

BUDDHISM & MODERN WORLD

Bhikkhu Dr Beligalle Dhammajoti

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About The Author

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From the formative years Bhante as a Buddhist monk he committed himself to the pursuit of educational excellence. To this end he himself has scaled the ladder of education from a BA Special (1981) and a MA (1986) in Buddhist Studies from the University of Peradeniya Sri Lanka to a Ph.D in Philosophy and Religion (1994-1997) from the University of Varanasi India. His thesis for his Ph.D was “ A critical study of Buddhist Economic Philosophy as expounded in the Pali Canonical Texts and Commentaries.”

Bhante has served in various capacities in teaching the Dhamma at the tertiary level at Universities in Sri Lanka as Senior Lecturer. Bhante has also served as Visiting Lecturer at the Buddhist and Pali College at Mangala Vihara Singapore a branch campus of the Buddhist and Pali University of Sri Lanka.

Bhante has also authored many books. Amongst them 'Buddhist Economic Philosophy', 'Articles on Buddhist Culture I & II', 'Modern Society and Buddhist Spirituality' and 'Rains Retreat and Kathina Ceremony'.

FOREWORD

The society in which we live today is highly competitive, consumerist and money-centered. Man is blind by desires and is cultivating pleasure-seeking attitudes. His machine-like lifestyle does not allow him to improve his spiritual matters. Society has been a mad house with sense-lacking people who are running after their own misguided concepts. Therefore, a drastic but ethical change is necessary to turn our society into a more suitable place for peaceful living.

Many do not see the relevance of Buddhist philosophy to day-to-day life and what it has to offer to us as a practical solution. Many think that Buddhism is just Nibbana-oriented religion. Needless to say that it is a misconception.

This book addresses some basic questions people frequently ask about Buddhism. Is Buddhism to be accepted with blind faith? Is it like other world religions? What is the relevance of Buddhism for the modern world? Does Buddhism suggest any socio-economic and political philosophy? Is it acceptable to modern scientific mind?

During my short stay in Buddhist Maha Vihara, Brickfields, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, I visited Kinrara Metta Buddhist Society (KMBS) Puchong, Selangor and there Sister Julie Tan (Hon. Secretary – KMBS) requested that I write a book on Buddhism for Publication and this is a result of her motivational request.

And KMBS needs to dedicate this book for the Spirituality and ecclesiastical service of Ven. B. Sri Saranankara, Chief Judicial Sangha Nayaka of Malaysia a token of their deep reverence for him. It is a privilege for me to join with them to pay gratitude to a Great Chief Monk who has a compassionate heart.

First and foremost, I am thankful to Sister Julie Tan and other members of KMBS for their effort to publish this book. My thanks are also to Ven. K Sri Dhammaratana, Chief Sangha Nayaka of Malaysia, Ven. K Siridhamma and the members of Buddhist Maha Vihara, Kuala Lumpur for their cooperation.

May my late revered teacher, Abhidhammika Beligalle Sri Dhammadhara Nayaka Thero share these meritorious energies and attain Nibbana!

May the power of Dhamma bless you!

May all beings be well and happy!

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1. The Concept of “Attha” and Buddhist Economic Philosophy

The Pāli term “*attha*” (‘*artha*’ in Sanskrit) has many meanings, viz., profit, advantage, prosperity, welfare, well-being, and success. Generally speaking, the word ‘*attha*’ as success relates to the various aspects of man’s social and economic development -- such as the economy, politics, education, health, law, and morality of society. It refers to economic development and social progress due to the harmonious unification of all the above factors and it contributes to the peaceful co-existence and prosperity of a people.

Another term pertaining to the socio-economic progress of man is found in our Pāli canonical texts, that is, “*atthacariya*,” which means useful behavior, profitable behavior, and socio-economic environment of man. “*Atthacariya*” is, according to the *Sigalovada Sutta*, one of the four characteristics of sympathy (*sangaha vatthus*).

The four characteristics of sympathy are:

<i>Dāna</i>	- charity, generosity
<i>Peyyavajja</i>	- kind speech
<i>Atthacariya</i>	- useful economic behavior
<i>Samanatatta</i>	- feeling of common good (<i>sensus communis</i>).

These four benevolent practices are very necessary for the survival of a just society. These are, according to the *Sigalovada Sutta*, like the lynchpin of a moving carriage and therefore *Atthacariya*, or useful economic behavior may be considered to be a very significant characteristic of a well organized society.

B.G. Gokhale emphatically points out the significance of the term “*attha*” and says, “It is also used to imply economic or worldly gain and a philosophy of welfare in the world.” The Jātaka literature declares that there are six means or “doors” *dvara* to “*Attha*,” namely, good health, virtuousness, seeking the advice of elders, learning scriptures, conforming to truth, and non-attachment. It is very clear that the Jātaka stories encourage the seeking of *attha* through morality, teaching how to behave for socio-economic benefit.

From very early times, “*artha*” (Sanskrit) has been regarded as one of the four Brahmanical ideals (*purusharthas*), the other three being *kāma* (gratification of desire), *dharma* (discharge of duty), and *moksha* (final emancipation). In this connection, *artha* is understood to stand for material prosperity and well-being, particularly wealth. The Sanskrit term *artha* has many meanings, *viz.*, advantage, utility, wealth, substance, property, use, opulence and money. In the great Indian epic *Mahabhārata*, it is mentioned as one of the aims of the state. The promotion of *artha* was to encourage trade, industry, and agriculture by developing natural resources, by bringing fresh land under cultivation, by building new dams and new canals to make agriculture independent of

rain, and by encouraging extensive and systematic working of mines.

It seems that there is an inter-relatedness between *attha* and *dhamma* (material well-being and righteousness). Without *attha*, *dhamma* cannot exist; without *dhamma*, *attha* is useless and destructive to society. *Attha* without *dhamma* leads to the fear of losing wealth, and leads to envy, pride, arrogance, and misuse of wealth, resulting in neglect and abuse of others, all of which in turn result in conflict and aggression. *Dhamma* without *attha* produces individuals who cannot live up to and propagate ideals of Dhamma due to ill health, worry, helplessness, and lack of resources. In short, *attha* with *dhamma* produces stability and security in society.

It is to be noted here that in the Jātaka stories, we find that the major function of the ministers is to instruct the king in *attha* (material well-being) and *dhamma* (righteousness) which together cover the entire spectrum of law and royal duties (*atthena dhammena anusasati*). Therefore, it is very clear that the Pāli term *attha* stands for the economic and social welfare of human beings.

Fundamental Buddhist teachings may be divided into two parts, *viz.*,

1. Basic Buddhist teachings – (*i.e.*, Four Noble Truths, Kamma, Nibbana, Theory of Causality, Rebirth, etc.)

2. Common secondary teachings – (*i.e.*, Socio-economic Philosophy, Political Philosophy, etc.)

Basic philosophical concepts pertain to the reality of man and his worldly and transcendental life, whereas secondary teachings mainly belong to the worldly life of man and society. It has to be mentioned here that secondary teachings pertaining to the social, economic, and political philosophy are scattered throughout the Pāli Canonical texts and their Commentaries.

It is true that there is no separate teaching of economics or politics among the Buddhist Canonical texts. But the socio-economic teachings that are found in the Buddhist Suttas bear eternal values. The Greek philosopher **Plato** wrote *Republic* and the ancient Indian political advisor **Kautilya** wrote *Arthashastra*. Plato's *Republic* concerns only the contemporary social conditions of Greece. Kautilya's *arthashastra* is lacking in ethical and spiritual values. But Buddhist socio-economic philosophy is timeless and has no boundaries. It is mainly a socio-economic system that is founded on ethical and spiritual philosophy. If we examine the Buddhist Canon carefully, we find that there are ethical teachings which are pertaining to both micro-economics and macro-economics, but it must be mentioned here that Buddhist socio-economic teachings are given in their embryonic form.

Presenting a paper on Economics, Professor Glen Alexandrin says: "Today it seems, ethics is ignored and accounting is promoted." When ethics are ignored, there

are no humanitarian values. Then economics becomes a lopsided science that cannot be applied to modern man's problems. Accounting does not give us a correct picture of political or socio-economic conditions, poverty or human feelings. According to traditional analysis, economics is a science of wealth, distribution and exchange. It gives priority to wealth, but it ignores the moral relationship between human beings and wealth. "Buddhist economics is an effort to return human values to economic activity in pursuit of maximum long-run benefit to society," says Professor Alexandrin. When we lay our emphasis on ethical factors, Buddhist values are more important regarding socio-economic problems. Here, Buddhist economics can inject Buddha-element and dhamma-element into traditional economics, econometrics, and planning techniques. Further, Professor Glen Alexandrin says, "We call our new version of economics 'Buddhist' because this adjective, as well as Buddhism itself, can be seen as universal."

E.F. Schumacher admires the ethical values of Buddhist Economics thus: "The keynote of Buddhist Economics . . . is simplicity and non-violence. From an economist's point of view, the marvel of the Buddhist way of life is the utter rationality of its pattern – amazingly small means leading to extraordinary satisfactory results."

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2. **Buddhism for Modern Competitive Society**

Now humans are living in the 21st century, and the society in this century is totally different from the ancient world. Modern man is rapidly reaping the good and bad results of his scientific progress. We are not entitled to say that ancient man is better than modern man, but it seems that modern man is going to face the dangers of war-games and many socio-economic and other political problems. Needless to say, the world in which we live today is highly complicated and confused with many tangles (*jatas*). Ancient man had only to cope with natural disasters and sudden terrible misfortunes such as a great flood, fire, or earthquake. But modern man is facing the danger of extinction due to his own evil and immoral actions. Certain political philosophers and well-known scientists are of the opinion that the whole world could certainly be affected by a nuclear war or some other kind of terrible war.

Day by day, hundreds and hundreds of previously unheard problems and new troubles arise. To name a few, depression, drug-related crimes, environmental pollution, unemployment, obesity, teen suicide, gang violence, neglect of aged parents, workaholism, overpopulation, large-scale terrorism, and revolutionary activity of certain groups are before us. In brief, the whole human society is in a state of chaos. Can this chaotic situation be remedied or discontinued soon? Who is there to give a proper

remedy or guidance to avoid these man-made problems? People who are blinded by desire and money have no compassion for this troubled situation. Is it, therefore, not incorrect to say that modern man is digging his own grave at a frantic rate?

Today our society is pleasure-seeking (*Kāmagavesi*), money-centered, and highly competitive. Is this the proper way to lead a successful life with a peaceful mind? Man seeks his own happiness through competition, but he never finds it there. He is misguided, misdirected, and the real nature of his mind is exploited. He is taught to cultivate desire-seeking attitudes and actions. Competition gives birth to a selfish mind, unhappiness and lack of satisfaction (*attito*). It is the very nature of competition. As a result, people tend to be demanding, untrustworthy, slanderous, suspicious, jealous, and frustrated when desires are not fulfilled, so there are very few truly harmonious social relations (*sammā-samaggi*) among human beings. Therefore, today we are in urgent need of a considerable change of human attitudes. What is the answer for this unhappiness and lack of satisfaction? Is there any ethical or religious thought or scientific thinking which is capable of bringing peace and cooperation to this confused society of our post-industrial world?

