CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The surface of globe is now different from its surface, say, of 200 years back. During this span of time, we see a tremendous development of science and technology which tends to create a wide gap between haves and have-nots. It has changed our outlook towards man and society and has given space for creation of many problems for all of us.

All these changes, in individual as well as in social life have been compelling the philosophers of the world in general and those in India in particular to think over as to how we should get rid of this pathetic state of affairs. The only way, it seems, to get out of this malady is to create moral sense in individuals and in social life rather than creating merely the so-called individualistic scientific temper. It has brought the researcher to think over and discuss the issue of ethics in various dimensions such as politics, social life (socialization), science and technology, ecology & environment, business (economy), literature, culture, education, women & abortion, youth, laws and legislation etc.

Now the question arisen before the present researcher was, why ethics only in terms of Buddhism; and the answer as appeared is, Buddhist ethics finds its foundation on the prevalent social customs, although not changing very frequently. Buddhist ethical values are intrinsically a part of nature, and the perennial laws of cause and effect (Kamma). The simple fact that the Buddhist ethics are rooted in the natural law makes its principles both useful and acceptable even to the modern world. The fact that Buddhist ethical code was formulated nearly 2600 years ago does not detract from its timeless character. Furthermore, Buddhist ethics is a subject which still needs its analysis on the fast changing global scenario.

Buddhist Ethics emerged as a unique entity in the history of mankind in general and in the history of religions in particular. Therefore, in order to understand the practical utility and relevance of Buddhist ethics in the 21st century, efforts have been made in the first chapter. This chapter comprises of four sub-chapters, namely,
Ethics—Meaning and Scope of Ethics, Historical Evolution of Ethics, Necessity of the Study of Ethics, Significance of the Study of Ethics and Buddhist ethics and its salient Features. In the first part, a detailed description has been made over the meaning and scope of ethics. Further, emphasis has also been laid on the historical evolution of ethics. In the Second and third part a thorough study has been carried out on the necessity and significance of study of ethics. In the last section detailed description of the Buddhist ethics and its salient features has been given.

1.1 Ethics- Meaning and Scope and Historical Evolution

At the very outset let us have an overview of the term ‘Ethics’. According to learned scholars, thinkers and philosophers the term Ethics (Pāli: nitisattha, guṇadhamma, ācāravidhi or ācāra, Skt.: nitiśāstra)¹ having its origin from the Greek word Ethikos, pertains to Ethos or Character. Another synonym for it, is ‘moral philosophy’, which is based on the Latin word mores, meaning habits or customs.² Generally, Ethics is described as ‘the science treating of morals.’³ However, in order to grasp the full and authentic meaning of the term, various opinions about the term needs to be analyzed. As G.E. Moore, in Principia Ethica, refusing to take it as the adequate definition of ethics as dealing with ‘the question of what is good or bad in human conduct’, declares: “I may say that I intend to use ‘Ethics’ to cover more than this—a usage for which there is, I think, quite sufficient authority. I am using it to cover the general inquiry into what is good.”⁴

A more detailed description is given by Rev. H.H. Williams: “In its widest sense, the term Ethics would imply an examination into the general character and habits of mankind and would even involve a description or history of the habits of

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⁴ G.E. Moore, Principia Ethica, Cambridge University Press; reprint 1954, p.2
men in particular societies living at different periods of time.” Observing the exceptionally wide field that would be so covered, the author concludes: “Ethics then is usually confined to the particular field of human character and conduct so far as they depend upon or exhibit certain general principles commonly known as moral principles. Men in general characterize their own conduct and character and that of other men by such general adjectives as good, bad, right and wrong, and this is the meaning and scope of these adjectives, primarily in their relation to human conduct, and ultimately in their final and absolute sense, that ethics investigates.”

Furthermore, according to John S. Mackenzie, “Ethics…discusses men’s habits and customs, or in other words their characters, the principles on which they habitually act, and considers what it is that constitutes the rightness or wrongness of those principles, the good or evil of those habits.”

Also, William Lillie defines ethics as “the normative science of the conduct of human beings living in societies—a science which judges this conduct to be right or wrong, to be good or bad, or in some similar way.”

In conjunction with these aspects the opinion of Muirhead may also be borne in mind: “we have two kinds of sciences… those concerning themselves with the description of things as they are, and those which concern themselves with our judgments upon them. The former class have sometimes been called ‘natural’, the latter ‘normative’, or, as is better, ‘critical’ science. Ethics is critical in the sense explained. Its subject-matter is human conduct and character, connections with other facts, but as possessing value in view of a standard or idea.”

The various ethical systems are, therefore, more likely to show divergence when one comes to consider the standard or ideal that furnishes the value of human conduct rather than the prescriptions for the conduct itself. For example, killing, thieving, and lying are in general considered to be evils, though whether they are at

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any time, justifiable will depend on the terms of the ideal; on the other hand, happiness is invariably associated with good.

The study of Ethics as a particular discipline contributing to philosophical inquiry as a whole was originally due to Aristotle, since he distinguished between “first principles or the investigations of the ultimate nature of existence as such, and the subsidiary disciplines which, though having the same purpose, dealt only with a particular approach to it. Ethics constituted one such approach and, of the many hundreds of Aristotelian writings, three major works on ethics have come down to us. Aristotle maintained throughout the fundamental doctrines of Socrates and Plato that virtue is happiness (Silam sukhavaham), a doctrine with which Buddhist thought would, in general, be in agreement.9 Some two centuries earlier, a learned and eminent Brāhmaṇa expounded his teachings that morality and wisdom are essential to the character of a true Brāhmaṇa – the “true Brāhmaṇa” here representing the ideal. The Buddha then asked the man what morality and wisdom are. The Brāhmaṇa answered: “That is the farthest we have advanced, Gotama. It would indeed be well if the esteemed Gotama would clarify with regard to these words.” The lengthy exposition with which the Buddha replied constituted a standard basis for the development of his teaching.

In his article on Ethics in Encyclopedia Britannica, Wolf says: “Ethics is not a positive science but a normative science; it is not primarily occupied with the actual character of human conduct but with the ideal. Many moral philosophers, indeed, have stated explicitly that the business of ethics merely consists in clearing up current moral conceptions and unfolding the ultimate presuppositions involved in them and that it is not its function to discover any new moral ideas. It may be remarked that even the ethics of Aristotle attempted no more, although he was not bound by anything like this authority and the traditions to the Christian church”10

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9 “Puññaṃ ce puriso kayirā, kayirāth etam punappunam / Tamhi chandam kayirātha, sukho puññassa uccayo//” Dhp. verse no. 118
10 Encyclopedia Britannica, vol. 8, 1951, p. 757
He further adds that the main problems of ethics turn chiefly on the following conceptions: i) The highest good of human conduct or its ultimate ideal aim, which may serve as the ultimate standard of right conduct; ii) the origin or source of our knowledge of the highest good or of right or wrong; iii) the sanctions of moral conduct; iv) the motives which prompt right conduct. Another problem discussed by moral philosophers is that of freedom of the will.

Generally, Ethics are divided into three main categories. These are:

a) Descriptive Ethics
b) Normative Ethics and
c) Meta Ethics

Broadly speaking, Descriptive Ethics stands to give an objective account of the moral prescriptions, norms and values of a community or group and to show action-guiding precepts and principles are applied in specific contexts. Whereas normative ethics proposes general rules and principles governing how we ought to act and tries to define the character and shape of the ‘good life,’ or the life we ought to lead. It also aims to offer justification and validation for norms it seeks to establish.

Finally, Meta ethics sees its task as providing conceptual clarification by analyzing the meaning of moral terms and characterizing the logical relations in moral arguments. It critically examines the logic of ethical legitimacy and validation and considers the overall question of the vindication of competing ethical systems.

Furthermore, there are also, three major theories related to ethics. These are:

a) Deontology
b) Utilitarianism
c) Virtue ethics

It is interesting to note here that three of the most influential theories of ethics in the West have been deontology, utilitarianism and virtue ethics. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) was one of the leading exponents of deontological ethics, an approach which emphasizes notions of duty and obligation and is characterized by looking backwards for justification. Deontological systems of ethics typically emphasize
rules, commandments and precepts, which impose obligations we have a duty to fulfill.

In contrary to this, utilitarianism is a theory closely associated with Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) and John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) which focuses on seeking justification in the future through the good consequences that are expected to flow from the performance of an act. Utilitarianism may be characterized as a quantitative and reductionist approach to ethics. It is a type of naturalism.\textsuperscript{11} It can be contrasted with deontological ethics,\textsuperscript{12} which does not regard the consequences of an act as a determinant of its moral worth.

On the other hand, virtue ethics,\textsuperscript{13} which mainly focuses on acts and habits leading to happiness; pragmatic ethics; as well as with ethical egoism and other varieties of consequentialism.\textsuperscript{14}

It offers something of middle way between the other two and tends to look both to the past and future for justification. According to virtue ethics, of which Aristotle (384-322 BCE) was a leading exponent, what is of primary importance in ethics are neither pre-existing obligations nor pleasant outcomes, but the development of character so that a person becomes habitually and spontaneously good. Virtue ethics seeks a transformation of the personality through the development of correct habits over the course of time so that negative patterns of behavior are gradually replaced with positive and beneficial ones. The way to act rightly, according to virtue ethics, is not simply to follow certain kinds of rules, nor seek pleasant consequences, but first and foremost to be or become a certain kind of person. As this transformation proceeds, the virtuous person may well find that his behavior spontaneously comes increasingly into line with conventional moral norms. In virtue ethics, however, in contrast to deontology, these norms are internalized rather than externally imposed.

\textsuperscript{14} Eldon Soifer, \textit{Ethical Issues: Perspectives for Canadians}, Broadview Press, 2009, pp. 11.
Aristotle called the state of well being which results from living rightly eudemonia, a term often translated as ‘happiness’ but which really means something like ‘thriving,’ ‘flourishing,’ or ‘self-realization.’ Virtue ethics thus proposes a path of self transformation in which a person comes gradually to emulate certain ideal standards of behavior disclosed in the conduct of teachers or sages who have already progressed further than us towards the goal of human fulfillment. The behavior of these role-models provides a template on which to shape our own conduct: their positive qualities reveal the virtues we should emulate, and the actions they systematically avoid become codified in the form of precepts which serve to guide their followers.

So far as the question of historical evolution of Ethics is concerned, it may be pointed out that we do not find any exact date of its origin, however, it may be concluded with strong conviction that the moral and ethical practices and principles remained part and parcel of human life since time immemorial or the day man started living in a civilized way. Of course, the modern concept of Ethics and its practicality, utility, implementation and relevance is though drawn from the Western world but as the whole world unanimously accepts the fact that the Vedas, the first and foremost scriptures of human civilization and Sanātana Dharma (presently known as the Hindu Dharma) as well the earliest way of human life so one may find a setup of ethics from that time. If we have a close look of Vedic literature, Upaniṣadic literature and of the Smṛti and Epics like Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata in one context or the other we find the elements of moral and ethical values. The above fact may be supported by the comment of I. C. Sharma as he says that “the Vedic sages were quite aware of the notions of good and evil and the moral distinction between right and wrong.”\(^\text{15}\) Furthermore, the Gods were always referred to as good and demons as evil. The concept of non-violence and universal love is also found in the oldest tradition of the universe.

So the researcher has very humbly tried to come to the conclusion that though the present definition and interpretation of Ethics is a gift of the West to the East, the

\(^{15}\) I. C. Sharma, Ethical Philosophy of India, p. 64
East in general and Indian tradition in particular had this concept long before the time when there was no existence of Western Society or one may say that the West was in a primitive age.

1.2 Necessity of the Study of Ethics

A very general and genuine question may arise in one’s mind about the necessity of ethics and we find several reasons for studying it. Somehow, we all use the ethical principles in our day to day life. Ethics is not some term grabbed out of thin air by philosophers trying to build castles in the air. However, unfortunately, many individuals do not know what actually ethical behaviour is.

Generally, when we think of ethics, what come in our mind are perhaps the words and phrases like ethical behavior, professional ethics, ethics boards, or code of ethics. At its heart, ethics refers to the concept of having moral values and behaviour. When we align our behaviors and actions with these values, we engage in ethical behaviour.

Studying ethics is one way of recapturing our heritage. Why do we teach ethics? This question would have confused our ancestors and at present the modern society is also redefining and researching on it. No doubt, ethics were an inherent part of our ancestors’ daily life. Today, however, we live in a different time, a time when ethical behaviour appears to have diminished in our culture. As a result, a course on ethics is appropriate, valuable and useful.

Following are some of the reasons revealing the necessity of studying Ethics:

- Ethics maintain our credibility and reputation.
- Practice and study of Ethics provide honest facts with integrity and without deception or distortion.
- Speaking and working ethically helps us to use our own original contents.
- Ethical speakers are ones who do not plagiarize their material or try to pass off words and ideas from others as their own.
• Ethical speakers do not deceive their audience. The same can be said that ethical speakers do not distort or warp facts, or worse yet, disguise opinions as fact, in order to argue their thesis or make their point.

• It is important to practice ethical behavior in our personal and social atmosphere, as it helps us to establish trust with others. Besides the ethical grounds provides honest facts with integrity and without deception or distortion.

1.3 Significance of the Study of Ethics

Right from childhood, we have been taught and embedded with what is right and what is wrong, what is merit and what is demerit etc. Ethics is basically a trait that is planted in a very systematic way in the young minds, the difference being in the values and perspectives which make it difficult for one to achieve. Further, the only problem lies in the way the ethical principals are taught. Whether at work, home or school, ethics form an essential part of every human being and hence, should be practiced by everyone, everywhere. The term ethics has different definitions based on different viewpoints. For example, a medical ethicist may define ethics to be a method, procedure, or perspective for deciding how to act and for analyzing complex problems and issues. Similarly, one may take economic, ecological, political or ethical perspective for solving complex issues like global warming. While on one hand, an economist may consider the cost and benefits of various policies related to global warming, an environmentalist, on the other hand, may examine the ethical values and principles. The more significance of it may be analyzed on different grounds as mentioned below:

i) Increases Knowledge: First and foremost, ethical norms help in gaining knowledge, analyzing the truth, and avoiding any chances of errors while examining any given circumstance or situation. Thus, ethicists are most efficient for avoiding errors and prohibiting against fabricating, falsifying, or misrepresenting any data.
ii) **Enhances Cooperation:** Working in any organization or workplace demands great deal of cooperation and coordination amongst people at different levels and different fields. As such, different values are promoted and shared amongst these people, such as trust, accountability, mutual respect and fairness. These only contribute to better and improved working conditions, growth and success, in turn.

iii) **Assists in Dealings:** The right sense of thinking can help us deal with people on a daily basis in the right and positive manner. The absence of right approach and wrong sense can only induce negative feelings, thereby affecting our communication with people as well. Ethics, which are built on trust, help in treating everyone as the children of GOD and love everyone. Hence, ethics that we pass onto others reveals the correct way of living.

iv) **Builds Public Support:** By following proper ethical norms, they ensure building positive and strong public support. For example, people are more likely to invest in a project or fund if they are guaranteed about the quality and integrity of the project. However, if they are unsure of the quality and growth, they probably will step back and look for another similar project that will fulfill their demand.

v) **Promotes Moral & Social Values:** Ethics is considered to be of utmost importance simply because it assists in promoting other significant moral and social values. As such, values like social responsibility, human rights, animal welfare, compliance with the law, health and safety, are some that are supported through practicing proper ethics. Any flaw in our values will reduce our ability to achieve success in our endeavors. For example, a person who fabricates data in a clinical trial can harm or even kill patients.
1.4 Salient Features of Buddhist Ethics

If seen minutely, Buddhist ethics was prescribed nearly 2600 years ago by the Buddha and much water has flown in the river since then. Some scholars opined that Buddhist ethics is no more applicable to the modern society whereas majority of scholars believe that these ethical values will never get old or irrelevant. It is evident that Buddhist ethics originated from the practical needs of Buddhist monks in their pursuit of the path leading to the ultimate goal i.e. liberation from suffering (nibbāna). Besides, it may also be coined that these were set forth by the Great Master to meet the need of Saṅgha in disciplining its members and assembling them under common conditions.

Apart from this ethical foundation, various rules of conduct and discipline were circumstantially introduced throughout his preaching career. These rules served as favorable conditions to assist disciples to develop their individual discipline and for maintaining the perfect community. Such community was helpful in many aspects: facilitating the Buddha’s task of preaching, providing a favorable seat of learning and practicing for his disciples; and serving as the background of their mission of spreading the Buddha’s teachings among masses.

The Buddhist Ethics emerged as a unique entity in the history of mankind in general and in the history of religions in particular. At the very outset the ethical doctrine preached by the Buddha sought to abolish all types of defilement in order to live a pure, pious and spiritual life. To develop a proper understanding of Buddhist ethics one must remember few other facts relating to it. The one and foremost is to understand that Eastern and Western societies have developed on different cultural patterns since time immemorial. These differences are expressed in the various aspects of life as well as in their vision and thinking. As far as ethics is concerned this difference, sometimes, also comes on the surface. For example, the western ethics, which is guided by, somehow, Christian ethics and starts with Aristotelian ethics at large, is anthropocentric by nature. Of course, now-a-days the western ethics is willing to open its door even for the other biological entities as well as for entire nature.
Following are the main features of Buddhist ethics which the researcher has observed during the course of research:

1. Buddhist ethics laid great emphasis on positive virtues like maitrī, karuṇa etc. Furthermore, Aḥiṃsā in Buddhism is represented by twin concepts of maitrī and karuṇā.

2. Buddhist ethical values, norms and standards are the by-products of social interactions of living beings and are not created by any supernatural entity like ‘God’. However, this does not mean that like Greek Sophists, Buddhism is willing to establish a principle like ‘man is the measure of all things’. In fact Buddhism has a strong belief in the harmony of nature, the interdependence of natural beings and the autonomy of natural process. This belief is revealed in the Second Noble Truth of Buddhism where the Buddha explains the cycle of life and death.

3. The Buddhist Ethics emerged as a unique entity in the history of mankind in general and in the history of religions in particular. At the very outset the ethical doctrine preached by the Buddha sought to abolish all types of defilement in order to live a pure, pious and spiritual life.

4. The ethics of Buddhism preaches the middle path between two extremes from the hedonism and utter and absolute self abnegation and asceticism.

5. The Buddhist ethics cautions individuals not to entertain wrong opinions about the self and the world. There is no substantial or permanent self.

6. The ethics of Buddhism suggests that the individual has to work for his salvation through his own efforts.

7. The most important feature of Buddhist ethics is its practicality. The practical nature of Buddhist ethics is conspicuous especially in its primitive period of development, when the disciples of the Buddha flocked around for the purpose of practicing Brahmācārya under his guidance.\(^{16}\)

\(^{16}\) M. V. Ram Kumar Ratnam & K. Srinivas, Buddhist Ethics in Impermanence, New Delhi: D. K. Print World (P) Ltd., 2011, p. 79.
8. Self-restraint or self-control is regarded as the greatest virtue by many religions and ethical doctrines. For instance, in Christianity, Brāhmanism and Confucianism, self restraint is a part of self discipline. In Pāli Tipiṭaka we find that this virtue is taught in many ways. To mention some of them, indriyesu guttadvārata or guarding ‘the doors of the senses’\textsuperscript{17}, rakkhitamānasānam or protecting one’s own mind\textsuperscript{18}, vijitindriyo or a man who conquered his senses\textsuperscript{19}, santo danto niyato or one who is controlled or calmed and restrained\textsuperscript{20}, bhavito citto or a mind which is trained\textsuperscript{21}, samvuto pātimokkhasmi or a man who has restrained himself by means of Pātimokkha\textsuperscript{22}. These sayings are directly or indirectly concerned with self restraint. There are many other words of similar derivation and significance that are used to denote this virtue. This fact simply testifies its significance in Buddhist ethics.

9. Buddhist morality is a matter of character and cultivation and thus focuses on cultivating character rather than evaluating particular acts.\textsuperscript{23}

10. Buddhist moral self cultivation tends to encompass not only the formation of good intentions in the heart and mind but also pushes to help others not only by forming a good will but also by expressing kind words and offering the material things that they also need.\textsuperscript{24}

11. It shows human beings their ultimate wisdom, how to use it and how to live with it. It shows the way through which men can destroy their sufferings forever, cut off the circle of birth and death forever and get ultimate peace forever, if practiced.\textsuperscript{25}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item S. II, p. 218
\item Sn., p. 63
\item Ibid., p. 250
\item Dhp., verse no. 142
\item Sn., p. 340
\item Ibid, p. 25
\end{enumerate}
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12. Buddhism also holds, in the doctrine of no-self, that all individuals are equal in the most profound sense.\(^\text{26}\)

13. It teaches to show the same tolerance, forbearance and brotherly love to all men, without distinction and kindness towards the members of animal kingdom.\(^\text{27}\)

14. Buddhist Ethics lays utmost emphasis on the observance of Middle Path.\(^\text{28}\)

15. Buddhist ethics always ignores the result of action. Doing a good thing is sufficient because it is good to do it and not because it brings pleasurable results. Certainly Buddhism does not reject the good result from the good action. In the Buddhist ethics, the result is viewed as a supplementary of being a good person.\(^\text{29}\)

16. The Buddhist ethics strives for individual salvation so that a person be more responsible for his/her own weal and woe both in the present and future life than any other religionists.\(^\text{30}\)

17. Buddhist ethics, thus, in spite of the fact that the system has so many precepts and instructions, is in its foundation autonomous, more autonomous than the ethics of any other religion.\(^\text{31}\)

18. Another characteristic of Buddhist ethics is its practicability. In Buddhism no sharp boundary line is indeed drawn between ethical theory and moral practice. Theory, if we can consider it separately, is valuable only when it can be applied to practice; the former always presupposes the existence of the latter; there can be no theory which is thought of merely for its own sake. In the case of spiritual enlightenment, personal experience is of vital importance. That is why the Buddha says: the most important things with spiritual

\(^{26}\) Carrithers (1985) suggests that the Buddhist concept of the ‘self’ (which he relates to Mauss’s concept of the ‘Moi’) is one which is easily transportable across cultural frontiers. This enhances the prospects for a Buddhist doctrine of universal human rights return) …(source: The Ocean of Buddhist Wisdom, vol. 4, p. 370)

\(^{27}\) JIABU, vol. 2, 2009, p. 117

\(^{28}\) Somparn Promta in an essay concerning Buddhist Ethics, Chulaongkorn University Press, 2008, p. 2

\(^{29}\) Ibid., p. 10.


\(^{31}\) Ibid., p. 90.
enlightenment therefore, are to experience it in our own person. The case is
same with Buddhist ethics too. The mere knowledge of it is of no use for
Buddhist followers.\footnote{Ibid., p. 92-93.}

19. Women who constitute nearly half the segment of population were given equal
opportunities with men in Buddhism. As a consequence their status was
enhanced.\footnote{I.B. Horner, Women Under Primitive Buddhism, Delhi, 1975, p. 1; L.M. Joshi, Studies in Buddhistic
Culture of India during the 7th and 8th century A.D. 2nd revised edition, Delhi, 1977, p. 368.} In the Therī Gāthā we find a collection of stanzas, which are
attributed to 73 of leading nuns (Therīs) during the life of the Buddha.

20. The Buddha’s idea of ethical code of conduct is applicable to one and all and
at all times. It is not concerned with metaphysics; instead, it deals with this
world and the suffering (dukkha) in human life.

21. In Buddhism there is voice against ignorance, superstition and dogmatism.

Concludingly, it can be maintained that Buddhism was essentially a Social and
religious movement. Its ethics endeavor to solve the problems of man because it is the
man and his role in the society which occupies a central place in Buddhism. Buddhist
metaphysics aims at ameliorating the lot for human beings. It works tirelessly for the
mitigation of the distress and disabilities of man.
CHAPTER 2
BUDDHIST ETHICS: CONCEPT AND PRACTICE

After attaining the supreme state of enlightenment at Bodhgaya under the Bodhi tree on the full moon day of Vesāka, the Buddha spent his remaining life of, forty five years, wandering and preaching his doctrines to the people. For this long period of his missionary life, the Buddha is said to have delivered a large number of sermons to different kinds and classes of the people on different occasions and at various places. His teachings are grouped in the three Piṭaka viz.: Suttapiṭaka, Vinayapiṭaka and Abhidhammapiṭaka. The whole of his teaching may, however, be classified mainly into two levels: Lokuttara (Supra mundane level) and the Lokiya (Mundane level). The former aims at delivering the followers from worldly sufferings whereas the latter emphasizes on the right way of belief developed their minds up to a higher stage ready for deliverance so that they can, to some extent, have peace and progress in their lives.

A thorough study will make one understand that the Buddha was a great psychologist and he knew well the mental conditions of the human beings. He propagated his doctrines in accordance with the condition of minds of listeners.

From this, it is evident that the teachings of the Buddha are practical for all walks of the people. Though the highest goal in Buddhism is to attain Nibbāna, it is not possible for all people to go up to that stage. Even the Buddha himself could not lead every practitioner to this supreme state of bliss. Despite this, he never neglected the common people and preached several doctrines for their benefits. The teachings of the Buddha, if applied properly, can solve problems of human society. If anyone sincerely follows it, certainly he will get benefit of it in his present life.

As have been mentioned above the teachings of the Buddha are very vast, so it is not possible to explain all of his doctrines in this limited chapter. This chapter, therefore, deal with some essential teachings which are usually practiced by the common Buddhists.
2.1 **Buddhist Ethics and the Four Noble Truths**

The ethical doctrines of Buddhism have some social foundations and implications as well. Individuals are part and parcel of any organized society. In isolation from society an individual loses his identity as a human individual. Although, it is true that the Buddha attained enlightenment under the Bodhi tree as a result of intense austerities and deep contemplation, he lived and flourished in a society whose conscious and unconscious influences were cast on his personality and thought. Every great saint represents the explicit flowering of the dominant forces of his time. The insistent and compulsive urgency with which the problem of pain and suffering represented itself to the sensitive mind of the Buddha was a consequence of the social ethos and spirit of that age in which he lived. The society of his time was pulsating with pessimism and monasticism and there were many wandering preachers. The Buddha himself was conscious of his moral teachings and their impact on the society. In the *Dhammapada* it is mentioned that:

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“Yathāgāraṃ succhannaṃ vutto na samativijjhati /
Evāṃ subhāvitaṃ cittāṃ rāgo na samativijjhati //”
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The Four Noble Truths (Pāli: *Ariya-sacca*; Skt.: *Ārya-satya*)\(^{35}\) constitutes fundamental teachings of Buddhism. Before proceeding further, it is essential to note here that a few Sanskrit treatises that mainly belong to the Theravāda represent the four noble truths as the core, central and fundamental dogmas of Buddhism whereas on the other side the Mahāyānist authors do not attach much importance to the four noble truths. As stated earlier, the four noble truths are the basic foundation of Buddhist teaching, and that is why they are so important. In fact, if one does not understand the four noble truths and if one has not experienced the truth of this teaching personally, it is impossible for him or her to understand what really the Buddha’s Dhamma is?

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\(^{34}\) *Dhp.*, verse no. 13

However, here arises a question. Why these four noble truths are regarded as the base or essence of Buddhist teachings? And the answer to this is— it is a natural phenomenon that every living creature in the universe runs after happiness and tries to overcome suffering. This is something eternal and does not require any finding or references.

This leads us to the teaching of four noble truths which provides an understanding of the relationship between two set of events: casualty and their effects. On one side we have suffering but it does not come from nowhere, it arises as a result of its own causes and conditions. On the other hand we have happiness which also arises from a particular set of causes and conditions.

Four noble truths clearly distinguish two sets of causes and effects: those causes which produce suffering and those which cease it and produce happiness.

By showing us how to distinguish these in our own life, the teachings aim at nothing less than to enable us to fulfill our deepest aspiration— to be happy and to overcome suffering. Now let us turn to the details of Buddhist teaching on the Four Noble Truths.

The Four Noble Truths also known as Ariyasaccāni are the basic teachings of the Buddha and that is why if one does not understand and experience these truths personally, it is impossible to practice the dhamma of the Buddha. The Four Noble Truths can abundantly and repeatedly be found in Dīghanikāya, Saccasamīyutta of the Samyuttanikāya, Saccavibhaṅga of Abhidhammapiṭaka, Saccaniddesa of Visuddhimagga and so on. We also find the references of these four noble truths in several passages of Buddhist Sanskrit literature such as Lalitavistara, Mahāvastu, Mahāvyutpatti, Dharmasaṅgraha, Daśabhūmika sūtrā, Mūla-Mādhyamika Kārikā etc.

According to Buddhist tradition, after having obtained final enlightenment under Bodhi tree at Bodhagaya, Siddhārtha Gautama turned into the Buddha proceeded towards Vārāṇasī where in a Deer park (presently at Sarnath) taught to his five former companions namely Koṇḍañña, Bhaddiya, Vappa, Mahānāma and Assajji the Four Noble Truths. These are:
1) **Dukkha Ariyasaccam** or the Noble Truth of Suffering.

2) **Dukkhasamudaya Ariyasaccam** or the Noble Truth of Origin of Suffering.

