇimittāsuhajjācaparivajjentikodhanam.”

AN.764

39 AN.II.220.41: Kodhapeyyālasutta “‘Dvāhi, bhikkhave, dhammehisamanṇāgatoidhekaccokāyassabhedēparaṇāparapapāyapagatīvinipātānāmajjhapālāyapagatīlassa, āyasaṁnissritikodhanatvāt. Katamehīdvāhi? Kodhenacaupanāhenaca...”


43 Ibid.p.36

44 Vism.306

45 “kodham chetvā sukham seti, kodham chetvā na socati; Kodhassa visamūlassa, madhuraggassa brāhmaṇa; Vadham ariyā pasaṁsanti, taṁ hi chetvā na socati’’ ti. SN.I.I. p. 254

46 MN.135

47 Dh.v.224 “Saccam bhaṇe na kujheyya, bdajjā appampi yācito, Etehi tihi thānehi, gacche devāna santike.’’
It.2.13


49 “Nava, bhikkhave, dhammepāhāvabbhāroarahattamsacchikātuṃ. Katamena?Rāgam, dosam, moham, kodham, upanāham, makkham, palāsam, issam, macchariyam— imekho, bhikkhave, navadhammepāhāvabbhāroarahattamsacchikātuṃ “ti. “One who has abandoned nine things is capable of realizing arahantship. Which nine? Passion, aversion, delusion, anger, resentment, arrogance, insolence, envy, & stinginess. One who has abandoned these nine things is capable of realizing arahantship.” AN.09.62.11


51 It.39

52 Dh.vs.246-247.

53 For detailed explanations on keeping the precepts read *Going for Refuge and Taking the Precepts* by Bodhi, Bhikkhu (Wheel 282/284) and *Everyman's Ethics* by Narada Thera (Wheel 14), and also read *The Five Precepts and the Five Ennoblers* by Vajirananavarorasa (Bangkok: Mahamakuta, 1975), *The Five Precepts Collected Essays*, (Wheel No.55).


56 AN.5.161

57 Ibid.

58 SN.56.27

59 "Seyyathāpi, āvuso, yānikānicijaṅgalānaṃ pāṇiṇaṃ padajātānisabbhānīni hatthipadesamadhānaṃ gagacchanti, hatthipadāṃtesamāggamakhāyatiyadidāṇmahantattena; evamevakhō, āvuso, ye keci kusaladhammasabbete ca tisutiyusaccesusangahaggacchanti. " MN.28.1:

60 “Just as, bhikkhus, if anyone should speak thus, ‘Having built the lower storey of a peaked house, I will erect the upper storey’ this would be possible; so too if any should speak thus: ‘Having made the breakthrough to the Noble Truth of dukkha, its cause, its cessation and the path to end dukkha, as they really are, I will completely make an end of dukkha;-This is possible.’ SN.V.44.4. p.1868 (Bhikkhu Bodhi translation)