Albert Einstein, who is considered the father of modern science, gives the answer thus:

If there is any religion which is acceptable to modern scientific mind, it is Buddhism. It is capable of bringing

peace, prosperity, and happiness into this profoundly disturbed world.

It is high time for us to lay special emphasis on this scientist's words. Gaining a deep knowledge and understanding about many religions, Einstein points out the proper religion which can be acceptable to modern scientific thinking.

Buddhism discarded all mythical views, and it paved the way for tearing the mythical curtain of dogmatic views of the time of the Buddha. It teaches us to be open-minded and to give up preconceived ideas and prejudices. Buddhism is not a secret doctrine; it is open to all human beings alike. It is neither a theistic religion nor is it really a religion in the true sense of the term "religion."

There is no concept of a supernatural God in early Buddhism, and it is not a system of devotional faith (*bhakti*). Buddhism does not demand blind faith from its followers, but it teaches us to inquire, experience, and derive confidence (*saddhā*) from the experience. *Saddhā* is two-fold:

1. *amulikā saddhā* - blind faith based on scripture, tradition or authority
2. *ākāravati saddhā* - confidence based on inquiry.

Buddhist followers are advised to cultivate *ākāravati saddhā* whereas *amulikā saddhā*, which may lead us to be blind to the vision of knowledge and insight, is to be

abandoned. The *Kalama Sutta* of the *Anguttara Nikaya* points out the way to get the correct knowledge of what is wholesome (*kusala*) and what is unwholesome (*akusala*), and it also teaches us the way of grasping reality. The *Kalama Sutta* can easily be considered to be an embryonic form of scientific thinking.

What is the Buddhist attitude to the problems of modern man? Does it propose any way of finding an answer to these continual hardships? Before going on to give solutions to various problems of this modern industrial man, Buddhism advises us to scrutinize the real cause of all the problems. It says that all of the problems of human beings arise as a consequence of man's greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*).

Man abuses world resources and produces pernicious nuclear weapons. Why does he produce inter-continental atomic missiles and laser bombs? Why are there supersonic fighters? These are the results of man's greed and hatred. Therefore, is it not untrue to say that over the entire world today, there spreads an invisible umbrella – the umbrella of nuclear terror? **Roger L. Shinn**, the author of *Tangled World* says that any city on any continent can disappear instantaneously in a mushroom cloud.

Today, man is not spiritually intelligent enough to understand humanity and the sacredness of humanity because of his deep involvement in commercial enterprises. And he cannot fully understand the reason why he is disgusted with his fellow man – hating his own

species. In accordance with the exhortations of the *Vasettha Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikaya*, we may come to the following conclusion unquestionably:

There is one race in the world, that is the human race.
There is one caste in the world, that is the human caste.

Although human beings have certain wrong views, ideas and assumptions regarding race and caste distinctions, they have to accept that all human beings are equal before the moral law (*Dhamma*). Neglect of moral law means the deterioration and destruction of everything. It is very clear that war-games are targeted at the destruction of man's own species and again it is due to the lack of understanding of *Dhamma*.

In the *Dhammapada* we find the most fitting admonition for war-like tendency and hatred of man thus:

Hatred is never appeased through hatred in this world.
It is appeased only by loving-kindness.
This is an eternal law.

*Nahi verena verani – sammantidha kudaccanam
averena ca sammanti – esa dhammo sanantano.*

We should have a motherly affection toward other humans and non-humans. “As a mother at the risk of her own life watches over her own child, her only child, so also let everyone cultivate a boundless compassion toward all beings. It is this attitude that all political leaders of the modern world should cultivate irrespective of their “isms”

or ideologies, whether it is Communism, Socialism, Marxism, or Democracy.

Mind is very significant, for it is the forerunner of all actions. Therefore, compassion and loving-kindness for *all* fellow citizens – all those of different views, preferences, habits, race, religion, social status, moral character, etc. – are badly needed today.

Supersonic fighters and inter-continental atomic missiles do not operate themselves. It is man who operates them. Who are the people that give orders to operate them? It is political leaders who issue orders and make them operate. They also have hearts and minds that can be changed and it is not impossible to do so. The problem is that they do not personally see their own fellow human brothers suffering in the battlefields. They see only the statistics and the success of their ideologies being imposed on others, and not the suffering people. Statistics do not lament. Statistics do not bleed. Political leaders think that their own opinions are correct and that they justify waging war.

The Emperor Ashoka of India saw for himself the suffering wrung at the Kalinga battlefield, which changed his mind. He gave up winning territories by battle and embraced Buddhist doctrine. After that, his ideology was the *Dhamma* (righteousness). Therefore, it has been clearly proven that through Buddhist teachings peace could be achieved and that it is not a mere theory.

Now there are many other man-made problems to be solved in this post-industrial era. Many of them are related to the resources of the earth. Air pollution, water pollution, land pollution, deforestation, overgrazing, over-fishing, overuse of pesticides, over-urbanization, and over-industrialization are some of them. Man violates his own environment irrespective of the law of nature or *Dhamma*. This is the result of the gap between scientific knowledge and ethical understanding. Knowledge without ethical foundation is blind. It generates harmful consequences to any kind of society. Therefore, ethical understanding is the most important factor here. Buddhism would say that we should cultivate friendly thinking and a sacred attitude toward our environment. Nature fosters all human beings and therefore it can easily be considered to be the sacred mother of the human race.

This concept was exemplified by the Buddha's own actions. During the second week after attaining Enlightenment, the Buddha silently taught a great moral lesson to human beings. To express his profound gratitude to the Bodhi tree (*ficus religiosa*) that sheltered him during his endeavor for Enlightenment, he sat down at a certain distance gazing at the tree with motionless eyes for one whole week. This is called "*animisalocana puja*" with which Buddha taught us by his example that nature should be well respected, and it further emphasizes that nature deserves a friendly attitude and profound gratitude from humans.

Malnutrition, poverty, unemployment, poverty-related crimes, poverty-related diseases, and other chronic socio-

economic problems, are the results of misguided knowledge and desire (*tanha*) of man. Mal-administration causes malnutrition and poverty. Social crimes and certain diseases are related to poverty. These chronic social problems, as well as the more recent social problems that have arisen in the past 50 years, are caused by greed and delusion (*lobha* and *moha*). In other words, man's extreme selfishness is responsible for these problems.

It seems that the solution rests with the changing of hearts of human beings – there is no other way. The heart is the seat of feelings and strong emotions. Anger and ill-will can be cooled down by calmness of heart (*hadayassa santi*). Buddhism, as an ethical philosophy, advocates the practice of meditation. Buddhist meditation enables the individual to gain calmness of heart, control of emotions, control of the senses and thus control of the desires, and eventually leads to insight (*vipassanā*), spiritual wisdom (*pañña*) and eradication of delusion. Therefore, Buddhist meditation is capable of bringing a solution to almost all of the problems and tangles of modern man (see Appendices ii and iii for examples of Buddhist meditations).

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3. Restless Society and Restrained Mind

Today, our society is restless and nowhere do we find real peace. There are many people who spend restless nights and they show signs of impatience and agitation in their daily life. The restless waves can be found in their mind and those mind-waves generate restless behavior – seeking some sort of satisfaction from for example, entertainment, shopping snacking, gossiping, driving around or taking alcohol or drugs. They do not find enough time to pay attention to their spirituality. In this restless society we clearly find that many are running after money and material happiness. There are many who are greedy-natured and angry-natured. Why? No mental peace or inner tranquility. Millions of human beings talk of world peace but they never focus their attention on their own tranquility.

Every society is full of socio-economic and political problems. If we scrutinize all these problems very honestly then we can come to a conclusion that they arise because of wrong thinking and unethical behavior or human beings. Millions of educated people discuss these problems and try to avoid and solve them. Before we try to solve the problems of our outer world, it is our utmost responsibility to fully understand our own mind, its nature, its cankers, taints, intoxicants, corruptions and restless waves. Because it is these intoxicated and corrupted

mind-waves that generate a restless man and restless society.

Many are ready to criticize, antagonize, fight and defeat others but are not ready to admit their own faults and thereby sympathize with and tolerate others. Attachment to the ego-belief is one of the impurities of the restless mind and the guiding force behind many wars. One of the many causes for the war-like situation is dogmatic views of certain groups. They think that their religion, their way, is the truth and everything else is false. This inhuman thinking creates tension in society and it paves the way for complete destruction of other humans and their priceless monuments. Values of harmlessness or non-violence (*avihimsa* or *ahimsa*) are not emphasized in this restless society.

The first disciplinary rule enjoined by the Buddha for our human society is abstaining from taking life of sentient beings. Which includes animals and insects. Why is that? It is the basic precept for survival and security of all humans and all other beings. It encourages respect for all life, tolerance, kindness and compassion. It also maintains a healthy environment, allowing nature to keep the balance eco-system. Preventive rather than destructive methods can be used to avoid bodily harm or property damage from other beings. We can evaluate for ourselves whether this rule is good or bad for society.

When the majority of members in any society are ill-mannered (*muttacārins*), then that society is not in a position to expect progress. Even material development in

no way can be continued without morality. Therefore, the major problem is the failure to uphold ethics (*ācāra-vipatti*).

Deforestation, water-pollution, land pollution, sound pollution, over-urbanization, war-targeted games, poverty, poverty-related crimes and all other socio-economic and political problems arise due to the failure to uphold ethics. In other words, they arise because of uncultivated minds. Therefore, cultivation of the mind is very necessary and it must be given the highest priority. To cultivate the mind and thus for ethical progress in our society, Buddhism recommends meditation. It is through meditation that we can visualize the real nature of our inner mind, its impurities and the outer world. Then only are we capable of having a proper understanding of who we are, why we were born, what is the meaning of our short life and what we should do.

Zen Buddhism

There is a special tradition of Buddhism which emphasizes meditation more than any other religious sect, that is **Zen** (Chan or *Dhyāna*). Zen Buddhism advocates cultivation of our mind and to “live like a flower” - having a joyful appearance, spreading joy and serenity, having the fragrance of morality, offering the pollen of service to society, with the understanding of the self as impermanent. It shows us the way to safeguard our mind from outer impurities (*kilesas*).

Zen is a philosophy and not a system founded upon logic and analysis. Zen is a focus on the whole mind. Zen has nothing to teach is. It has no set doctrines. There are no sacred books in Zen. Zen merely points the way. It has no God to worship. Zen has no concept of soul. Zen tradition believes in man's inner purity and goodness. Mind is the fundamental object of Zen.

Zen emphasizes the attainment of freedom, that is, freedom from all unnatural encumbrances. When this Zen is understood, absolute peace of mind is attained. Zen is explained in very interesting words:

**Zen is the ocean, Zen is the air,
Zen is the mountain,
Zen is thunder and lightning,
Zen is the Spring flower,
Zen is the summer heat,
Zen is the winter snow,
Zen is the man**

This means that Zen is reality, Zen is nature and Zen can be understood by perceiving nature.

Bhikkhu Bodhidharma, a Zen teacher, says:

Zen has nothing to do with letters, words or sutras. It is like unlocking the door to a treasury. When the entrance is once gained, every object coming into view is yours.