3) **Dukkhanirodham Ariyasaccam** or the Noble Truth of Cessation of Suffering

4) **Dukkhanirodhagāminīpaṭipatā Ariyasaccam** or the Noble Truth of Way to the Cessation of Suffering

The first Noble Truth enunciates that there is Dukkha. Now, question is what exactly Dukkha is. And it is said that Dukkha is basically a feeling which is unpleasant or unfavorable one and one bears it with heavy heart. In Pali it has been defined as: ‘Paṭikūl vedanā ti dukkhā, asātā vedanā ti dukkhām’ etc. The Buddha explains it with various types of suffering in his First Noble truth as:

“Katamañca bhikkhave dukkhaṃ ariyasaccam? Jātipi dukkhā, jarāpi dukkhā, vyādhipi dakkho, maraṇampi dakkham, vyādhipi dakkho, appiyehi sampayogo dakkho, piyehi vippayogo dakkho, yampicchaṃ na labhati tampi dakkham, saṅkhittena pañcupādānakkhandhā dukkhā.”

— meaning birth is suffering, decay is suffering, illness is suffering, and death is suffering. Presence of objects we hate is suffering, separation from the objects we love is suffering, not to obtain what we desire is suffering. In short, the fivefold clinging to existence is suffering.

Here we can recognize three kinds of suffering. Birth, old age, illness and death are physical sufferings. Presence of objects we hate, separation from objects we love and not to obtain what we desire characterizes mental suffering. The fivefold clinging to existence i.e. Rūpa, Vedanā, Saṅnā, Saṅkhāra and Viññāṇa which constitute our personality represent the essential form of suffering.

“However according to Buddhism Jāti (Birth) is not merely a single moment in one’s life, it is not only the physical process of being born, but it refers to the appearance of the five aggregates of existence again and again. Jāra (Decay) is also termed as dakkha as with the passage of time the sense organs decay and become feeble. Similarly Maraṇaṃ (Death) is also dukkha, because it is not only a definite moment of life, but it refers to the decay, dissolution and the continuous change of

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physical, mental and psychical elements of existence. In other words, the five groups of Skandhas (Aggregates) continuously undergo a process of decay until they are shattered to pieces”, as termed by Professor Angraj Choudhary.\textsuperscript{37}

As, it is well versed in Dhammapada: “Neither in the sky nor in the depths of ocean, nor having entered the caverns of the mountain, nay such a place is not to be found in the world where a man might dwell without being overpowered by death.”\textsuperscript{38}

It is pertinent to mention here that suffering which surrounds our life is regarded as the most universal feature of life. Furthermore, it shows that suffering is common to all; no one can escape from it except the enlightened ones.

To sum up, according to the Buddhist view, when we are separated from all the objects we like and not obtaining them when we need results in suffering or dukkha.\textsuperscript{39}

The Second Noble Truth deals with the cause of suffering. It can be seen that the Buddha identifies the cause of dukkha in Samyuttanikāya and Mahāvagga, and also in the Mahāsatipaṭṭhānasutta of Dīghanikāya, as follows:

“Idaṃ kho pana bhikkhave, dukkhasamudayo ariyasaccam yāyāṃ taṇhā, ponobbhavikā nandirāgasahagatā tatra tatrābhinandinī, seyyathidām, kāmataṇhā, bhavataṇhā, vibhavataṇhā.”\textsuperscript{40}

The Buddha describes the cause of suffering in following words: yā yā taṇhā ponobbhavikā i.e. Taṇhā (craving) leads to rebirth which, accompanied by pleasure and lust, finds its delight here and there. In this respect, it is threefold, namely, kāmataṇhā (desire or craving pertaining to sensual pleasure), bhavataṇhā (desire or craving to take re-birth) and vibhavataṇhā (desire or craving of deliverance).

Taṇhā is thus a selfish inordinate attachment towards six kinds of objects attached with one’s six sense organs. Here a genuine question arises, how it arises and where it resides. One is endowed with six sense organs, namely, Cakkhu (eyes), Sota


\textsuperscript{38} “Na antalikkhe na samuddamajjhe, na pabhatānaṃ pavissa /
Na vijjati so jagatipadeso, yatthaṭhitaṃ nappasahetha maccu /”; Dhp., 128.


\textsuperscript{40} D., vol., 2, Swami Dwarikadas Shastri (ed. & tr.), op. cit., 1996, p. 536.
(ears), Ghāṇa (nose), Jīvḥā (tongue), Kāya (body) and Mana (mind) and with these sense organs one enjoys various objects of the world. One sees the beautiful objects of the world with eyes, hears melodious sound with ears, smells good perfumes with nose, tastes dainty dishes with tongue and touch as soft things with the body. The more one enjoys, the more one wants to have them. Thus, one’s craving increases and multiplies. So craving, indeed, resides in these sense organs. Tanhā is of three kinds. These are: Kāma-tanhā, Bhava-tanhā and Vibhava-tanhā.

The Buddha has compared tanhā to a seamstress who brings two ends together and joins them. It is for this reason, that the Buddha says Natthi rāgasamo aggi—there is no fire like lust. With the help of the law of dependent origination called Paṭiccasamuppāda the Buddha has explained the cause of craving. If craving causes dukkha in life, then dukkha can be eradicated by removing craving.

This led the Buddha to enunciate the Third Noble Truth i.e. dukkha can cease with the complete cessation of this thirst:

“I am free from desire for pleasant sensations that one gets from the objects of one’s liking. When one eradicates desires completely, the craving starts decreasing. However here arises a genuine question, as, how one can eradicate carving. It may be pointed out that if we wish to get free from the ailment of suffering fully and finally, we have to eliminate it by the root, lying in ignorance. But how does one go about eliminating ignorance. The answer follows clearly from the nature of the adversary. Since ignorance is a state of not knowing things as they really are, what is needed is knowledge of things as they really are. Not merely conceptual knowledge, knowledge as idea, but perceptual knowledge, a knowing which is also a seeing, visualizing and realizing. This kind of knowing is called paññā (wisdom).

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41 Dhp., verse nos. 202, 251.
It helps to correct the distorting work of ignorance. It enables us to grasp things as they are in actuality. But how wisdom can be acquired? Wisdom cannot be gained by mere learning, by gathering and accumulating a battery of facts. The Buddha says that wisdom is to be cultivated. It comes into being through a set of conditions, conditions which we have the power to develop. These conditions are actually mental factors, components of consciousness, which will be discussed thoroughly in the next sub chapter.

The third noble truth asserts that the ending of rebirth and suffering results in eternal peace which is Nibbāna. Walpola Rahula states that Nibbāna is a quality of life to be realized within by following a path which is not mere an idea or place. Nibbāna can be realized in this very life. It is not necessary to wait till you die to attain it. However, it is to keep in mind that this supreme state of bliss is achieved only through by practicing the Noble Eightfold Path also called as Ariyo-Atthaṅgiko Maggo or MajjhimaPaṭipadā. This path is explained as:

2.1.2 The Noble Truth of Way to the Cessation of Suffering or The Noble Eightfold Path

The Buddha has shown to the mankind the path of removal of suffering. It is the Noble Eight-fold Path (Ariyo-Atthaṅgiko Maggo or Majjhima Paṭipadā). It is acknowledged as an excellent course of spiritual training and has eight constituents or aṅgas. As mentioned in the Mahāsatipaṭṭhānasutta of the Dīghanikāya, the path has the following elements:

1. **Sammā Diṭṭhi** (Right View or Understanding)
2. **Sammā Saṅkappo** (Right Resolution)
3. **Sammā Vācā** (Right Speech)
4. **Sammā Kammanto** (Right Action)
5. **Sammā Ājīvo** (Right Livelihood)
6. **Sammā Vāyāmo** (Right Effort/ Endeavour)

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7. **Sammā Sati** (Right Mindfulness)

8. **Sammā Samādhi** (Right Concentration)

This is the path between the two extremes viz., excess worldly pleasure and the extreme self-mortification. Let us, now, have a thorough explanation of these eight constituents:

1. **Sammā Diṭṭhi** (Right View or Understanding):

   "Yaṃ kho, bhikkhave, dukkhe ſānaṃ, dukkhasamudaye ſānaṃ, dukkhanirodhe ſānaṃ, dukkhanirodhagāminiya paṭipadāya ſānaṃ, ayaṃ vucaṭṭi, bhikkhave, sammādiṭṭhi."\(^{45}\)

   Right view is the knowledge of understanding the four Noble Truths in their true sense. It refers to understanding the things in their true nature or *yathābhūta*. This is possible only when mind is free from all obsessions and impurities or āsavas through ethical conduct and mental culture. The word *Diṭṭhi* in *Sammādiṭṭhi* stands for view, belief, dogma, theory, speculation etc.\(^{46}\) The prefix *Sammā* means proper, right, best, perfect etc. Thus, *Sammādiṭṭhi* means proper understanding.

2. **Sammā Saṅkappo** (Right Resolution):

   Right resolution means the thought of renunciation, of detachment, of compassion and love, of non-harming and non-violence. As mentioned in the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhānasutta* of the *Dīghanikāya*:

   "Nekkhammasaṅkappo abyāpādasaṅkappo aviḥīṃsāsaṅkappo, ayavṃ vucaṭṭi bhikkhave sammāsaṅkappo //"\(^{47}\)

3. **Sammā Vācā** (Right Speech):

   "Musāvādā veramaṇi, pisuṇāya vācāya veramaṇi, pharusāya vācāya veramaṇi, samphappalāpā veramaṇi, ayaṃ vucaṭṭi bhikkhave sammāvācā //"\(^{48}\)

   It is abstention from falsehood, backbiting, slander, harsh, impolite and malicious speech, idle talk and gossip. When a person abstains himself from all these

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\(^{45}\) D., vol., 2, Swami Dwarikadas Shastri (ed. & tr.), op. cit., p. 540.


\(^{47}\) D., vol., 2, Swami Dwarikadas Shastri (ed. & tr.), op. cit.

\(^{48}\) Ibid.
negative activities, then the truth is naturally spoken as something that is profitable for the speaker and listener both. It is better to be silent than to engage in useless chatter.\textsuperscript{49}

4. **Sammā Kammanto (Right Action):**

\begin{quote}
“Pāṇātipātā veramaṇi, adinnādānā veramaṇi, kāmesu micchācārā veramaṇī ayaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, sammākammanto //”\textsuperscript{50}
\end{quote}

It is refraining from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct etc. It aims at promoting the moral, honorable and peaceful conduct of a person.

5. **Sammā Ājīvo (Right Livelihood):**

Right Livelihood consists in refraining from earning one’s living in a manner which brings harm to others, for example, trading in weapons, in living beings, in flesh and intoxicants, cheating in trade, selling poisonous articles etc., as clearly stated by the Buddha:

\begin{quote}
“Idha bhikkhave, anuppannāvako micchājīvānaṃ pahāti, sammā ājīvena, jivikaṃ kappeti, ayaṃ vuccati bhikkhave sammā-ājīvo.”\textsuperscript{51}
\end{quote}

6. **Sammā Vāyāmo (Right Effort/ Endeavour):**

It is of four kinds: (a) preventing evil thoughts that have not yet arisen; (b) getting rid of such evil thoughts that have already arisen; (c) producing and cultivating good and wholesome thoughts that have not yet arisen; (d) conserving and bringing to perfection good and wholesome thoughts that have already arisen. This, in Buddhism, is the right mental exercise.

\begin{quote}
“Idha bhikkhave, bhikkhu anuppannānaṃ pāpakānaṃ akusalānaṃ pajahati ayaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, sammāvāyāmo.”\textsuperscript{52}
\end{quote}

7. **Sammā Sati (Right Mindfulness):**

According to *Mahāsatipaṭṭhānasutta*, mindfulness has maintained four types of ways as follows:

\textsuperscript{50} D., vol., 2, Swami Dwarikadas Shastri (ed. & tr.), op. cit.
\textsuperscript{51} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{52} Ibid., 540-41
“Idha bhikkhave, bhikkhu kāye kāyānupassī viharati ātāpī sampajāno satimā, vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassanam vedanāsu pi citte pi dhammesu, dhammānupassī viharati ātāpī sampajāno satimā vineyya loke, abhijjhādomanassanam vucaṭi, bhikkhave, sammāsati.”

Sati means becoming constantly aware and mindful of activities of body, sensations, mental states and ideas or cognitive processes, thoughts, etc. By right mindfulness man gains self-control and becomes self-possessed. It aims at self-mastery. It also stands for having a look at various incidents, things around us; differentiate between merit and demerit etc. In Taking help of its two characteristics marks of *Apīlāpana lakkhaṇa* and *Upaggaṇhaṇa*, *sāti* proceeds further by reminding the mind what is good and what is bad, what is right and what is wrong, what is helpful and what is harmful and likewise. As mentioned in *Dhammapada*:

> “Attānaṃ ce piyaṃ jañṇā, rakkheyya naṃ surakkhitam /
> Tiṇṇam aṇṇataram yāmam, paṭijaggeyya paṇḍito //”

Etymologically, the Pali term *Sati* (Skt.: *Smṛti*) means memory but it was given new connotations in early Buddhism and thus the rendering of *Sati* simply as memory is inadequate in most of the contexts. It has been explained in diverse ways and contexts in Buddhist Canon. It seems that *Sati* has different functions on different occasions for different purposes. In the *Dukkhadhammasutta* of the *Salāyatana Samyutta*, the Buddha gives instructions on how to behave in daily life: “And how, monks, has a monk comprehended a mode of conduct and way of living in such a way that as he conducts himself thus and as he lives thus, evil unwholesome states of covetousness and dejection do not flow into him? Suppose a man should enter a thorny forest. There would be thorns in front of him, thorns behind him, thorns to his left, thorns to his right, thorns below him, and thorns above him. He would go forward, being mindful (*sata*), he would go back, being mindful, thinking: ‘may no

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53 Ibid. p. 541.
55 Dhp., verse no. 157.
thorn (prick) me!’ So too, monks, whatever in the world has an agreeable and pleasing nature are called a thorn in the Noble One’s Discipline.”

Furthermore, the Buddha says that ‘Ekāyano ayaṃ bhikkhave maggo sattānaṃ visuddhiyā’ ‘Oh! Monks this is the only way for purification of being’. There is no meditation, no way of purification without four foundations of mindfulness (sati).

This implies that one should constantly practice mindfulness in every moment of life in order to be away from unwholesome state of mind, which results from contact with attractive objects.

8. Sammā Samādhi (Right Concentration):

“Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu vivecce, vā catutthajjhānaṃ upasampajja, viharati ayaṃ, vuccati bhikkhave sammāsamādhi.”

It is the practice of the four dhyānas (Pāli: Jhana) or meditative absorption. In the first dhyāna, there arises detachment from sensual objects and unwholesome states of mind. It is accompanied by initial application of mind or vitakka and sustained thought or vicāra, rapture or pīti and joy or sukha born of detachment (upekkhā).

In the second dhyāna, all diverse mental activities are suppressed, inner tranquility and one-pointedness (ekaggata) of mind are developed and rapture and joy still continue. In the third dhyāna, the feeling of joy disappears but rapture continues. In the fourth dhyāna, all sensations of happiness and unhappiness, joy and sorrow are no more, only pure equanimity or uppekha and awareness or sati remains. It should be noted that ekaggata is a common factor in all the dhyānas. In fact ekaggata is the essence of a dhyāna.

The Noble Eightfold Path is thus a practical way shown by the Buddha for a tensionless, tranquil and peaceful life. It is a self discipline of body, speech and mind.

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57 Ibid., 543.
58 D., vol., 2, Swami Dwarikadas Shastri (ed. & tr), op. cit., p. 541.
It is the path of self-purification. The essence of path has been put forth in the following verse by the Buddha:

"Sabbapāpassa akaranam kusalassa upsampadā / Sacitta pariyodapanam, etam Buddhana sāsanam //" 59

2.2 Threefold Path of Sīla, Samādhi and Paññā

The Buddha has prescribed a path of gradual purification. It has three steps namely: Sīla (virtue), Samādhi (concentration) and Paññā (wisdom). Sīla helps in curtailing the physical and vocal misdeeds. Samādhi minimizes the pollution of mind. Paññā removes the darkness of ignorance and unfolds the nature of reality.

In words of Prof. Mahesh Tiwary, ‘the man having such soothing light of wisdom, finally destroys the chain of attachment and achieves a state of desirelessness. It is named as Nibbāna.’ 60

So let us have a brief overlook of these three terms. Sīla (skt.: Śīla) originally means ‘habit, nature, character, behavior.’ 61 It has been analyzed in various contexts and from various standpoints. However, here it is taken in a sense of purifying physical and vocal misdeeds and also a means of preparing a solid background for building a strong structure of character.

Sīla is the very basic of Samādhi (concentration) and Vipassanā (insight wisdom). It is not only the control of the body and speech to restrain from doing and speaking of sinful, but it is also the control of violence in the society as well. As it is said in Visuddhimagga: “When a wise man, establishes well in virtue develops consciousness and understanding then as a bhikkhu ardent sagacious, he succeeds in

59 Dhp., verse no.183.
60 Prof. Mahesh Tiwary in his forward of the book Paññā in Early Buddhism by Dr. Baidyanath Labh, Delhi: Eastern Book Linkers, 1991, p. iii.
disentangling this tangle.”"\(^{62}\) Sīla is so called because it keeps one from bodily and verbal evils.\(^{63}\) It is not just morality or moral conduct but also the condition of peace.

**Types of Sīla:**

Following are the two types of Sīla which have been mentioned in *Brahmajālasutta*, the very first discourse of *Dīgha Nikāya* and also in *Visuddhimagga*.

a) **Sīla for monks:** Sīla for monks means the monastic discipline or rules which have to be followed by monks who renounce worldly life to devote them in monastery, temples as well as in forests. There are 227 rules commonly known as *Bhikkhupātimokkha*, the fundamental precepts for monks. The four major precepts are described as follows:-

1. *Pātimokkhasaṃvarasīla:* It stands for self control to restrain from fracturing the disciplines laid down by the Buddha.
2. *Ājīvapārisuddhisīla:* It is the self control to restrain from doing wrong way for getting a living.
3. *Indriyasamvarasīla:* It is the self control to restrain the senses which arises due to coming of the six sense organs into contact with their respective objects.
4. *Paccayasannissitasīla:* It is the self control to regulatory contemplations, whenever monks have to use the four necessaries of monks’ daily life.\(^{64}\) These four are: *cīvara, piṇḍapāta, senāsana* and *gilānapaccayabhesajja*.

b) **Sīla for laymen**\(^{65}\): The following are the Sīlas that can be practiced even by laymen:

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\(^{63}\) S. Rinpoche (ed.), *Ten Suttas From Dīgha Nikāya*, p. 448.

\(^{64}\) The four necessities for monks are *Cīvara* (cloth), *Piṇḍapāta* (alms), *Senāsana* (dwelling-place) and *Gilānapaccayabhesajja* (medicine), Ibid, p. 449.

\(^{65}\) ‘It means both the male and female in Buddhism’, Ibid.
1. *Pañca-Sīla* (Five precepts): These *Sīlas* needed to be observed by all Buddhist devotees who do not have much time in everyday life owing to their preoccupation in their family life. The *Pañca Sīlas* are:
   i. to restrain from killing
   ii. to restrain from stealing
   iii. to restrain from sexual misconduct
   iv. to restrain from lying, and
   v. to restrain from taking intoxicants.

2. *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-Sīlas*: These are similar to the *Pañca-Sīla* with an addition of three more. The extra three are:

   There are some more *Sīlas* like *Brahmacariya-sīla*, *Āṭṭhaṅgika-sīla* and *Navaṅga-sīla* for laymen to keep vows similar to those mentioned in *Pañca-sīla*. In the last three *Sīlas* one has to take eight and nine vows on different occasions. On the other hand the eight vows in *Āṭṭhaṅgika-sīla* are called *Āṭṭhaṅgika-uposathasīla*. ‘The *Dasa-sīlas* come under the rules of novice as *Sāmaṇera*’.\(^{66}\) However the most fundamental is the *Pañca-sīla*, which regulates the social life of humans. Whenever *Sīla* is brought into practice of man, no harm is done to anybody. For the sake of peaceful life the Buddha has laid down these rules.

**Samādhi (Concentration)**

Besides *Sīla* (morality), *Samādhi* (Concentration) has very important role in Buddhism. *Buddhaghosācariya* uses the term *Citta* and *Samādhi* synonymously. *Samādhi* is the profitable unification of mind (*Cittassaekaggatā*).\(^{67}\) It means that mind is put to focusing on a single object. It stresses itself on only one object to stand still. The real nature of mind is always flirting. Whenever, mind is controlled and fixed at one point, it will become very powerful, useful and peaceful. If one can cultivate

\(^{67}\) Vism. (The Path of Purification), Bhikkhu Nanamoli (tr.), Singapore: Singapore Buddhist Meditation Centre, 1956, p.84.
one’s own mind in proper ways, it would stand still, steadfast without fluctuation and flirting.

Concentration can also be defined as the unification of wholesome mental states (Kusalacittekaggatā Samādhi). According to Phramaha Narāsabho “The depth meaning of Samādhi and the significance of it seems to be awarded for which the real equivalent in English is not possible. It has been rendered by terms as ‘concentration’, ‘meditation’, ‘contemplation’, and so forth but inadequately”.68

T.W. Rhys Davids engaged in translation, confesses that it is difficult, if possible at all, to find any single English word for Pāli which would convey its full force without distorting its connotation.69 On the other hand, Samādhi in Abhidhamma, has been defined synonymous with ‘Cittassa ekaggatā’ (one-pointedness of mind).

“Yā cittassa ṭhite, saṇṭhiti, avaṭhiti avisāhāro, avikkhepo, avisāhata-mānasatā, samatho, samādhindriyaṇa, samādhi-balaṇa, sammāsamādhi.”70

Nāgasena, in Milindapañha explains Samādhi as the leader. He says:

“Samādhi, ye kechi kusalā Dhammā, sabbe te samādhippamukhā hoti, samādhinitrā, samādhipoṇa samādhipabbhārā’ ti”71

Samādhi itself is based on the morality for its development. And Samādhi takes the origin of moral conduct, then it is regarded as the basis of insight knowledge (Vipassanā or Paññā). Therefore, Sīla, Samādhi and Paññā are independent for the attainment of Nibbāna.

In this way we find that both Sīla and Samādhi prepares mind for developing and understanding Paññā.

Paññā (Wisdom)

If analyzed etymologically, the word ‘Paññā ’(Skt.: Prajñā) has two components –‘pa’ and ‘ñā’. Here ‘pa’ is a prefix denoting the sense of proper, full, thorough etc. ‘Ñā’ is a root with its verbal form as jānana, jānāti, jānati etc., which

68 Phramaha Singhathon Narāsabho, p. 34
70 Vbh., p. 217
71 Miln., VRI, 1998, p. 36
means to know, to understand or to comprehend. Thus the literal meaning of Paññā is to know, to understand or to comprehend fully and thoroughly. However, the concept of Paññā (wisdom) appears to have gone through various changes and developments in the shades of its meaning. In the earlier phase, it manifests in realization of the fact that – whatever is subject to arise, that is subject to cessation.

The clearest example of Pañña is seen in the Dhammacakkapavattanakathā, where we find it with some other synonymous terms such as ṇāṇa, vijjā, āloka etc. There it has been said by the Buddha that when one attains wisdom, one understands properly even those things that were unknown and unheard till now.

In the Dīghanikāya, Paññā has been explained and analyzed as performing various types of functions. As, while preaching Ajātasattu, who was disturbed for murdering his own father, the Buddha explains the fruits of leading saintly life and tells that paññā is the highest stage of leading such a pure life, which culminates into Nibbāna. Also, in the Mahālisutta, Jāliyasutta and Subhasutta, we find wisdom performing the same role. In the Majjhimanikāya, we find many more new aspects of wisdom. In the Sammādiṭṭhisutta, it has been said that right understanding (Sammādiṭṭhi) or wisdom consists in the knowledge of: a) moral roots, moral states; b) immoral roots, immoral states; c) suffering, origin of suffering, cessation of suffering and the path leading to cessation of suffering; d) food (āhāra), origin of food, cessation of food and the path leading to the cessation of food; and e) the law of dependent origination. The motive of wisdom in this context is to make mind free from the three immoral latent-factors (anusayas), namely, rāgānusaya, paṭighānusaya and mānānusaya. Furthermore, it may be added that it help the practitioner in attainment of a state in this very life where there is no suffering at all— ‘diṭṭheva

72 B.Labh, Paññā in Early Buddhism, op. cit., p. 24.
73 Yañ kiñci samudayadhammañ, sabbañ tañ nirodhadhammañ’ti….Mahāvagga, Bombay University Publication, p.17.
74 Mahāvagga, op. cit., p.16
75 Pubbe anussutetu dhammesu cakkhum udapādi ṇāṇaṁ udapādi, paññā udapādi, vijjā udapādi, āloko Upadādi, Ibid., p. 17… quoted by B. Labh in Paññā in Early Buddhism, op. cit. p. 41.
dhamme dukkhaṁ āntakaro hoti.\textsuperscript{77} In this context, we find the term ‘Vipassanā’ which is also another term for paññā. There is no difference between the two so far as their sense is concerned. Only this much is said that paññā is the right understanding of the true nature of dhamma and when it comes into action it is known as ‘Vipassanā’ which visualizes the same.

Fruits of developing wisdom have also been explained in the Dhammapada in the following manner: “A person endowed with wisdom understands the threefold reality of phenomena and thereby gets free from all the attachments towards them.”\textsuperscript{78}

Again it has been mentioned that one who takes the three refuges in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha, beholds by wisdom the fourfold noble truths—suffering, origin of suffering, cessation of suffering and the path leading to the cessation of suffering, and remaining in the three refuges, ultimately gets rid of them.\textsuperscript{79}

With the attainment of wisdom, a wise man drives away the clouds of sloth by heedfulness, and thereby becoming sorrow less, he looks down upon all the miserable beings as a man on hilltop looks down upon beings on plains.\textsuperscript{80}

The Suttanipāta explains wisdom in various ways and as performing various types of functions, it also makes one a true and great human being. First the Buddha has called wisdom as his plough\textsuperscript{81}, as the plough discharges the function of ploughing field so does the wisdom discharges the function of ploughing mind and preparing it for growing moral dhammas. It has also been considered as one of the most essential

\textsuperscript{77} M, I, p. 75
\textsuperscript{78} Dhp., verse no. 234.
\textsuperscript{79} “Yo ca Buddhaṁ ca dhammaṁ ca saṅghaṁ ca saraṇaṁ gato / Cattāri āriyasaṅcārī sammappaññāya passati // Dukkhaṁ dukkhasamuppādaṁ dukkhaṁ ca atikkamaṁ / Āriyācaavigaṁ maggam dukkhūpasamagāminām //” Dhp., verse nos., 190-91.
\textsuperscript{80} “Pamādaya appamādo yathā nudati pañḍito / Paññāpāsādamāruhya asoko sokiniṁ pañjām / Pabbataṭṭho va bhūmaṭṭhe dhīro bāle avekkhati //” Dhp., verse no. 28
\textsuperscript{81} Paññā me yuganaṅgalarām…quoted by B. Labh in Paññā in Early Buddhism, op.cit, p. 50.
qualifications for a sage. A sage endowed with wisdom along with Sīla and Samādhi destroys all types of cankers and gets free from all sorts of worldly ties.82

Similarly, wisdom is seen making one wise man also. Such a person, by defeating all the internal and external objects of attachment, goes beyond moral and immoral and remains unaffected by the temptations.83 Further, wisdom makes one a true Brāhmaṇa also. One who is intelligent knows well the right and wrong paths, one who has attained truth and wisdom, is called a true Brāhmaṇa.84

Ācārya Nāgasena in the Milindapañha85 defines the two characteristics marks of Paññā as Chedanalakkhaṇā and Obhāsanalakkhaṇā. Furthermore, the text also explains the merits of developing it. As an answer to the question whether with the attainment of wisdom, bewilderment of the attainer vanishes or continues to exist, Nāgasena makes it very clear that wisdom of that person is in regard to the nature of dhammas. So far as the true nature of dhammas or so to say the world is concerned, he will not have any confusion, ignorance or bewilderment, rather he will be very clear in his mind about it. But, there may be such things that he may not be knowing. The learning which he has not already learnt, the countries he has not gone so far, the words or terms he has not heard before and etc., in these matters, he will remain bewildered. Thus, in the matters of mere worldly knowledge, he might still be wrong or bewildered, but so far as the fundamental truths of religion are concerned, he will absolutely be clear.86

Nāgasena points out that wisdom is the strongest thing in the world and it can cut or divide anything howsoever minute or subtle it may be, as clearly shown by the

82 Paññābalaṃ sīlavatupanānaṃ, samāhitaṃ jhānaratam satīmaṃ / Saṅgā pamuttam akhilaṃ anāsavaṃ, tāṃ vā pi dhīrā muniṃ vedayanti // Sn. 52 quoted by B. Labh in Paññā in Early Buddhism, op.cit.

83 Tadubhāyāni vijeyya paṇḍarāni, aṭṭhānati bhāhiddhā ca suddhipaṇño / Kaṇhaṃ sukkaṃ upātivato, paṇḍito tādi pavuccate tathā // Sn. P. 136 quoted by B. Labh in Paññā in Early Buddhism, op.cit., p. 50

84 Gambhīrapaṇaṇaṃ medhāvīm, maggāmaggassa kovidaṃ / Uttamathanā anuppattaṃ, tamaṇhaṃ brūmī brāhmaṇaṃ // Sn. P. 166; B. Labh in Paññā in Early Buddhism, op.cit., p. 51.