61 M.19.26


63 For a detailed exposition on *Right Understanding* see *The Discourse on Right View* by Nanamoli, Bhikkhu (Wheel 377/379); *Right Understanding* by Soma Thera (Buddhist Literature Society, Colombo, 1946); *The Four Noble Truths* by Story, Francis (Wheel 34/35); and *Karma and Rebirth* by Nyanatiloka Thera, (Wheel 9).
65 MN.9; See also “The Discourse on Right View, The SammādiṭṭhiSutta and its commentary” translated by BhikkhuÑānamoli, (BPS Wheel No.377-379)
66 AN.10.103.3
67 MN.117-34
68 MN.117
70 DN.22, MN.141.25; SN.45.8
71 AN.6. 109-110-111
72 AN.i.11 [PiyadassiThera (2003). p135] “Whatsoever there is of evil, connected with evil, belonging to evil—all issue from the mind. Whatsoever there is of good, connected with good, belonging to good—all issue form the mind.” AN.i.261. [PiyadassiThera 2003.p135] “When the mind or thought is guarded, bodily action also is guarded; verbal action is also guarded.” “When the mind is unguarded, bodily action is also unguarded, verbal action also is unguarded.”
73 DN. 22. MN.141.26. SN.45.8
74 MN.48.5
75 AN.10.44, Bhikkhu Bodhi, (2012), p.1394
76 “Kāyappakopamrakkheyya,kāyenasaṃvutosiyā;Kāyaduccaritamhitvā,kāyenasucaritam care.” Dh.v.231
77 MN.117-29
78 “Na attahetunaparassahetu, Na puttamicchenadhanammaratthag; Na iccheyyaadhammenasamiddhimattano, Sa sīlavāpaññavādhammikosiyā.” Dh.v.84:
79 “Dhammaṃ care sucaritam,nanaṃduccaritamcare;Dhammacārīsukhaṃseti,asmiṃlokeparamhi ca.” Dh.v.169:
80 DN.22. ii.313.p.348, MN.141.29. SN.45.8
81 MN.77.16
82 “Yassapāpaṃkataṃkammaṃ, kusalenapidhīyati, somaṃlokaṃpabhāseti, abbhāmuttovacandimā.” Dh.v.173:
83 For a detailed explanation read The Seven Factors of Enlightenment by PiyadassiThera (Wheel 1)
85 DN.22, MN.141.30, SN.45.8
86 The “Direct Path” is translated from Pali term “Ekāyanomaggo” which can be divided into three words as “Eka-one”, “yāna-going” and “magga-way or path.” The Majjhimanikāya commentary gives the five alternative explanations for the term “Ekāyana-direct Path.” It is the direct path in the sense of
(1) a “Single Path” leading straight to the goal of fully liberation, (2) to be followed by oneself “alone”, without a companion, for his own emancipation, (3) taught by the “One” (the Blessed One), (4) can be found in the Buddha’s dispensation, and (5) which leads to “one way”, namely to Nibbāna. See, The Four Foundations of Mindfulness by Sayadaw Usilānanda, (Wisdom Publication-Boston), (1990). P.8: Satpaṭṭhāna The Direct Path to Realization by Bhikkhu Anālayo, (BPS), (2010), p.27. Notes to Suttas 10-135 by Bhikkhu Bodhi in his Translation of the Majjhimanikāya. Pp.1188-9

87 “Ekāyanoayaṃ, bhikkhave, maggosattānamvisuddhiyā, sokaparidevānaṃsamatikkamāya, dukkha-domanassānamathangamāya, nāvassaadhidhamāya, nibbānassasadhirādyāya, yadidamcatatārosatipaṭṭhānā.” DN.22, MN.10

88 MN.2.3

89 ‘Nāhaṃ, bhikkhave, aṇṇamekadhampampisamanupassāmyenaanuppannāvākusalaḥhammāupajjantītaṇṇāvākusalāḥ hammāparihāyantītāsidam, bhikkhave, appamūdo. Appamattassa, bhikkhave, anuppannācevākusalaḥhammāupajjantītaṇṇācaakusalāḥhammāparihāyanti”’ ti. AN.1.59

90 MN.10-36; DN.ii.301

91 Byāpādavitakkaṇce, bhikkhave, bhikkhubahulaṃmanathāvākicatāvākiceteti, tathātathānativākiceto. Byāpādavitakkaṇce, bhikkhave, bhikkhave, bhikkhubahulaṃmanathāvākicatāvākiceti, pahāsiByāpādavitakkaṇce, bhikkhave, bhikkhubahulaṃmanathāvākicatāvākiceti, pahāsiByāpādavitakkaṇce, bhikkhave, bhikkhubahulaṃmanathāvākicatāvākiceteti, pahāsiByāpādavitakkaṇce, bhikkhave, bhikkhubahulaṃmanathāvākicatāvākiceteti, pahāsiByāpādavitakkaṇce, bhikkhave, bhikkhubahulaṃmanathāvākicatāvākiceteti, pahāsiByāpādavitakkaṇce, bhikkhave, bhikkhubahulaṃmanathāvākicatāvākiceteti, pahāsiByāpādavitakkaṇce, bhikkhave, bhikkhubahulaṃmanathāvākicatāvākiceteti, pahāsiByāpādavitakkaṇce, bhikkhave, bhikkhubahulaṃmanathāvākicatāvākiceteti, pahāsiByāpādavitakkaṇce, bhikkhave, bhikkhubahulaṃmanathāvākicatāvākiceteti, pahāsiByāpādavitakkaṇce, bhikkhave, bhikkhubahulaṃmanathāvākicatāvākiceteti, pahāsiByāpādavitakkaṇce, bhikkhave, bhikkhubahulaṃmanathāvākicatāvākiceteti, pahāsiByāpādavitakkaṇce, bhikkhave, bhikkhubahulaṃmanathāvākicatāvākiceteti, pahāsiByāpādavitakkaṇce, bhikkhave, bhikkhubahulaṃmanathāvākicatāvākiceteti, pahāsiByāpādavitakkaṇce, bhikkhave, bhikkhubahulaṃmanathāvākicatāvākiceteti, pahāsiByāpādavitakkaṇce, bhikkhave, bhikkhubahulaṃmanathāvākicatāvākiceteti, pahāsiByāpādavitakkaṇce, bhikkhave, bhikkhubahulaṃmanathāvākicatāvākiceteti, pahāsiByāpādavitakkaṇce, bhikkhave, bhikkhubahulaṃmanathāvākicatāvākiceteti, pahāsi