Once, a disciple came to Bhikkhu Bodhidharma and asked a question and Bhikkhu Bodhidharma gave a clear answer thus:

Disciple : I came here to seek the truth of Buddhism.

Bodhidharma : Why do you seek such a thing here?
Why do you wonder about, neglecting your own precious treasure at home? I have nothing to give you and what truth of Buddhism do you desire to find in my monastery? There is nothing, absolutely nothing.

Here, Bodhidharma emphasizes the significance of mind by referring to words, “precious treasure at home.” A dialogue between Zen teacher and a pupil on mindfulness runs as follows:

Teacher : Do you ever make any effort to get disciplined in the truth?

Pupil : Yes, I do.

Teacher : How do you exercise yourself?

Pupil : When I am hungry I eat; when tired I sleep.

Teacher : That is what everybody does. Can they be said to be exercising in the same way as you do?

Pupil : No

Teacher : Why not?

Pupil : Because when they eat they do not eat but are thinking of various things thereby allowing themselves to be disturbed; when they sleep they do not sleep but dream a thousand and one things. That is why they are not like myself.

In accordance with the sayings of Zen, the human heart has two aspects, viz.:

- ◆ The pure heart
- ◆ The impure heart

Heart is one but there are two ways that it works. Pure heart is somewhat similar to Buddha-heart. But the impure heart gives us no peace from morning until night; that is the passion-ridden heart. It disturbs us every day. It leads men astray. It tries to destroy our spirituality. It advises us to do unethical things. It is the easiest way to woeful states. And the impure-hearted ones have to suffer before their death.

The pure heart gives us peace from morning until night. It is the compassionate heart. It helps us to “live like a flower.” It tries to destroy evil tendencies and cankers. It helps us to cultivate good quantities. It advises us to do ethical things. It is the proper way to everlasting happiness. The pure-hearted ones do not gloom over anything and they can even be happy just before death.

Mind is so difficult to guard and control. It is always agitated. It is also very wonderful. It tries to seize

whatever it desires. Therefore, it is so difficult to subdue. It is extremely subtle. It has no form. It wanders far and alone. But when there is no mind then our body would be a useless log. If we can tame the mind then it will bring happiness. A guarded mind gives no troubles. An ill-directed mind will cause injuries to our consciousness and a well-directed mind will give us everlasting happiness.

Average human beings do both good things and bad things. Whatever we do whether it is good or bad, it spontaneously is recorded in our consciousness. The nature of our actions will be deposited in a certain way in that place. The name of the place is “*viññanagabbha*” or “store-consciousness”. One can destroy the life of a man but he cannot destroy his store-consciousness.

Therefore, no one can escape from his own deeds. No one can purify others. We are not in a position to pray to undo our misdeeds and unwholesome actions. “*Dhammata*” (or *shakti*, universal energies) will give the deserved results, pleasant or unpleasant. It is the nature of the world. Many in the world cannot understand this truth.

The specific name for this *shakti* or *dhammata* is *kamma* (*karma* in Sanskrit). No one can avoid this universal *kamma* or *shakti* or universal energies. We are the passive subjects of this universal phenomenon. What we can do is to understand this truth with the help of the teachings of the Buddha and try to control our mind and do meritorious and wholesome actions. Restrained mind is the only way to experience happiness and the only consolation to suffering around the world.

4. Scientific Thinking and the *Kālāma Sutta*

The *Kālāma Sutta* is a discourse on free thinking, and the explanation of the way of having correct knowledge of reality. It is so important for the modern man to understand his mind as well as the outer world. In a way, it helps us to open up our eyes to reality (*yathābhuta*) and see things as they really are, thereby leading us to a correct path. Following are excerpts from the *Kālāma Sutta*.

On a certain occasion, the Buddha while going on his rounds among the *Kosalans* (people of the *Kosala* area of ancient India) with a large group of monks, came to a village called *Kesaputta*. Its citizens were known as the *Kālāmas*. Now, the *Kālāmas* of Kesaputta heard that Gotama the Buddha had reached Kesaputta. Then the *Kālāmas* came to see the Buddha. On reaching him, some persons saluted the Buddha courteously and sat down at one side; some greeted the Buddha courteously and after the exchange of greetings and courtesies sat down at one side; some raising their joined palms to the Buddha sat down at one side; some proclaimed their name and clan and did likewise; while others without saying anything just sat down at one side. Then as they thus sat, the *Kālāmas* of Kesaputta said this to the Buddha:

Respected Venerable Sir, certain recluses and Brahmins come to Kesaputta. As to their own view, they proclaim and expound it in full, they cause to kindle and illuminate

their doctrines. But as to the view of others, they abuse it, despise it, revile it, depreciate and cripple it. Moreover, Venerable Sir, other recluses and Brahmins, also on coming to Kesaputta, do likewise. When we listen to them, Venerable Sir, we have doubt and wavering as to which of these worthies is speaking truth and which speaks falsehood.

Then Gotama the Buddha, answering the *Kālāmas* gave advice and showed them the path to reality thus:

Yes, *Kālāmas*, you well may doubt, you well may waver, in doubtful matters wavering does arise. Now look, *Kālāmas*, be not misled by report or tradition or hearsay. Be not misled by proficiency in the scriptures, nor by mere logic or inference, nor after considering specious reasons, nor by pre-conceived ideas or views, nor because it seems acceptable, nor out of respect for a recluse who holds it.

Here, the Buddha explains that truth-seekers have to pay attention to these ten points in order to avoid having incorrect knowledge. Many of the scholars, well-educated ones, or any other religious teachers or philosophers would go astray or would go off of the right path because of these ten points. Then they would teach a wrong thing, a wrong path, an evil doctrine, or a wrong view that is harmful to society. The listeners of those views would practice the wrong path in their daily life, and they would continue to practice it without seeing the truth or the correct path. The ten points are explained here with the *Pāli* words used by the Buddha:

1. *Mā anussavena*

Be you not misled by report, Sometimes, it may not be a correct thing and may be a wrong fact, Therefore, if you accept any report at once, you may come to a wrong view or incorrect conclusion.

2. *Mā paramparāya*

Be you not misled by tradition. Here the Commentator says that tradition should not always be taken as the truth. (*paramparākathaya pi mā ganhitta*).

3. *Mā itikirāya*

Be you not misled by tidings or hearsay. We should not believe what others say without inquiry or careful attention. If we do believe at once what others say, we may also have a corrupt mind on the tidings and may act in a wrong way.

4. *Mā pitakasampadānena*

Be you not misled on the authority of the scriptures. Maybe the whole scriptures of certain religious teachers who hold wrong views (*micchā ditthi*) are quite wrong. Sometimes, there may be doubtful places or later additions of any old books of any religious tradition. Therefore, we should be more careful of them.

5. *Mā takkahetu*

Be you not misled by mere logic or reasoning. Certain statements may accord with reasoning but in the practical world we find that they are wrong, To a certain extent, we can use reasoning, but pure reasoning may give us a wrong conclusion.

6. *Mā nayahetu*

Be you not misled by mere theory or inference. A well-accepted theory may sometimes be quite different from the practical happenings.

7. *Mā ākāraparivitakkena*

Be you not misled by considering mere appearances. Here, the Commentator thus explains: “Certain things should not be taken as truth thinking that this statement is so nice and so beautiful and so beautifully said.” (*sundaram idam karananti evam karanaparivitakkenapi mā ganhittha*).

8. *Mā ditthinijjhānakkhantiyā*

Be you not misled by your preconceived ideas, notions or views. The preconceived ideas obscure the truth. Truth-seekers should be open-minded.

9. *Mā babbarāpatāya*

Be you not misled by anything merely because it seems acceptable. The Commentator explains that in

this way: “Any utterances or declaration should not be taken as truth thinking, ‘This monk is a capable monk. Therefore, we have to accept his words.’ (*Ayam bhikkhu bhabbarupo, imassa ktham gahetunti pi mā ganhittha.*). ”

10. *Mā samano no garā*

Be you not misled by anything out of respect for a recluse or teacher who holds it. The Commentator explains that we should not take something as truth based on a thought: “This monk is our teacher. Therefore, we all have to accept his words.” (*Ayam samano amhākam garu, imassa katham gahetum yuttanti pi mā ganhittha*”).

In accordance with this Dhamma discourse, we should be very mindful when we have to attain knowledge and truth. Then the Buddha goes on to say:

But *Kalāmas*, when you know for yourselves, these things are unprofitable, these things are blameworthy, these things are censored by the intelligent; these things, when performed and undertaken, lead to loss and sorrow, then indeed do you reject them, *Kalāmas*.”

The Buddha mentions a special word to *Kalāmas*, that is, *attanāva janeyyātha*, which means, “know for yourselves.” We are given complete freedom to think, analyze and investigate whatever matter we have before us. It is of great importance to those who seek reality. Reality-seekers are invited to investigate and re-scrutinize

all the facts that they have before them and come to a final decision of truth, but it should be in accord with the Dhamma or reality or righteousness.

Scientists do not accept anything on mere hearsay, tradition or tidings. They do not accept immediately what the books say. Theory, reasoning or appearances are not simply accepted by them. They discard preconceived ideas and notions. They do not accept anything merely because it seems acceptable, and do not just believe in whatever the teachers say. They analyze, examine, investigate, scrutinize, and re-scrutinize the facts. It should be mentioned here that the Buddha, by promulgating the *Kālāma Sutta*, has revealed the embryonic form of scientific thought and scientific method.

The scientific method can be applied within the context of Buddhist practices to “know for yourselves.” The Buddha says:

Kālāmas, when you yourselves know: “These things are good; these things are not blamable, these things are praised by the wise; undertaken and observed, these things lead to benefit and happiness,” enter on and abide by them.

As we know from the scientific method, the best way to observe something is to isolate it, eliminating or controlling as many variables as possible. By practicing morality (*sila*), mental distractions (such as desires and worries) and negative emotions (such as anger, ill-will,

and jealousy) can be controlled and decreased, so the mind becomes less agitated and more able to observe. Then, by practicing meditation (see Appendices ii and iii for examples), the mind can be further quieted and is able to observe clearly, with more keen awareness. Thus, the variables of mental distraction, emotion, and dullness can be eliminated or decreased. At this point, a particular teaching, practice or view can be examined, “undertaken and observed,” to see whether it “leads to benefit and happiness.”

Dogmatic views (*ditthis*) can easily be discarded by following the method taught in the *Kālāma Sutta*. Wrong views are very dangerous, for they can destroy anything in the world. They can destroy human beings and sacred monuments of other faiths. Wrong views are so harmful to the person who holds them and to others as well. Some men are blinded by their own dogmatic views. They run after their own dogmatic views and seek happiness therein.

By following the scientific method taught in the *Kālāma Sutta*, human beings can understand their dogmatic views, discard their unnecessary mythical views, and arrive at the correct path. It is the method of philosophical truth-seeking and methodical investigation. The *Kālāma Sutta* can easily be applied to this modern scientific society and to all human beings. Therefore, it has everlasting value and ethical significance.