85 Miln., VRI, 1998, p. 37

86 B. Labh, Paññā in Early Buddhism, op.cit., p. 57
statement—‘Dhammasabhāvapatiṣedhanalakhanā paññā.’ In other words, wisdom is the factor which pierces into core of the dhamma, and after cutting off all the veils of ignorance, brings into light the hidden truth and thereby, spreads the light of knowledge in which one can see the three characteristics of phenomena. On the contrary, there is no other factor or quality in this world which could cut, break or divide paññā.\(^{87}\)

### 2.3 Pañcasīla

As a fact in Buddhism, the individual salvation is given the utmost importance which is achievable through self restraint and sincere observance of the Five Precepts generally known as Pañcasīla. In Buddhist tradition, Pañcasīla basically refers to the fundamental moral principles for lay disciples of the Buddha. Before developing the higher training, an individual has to pass through these precepts, because they are the basic foundations for creating a moral character in the social as well as ethical life of a person. If one observes these five principles in his life he can maintain a harmonious relations and trust with others. However, according to Prof. Labh, so far as lay disciples are concerned, they have to lead a social life with many ups and downs and have to pass through many difficult situations in the day today life, so the Buddha has taken a comparatively lenient attitude towards them.\(^{88}\) The following are the Five Precepts which the Buddha advises them to follow:

1. **The First Precept:** So far as the first precept— pāṇātipātā veramaṇī is concerned, a person should abstain from killing, cause to killing or sanctioning the destruction of a living being. It is to be kept in mind that the living being does not merely stand for humans but it covers all animals as well as vegetations. In its strictest sense, anything that has life comes under this category. Through this precept, the Buddha has tried to make a person realize that he has to understand that all living beings are like him and as he gets

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\(^{87}\) Yaññi köñci chhinditabbaṃ sabbaṃ taṃ puññāya chhindati natthi dutiyaṃ paññāya chedanaṃ’ti; B. Labh, 58.

\(^{88}\) B. Labh in his article on *Buddhist Pañcasīla vs political Panchasheel* published in *Jammu Panorama J&K*, vol. 9, 1993, p. 45.
disturbed by pain similarly when injury is done to any type of living being they too experience the same unpleasant feeling. The concept is more clearly mentioned in the Dhammapada as:

“Sabbe tasanti daṇḍassa, sabbe bhāyanti maccuno / 
Attānaṃ upamaṃ katvā, na haneyya na ghātaye ///”
“Sabbe tasanti daṇḍassa, sabbesam jīvitam piyam / 
Attānaṃ upamaṃ katvā, na haneyya na ghātaye ///”89

However, it seems proper to analyze here that as many a times unknowingly or unintentionally under some unavoidable circumstances particularly while performing various daily routine activities such as walking, harvesting, cooking etc., killing or hurting becomes inevitable as many small insects are killed, so does such acts be considered as the violation of the First Precept. The Buddha there establishes some norms to examine and identify the real cause behind all such acts as he clearly emphasizes on avoiding killing intentionally. Therefore, in daily routines, one is advised to restrain not only from killing but even from all sorts of physical hurt like beating, wounding etc.

2. The Second Precept: The second precept i.e., adinnādānā veramaṇī, teaches restraint from acts like stealing, robbing, snatching, pick pocketing etc. In other words, to abstain from taking things which are not given or illegally taken without the wish of the owner. According to S. Tachibana the adinnādāna includes material as well as immaterial things such as infringement of another’s rights, unasked interference in another’s business, waste of time by an employee, neglect of duty or evasion of responsibility. 90

3. The Third Precept: The third precept i.e., kāmesumicchācāra veramaṇī is the abstinence from committing unsocial and unlawful sexual intercourse. Here the word kāma stands for lustful attachment to male or female and micchācāra means wrong conduct. Thus the two words together indicate

89 Dhp., verse nos. 129-130.
volition of fulfillment of lustful desire of a male for a female and vice-versa. No doubt, sex is an essential and natural biological need from which no one can deny, but, should it be expressed and performed openly? Should it be like in animal manner or should there be some norms, modesty etc. to regulate it? As in the Suttanipāta, the Buddha says: “Let the wise man avoid an unchaste life as a burning heap of coals; not being able to live a life of chastity, let him not transgress with another man's wife.”

4. The Fourth Precept: The fourth precept i.e., musāvādā veramaṇī teaches to abstain from telling lie. Although, in practical life, it is very difficult to speak truth only all the time, it may be said that maximum and best efforts be made to be true in one’s speech and behavior. Besides, one should try one’s level best to utter sweet, polite, meaningful and sensible words.

5. The Fifth Precept: The fifth and last precept of the Pañcasīla is surāmerayamajjapadāṭṭhānā veramaṇī which teaches to abstain from any state of indolence arising from the use of intoxicants. Wine or any other variety of liquor or so to say any type of intoxicants is harmful to the body and mind both. It is indeed a silent killer which causes serious afflictions. A habitual drinker causes harm to his own body and mind and harms his family as well, by way of losing wealth and health both. He loses mental equilibrium and cannot take balance and cool decision. This is the reason intoxication is totally prohibited in Buddhism.

2.4 Dasasīla

The dasasīla also known as The Ten Precepts were laid down by the Buddha for sāmaṇeras and for the more pious of the laity who could get unattached to their families. They could observe it for a certain period or lifelong. The lay–followers observe these additional precepts on Uposatha days whereas the Buddhist recluses have to strictly adhere to these precepts in their day to day life. Out of these ten, the five remains the same as discussed above and the remaining five includes:

91 Sn., verse no. 395
6. *Vikālabhojanā* veramanī (Abstinence from Taking Meal at Late Hours): This precept stresses on developing control over the habit of eating and diet regulation. On *Uposatha* days all Buddhists take only one main meal at mid-day and abstain from taking anything during the rest of the day.

7. *Naccagītavādityavisūkasananā* veramanī (Abstinence from dance, music etc.): This precept consists in abstinence from dancing, singing, music etc. Its aim is the control on all forms of sensual lust and to develop control on them.

8. *Mālāgandha-vilepanadhārāmanḍana-vibhūṣanaṭṭhanā* veramanī (Abstinence from taking, essence, make-up etc): This precepts stands for refraining from the use of garlands, perfumes, scents, cosmetics, ornaments etc. A person who gets addicted of these things, will always indulge in them and will not be able to develop his mind rightfully towards the path of spiritual upliftment.

9. *Uccāsayanamahāsayanā* veramanī (Abstinence from using High and Costly Bed): The Buddha strictly forbids for the use of high and luxurious style of living through this precept, because the addiction of luxurious life style may add to the ego of recluse which is not suitable for achieving the highest goal of life i.e., *nībbāna*. The Buddha exhorts his followers to practices simple living wherein one makes use of things only to the extent essential.

10. *Jātarūparajata Paṭiggahaṇā* veramanī (Abstinence from accepting gold, silver etc.): This precept lays emphasis on abstinence and developing control over the desire to accept gold and silver, and also such other worldly and precious items of possessions.

   It is pertinent to mention here that the Buddha wished to stress the importance of a longer abstinence, possibly life-long, from all sensual pleasures.92 All these Ten Precepts shall be discussed in detailed and analytical way in the next chapter.

### 2.5 Dasasikkhāpadāni93

Having taken the Three Refuges, a Buddhist lay devotee takes it upon himself to observe the Precepts. In the first instance

1. **Pāṇātipātī veramaṇī sikkhāpadāṃ samādiyāmi** (I undertake the precept to abstain from the taking of life): As already discussed, this precept aims at not to take life of any living creature. This precept is believed to have been prompted, partly, by a common practice of animal sacrifice, an unredeemable act considered by the Buddha.94 The Buddha, irrespective of size of the object, has strongly condemned intentional killing as he advises in the following verses:

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"Sukhakāmāni bhūtāni, yo daṇḍena vihiṃsati /
Attano sukhamesāno, pecca so na labhate sukham //
Sukhakāmāni bhūtāni, yo daṇḍena hiṃsati /
Attano sukhamesāno, pecca so labhate sukham //"95
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He also advises that one, who keeps himself away from committing any killing intentionally, will achieve the ultimate state of **nibbāna**.96 Besides this, the *kammic* consequences of committing injury to a living creature is also enumerated e.g., rebirth in some lower realm of existence or if reborn as a human being, may have to undergo the constant torture of being infirm, ugly, notorious etc. or may meet death unexpectedly, while in the prime of life.97 However it is to be noted here that the killing for food always remained outside the domain of this precept. As proclaimed by the Buddha to his disciples for having the customary food in any place or country provided it is done without indulgence of the appetite or evil desire.98 Also, meat eating is allowed by the Buddha but that should be purely as a medicine or substenance

95 Dhp., verse nos. 131-32.
96 “Ahiṃṣakā ye munayo, niccāṃ kāyena samvutā / Te yānti accutaṃ ṭhānāṃ, yattha gantvā na socare”, Ibid, 225.
98 Harcharan Singh Sobti, op. cit., p. 47.
but one thing is sure that the killing or meat eating for personal interest is strictly banned by the Buddha.

2. Adinnādānā veramaṇī sikkhāpadāṃ samādiyāmi (I undertake the precept not to take anything which is not given): This sikkhāpada underlines the idea of not taking anything without the consent of the owner of the thing. The kammic effects that ensure from an act of stealing apart from other things ensure such a person in his next birth as a beggar. Whereas, an ardent follower of this sikkhāpada is endowed with nine qualities in his next birth, for instance, possessing noble wealth and position, peaceful living etc.\(^9^9\)

3. Kāmesumicchācāra veramaṇī sikkhāpadāṃ samādiyāmi (I undertake the precept to abstain from sexual misconduct): Kāmesumicchācāra is identified as the greatest enemy of mankind by the Buddha and that is why he has advised his followers to keep restraint on sensual pleasures, which can be conquered by practicing mindfulness\(^1^0^0\) that makes oneself aware against the perpetual attack of sensual desires. The sincere practice of mindfulness results in the development of mind, which in result resists against such desires. Further, this is well explained in the Dhammapada:

\[\text{“Yathāgārama ducchannaṃ, vuṭṭhi samativijjhati /} \\
\text{Evāṃ abhāvitaṃ cittaṃ, rāgo samativijjhati //} \\
\text{Yathāgārāma suucchannā, vuṭṭhi samativijjhati /} \\
\text{Evāṃ subhāvitaṃ cittaṃ, rāgo samativijjhati //”}^{1^0^1}\]

This sikkhāpada needs to be analyzed through two perspectives i.e., celibacy and chastity. The former needs to be strictly imposed on the Buddhist recluses. Celibacy here does not merely stand for sexual intercourse only but even if a monk anticipates himself as a woman is rubbing her body or if he looks lustfully towards a woman expecting for a reciprocal response from her side too. Whereas the chastity,

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99 Ibid., 49.
100 D. vol. 2, Swami Dwarikadas Shastri (ed. & tr.), op. cit., p. 541.
101 Dhp., verse nos. 13-14
which is primarily concern with lay disciples, needs to be protected as warned by the Buddha:

“Cattāri ṭhānāni naro pamatto, āpajjati paradārūpasevī //
Apuṇṇalābhāṃ na nikāmaseyyaṃ, nindaṃ tatiyam niryaṃ catuttohāṃ //
Apuṇṇalābhō ca gati ca pāpika, bhītassa bhītāya rati ca thōkiṃ /
Rājā ca daṇḍaṃ garukaṃ paṇeti, tasmā naro paradāraṃ na seve //”^102

Thus, having any illicit relation with another woman is the clear cut violation of this sikkhāpa and hence is a hindrance on the way of leading a noble life.

4. Musāvāda veramaṇī sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi (I undertake the precept to abstain from telling lie and false speech): Lying is an abdominal vice, whereas, truthfulness is a great virtue that everyone aspires, but, only few can live with it. According to this sikkhāpada one needs to cultivate the habit of speaking truth. The biggest advantage in speaking truth is in getting away from mental confusion and having clear vision. While the major disadvantage associated with musāvāda is that no one trust on the speaker. As mentioned by H. Sobti, a habitual liar is reborn in hell, in the animal world or in the world of spirits, after his death. Besides, if again reborn in the human world, he may suffer from false accusation.^103

5. Surāmerayamajjappamādaṭṭhānā veramaṇī sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi (I undertake the precept to abstain from taking intoxicants): Consumption of liquor results in the distortion of mental vision. Under the influence of liquor one behaves abnormally and probably infected with dark passions that in the long run generate mental and physical sluggishness and stupidity.

In the Suttanipāta^104, drinking liquor is forbidden for all the categories of the Buddhists, which is described as source of evil, seat of sin and madness and delightful only for the foolish. The bad consequences, besides this, for a

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^102 Ibid., 309-10.
^103 Harcharan Singh Sobti, op. cit., p. 52.
^104 "For through intoxications the stupid commits sin and makes other people intoxicated; let him avoid this seat of sin, this madness, this folly, delightful to the stupid.”, F. Max Mullar (tr. & ed.), The Sacred Books of the East, vol. X, verse 398.
drinker according to Buddhism are his rebirth in the lower world. Thus, consuming intoxicants is strongly prohibited by the Buddha.

6. *Vikālabhojanā veramaṇī sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi* (I undertake the precept to abstain from taking untimely meal): While on *Uposatha* days the lay-follower observes this sixth *sikkhāpada*, and takes his meal at mid-day and abstains from taking meal, altogether, during the rest of the day whereas for Buddhist monks and nuns this *sikkhāpada* is the daily routine matter.

7. *Nacca-gīta-vādita-visūkadassanā sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi* (I undertake the precept to abstain from dance, music etc.): There is hardly anything which seems to be explained under this *sikkhāpada*. The only motive of this *sikkhāpada* is to avoid feeding sensual lust.

8. *Mālā-gandha-vilepana-dhāraṇa-maṇḍana-vibhūsanaṭṭhāṇā veramaṇī sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi* (I undertake the precept to abstain from taking essence, make-up, perfumes etc): The only motive behind the oath of this *sikkhāpada* is to keep restraint from luxurious style of life.

9. *Uccāsayanamahāsayanā Veramaṇī sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi* (I undertake the precept to abstain from using high, lofty or costly bed): There is a tradition in Buddhism of ten precepts designed for Sāmaṇeras or for exceptionally devoted laities. The seventh precept of *Uposatha* is split into two, thus, numbering the total *sīla* up to eight. The eighth precept of *Aṭṭhasīla* i.e., abstaining from using high, lofty or costly bed remains intact but assumes the position of ninth precept.\(^{105}\)

10. *Jātarūparajata Paṭiggahaṇā Veramaṇī sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi* (I undertake the precept to abstain from accepting gold, silver etc.): The sole purpose of the tenth and last *sikkhāpada* is to induce the feeling of detachment from the extreme of worldly living.

These Ten *sikkhāpas* as enumerated and evaluated above not only teach to avoid evil deeds but equally emphasize on the performance of good deeds.

\(^{105}\) Harcharan Singh Sobti, op. cit., p. 54.
Performing right actions and leaving the wrong ones always goes together. Through the observance of these *sikkhāpadas* the Buddha wants to tell us how we can develop a healthy mind and sound body which is essential for living a noble and blissful domestic as well as social life.

**CHAPTER 3**

**BUDDHIST ETHICS IN MONASTIC LIFE**

India i.e. Bharat is the land of great saints, seers and sages. It is an unbroken tradition that the saints have been appearing in different parts of the country; realizing and visualizing face to face the ultimate truth and bringing down to the people for their understanding and putting into practices in their life. In the present time too saints appear in different parts of the country. As the Indian society is divided into different regions and languages, saints can be found in every religion during different periods of the history. Even at the time of Buddha there were various saints. They had their own theories and had a large number of followers too. The saints used to mix up with the people, try to know their problems, the cause of arising of those problems and through their *dhammic* instructions try to address them. For this noble purpose they did not remain in one place but moved from one place to another and propagated their teachings without any discrimination.

In this remarkable tradition if we flash back to the 6th century BCE we find an enlightened personality, who made a righteous way faring among the people. He was none other than the Buddha—who the perfectly Enlightened One. The appearance of the Buddha is a remarkable event in the history of mankind. He appears as a man and exhibits the infinite power of man by realizing the perfect enlightenment. He does not realize for himself but he does so for the well-being and happiness of all.

In order to understand the real motive of the teachings of the Buddha, it is necessary to observe the monastic life of Buddhism founded by the Buddha himself.
Therefore, Ten Commandments in the life of a recluse, monastic discipline, Pabbajjā and Upasampadā, the life of Sāmanera under probation, supervision of Ācariya and Upajjhāya, eligibility conditions for Monkhood, Pātimokkha rules, appointments of various officials in the monastic life and their eligibility conditions and assignments etc. have been studied in the present chapter.

### 3.1 Ten Commandments as the beginning point in the life of a Recluse

The Ten Commandments (*dasasikkhāpadāni*) are very strongly advocated by the Buddha for leading a defilement free life. The only purpose behind this emphasis is to generate a sense of morality and of self realization so that one may be able to extinguish the fire of worldly complexities. As the observance of these Ten Commandments, somehow, implies the practice of the threefold path of Buddhists e.g. *Sīla*, *Samādhi* and *Paññā*; the Buddha has very beautifully described the essence of these Ten moral Commandments. As the story goes, once the Buddha was dwelling in the Jetavana monastery. There a divine being appeared before the Buddha and asked a question, the text of which is as follows:

> “Ante jaṭā bahi jaṭā jaṭāya jaṭītā pajā /
> Taṃ taṃ, Gotama, pucchāmi, ko imaṃ vijaṭaye jaṭaṃ’ ti //”

i.e., there is tangle inside and there is tangle outside. This generation is entangled in a tangled. So I ask you this question- who succeeds in detangling this tangle.

The Buddha replied in the following way:

> “Sīle patiṭṭhāya naro sapañño, cittam paññaṃ ca bhāvayam /
> Ātāpī nipako Bhikkhu, so imaṃ vijaṭaye jaṭaṃ’ ti //”

—or in other words, a wise man well established in virtue, develops concentration and right understanding he, as a recluse, ardent and sagacious can succeed in detangling the tangle.

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Here it is to be noted that through this verse the Buddha advises us to practice the threefold training of morality by the observance of the ten basic Commandments. However, for lay disciples the first five commandments only are kept essential by the Buddha. On the other hand for recluses, in order to attain the spiritual perfection, these Ten Commandments are made essential and of utmost importance. In the light of this background let us have an deeper study of these commandments.

3.1.1 Abstinence from Killing (Pāṇātipātā Veramaṇī):

The first and the foremost among the Ten Commandments taught by the Buddha is the Pāṇātipātā Veramaṇī. As already discussed in the previous chapter, this precept possess such an importance in Buddhist tradition and thus directed by the Buddha himself to his followers especially to those who have left the household life to observe it with attentive mind. If seen minutely the term Pāṇātipātā comprises of three parts namely, pāṇa, ati and pāta. Pāṇa means living beings. Ati is a prefix which means quietly, rapidly etc. It is also used in the sense of transgression knowingly or intentionally. Pāta means to fall, to make an end of anything or to destroy. So to destroy the life of any living being forcibly before its full span of time is Pāṇātipāta107, whereas Veramaṇī stands for abstention. In other words it can be stated as to abstain from killing. This teaching of Abstention from killing living beings (Pāṇātipātā Veramaṇī) was administered by the Buddha to the monks at Vesāli108.

As the killing not only in Buddhist tradition but almost in all the traditions, is strongly condemned by one and all with strong notion that it may lead to grave sin and thus one has to bear the dire consequences of committing this sin either in this life or in the next one by the hands of some supernormal power. Thus, at the very moment, a question arises as does all sorts of killing leads to grave sin as generally, it

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is observed that while leading the daily life, a person has to perform various actions, in which hurting or killing becomes inevitable. Because there may be killing of many insects in our day today life unintentionally, which in many a time is unavoidable. However, the Buddha emphasized on avoiding killing intentionally.

It also seems desirable to understand the killing from the angle of morality and sinfulness. Killing in any way is a sinful act. So, one should refrain himself from it. In this context there is need to observe the gravity of killing. One may kill an ant or an elephant and in both cases he commits sin but the gravity of sin varies. There is a little sin in killing an ant as compared to killing an elephant. This is due to the fact of application of the killing of consciousness. It takes a less time to kill an ant but longer time in case of an elephant. The period of continuity for a longer period is obviously produces more sin.

In case of birds and beasts, it is further stated that there are even birds and animals which passes spiritual merit. Some are less virtuous and others are more virtuous. Therefore, the gravity of sin is determined from the basis of merit existing in them. This is also applicable in respect of human beings. An immoral person is harmful to the society while a moral man on the other hand is helpful and beneficial to the society in all possible ways.

It is less sinful in case of an immoral man and more sinful in case of a moral man. Sometimes, it is seen that a man though does not possess more virtue yet is very helpful to the society. His utility is counted higher than those who are not useful for the society. However, despite this in general parlance, it has been advised to be away from any sort of killing. Killing is such an act which is generally avoided by a common man. The reason behind this is that basically by nature everyone fears from any kind of injury and thus tries to avoid it. This basic characteristic feature is very well explained in the Dhammapada through the following verses:

“Sabbe tasanti daṇḍassa sabbe bhāyanti maccuno /
Attānaṃ upamaṃ katvā na haneyya na ghātaye //
Sabbe tasanti daṇḍassa sabbesaṃ jīvitāṃ piyaṃ /
Attānaṃ upamaṃ katvā na haneyya na ghātaye //\(^{109}\)

It is golden rule that one should not kill or punish anyone taking one’s own example. Here, it can be said that punishment is necessary for a state to maintain peace and order in the society. However, degree of punishment is determined by the state machinery according to the degree of fault. The theory is somehow based on the principle of ‘Tit for Tat’.

3.1.2 Abstinence from Stealing (Adinnādana Veramaṇī):

The term Adinnādana comprises of constituent parts viz. Adinna and ādāna. Adinna refers to that ‘which is not given or offered or presented’\(^{110}\). ādāna stands for ‘to take’\(^{111}\). Thus adinnādana means taking anything which belongs to someone else and has not been given by him. Therefore, taking something consciously which belongs to someone else is known as theft, stealing etc.

Sense of adinnādana develops basically out of dissatisfaction with what one already has or due to excess greed to have more even by unethical means. Here arises a question as under what conditions stealing can be termed as materialized. In this context it is seen that there are five conditions related to the materialization of theft\(^{112}\). These conditions are Parapariggahīta (another’s property), Parapariggahitasaṇñita (awareness that it belongs to other), Theyyacitta (the thieving mind), Upakkama (relevant effort), and Harāṇa (subsequent removal).

Hence one should also understand that there are six means of stealing the property of someone else. They are Sāhatthika (by oneself), Āṇattika (stealing by command), Nissaggiya (stealing by throwing the object), Thāvara (stealing by permanent device), Vijjāmaya (theft by art) and Iddhimaya (stealing by potency).

\(^{109}\) Dhp., verse nos. 129-30
\(^{111}\) Ibid., p. 26.
Twenty five kinds of theft have been described in the commentary of Vinaya Piṭaka\textsuperscript{113}.

The twenty five kinds of thefts have been divided under five headings, i.e., Nānābhaṇḍa, Ekabhaṇḍa, Sāhatthika, Pubbapayaga and Theyyāvahāra. Again each one has further been divided into five parts numbering the total twenty five.

After dealing with these means of stealing it is necessary to discuss the object of theft. As we all know, we have six sense organs namely i.e., cakkhu (eye), sota (ear), ghāṇa (nose), jīvha (tongue), kāya (body) and mana (mind) and each sense organ has its own object. They are rūpa (visible objects), sadda (audible object), gandha (odorous object), rasa (sapid object), phoṭabba (tangible object) and dhamma (ideational object). A man can steal any visible object. He can also snatch away the things of others which bear characteristics of gandha (scent), rasa (sapid) etc. Now, it should be discussed from the standpoint of origination, feeling, root and action. It has threefold origination, namely, by body-cum-mind, by speech-cum-mind and by body-cum-speech-cum-mind. Also the degree of sinfulness depends on the value of things stolen. It may be of little or greater value. By stealing things of others no one can become happy. If someone takes anything which is not given to him, he may be happy for sometime but he cannot realize the bliss of happiness. So long as sin of a man is not ripening, he feels happy in doing sins or bad activities. As sins become ripe so that man realizes suffering.

3.1.3 Abstention from Sexual misdeeds (Kāmesumiccāra / Abrahmacariya Veramaṇi):

The word Abrahmacariya may be split up into two components, namely, ‘A’ and ‘Brahmacariya’. ‘A’ means absence, void of and to be away from. The term Brahmacariya literally denotes the sense of holy life, good and moral living

\textsuperscript{113} \textit{Tasmā pañca pañcaka samadhānetvā dassiyamānā ime pañcavīsati avahārā sādhukaṃ sāvakkhatabā, pañca pañcakāṃ nāmā- nānābhānda pañcakaṃ, theyyāvaha pañcakaṃ’ti”, Samantapāsādikā, I, Nalanda edition, p. 298.}
particularly of chastity etc. It means involving in various types of activities related to sexual misconduct. It is also sometimes expressed by the term *Kāmesumicchācāra* i.e. indulging in wrong conduct in sensual pleasures. One should understand the difference between the word *Abrahmācāriya* and *Kāmesumicchācāra*. The former has been stated in the context of monks and nuns as they are advised to refrain from unchastity completely. They have to remain away from un-chastity in awakening, sleeping and at all other stages of life. While the latter has been stated with respect to a householder. A householder has been advised to remain satisfied with his wife or her husband alone and in no case has to develop the consciousness, physical activities or vocal activities related to the sexual misconduct towards other women or men.

No doubt, sex is an essential biological need and nobody can deny of it. But the point of discussion is this whether it should be expressed or exhibited openly? Should it be like animal or should there be some rules and regulations, modesty, social norms etc. to regulate it? As a fact in hoary past, when there was no family system, man used to satisfy this biological need anywhere, anytime and with anybody. Later, he learnt and developed emotions and sense of belongingness, which caused further development of family and society. Thus, sexual behavior was regularized.

Realizing the factor, the Buddha put severe restrictions on recluses and asked them to abstain from entering into any sort of sexual behavior with human or any other being including animal. If a recluse gets indulged in any such act he or she will lose the eligibility to stay in the monastic Order.

There are various fruits of refraining from un-chastity. Chastity has been highly praised by the Buddha in both the social as well as spiritual background. A man of chastity is socially honored and he enjoys the confidence of the people as well as the divine pleasure after death. A person observing chastity becomes free from enemies; gets sound sleep and pleasant awakening etc. He becomes dear to both male

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115 B. Labh, in his article *Buddhist Pañcasila Vs Political Panchasheel*, proceedings of the XXXII International Buddhist Conference, Bodhgaya, 2007, p. 9
116 Patimokha, Swami Dwarkadas Shastri (ed. & tr.), Varanasi: Bauddha Bharti, p. 1
and female. He feels himself free like a bird and there is no liability for him to assume the female sex or neuter sex. By refraining from un-chastity, he lives in the state of fearlessness, gets everything and there never comes any moment in his life when he has to grieve on separation from the thing which he loves much. In contrast, it is narrated in the *Dhammapada* that four misfortunes befall a careless man who commits adultery:

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“Cattāri ṭhānāni naro pamatto apaijati paradārūpasevī / 
Apuññalābham na nikāmaseyyaṃ nindaṃ tatiyaṃ nirayaṃ catutthaṃ // 
Apuññalābho ca gatī ca pāpika bhītassa bhītāya ratī ca thokikā / 
Rājā ca daṇḍam garukaṃ paṇeti tasmā naro paradāraṃ na seve //”
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Concludingly, it may be said that one should avoid such misconduct that demolishes one’s social image as well as distracts one from the path of spiritual development.

### 3.1.4 Abstinence from Lying (*Musāvāda Veramaṇī)*:

The term *Musāvāda* has two components namely, *musā*\(^{118}\) meaning false, untrue, wrong etc., and *vāda* meaning speech, talk, theory, discussion, argument etc.\(^{119}\) Thus *Musāvāda* means the speech which is not true. It may be urged here that what is false speech. A person who is cunning and hurtful towards the well being of others’ false speech or telling lies applied to his effort of the body and speech. When he sets his bodily and vocal efforts to cheat others his intention is called ‘false speech’.

Here it is remarkable to understand that if anyone asks somebody to say something false to others, the act of speaking falsehood is completed. So by instigating others to speak lie, by writing false to others, by recording permanent writing on walls or by making false posters; one should understand that the act of telling lie is committed and the person will be guilty of offence. Thus, it can be said that instigation, transmission and permanent records are involved in this immoral act.

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\(^{117}\) *Dhp.*, 309-10.
\(^{119}\) Ibid, p. 608.
The degree of sinfulness of false speech depends on the degree of welfare destroyed of others. If a lay devotee who does not want to give alms to a monk and speak lie that he/she does not have anything, it is a lesser offence, but if he/she witnesses in any case which results into heavy loss to others then it is a greater offence. In the same way when a monk says something jokingly to get some butter, oil or alms then it is a less offence, but when he claims about uttarimanussa dhamma (supernormal power) which he does not possess; in this case he is responsible for the gravest punishment.

In our daily life we find people who habitually speak lie. They are not respected in the society. People do not pay attention towards their requests and problems. A person who abstains from speaking lie has amiable speech, modesty and no personal vanity as its fruits. Conclusively, we can say that one should refrain from musāvāda. He, who refrains from it, has distinct and sweet speech and no over stoutness.

In this way a man who wants to be pious and is desirous to lead a happy life, should always speak truth. It is a moral base which provides support for both the household and homeless.