92 DN.22

93 Vism. III.4. p.82

94 Pesala Bhikkhu, 1991: p.9
Conflict Resolution: The Buddhist Way

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Conflict Resolution: The Buddhist Way

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Psychologists who focus attention on conflict state that conflicts arise when one individual or group perceives that another individual or group has caused or will cause harm. It can be caused by a variety of factors. Limit of resources – territorial, material, political etc. - is one major factor identified. Poor or ineffective communication is another commonly occurring reason behind many conflicts. Social psychologists and others who are actively involved in working for reducing destructive conflicts are trying to develop successful conflict management techniques. Experiments and research and even courses to train conflict resolution managers are in progress in many countries. In general, religions are also expected to help, at least conceptually, in conflict resolution processes, even though they are often found culprits of causing conflicts themselves.

The Buddha lived in an era of political and social conflicts. Even within the Buddhist monastic community occasions of conflicts arose. Once there was a conflict between Dharmadhara monks and Vinayadharma monks over a minor rule. When negotiation did not resolve the problem, the Buddha left them to argue and retired to forest. He did so as a way to make them feel the repercussions of conflict and it was effective to bring harmony again. However, he made a pungent comment saying that those who quarrel do not know that they are mortals. He also used the term ‘pare’ to quarrelsome ones to indicate that conflict makers are not considered by his as insiders of Sasana. The Buddha, in no uncertain terms, has affirmed that he was against conflicts and committed to peace. This characteristic of the Buddha was so well known that at the point when some kings were to about to fight for his relics, a Brahmin called Drona brought peace and understanding to them by reminding them of the Buddha’s commitment to peace. He said ‘Listen to me, Sirs; just allow me to utter one sentence. Our Master was a peace-person (santivādo).’ And that small reminder made everyone agree that there should not be war in relation to the relics of the Buddha.

There even were occasions when the Buddha was made to present his views about conflicts on request. One such enlightening dialogue is reported in the Sakkapāṇīha Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya. In that Sutta, Sakka, the lord of gods, informs the Buddha that all peoples wish to live without hate, harming, hostility or malignity, and in peace. In spite of this, he says, that they actually live in hate, harming one another, hostile and malign. Sakka asks the Buddha the reason why this is so. The Buddha’s reply traces the cause of conflict and hostility to the fetters of jealousy and avarice, thence to likes and dislikes, desire, and finally to what is called papañca, proliferation of greed, conceit and strong views, which may be taken as flawed perception. This analysis of the Buddha reveals the deeper psychological roots of conflicts. Even though conflicts find expression in various external ways the real deep roots are psychological. Elsewhere the Buddha has given a similar psychological explanation of disputes, quarrels and conflicts. There he has used the term ‘Saññā’ to mean subjective perception which can be wrong or
flawed. People create wrong ideologies, slogan oriented dogmatic thinking and consequentially get attached to conventional notions like cast, race, etc. as if they are absolutes and look at others with prejudice. These unrealistic views cause conflicts and disharmony among groups and even individuals. The Brahmins during the time of the Buddha provided good examples. When one is a member of a group, he is exposed to group ideologies and prone to grasp them strongly so that his value system will be conditioned by that environment. In the Buddhist analysis, this is explained as unconscious conditioning of our minds owing to exposure to them for a long time. Then without much analytical thinking people get provoked into conflicting scenarios.

The Buddha has also seen how people get into conflicts owing to craving, hatred and conceit. It is a general fact that the nature cannot meet the demands made by human greed. The Buddha has seen that sensual desires of men as insatiable. Even if everything in the world is achieved the greed of man is never satiated. Yet, as men have to engage in competition with equally greedy others – not only men but animals as well- to find satisfaction from the limited resources they die in dissatisfaction without reaching their target. In fact, it is not only the greed for things that make people aggressive but also their greed for power is seen as a strong factor causing conflicts among people. The Buddha highlights the ideas like ‘I have power’ (balavāmhi) and “I want power” (Balattho). This is, perhaps, the reason behind the UN statement that wars arise in the minds of people. Greed is especially destructive when it comes to hunger for political power. Buddhist literature abounds with stories depicting the insatiability of desire for power and wealth. The story of Maha Mandhātu, the King who wanted to become the sole ruler of the Universe is an eloquent example. The Buddha explains in Sutta Nipata how people, when one desire is fulfilled, generate another in unending sequence. Desire, it is said, grows like horns of a young bull.