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5. **Buddhist Social Philosophy – An Introduction**

Some scholars with a little knowledge of Buddhism are of the opinion that there is no socio-economic and political philosophy of Buddhism. A well-known scholar, **Max Weber**, who is considered “the father of Sociology of Religion,” explaining the socio-political aspect of Buddhism says:

Buddhism had no sort of tie with any sort of social movement, nor did it run in parallel with such and it has established no social and political goal.

He further says that Buddhism is asocial and anti-political, and it can be considered to be an “other-worldly religion.” This is a misleading and distorted concept of Buddhism. It is very clear that Max Weber has not deeply analyzed Buddhist teachings. Buddhism is in no way an other-worldly religion. It includes a well-defined socio-economic and political philosophy. Professor D.D. Kosambi and Professor Rhys Davids accept that there is a socio-economic and political philosophy of Buddhism, and they disprove the above-mentioned idea.

Another misconceived idea of Buddhism says that Buddhism is such a sublime system that ordinary people cannot practice it. One has to retire to a monastery if one desires to be a true Buddhist. This is a partial view. The doctrine of the Buddha is meant not only for monks but

also for ordinary men and women living in their homes with their family members. The Noble Eightfold Path, meditation on loving-kindness and the Ten Perfections are meant for all. They can be practiced in anyone's daily life.

It is incorrect to say that Buddhism is asocial. Addressing the first sixty Arahants (Perfected Ones), the Buddha says: "O monks, walk on tour, for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many, for the welfare of the many, good and happiness of human beings and celestial beings." This shows that the Buddha has laid much emphasis on the members of society and their welfare. Therefore, the old Buddhist monasteries became spiritual centers and the centers of learning and culture. The Five Precepts are meant for the whole human society. Any person can observe them and lead a spiritual life, and that would be of great benefit to this competitive society.

The *Sigalovada Sutta* explicitly explains the family and social relationships. It gives a set of instructions and teachings that pertain to man's socio-economic and spiritual progress. Modern man can lead a very happy and prosperous life if he understands the significance of these social relations explained in the *Sigalovada Sutta*.

Some scholars are of the opinion that Buddhist philosophy is interested only in higher morality, and it ignores the social and economic welfare. This is also another misconception of Buddhist socio-economic philosophy. The *Kutadanta Sutta* explains the way of developing a country with proper planning and the nature of socio-

economic progress. We should not forget that the Buddha expounded these words in the sixth century B.C. and that even today they are of great value.

The *Cakkavattisihanada Sutta* explains the poverty, revolution, poverty-related crimes and the chaotic situation of a country and the reasons for those social ills. Today, our competitive global society experiences these socio-economic and political ills that are explained in the *Cakkavattisihanada Sutta*.

In the *Aggana Sutta* we find a theory of the origin of social classes. There the Buddha explains the arising and evolution of vegetation, the origin of state, the evolution of human race and social grades, the changing nature of moral values, and the relationship between moral degeneration and the deterioration of environmental elements. The sutta explains how the beings (*sattā*) were becoming less hard-working, less honest, less ethical, and how they lost their physical and mental qualities.

Fundamental unreasonable concepts relating to social organizations were radically transformed by the Buddha. The Buddha explained the nature of those concepts and their connection with the *ditthis* or dogmatic views of certain religious traditions.

The socio-economic and cultural transformations by the Buddha can be seen explicitly even in the present time in our Buddhist societies. Making a comment on the social upheaval of Buddhism, **Narendranath Bhatthacharya** says:

The rise of Buddhism was certainly to serve some social purpose. It had some distinct social and functional role. But very few attempts have been made to understand all these.

It is true that Buddhism is capable of doing a drastic transformation of the present day competitive and war-like society. But it needs a proper knowledge and correct understanding of the teachings of the Buddha.

The first significant work in the Buddhist social field was Die Religion des Buddha (1957), written by **C.F. Koppen**. In his book Koppen explains:

. . . the Buddha was viewed as the emancipator of the oppressed and a great political innovator.

Here, it is very interesting to note that Koppen was a close friend of **Karl Marx** and **Friedrich Engels**.

Karl Marx ruthlessly criticized religion and the widely accepted concept of an omnipotent God. Buddhism is completely free from that criticism, for it does not have include concept of God. **Trevor Ling** in his work Buddha, Marx and God explains that Buddhism is free from his critique. French scholar **La Loubere** says that Buddhism is totally different from other religions as it does not have a doctrine of God and it teaches rebirth (re-becoming, or *punabbhava*) without accepting the concept of a soul. Addressing the Berlin Science Academy in 1856, **Albrecht Weber** explained that Buddhist teachings

were so helpful for social reformation and it had accepted the equality of all human beings.

Karl Marx, writing a letter to his daughter Laura Marx, on March 20, 1866, said:

Most of my time I'm walking and breathing fresh air. I read nothing and write less. I go to bed at 9:00 p.m. Generally, I subside into the emotional state of non-existence that Buddhism considers to be the height of human delicacy.

This statement suggests that Karl Marx tried to practice Buddhist mindfulness and meditation in his final days. A well-known political philosopher who wanted to change the world society with revolutionary measures apparently changed his mind and came to the spiritual path.

Buddhism is the most socially-oriented religion. Early Buddhist monasteries were celebrated seats of learning which functioned to a great extent like the modern universities. Buddhist education paved the way for righteous existence and welfare of various societies. A more favorable socio-economic system for the world has been shown by the teachings of the Buddha.

The contribution of Buddhism in the field of art cannot be explained in words. It is inexpressible. Millions of pagodas and statues speak volumes for the immeasurable kindness and pure motivations of the human heart. Those statues were able to tame the minds and change the hearts of human beings.

The very great and astonishing creations of Buddhist art can be seen in India, China, Central Asia, Afghanistan, Indonesia, Burma, Thailand, Japan, Korea, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Cambodia, and in some other countries. The Borobudur Tope Complex in Central Java is a very wonderful creation of the Buddhist mind. Today, modern architects try to explain how they built it. The only thing that we can do is to admire and be astonished by seeing it. The immensity and beauty of these structures puts the observer in awe of the intense dedication and inspiration of the people who built them.

Candi Sewu, Candi Mendut and Candi Plaosan in Central Java are also very astonishing Buddhist complexes. Why do so many people visit these artistic creations? They definitely pave the way for mental peace and mental harmony of the visitors.

The society in which we live today is highly competitive and money-centered. That very competition and money-centeredness takes a lot of time, energy and effort, and results in mental stress and physical distress. So, where do we find the proper medicine for this inconvenience? If we look at those ancient statues in a silent place, they infiltrate love, compassion and peace into the pure side of our hearts. A society would be a very pleasant place if many human beings have pure hearts.

The greatness of the Buddha's contribution to sociology as a psychotherapist is admitted by **Dr. Robert H. Thouless**, the well-known psychologist of Cambridge. If we carefully investigate the teachings of the *Sutta Pitaka*

(Discourses) and the *Vinaya Pitaka* (Discipline), we certainly would find many fundamental theories of sociology in them.

Buddhism is certainly a socio-ethical movement and it appreciates nothing but socio-ethical progress. Material progress without ethical foundation is of no use. **R. R. Bhole** says, “Buddhism spread after first century A.D. to Middle Asia, China, Mongolia, Japan and Southeast Asia and triumphed as a far-reaching social humanistic movement.”

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6. Buddhism, Classical Ayurveda and Modern Society

The term *Ayurveda* literally means “ the science of life.” *Ayurveda* is a sacred science and in accordance with Indian mythology, it is supposed to have been perceived by Lord Brahma. From Lord Brahma it was passed on to the Ashwin twins and then to Lord Indra and from him to ***Bharadvaja*** and finally to ***Atreya***, who are human beings. *Atreya* taught medicine at the ancient city of Takkasila (Taxila or Takshasila). His six students spread this holistic system of medicine throughout India.

The history of *Ayurveda* as an actual medical system can be traced back to the *Rig Vedic* period although it is part of the *Atharva Veda*. The *Rig Veda* mentions various maladies and it contains the names of medicinal plants and gives certain notes on curing the various diseases.

Atharva Veda is the earliest source of therapeutic prescriptions and it methodically paved the way for the Ayurvedic tradition. To prevent diseases and to improve health, the *Atharva Veda* prescribes herbal medicines, cleansing methods and mantras. There were two distinct classes of physicians during the *Vedic* and post - *Vedic* period:

1. *Rishis* – sages or yogis who learned to cure diseases through yogic powers
2. Professional Ayurvedic physicians

During the Brahmanical period in 800 B.C. Those Ayurvedic physicians developed their tradition to considerable heights and Ayurveda's progress continued as a methodical medical system until the ruthless Islamic invasion of India. Millions and millions of Ayurvedic manuscripts were destroyed by the Islamic conquerors in India in the 13th century.

During the time of the Buddha, Ayurveda became a scientific medical system. Many of its medical discoveries and techniques, for example, plastic surgery were not known in the West until thousands of years later. This Ayurvedic medical system was entirely an oral tradition until the first century A.D. Later, an enormous amount of Ayurvedic knowledge developed and gradually came to be written down.

The Ayurvedic system was divided into eight branches of medicine:

1. *Salya* - surgery
2. *Sālakya* - treatment of disorders of the head and neck
3. *Kāya Cikitsā* - general medicine
4. *Bhāta-vidya* - psychiatry and mental diseases caused by demons (demonology)
5. *Kaumara-bhrutya* - children's diseases, pediatrics
6. *Agada* - toxicology, remedies for poisons
7. *Rasāyana* - elixirs, rejuvenations
8. *Vājīkarana* - virilifications

Surgery or *Salya* is not a modern system of medicine. It is the result of the systematic understanding of the human body by very ancient healers or physicians. Now it is a highly developed system of medicine. Yet we in no way are entitled to say that the ancient system was unsystematic unmethodical or unwise.

Diseases of the body were expressed in terms of a humoural theory of medicine. There are three humours which are the underlying constituents of the body: air (*vata*), bile (*pitta*) and phlegm (*kapha*). There may have been a relationship between the development of Indian Ayurvedic humoural medicine and the old clinical Greek System of humoural medicine (which is based on four humours: blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile).

Making comments on humoural medicine, Heinrich Zimmer explains that the humours are in fact not just airy, bilious and mucous matter found in the body but three principles of life-energy corresponding to the major parts of the environment: the wind element, the fire element and the fluid element. A very significant point that should be mentioned here is that veneration and worship are necessary to Ayurvedic therapy. The basic system is to restore the humoural balance through food and herbs but hygiene is emphasized and even politeness is considered a good preventative medicine in Ayurveda.

The most advanced methods of medicine have been used by the Ayurvedic doctors at the high point of development of Ayurveda. Medical historians are of the opinion that ancient Ayurvedic doctors practiced excellent surgery,

plastic surgery and removal of cataracts and that they had good clinical knowledge that leprosy was contagious, they recognized that blood spitting in pulmonary tuberculosis spread the disease and they were able to make excellent descriptions of epileptic disorders.

Sushruta, *Charaka* and *Vāgbhata* are the most famous figures in classical Ayurveda. Encyclopedic medical treatises have been written by these great scholars. *Charaka* composed the “*Charaka-Samhita*” which was based on an earlier *Samhita* by *Agnivesa*. *Charaka-Samhita* contains the theory and other knowledge of ancient Ayurveda that is the ancient oral medical tradition.