3.1.5 Abstinence from taking Intoxicants (Surāmerayamajjapamādaṭṭhānā Veramaṇī):

One of the most important commandments by the Buddha for all the disciples even to say for the mankind is Surāmerayamajjapamādaṭṭhānā Veramaṇī. Before going further let us have a literal meaning of the term. If split in small groups we find that Surā means spirituous liquor etc. It is a certain kind of alcoholic spirit distilled by rice. Meraya refers to a sort of intoxicant drink such as rum. Majja means intoxicating drink such as wine, by drinking which a man becomes matta (mad) and pamatta (ignorant). Both surā and meraya are majja (intoxicating drinks) which

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121 Ibid., 541.
122 Ibid., p. 514.
stupify a man mentally and morally. *Pamāḍṭṭhāna* refers to choice by which anyone drinks whenever and wherever he gets opportunity.

Further, five kinds of *Surā*s have been identified. They are *piṭṭhasurā*, *pūvasurā*, *odanasurā*, *kiṇṇapakkhitā* and *sambhārasamyutta*\(^{123}\).

i) **Piṭṭhasurā**: It is a kind of arrack which is prepared by flour. Flour is squeezed and then it is left into open air for some days. After few days the paste becomes discolor and a bad smell develops in it. Such type of *Surā* is called *Piṭṭhasurā*.

ii) **Pūvasurā**: It is prepared by cake. Sweet cakes are cut into pieces and a paste is prepared, when it is left into air, there develops a new quality in it.

iii) **Odanasurā**: It is a certain kind of *surā* which is prepared by boiled rice.

iv) **Kiṇṇapakkhitā**: It is made up of yeast\(^ {124}\). It produces alcoholic fermentation and is used in brewing beer, making wine, distilling spirit and raising bread.

v) **Sambhārasamyutta**: It is a kind of *surā* which is mixed with condiments. Condiments refer to substances which are used to give relish to food. It also means seasoning. Sometimes plain food is mixed with some other substance to make it tasty. When these substances are mixed with any *surā* it gives a distinctive taste.

Similarly, there are mainly five kinds of *Meraya*. A brief description about them is available as under:

i) **Pupphāsava (flower wine)**: It is prepared with different kinds of flowers. Petals of different kinds of flowers which radiate sweet smell,
are collected and ringed. A wine prepared by the sapid of such flower petals is called *Pupphāsava*.  

ii) **Phalāsava (fruit wine):** When the wine is prepared by fruit juice, it is called *Phalāsava*.  

iii) **Guḷāsava (sugar wine):** Guḷāsava is a kind of wine prepared from sugar cane. Sugar cane is mixed with various substances and a liquid is prepared for a strong drink.  

iv) **Madhvāsava (honey wine):** Honey is extracted from the beehive. Bees collect honey by wandering on different flowers. When the beehive is full with honey, a hawker extracts honey from it. The wine prepared by honey is called *Madhvāsava*.  

v) **Sambhārasaṃyutta (wine mixed with condiments):** It is the name of wine which is prepared by condiments. Substances like molasses and coconuts etc. are mixed with wine to prepare *Sambhārasaṃyutta*.  

After giving a brief introduction of *surā* and *meraya*, it seems proper to discuss the factors which are necessary for drinking *surā* and *meraya*. In this context *Paramatthajotikā* prescribes four factors. These are, namely,  

i) **Surādīna (liquors)**  
ii) **Madaniyaṃ pātukamyatācitta (intention to take drink is established.)**  
iii) **Vāyāma (efforts)**  
iv) **Pīte ca pavisati (drunken liquors be absorbed)**  

After dealing with different kinds of *surā*, *meraya* and conditions for materialization of drinking wine, it seems logical to discuss the drinking wine and liquors with respect to its origination, feeling, roots and action. Taking intoxicants has twofold origination, namely, by body and by body-cum-mind. There are two roots of  

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126 ‘*Phalāsava nāma muddikaphalādīni madditvā tesam rasena kato*,’ Ibid.  
127 ‘*Guḷāsava nāma uchhurasādilhi kavirati*,’, ibid.  
128 ‘*Madhvāsava nāma muddikānaṃ jātirasena kato; makkhika madunā pi kavirati ti vadanti*,’ ibid.  
129 “*Surāmerayamajjapannādātthānasassa pana surādina ca aṭṭhataṃ hoti madaniyapātukamyatā cittaṃ ca paccepāṭṭhitaṃ hoti, tajjam ca vāyām āpajjati pīte ca parisatī ti-imāni cattāri angānī ti*,” P.J., p. 31.
Taking it. These are lobha and moha. Also, it is associated with pleasant or unpleasant feelings.

Taking intoxicants is greatly blamable. It obstructs the true idea of the Buddha by inducing madness in human being. Again the degree of sinfulness depends upon the importance of person concerned. A man, who drinks, is generally hated in our society. Sometime people argue that they take wine in low quantity and use it as medicine, but practically they gradually become addict to it. Moreover, even the small quantity also makes a man little excited. Hence drinking wine in the form of medicine and not performing any type of wrong activities thereby is also kamma-patha.

So to take wine even in the slightest quantity is a sinful act. Drinking wine helps sometimes a timid person in killing, stealing and in performing sinful act like sexual inter-course. So, surāpāna is the base of ten courses of akusala kamma-patha (immoral actions). Some people are of the view that sobriety in drinking may prove tonic for them. Surprisingly as mentioned by H. Sobti in 'Nibbāna in Early Buddhism', liquor is allowed to use in Theravāda Buddhism but simply in a way as medicine. However, the only danger is that slowly a sober drinker turns into a habitual drinker. A habitual drinker gradually loses his thinking power. At last his senses stop functioning. So a man should always avoid it. There are various fruits/benefits of abstaining from it. These are, namely,

i) One who does not drink has a sound memory.

ii) He always remains aware of his past, future and present works to be done.

iii) He is always mindful, careful and in the possession of knowledge.

iv) He is always far away from faux pas and stupidity.

Thus, a man who refrains himself from taking intoxicants, places himself in the highest place of the society. It has been told by the Buddha as highest blessing.

"Arati virati pāpā, majjapāna ca saṃyamo /
Appamādo ca dhamesu, etam maṅgalamuttamaṃ //"\(^{131}\)

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\(^{130}\) Harcharan Singh Sobti, op.cit., p. 53.

\(^{131}\) Suttanipāta, VRI, p. 123
3.1.6 Abstinence from Taking Meal at Late Hours (Vikālabhojana Veramaṇī):

The term Vikālabhojana consists of two components, namely, Vikāla and Bhojana. According to the Pali-English dictionary⁴ Vikāla means wrong time i.e., not the proper time which usually means afternoon or evening and therefore often too late. Bhojana refers to food, meal etc.⁵ Thus, Vikālabhojana means eating at wrong time or forbidden time. It is the sixth moral commandment. It throws light on forbidden times, different kinds of food and refraining from eating untimely meal.

At the time of the Buddha, there lived the sattarasa monks in Rājagaha. One day these monks went for begging alms. People after taking bath gave food to these monks. These monks went in a garden and took the food at forbidden times. The Chavaggiya monks condemned it and said it to the Buddha. The Buddha then framed a law—“Yo pana bhikkhu vikāla khādanīyaṃ vā bhojanīyaṃ vā khādeyya vā bhuṇjeyya vā pācittiyaṃ ti”⁶ meaning whosoever a monk eats any kind of food at forbidden time is responsible for Pācittiya.

Vikālabhojanā is thus against the Pācittiya rule 37. Now, let us have a bird eye view of the materialization of Vikālabhojana. There are four different conditions. These are⁷: i) Vikāla ii) Yāvakalika iii) Ajjhoharaṇa and iv) Anummattakatā.

i) Vikāla (forbidden time): A monk has to eat within a definite period. It is the period from sunrise to the noon. It is technically known as anuññātakāla. So the time period between noon and sun rise is vikāla.⁸

ii) Yāvakālika (the permissibility only till the noon of some particular object eaten): It is the second condition in course of eating at the forbidden time. It refers towards the eating after noon.

⁵ Ibid., 510.
⁶ Pācittiyaśāla, Igatpuri: VRI, p. 118.
⁷ “Vikālabhojanassā cattāri aṅgāni-vikālo yāvakālikam ajjhoharanam, anummattakatā ti”, P.J., p. 36.
iii) **Ajjhoharaṇa (swallowing):** It is the third condition. Finding the prohibited time and not getting permission, when one eats any kind of food, vikālabhojana is materialized. This is the state of mind when one takes decision of eating and gluts the object present.

iv) **Anummattakatā (soundness of mind of the eater):** it is the last and the most important condition in course of commission of this offence. If the eater is mentally disturbed the, this act will not be an offence. If the eater is ill, then it will also not be considered as a sinful act.

The presence of all these four conditions is very much essential for the materialization of vikālabhojana. If any of these conditions is not fulfilled, the act does not take place.

Also, there are mainly five types of food which are prohibited during the forbidden times. These are\(^{137}\): Odana, Kummāsa, Macchaṃ, Māmsaṃ and Sattu. Moreover, in this regard mention may be made of Vajjiputtaka of Vesālī. They were following ten points which is technically known as *Dasā-Vatthūni*. One of them was *Dvaṅgulameca*. It means a monk can take food when the shadow of the sun has not gone two fingers ahead of the noon. These practices were declared unlawful during the time of 2\(^{nd}\) Buddhist Council. So a monk should always follow this precept.

It is also necessary to take food in time. Eating at time provides basic support in the day-to-day work and keeps the routine regular and smooth, as very well mentioned in this gāthā:

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\text{“Asubhānupassiṃ viharantam indriyesu susaṃvutaṃ /}
\text{Bhojanamhi ca mattaṃṇum, saddhaṃ āraddhaviriyam /}
\text{Taṃ ve nappasahati māro, vāto selaṃ’va pabbatan /”}^{138}
\]

3.1.7 Abstinence from dance, music etc. (*Nacca-gīta-vādita-visūkadasanā*

Veramaṇī):
The seventh moral commandment is implemented by the Buddha particularly for Buddhist monks and nuns, as such events lead polluting of consciousness which further extends the range of suffering. A number of such events have been mentioned in the *Brahmajālasutta* of *Dīghanikāya*. These includes dancing, singing, music, stage-shows, recitations, hand-clapping, cymbal-playing, drum-playing, art-exhibition, playing with an iron ball, bamboo-raising games, rituals of washing the bones of the dead, elephant, horse, buffalo, sheep, cock & quail fights, boxing, wrestling, military tattoos, army parades, troop movements and other such things\textsuperscript{139}.

Here arise the genuine doubts in one’s mind that: i) why such acts are considered immoral by Buddha? ii) What and how is it bad, if someone earns livelihood from such acts?

According to Buddhism, when someone watches such acts, it means the person is watching contortions hidden in dancing, singing and music. It does not depend merely on hearing or seeing, but the person starts taking delight out of them. His senses become uncontrolled. He becomes careless. So, the Buddha advises his disciples not to visit such shows. Similarly, such acts are not merely pious means of livelihood. In doing these means a man does several other vices. It causes untoward lusts, attachment and indiscipline. Therefore, these are called wrong means of earning livelihood and general instruction is given not to accept such means\textsuperscript{140}.

Conclusively, we can say that it is a moral commandment for refraining from any sort of seeing, dancing, singing, music and contortions shows. If followed, sincerely, it helps in developing the mind in a proper and right way.

3.1.8 Abstinence from taking essence, make-up etc. (*Mālā gandha-vilepana-dhāraṇa-maṇḍana-vibhūsanaṭṭhāna Veramaṇī*):

Etymologically speaking the word *Mālā* means garland, wreath, chaplet etc.\textsuperscript{141} It refers to any kind of preparation or decoration prepared by flowers. *Gandha* stands

\textsuperscript{139} D., I, Swami Dwarikadas Shastri,(ed. & tr.), op.cit., pp. 8-10.
\textsuperscript{141} T. W. Rhys Davids & William Stede, op. cit., p. 530.
for any substance from which sweet fragrance, odour, and scent comes out.\textsuperscript{142} Vilepana means ointment, lotions and cosmetics.\textsuperscript{143} Dhāraṇa means to wear.\textsuperscript{144} Maṇḍana means ornaments, adornment, finery etc.\textsuperscript{145} The Buddha has forbade from the use of these things as he advises that these should not be used for charm looking or beautiful appearance.

Although, since ancient time garland has been used in our society in various ways on different occasions. Also, garland is prepared with various methods such as ganthima, goppīma, vedīma, veṭhīma, pūrima and vāyima.\textsuperscript{146}

In the same way, we find different ways of wearing wreaths of flowers. They are: ekato vaṇṭika, ubhato vaṇṭika, maṇijarika, vidhūtika, vataṃsaka, Āveḷā and uracchade. Also, scents and unguents are used in different ways. Both men and women use to bathe with scented water. Water is used to be scented with different kinds of perfumes. The text also describes various types of ornament used by the people. They are: vallikā (ear ornament), pamaṅga ; kaṇṭhasuttaka (neck ornament), kaṭisuttaka (an ornament worn along the waist and is prepared by wearing thread with jewels); ovaṭṭika (bracelets); aṅgulimuddikā (a kind of ring), and hatthābharaṇaṃ (hand bracelets).

A man needs to do lot of things for looking attractive and charming which further wastes a lot of time. In order to understand the phenomenon in a better way, it

\textsuperscript{142}Ibid., 244.
\textsuperscript{143}Ibid., p. 636.
\textsuperscript{144}Ibid., p. 341.
\textsuperscript{145}Ibid., p. 516.
\textsuperscript{146}“Ganthanādisu sabbāpi cha pupphavikatiyo veditabbā- ganthimaṃ, goppimaṃ, vedhimāṃ, veṭhimaṃ pūrimaṃ, vāyimaṃ ti”, S.P., II, Nalanda edition, p. 621.
\textsuperscript{147}“Tattha ekato vaṇṭikāṃ ti pupphānaṃ vaṇṭe ekato katvā katamālam ubhatovanṭikāṃ ti ubhohi passehi pipphavante katvā katamālaṃ. Maṇijarikāṃ ti ādisu pana maṇjāri viya katā pupphavikati maṇijanka ti vuccati. Vidhūtikati sāciyā vā salākāya vā sinduvāra pupphādiṇi vijjhitvā katā vataṃsako. Āveḷā ti kaṇṭikā uracchado ti āharsadisaṃ ure ṭhanparaka pupphādamaṃ””, Ibid. p. 620.
is essential to mention the following interaction took place between Nāgesana and the Rohaṇa.

Nāgasena asks Rohaṇa about his head which is shaven. Rohaṇa replies that a recluse shaves off his head and beard on the recognition of solasa palibodhā (sixteen impediments) into the higher life. These impediments are in the following forms. These have been mentioned in the form of various works which are to be performed to beautify hair. These are ornamenting and decking it out, putting oil upon it, shampooing, placing garlands around it, using scents etc., use of ribbon, combs, dyes and going to barber etc. have also been mentioned here.

Rohaṇa further says that when hair falls, men and women become grieved and harassed. They lament, cry and sometimes even beat their breasts. He further says that a man entangled by these and such impediment forgets those parts of wisdom which are delicate and subtle. Similarly, he stresses that beautiful clothes such as worn by worldly men are inseparable from the craving\textsuperscript{149}. If these things are intentionally used for decoration, monks are responsible for Pācittiya. Use of garlands etc. is against the thirteenth Saṅghādisesadhamma. Therefore, wearing garlands, scents, unguents, ornaments etc. are refrained by the Buddha. Upāsaka and Upāsikā (lay devotees) can use garland but it is strictly prohibited for monks and nuns.

3.1.9 Abstinence from using High and Costly Bed (Uccāsayanamahāsayanā Veramaṇī):

Uccāsayana means to sleep on those beds which are abnormally high— beds higher than the standard height. Mahāsayanā means those beds which are exceedingly

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broad. Neither of these is allowed to be accepted in any ways. Here the question arises about the prohibition from using such high and lofty beds?

There was a monk named Upananda who lived in Sāvatthī. He used to sleep on high beds in his Vihāra. One day the Buddha went there. Upananda showed his bed to the Buddha. After seeing this, the Buddha made a rule—“A monk should make a new bed which is eight fingers in height with the finger of Sugata (the Buddha). Whosoever cuts it after transgressing its height, is responsible for Pācittiya.”

Thus using high and lofty beds is against the Pācittiya rule number 87. There are several kinds of couches which should be avoided by both a monk as well as a lay devotee. Besides this, various kinds of luxurious bedsteads, soft cushions, mattresses, bedcovers, spreading, carpets etc. are also strictly prohibited by the Buddha. A short description about this is made below:

a) Āsandī: It refers to a high coach.
b) Plilaṅka: It is the name of a luxurious coach. It is full with extra facilities for sleeping and sitting.
c) Goṇaka: It means a spreading with long hair.
d) Cittaka: It indicates about wool spreading with designs.
e) Pāṭikā: A certain kind of white woolen spreading with deep red floral designs.
f) Pāṭalikā: A white woolen spreading with deep red floral design is called Pāṭalikā.
g) Tūlikā: It is a spreading stuffed with soft cotton.
h) Vikatīkā: A kind of woolen spreading with animal designs.
i) Uddhalomī: A woolen spreading having one side long wool.
j) Ekantalomī: A spreading with wool on both sides is known as Ekantalomī.
k) Kaṭṭissa: It refers to an embroidered silken spreading with golden weave.

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151 “Navaṃ pana bhikkhunā maṅcaḥ vā piṭhāṃ vā kārayamāṇena atṭhangulapādakaṃ kāretabbaṃ Sugataṅgulena aṭṭhangulaḥ etṭhimāya atṭaniyā; taṃ atikkāmayato chedakaṃ pācittiyaṃ ti”, Pācittiyaṭṭhi, Igatpuri: VRI, p. 222.

l) *Koseyya*: A certain kind of embroidered silken bed spreading is technically known as *Koseyya*\(^{153}\).

m) *Kuttaka*: It is the name of large woolen carpet.

n) *Hatthatharaassattharā*: It signifies to the covering on the elephants back.

o) *Rathattharā*: It indicates the spreading on the chariot.

p) *Ajinappaveni*: A spreading made of the skin of a kind of door is called *Ajinappaveni*\(^{154}\).

q) *Kadalimigapavaroaccaththaraṇam*: It is a spreading made of the skin of a kind of deer known as *Kadalimiga*.

r) *Sa-Uttaracchada*: It is a kind of spreading with a red canopy over head.

s) *Ubhatolohitakūpadhāna*: A certain kind of bed with red pillows at its both ends is called *Ubhatolohitakūpadhāna*\(^{155}\).

All these are regarded as *Uccāsayanamahāsayana*. Therefore, monks and nuns are not allowed to use them. In addition to these, we also come to know about some other types of high and lofty beds. They are: *Masāraka, Bundikabaddha, Kulīrapādaka* and *Āhaccapādaka*\(^{156}\).

For instance, if a monk happens to visit a householder and there he is given these spreading or beds, the monk may use them for sitting but not for sleeping. On the contrary, the *Āsandī, Pallāṅka* and *Tūlikā* should not be used even for sitting.

In this way in this moral base the Buddha refrains from the use of such luxurious and lofty beds.

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153 “*Koseyyaṃ ti ratanaparisibitaṃ kosīya suttamayaṃ paccattharanaṃ; suddhakoseyyaṃ pana vaṭṭati*”, Ibid.

154 “*Ajinappaveni ti ajinacammehi maṅcappamāṇena sibbitvā katā paveṇī*”, Ibid., pp. 1149-50.

155 “*Ubhatolohitakūpadhānaṃ ti sīsūpādhānaṃ ca pādūpadhānaṃ ca ti maṅcassa ubhatolohitakūpadhānaṃ etam na kappati*”, Ibid., p. 1150.

3.1.10 Abstinence from accepting gold, silver etc. (Jātarūparajata Paṭigghanā Veramaṇī):

Literally Jātārūpa means sterling pure metal i.e., gold. It is of immense significance whereas Rajata i.e., silver is a white lustrous precious metal which is used chiefly with admixture of harder metal for coins, plates, ornaments etc.

The question arises here why the Buddha forbade the acceptance of gold and silver. It is said that there was a monk named Upananda. He used to receive alms from certain houses of Rājagaha. One day meat was prepared in that house. Some part of it was left for Upananda. But that part of meat was eaten by a child of that householder. When Upananda came for begging alms he did not get meat. He then accepted Kāhāpana. It was discovered by other monks and they condemned such act. The Buddha hearing the event framed a law—“If any monk accepts gold and silver or cause to accept other or accept accumulated property, he is defaulter of Nissaggiya Pācittiya.”

Acceptance of gold, silver and money was one of the ten points which the Vajji monks pleaded as ‘proper’ for the monks. It led the convention of Second Buddhist Council (saṅgīti) at Vesālī. In this council it was declared improper for the monks to accept gold, silver or any kind of money as it involves an offence of Nissaggiya Pācittiya.

At last it is necessary to say these ten moral commandments by the Buddha are of utmost importance in generating a stubborn support for human life. A person can achieve his desired goal by practicing these precepts.

3.2 Buddhist Ethics and Monastic Discipline

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158 Ibid., 561.
160 Bapat P.V., 2500 Years of Buddhism, Chapter IV, New Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Government of India, rpt., 1997, pp. 36-37.
The monastic order i.e., *Saṅgha* was founded by the Buddha himself, as after attaining enlightenment, he started his noble missionary activities with a very simple formula ‘*Ehi bhikkhu*’.\(^1\) Very soon the devoted disciples of the Buddha brought to him a large number of persons for admission into the *Saṅgha*.

A person seeking entry into the *Saṅgha* is known as a Novice or *Sāmañera*. He must be at least eight years of age, and must have received the consent of his parents to his abandonment of this world. However, he cannot receive *Upasampadā* or Ordination until he attains the age of twenty. The sole motive behind the establishment of monastic discipline was indeed to provide ample opportunities to lead oneself to the path of eternal bliss by the practice of self-restraint and self-purification.

### 3.2.1 Initiation (Pabbajjā) and Higher Ordination (Upasampadā)

The first ceremony of initiation into the Buddhist *Saṅgha* is called *Pabbajjā* or ‘leaving the world’.\(^2\) A person first of all, presents himself for admission into the *Saṅgha* by renouncing the worldly life, whether be a layman, a wandering ascetic or anyone else. When any person embraces the priesthood he/she is said to be a *Pabbajita*.

In case of a layman under twenty years of age seeking admission into the *Saṅgha*, he approaches the *Vihāra* or monastery of his choice with a set of yellow robes and shaven head and presents himself before an elder monk of the monastery for initiation. The elder monk then invests him with yellow robes and calls upon him to take the following oath of three Refuges three times: ‘*Buddham saraṇam gacchāmi, Dhammam saraṇam gacchāmi* and *Saṅgham saraṇam gacchāmi* meaning I take refuge in the Buddha, I take refuge in the Dhamma and I take the refuge in the

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\(^1\) *Vin.*, Mahāvagga, I, 7, 19, *Ehi Bhikkhu* (come monk): the oldest form of ordination as a bhikkhu by pronouncing the word *Ehi Bhikkhu*, this was used only by the Buddha.

Saṅgha”. After this, the Dasasīla (Ten Precepts) as discussed earlier is administered to him.

Besides, he has to render all possible service to his teacher. As a general rule he must be respectful to all monks, and should never speak anything wrong or negative against the Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha nor adhere to any false belief.

Then the ceremony is over and the novice is committed to the care of two elder monks who (upajjhāya) train him in the Dhamma or doctrine, and Vinaya or discipline. The latter is called ācariya. Both these teachers bring him up till he is fit for the higher ordination (upasampadā).

After the period of novitiate is over a Sāmaṇera or novice undergoes second ordination called Upasampadā which is gone through usually after the 20th year, the arrival at the full status of monkhood or Bhikkhu, a full-fledged member of the order.

Upasampadā consisted of a ceremony which has to be completed before the Order (Saṅgha) and by the participation of all the monks. The Ordination can be conferred only by the Saṅgha of at least ten elders who should be all learned, competent and of not less than ten years standing, having been called and one of them must introduce the novice to the president of the Saṅgha in a formal resolution. After that either President or any other member of the Saṅgha gives the preliminary instructions, stated above, and a series of questions are put to the candidate to ascertain his eligibility under the specified condition regarding his being free from certain diseases, debts, royal service, the consent of parents etc. The candidate is also asked if he has reached the age of twenty and has the requisites of a recluse, i.e., robes, alms-bowl etc. that have previously been prepared and deposited.

He is then asked his own name and the names of his Upajjhāya (preceptor) he had chosen. These things being ascertained, the instructor commands him to advance. The candidate should ‘adjust his upper robe so as to cover one shoulder’, salute the

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163 Vin, Mhv I, 12, 3-4.
164 Ibid.,60.
165 Radha Kumud Mookerji, Ancient Indian education, op.cit., p. 318
feet of Bhikkhus with his head, sit down squatting, raise his joined hands and says respectfully, thrice, “I request for Upasampadā”.166

Then a member of the Saṅgha other than the instructor formally calls thrice Ñatti-Catuttha167, i.e., “Let him who assents to this request be silent, let him who dissents now declare it.”

If the assembly be silent the moderator infers that consent is given, upon which he repeats to the candidate the more important of the rules by which he will have to abide; relating to the food he may receive; the garments he may wear; the place in which he may reside; the medicine he may use in case of sickness; and the crimes that involve expulsion from the monkhood.168 It is declared that these ordinances are worthy to be observed till the end of life.

3.2.2 Life of an Sāmaṇera under Probation

When a person leaving the worldly life decides to enter the monastic life as a recluse, first of all has to go through the process of ordination, technically known as Pabbajjā. By performing this ritual he becomes an Sāmaṇera or novice. Hereafter he has to live in the monastic settlement with other fellow monks. The primary duty which he has to perform is the practice of ten basic moral commandments also known as dasasikkhāpadani as discussed thoroughly in the previous as well as in the present chapter. This is the primary assignment for a recluse, to be followed, for leading noble life. After the successful practice of first step, a recluse is supposed to proceed for the further procedures under the guidance of ācariya and upajjhāya.

3.2.3 Supervision of Ācariya and Upajjhāya

Ācariya (Skt.: Ācārya) in Buddhist tradition signifies a teacher or guide of a recluse. According to the Buddhist scriptures, the term is used in the sense of a

166 Mhv. I, 29.2.
167 Ñatti-Catuttha is a procedure followed for entry into the Saṅgha. Earlier it was threefold refuge i.e., Tisaraṇagamana but after sometime when the utterance of mere Tisaraṇa was found inadequate, the system of Natti-Catuttha-Kamma-Upsampadā was introduced., Mhv. II, 4, 7, 9.
168 Cullavagga, V, 8
teacher or moral training. It is almost synonymous with Upajjhāya. The Upajjhāya (Skt.: Upādhyāya) means a spiritual teacher or preceptor and master. He is one who supervises that a novice does not commit any wrong and transgress any rules of Pātimokha and performs his monastic duties and obligation. Furthermore, Mahāvagga refers to two kinds of Upajjhāya: one who gives the preliminary admission i.e., Pabbajjā and the one who gives the full ordination i.e., Upasampadā.

Again coming to the point of Ācariya, in the Mahāvagga and Vissuddhimagga five kinds of Ācariyas are mentioned: Pabbajjācāriya (one who give three refuges and ten precepts to sāmaṇera), Upasampadācāriya (ordination teacher), Nissayācāriya (teacher from whom one takes the dependent), Upasācāriya (teacher who gives the doctrine instructions) and Ovādācāriya (teacher who gives admonitions).

### 3.2.4 Eligibility conditions for Monkhood

A person seeking ordination was required to shave his hair and moustaches, put on yellow robes, sit on his legs, offer salutation to the monk, and then with folded hands utter the tisaraṇa formula. However, after sometime when the utterance or mere tisaraṇa was found insufficient, the system of Āatti-catutthaka-maṇḍa was introduced. The procedure was that an entrant is to sit on his legs and ask for ordination in a set formula before at least ten fully ordained monks. The age of the entrant must not be less than fifteen years in case of Pabbajjā and twenty in case of Upasampadā. He must be presented before the senior monks by his Upajjhāya, or Ācariya. The Upajjhāya or Ācariya announces thrice about his intention to become a fully ordained monk. After this, ordination is conferred provided there is no dissent. Immediately after ther ordination, the entrant is apprised of the four Nissayās upon which he is to depend i.e, living on alms, using robes made out of rags, sleeping under trees, and taking urine and such other filthy things as medicine. These were however, 169 Rhys Davids and William Stede, *op.cit.*, p. 141.
later on relaxed. After Pabbajjā ceremony an Sāmaṇera is now asked to observe only ten precepts and it is only after Upasampadā that a monk is asked to observe the four Pārājikas and other rules of the Pātimokkha. It is essential to mention here that the person suffering with Kuthaṃ (leprosy), Gaṇḍo (boils), Kilāso (dry leprosy), Soso (consumption) and Apamāro (fits) was not considered fit or eligible for admission. Also, a Rājabhato (man in royal service), Dhajabaddho (a declared thief), Kārābhedako coro (a jail-breaker), Likhito coro (a proclaimed robber), Kasāṭho katadaṇḍakammo (a scourged offender), Lakkaṇṭha (a branded thief), Iṇāyiko (a debtor), Dāsa (slave), a person who had violated a nun, caused a schism, has shed the Buddha’s blood, one having hand or feet or both been severed and one who had surreptitiously joined the Saṅgha was disqualified. Furthermore, a person belonging to any non-Buddhist Order could be admitted only after he had gone through a probationary period of four months and behaved himself properly during this period. However, in the case of this rule some exceptions were made from time to time.171

3.3 Pātimokkha Rules as a code of Moral Conduct

In order to streamline the functioning of any institution or organization as well as inculcating the spirit of discipline, morality, and duties; some norms need to be framed so that the common member of that organization may have an outline of the motive of organization which he is associated with. Various norms that we see in the present time of various organizations and institutions, we find the similar glimpse of the same what we find at the time of the Buddha also, wherein, he also formulated various rules and guidelines for the regularization and maintaining discipline in the life of his followers, at different times and places as per demand of the situation. The sole motive behind those rules or norms was to generate a sense of self-discipline, restraint from committing wrong and purifying oneself so that the highest purity could be attained in the form of nibbāna.