The Buddha has also focused on conceit (māna) as leading to conflicts among people. They mostly pride their birth on a caste, race, country and even inheriting a particular language and religion as factors that make them unique. Some pride on their learning, skills, beauty and good looks etc. and look down upon others. This results in snobbish behaviour, ill-treatment, debate and violence. People are too proud to allow others to excel and wish to be on the top of the world at the expense of others. Accompanied with jealousy (macchariya), conceit makes people aggressively pursue power and wealth whole not allowing others to enjoy their due. Even some religious concepts may generate such disastrous attitudes in the minds of people. And all these are results of wrong perceptions.

However, Buddhism does not adopt the pessimistic view that human beings are hard-wired to fight. The Buddha has provided much insight for managing conflicts both theoretically and practically. The tracing of psychological reasons behind conflicts implies the possibility of creating a mindset of avoiding conflicts. Changing minds of beings is a very difficult process but not an impossible one. In fact, the whole of Buddhism is an enterprise to transform man from what he is to what he ought to be. Radhakrishnan, admiringly, says that “The greatness of the
Buddha lies in giving man confidence in his own capacity to reform himself, and showing that the human nature can be perfected. The aim of the Buddha was through these means to achieve the goal of a world free from conflict, suffering, and sorrow⁶. Aṅgulimala, the serial killer is an example of one who underwent a sudden change of heart. Usually however, there are no such short cuts, only a systematic, long-term programme of moral education.⁷ It is for such change in society that the Buddha gave his discourses and founded the Saṅgha.

The Buddha’s teaching is a message of peace and non-violence. It is not only a philosophy of life, but a doctrine of progressive reconstruction of society. Buddhism is a path of enlightenment aiming at the root of all conflicts. It is an answer for the problems which prevailed in the Buddha’s time in India. But the validity of his message is universal. Therefore, his philosophy of peace is relevant even to the problems of contemporary world. That is why Buddhists all over the world keep on meditating, “Let all being be happy, let all beings live without fear, let all beings enjoy peace and happiness, and be free from all sorrows and troubles”. Learning and practicing of the values of sharing, loving and equality amounts to creating a mindset conducive for living a conflict free life.

The Buddha created his Saṅgha to be an exemplary society where unity and peace prevail all the time. He used to advice Saṅgha to stay united and to refrain from having conflict. King Ajatasattu, when he visited Saṅgha for the first time after his break from the Devadatta group, wished that the peacefulness of Saṅgha could be imbibed in his son also. The Buddha did not wish to lead or live with a split Saṅgha and when he found, at one juncture, the monks were failing to resolve an argument in relation to a miner Vinaya rule, he left the crowd and spent a rainy season all alone in the forest.

The Buddha described himself as a reconciler of those at variance and an encourager of those already united, rejoicing in peace, loving peace, delighting in peace, speaking in favour of peace. In describing the Buddhist precept of refraining from pisunāvācā, words causing disharmony (telling what you heard from one to another to cause misunderstanding between the parties), the Buddha insists that one should, instead, try to make those who have broken their friendship friendly again (bhinnānaṃvāsandhātā). He added that the Buddhists should become lovers of unity (samaggaratā), and should be joyous over unity (samagganandī).

There are reports in the Tipiṭaka of several occasions that the Buddha functioned as a mediator in resolving conflicts. For instance, the Buddha personally intervened when Sākyans and Koliyans were about to enter into war over a dispute on the water of Rohini river. He pointed out to them that it was foolish and dreadful to destroy invaluable human life over a trivial matter. Moreover, when Vidūdabha went to massacre Sākyans, in spite of his own ill health, the Buddha intervened on three occasions to prevent the attack. And, two out of the three visits he is believed to have made to Sri Lanka were also for making peace between rival factions. In the ninth month of his enlightenment he is reported to have visited Sri Lanka for the first time to prevent two yaksa groups from fighting. His second visit
was in the fifth year of enlightenment and it was to pacify two *Naga* kings who were ready to fight over a jewelled seat.