Sushruta, the other great figure of Ayurveda, compiled the “*Sushruta Samhita*” which contains the comprehensive details of advanced Indian surgery. *Charaka* is reputed to have been the court physician of the Emperor *Kanishka*. The third great figure in classical Ayurveda is *Vāgbhata*, who was clearly a Buddhist. Two writers shared the same name, *Vāgbhata* and they must be distinguished. Both of them claimed the same parentage in their great works, the *Astāngasamgraha* and the *Astāngahridayasamhita*.

Vruddha *Vāgbhata* (Elder *Vāgbhata*) is the son of *Sinhagupta*, whereas the younger *Vāgbhata* and the younger one's teacher was *Avalokita*, a Buddhist. This younger *Vāgbhata*'s work explicitly shows the influence of Buddhist ethics in Ayurvedic medicine. It is *Astangahridayasamhita* which still exists in original Sanskrit and its Tibetan version is also found. In the

introductory stanza of this medical manual, he reveres the Buddha thus:

I pay homage to that unique physician, the Buddha who rooted out and removed all diseases such as lust, which cause delusion and indolence and are spread over all living beings, striking them always.

Vāgbhata puts much emphasis on morality pertaining to man's health and he devotes an entire chapter on that. Development of morality or mind-culture, according to Vāghata, potentially develops health. He exhorted physicians to practice Buddha's loving-kindness (*Metta*) and compassion (*Karuna*) and to treat all beings equally.

The golden age of Ayurveda corresponds to the period of the glory of Buddhism in India, that is from the 4th century B.C. To the 8th century A.D. Buddhism exerted a positive and beneficial influence on Ayurveda and therefore it may accurately be called classical Ayurvedic System or “Hindu-Buddhist Medicine.” A.L. Basham says:

Buddhism which encouraged the virtue of compassion and was less bound than Hinduism by considerations of ritual purity, seems to have been particularly conducive to the study of medicine.

Therefore, it is needless to say that Buddhism paved the way for the progress of Ayurvedic studies and that the Buddha knew Ayurveda well. Heinrich Zimmer points out:

The Buddha in expounding his doctrine of salvation, modeled it after the attitude of the Hindu physician toward the task of healing.

Buddhism and the classical Ayurvedic system were intimately connected and Western scholars also accept the fact that Ayurveda flourished in India with the rise of Buddhism.

In the *Vinaya Pitaka* (Basket of Discipline), there is a special section called “*Bhesajjakkhandaka*” or the section on medicine where the Buddha prescribed many different things as remedies for sick monks. It must be mentioned here that Buddhist monks are not allowed to earn their living as a healer for it is considered a common type of action or animal science (*tiracchena vijja*). Why is it considered a type of animal science? Because it weakens the monk's spiritual desire. And it also hinders his spiritual and religious progress as there would be no time for him to practice his religious activities and cultivate his inner spirituality. But Buddhist monks are permitted to prescribe medicines and perform whatever they think fit for the welfare, goodness and happiness of the patient out of loving-kindness (*metta*) and compassion (*karuna*).

Jivaka-Komārabhacca was the Buddha's personal physician and also the student of the celebrated sage *Atreya*, a great figure of Ayurveda. He went to Takkasila and studied medicine for seven years. *Jivaka* was crowned in public as 'The King of Doctors’ for his medical eminence.

Making comments on the Buddha and Buddhist influence on Ayurveda, Jyotir Mitra says: “Compassion was the source of his morality and the good of all was the goal of his moral conduct. Under the moral conduct, the inclusion of celibacy, knowledge, charity, amicableness, compassion, joy, impartiality and peace in Ayurveda is positively influenced by Buddhism.

Dharmashoka, the Buddhist Emperor of India is reported to have established hospitals for both human beings and animals. The second Rock Edict of Emperor Ashoka states:

Everywhere in his kingdom and in other neighboring countries, Ashoka established the medical centers which consisted of the medical care for men and animals. Medical herbs whether of use to man or to best have been brought and planted there where they did not grow; similarly, roots and fruits have been brought and planted there where they did not grow. (*Devanam priyasa priyadasino rajo dve cikicha kata manusa cikicha ca pasu cikicha ca*)

- The Second Rock Edict

These medical centers of Ashoka predated similar hospitals in the West by about 20 centuries. During the period of this Emperor's rule the Ayurvedic system reached to every nook and corner of this vast empire – from Afghanistan to Sri Lanka (or *Sihaladvipa*, the country of the Sinhalese) and to the Western frontiers of the Greek kings. Emperor Ashoka did everything for the

welfare of all human beings and animals out of compassion (*karuna*) and pity.

Mahayana Buddhist monks are required to study medicine, for it is one of the major subjects for them. Therefore the Northern Buddhist tradition or the Mahayana Buddhism gave birth to hundreds of great scholars and Ayurvedic physicians. They made an enormous contribution to the advancement of Ayurveda.

The Mahayana concept of Medicine Buddha, *Bhaisajyaguru*, paved the way for the welfare and benevolent effects on public health in various countries throughout the ages. The worship of the Medicine Buddha became prevalent in Mahayana Buddhist countries and under the religious and spiritual guardianship of *Bhaisajyaguru*, thousands of hospitals have been established for the welfare of those countries.

Because of the relationship between Mahayana Buddhism and Ayurveda, Mahayana philosopher-saints were great physicians and they out of compassion and loving-kindness for humans and animals, wrote important and great medical works. They can be considered to be a major contribution to Ayurvedic literature. *Nāgarjuna* and *Ashvaghosa* were great philosophers and they were also considered as physician sages.

Tāntric Buddhist tradition also has developed a great medical system that is based on the psychophysical practices of *Tantric Yoga*. The ancient Indian alchemy (Chemistry of the Middle Ages) is related to tantras as

well as to Ayurvedic medicine. The major aim of alchemy is transformation of energy. Various medicinal and magical herbs and other substances have been applied in conjunction with religious techniques like spells and incantations to transmute the body and make it immortal. Tantric yoga can be defined as the esoteric inner union of medicine and religion.

Thus measureless contributions were made to the Ayurvedic medicine during the Buddhist period of India. Countless manuscripts pertaining to medicine were translated and preserved by these Buddhist monks. It was this Ayurvedic medical science that was methodically taken to Tibet (Hidden Land of the World) and there it became an indigenous medical system. Buddhism in India continued to contribute to the Ayurvedic medical system until its complete disappearance from its native land by Islamic invasions. Islamic invaders systematically destroyed everything pertaining to Buddhist culture. Countless Buddhist manuscripts were burnt. Among them were hundreds of great medical works which could easily be considered as the most essential and great literary treasure of mankind.

Today, we are living in a highly developed scientific society. Modern science is fairly advanced but we are still not able to find proper cures for certain diseases. Cancer is one kind of deadly illness. Many people think it is a new kind of illness which is a great misconception. It is an ancient illness. In the Buddhist *suttas* we have a special Pāli term for cancer, that is, “*pīlakā*”. And there were proper medicines for that but the modern medical

community is not aware of that ancient wisdom and has not made efforts to find it.

Ancient wisdom can be found in traditional societies and in rural areas but not in the modern laboratories. Modern man is ignorant, thinking that this ultra-modern knowledge is the only truth and that ancient thoughts, concepts and ideas are wrong, useless and out-of-date. For instance, not only does traditional Ayurveda have certain remedies for cancer but also ancient Sinhala and Tibetan medical system had certain remedies for it too. It is pathetic that our modern medical scientists are not aware of the traditional wisdom. It is about time that modern pathologists turn their mind to ancient wisdom. They should not turn a deaf ear to old wisdom and old manuscripts of medicine.

“*Bower Manuscript*” belongs to the fourth century A.D. And it gives a detailed description of long life. One chapter discusses the proper use of garlic and it explains the way to prolong our lives by using garlic. Hundreds of remedies are given in the manuscript for various illness. Why does the modern man ignore these ancient methods of treatment? It is because of the negligence and lack of confidence in ancient things and knowledge. The day will come when the modern medical scientists will say, “go back to the ancient wisdom and find remedies for these deadly diseases of our time.”

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7. Science and Spirituality

Science has changed the whole world in all respects. Today we are bewildered by its stupendous changes. Industry, transportation, agriculture, trade, communication, life pattern and the way of thinking were changed by the application of science. In the 19th century, there was much higher level of increase in scientific knowledge. With the rapid increase of this scientific knowledge, man proudly thought that he was the chief controller of nature. He couldn't understand the friendly gifts of the natural world and began to exploit it instead.

It is true that new technological products are more useful and more desirable. But if there is no demarcation of any limit and unless they are appropriately guided they can create disastrous consequences for the community of our planet. The airplane is more useful than many other ways of transportation. Pilots take their aircrafts to every nook and corner of the world and man is proud of using it and also he proudly thinks that he lives in as scientifically and technologically more advanced age. People of the previous ages of the world had no such things in which to travel. Therefore many people assume that they are more advanced than ancient men.

Scientific knowledge is great but if we do not know how to use it properly then the very same science will create a chaotic situation. Without knowing the meaning of life, real objectives of life or the utmost significance of

spirituality, many are trying to abuse scientific knowledge, rendering it harmful or useless.

Modern Science

Some scholars have made unparalleled and remarkable contributions to modern science and technology. They dedicated their whole life to carry on scientific research for the betterment of human society. The father of Modern Science is considered to be *Albert Einstein*. He discovered the new fundamental laws of physics and was able to change the accepted views of physics. Relativity is the famous modern theory of Albert Einstein. He further explained and made very extraordinary comments on the concepts of space and time.

Nowadays, scientists make hundreds of experiments on various subjects. Now we know the behavior of atoms, protons, electrons, positrons and neutrons. Ancient Jain seers and Buddhist philosophers were the first thinkers who talked of atoms and gave explanations about them. Ancient seers explained them with the idea of revealing the truth of our outer world. But today, so-called educated experts make experiments on atoms with the intention of killing their fellow human beings.

Needless to say, the earth is very small planet in the universe. The whole solar system also is a very small place. It can be considered to be a very little drop in the great ocean of immeasurable space. It is an accepted fact that it takes millions and millions of years for light to

reach our planet from some places in the universe. Is it true that there are billions and billions of stars in the universe and that they are situated in very far away places in the cosmos?

Buddha's Teaching

What did the Buddha explain in this regard more than 2500 years ago? The Buddha teaches us that there are three kinds of universal systems:

1. ***Sahassi-culanika lokadhatu***
The universal system which consists of one thousand solar systems.
2. ***Dvisahassi-majjhimanika lokadhatu***
The universal system which consists of a million (1000 x 1000) solar systems
3. ***Tisahassi-mahasahassi-lokadhatu***
The universal system which consists of a billion (1000 x 1000 x 1000) solar systems.

How many ***Tisahassi-mahasahassi-lokadhatu*** world systems are there in space? It is countless and unthinkable and also beyond human knowledge. It cannot be expressed through our human language and is also beyond reasoning. The peculiar characteristic of this teaching is that we do not find that kind of explanation in any other ancient religion or philosophy.