Regarding the monastic rules, the Buddha constantly reminds his followers that it is the spirit that counts. On the other hand, the rules themselves are designed to assure a satisfying life. Various rules formulated by the Buddha are not merely the way to express ethical norms; rather the Buddha focuses in teaching the virtue he wants his followers to develop. The rules, thus, function in a wider context than simply legality, and work together with the principles and models formulated by the Buddha to provide a complete training in behavior, with each side making up for the weakness of another.

Pātimokkha (Skt.: Prātimokkha) is an inventory of offenses, being primarily a collection of liturgical formularies governing the conduct of Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunīs.\(^{172}\)

Many scholars have attempted to explicate the etymological meaning of this term, but these pursuits remain, for the most part, speculative. However, Rhys Davids and Oldenberg derive Pātimokkha from Pratīṣṭhī, taken in the sense of disburdening or getting free.\(^{173}\) There are several more translations of the term as according to Sukumar Dutta, Pātimokkha means ‘bond’; he suggests that it refers to the external bond of union devised to convert the sect of the Sakyaputtiya Samanās into an Order.\(^{174}\) Since Pātimokkha is concerned with both monks and nuns, it is twofold, namely, Bhikkhu Pātimokkha and Bhikkhunī Pātimokkha. The former containing 227 offences are classified into seven categories according to the degree of gravity,\(^{175}\) viz.

1. Pārājika (defeat) contains 04 rules.
2. Saṅghādisesa (entailing communal meetings) contains 13 rules.
3. Aniyata (indefinite or uncertain) contains 02 rules only.

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8. *Adhikaraṇasamatha* (the settlement of issues) contains 07 rules.

*Bhikkunī Pātimokkha* too consists of the similar categories with rules numbering 311 but omitting the third category i.e, *Aniyata* as it is related to the conduct of *Bhikkhu*.\(^{176}\) However, it is to be mentioned here that the last category of the *Bhikkhu Pātimokkha* i.e., *Adhikaraṇasamatha* containing 7 rules in it, is excluded because it does not deal with the offences rather the method to settle legal disputes. Furthermore, some scholars do not include *Aniyata* in this broader classification as they are of the view that the nature of the offenses in this category is unclear that whether these offenses are *Pārājika*, *Saṅghādisesa* or *Pācittya* offenses. As such there are only two rules in this category:

- A bhikkhu should not sit alone with a woman where they cannot be seen.\(^{177}\)
- A bhikkhu should not sit alone with a woman in a place they cannot be overhead.\(^{178}\)

Leaving the debate here, it is needed to be concentrated here that, among all these rules, those are first laid down by the Buddha in the *Vinaya* are called *mūlapaññatti* (the root of regulation) and those added later are known as sikkhāpadas (the rule of discipline).

*Bātimokkha* was first mentioned in the *Mahāpadānasutta* and then in the commentary of *Dhammapada*. *Pātimokkha* rules are supposed to be recited at each *Poṣadha* day, and regarding its function, I. B. Horner states: This recitation served the double purpose of keeping the rules fresh in the minds of the monks and nuns, and of giving each member of the monastic community the opportunity, while the rules were being repeated or recited to arrow an offence that he or she had committed.\(^{179}\)

*Pātimokkha* contains the characteristic behavior for ideal monks and nuns. The

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\(^{176}\) Oldenberg, *The Vinaya Piṭaka*, vol. II, p. 83.

\(^{177}\) Vin. III, 131-134.

\(^{178}\) Vin. III, 135-144.

In the first stanza, it shows the true character of Buddhism, distinguishes how Buddhism differs from other faiths, and that the highest goal of Buddhism is nibbāna.

- In the second stanza, it shows how to practice, the process of practice i.e. not to do evil, to do good and to purify mind.
- In the third and last stanza, it shows the rules which a person doing missionary job must follow.

### 3.3.1 Provision of Punishment

The system of punishment is based on two principles. The first is that the training aims primarily at the development of mind. Thus the factors of intention and perception often determine whether or not a particular action is infringement of a rule. For instance, killing any insect or animal accidentally is purely different from killing intentionally or purposefully and thus the former may not be an infringement of the rules of killing. Furthermore, there are few rules where the intention does not matter at all e.g. if a monk takes intoxicants then he cannot take the excuse of unintentional.

In any event, the system of analyzing each offense into the factors of efforts, object, perception, intention etc. shows how adherence to the rules leads directly to the development of concentration and discernment. Whereas, the second principle is based on the offender’s status within the community.

As stated above, **Pātimokkha** – the fundamental rules for the Buddhist Order, are arranged into the order of seriousness of the offenses from major to minor. Thus, in case of violation of the four most serious rules of the **Pārājika** – a monk is expelled from the **Saṅgha** for the whole life. He automatically loses the status of a **Bhikkhu**. He has either to go back to the household life as a layman or revert back to the status of a **Sāmaṇera** (a novice) even though he can never be ordained again. The four **Pārājikas** are:

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• Indulgence in sexual intercourse.
• To take unoffered thing and which has a value of five Māsaka or more.
• Deprivation of life of a human being.
• Proclamation of attainment of superhuman faculties such as jhāna or magga and phala insight, which he has not in fact attained.

The offender of any these four Pārājika is guilty of the gravest transgression. If he breaks the next most serious class of rules i.e., Saṅghādisesa – he is put on probation for six days, during which period he is stripped of his seniority, is not trusted to go anywhere unaccompanied by four other monks of regular standing, and daily has to confess his offense to every monk who live in or happens to visit the monastery. At the end of his probation, a meeting of at least twenty monks has to be convened to reinstate him to his original status. Of the thirteen rules, the first five rules deal with minor sexual offenses, such as touching a woman, talking to one with erotic words or acting as a go-between leading a man and woman to become husband-wife. The next two follow the construction of kuṭi (huts) and vihāras (monasteries) and to prevent monks from over-begging building materials from the laity and from building where harm might befall living creature. The last six rules involve violations expressed through speech to create schism, to defame or to purposely quarrel.¹⁸²

A bhikkhu who transgress one or more of these thirteen rules must be removed from the Saṅgha and may be allowed his reentery into the Saṅgha if his āpatti is lifted at a special congregation attended by at least twenty bhikkhus.

The next three levels of rules i.e., Nissaggiya Pācittiya, Pācittiya and Pāṭidesanīya¹⁸³ entail simple confession to a fellow monk. In the Nissaggiya Pācittiya there are thirty rules laid down to curb inordinate greed in the bhikkhus for possession of material things. Among the thirty rules, sixteen belongs to robes; five with rugs; three with gold and silver; two with bowls; one with medicine; and one with wrongfully taking benefits from the entire Order.

¹⁸² Ibid.
The Pācittiya on the other hand contains ninety two rules dealing mainly with lying, abusive language, slandering, having unsuitable dealing with women, destroying any form of life including vegetation and other rules regulating the life of monastery. Further, the Pṭtidesanīya reflect the bhikkhus concern for making sure that the laity is not in some way caused suffering through the practice of alms-giving.

The final two levels of rules do not give a particular penalty. The Sekhiya rules numbering seventy five deals primarily with etiquette simply stating that one should work at following them. The rules are further divided into four groups. The first group of twenty six rules is concerned with good conduct and behaviour when going into towns and villages. The second group of thirty rules deals with polite manners while accepting alms-food and while eating meals. The third group of sixteen rules contains rules which prohibit teaching of the Dhamma to disrespectful people, and the fourth group of three rules relates to unbecoming ways of answering the calls of nature and of spitting.

The last classification Adhikaraṇasamatha rules are not basically considered as rules, rather they are principles for settling down disputes, if arises, in the Saṅgha. According to Vinaya, following are the four kinds of disputes:

1. Vivādādhikaraṇa: These disputes are related to what is dhamma, what is not dhamma; what is vinaya, what is not vinaya; what the Buddha said, what the Buddha did not say; and what constitute an offense, what is not an offense.
2. Anuvādādhikaraṇa: Dispute arises out relating to the virtue, practice, views and ways of living of a bhikkhu.
3. Āpattādhikaraṇa: Dispute about the infringement of any disciplinary rules.
4. Kiccādhikaraṇa: Dispute concerning formal meeting or decision by the Saṅgha.

If monks try to settle an issue without following these principles, their decision is invalid and they must confess their wrong doing to other monks who took no part in the decision.

3.4 Appointment of various officials in the Monastic Life
It is very clear that the administration of monastic life was not a meager task. There are references in *Vinaya Piṭaka* of how the officials were appointed. The text clearly represents the administrative structure and the responsibilities among different persons for different assignments. A layout of the appointment of various officials for the smooth functioning in the monastic Order is given as under:\(^{184}\)

**Permanent Officers:**

**a) Connected with the Commissariat**

1. *Bhaṇḍagārika* – Store Keeper
2. *Kappiya-Kārāka* – Officer assigned to determine what is and is not allowed; he converted gifts of money into goods.
3. *Bhattuddesaka* – Apportioner of Food.
5. *Phala-Bhājaka* – Distributor of Fruit

**b) Connected with Chambers, ward Robe etc.**

1. *Senāsana Paññāpaka* – Assigner of Lodgings.
5. *Patta-Gahāpaka* – Receiver of Alms-Bowls
6. *Appamattaka-Vissajjaka* – Disposer of trifles

**c) Superintendents**

1. *Ārāmika-Pesaka* – Superintendent of Workers

1. **Temporary Officers**

1. *Navakammika* – Superintendent of Buildings (including

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reparis).

ii. *Kathina-Vatthāraka*—Distributor of Robes.

iii. *Salākā-Gahāpaka*—Receiver of rooting Tickets.

2. **Miscellaneous Officers**


4. *Bhājana-Vārika*—Officer in charge of Vessels.

5. *Upadhivāra*—Steward.


7. *Muṇḍasenāsana-Vārika*—Officer of Lodging not in use.

3.4.1 **Their Eligibility Conditions and Assignments**

A *Bhikkhu* endowed with the following five qualities could be appointed as an official in the monastic life.

1. Without Chandāgati (prejudice by love, desire or partiality)
2. Without Dosāgati (prejudice caused hatred or enmity)
3. Without Mohāgati (prejudice caused by delusion or stupidity)
4. Without Bhayāgati (prejudice caused by fear)
5. Possession of good knowledge and sense of efficient management

A recluse is appointed and assigned the duties by the consent of the *Saṅgha* only after having been receiving as a person of all five qualities—unswayable through partiality, hatred, stupidity and fear and knowing what is taken and what not—and is the one who receives robes and other materials given by donors who come to the monastery. Besides, an abbot has the power and authority in administering the religious and secular affairs of the monastic life. Following are the few assignments accorded to the appointed monks for the smooth conduct of daily affairs of the monastic Order:

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186 A. II, 18.
To provide administrative direction and permission for monastic and individual activities.
To manage education of the dhamma and of the secular school, if any, in the monastery.
To preach and teach the Buddha’s teachings.
To send the academic monks to various social and public organizations for training the laity to ingrain them the Buddhist dhamma. Such interaction may be held in the form of lectures, workshops, seminars etc.
To monitor activities both in and outside the monastic Order.
To donate food, money and tools to the needy whenever appropriate.

CHAPTER 4
Buddhist Ethics: Application/ Utility in the Common Social Life

Buddhist ethics aims at self purification. In this process not only individual gains perfection, but he or she also benefits the society at large. Ethical teachings by the Buddha are meant to ensure physical as well as spiritual advancement of man. In a more technical way, it is called purification of the consciousness of an individual. The path of Buddhist ethics has three steps Sīla, Samādhi and Paññā. It begins with moral teachings and prepares a moral base in the mind and thereby generates an atmosphere of harmony in the society. Buddhist ethical code of conduct prescribes the observance of certain moral norms for the benefit of mankind. If an individual follows these basic norms of moral and ethical conduct, he or she can live peacefully, harmoniously and happily with mutual trust and respect. Thus, in the present chapter
study has been made to understand the relevance and utility of the Buddha’s teaching applicable in our social life.

4.1 Buddhist Ethics and a Common Man

The Buddha first of all laid down five fundamental principles (Pañcasīla) for the lay disciples to follow. They are: (1) Abstinence from killing (Pāṇātipātā veramaṇī); (2) Abstinence from stealing (Adinnādānā veramaṇī); (3) Abstinence from sexual misconduct (Kāmesumicchācārā veramaṇī); (4) Abstinence from telling lie (Musāvādā veramaṇī); and (5) Abstinence from taking intoxicants (Surāmerayamajjappamādaṭṭhānā veramaṇī). The five precepts, preached by the Buddha are never out of date. Even today one can find their relevance.

In a bid to live a disciplined life the Buddha also teaches to follow the eightfold noble path. This is: Sammā diṭṭhi, sammā saṅkappa, sammā vācā, sammā kammanta, sammā ājīvā, sammā vāyāma, sammā sati and sammā samādhi. The Noble Eightfold Path is thus a practical way shown by the Buddha for a tensionless, tranquil and peaceful life. It is a self discipline of body, speech and mind. It is the path of self–purification. As these ethical teachings are already discussed in the second chapter, so here without going into the further details a simple mention is being made.

Man is indeed a part and parcel of the natural world. In this natural world, he creates a social world for the benefits and the furtherance of human race. As aptly stated by Aristotle, God and beasts do not require a society for “man is naturally a political animal and that one who is not a citizen of any state, if the cause of his isolation be natural and not accidental, in either a superhuman being or low in the scale of civilization, as he stands alone like a blot on the backgammon board.”

Further the Buddha advises the people that by effort, earnestness, discipline, and self control make an island which no flood can overwhelm:

“Uṭṭhānena appamādena, saññamena dāmena ca /

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More specific directives, however, have also been given such as self control over body, speech and mind in the following verses:

“Kāyappakopaṃ rakkheyya kāyena suṃvuto siyā / kāyaduccaritaṃ hitvā kāyena sucariṭaṃ care // Vacīpakopaṃ rakkheyya vācāya suṃvuto siyā / Vacī duccaritaṃ hitvā vācāya sucariṭaṃ care // Manopakopaṃ rakkheyya manasā suṃvuto siyā / Manoduccaritaṃ hitvā manasā sucariṭaṃ care // Kāyena saṃvutā dhīrā atho vācāya saṃvutā / Manasā saṃvutādhīrā te ve supārīsaṃvutā //”

The Buddha also gives a message to the mankind to refrain from destroying life, stealing, sexual misdeeds, lying and consumption of intoxicants etc.

“Yo pāṇamatipāteti musāvādañca bhāsati / Loke adinnaṃ ādiyati paradārañca gacchati // Surāmerayapānañca yo naro anuyuñjati / Idhevameso lokasmiṃ mūlaṃ khanati attano //”

A sincere and faithful disciple should treat all beings with kindness and compassion, live honestly, control his desires, speak truth and live a sober and upright life. He should fulfill all his duties to parents, to immediate family, to friends and to recluses and Brāhmaṇas as reflected beautifully in the following verses:

“Atthamhi jātamhi na sukhā sahāyā, tuṭṭī sukhā yā itarītarena / Puṇṇaṃ sukhāṃ jīvitasāṅkhayamhi, sabbassa dukkhassa sukhāṃ pahānaṃ // Sukhā metteyyatā loke attho petteyyatā sukhā / Sukhā sāmaññatā loke attho brahmaññatā sukhā //”

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189 Dhp. verse no. 25.
190 Ibid., 231-34.
191 Ibid., 246-47.
192 Ibid, 331-32
From the above discussion, it is clear that the Buddha’s ethical concept is practical and relevant for all for common man. Through these teachings the Buddha tried to give a message to strive hard for making life a noble one so that peace, harmony and respect for each other may prevail. Though the final target of Buddhism is to attain nibbāna, it is practically not possible for all to attain that supreme stage. Even the Buddha himself could not lead all people towards nibbāna. Despite this fact, he never neglected the common mass and preached several doctrines, few of them as discussed above, of the mundane level, for the benefit of worldly people. The Buddha’s teachings, if applied properly in day-to-day life, a common man can definitely get rid out of many issues and make this planet the happiest place to live in for the generations to come.

4.2 Ideals of Buddhist Ethics

Buddhism is essentially a religion of ethics without any God or divine metaphysical principle, and also a system of salvation based on moral, contemplative and intellectual virtues. The centrality of its ethical programme can be gauged from its strong emphasis on transformation and ethicization of human consciousness, the entire humanity, and the whole realm of cosmology. In this scheme, whether it is egoistic or personal nibbāna or an individual purification like attainment of Arhathood in early Buddhism or altruism of Bodhisattva in later Buddhism the regulative principle is always ethical. The development of these possibilities in a person, which have both personal and other regarding implications, is only through self-effort which involves three pronged strategy— Sīla, Samādhi and Paññā. The last two help in achieving excellence in the practice of the former. Thus, it is a journey from ethics to ethics through ethics.

The Buddhist ethics since its inception has been rational and reflective as opposed to the customary one. The centrality of ethics in Buddhism also accepts the centrality of each human being and within him the centrality of mind which is the source of all values, virtues and vices as well defined in Dhammapada:

“Mano pubbaṅgamā dhammā mano seṭṭhā manomayā /
Since man is a natural being who is endowed with cognitive and affective character, the Buddhist ethics emphasizes primarily on the necessity of understanding his whole nature and so it analyzes his disposition, will, motive, intention and purpose, which together constitute his self and moral character. These psychological factors according to Buddhism, conditions his knowledge, reason and conduct.

The next step of Buddhism in this regard is to reshape and develop the self for holistic ethical action. In the process, besides criticizing irrational elements of the existing ethical theories and ideas, Vedic as well as non-Vedic, Buddhism begins with the necessity of strict adherence of sīla which is in the beginning customary but gradually becomes reflective. It not only overcomes the vices but also reduces the state of conflict between self and the other. There upon the technique of contemplative meditation is applied to form the moral habit. This results in developing the unity between self-consciousness and universal harmony. The process does not stop here rather goes on further for the development of wisdom about the true nature of the things. The ethical spiritual journey does not end here, unless out of compassion, like the Buddha, the practitioner returns to the world of action and helps in bringing freedom and happiness to the entire suffering humanity. Thus, Buddhist ethics culminates in altruism.

Buddhist ethics without the conception of any supreme authority like God focuses on self purification. In Buddhism, godhood is just a stage in the process of ethical development of man which is still fallible. The highest goal in Buddhism is the attainment of enlightenment. In the absence of any divine agency, the Buddha says that one has to work for his own salvation by following the method as mentioned above and in the previous chapters too. Because according to the Buddha the blind

faith in God’s will may have dangerous moral implications. In Buddhism, to be morally good means to be rational, virtuous, emotional, enlightened, contemplative and compassionate. This is the reason the Buddha during his whole monastic life has stressed on the observance of *Kusala dhammas* with the essence of *mettā, karunā, muditā* and *upekkhā*. These four sublime ways of life along with the moral commandments in the form of *Pañcasīla* are the real backbone of Buddhist ethics.

4.3 **Four Brahmavihāras as the Guiding Principle of Social Harmony**

The literal meaning of the word *Brahma* is superior or noble\(^\text{194}\) and *vihāra* means living\(^\text{195}\). Thus, *Brahmavihāra* means a noble or sublime way of living. The Buddha has tried to project a very higher ideal through the concept of *Brahmavihāra* and also made possible attempt to bring them into practice. There are four principles in the *Brahmavihāra*. They are—*Mettā* (universal friendliness), *Karuṇā* (universal compassion), *Muditā* (joy) and *Upekkhā* (equanimity). When these four sublime human values are inculcated and developed, there is emergence of a social set up where there is no enmity, cruelty, jealousy, hatred, inequality etc.

Narada Mahathera also termed these four sublime virtues as *Appamaññā* (illimitable) as those does not find any limit and be extended towards all beings without exception. They embrace all living beings including animals\(^\text{196}\).

According to Narada, the modus operandi of *Brahmavihāra* is: “*Mettā* embraces all beings, *Karuṇā* embraces sufferers, *Muditā* embraces the prosperous, and *Upekkhā* embraces the good and the bad, the loved and the unloved, the pleasant and the unpleasant.”\(^\text{197}\) Also, in words of Prof. B. Labh, like monastic Order, the Buddha gave more importance to social Order which should be congenial and saturated with peace and tranquility. For this, he introduced the idea of *Brahmavihāra*. Now, let us examine these four principles in detail:

\(^{195}\) Ibid., p. 642.
a) **Mettā**: Literal meaning of Mettā is friendliness. The equivalent Sanskrit term for Mettā is Maitrī. There is no equivalent term for Mettā in English and hence it can be taken to refer as good-will, benevolence, loving-kindness etc. In its technical sense it refers to the universal friendliness. It is ‘Parahitakāmatā’ or the pious desire of the well-being of all. It embraces the entire living beings and radiates in the form of their well-being. While practicing friendliness, one establishes the noble idea and develops within oneself a thinking that he and the persons all around him should be in state of happiness. Further, he breaks this barrier and develops it to persuade all through.

In the words of Prof. Labh, “There is no living creature on this earth, another world or in the divine kingdom who are not in the purview of this universal friendliness.” The practitioner makes efforts in all directions. The waves of friendliness touching and creating smoothness can be felt in this very life. The practitioner thinks that the beings who are born, who will be born, who are either big or small, living near or far, living diagonally in space or vacuum or living anywhere may be in the form of stable moving etc. may be happy. Let all beings be free from ailment pollution and disturbance in the journey of their life—“Sabbe sattā arogā anighā hontu, sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhitattā. Sabbe sattā sukhino hontu.”

Furthermore, according to Piyadassi Thera, “Mettā is a very pure sublime state of human mind; like a quicksilver it cannot attach itself to anything. It is a calm, non-assertive super-solvent among virtues.”

In border sense, it may be concluded that it is the ultimate love that does not have any boundaries and is above from the sense of taking anything in return. In this way, the friendliness covers ‘sabbe sattā’ or all beings living anywhere and thus it is called unlimited.

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b) **Karuṇā:** It means compassion.²⁰⁰ It is not a mere verbal sympathy but it is the feeling of sublime state of experiencing the suffering of others, making one with that and thereafter making attempt for removal of the suffering. In this direction, it is defined— ‘kaṅ iti dukkhaṅ, uṇāti iti pavissati, taṅ vināsāya vāyamati ca.’ Kaṅ- suffering, uṇāti- entering into suffering of others and making right efforts for the removal of the same. A man practicing compassion does not simply harbor the idea at intellectual level but rather puts the same into practice. By doing so, he does not develop sympathy, compassion for them. He makes the idea engrained in him and develops it in such a way that he persuades all through and embraces the beings of universe. Keeping this in view it is said that ‘Karuṇā sahagatena cittaṃ sakalam disam pharitvā viharati.’

Karuṇā is, therefore, does not mean helping others and expecting something in return. Rather, it is helping without the zero expectation of any desire. It is the kind of pure mind wherein no selfishness or ulterior motive inside resides. According to Narada Mahathera²⁰¹, the chief characteristics of compassion are the wish to remove the suffering of others. As in Mahāyāna Buddhism it is observed that the Bodhisatta will help others to get rid of their sufferings in the world before getting himself out of suffering.

c) **Muditā:** Third sublime state means joy, glad, pleased etc.²⁰² It is joy in generic and technical sense. It is joy with reference to the well being of others.²⁰³ Muditā is, thus, the state of happiness at the sight of welfare of others without jealousy. The men who are healthy, educated, well settled, and making progress in their day to day activities are regarded as to persons who are happy. People generally develop jealousy towards others’ progress. They also

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²⁰¹ Nārada Mahāthera, The Buddha and His Teachings, p. 536.
²⁰³ Muditā sahagatena cetasā ekam disam pharitvā viharati; M., Syamaraṭṭhassa Tepikaṃ, XIII, p. 50.
sometimes, finding people in a state of distress, like to increase the distress by creating unfavorable situation for them.

Thus Muditā minimizes such wrong feelings and in due course removes them forever. There is no sense of jealousy at all for everyone but there is unmixed joy for the gradual development of others. It is said that the practitioner develops the sublime state in such a way to persuade all through that he includes the beings of the entire universe.

d) Upekkhā: It is generally translated as indifference.204 It is indifference in the sense that in course of our life we find persons who are ignorant people and due to their ignorance do something which are not up to the mark, sometimes even disturbing the society. They do so out of ignorance. Here, the practitioner becomes indifferent and makes efforts for removal of the folly. It is also interpreted as equanimity and in that sense all the beings of the universe are accepted as one and similar. There is no question of higher, lower, well to do and poor persons. The practitioner takes them as beings, equal in their nature, in spirit and does not develop any sense of discrimination. He develops this noble state also in a way to pursue all through and makes the entire direction surcharge with the noble idea—‘Upekkhā sahagatena cittena sakalam disam pharitvā viharati.’

The Buddha was a pragmatic thinker. He clearly stated that one has nothing to do for learning the four states of Brahmavihāro from a teacher living far away in a monastery or forest. Rather, the same can be learnt from the mother. For instance, a mother has three children. One has been sick and ailing for a long time. The other is healthy, well educated and making progress every day. Third is a small baby having no understanding of anything. Now, what is attitude of the mother towards these three children? The common feeling of the mother towards all is friendliness. She likes to see well-being of all the three. With respect to ailing child, she wishes that the ailment should go away. Compassion becomes one with the feeling of the boy and tries to

minimize suffering by making all possible efforts. The small baby, unsteadily roaming here and there sometimes jumps on the body of the mother, makes her cloth dirty. Mother is not hassled. Instead she develops feeling of indifference towards the foolish act of the baby, with feeling of his becoming intelligent in future.

Again, mother has state of complete joy towards the boy who is healthy, settled and progressing every moment. She does not feel jealous of his progress. As a stream of all the four sublime states is seen flowing incessantly in the heart of mother. Similarly one should learn it from her and develop practice in different walks of life.

It is further said that one should not think that in a particular moment or place he will develop the feeling of friendliness, compassion, joy and indifference, but whether while sitting, standing, lying down or moving every time, there should be practice of sublime state of *Brahmavihāra*. It is said in this context that by inculcation and development of these sublime states there will be a society of harmony free from disturbances, the reign of friendliness and eternal bliss.

### 4.4 Buddhist Ethics and Just Social Order

The Buddha’s approach to Just Social Order can be realized by the idea of *bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya*; by keeping which in the mind he started his mission of extinction of suffering from the life of people. Though the Buddha’s primary concern was moral and spiritual enhancement, yet he equally focuses on the social front also. In a common sense Just Social Order means many different kinds of action intended to benefit the mankind. These range from simple individual acts of Right Livelihood in and outside and through various kinds of community development as well as through political activities for a better society. Buddhism is a pragmatic teaching which starts from certain fundamental propositions about how we experience the world and how we act in it. It teaches that it is possible to transcend this world full of suffering. What finally leads to such transcendence is what we call Wisdom. The enormous literature of Buddhism is not a literature of revelation and
authority. Instead, it uses ethics and meditation, philosophy and science, art and poetry to point a Way to this Wisdom. Similarly, Buddhist writing on social concern, unlike secular writings, makes finite proposals which must ultimately refer to this Wisdom, but which are also arguable in terms of our common experience.

The Buddha’s concept of Just Social Order can be seen during his missionary span of time wherein through his teaching and discourses he stressed on the establishment of the social justice and harmony.\textsuperscript{205} From the evidence of the Buddha's discourses in the \textit{Dīghanikāya}, it is clear that early Buddhists were very much concerned with the creation of social conditions favorable to the individual cultivation of Buddhist values. An outstanding example of this, in later times, is the remarkable welfare state created by the emperor Aśoka.

From the many utterances of the Buddha, the idea of social concern may be realized: “He who has understanding and great wisdom does not think of harming himself or another or of harming both alike. He rather thinks of his own welfare, of that of others, of that of both, and of the welfare of the whole world. In that way one shows understanding and great wisdom.”\textsuperscript{206} And “By protecting oneself (e.g., morally), one protects others; by protecting others, one protects oneself.”\textsuperscript{207}

Furthermore, the Buddha’s support to freedom of women to reach at the higher spiritual realm, love for animals and nature etc. is deeply reflected in the Pali scriptures. The concept in \textit{Dhammapada} for the restoration and establishment of non-violence in the society and leading humanity towards global peace is obvious as the Buddha proclaims:

\begin{quote}
\textit{Na hi verena verāni, sammantidha kudācanāni} / \\
\textit{Averena ca sammanti, esa dhammo sanantano} /\textsuperscript{208}
\end{quote}

This indicates that Buddhist concepts of non-violence, love, compassion, good-will etc. are the foundations of human life. It is because, when we cultivate such feelings in ourselves, we enter the state of eternal satisfaction and we feel the whole

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\textsuperscript{205} B. Labh in his unpublished article \textit{Buddhism and Social Harmony}. \\
\textsuperscript{206} A. (Gradual Sayings) Fours, No. 186 \\
\textsuperscript{207} S. (Kindred Sayings) 47; Satipaṭṭhāna Samy., No. 19. \\
\textsuperscript{208} Dhp., verse no. 05.
\end{flushright}
universe as our own family. The verses dealing with hatred and its appeasement are of special significance. If anger is met with anger and hatred with hatred, there is no end to struggle and scuffle. This is the reason, the Buddha advices for having company of good friends, who could show and suggest noble ideas and useful path:

“Na bhaje pāpake mitte, na bhaje purisādhame / 
Bhajetha mitte kalyāṇe, bhajetha purisuttame //”

Also, as recorded in the Assalāyanasutta, the Buddha has refuted the claim that the spiritual achievements could be made by the Brāhmaṇas only. The Enlightened guru, thus, worked and pointed out that members of all the four Vargaṇas are eligible for attaining the supreme stage of spirituality. For maintaining this social equality he has opened the entry of all in the Buddhist Saṅgha.