How much the Buddha disliked war could be clearly seen in the prohibition he made against monks gossiping over wars. Such gossip was condemned as low and uncivilized discussions (*tiracchānakathā*). The monks were asked not to engage in such chatter. The Buddha’s condemnation of trading in weapons as a living for laymen also echoes his dislike of war. “One can clearly see here that Buddhism strongly opposed to any kind of war” observes Rahula, “when it lays down that trade in arms and lethal weapons is an evil and unjust means of livelihood.”

The **Buddha has used didactic stories in creating a non-conflicting mind set and conditioning people with it.** Thus, in one Jātaka story a lion who was challenged by a pig for a fight, realizing the strength of the evil craze of the enemy in claiming the victory and the ill-effects of fighting, declares: “My friend, enjoy victory. I admit defeat”. Stories like *Khantivādi-jātaka* are good examples of idealizing non-confrontational attitude. The Cakkavatti ideal presented in the *Cakkavattisihanāda-sutta* portrays a king who united the entire world without resorting to violence or armed war. The message he wanted to put across was that true glory and victory should be achieved neither by scourge, nor by weapon and force, nor by violence and aggressiveness, but through righteousness.

The **Buddha clearly explained that violent conquest engenders endless hate. The conquered live in misery, while the conqueror has generated hatred.** Neither the conqueror nor the conquered lives in peace since hatred is not over; instead it keeps on getting aggravated. When two parties get heated up in hate the result will be the disastrous for the both parties. When two dry sticks rub against each other the resulting fire will burn both the sticks. The same way when two human groups are in conflict the both parties will experience destruction. The Buddha says that hatred never ceases by hatred but ceases only by loving kindness. According to him, one should conquer enmity with amity, evil with good, meanness with charity, and falsehood with truth. The slayer gets a slayer in turn, the abuser an abuser, and the annoyer an annoyer. So the Buddha advises his followers to refrain from tit-for-tat action (*sarambha*). When one retains the thoughts like he abused me, hit me, defeated me or caused loss for me the hatred increases. One should never let such thought pervade one’s mind if he wishes to live happy. (*Dhammapada*) The Buddha strongly advocated non-violence and tolerance. Even when he was abused he did not get angry and remained calm. The Buddhist scripture has it “Having seen contention as a danger and harmony as peace, abide in unity and kindness; this is the teaching of the Buddha.”

The **roots of conflict are diagnosed, it is easy for people to cultivate peace within and without.** If hatred keeps generating more hatred only and if it is not possible to have any happiness in life when we are surrounded with enemies who wish to destroy us, the only way to avoid conflict and achieve peace of mind and society is to control our greed, hatred and conceit with the cultivation of good moral qualities. If a ruler, aggressive, greedy and hateful, wishes to engage in a course of conflict using all what he has to gain his personal interests even at the cost of others,
The inevitable consequences will be dispute, quarrel and warfare. The great root cause behind the rulers set against rulers, citizens against citizens, children against parents, brothers against brothers, friends against friends is Kāma (desire for sensual pleasures). ‘If the ruler would cease to fight and live in peace with his subjects and follows the principle of righteousness by conquering his selfishness how happily and peacefully would all his subjects live!’

The question might arise here whether it would be possible to live without conflicts and wars. Buddhism would not agree if somebody would say it is not possible. It should be encouraged, at least in principle. To encourage such an ideal, we can refer to a story presented in the *Samyutta-nikāya*. There it is said that Sakka, the lord of gods, who defeats his adversary Vepacitti, the Asura leader, in battle, does not retaliate even verbally when Vepacitti insults him in the presence of his subordinates. This is not because he is afraid or weak, but because, being a wise person, he knows that one who does not react in hate towards a hater wins a victory hard to win.

Palihawadana states: “That it is possible for individuals to achieve, and abide in, peace and sanity is, of course, the message of Buddhism.” And the fact that peace mentality could be ‘infectious’ in a positive manner is also implied in the Buddha’s teachings. On the other hand, the Buddha did not even pursue the noble doubt that arose in him once, as to whether it would be possible to run a state righteously, without killing, conquering, or creating grief to self and others. The *cakkavatti* ideal portrays the possibility of uniting many states under the banner of Dhamma, without firing a single arrow. However, Buddhism found it impossible, even under the best of circumstances, to visualize a state that functions without the backing of an army as it is essential for defensive purposes. It, however, is not to be misunderstood as an endorsement of war. Even after establishing Dharmavijaya, for instance, Ashoka maintained a powerful army, yet never thought of invading another province.