It should be understood here that there are limits of our knowledge, whether scientific or computerized. If we say that there are “trillions and trillions and trillions of galaxies” in outer space, this is not correctly within our knowledge. It is limitless and immeasurable and our brain-power is not strong enough to think of it.

Machine Age and Power Age

There are so many things that we do and that we see in our daily life which are connected with Science or Applied Science. Science and technology introduced the multifarious and multi functional machines and electrical power to human life. Early scientists introduced these machines with the intention of promoting human welfare. But with the introduction of big machines, human labor was neglected. Electrical power is rapidly taking the place of human labor and it results in a shocking decreased in the need for and employment of laborers.

The Industrial Revolution paved the way for the Machine age. After that the electrical revolution came in existence and electrical power has become the essential limb of human life. Now we live in the Power Age and we have to deal with the results of this power age whether we like or dislike them. The Power Age changed everything in our outer environment and every activity of all human beings. Now man cannot live without this electrical power.

Every where in the whole today we find electric power stations. But there are no manpower stations. Electric and petroleum-fueled machinery has doubled and redoubled in production. It produces and transports necessary and also unnecessary goods and commodities for so-called welfare of human beings. One man can control and operate a huge machine and produce hundreds of items per day. Machines do not discern what is good utility or necessity but just spew out enormous numbers of manufactured goods. Similarly a few men can operate many machines to grow and harvest vast acres of crops without concern for the ecosystem or employment needs of their fellow men.

Then what happens to the millions of workers in the factories and farms? We see that those machines were able to mercilessly throw out the workers from their factories and farms day after day. Can this situation be regarded as a good application of the progress of science and technology? It is true that the power age helps in multifaceted ways to improve the quantity of human life, producing more goods with less money. But it has neglected the labor and labor dignity of the millions of our own fellow factory and farm workers. It is very clear that man has become an inferior slave of electric and petroleum-fueled power and that they dominate all human activities.

Technology is advancing rapidly. Technical improvements are going on ceaselessly. But workers are being displaced at the same rate by huge machines. The unemployment problem is also increasing at a terrifying rate. In every

place, chaotic situations are stirring up. Poverty is also on the increase. Educated people are applying the multifarious methods of science and technology to solve this problem and to avoid terrible suffering of human beings. Can this be done easily? Can we hope for good results? Is it not this same science and technology that gave birth to the war-like situation today?

Science and technology as we have visualized has facilitated so many good things for the physical and mental happiness of human beings but science has also invented newer weapons in a greater scale to the war fronts. Now these newly-invented deadly weapons such as computerized missiles can destroy the places of very old civilizations. And they do that unpleasant job today. Destroying the places of ancient civilizations means that man of this computerized age is attacking violently his own heritage.

Highly explosive bombs and various kinds of poisonous gases are there now and they can destroy many important places including our great cities.

They can suffocate and kill every living thing. Now we talk of a bacteriological that can affect seriously our food and drinking water. Some scholars are of the opinion that the whole mankind is going to commit suicide.

Citta vipallasa

Are we as human beings to promote peace and cooperation or to help destructive and greedy processes guided by dogmatic views? Are we intelligent enough to select the right path?

Do science and technology have any response? Do computers give any hint to select the correct path for the welfare of mankind? Is there any process of remedial action for perversion of minds (*citta vipallasa*) blinded by so-called advancement of science and technology? One truth is very clear: without limits and controls, strange reactions will come and give very unpleasant results. It is the law of nature. Therefore the answer for all these tangles and chaotic situations is the cultivation of our inner spirituality.

8. Cosmological Explanations of Buddhism – An Introduction

1. According to the teachings of the Buddha, thinking about the world is called “*loka-cintā*” but humans cannot gain the complete knowledge of the four fields of knowledge, viz:
 - i) The sphere, scope or power of the Buddha (*Buddha-visaya*)
 - ii) The sphere of the meditative absorptions (*Jhāna-visaya*)
 - iii) The sphere of kamma (*Kamma-visaya*)
 - iv) The sphere of universe (*Loka-visaya*)

This means that complete knowledge of these four spheres is impossible and they are *acinteyyāni* – thoughts not to be thought out. Although we can obtain knowledge to a certain extent there would be no end to seeking or researching those fields. They are unthinkable, unimaginable, incomprehensible and impenetrable and they transcend the limits of thinking.

2. A unit of the universe is called “*loka*” or “*lokadhātu*” and another Pāli term for universe is “*cakkavāla*”. The term “*cakka*” (in Sanskrit, *chakra*) means wheel, cycles or something that is continuously turning.

There are smaller world systems and also larger world systems. A somewhat wider sphere is perhaps indicated by “*sabbaloka*”.

The “*kappa*” (in Sanskrit, *Kalpa*) means “world-period” and it is an inconceivable long period, an aeon. The Buddha explains:

How long a world-dissolution will continue, how long the chaos, how long the formation, how long the continuation of the formed world of these things, O Monks, one can hardly say that it will be so many years, or so many centuries or so many millenniums or so many hundred thousand years.ⁱ

The world or universe has its *kappas* or evolutionary periods as follows:

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| Sanvatta kappa | – the ascending aeon or evolving cycle (or rolling forward) |
| Sanvattatthāyi kappa | – the period after the ascending aeon or the continuation |
| Vivatta kappa | – the descending aeon or devolving cycle (or rolling back) |
| Vivattattāyi kappa | - the period after the descending aeon or the continuation |
| Sanvatta-vivatta kappa | - a period within which evolution and dissolution of the world |

takes place; a complete world cycle.ⁱⁱ

These words clearly express the idea of constant change of everything – arising and disappearing. We sometimes find *vivatta* in the sense of renewal and *sanvatta* in the sense of destruction where we should expect the opposite meaning for each. The Pāli term “*lokantara*” means the space between the single worlds.

3. When we consider the Buddha's appearance in the world, there are five kinds of *kappas*:

- i) Sāra-kappa - One Buddha is born in this kappa
- ii) Manda-kappa - Two Buddhas are born
- iii) Vara-kappa - Three Buddhas are born
- iv) Sāramanda-kappa - Four Buddhas are born
- v) Bhadda-kappa - Five Buddhas are born and this is very rare.

Now we are in *Bhadda-kappa* in which five Buddhas are born and Gotama the Buddha in this time period is the forth Enlightened One.ⁱⁱⁱ

4. The Buddha explains that there are three kinds of universal systems:

Sahassi Cūlanikā lokadhātu -

The system of the 1000 lesser worlds. It consists of 1000 suns and 1000 moons and 1000 places where there are living things.

Dvisahassi Majjhimānikā lokadhātu -

The Twice-a-thousand Middling thousand-fold world systems. It consists of 1000 *sahassi Cūlanikā lokadhātus* or 1000 x 1000 lesser worlds.

Tisahassi Mahāsahassi lokadhātu -

The Thrice-a-thousand Mighty thousand-fold world system. It consists of 1000 *dvisahassi majjhimānikā lokadhātus* or 1000 x 1000 x 1000 lesser worlds.^{iv}

In some places of Pāli canonical texts and commentaries, we find a Pāli term, *dasahassi lokadhātu* or ten times-a-thousand-fold world systems which we cannot comprehend.^v

The Buddha has mastered this field of knowledge by his full enlightenment (*loka thatāgatena abhisambuddho*) and he is also *lokavidū* or the knower of the universe.

5. In the *Samannaphala Sutta*, we find many Pāli terms pertaining to space (Akasa) and cosmology, such as:

Candaggaho – the moon-eclipse

Suriyaggaho – the sun-eclipse

Nakkhattaggaho – the seizure of a star (the disappearance of a planet)

Ukkapato – a meteor

Candimasuriyanam pathagamanam – usual course of the sun and moon

Candimasuriyanam uppathagamanam – unusual course of the sun and moon

Nakkhattanam pathgamanam – usual course of the stars / planets

Nakkhattanam uppathagamanam – unusual course of the stars / planets^{vi}

6. There are three kinds of Buddha-khettas or regions of the Buddhas:

Jātikkheta

A universal system on which the Buddha may be born. There can appear only one Buddha at a time. No Buddha can arise until the Order of the previous Buddha has completely disappeared from the world. When a Bodddhisattva takes conception in his mother's womb in his last life after leaving a divine place (*divya loka*), there is manifested throughout these worlds a wonderful radiance and the ten thousand world systems tremble.^{vii}

Ānakkheta

The region of authority and command of the Buddha.

Visayakkhetta

The region of wisdom power of the Buddha

7. Though the Theravada texts give scanty ideas of cosmology the Mahayana texts contain many more details. Mahayana text speak of incalculable stars and innumerable galaxies. The *Mahāvastu* explains that the *Buddhakkhetta* (region of the Buddha) is equivalent to 61 billion cosmos (61 x 1,000,000,000)

The *Mahā-Pragnāpāramitā-Sāstra* mentions millions of suns, moons and celestial abodes and it is said that a *Buddhakkhetta* or *Buddhalokadhātu*, the region of the Buddha's universal system is equivalent to the sands of the Ganges River in India. The *Avatansaka Sutra* also explains the thousands of world systems. In this way the Mahayana tradition gives a number of discourses that help us to understand the universal systems. I assume that a day will come when modern cosmological scientists would have to go back to the ancient Buddhist texts and find the answers to the questions pertaining to the universal systems.

References:

- i Angutara-nikāya, vol. IV, 156 and vol. VII, 62, P.T.S., London
- ii Anguttara nikāya, vol. II, 142, P.T.S., London
- iii Buddhavansa Atthakathā, 158 f., P.T.S., London
- iv Anguttara-nikāya, vol. I, 226, P.T.S., London; Samyutta-nikāya Atthakathā, vol. II, 525, P.T.S., London
- v Buddhavansa Atthakathā, f.158, P.T.S., London
- vi Samannaphala-Suppa, Digha-nikāya, vol. I, P.T.S., London
- vii Digha-nikāya, vol II, f. 108 and Digha-nikāya Atthakathā, vol. III, 897, P.T.S., London

9. Suka Jataka and the Theory of Moderation in Food

The *Jataka* is the tenth book of *Khuddaka Nikaya* of the *Sutta Pitaka*, and it consists of stories of the former births of the Buddha. The canonical book of the *Jatakas* contains only the verses, but it is quite certain that these stories were originally handed down in the oral tradition, giving the tales in prose. Every *Jataka* story gives a spiritual, moral, religious, philosophical, social, educational or psychological lesson. The following story illustrates a moral lesson.

The Suka (Suva) Jataka:

Once upon a time, when King Brahmadata reigns over Benares, the *Bodhisatta* (being who would become the Buddha in a future birth) was born as a parrot, and dwelt in the Himalaya region. He was king over several hundred of his kind, who lived on the seaward side of the Himalayas, and he had a son. While his son grew up to be strong, the father parrot's eyes became weak. Parrots fly with great swiftness, so when they become old, it is the eye that weakens first. His son kept his parents in the nest, and would bring them food.

It happened one day that the young parrot went to the place where he found his food, and he alighted upon a mountain-top. Then he looked over the great ocean and beheld an island on which was a mango grove full of

sweet golden fruit. So the next day, at the time of fetching food, he rose into the air and flew to this grove of mangoes, where he sucked the mango juice. He took some fruit and brought it home to his mother and father. As the Boddhisatta ate it, he recognized the taste.