The long history of Buddhism bears ample testimony to the glorious part played by it in human society. The teachings of Buddhism had a salutary effect and it was due to the influence of those teachings that many rulers and governments in the past worked for the welfare of the people. The Buddhists teachings of Pañcasīla, Brahmavihāra, and of the Noble Eightfold Path if considered and implemented sincerely, the dream of an ideal and welfare society may be achieved.

4.4.1 Downtrodden

As we all are well aware about the fact, the social stratification in the Indian society at the time of the Buddha played an important role in the rise of his religion. The then society was divided into a couple of distinct groups. The first group which was numerically less was dominating and exploiting the other groups which were numerically very high. The Buddha realized this fact and revolted against the negative dispensations. This step of the Buddha was beneficial for the people and in turn they rallied behind him. The second major step initiated by the Buddha was the whole hearted support to the Vrātyas. The Vrātyas were the offspring of the heterogamy and hypogamy marriages. This finds mentioned in the Atharvaveda also where this new sub varṇa is eloquently placed after the four varṇas. It is essential to be mentioned

209 Ibid. 78
here that the Buddha was the only person who supported the cause of Vrātyas and in return they came around the Buddha.

He was deeply disheartened over the practice of discrimination among human beings on the basis of caste. He outrightly discarded it and tried to replace the social stratification of the then Indian society from the consideration of deeds instead of birth which is evident from this beautiful verse:

“Na jaccā vasalo hoti, na jaccā hoti brāhmaṇo /
Kammunā vasalo hoti, kammunā hoti brāhmaṇo //”²¹⁰

It was due to this approach that when the Buddha established Saṅgha he declared the entry of all irrespective of any discrimination of caste, creed and family. There are many references wherein the high position in the Saṅgha is occupied by the people of low caste. He was of the view that our Karma must be the only factor to decide our social position in the society.

No doubt for the Buddha too, Brāhmaṇa remained the supreme, but his concept of ‘Brāhmaṇa’ was entirely different. It was indeed based on purity of action irrespective of any caste, as we find in Dhammapada:

“Na jaṭāhi na gottehi na jaccā hoti brāhmaṇo /
Yamhi saccaṃ ca dhammo ca, so sucī so ca brāhmaṇo //”²¹¹

We also see that the followers of the Buddha strictly followed these teachings in their practical life as it is evident by this incident. It is said that once Ānanda went for the alms. On the way he felt thirsty and was searching for water. He found a well and came near it for drinking water. A girl of very low caste was drawing water from the well. Ānanda requested her for water, but she said, “I belong to Mātaṅga caste, sir”. Ānanda replied, “I did not ask for your birth, sister, I asked for water”.²¹²

Generally speaking, Buddhism developed five main arguments against social stratification— biological, evolutionary, sociological, ethical and spiritual unity of mankind. Biologically, all human beings are from one single caste. Evolutionary

²¹⁰Sn., Bhikkhu Dharmarakshita (ed.& tr.), verse nos. 21 &27, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publisher, p. 34.
²¹¹Dhp., Verse no. 393.
argument throws light that how caste name originated must be mere conventions. With division of the nature of job or work such conventional grouping becomes necessary. Third argument is based on sociological considerations. In a society one finds two caste systems and in some other societies there is no caste system at all. Ethical and spiritual arguments reveal the privileged position desired by some communities in order to maintain their status in the religious sphere.

However, it is to be mentioned here that though the Buddha did not believe in the birth based caste, he did not condemn the social order based on caste either. He perhaps believed that the divisions in a society into groups was the result of historical and economic reasons and did not affect the moral climate much. The Buddha says, “Just as, brethren, the great rivers—Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Aciravatī and Mahī—when they have fall into the great ocean, lose their individual identities and are known as the great ocean, in the same way, O brethren, do the members of these four varṇas—Kṣatriya, Brāhmaṇa, Vaiśya and Šūdra when they began to follow the Doctrine and Discipline as propounded by the Tathāgata, they renounce their different names of caste and rank and become members of one and the same order.”

However, he did not stop here. Rather he talked of developing a sense of equality, loving-kindness, and compassion towards one and all; which could be possible only when one gives up the notion of false complex of superiority and inferiority and treats everybody just like himself.

4.4.2 Women and their Entry to Saṅgha

It is said that men and women are the two wheels of the same cart known as the family and social life. However, in this male dominated society one of the biggest questions that arises is the position accorded to women in all spheres of life. Unfortunately the society has remained very inhuman towards women for centuries continuously and surprisingly the position of women is still enclosed in the role

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“women produce children; women are mother and wives; women do the cooking, mending, sewing and washing, they take care of men and are subordinate to male authority, they are largely excluded from high status occupations and from positions of power.” Women still does not have access to the same opportunity as men in society, politics, religious ceremonies, rituals and at work. History has witnessed a time when women had to jump alive onto the funeral pyre. In India for ten thousand years, women were told that even to dream of some other men is a sin. The same was not applicable for men.

Many social and religious reformers such as Gautama Buddha, Guru Nanak Dev, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Swami Vivekananda, Bal Bangadhar Tilak, Jyotiba Phule, Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Mother Teresa etc. from time to time raised their voice against such discrepancies and left no stone unturned for the upliftment of the status of woman. However, there remains a lot yet to be done.

The first and greatest Hindu missionary monk Swami Vivekananda once remarked, ‘There is no chance for welfare of the world unless the condition of woman is improved. It is not possible for a bird to fly on only one wing.’ These remarks of Vivekananda are very much applicable and relevant even in the modern era when the society is progressing with a rapid speed.

The seed of women discrimination in India was sown during the later Vedic period which grew as a strong tree during the Smṛti period. Discrimination against women has been a common feature in almost in all the male dominated societies and religion has played a crucial role in it. Women are depicted as a temptress and are warned against almost in all the religions of the world. Therefore we can say that the root cause of women discrimination actually originates in religion, as alleged by some thinkers. Some religious cults have also prohibited women from reading the religious

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215 Rajnish Osho in his discourse *Beyond Enlightenment*, chapter 17 quoted in Osho World Newsletter, March 2013, p. 41.
scriptures. They were also discouraged from entering the places of worship and even if allowed to participate in religious practices, they were confined to their own homes only. Such hindrances and obstructions in the matter of moral and spiritual upliftment of women still exist in varying degree in certain parts of the world although barriers have been removed.

In contrast to such hindrances and bigoted religious practices, Buddhism can certainly claim to have least discriminatory attitude against women. Undoubtedly, the Buddha was the first religious teacher who gave women considerably respectful position and unfettered opportunities in the field of spiritual development. Before penning down on Buddhism let us have an overview of the position of woman in the ancient Indian society and her downfall during the *Smṛiti* period.

As a matter of fact, history of almost all civilizations reveals that further back we go into antiquity, the more deterioration we find in the position of women in that respective civilization. However, Indian civilization has a unique perspective in this regard, as here we find a surprising exception. The further back we go, the more satisfactory we find the status of woman in the society in all the spheres of life. If we split the Vedic Period into two halves then it may be concluded that the condition of woman deteriorated in the post Vedic period. In the early Vedic or Ṛgvedic period woman had a high status in the society. The observation of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, that husband and wife are the two halves of one entity, was not merely a courtly compliment to the fair sex. At the commencement of the sacrifice, she used to receive a regular *dīkṣā* as was the case with man; this was known as *Vrato-panayana* because fresh girdles were supplied on the occasion.

*Ṛgveda* also describes the participation of both wife and husband in pressing the Soma juice and supervising over various functions going on in the sacrificial pandal. Further woman was entitled to participate in sacrifices.

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216 Argho ha vā pasha ātmano yajjāyā.
217 *Taîtiyīya Brāhmaṇa*, III, 3; *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, 1, 3 1, 12, quoted by A.S. Aletkar in *Education in Ancient India*, Delhi: Isha Books, p. 221.
218 Ṭa ṭampa sūmanāsā sūnuta’ā ca dhāvātā / devāso nityayāśhira.
219 Sa hotram sma purā nāri samaṇa vāva gachchhati.
Women were highly respected in the family as well. Despite the prominence of man in family, woman was considered as the mistress of the household. There are literary evidences to suggest that women power destroyed kingdoms and mighty rulers. The great epics— *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata*, tell the stories of wiping out of Rāvaṇa (because he abducted and tried to marry Mātā *Sītā* forcibly) and the downfall of Kauravas (because they humiliated queen Draupādi).

*Ardhanārīśvara* (where God is half-man and half-woman) was and is still highly worshipped in the Indian tradition and culture. In the Vedic society she had rights to participate in religious and tribal assemblies but she had to depend on male members throughout her life. A woman could choose her husband through a type of marriage called ‘*Svayāṃvara*’\(^{220}\). Instances of such ceremonies can be found in epics, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata*. This continued even in the later period in high class families. As the time passed the position of woman deteriorated gradually in all spheres of life. In the later Vedic period, she lost her political and social rights of attending assemblies. Child marriages also came into existence. Position of women gradually went down as the golden Vedic ideals of unity and equality began to fade away through the passage of time. *Smṛti* period\(^{221}\) witnessed the lower status of women further. During this period she had been bracketed with the *śūdras* and was denied the right to study the Vedas, to utter Vedic mantras and to perform Vedic rites. Marriage or domestic life became compulsory for her and unquestioning and devotion towards male partner was accorded as a prime duty.

By the time of the Buddha, women were seen confined to the four walls of house, though with all dignity and honor. However, on the social front she had no role to

\(^{220}\) In this type of marriage, potential grooms assembled at the bride's house and the bride selected her spouse.

\(^{221}\) The period of Manusmṛti also known as Māṇava-Dharmaśāstra, is the most important and earliest metrical work of the Dharmaśāstra textual tradition of Hinduism. Generally known as the Laws of Manu, presents itself as a discourse given by Manu, the progenitor of mankind to a group of seers, or ṛṣis, who beseech him to tell them the "law of all the social classes." Manu became the standard point of reference for all future Dharmaśāstras that followed it. According to Hindu tradition, the Manusmṛiti records the words of Brahma. By attributing the words to supernatural forces, the text takes on an authoritative tone as a statement on Dharma. For more detail see [http://www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com).
play. Initially, the Buddha was also hesitant to allow them to join his *Saṅgha*, but finally agreed with certain pre-conditions. By allowing women into the *Saṅgha*, the Enlightened Master gave chance to them to make efforts for their individual liberation, although certain provisions or *Garudhammas* too were imposed on them, such as:

- A *Bhikkhunī* despite having been in the Order for 100 years must respect a *Bhikkhu* even of a day's standing.
- A *Bhikkhunī* must reside within 6 hours of traveling distance from the monastery where *Bhikkhus* reside for advice.
- On Observance days a *Bhikkhunī* should consult the *Bhikkhus*.
- A *Bhikkhunī* must spend rainy season retreats under the orders of both *Bhikhus* and *Bhikkhunīs*.
- A *Bhikkhunī* must live her life by both the orders.
- A *Bhikkhunī* must on two years obtain the higher ordination (*Upasampadā*) by both Orders.
- A *Bhikkhunī* cannot scold a *Bhikkhu*.
- A *Bhikkhunī* cannot advise a *Bhikkhu*.

By observing these provisions one may conclude the anti feminine attitudes in the early Buddhist texts.\(^{222}\) But, if observed minutely, one may realize that the Buddha actually prescribed these provisions for the *Bhikkhunīs* to follow so that they function as a protection for themselves. The *Bhikkhunī Saṅgha* came into existence after five years of the *Bhikkhu Saṅgha*. It is natural and understandable that the Buddha would place the *Bhikkhunī Saṅgha* in a subordinate position to the *Bhikkhu Saṅgha* for the

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\(^{222}\) In the treasure house of Buddhist literature, the Pāli Tipiṭaka represents the earliest available and most authentic Buddhist sacred texts. It is preserved in three systematic collections: i) *VinayaPiṭaka*—the book of discipline, ii) *Sutta Piṭaka*—the book of discourses and iii) *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*—the collection of books on abstruse philosophy based on psychological ethics. It is also termed as the three baskets. Many of Buddha’s early disciples were possibly the authors of a few of the speeches, sayings and poems found among the collections. Almost whole of Early Buddhist literature consists entirely collections of speeches, dialogues, sayings, stories and rules of holy order. This portion of Buddhism is regarded as the most authentic and reliable one as in the later ones the dominance of various sects which arose in Buddhism clearly reflects.
harmonious coexistence and to establish a balanced foundation of administration. The Buddha was well aware that with the entry of larger number of women he would need assistance from the Bhikkhus to help in the teaching and training of the newly ordained Bhikkunīs. The best possible way to make their path smooth is to make them subordinate to the Bhikkhu Saṅgha for functional benefit.

Similarly many scholars points finger over the Buddha’s remarks that women indeed is quite capable of attaining the highest goal of liberation but going to add that the creation of an order of nuns would aromatically hasten the decline of his teachings in the world— “If, Ānanda, women had not received permission to come out from the household life and enter the homeless state under the doctrine and discipline proclaimed by the Tathāgata, then would be the pure religion, Ānanda, have lasted long, the good law would have stood last for a thousand year, but, since Ānanda, women have now received that permission, the pure religion, Ānanda, will not now last so long, the good law will stand last for only five hundred years.”

Also as quoted by Bhikkhu DUC TRUONG, that in Pāli Nikāya literature the Buddha sometime warns his disciples that women are likening to black snakes, treated as unclean, evil smelling, timid fearful and betray friends, and are labeled as secretive and not open, they are full of passion, easily angered, stupid and envious and have no place in public assemblies. They are incapable of caring out any business or earning a living by any profession because they are uncontrolled, envious, greedy and stupid.

However, the Bhikkunī Saṅgha was organized more or less on the same line as those of the Bhikkhu Saṅgha. Its doors were opened for all without any distinction of caste or position. The only necessary qualification to enter the Saṅgha was the earnestness and ability to lead the holy life. On the one hand, there were members from the royal families of Kapilavatthu, Kosala, Vesālī and Rājagaha. On the other hand, there were the members from lower classes and castes. For example, Puṇṇā was

223 Vin., V, p. 356
224 A., III, p,260
225 A., I, p.282
the daughter of a slave woman, Cāpā was the daughter of a hunter, Subhā was the
daughter of a goldsmith, Aḍḍhakāsi, Ambapālī and Vimalā were the well known
courtesans of the day. As members of the Saṅgha they all led the holy life and
attained the highest spiritual goal like Theras and they also propagated the message of
the Master among the people.

*Therīgāthā* records the Udānas in which the Therīs give expression to their joy
after attaining freedom, peace and bliss. It is essential to note that no Buddhist
doctrine has asserted any difference between man and woman. The monastic Order is
made up of two groups: *Bhikkhu Saṅgha* and *Bhikkhunī Saṅgha*.

The Buddha gave an independent status and place in respect of a quality as
man. Thoroughly, male and female were placed on the same footing of equality.
However, in practice the latter seems to stand a bit lower.

*Vinaya Piṭaka*— one of the prominent broad divisions of the Buddhavacana,
shows the picture of early Buddhist teachings and records the rules of *Bhikkhus* and
*Bhikkhunīs*. Rules of *Bhikkhunīs* constitute ‘*Bhikkhunī Vibhaṅga*’. In *Samyuttanikāya*,
there is *Bhikkhunī-Samyutta*, where a number of verses have been ascribed to
*Bhikkhunīs*. In *Aṅguttaranikāya* there is a long list of outstanding Bhikkhunīs. 227

These canonical texts show that a woman’s *vimutti* (emancipation) has an
important place in Buddhism. In *Aṅguttaranikāya*, the Buddha expresses with great
admiration that there are a sort of scale and standard of his disciples who are
*Bhikkhunīs* namely Khemā and Uppalavaṇṇā. 228

In the case of Somā, *Māra* comes to her and says that she should not take to
the path of holiness as it is unworthy of woman whose knowledge is confined to the
kitchen. In reply, Somā says that a woman is as much qualified as a man; to lead the
life of holiness and reach the goal as such, sex does not stand in the way of
righteousness. 229 In the episode of Uppalavaṇṇā, has been said that one day she was
sitting in meditation under a tree, when Māra asked her how she dared to sit alone in

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228 Ibid.
229 Therīgātā, p.9
solitary place without fearing the wicked people. Uppalavanna is reported to have said that she was not afraid of even hundred and thousands of wicked persons as she was very well armed with righteousness. 230 There are various evidences of the ability of Bhikkhnis such as:

Soma Theri further says:

“Itthibhāvo kiṃ kayirā cittamhi susamāhite /
Nāmamhi vattamānamhi sammā dhammaṃ vipassato //” 231

Historians have sought to make the Buddha as redeemer of the lot of Indian woman. Prior to the Buddha, woman’s position had gone to the bottom of society. She was not allowed to progress and show her creativity and abilities beyond the boundaries of household life. She was prohibited education, social responsibility and religion. She had to satisfy man, care for her children and stay in the house. According to I.B. Horner, “In the pre-Buddhist days, the status of woman in India was on its lowest ebb and without honor. During the Buddhist epoch there was a change. Woman came to enjoy more equality and greater respect and authority than ever hitherto accorded to her”. 232

In the views of Narasu, man and woman have been placed, by the Buddha, on the same footing of equality. 233 According to historical evidences there are indications that during the Buddha’s lifetime, the percentage of Bhikkhnis achieving Arhantaship was remarkable.

Nowhere in any of the utterances of the Buddha do we find anything to show that he made any difference between men and women. The Buddha does not recognize rights and freedom for the male which cannot be extended to the female. They were not treated inferior to men with regard to the potentialities of spiritual development. 234

230 Ibid., p. 25
231 Ibid., p. 9.
234 Therigātā p. 61
Buddhism emphatically advocates that women are as capable as men for leading a contemplative life, as the Buddha himself proclaims: ‘and be it women, be it men for whom, such chariot doth wait, by that same car, into Nibbāna’s presence shall they come.’

Concludingly we can say that the fate of women in the men dominated society has witnessed different changes of approaches towards her in the annals of human history in general and Indian history in particular. Further unquestionably, we can claim that the condition of women improved during and after Buddha’s appearance. The Buddha who lived nearly 2600 years ago and whatever he did proved instrumental in upgrading the status of women in the then society. However on certain occasions, he made some anti-feminine remarks, but simply on the basis of those scanty remarks we cannot claim that Buddha had a discriminatory attitude towards women. Indeed being prudence, the Enlightened Guru realized that normally women are more feminine and consequently less masculine. The femininity inclines for love which needs a partner. This may result in the involvement of Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis with each other. Therefore, the Buddha thought the decline of the doctrine of good law and pure religion on account of expressive femininity of women. Furthermore he has only warned weak-minded men against the dangers of her unconscious influence. Moreover, our criticism remains usually from the modern angle which is not fully justified and balanced so there is need of balanced criticism of the Buddha, being anti feminine.

At last during the research of this portion what came to surface is that Buddhism seems to be one of the rare religions that has provided ample opportunities to woman, at par with man, to excel in almost all the spheres of life after the end of golden era of Vedic society and culture.

4.4.3 Abortion and Feticide

The issue of abortion has become the most controversial and divisive moral issue in this present era of life. From the last few decades, the arguments and logics both for and against have been coined by the people from all walks of the society,
from religious fundamentalists to radical feminists. The term ‘Abortion’, if observed minutely, may be defined as the deliberate termination of a pregnancy by killing the Foetus. Foetus refers to an unborn child at all stages of its development. However, although, whenever we heard about abortion a general mindset is that giving and taking life is in the jurisdiction of the Nature to whom we call with various names such as Paramapitā Paramātmā, Īśvara, God, Allah, Waheguru etc., in a focused sense a Supernatural power which controls the whole universe. So one should have no right to take others’ life and particularly of those who have yet to see this world i.e., the one who is still undeveloped in the womb of mother.

Socially we treat such acts as sinful, but if minutely observed through the angel of medical science, however, sometimes due to the complicacies it becomes necessary to abort. But it does not mean that medical science advocates for the act of abortion. Both socially as well as medically the gravity of the sin is observed on the parameters of foetus.

Neol Stewart\textsuperscript{235} points out the following condition whether the foetus becomes a person or not and determines the gravity of sin accordingly.

a) At the time of conception.

b) When it possesses a recognizably human shape approximately after eight weeks.

c) When it is sentient i.e., at the point when it can feel pain / pleasure.

d) When it is viable i.e., when it has the ability to survive independently outside the womb.

e) At the time of birth.

Furthermore, there may be certain reasons behind abortion including:-

a) Either due to rape or due to the failure of contraceptive.

b) The condition of the Foetus e.g., anencephaly (no brain).

c) The condition of mother e.g., under age, risk of health, adverse social conditions such as poverty, drug addiction, abusive partner etc.

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{235} Neol Stewart, \textit{Ethics An Introduction to Moral Philosophy}, UK: Polity Press, 2009, p. 94.}
d) Some other issues such as having baby would spoil the figure, career craziness or the feeling of fear of hurdle in enjoyment and chilling out with friends.

These debatable aspects one side advocates the rights and happiness of a woman arguing that these are more important than those of the Foetus. This argument supports abortion morally permissible in most if not in all cases. Whereas most of the philosophers, thinkers and experts focus on the right of the Foetus or unborn child arguing that it is right to life override anything or almost anything. However, in most if not all, this stand is treated as conservative one. Above all, in case of rape, for instance, it all depends on how the sufferer feels about having a baby conceived in such a manner. If she wants it badly enough and can distance herself and the baby from the rape, perhaps with the help of family support after a thorough discussion on pros and cons then it would be wrong to go for abortion because her distress at the abortion would out weight her happiness if she had the child. But, if she feels disgust or hatred for the Foetus as assuming it as a sort of parasite implanted within her, which she feels merely continuous and exacerbates the rape and would blight her whole life, then, unless she would be happy to have baby adopted, abortion is clearly the obvious choice, morally speaking.

Similar considerations may apply in case of failure of Contraceptive. It is not like that the woman feels disgust rather she would be shocked but, again, whether an abortion would be right, depends on the calculations of the pleasure and pain resulting from the alternatives. The woman should be allowed to choose an abortion if she wants, because to forbid this would have much greater traumatic consequences for her happiness and for that unwanted born child.236 Again, regarding the handicapped and defective Foetus the decision of abortion left on the mother only depending upon the severity of the disablement, mother’s mental status and the doctor’s prognosis. In general, the more severe the Foetus defective is the more likely it is advisable for abortion.

So far as Buddhist standpoint is concerned, it can easily be seen that what medical science is defining today about the gravity of sin in destroying a Foetus,

236 Ibid., pp. 97-98.
Buddhism had warned about it 2600 Years ago, as in the Śrīghanācārasaṅgraha it is mentioned:

“Sakalena śarīrena śarīanyakārena vā / Pañcaśākhādhinivṛttam na hanyāt prāṇinamyaṭṭham //”\(^{237}\)

Furthermore as discussed by James P. Mc Dermott\(^{238}\), in the Mahāniraya (one of the dreadest Buddhist hells) flows a great caustic river Vetaranī. The water of this river is like sharp edges of razors. It is believed that those who enter in it are slashed up by swords and similar sharp weapons standing hidden along the river bank.

According to the Saṅkicca Jātaka the people who are guilty of gabbhapāṭīyo (abortion) are reborn in this hell and be put in this river as a result of committing the mentioned sin. The punishment referred to above, reveals the seriousness of abortion as an offence, though there appears no clear, explicit or general prohibition of abortion in the Pali tradition despite the fact that killing itself is prohibited in the first precept. Further, in a story of previous rebirth of the Buddha as recorded in the commentary of Dhammapada, we come across the cycle of birth and rebirth because of the miscarriage done by two women with each other’s Foetus.\(^{239}\)

Another pair of stories in the Petavatthu also reveals the severe punishment to a jealous wife who was engaged in causing her rival co-wife to miscarry. When confronted by their husband and by the family of victim, the guilty wife took false oath that she was not involved in any such acts. After her death, she was reborn as a naked, ugly, foul-smelling ghost who used to eat her own children. Her heart was scorched and smoked with hunger and thirst because of the sin she committed in her previous life. Whereas the other story reveals that the sinner was reborn as a suffering ghost who used to destroy her own offspring, the punishment occurred because in her previous life she had destroyed the two months unborn baby of her husband’s second

\(^{237}\) Śrīghanācārasaṅgraha, chapter 3, verse 5 quoted by Sanghasen Singh in A Study of the Sphuṭārathā Śrīghanācārasaṅgraha-Tīkā, Patna: Kashi Prasad Jayaswal Research Institute, 1983, p. 293.
\(^{239}\) Ibid. pp. 158-59.
From these stories it can be understood that there is no excuse for such heinous acts.

However, unfortunately, even in the 21st century of globalization there are a number of Hospitals and Health Clinics both government as well as private which are involved in such heinous crimes wherein the doctors and medical staff found involved in abortions. The practice is done in both ways legally/medically advised as well as illegally. Legally in the sense of being a woman having some health complexities or infected with HIV/ AIDS and illegally just for the sake of money. Leaving behind the debate, the two major reasons that came out into figure during the research about abortion were really eye opening. The first and foremost is the wish among Indian families of preferring a male child as there are numerous logics and philosophies behind this preference and secondly, in the mad race of glamour wherein the woman preferring to have a perfect good looking figure and as a result does not wish to conceive as they think the kids are the main obstacle in their high profile and kitty party enjoyments.

4.4.4 Youth, Education and Culture

Youth— signifies and represents idealism and hope; and is known as the backbone of any society; a mirror which reflects the future picture of society. The term ‘Youth’ is an alternative word to the scientifically oriented adolescent and the common sense of teen and teenager. Another common title for youth is young people. According to another dictionary, it indicates to ‘The time in life when one is young; especially; the period between childhood and maturity or the early period of existence’.

Various countries and some of the scholars have their own definition of youth. The United Nations General Assembly has accepted youth as people who are in the age brackets of 15-25 years. Around the world, the terms ‘youth’, ‘adolescence’, ‘teenager’ and ‘young person’ are interchanged, often meaning the same thing,

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240 Ibid., pp. 159-60.
occasionally differentiated. Youth generally refers to the time of life that is neither childhood nor adulthood, but rather somewhere in between. Youth also identifies a particular mindset of the attitude, for example ‘This old man is very youthful’. In brief we can say that the term youth is also related to ‘being young’ in thought and action.

History reveals innumerable instances when youth played crucial role in the upliftment of society. Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna, Karṇa, Mahāvīra, Siddhārtha Gautama, Mohammed (SAW), Guru Gobind Singh, Swami Vivekananda, MK Gandhi, Subash Chandra Bose, Chandra Shekhar Azad, Bhagat Singh and many others whose name are not mentioned here are some of the personalities in support of the aforesaid statement.

The youth hopes for a world free of poverty, unemployment, inequality and exploitation of man by man; a world free of discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, language and gender; a world full of creative challenges and opportunities to conquer them. However, it is also evident that whenever youth has diverted from the path of morality, it has brought degradation in his character, thoughts and actions as well as shame for the family and the society both. The story of cousin brothers ‘Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas’ as depicted in the great epic Mahabharata, is an eye opening example for us, which resulted in the bloodshed of thousands of innocent people.

Although, it is a matter of pride that today our country is having the largest youth population in the world. The entire world is eyeing India as a source of technical manpower. They are looking at the youth as a source of talent because the role of youth is of the great importance in today’s time. It has underplayed itself in the field of politics. It can play a vital role in elimination of terrorism and can recognize many other problems and have the capability to solve them.

However, for the fulfillment of all this it should be kept in mind that the youth remains on the right direction because if misdirected, this young brigade can prove

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243 The Mahabharata of ṛṣi Vyāsa translated from Sanskrit into English by Kisari Mohan Ganguly published online at http://www.sacredbooks.com
dangerous also, as we discussed above. Unfortunately, at present, the modern day youth is on the path of degradation. In the mad race of fashion and the so called modernization, today’s youth has got indulged in violent activities, sexual misconduct etc. resulting in unsafe sex which further cause HIV/AIDS infection, consumption of alcohol, smoking cigarette, chewing tobacco, injecting drugs etc., and surprisingly the number is increasing at alarming rate, not only males but females are also found involved in this mad competition, numerically less, but posing a great threat for the years to come. Youth across the globe constitute a majority of the addict population and represent all the segments of the society. Consumption of drugs and other intoxicating materials in recent years has become a status symbol among them. The silent support of parents in the name of freedom, liberty, status symbol etc. and surprisingly, in some cases, their self involvement is adding fuel in the fire.