During the time of the Buddha, there were many conflicts between religions in India. The religious men were competing with each other to win supporters and pupils. The Buddha not only refrained from being a partner to that unpleasant situation but also set an example of living in harmony with other religionists by avoiding conflict. He, as a matter of fact, set himself as an example of peaceful coexistence. He admired the positive points of other religions. For instance, he praised Mahavira’s acceptance of Kamma as a strength in his religion. His communication was exemplary since it avoided unnecessary conflict with others. Sometimes, when a person representing another religion raised a conflict-prone issue the Buddha would state: “About these things there is no agreement. Put them aside. Let us discuss about the things we can agree on.” And he was so broad minded even to instruct his followers to accept any good thing as Buddhism. The modern theory of Nonviolent Communication developed by Dr. Marshal Rosenberg has been, according to some scholars, closely influenced by the Buddhist notions.

He was kind enough to give due respect to other religionists when they became his guests. Once when a group of ascetics met the Buddha and asked him to deliver a sermon for them, the Buddha said “Better still, tell me about your teachings.” The
surprised ascetics commented “It is wonderful, truly marvelous! How great is the Samana Gotama in that he will hold back his own views and invite others to explain theirs!”22 When someone asked a meaningful question leading to fruitful discussion the Buddha never failed to praise him. Bhadda, who asked such a question, was praised thus: “Well said, well said. Friend Bhadda, your understanding is excellent. Your wisdom is welcome.”23 He would, very often after his midday meal, visit monasteries of other religions. They are reported to have welcomed him in great admiration and even provided him with audience to deliver sermons. When a prominent follower of another religion expressed his desire of becoming a follower of the Buddha he asked to think again of their decision. Thus, the Buddhism seems to have avoided igniting conflicts as much as possible.

However, attempting to avoid conflict in itself is not sufficient as it is inevitable that conflicts of various nature are bound to arise in society. One might expect, with such glowing record of tolerance and peace psychology, the Buddha to apply his theory to resolve real conflicts. As a matter of fact, the Buddha was approached by some people to get his assistance to mediate in their conflicts. Two young Brahmins called Tarukkha and Pokharasati, once approached Buddha to resolve a conflict on their religion. And the Buddha resolved their issue by convincing what was right after a systematic and sober discussion. This was a good example of successful mediation where the both parties agreed with the conclusion.

The Buddha has provided practical wisdom in resolving socio-political and economic conflicts in some discourses. The Kutadanta Sutta of Digha Nikaya presents, rather mythologically in form, how a conflict between the state and people became aggravated owing to short-sightedness of advisors was resolved by applying a rational approach. It speaks of a king whose kingdom was ravaged by the riots of poor people. The king is advised by his Brahmin adviser that this situation will not be solved by executions, imprisonments or other repressive measures, for those who survive will continue to cause problems as the reason why they are against the government is not addressed. He gives the alternative of economic planning which involves granting grain and fodder to those who cultivate crops and keep cattle; granting capital to traders; and giving proper living wages to those in government service. Thus, in resolving of conflicts which are socio-political in nature, it is advised that attending to the root of the problem is necessary.

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\[\text{2} \text{Suttanipāta, 862 -877} \]
\[\text{3} \text{Suttanipāta, Vāsetṭhasutta} \]
\[\text{4} \text{A.I.201} \]
\[\text{5} \text{Jayatilleke, K.N., Dhamma Man and Law, p.52} \]
\[\text{6} \text{Encyclopedia of Buddhism, Vol. 8, 1996 p, 386} \]
\[\text{7} \text{Palihavadana, Mahinda “Theravada perspective on Causation and Resolution of Conflicts” Journal of Buddhist Ethics Vol.10, 2003} \]
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11 D.III.59
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13 Dhammapada. Na hi verenaṃvānaṃsannadhadhakudacanaṃ
14 S.I.85
15 Cariyāpiṭaka 3.15.13
16 Jātaka Vi.214
17 S.I.221
19 D.II.124
21 Jason Little, “Buddhism and Nonviolent Communication” Shambala Times 31 January 2009
22 D.III.40
23 S.V.15
How Do People Get Motivated? A Critical Evaluation from a Buddhist Perspective

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How Do People Get Motivated? A Critical Evaluation from a Buddhist Perspective

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Motivation is the process that initiates, guides, and maintains goal-oriented behaviors of human beings and animals. Motivation is what causes us to act in different situations. Motivation covers three aspects of behavior: states that motivate behavior, behavior motivated by these states and the goals of such behavior (Silva, 1979). The Buddha's theory of human motivation is based on certain key factors shared by all human beings and is primarily concerned with the nature of human dissatisfaction (dukkha) and how to dispel it. Buddhism also talks about the good and bad side of human motivation.