“My son, this is a mango of such and such island,” naming it.

“It is so, father,” replied the young parrot.

“Parrots that go there, my son, do not have long life,” he said, “do not go to that island again!”

But the son did not obey him and went there yet again.

Then one day it happened that he went as usual, and drank much mango juice. With a mango in his beak, he was passing over the ocean when he grew worn out with carrying the fruit so long, and sleep took over him. Sleeping, he flew on, but the fruit that he carried fell out of his beak. And by degrees he fell from his path, and, sinking down, skimmed the surface of the water. And then a fish caught and devoured him. When he should have returned, he did not return, and the Boddhisatta knew that he must have fallen into the water. Then his parents, receiving no sustenance, pined away and died.¹

Moderation in Food

The Buddha having told this story, in his perfect wisdom, uttered the following stanza:

What time the bird without excess did eat
He found the way, and brought his mother meat.

But once he too much, forgot the mean,
He fell; and afterward was no more seen

So be not greedy, modest be in all,
To spare is safe; greed goes before a fall.

The scholastic (commentator) adds the following lines:

Be moderate in eating wet or dry,
And thy hunger's need will satisfy.
Who eats with care, whose belly is not great,
Will be a holy hermit soon or late.

Four or five mouthfuls, then a drink is right;
Enough for any earnest eremite.
A careful moderate eater has small pain,
Slowly grows old, lives twice as long again.

This *Jataka* story gives an ideal lesson for the modern man and his eating habits. People in the most affluent countries of the world take more animal protein than vegetable protein and they consume more saturated fats, which is harmful to their circulatory systems, whereas in poor countries, every day people do not have enough food

to eat. These irregular behaviors are unsuitable, unfriendly, displeasing and extreme -- either over-consumption or under-consumption. These two extremes are hazardous to our health. Therefore, proper way to be followed is the middle way.

The Story of King Kosala

One day King Pasenadi Kosala went to the monastery to pay respect to the Buddha soon after having a very heavy meal. While he was in the presence of the Buddha, the king felt so drowsy that he kept on nodding. Then he said to the Buddha:

“Venerable Sir, I have been in great discomfort since I have taken my meal.”

Then the Buddha replied, “Yes, O . . . King, gluttons do suffer in this way.”

Then the Buddha taught him the advantage of moderation of food.ⁱⁱ

Classification of Overeaters:

Anguttara Nikaya commentary gives the following extreme classifications of over eaters:

1. *āhārahattaka*-one who eats until he has to be lifted by hand
2. *alansātaka*- one who eats until his loin-cloth cannot be retained
3. *tatthavattaka*- one who has to roll where he eats
4. *Kākamāsaka*- one who eats until a crow pecks from his mouth
5. *Bhuttavamitaka*- one who eats until he vomits.ⁱⁱⁱ

These people never get satisfaction by overeating, but yet amazingly they continue to attempt to satisfy temporarily the cravings in their mind by eating without control.

Even when overeating is not so extreme, but merely results in the body being a bit overweight, there is a similar abuse of food as a method of trying to satisfy the cravings in the mind. When overeating is a result of stress, the problem is the same: trying to calm the mind – to satisfy the craving for peace and enjoyment - by enjoying food. Overeating can also be a result of poor habits. These habits can form during childhood when parents try to quiet their children with food, or when parents allow frequent snacks, fatty foods, junk foods, and eating out of boredom, or when they serve full plates of food, or are otherwise indulgent with food.

Instead of trying to satisfy the mind with food, one can instead occupy and satisfy the mind with that which brings more lasting peace: charitable and meritorious acts such as service to the needy, studying and practicing spiritual and religious teachings, and meditation. Keeping occupied and happy with these activities, one thinks less about food. One should treat food as a medicine for the body, choosing foods that are most healing and nourishing rather than foods that simply satisfy the palate.

In the *Ganaka-Moggallana Sutta*, the Buddha explains the way of proper thinking pertaining to alms food:

Come you, monks, be moderate in eating; you should take food reflecting carefully, not for fun or indulgence or personal charm or beautification, but taking just enough for maintaining this body and keeping it going . . .”^{iv}

Therefore, according to Buddhist teaching, eating for fun, indulgence or body-building, when the body does not need more food for proper nourishment, is not a good habit and cannot be praiseworthy. Moderation in food leads to a healthy, happy and long life.

References:

- i. Suka Jataka, No. 255, *Jataka* vol. II, (V. Fausboll, ed.) P.T.S. London.
- ii. Samyutta Nikaya, Vol. 1, p. 81, P.T.S., London; Dhammapadatthakatha, Vol. III, P.T.S., London
- iii. Anguttara Nikayatthakatha, Vol. I, p. 50, P.T.S., London.
- iv. Majjhima Nikaya, Vol. III, P.T.S., London.

Appendix 1

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF IMPORTANT EVENTS OF BUDDHIST HISTORY

B. C.

- 624 - Birth of Prince Siddhartha
- 589 - The Enlightenment of the Buddha
- 544 - Passing away of the Buddha
Reign of king Ajatasatta of Magadha
First Buddhist Council at the mountain
Vebhara – Rajagaha
- 444 - Second Buddhist Council at Valukaramaya
- Vesali
Reign of King Kalasoka of Magadha
First schism in the Buddhist Order
- 264 - Reign of the Emperor Ashoka
- 247 - Third Buddhist Council at Ashokaramaya-
Pataliputra
Sending of Buddhist missionaries to nine
countries (Kashmir Gandhara, Mahisamandala,
Vanavasa, Aparantaka, Maharattha,
Yonakaratta (Greece), Himalaya,

Suvannabhumi (Lower Burma, Cambodia & Siam), and Tambapanni (Sinhaldvipa or Sri Lanka)

- 240 - Prince Kustana- son of Dharmashoka founded a Buddhist kingdom of Khotan in Central Asia
- 211 - First Buddhist Monastery in Khotan, Central Asia
- 101 - Reign of king Dutthagamini in Sinhaldvipa (Sri Lanka)
Beginning of the architectural creations of rock-cut cave temples in India (Ajanta, Ellora, Nasik, Junnar, Bhaja, Karle, Kanheri)
- 44 - Ven. Nagasena teaches the Dhamma to King Menander (Bactrian king) in Sialkot.
- 29. - Oral tradition of Doctrine changed into writing form in Sinhaldvipa

A. D.

- 67 - Introduction of Buddhism to China
- 78 - Reign of King Kanishka in North India
Fourth Buddhist Council in Kashmir
- 320 - A Sinhalese monastery established at
Buddha Gaya by Sinhalese
King Sri Meghavanna (304-333 CE)
- 372 - Introduction of Buddhism to North Korea by a
Chinese monk
- 386 - Wei dynasty in China – Buddhism became the
state religion in China
- 420 - Translation of Buddhist Vinaya texts from
Sanskrit to Chinese
- 431 - Ven. Gunawarman's Buddhist mission to
China, Vietnam and Java.
Java became a Buddhist country
- 458 - Arrival of Ven. Buddhaghosa, the great Pali
Commentator in Sri Lanka & commencement
of writing Commentaries
- 502 - Ven. Bodhidharma, founder of the Chan sect
in China (It is called Dyana Sect in India &
Zen Sect in Japan)

- 552 - Introduction of Buddhism into Japan from Korea
- 617 - Official introduction of Buddhism into Tibet, Reign of King Sron-btsan-gampo
- 714 - Reign of (Buddhist dynasty) Pala kings of Bengal
Establishment of Buddhist Universities in India
(Nalanda, Odantapuri, Wikramasila)
- 775 - Progress of Mahayana Buddhism of Sri Vijaya Kingdom
(in Java, Sumatra and in other parts of Indonesia)
- 982 - Great Tibetan scholar Atisa or Dipankara Shri Jnana (982-1054 CE)
- 1010 - Buddhism became a state religion in Vietnam (Ly dynasty)
- 1057 - Buddhist Council in Tibet with the great scholars of Atisa
(or Dipankara Shri Jnana), Milarepa and Marpa
- 1181 - Establishment of Sinhala Order of Buddhist monks in Burma
(Sihala Sangha Sect)

-
- 1368 - Decline of Buddhism in China – Ming dynasty in China
 - 1753 - (Upasampada) Higher-ordination brought from Thailand to Sri Lanka
 - 1872 - Fifth Buddhist Council at Mandalay, Burma
 - 1880 - Arrival of Henry Steele Olcott (American scholar) in Sri Lanka
 - 1881 - Founding of the Pali Text Society, London by Prof. Rhys Davids
 - 1885 - Design of Buddhist flag by Henry Steel Olcott with the help of Sinhalese monks and other scholars
 - 1891 - Establishment of The Mahabodhi Society by Anagarika Dharmapala
 - 1893 - International Conference of World Religions – Chicago
 - 1900 - First expedition of Sir Aurel Stein in Chinese Turkistan or Central Asia. (He unearthed more than 20,000 manuscripts related to Buddhism, Astrology and Medicine in his third expedition)

Appendix II

Meditation on Loving-Kindness

May I be free from enmity, disease and grief and
may I take care of myself happily.

As I am, so also may my teachers, preceptors, parents,
intimate, indifferent and inimical beings,
be free from enmity, disease and grief, and
may they take care of themselves happily!

May they be released from suffering!
May they not be deprived of their fortune, duly acquired!
May all living beings be free from enmity, disease and
grief and may they take care of themselves happily!

May all creatures be free from enmity, disease and grief,
and may they take care of themselves happily!

May all who are born be free from enmity, disease and
grief, and may they take care of themselves happily!

May all persons be free from enmity, disease and grief,
and may they take care of themselves happily!

May all those who have arrived at a state of individuality,
be free from enmity, disease and grief, and may they take
care of themselves happily!

May I be happy!
May I be free from hatred!
May I be free from disease!
May I be free from grief!

May my parents be well and happy!
May my brothers and sisters be well and happy!
May my teachers be well and happy!
May my friends be well and happy!
May my relatives be well and happy!
May those who help me be well and happy!
May all the non-friendly ones be well and happy!

Appendix III

Meditation on The Impurities of the Body

This body of mine is composed of:

1. hair of the head
2. hair of the body
3. nails
4. teeth
5. skin
6. muscles
7. sinews
8. bones
9. marrow
10. kidneys
11. heart
12. liver
13. diaphragm
14. spleen
15. lungs
16. intestine
17. mesentery
18. stomach
19. excrement
20. bile
21. phlegm

-
22. pus
 23. blood
 24. sweat
 25. lymph
 26. tears
 27. serum
 28. saliva
 29. nasal mucus
 30. synovial fluid
 31. urine
 32. brain.

If we think of our body in this way, we are having the correct understanding of our physical body. The person who practices this meditation would not be worried about the body when it is subjected to change (Anicca).

Appendix IV

An Introduction to Canonical Literature

There are three major baskets of the Buddha-Dhamma:

- I. Vinaya Pitaka - Basket of Discipline
- II. Sutta Pitaka - Basket of Discourses
- III. Abhidhamma Pitaka - Basket of Abstruse Dhamma

A. Vinaya Pitaka

There are five major books in the Vinaya Pitaka.