For instance we find that the northern belt of India i.e., Kashmir had a tradition of ‘Sufism’. This stream of religious movement had patronized music and chars in Kashmir valley. Furthermore chars smoking were also glorified through ‘Taqyas’.

Taqyas till 1978 were legally sanctioned institutions and were mostly associated with ‘Maqbaras’ of the saints. In the social system it was believed that charas smoking is the best instrument of accelerating meditation. This belief continues even at present and the charas is commonly used at the places where Holy gatherings (Mela) take place or saints meditate and surprisingly they get the support of local people too.

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244 Sufism is a term used for ascetic and mystical movements within Islam. While Sufism is said to have incorporated elements of Christian monasticism, Gnosticism, and Indian mysticism, its origins are traced to the forms of devotion and groups of penitents (zuhhad) in the formative period of Islam. The word Sufi first appeared in the 8th Century. More detail on it can be drawn from the works of A. J. Arberry, *Sufism* (1970); L. Lewin (ed.), *The Diffusion of Sufi Ideas in the West* (1972); A. Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (1975) and *As through a Veil* (1982) and [http://www.answers.com/topic/sufism](http://www.answers.com/topic/sufism)

245 Taqyas in Kashmir and in some parts of central Asia were old age institutions attached to such shrines where hashis was legally consumed. In other words, Taqyas were legally accepted institutions for drug abuse. Jammu and Kashmir State in 1978 issued an order wherein all the Taqyas were declared illegal and were closed.

246 Maqbara in Urdu is known as grave yard. In the Asian subcontinent, saint on their death are buried and shrines are constructed on their graves.
By this argument the motive of the researcher is not to blame that religion or religious gurus encourage such wrong practices because if the religion is followed in its true spirit, there is every possibility that people will remain away from the wrongful deeds. Moreover there is no intention to hurt the sentiments of any one’s religious faith but this is somewhat a harsh reality which needs to be accepted and rectified.

No doubt the restriction on such acts is strictly imposed by every religion whether it is Islamic Law, by Hindu texts or any other. Similarly, the religion of the Buddha has also given a clear message to the youth for leading a pragmatic life based on rationality, social equality, and dignity of labour. Buddhism clearly suggests the young mind to abstain from taking intoxicants, violence and from sexual misconduct as all these are harmful to the body and mind both as well as to the community. The ethical teachings by the Buddha are meant to ensure our physical as well as spiritual upliftment. In more technical way it is called purification of the consciousness of an individual. As discussed in the previous chapters, the path of the Buddhist ethics has three steps Sīla, Samādhi and Paññā. It begins with moral teachings and prepares a moral base in the mind and thereby generates an atmosphere of harmony with others so the Buddha has always advised the people in general and youth in particular to allow always good and wholesome thoughts in mind.

By controlling mind, which is the forerunner of all activities, one can develop the feeling of love, equanimity, brotherhood and respect for others. For the maintenance of peace of mind he also suggests them for the observance of Pañcasīla. These five precepts constitute the fundamentals of Buddhist ethics. In a bid to live a disciplined and benevolent life, the Buddha also teaches to follow the Noble Eightfold noble path and cultivate the Four Brahmavihāra. Further the Buddha says that by effort, earnestness, discipline, and self control, let the wise man make for him an island which no flood could overwhelm:

“Uṭṭhāneā appamādena, saññamena damena ca /
Dīpaṃ kayirātha medhāvī, yaṃ ogo nābhikīrati //

Thus, it is observed that if the modern day youth follows these teaching and path of the Buddha, surely he can make this world a more beautiful place to live in.

**Education** is a disciplined attempt towards gaining knowledge of fundamental principles about mankind. The main philosophy behind education is to nurture moral and spiritual values among students so that the civilization can further be developed. It begins at home and is sustained in schools, colleges, universities and such other institutions. Education is essential to help an individual in improving the value system and to implement the same into practicality for the betterment of society. No doubt, the family system in India has a long tradition of imparting value education right from the ancient practice of the *Gurukula* system.

However with modern day competitions and change in the life style, it has not been very easy for the parents to impart relevant morals to their children. Therefore, there is a need of such institutions and a model plan that can impart value education among the knowledge seekers. No doubt, elementary education is always essential to shape a student’s life, but after that the role of higher institutions becomes vital while giving a final shape to the personality of an individual. Before proceeding further let us have an overview of the term ‘Education’.

Etymologically speaking the word ‘education’ is derived from the Latin words, *educare and educere* meaning ‘to bring up’ and ‘to bring forth or to draw out’ respectively. The equivalent term for education in Buddhist tradition is ‘Sikkhā’ (Sanskrit: Śikṣā) which means study, training, discipline etc. It generally implies the process of learning, training oneself and acquisition of knowledge etc.

It is always combined with the term ‘pada’ in *Sikkhāpada* in educational code. Though, as a technical term it stands for the threefold training of *Sīla* (morality), *Samādhi* (concentration) and *Paññā* (wisdom). There is yet another term ‘Sikkhā
*Patipadā*’ meaning the course of learning. So, learning or education is a constant and gradual process. It is just like a torch that enlightens the way of human beings by not only imparting knowledge in the relevant field but also inculcating moral values, spiritual attitude, the righteousness in character, the forever existing and never stolen treasure of goodness, piousness and purity. The cardiac motive of education is the all round development of an individual. It functions like a magic trick that transforms an illiterate and uncivilized person into a literate and civilized man. It is an important tool of interaction that generates the particular acts of process of teaching and learning that helps an individual to become a worthy person of worthy society.

According to John Dewey, “education is the development of all those capacities in the individual which will enable him to control his environment and fulfill his possibilities.” In this meaning education is an activity or a process which transfer the behavior of a man from instinctive behavior to human behavior.

Ironically, today in the so called ultra modern and highly sophisticated atmosphere, education has lost its actual meaning and motive. The modern day education is totally materialistic. The only motive now left is to get high degrees and certificates with high percentage. Though it provides theoretical knowledge but fails to prove the facts practically. A major flaw in the education field is caused by corruption that has successfully spread itself as a giant epidemic disease especially in India and also has played a major role to bring idleness among the youth. No doubt, we enjoy luxuries and facilities but we have lost confidence, right attitude, mental peace and satisfaction.

It is to be noted here that the concept of education in India is not new. Even in Ancient India imparting of knowledge was very familiar and of utmost importance. The history of education system in ancient India goes back to very early times say 2000 BCE or even earlier.

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There are references in ancient scriptures to Āśramas and Gurukulas where young students received their education in the Vedas and Brāhmaṇas. The epics speak of education of Pāṇḍavas and the Kauravas under the Droṇācārya. Similarly, Rāma and his three brothers are said to have received their education along with others in the Āśramas of Ṛṣi Vaśiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra. During the post epic period also, the tradition continued. So, there is an unbroken record of a regular system of education in ancient India right from the Vedic period upto the 6th century BCE when prince Siddhārtha got his early education under the existing system. It is to be noted here that the basic aim of imparting education during those days was the same as it is today, namely, all round development of the personality of an individual. Body, mind, intellect and spirit were stated to constitute one and whole and education was aimed to develop all. There was emphasis on a healthy body, sound mind, sharp intellect and pure spirit, formation of character, inculcation of civil and social duties, promotion of social efficiency and preservation and spread of national culture may be described as the chief aims and ideas of education.252

So far as Buddhism is concerned, it has laid utmost emphasis on imparting moral education among youth which can be observed through Buddhist canon such as Jātakas, Milindapañha, and other texts. From various Jātaka stories we come to know about the commonly prevalent branches of education like archery or the military art, medicine, magic, snake charming and the art of finding hidden treasures etc. However, in order to attain the real motive of education Buddhism emphasizes on cultivation of the mind which is the forerunner of all activities.253

Through the concept of these two verses the Buddha emphasizes that one should have a control on mind as it the forerunner of all good and evil states. If one thinks or acts with pure mind, beneficial he will prove for the society and vice-versa. There are four mental states which Buddhism tries to develop through practice. These are mettā, karuṇā, muditā and upakkhā. Each of these has something important to say about the purpose and meaning of education and the principles that should underpin

252 Altekar A.S., Education in Ancient India, pp. 8-9.
that process, wherever it is practiced. The critical goal of Buddhist education is to attain wisdom.

Generally, it is believed that Buddhism is only an extension of Brāhmanism. As Max Müllar says, “To my mind...Buddhism has always seemed to be, not a new religion, but a natural development of the Indian mind in its various manifestations—religious, philosophical, social and political.”

Just like the social, political and economic set up of his times, the Buddha also adopted the existing educational system. There were no fundamental differences between Hindus and Buddhists so far as the general education theory or practice was concerned. Both systems had similar ideals and followed similar methods.

However, according to the Buddha a perfect life must be filled with three fundamental characteristics. These are Sīla, Samādhi and Paññā. For this, he emphasized the development of Eightfold path, which stimulates the spiritual, intelligent and physical faculties of man. As the Buddha’s teaching is meant for purifying body, speech and mind, character-building is naturally basic in his education system. One cannot gain any spiritual progress if one’s life is led by immoral actions.

He regarded moral conduct as the foundation of a perfect life on which human mind or spirit is based. It may, thus, be observed that the moral conduct/ character of a person in the Buddha’s view are the whole manifestation of personality including its ethical, spiritual and intuitive aspects. If a person, according to the Buddha, is perfect in Sīla, Samādhi and Paññā, he can win great success both in his individual religious life as well as in his relations to the society. It is for this reason that the Buddha regards the training in higher morality, higher thought and higher insight as the best way to constitute human character.

Not only on individual but Buddhism also focused on social development. The scholars have made interesting study of the basic philosophy of Saṅgha founded by

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254 Max Müllar quoted by Mukherjee R.K., Ancient Indian Education, p. 374
255 Altekar A.S., Education in Ancient India, p. 226.
the Buddha himself. It is to be noted here that the entry into Saṅgha was open to one and all irrespective of any colour, caste or creed. This point is also evident by the concept of the Buddha.

The concept behind establishing Saṅgha was the Buddha’s wish to transform the society consisting of lay followers also, because without education, according to the Buddha, a monk cannot properly discharge his duties. For this, besides his teachings, he laid down a code of discipline (Pātimokkha) for the guidance and regulation of monk’s conduct and activities. In the Buddha’s view, if a monk is well educated in Dhamma and Vinaya, he can prove to be more helpful to himself as well as to others. The theme that ‘by looking after oneself one looks after others; by looking after another one looks after himself is an integral part of social education. Here a great deal of emphasis is put on the mutual consequence of spiritual obligations done by the Buddhists on the grounds of wisdom and compassion.

A monk by following, cultivating and by making much of him in Dhamma, becomes the benefactor of others. By inculcating the sense of forbearance, harmlessness, good-will, compassion etc. one truly takes care of himself as well as of others. This educational theme of early Buddhism has profound social implications. For the Buddhists, Paññā and Karuṇā are the two essential qualities for leading a spiritual life as the development of both results in the social improvement.

Thus the education in ancient India, had given importance to self-development and character development. Character formation is the true end of education. According to Perry—in the broader sense, education will include not only what we learn through instruction, but all that we learn through personal experience—the formation of character through the education of life.256

In Buddhist perspective, the fundamental aim of education is salvation or emancipation of individual from the bondage of sufferings and sorrows of this world. Buddhist education aims at every human being that one should isolate himself from

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the desires and sufferings of this world for attaining peace. Buddhist education emphasizes that the individual emancipation is possible through self-discipline. It gives importance to practical moral values.

As mentioned above, one can clearly observe that the Buddha emphasized both the benefits for the individual and for the society. One’s behavior cannot only be judged in terms of how it affects the individual. Instead, the Buddha encouraged us to think about how our behavior affects the entire community. The Buddha considered morally and spiritually elevated beings to be a necessary component of the society as they are the most qualified to give moral direction to society.

Although the Buddha and his followers renounced the material bounds with society, they did not abandon society. The perfect person is expected to live in society, like the lotus flower which grows in the muddy water and rises and stays untainted above the level of muddy water. Thus, Buddhism aims that every person should attain the supreme end of life. That is why, number of educational centers were established which were called as Vihāras or Monasteries. Buddhist education gave emphasis to the development of personality through moral teachings. Moral values like sympathy, kindness, love, charity, compassion, co-operation and non-violence are the ethical objectives of the Buddhism. An individual can attain these values by practice. Education stressed the practice of these moral values as a means to achieve the supreme goal in life.

**Culture**— Having its origin in the Latin word ‘cultura’, culture is a modern concept based on a term first used in classical antiquity by the Roman orator Cicero: ‘cultura animi’ meaning cultivation of soul. However, in general parlance, the term culture has variety of meanings. For some, it refers to an appreciation of good literature, music, art and food. For biologists, it is likely to be a colony of bacteria or other micro organisms growing in a nutrient medium such as laboratory. For anthropologists and other behavioural scientists, culture is the full range of learned human behaviour patterns. Also, according to Oxford dictionary it stands for

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258 [http://www.anthro.palomar.edu/culture/culture.htm](http://www.anthro.palomar.edu/culture/culture.htm)
intellectual and artistic achievement or expression, refined appreciation of arts, customs and civilization of a particular time, people etc.\textsuperscript{259}

Thus, generally here arose three major aspects of the term commonly accepted by all. At the first instance, it is the act of developing the moral, intellectual and aesthetic nature of a man through education and discipline. Secondly, it is that familiarity with a taste in the fine arts, humanities and broad aspect of science that enlightened and refined state of mind, which such education tend to induce. Thirdly, it is those activities and objects which are the effect in artists or severer of a work of art, of the enlightenment and refinement referred to. Thus culture comprises of the act of cultivation or education (literally meaning: bringing out). In short, we can say that culture is the system of shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviours and artifacts that the members of society use to cope with their world and with one another, which are transmitted from generation to generation through learning.

Culture, as, is the characteristics of a particular group of people, defined by everything from language, religion, cuisine, social habits etc. It is represented through the art, literature, costumes, customs and traditions of a community. Different cultures exist in different parts of the world; therefore before going further let us have a look over the various kinds of cultural groups prevalent across the globe:

a) **Western Culture:** The term Western culture has come to define the culture of European countries as well as those in the American continents that have been heavily influenced by European immigration. Western culture has its roots in the classical period of the Greco-Roman era and the rise of Christianity in the 14\textsuperscript{th} century. Other drivers of Western culture include Latin, Celtic, Germanic and Hellenic ethnic and linguistic groups.

b) **Eastern Culture:** It generally refers to the societal norms of countries in Far East Asia including China, Japan, Vietnam, North Korea and South Korea and the Indian subcontinent. Like the West, Eastern culture was heavily influenced by religion during its early development. In general, in

Eastern culture there is less of a distinction between secular society and religious philosophy than there is in the West.

c) Latin Culture: Many of the Spanish Speaking nations are considered part of the Latin Culture, while the geographic region is widespread.

d) Middle Eastern Culture: The countries of the Middle East have some but not all things in common, including a strong belief in Islam and religion is very strong pillar of this society. Arabic language is also common throughout the region; however, the wide variety of dialects can sometimes make communication difficult.

e) African Culture: The continent of Africa is having two cultural aspects divided into North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa. The continent is comprised of a number of tribes, ethnic and social groups. One of the key features of this culture is the large number of ethnic groups and the diversity of their beliefs.

From the above classification it can be observed that diversity in cultures around the world is also a result of the mindsets of people inhabiting different regions of the world. The cultural values of a community give it an identity of its own. A community gains a character and a personality of its own, because of the culture of its people. Culture is shared by the members of a community. It is learned and passed from the older generations to the newer ones. For an effective transfer of culture from one generation to another, it has to be translated into symbols. Language, art and religion serve as the symbolic means of transfer of cultural values between generations. Culture is a bond that ties the people of a region or community together. It is that one common bond, which brings the people of a community together.

The customs and traditions that the people of a community follow, the festivals they celebrate, the kind of clothing they wear, the food they eat, and most importantly, the cultural values they adhere to, bind them together. Culture is seen as a system of social control, wherein people shape their standards and behaviour. Cultural values form the founding principles of one's life. They influence one's principles and philosophies of life. They influence one's way of living and thus impact social
life. The importance of culture lies in the fact that it is a link between people and their value systems.

Again coming to the point of Buddhism, it is obviously connected with culture in all three senses as mentioned above. But the basic issue is what the nature of connection is. Is it merely a historical and accidental or does it have some deeper and hidden affinity? These are some of the question that can puzzle a lover of this field. Buddhism as observed by the learned scholars and also advocated by the Buddha himself is the way or noble way to enlightenment. Therefore, in order to have an inner connection, culture must be able to function as a means to enlightenment. In other words, it must be possible for us to include it under the category of ethics or of wisdom.

Buddhism encapsulated and acknowledged the varying perspective of culture. Basically, the main emphasis is that culture can pave the way to spiritual emancipation. It can be understood through meditation in the form of mental culture as manifested in various learning of arts, science or dhamma.
CHAPTER 5
BUDDHIST ETHICS AND POLITICS

Political philosophy as well as governance plays a vital role in framing the roadmap for development and progress of any society or nation. So the present chapter deals with the political thought of the Buddha. If looked properly and impartially, Buddhism seems not merely a religion of ideals and philosophy, but a religion of practical approach as well. The Buddha made his teachings applicable to the real life of people in the society of his time. Keeping all these things in mind sincere efforts have been made by the researcher to analyze the implementation of Buddhist concepts of Politics in the present era.

5.1 The Buddha’s view on Political System

As we are aware of this historic fact, the Buddha was neither a politician nor he delivered any special emphasis on political setup. However in his sermons he promulgated a plethora of relevant matter in the field of politics. There are many Suttas in the Sutta Piṭaka such as in Dīghanikāya, Samyuttanikāya and the Aṅguttaranikāya and a number of Jātaka stories which contain discussion on kingly conduct and affairs. We can find the Buddha’s advice and instruction to the rulers,
which have been of immense practical value, producing boundless good results. The Buddha’s views are based on pragmatic realism and reasoned dispensations. It is conducive and compatible with the modern world. The doctrines of ahimsā, truth, equality, non-discrimination, brotherhood and of investigative thinking are being enforced and practiced by the governments and rulers of present day world in some form or the other.

Non-violence or Ahimsā is the prime concern of any society. Buddhism does not allow or favour any sort of violence so the Buddha’s doctrine of non-violence is completely associated with the non-violent, truthful and welfare politics. Truth has an eternal value and Buddhism gives strong emphasis on truth as well as truthful behavior and conduct so the Buddhist doctrine of truth is an essential component of politics. The Buddhist doctrine of equality is very important and relevant because the Buddha advocates for equality in all respects without any prejudice or discrimination. This is a salient feature of the Buddhist doctrine concerning to political activities. Buddhism does not discriminate on the basis of caste, creed, color, gender and region, which is well mentioned in the Vasalasutta of Suttanipāta.

The Buddha discusses the importance and pre-requisites of a good government. He shows how the country could become corrupt, degenerated and unhappy when the head of the government becomes corrupt and unjust. He speaks against corruption and how a government should act based on humanitarian principles. He says, ‘When the ruler of a country is just and good, the ministers become just and good; when the ministers are just and good, the higher officials become just and good; when the higher officials are just and good, the rank and file become just and good; when the rank and file become just and good, the people become just and good.’

In the Cakkavattī Sīhanāda Sutta, the Buddha says that immorality and crime, such as theft, falsehood, violence, hatred, cruelty etc. could

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260 “Na jaccā vasalo hoti na jaccā hoti brāhmaṇo / Kammunā vasalo hoti kammunā hoti brāhmaṇo //” Sn., Verse nos. 21 & 27.

arise from poverty. Kings and governments may try to suppress crime through punishment, but it is futile to eradicate crimes through force.\textsuperscript{262}

The Buddha does not guarantee any political system as the best one, but he pays attention to the way of rule as an important factor. He, thus, lays emphasis not on the form of government but how it works. The Buddha had a close relationship with contemporary kings. We find that whenever the Buddha visited some state, he made himself as a good friend of the ruler and advised him on the appropriate virtues for the stability of each system. He wanted the rulers to be virtuous. When we study the Buddha’s approach towards political ideas we find that he was always ready to give advice to the rulers of both forms of government. The detailed description of his advises to the rulers and government shall be discussed below in the third sub chapter.

The Buddha gives separate teachings for each form of government. For the monarchies, he teaches the duties of a Paramount Emperor, exhorting rules to use their absolute power as a tool for generating benefit in the community rather than a tool for seeking personal happiness. For the republican form of government, he teaches for the encouragement of social harmony. In their separate ways, both these teachings show how people can live happily under different political systems.

If looked properly and impartially, Buddhism seems not merely a religion of ideas and ideal philosophy but also a religion of practical approach. The Buddha made his teachings applicable to the real life of the people in the society of the time.\textsuperscript{263} These doctrines are being enforced and practiced by the Governments and rulers of present day world too in some form or the other.

5.2 Political Scenario of India at the Buddha’s Time

Before and at the time of the Buddha, during 6\textsuperscript{th} century BCE, there was no paramount sovereignty in India. What we presently call ‘India’ was then known as \textit{Jambūdīpa}, which was neither a single independent country nor a political unit rather

\textsuperscript{262} K. Sri Dhammananda, op.cit.
it was politically divided into number of small principalities, which according to Anguttaranikāya\textsuperscript{264}, were sixteen in number known as the Sotasamahājanapadas or the sixteen great countries. Among these sixteen, some were monarchical and few were republican set up of government.

It is especially to be mentioned here that despite having no single authority in the Indian as a monarch, India was a nation, which is evident from the fact that in the north of India, there is Himalayas, in its south is the Indian Ocean, in the west the Arabian Sea and so on.

This ancient map of India representing the Sixteen Mahājanapadas is discussed thoroughly as under:

\textbf{5.2.1 Sixteen Mahājanapadas}

\textsuperscript{264} A. I, 213; A.IV, 220, 252, 256; Vin.II, 146
1. **Aṅga**: The kingdom of Aṅga is mentioned in the *Atharvaveda* and was located roughly at the site of the present day Bihar and some parts of West Bengal. It was a powerful kingdom having material prosperity and military power before the time of the Buddha. Campā near Bhagalpur, East Bihar was its capital. However, during the Buddha’s time Aṅga had lost its political power.\(^{265}\) It consisted of the modern districts of Bhagalpur, Munger, Purenia and Campānagara or Campāpuī. It was an important centre of trade and commerce. It was regarded as one of the six principal cities of early India.

2. **Assaka**: Assaka also known as Aśmaka was a kingdom situated in the southern side of India. Its capital was Potana\(^{266}\) or Potali located on the bank of river Godavari.\(^{267}\) It is supposed that Assaka was situated roughly at the place where modern day Maharashtra is located. This kingdom is mentioned in the Pre-Buddhist and Buddhist literature.

3. **Avantī**: Avantī was a very important kingdom located in Western India and was considered to be one of the four important monarchies during the time Buddhism began in India. Its capital was Ujjayinī. It was also divided into two parts— north and south. Ujjayinī (modern Ujjain) was the capital of the northern part while Māhissatī (Mahiṣmatī) was of the southern part (Dakṣināpatha).\(^{268}\) Avantī has been referred in many ancient books as a very prosperous and culturally advanced kingdom in ancient India. It was a very important commercial centre being situated in the middle part of India.

4. **Cetī**: Cetī also known as Cedī was another Janapada. There were two settlements of Cetī, one was in the mountainous regions of Nepal while the other was located near the river Yumanā. The southern boundaries of Cetī went up to the banks of river Narmada. We come to know by the Cetiya


\(^{266}\) D.II, 235.


\(^{268}\) A. IV 252, 256, 261
Jātaka\textsuperscript{269} that the capital city of the Ceti was Sotthivatīnagara or Suktīmatī of the Mahābhārata.\textsuperscript{270} Ceti is mentioned as a very powerful kingdom in Pre-Buddhist time.\textsuperscript{271}

5. **Gandhāra:** Gandhāra was the kingdom consisting of major parts of Kashmir, modern Peshawar and Rawalpindi in Pakistan (northern Panjab) and Kandhar the eastern district of Afghanistan.\textsuperscript{272} Its capital was Takkasila\textsuperscript{273} (modern Taxila), which was noted as a centre of learning. It was also a commercial centre for the countries situated in Central Asia, China, Eastern Europe and Middle East. It is said that the Gandhāra were very aggressive in nature and were masters of the art of warfare. The kingdom was founded by the son of Aruddna known as Gandhara.

6. **Kamboja:** It is mentioned in ancient literature along with Gandhāra. Its capital was Dvārakā.\textsuperscript{274} According to B. C. Law, in fact, Dvārakā was not really a city of Kamboja. Nowhere in early or later Pāli literature any mention of the capital city of Kamboja people nor of the location of their country, though it is certain that Kamboja must be located in some part of north-west India not far from Gandhāra.\textsuperscript{275} Kamboja was famous for Brāhmanic learning in the late Vedic period. The Kambojas were supposed to have both Indian as well as Iranian similarities.

7. **Kāsī:** Kāsī was prominent for economic prosperity and for its capital Bārāṇasi (modern Varanasi or Banaras). It was also known as Surundhana, Sudassana, Brahmavaddhana, Pupphavatī, Rāma and Malini.\textsuperscript{276} Before the time of the Buddha, Kāsī was a great political power but later on it lost its

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\textsuperscript{270} Bimla Churn Law, op. cit., p. 16.

\textsuperscript{271} Rgveda, VIII. 5, pp. 37-39.


\textsuperscript{273} Bimla Churn Law, op. cit., p. 50.

\textsuperscript{274} Ibid., p. 28.

\textsuperscript{275} Ibid.

political power. Subsequently, it was merged with Kosala. Varanasi has been a holy place for pilgrimage from time immemorial and the Buddhist Jātaka literature mentions it being the birth place of former Buddha’s and Boddhisattvas. The Buddha spent a great part of his life there. Here, he also delivered the first sermon and some of the most important discourses and converted many people. This place is mentioned as Kausika or Kausaka in the Matsya Purāṇa.

8. **Kosala:** Kosala was located around 70 miles to the north west of present day Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh. It included Sāketa or Ayodhya and its neighbouring areas. It was flanked in the south by river Gaṅga, in the north by the Himālaya and in the east by the river Gandak. The ruler was called king Prasenajit who was succeeded by his son Vidudabha. During his son’s reign, Kosala acceded with Magadha.

9. **Kuru:** Kuru kingdom is said to have comprised of the modern Delhi, Meerut, Kurukshetra or Thaneshwar, Sonepat, Amin, Karnal, Panipat etc. it extended over three hundred leagues. Its capital was Indapatta or Indrapattana or Indraprastha or Indrapāṭṭa near modern Delhi. It was divided into two parts— Uttarakuru and Dakṣiṇakuru. The Jātaka mentions it as a powerful kingdom in the Pre-Buddhistic period. At this state, the Buddha delivered some profound discourses like Mahānidāna and Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna sutta of the Dīghanikāya to the Kurus. The Kurus were known for their profound wisdom and sound health.

10. **Maccha or Matsya:** The kingdom of Matsya is asid to have comprised the region of the present day Jaipur in Rajasthan along with Alwar and Bharatpur. The founder of this kingdom was Virata and the capital of this kingdom was named Viratanagara after him. The Matsya once formed

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277 B.C.Law, Geography of Early Buddhism, op. cit., p.3.
278 J. II, 214.
280 According to Rgveda (VII, 18, 6), Matsya or Maccha lay to the south or south-west of Indraprastha and to the south of Surasena.
a part of the Ceti kingdom as there are evidences that show that this place was ruled by the king of Ceti.

11. **Magadha:** Magadha was the most prominent of all states mentioned in the Pāli literature. This was the first centre of Buddhist activities. Rājagaha or Giribbajja (modern Rajagir in Bihar) was its capital.\(^{281}\) It consisted of the modern Patna and Gayā districts of South Bihar\(^{282}\), its boundaries being extended from time to time. Magadha had been the centre of commerce and cultural communication for many centuries. It is mentioned in Mahābhārata that Magadha came into lime light under the king Bimbisara and later under his son Ajatasatru.

12. **Malla:** Malla was situated to the south of the country of the Śākyas and Koliyas. It was divided into two parts, having two capitals, one at Pāvā (modern Fazilnagar, Uttar Pradesh) and another at Kusīnārā or Kuśāvatī (modern Kushinagar, Uttar Pradesh). It consisted of the modern districts of Gorakhpur. The Mallas became very powerful at the time of the Buddha and they formed an organized democratic government. Most of the scriptures of the Jainas and Buddhists mention the Mallas. The Mallas dominated the territory comprised of nine provinces. Two of these nine provinces, namely, Pāvā and Kusīnārā gained much importance in due course of time when the Buddha came over here and took his last meal before Mahāparinibbāna at Kuśīnārā.

13. **Pañcāla:** Pañcālas were located in the northern parts of India and had their province to the east of Kurus. They were located between the Himalayan ranges and river Ganga with their capital at Hastināpura.\(^{283}\) Modern Hastinapur near Meerut has been identified as the ancient Hastināpura. The Pañcālas were originally monarchial in nature and later transformed to the republican form of government during the 5\(^{th}\) century BCE. They are

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\(^{282}\) Ibid.

\(^{283}\) According to the *Divyavadāna*, p. 435, sometimes Uttara Pañcāla was included in Kurukshetra (J.No. 505) and had its capital at Hastināpura.
mentioned in *Kauṭilya’s Arthaśāstra* as following the constitution of the king.