Some behaviors that human beings display as the result of motivation may be problematic. As human beings, from the day we are born into this world until the time of death, we face many problems and life itself has become a problem that should be solved very carefully. Buddhism is always ready to discuss and analyze the problems of human beings. Here, the Buddhist theory of motivation is very important. As do the western psychological theories of motivation, the Buddhist theory of motivation clearly explains and analyzes how problems arise, what the causes of those problems are, what the result of those problems are, etc.

As there are theories of motivation in psychology presented by various psychologists, in Buddhism there is a teaching concerning motivation. The Buddhist theory of motivation is very important as Buddhism teaches this theory of motivation to answer the problems that human beings face. The main aim of Buddhism is to find solutions for the problems that are connected with human beings and society (Rahula, 1978). Buddhism accepts that the whole world is full of problems and it has become a mess. The Saṃyutta Nikāya presents the problematic situation of the world thus:

“Inside is also problematic. Outside is also problematic. So, Ven. Sir who solves this problem?”

The main teachings of Buddhism such as the Four Noble Truths (cattāri ariya saccāni), Dependent Co-arising (paṭicca samuppāda) etc., clearly explain how the problems of humans arise and how those problems are solved. According to Buddhism, there are two main types of problems (Thilakaratna, 2008). They are internal and external. Craving and the wrong vision are the causes for internal problems and there are many other reasons for external problems.

Today, we come across various problems of youth, economic problems, marriage problems, family problems, social and cultural problems, etc. Actually, Buddhism considers all these social problems as basic or primary problems and analyzes and emphasizes accordingly. According to Buddhism a problem arises because of primary human qualities or needs rather than because of the social background and finds correct solutions starting at this point.
Today, the world is developing with science and technology. Though science and technology try to facilitate human life, when we clearly observe the situation, we can understand that science and technology are creating problems for human life and society (Dhammadassi, 2008). Though we have very developed scientific and technological equipment, day by day, human beings suffer a lot. Especially, among the youth a lot of problems developed. Poverty, unemployment, stress, anger, various diseases and many other physiological and psychological problems have developed. Many problems have arisen connected with matters of religion, race, and nation, etc. Buddhism as a profound doctrine has covered all sides of human life and is also aware of human problems and always ready to answer those problems.

As Thouless (2000) mentions, Buddhism is a fundamental method of psychotherapy which is concerned with relief from emotional burdens, not only for the sake of this life, but also for the sake of future lives (p. 5). When we deeply observe the doctrine of Buddhism, we can see that if we solve basic human problems we can solve those social problems. The Buddhist theory of motivation tries to analyze and answer both those human and social problems.

In Psychology, motivation is considered as the activation of goal oriented behavior (Bindra, 1959). Motives are hypothetical states that activate behavior, propelling one towards goals and incentives which are also inferred from behavior (Rathus, 2008). In psychology, we speak about physiological and psychological needs. Physiological needs include oxygen, food, drink, pain avoidance, proper transpiration, and elimination of waste products for our survival. The Buddha in the “Sabbāsava Sutta and Asamaya Samaya Sutta” clearly mentions these motives. The psychological needs include needs for achievement, power, self-esteem, social approval and belongings etc. The “Śīla Sutta” of the Ānuttara Nikāya talks about this matter. The psychological and physiological needs give rise to drives. A drive is a condition of arousal in an organism that is associated with a need (Lorand, 2000). Depletion of food gives rise to hunger and depletion of liquids gives rise to the thirst drive. Psychological needs for approval, achievement and belonging give rise to drives. The motivation concept in psychology also talks about an incentive which can be an object, person or situation perceived as being capable of satisfying a need. When considering motivation in psychology, instincts are considered as an inherited disposition to activate specific behavior patterns attempt to reach certain goals. The goals of motivation can be either positive or negative and positive goals are those that people try to gain or acquire while negative goals are what people try to avoid (Silva, 1979).

According to Prof. Silva (1970), the Buddhist psychology of motivation is directly concerned with the factors that lead to human unrest, tension, and general anxiety and suffering (p. 35). The motivation in Buddhism focuses on finding the roots of unrest and shows the path to happiness. Therefore, the Buddhist theory of motivation is also therapeutic.