1. Pārājika Pāli

It contains the disciplinary rules pertaining to major offenses.

2. Pācittiya Pāli

It contains certain vinaya rules connected with the Patimokkha, the violation of which can be expiated in some way.

3. Mahavagga Pāli

This section is divided into chapters called Khandakas. The introductory chapter gives an account of the incidents immediately following the Buddha's Enlightenment leading up to the foundation of the Order of the Sangha. It also gives various rules for members of the Sangha.

4. Cullavagga Pāli

This volume consists of twelve chapters and they bring the ecclesiastical history of the Buddhist Order down to the Second Buddhist Council.

5. Parivāra Pāli

This is the concluding chapter of the Vinaya Pitaka. It is a digest (synopsis) of the other parts of the Vinaya and consists of nineteen chapters.

A. (a) Commentaries on the Vinaya Pitaka

- ◆ Samantapāsādikā
- ◆ Kankhāvitarani

The Samantapāsādikā was written by Buddhaghosa Thera at the request of Buddhasiri Thera. The Kankhāvitarani was written by Buddhaghosa Thera at the request of Sona Thera.

A. (b) Sub-Commentaries on the Vinaya Pitaka:

- ◆ Sāratthadipani
- ◆ Vajirabuddhi - tikā
- ◆ Vimativinodani
- ◆ Vinayattha-mañjusā

The Sāratthadipani is a sub-commentary (tika) on Samantapāsādikā and it was written by Sāriputta Thera in Ceylon (Sri Lanka). The Vajirabuddhi-tikā is an explanation of difficult passages in the Vinaya Commentaries and written by Mahāvajirabuddhi Thera of Sri Lanka. The Vimativinodani was written by Kassapa Thera. The Vinayattha-mañjusā is on the Kankhāvitarani and was written by Buddhaghosa Thera.

B. Sutta Pitaka

There are five major books in the Sutta Pitaka.

1. Digha Nikāya

Long discourses of the Buddha. It consists of 34 long suttas or discourses.

2. Majjhima Nikāya

Middle Length Sayings. It consists of 152 suttas.

3. Samyutta Nikāya

Kindred Sayings. It consists of 7762 suttas.

4. Anguttara Nikāya

Numerical Sayings. It consists of 9557 suttas.

5. Khuddaka Nikāya

Minor Readings. It consists of 15 independent books, viz.;

(i) Khuddaka Pātha

It contains extracts from earlier works. Going refuge, Ten precepts, Thirty-Two (32) parts of the body and five suttas, i.e. Mangala, Ratana, Karaniya Metta Tirokudda and Nidhikanda.

(ii) Dhammapada

It concludes important stanzas (gathās) collected together from various books in the Canon. The Dhammapada contains 423 verses divided into 26 sections (vaggas).

(iii) Udāna

A short collection of eighty stories. It contains solemn utterances of the Buddha made on special occasions.

(iv) Iti-Vuttaka

It contains one hundred and ten (110) suttas. The term “Iti-vuttaka” means, “Thus spoke the Buddha”.

(v) Sutta Nipāta

It consists of five (5) vaggas, i.e. Uraga, Cula, Maha, Atthaka and Parayana. The first four vaggas consist of forty-five short lyrics while the fifth contains sixteen suttas.

(vi) Vimānavatthu

It describes the splendour of various celestial abodes belonging to different divine-beings (devas). Here, the monks report their previous life in heavens.

(vii) Petavatthu

It consists of stories of persons born in the peta-world (world of ghost) owing to various misdeeds.

(viii) Thera-gāthā

A collection of poems which contain the life-stories of monks. They are the poems of joy uttered by them on their new-found freedom.

(ix) Theri-gāthā

A collection of poems which contain the life-stories of nuns.

(x) Jātaka:

It contains the stanzas pertaining to the five hundred and forty seven (547) former birth stories of the Buddha. Here, the Jātaka stories are not found but the theory of every Jātaka story.

(xi) Niddesa:

A commentarial work. It is divided into two parts, viz. The Mahā-Niddesa and the Culla-Niddesa.

(xii) Patisambhidāmagga:

It describes how analytical knowledge can be acquired by an Arahant (Perfected One). It presents a systematic exposition of important topics of Buddhism.

(xiii) Apadāna:

It contains five hundred and forty seven (547) biographies of monks and forty (40) biographies of nuns.

(xiv) Buddhsvansa:

It contains the lives of twenty five (25) Buddhas of whom the Buddha was the last.

(xv) Cariyāpitaka:

It contains the certain stories of the previous births of the Enlightened-Ones, chiefly setting forth the ten (10) perfections (pāramis).

B. (a) Commentaries on the Sutta Pitaka:

- ◆ Sumangalavilāsini
- ◆ Papañcasūdani
- ◆ Sāratthappakāsini
- ◆ Manorathapūrani
- ◆ Paramatthajotikā
- ◆ Paramatthadipani
- ◆ Saddhammapajjotikā
- ◆ Saddhammapakāsini
- ◆ Visuddhajanavilāsini
- ◆ Maduratthavilāsini

Sumangalavilāsini is on the Digha Nikaya and was written by the Thera Buddhaghosa at the request of Dathanaga Thera.

Papañcasūdani was written by Buddhaghosa Thera at the request of the monk Buddhhamitta. It is on the Majjhima Nikaya.

Sāratthappakāsini is also a Buddhaghosa's commentary on the Samyutta Nikaya written at the request of Jotipala Thera.

Manorathapūrāni was written by Buddhaghosa Thera at the request of Jotipala and Jivaka. It is on the Anguttara Nikaya.

Paramatthajotikā is on the Khuddakapatha, Dhammapada, Jataka and Sutta Nipata and it was written by the Thera Buddhaghosa.

Paramatthadīpani was written by Dhammapala Thera on the Udāna, Iti-vuttaka, Vimanavatthu, Petavatthu, Theragātha, Therīgātha and Cariyapitaka.

Saddhammapajjotikā is the commentary on the Niddesa written by Upasena Thera. It was written in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) at the request of Deva Thera.

Saddhammapakāsini is the commentary on the Patisambhidamagga written by Mahanama Thera of Ceylon.

Visuddhajanavilāsini is the commentary written on the Apadana. Its authour is unknown.

Maduratthavilāsini is the commentary on the Buddhavamsa and was written by Buddhadatta Thera at the request of Buddhasiha Thera.

C. Abhidhamma Pitaka:

“Abhidhamma” means the “Higher-teaching” or “abstruse dhamma”. There are seven (7) major books in the Abhidhamma Pitaka.

1. Dhammasangani

“Classification of Dhammas”. It enumerates and defines a number of categories of terms occurring in the other books (Nikayas). The chief subject of this book is ethics.

2. Vibhanga

It deals with the different categories and formulas given in the Dhammasangani.

3. Dhātukathā

“Discourses on Elements”. It discusses the truths, Dependent Origination and mental characteristics found in converted persons.

4. Puggalapaññatti

The subject matter of this book is person (puggala). It groups human types first under one term then under two and so on up to ten. It is considered to be the earliest book of the Abhidhamma pitaka.

5. Kathāvatthuppakarana

It discusses five-hundred (500) views pertaining to Buddhism and another 500 views of other heretical doctrines.

6. Yamaka

It explains various teaching viz., Mula (roots), Khandha (aggregates), Citta (consciousness), Sacca (truths) etc.

7. Patthāna

It explains the Causal Theory or “Conditional Relations” and it deals with twenty-four (24) modes of relations between things, mental and material.

C. (a) Commentaries on the Abhidhamma Pitaka:

There are commentaries and sub-commentaries on the Abhidhamma Pitaka. An exegetical work on the whole pitaka is called the Abhidhamma Mūla Tikā and was written by Ananda Vanaratana of the forest school in Ceylon. Some of the Commentaries are as follows:

- ◆ Atthasālini
- ◆ Sammohavinodani
- ◆ Pañcappakaranatthakathā
- ◆ Patthānappakaranatthakathā

Atthasālini is the commentary on the Dhammasangani and was written by Buddhaghosa Thera.

Sammohavinodani was written by Buddhaghosa Thera on the Vibhanga.

Pañcappakaranatthakathā is a commentary written by Buddhaghosa Thera.

Patthānappakaranatthakathā was written by Buddhaghosa Thera at the request of Culla Buhhaghosa Thera.

There are many other treatises written on the Abhidhamma and their Commentaries are also found. Some of them are as follows:

- ◆ Abhidhammāvatāra
- ◆ Abhidhammapannarasatthana
- ◆ Abhidhammatthavikāsini
- ◆ Abhidhammavibhānava
- ◆ Abhidhammatthasangaha

This book answers the frequently questions like: Is Buddhism to be accepted with blind faith? Is it like other world religions? What is the relevance of Buddhism for the modern world? Does Buddhism suggest any social-economic and political philosophy? Is it acceptable to modern Scientific mind? It highlights the important events in Buddhist History, An Introduction to Canonical Literature on Vinaya Pitaka, Sutta Pitaka, Abhidhamma Pitaka and Commentaries. This book is not only a glimpse into Dhamma but also a good reference book for the students in the Buddhist Studies Course. KMBS dedicates this book to our Spiritual Advisor, Most Ven. B Sri Saranankara Nayaka Maha Thera as our deep reverence and gratitude to his spiritual guidance.

*“Wherever the Buddha’s teachings have flourished,
either in cities or countrysides,
people would gain inconceivable benefits.
The land and people would be enveloped in peace.
The sun and moon will shine clear and bright.
Wind and rain would appear accordingly,
and there will be no disasters.
Nations would be prosperous
and there would be no use for soldiers or weapons.
People would abide by morality and accord with laws.
They would be courteous and humble,
and everyone would be content without injustices.
There would be no thefts or violence.
The strong would not dominate the weak
and everyone would get their fair share.”*

~THE BUDDHA SPEAKS OF
THE INFINITE LIFE SUTRA OF
ADORNMENT, PURITY, EQUALITY
AND ENLIGHTENMENT OF
THE MAHAYANA SCHOOL~

With bad advisors forever left behind,
From paths of evil he departs for eternity,
Soon to see the Buddha of Limitless Light
And perfect Samantabhadra's Supreme Vows.

The supreme and endless blessings
of Samantabhadra's deeds,
I now universally transfer.
May every living being, drowning and adrift,
Soon return to the Pure Land of Limitless Light!

*** The Vows of Samantabhadra ***

I vow that when my life approaches its end,
All obstructions will be swept away;
I will see Amitabha Buddha,
And be born in His Western Pure Land of
Ultimate Bliss and Peace.

When reborn in the Western Pure Land,
I will perfect and completely fulfill
Without exception these Great Vows,
To delight and benefit all beings.

*** The Vows of Samantabhadra Avatamsaka Sutra ***

DEDICATION OF MERIT

May the merit and virtue
accrued from this work
adorn Amitabha Buddha's Pure Land,
repay the four great kindnesses above,
and relieve the suffering of
those on the three paths below.

May those who see or hear of these efforts
generate Bodhi-mind,
spend their lives devoted to the Buddha Dharma,
and finally be reborn together in
the Land of Ultimate Bliss.
Homage to Amita Buddha!

NAMO AMITABHA

南無阿彌陀佛

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