The Buddhist theory of motivation presents four types of major motives. The Ānuttara Nikāya mentions those four major motives thus.
1. *Jivitukāma* - The motivation to live the life.
2. *Amaritukāma* - The motivation to avoid death and live forever (to be mortal).
4. *Dukkhsapatikkūla* - The motivation for avoidance of suffering and discomfort²

According to Buddhism, these four types of motives are intrinsically rooted in human beings. According to the Majjhima Nikāya, these four motives are the foundation for all sorts of other behaviors (p. 656). These motives are considered as basic or primary.

In the same way, Buddhism talks about a secondary type of motivation. This secondary type of motivation creates a great effect on the behavior of human beings, especially resulting in wrong behavior. This secondary type of motivation has three components which is called “Mūla”, which means “root, cause, reason”, etc. These Mūla, or roots, can be wholesome (Kusala Mūla) or unwholesome (Akusala Mūla). The three unwholesome motives are:

1. *Lobha* - Greed creates positive approach desires.
2. *Dosa* - Hatred creates avoidance desires.
3. *Moha* - Delusion creates confusion in the mind (Sabbāsava Sutta)

The motivation of Lobha, or greed, motivates the person to get something that the person desires and the motive of Dosa, or hatred, motivates a person to avoid or detach from something, while the motive of Moha, or delusion, creates a messy, confused and wrong understanding about something.

In the same way, in some other Buddhist discourses these three main motives are collectively called “Tanhā” or craving. The simple meaning of “Tanhā”, or craving, is thirst. And actually, this Tanhā or craving is the motive that creates the powerful necessity to obtain something in the mind of an individual. This craving also has three components or three types as follows.

1. *Kama Tanhā* - Craving or desire for sensuous gratification.
2. *Bhava Tanhā* - Craving for self-preservation
3. *Vibhava Tanhā* - Craving or drive for annihilation and aggressive tendencies (Dhamma Cakkappavattana Sutta)

According to the Buddhist analysis of motivation, these Akusala Mūla and three types of craving lead or direct the individual to any type of behavior. As there exist three Akusala Mūla or unwholesome roots, in the same way, there exist three wholesome roots or three Kusala Mūla. They are:

1. *Alobha* - Non-greed
2. *Adosa* - Non-hatred
3. *Amoha* - Wisdom (Nidāna Sutta)
These Kusala Mūlas or wholesome roots direct the person towards good behavior.

As Buddhism teaches, both these wholesome and unwholesome roots of motivation can be seen within the individual and according to the power of those motives, the individual acts goodly or badly. Actually, as Buddhism teaches, an individual’s unwholesome motives are very much more powerful than wholesome motives, but they can be controlled or manipulated (Nidāna Sutta). Therefore, according to the Buddhist theory of motivation, the above mentioned four types of motives and secondary types of motivation are very important.

The western psychological theories of motivation tell that when a person tries to fulfill his or her needs he or she follows a hierarchy or a procedure step by step. The psychologist Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs is a fine example. In the same way, the Buddha teaches that, when a person tries to fulfill his or her needs, he follows a procedure step by step. As the “Pattakamma Sutta” of the Anguttara Nikāya describes when fulfilling a wish an individual,

1. First- earning wealth righteously
2. Second- getting social fame and reputation.
3. Third- living for a long time with relatives and friends.

So, according to the Buddhist theory of motivation, an individual fulfills his or her needs step by step according to the above-mentioned procedure. In the same way, motivation theory in Buddhism talks about three persons

1. Rāga Carita - a person who is much greedy.
2. Dosa Carita - a person who has much hatred.
3. Moha Carita - a person who is very ignorant (Nidāna Sutta)

In the “Saddhā Sutta,” it talks about two persons called Saddhānusari and Dhammānusari who motivate towards confidence, or Saddhā, and towards the Buddhist doctrine respectively.

Thus, the Buddhist theory of motivation examines the good and bad side of human motivation and it emphasizes the necessity of wholesome motivation to attain Nibbana. Further, it is obvious that the concepts and teachings taught in the Buddhist theory of motivation are very practical and it can be applied to any type of problems that we face in our day today activities.

References


**Endnotes**

1 “Anto jatā bahi jatā- jatāya jatitā pajā Taṃ taṃ gotama pucchāmi- ko imaṃ vijataye jaṭam.” p. 578

2 AN. p. 456