14. **Sūrasena**: The location of Sūrasena (Skt.: Śūrasena) was around the west side of river Yamunā. It had its capital at Mathurā. It is said that the king Avantipura played a vital role in promoting Buddhism in this region. The capital city Mathurā was an important centre for the worship of lord Kṛṣṇa. With the passage of time, the kingdom of Sūrasena was annexed by Magadha Empire.

15. **Vajjī**: Vajjī was a republican form of state ruled by eight clans. Its capital was at Vesālī or Vaiśālī which may be identified with modern Besarh in the Muzaffarpur district of northern Bihar. Vesālī, at the time of the Buddha, was an opulent, prosperous and populous town. Out of the nine races, the Licchavīs, the Vedehans, the Jñātrikas and the Vajjīs were the most important. The Licchavīs were an independent clan and their capital was called Vaiśali. It was an important center of Buddhism and the headquarters of the powerful republic of Vajjīs. The Buddha is supposed to have visited Licchavīs on many occasions. As time passed, the kingdom of Licchavīs was conquered by the king of Magadha, Ajātaśatru.

16. **Vaṃsa**: Vaṃsa or Vatsa was a kingdom on the south bank of the river Gaṅga. Its capital was Kosambī which has been identified with the modern Kosam situated on the bank of river Yamuna near Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh. This kingdom was mentioned in the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* and in the *Aṅguttaranikāya* as a very prosperous country. In the *Dīghanikāya*, we find that Kosambī was suggested as one of the great cities where the Blessed One should attain Mahāparinibbāna.

5.3 **The Buddha’s Advocacy for a Just and Welfare State**  
We all are well acquainted with the fact that the Buddha was neither a political thinker nor he delivered any political sermon. Therefore, the political ideas of the Buddha appearing in Buddhist scriptures are not purely political as that we find of
other modern thinkers, philosophers, logicians and political reformists. Nevertheless, they can be searched and analyzed from various aspects of teaching such as the discourses delivered to the recluses and common mass at several places, conversation with the rulers and other fellows during the sojourn of his monastic life.

In order to understand the idea of the Buddha’s advocacy of Welfare State, it is essential to have a general look of the term ‘State’. The word ‘State’ in English is similar to and practically identical with the term ‘Raṭṭha’ in Pāli, which means a reign, kingdom, empire, country, or realm. The term State is also very commonly used to express the collective action of the community, through the agency of the government, as distinguished from individual action. For instance, when we use the terms “State aid”, “State regulation”, “State management” etc., we actually use the word State for government. Similarly, when we talk about the twenty-eight political units of the Indian republic, we do not give the scientific meaning as none of them is really a state. In Political Science, it has a more specific and definite meaning which has little in common with most of its various ordinary meaning.

As used in Political Science, the term State mean as assemblage of people occupying a definite territory under an organized government and subject to no outside control. The State is a natural, necessary and sovereign institution. It is natural because it is rooted in the reality of human nature. It is necessary, because, as Aristotle said, “The State comes into existence originating in the bare needs of life and continuing in existence for the sake of good life.” Though State is a necessary and a sovereign institution, no two writers agree on its definition. There have been many different views about the nature of the state. As some writers define the State as essentially a class structure, others regard it as the one organization that transcends class and stands for the whole community. Some interpret it as a power system, others as a welfare system. Some view it as legal construction while some identifies it with the nation.

Out of this maze of confusion we select fair views which represent the weight of authority. Notwithstanding the disagreement, all the philosophers, thinkers and

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writers agree in ascribing to the State the three elements: people, territory and government. Disagreement again becomes prominent in respect of the fourth element of sovereignty. Those who deny to the State the elements of sovereignty, attribute a special quality to government. The sovereign is “legally supreme over any individual or group”, \(^{285}\) says Laski and the sovereign possesses “supreme coercive power”. It is to be kept in mind that the state and government is by no means the same thing. Government is merely an essential instrument or contrivance of the State through which its authority is manifested. Taking cognizance of all such considerations, Garner gives a wider and more reasonable definition of the State. He defines the State as “a community of persons, more or less numerous, permanently occupying a definite portion of territory, independent, or nearly so of external control, and possessing an organized government to which the great body of inhabitants render habitual obedience.” \(^{286}\)

According to the Buddhist Canon, also, the State is not an independent or single thing, such as the ruler, government or lands instead a combination of the four elements as mentioned above. The concept of the State in the Buddha’s time consisted of four elements just as we find in the modern concept of State. From the *Mahāvagga*, we learn that the Magadha state held its sovereignty over eighty thousand townships. \(^{287}\)

*Dhammapada* Commentary says, “The population of the Magadha state was a hundred and eighty million.” \(^{288}\) Therefore, it can be concluded that the concept of State might be well-known in the sense of country or kingdom during and even before the appearance of the Buddha.

Welfare State on the other hand means a state where the government plays a key role in the protection and promotion of the economic and social well-being of its citizens. It is based on the principles of equality of opportunity, equitable distribution


of wealth and public responsibility for those, unable to avail themselves of the minimal provisions for a good life. Renowned sociologist T.H. Marshall identifies welfare state as a distinctive combination of democracy, welfare and capitalism. In strictest sense, a welfare state means, wherein, government provides each and every facility for the well-being of its citizens. Such a government ensures for its citizens physical, material and social needs. The purpose behind this, is to create economic equality or to ensure at least a minimum standard of living for all citizens.

However, the biggest barrier seems in the way of establishment of welfare state, in letter and spirit, is the creation of an efficient and impartial governing system. At present time, many small and poor countries are unable to provide equitable for all the citizens. Another important problem with it is that many peoples who are, though, capable of providing for them will surely sit idle and rely on the government to provide for them. This will definitely bring resentment among those who do work and are taxed more heavily to pay for the support of people who do not work. As the question of Buddha’s advocacy for a Just and Welfare State is concerned, it needs to be keep in mind that the Buddha did not made any political pronouncement, rather, he confined his attention strictly to questions of religious discipline. However, he emphasized that the government or the ruler should uphold moral and spiritual law and that the state has the duty of providing strength to political and social organizations. So far as the ‘Buddhist laws’ are concerned, we find the Buddha’s concept of origin of state, ruler and different varṇas in the Aggañña sutta\textsuperscript{289}, which is akin to the modern social contract theory. Accordingly in the hoary past, people approached the strongest and wisest person with charming personality to take lead of the society and rule with justness. As he was approved and appointed by mass, he came to be known as Mahāsammata. He was also called ‘Khattiya’ as he was master of fields (khettapati). Further, he ruled and pleased the people by Dhamma, his third epithet became ‘Rājā’.

Obviously, Mahāsammata was given certain rights and privilege by his subject, and in return, he was supposed to rule with justice, impartiality, wisdom etc.

\textsuperscript{289} D., III. Igatapuri: VRI, 1993.
Another systematic development of kingship in Buddhist setup seems to be available in the Buddhist Saṅgha, where despite having a democratic set up, a well defined set of rules is available in the form of *Patimokkha* for monks as well as for nuns. Needless to say, till these rules were followed in letter and spirit, *Saṅgha* remained intact, strong and a model for the society.

Further, in the *Mahāparinabbānasutta*\(^\text{290}\) the Buddha refers the following seven qualities necessary for the community welfare and stability. These are: collecting together frequently in public meeting of their clan, mutual concord, regard for the ancient institutions of their clan, reverence for elders, protecting the prestige of the fair sex, honoring their shrines, arranging for the safe and convenient stay of the Arhants. Ven. P.A. Payutto summarizes the above mentioned idea in the following way:\(^\text{291}\)

1. To hold regular and frequent meetings.
2. To meet together in harmony, disperse in harmony and conduct business & duties in harmony.
3. To introduce no new ordinance, to break up no established ordinance but to abide by the original principles.
4. To honor and respect the elders and to listen their counsel.
5. To honor the womenfolk of the community and don’t abuse them.
6. To honor the shrines worshipped by the community and not to neglect the ceremonies to be conducted for them.
7. To provide rightful protection, shelter and support for the enlightened beings and to welcome them to the community.

Also, Payutto mentions the following conditions needed to be fulfilled by the government or rulers for fulfilling the set up of welfare state. The conditions may broadly be put under the following categories:\(^\text{292}\)

A. Being endowed with the ten Royal qualities (*dasarājadhammas*):

1. **Dāna (sharing with the populace):** An ideal ruler is a benefactor in such a way that he rules or works to deliver, to give and not to take or gain. He should devote himself to administering services and providing welfare and aid for his people to ensure their well-being, convenience and security. He should render assistance to those in distress and difficulty and support and reward those who do well.

2. **Sīla (maintaining good conduct):** He should be impeccable in conduct and restrained in physical and vocal actions. He should rather do discharge good actions only and uphold his prestige and honour. He should set an example for the people, so that he could command their respect. Besides, he should remain free from any cause for comfort.

3. **Pariccā (working selflessly):** An ideal ruler should be capable of sacrificing personal comfort, even in his own life, for the benefit of people and the peace and stability of the country.

4. **Ājjava (working honestly):** An ideal ruler is honest and upholds the truth; he is un-deceitful and upright in his dealings; he is sincere and does not deceive or befoul the people.

5. **Maddava (deporting himself with gentleness and congeniality):** Despite being tough in his administration, he should not unnecessarily behave arrogantly, rudely, harshly or in a congenital manner. Nobility and dignity is expected from him in his outlook and public behavior.

6. **Tapa (Rejecting indulgence through austerity):** An ideal ruler destroys defilements and unnecessary cravings and does not allow them to overpower his mind. He should restrain his mind in such a way that it does not get lost in sensual pleasure and debauchery. On the contrary, he remains simple and regular in life-style, and dedicated to the fulfillment of his duty.

7. **Akkodha (adhering to reason, not to anger):** He does not resort to lose temper or fiery outburst and does not make judgments or act out of anger,
but has a heart of good-will, suppressing anger, he judges and acts 
righteously with a mind that is subtle and calm.

8. Avihiṃsā (bringing tranquility through non-violence): He does not let 
his power go to his head or use it to repress his subjects. He is rather kind 
and does not find a pretext for punishing a subject out of vindictiveness or 
hatred.

9. Khanti (Overcoming difficulties): An ideal ruler should practice the 
virtue of non-violence, patience, forbearance and tolerance; being able to 
bear hardships, difficulties and insults.

10. Avirodhana (not doing that which strays from righteousness): He 
should not transgress the principles of public administration that are based 
on moral values and aimed to welfare, happiness and righteousness of the 
people and the country. He should not oppose what the people rightfully 
desire and demand. He should not stand in the way of those activities 
which are for the common good; he should establish himself firmly in 
righteousness, steadfast and unwavering in the face of pleasant and un-
pleasant words, gain and loss, desirable and un-desirable conditions;²⁹³ he 
should be firmly established in righteousness principles and not deviate 
from or subvert them—both in judicial terms namely, the administration 
of justice, and in regulatory terms, namely the observation of regulations, 
formalities and administrative principles, including good customs and 
traditions.

B. Performing the duties of a universal emperor: he performs the five duties of a 
supreme ruler, called cakkavatti-vatta:

1. Dhammādhipateyya (holding the dhamma supreme): He adheres to 
truth, righteousness, goodness, reason, principle and rightful rules and 
regulations as standards; he respects, upholds, favors and establishes 
himself in righteousness and practices accordingly.

²⁹³ “Selo yathā ekaghano, vātena na samīrati/
Evaṃ nindā pasamsāsu, na samīñjanti paṇḍitā/” Dhp., verse no. 81.
2. **Dhammikārakkhā (providing righteousness protection):** He provides fair protection to all groups in the land, i.e., the royal household, the military, administrative officials, civil servants, academics and people of various occupations such as merchants and farmers, country people and inhabitants of the border provinces, monks and priests who uphold moral conduct, and even beasts and birds requiring conservation.

3. **Māadhāmmakāra (prohibiting unrighteous actions):** He arranges preventive and remedial measures, not allowing unrighteous actions, exploitation, oppression, corruption, or unrest to arise in the country; he encourages the people to establish themselves firmly in honesty and virtue and also establishes a system that excludes bad people and promotes good ones.

4. **Dhanānuppadāna (distributing resources to the poor):** He ensures that there are no poverty-stricken people in the land by, for example, arranging that all people have a chance to make an honest living.

5. **Paripucchā (not falling to seek counsel):** He seeks advancement in wisdom and virtue by having advisors who are learned and virtuous, who are morally upright and not heedless or self-indulgent, and who can help him to cultivate his wisdom and wholesome qualities; he approaches monks and wise men and queries them to seek knowledge, goodness and truth; he discusses various problems with them at regular and appropriate times so that he may examine and improve himself and carry out his duties rightfully, properly so as to bring about true welfare and happiness.

C. **Effecting the royal benefactions:** he supports the people, allowing them to live in unity and harmony, with the four rāja-saṅgaha-vatthu (principles by which a king supports his people):

1. **Sassamedha (shrewdness in promoting agriculture):** He is skilled in agronomic policies and promotes agricultural activity which brings about bountiful crop yields.
2. **Purisamedha (shrewdness in promoting government officials):** He is clever at making policies for supporting government officials by, for example, encouraging honest and capable officials and providing them with adequate social benefits.

3. **Sammāpāsa (bonding the people together):** He assists the people with policies that support their livelihood by, for example, providing funds from which the poor may borrow to set them up in commerce or start business operations, thereby eliminating an economic disparity that is so wide as to cause rifts among the people.

4. **Vājapeyya (impressive speech):** He knows how to speak, clarify and advise; he takes an interest in greeting people of all levels and inquiring about their welfare; his speech is pleasant to the ear, worth listening to, reasoned, well-founded and useful; it leads the way to constructive action, to solution of problems, to increased harmony, and to mutual understanding, trust and respect.

D. Avoiding the biases: when an administrator is carrying out his functions, he should not allow the four biases, or deviations from righteousness to interfere:

1. **Chandāgati:** biased conduct on account of like.
2. **Dosāgati:** biased conduct on account of dislike.
3. **Mohāti:** biased conduct on account of delusion or foolishness.
4. **Bhayāgati:** biased conduct on account of timidity and fear.

Thus, it can be summarized that whatever form of the government is there, the ruler must have the above qualities. The Buddha did not speak in favor of a particular type of government whether it was democratic or republic or monarchic; there should be a just code of conduct for the subject as well as for the ruler or administrator. Only then a fair and effective administration can be brought into reality and the creation of the ideal state is thus possible.

5.4 **Buddhist Society and Politics**
As we all are well aware about the facts that the Buddhist society generally comprises of two group viz. the community of monks and nuns and that of lay disciples. The two groups never have the same kind of relation to political affairs. On the part of monastic group, though their ultimate goal is the attainment of nibbāna through self purification, still they are not free from the socio-political environment as they have to remain in contact with the lay disciples by one way or the other. On the other hand, since, the community of lay people still remains attached with the worldly affairs; they are obviously supposed to engage themselves in practical politics. During the lifetime of the Buddha two types of governmental set up prevailed: the monarchical and the republican ones; but the Buddha did not praise or condemn either. What he really emphasized was that the government of any system should not ignore and disregard the importance and necessity of moral and spiritual advancement as well as those of material prosperity of the state, and that in order to reach this integral aim the principle of righteousness should faithfully be observed.

No doubt, even Buddha himself belonged to a family having a strong ruling set up but he always kept himself away from it and thus strived for the well being of others. One may claim the close proximity of the Buddha with the political activities, but he always stood firmly on the point that the ruler of the state should always work for the well-being of people of his state.

5.4.1 Should Buddhist Recluses Come into Practical Politics

The international and strategic relations are totally different, say, of 2600 years ago so in the light of new global implications, policies and strategies it does not seem suitable for a Buddhist recluse to take part in practical politics. However, such conditions are not binding but by virtue of the rules which, at the time of Ordination, a monk undertakes whole heartily to observe. He is obliged to refrain from participation in practical politics. “One is the road that leads to worldly gains while another leads to nibbāna. Let not the bhikkhu, the follower of the Buddha, yearn for
honor, but let him, on the contrary, develop dispassion.” In order to conform to this advice, a recluse should not join, support or even vote for any political party. Neither should he participate in any public gathering meant for political or quasi-political motive.295

The Buddha instructed his monastic followers to live in seclusion and to arouse energy in practicing the Noble Eightfold Path. Sociability and involvement with lay people and worldly matters were definitely discouraged by the Buddha. As, at the time when the Enlightened Master was about to attain Parinibbāna, Ānanda enquires about the last and final rituals to be performed.

The Buddha then replies “Do not worry yourselves about the funeral arrangements, Ānanda. You should strive for the highest goal, devote yourselves to the highest goal, and dwell with your mind tirelessly, zealously denoted to the highest goal. There are wise nobles, brāhmaṇas and merchants who are devoted to the Tathāgata (The Buddha); they will take care of the funeral.” Therefore, by observing the above facts, a recluse should avoid himself from active political involvement, which is within the sphere of lay people. At the most, in this changing and global scenario, a recluse, if wishes, may exercise his or her citizens right to vote in the General Elections.

If monks actively engage themselves in political activities, it will endanger the sanctity of the Saṅgha. As it is seen that the active involvement of monks in politics in Sri Lanka, few years ago, were rounded up at night for questioning and some were never seen again. In Myanmar, sometimes, curfews were also imposed on the monasteries. On the other hand, during the political unrest in Thailand, many years ago, the monks going for daily alms were never obstructed by the soldiers guarding the streets during curfew hours. So when monks will keep themselves away from

294 “Añña hi lābhupanisā, aññā nibbānagāminī/ 
Evam etam abhiññāya, bhikkhu Buddhassa sāvako / 
Sakkāraṃ nābhīnandeyya, vivekaṃ anubrāhaye //” Dhp. Verse no.75.
296 D., Mahāparinibbānasutta.
active political activism they will not pose any threat to political set up and hence face no obstacles or danger in their daily routine.

Also, there are ten contemplations a monk is instructed by the Buddha to consider thoughtfully every day, as among them the first and third are: “I now come to the state of being an outcast (vevanniya)”; and “I must now behave differently (from a lay person).”

So, a monk should remind himself that he has gone out from the society to live a completely different life style from a lay person. Dīghanikāya\textsuperscript{297} mentions various lay professions not allowed for a recluse. It is considered wrong livelihood for a monk to engage in them.

5.4.2 If So, Should he accept post of privileged, authority and take Remuneration

As already mentioned earlier, a Buddhist recluse should avoid active participation in any kind of political involvement. So it does not seem suitable for him to accept any political or administrative privilege. Furthermore, neither he should accept any authority nor remuneration on one to one basis. However, if needed, such offer may be accepted under the sole supervision of the Buddhist Saṅgha and that too for the well-being of the common mass of the state only. Further, after attaining any such position, the recluse should work for the eradication of social evils such as corruption, dowry, violence, environment equilibrium and many others and never get involved in benefitting any particular.

5.4.3 Buddhist Saṅgha in the Role of an unattached guide (Kalyāṇamitra)

Directly coming to the point as Saṅgha in the role of Kalyāṇamitra, it is essential to have an understanding of the term ‘Saṅgha’. If we go through the pages of history, we find that the Saṅgha was very much in use before the time of the Buddha. According to R.B. Barua\textsuperscript{298}, both the Brāhmānic and non- Brāhmānic ascetics used to

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\item \textsuperscript{297} D., Brahmajālasutta.
\item \textsuperscript{298} Rabindra Bijay Barua, \textit{The Theravāda Saṅgha}, Bangladesh: Al-Hajj A.K.M. Abdul Hai Asiatic Press,
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
address their leaders as ‘Gaṇapatī’, ‘Gaṇācariya’, ‘Saṅgha pamukha’ etc., T.W. Rhys Davids mentions that people organize themselves under different organizations, which were not existent before. These organizations known as ‘Nigama’, ‘Saṅgha’, ‘Seṇī’, ‘Puga’, ‘Nikāya’ and likewise.

In Kautilya’s Arthaśāstra, the term ‘Saṅgha’ signifies political group and trade guilds. According to Buddhist tradition, the term ‘Saṅgha’ is also applied to religious Orders, and that’s why the Buddhist Order is called ‘Saṅgha’. It is to be noted here that the religion of the Buddha consists of two communities. The first one is the community of homeless people (bhikkhus and bhikkunīs) and the second one is the community of home people (lay men and lay women). The Saṅgha with the Buddha as its supreme leader was the most powerful element of Buddhist faith. It played a vital role in the preservation of the Buddha’s teaching.

According to the Pāli canonical literature, the history of Buddhist Saṅgha started from the 2nd month after the Buddha got Enlightenment. With the first sermon the Buddha began a ministry that last forty five years. During this period he established a religious order. Perhaps it was the only a mendicant order in its beginning—and trained a number of distinguished disciples who would carry on the teaching after the founders death. Tradition preserves the names of his disciples and immediate heirs to his teachings.

Sukumar Dutta has observed that the Buddhist Saṅgha represented a form of group life different from these societal organizations –the Gaṇas or the Saṅhas– in both aim and purpose, but it aspired to be firm and united body, and , in pursuance of this objective the first organizers of the Bhikkhu Saṅgha tried to plant in the Order

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1978, p. 1
299 T.W. Rhys Davids, Buddhist India, New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1999, p. 27.
300 Rabindra Bijyay Barua, op. cit., pp. 57-60.
302 Ibid.
303 K.T.S. Sarao, Lay Devotees, Their Position and Contribution or Role of Lay Disciples in History of Buddhism, Delhi: Department of Buddhist Studies, University of Delhi, 1997, p. 9.
some of the characteristic institutions in which the vital strength of these group-organizations lay. The Gaṇas and Saṅghas knew nothing of personal rules; they deliberated and acted together, were ‘communistic’ in their property –relationships, republican in the conduct of their affairs and had the tribal council as their organ of the Government.\textsuperscript{305}

The Buddhist Saṅha has always led state and government for peace and harmony. There is a cordial relationship between the Saṅha and state. The Saṅha in the present time is not only confined itself in imparting the religious and spiritual values, instead it takes active part in ecology balance, child rights, girls education, standing against rapes, settling down the issues between the administration and the civil society and likewise.

In the northern Thailand the Buddhist Saṅha has developed some areas for plantation. In Myanmar the Saṅha has maintained a very cordial relation between Buddhist recluses and government officials. The government officials gets initiation into the Saṅha as monks and nuns for two months during the summer and winter vacations and gets them edify. These sorts of activities have proved very fruitful for smooth functioning of the society and the government.

Thus, from the Buddha’s first proclamation we find that the policy of Buddhism was not directed towards serving self-interest of Buddhism, but for the happiness and benefit of the people. It described the method of working and gave a clear purpose, method of procedure and what should be given to the people. The objective of the Buddha through the establishment of the Saṅha was to proclaim and propagate the sublime way of life.

\textbf{5.4.4 Vinaya providing an ideal code of Political Discipline}

Vinaya is the collection of rules, regulations and guidelines for conducting the life of monks and nuns properly. Doing so, the Vinaya leads them in a systematic way

\textsuperscript{305} Sukumar Dutta, \textit{Buddhist Monks and Monasteries of India: Their History and Their Contribution to Indian Culture}, Delhi:Motilal Banarasidass Publishers, 2000, p. 86.
for purification of physical, vocal and mental deeds. It is a specific method of
training which teaches the restraint and control of our self or another with a goal of
acquiring greater efficiency for the purpose of achieving Nibbāna.

Vinaya is the combination of the prefix ‘vi’ which connotes difference,
distinction, apart, away etc. and the verb root ‘ni’ which basically means to ‘to lead’.
‘Vinaya’ the reified noun form of the verb ‘ni’ therefore leads us to the general
meaning of ‘that which separates or that which removes’. So far as the question of
Vinaya with Political discipline is concerned, though, the Vinaya is ignored by some
scholars who do not understand the spirit of the Vinaya adequately; they regard it as
something that deprives the freedom of individuals. People who are of such opinions
tend to confine themselves to a singular study of only the dhamma. Buddhism indeed
consists of these two equal important portions. In his last sermon, the Buddha advised
Ānanda to use both portions of Buddhism, the dhamma and the vinaya, for his
guidance: “It may be Ānanda, that in some of [the Bhikkhus], the thought may arise:
‘The word of the master is ended, we no longer have a teacher.’ But it not thus,
Ānanda, that you should regard it. The Truths [Dhamma] and the Rules of the Order
[Vinaya], which I have set forth and laid down for you all, let them, after I am gone,
be the teacher to you.”

However, in the early phase Vinaya did not play an important role because the
spiritual standard of Bhikkhus was very high, they were at least at the stage of
Sotāpanna. For them, Vinaya seemed to be unnecessary, because they knew very well
how to behave in their external lives. On the other hand, it became of prime
importance for those Bhikkhus who have not yet attained such ideal qualities. As also
mentioned in the previous chapters, a person is ordained as Bhikkhu or Bhikkhunī in
accordance with the rules laid down in Vinaya. The rules govern all practical
activities of the community of recluses and all aspects of their life. As mentioned by
U KO Lay that in Vinaya the rules of discipline are outlined, these rules embody

306 B. Labh, Paññā in Early Buddhism, op. cit., p. 35.
authoritative injunctions of the Buddha on modes of conduct and restraints on both physical and verbal actions. So, one must understand that Vinaya is not for depriving people of their own freedom or basic rights. Furthermore, these rules were not imposed on everybody but only on those who had chosen the holy life with their own will. Therefore, to understand the real spirit of Vinaya, the ten conditions cited by the Buddha are worth mentioning:

Sitting there, Upāli asked the Exalted one, ‘Lord, what are the reasons why the rule of training was laid down for the discipline of the Tathāgata and the Pātimokkha appointed? ’ [The Buddha responded,] for ten reasons, Upāli, the rules of training were laid down and the Pātimokkha appointed:

1. For the good establishment of the Saṅgha.
2. For the comfort of the Saṅgha.
3. For the riddance of obstinate men.
4. For the happy abiding of well-behaved Bhikkhus.
5. For guarding against troubles in this present life.
6. For guarding against troubles which may arise in future life.
7. For pleasing those not yet pleased.
8. For the increase of those who are pleased.
9. For the establishment of true Dhamma.
10. For the benefit of Vinaya.

Concludingly, it can be said that Vinaya came into existence for no other purpose than the long-term benefit and happiness of the Saṅgha. By regulating the Saṅgha’s relationship to the society which supports it, the Buddha set up a system that could generate harmonious co-existence of recluses and lay-disciples.

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310 Vin., III
CHAPTER 6
BUDDHIST ETHICS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Since time immemorial, economy has been playing an important role in the society. Today, the whole world is becoming a global village and in recent years the economy of most of the nations has shattered. Because of the economic crisis of one country the whole world suffers. It is also interesting to remark here that, in the early stage of development of Buddhist ethics, scholars and thinkers normally did not realize the importance of having a discussion on economy and ethics as according to them, may be, it was irrelevant or illogical to find any relation which, somehow, seems opposite in all prospects. It is due to this reason we hardly find any concrete study relating to ethics and economics. However, in this present era of globalization the economic perspective on the surface of morality is changing and it is due to this reason the modern day scholars are forced to make a distinction between moral life and good life. It is like as if one wishes to have a good life one would have to sacrifice morals and if one wants to have a pure moral life he/she has to abandon good life.

In this complexity, the Buddhist ethics does not lose grounds and very firmly establishes the righteous way of earning and distribution of wealth. As a fact the Buddha never deprecate from earning money and other material objects. However, he appreciated the wealth that is earned should be by means of righteousness and spent on good and wholesome activities meant for the spiritual, mental and physical development of the human society.

So efforts have been made to explore the Buddhist approach of economy through which a person can lead a happy and growth full economic life.
6.1 Buddhist Notion of Economic System and Safeguard and Growth

At the very outset, a genuine doubt arises in mind whether there is any justified relation between economics and religion, because whenever we think of economy the first thing comes to our mind is the activity related to selling and buying, production and consumption, profit and loss etc. On the other hand religion tends towards the concept of spirituality and leading a pious life. In practicality, there seems to be no linkage or connection between religion and economic growth. Furthermore, when it comes to the discussion of ethical values, the distinction between economics and ethics is easily discernible. We can overview any economic situation either entirely through market perspective or through an entirely ethical one.

However, these two perspectives are interconnected to each other. Although modern economists reject any subjective value ethics, the influence of ethics in economic matters is all too obvious; for instance, if a community is unsafe—if there are thieves, the threat of violence etc.; it is obvious that businessmen will not invest there, tourism will not flourish and as a result the economy will suffer and shatter. On the other hand, if the citizens are law-abiding, well-disciplined, peace-lover, and conscientiously help to keep their community safe and clean; business will have a much better chance of success.

Ethical qualities also influence industrial output. If workers enjoy their work and are industrious, productivity will be high. On the other hand, if they are dishonest, disgruntled or idle, this will have a negative effect on the quality of production and the amount of productivity. Taking a wider perspective, it can be seen that the free market system itself is ultimately based on a minimum of ethics. The freedom of free market system may be lost through business using unscrupulous means of competitions.
To be ethically sound, economic activities must take place in such a way that is not harmful to the individual, society or the natural environment. In other words, it should not cause problems for oneself, agitation in the society or degeneration of ecosystem, rather, enhances well being in these three spheres. Thus, an economy inspired by Buddhism would strive to see and accept the truth of all things. It would cost a wider, more comprehensive eye on the question of ethics. Once ethics has been accepted as a legitimate subject for consideration, ethical question then becomes factor to be studied within the whole causal process. On the contrary, if no account is taken of ethical considerations, economics will be incapable of developing any understanding of the whole causal process, of which ethics forms an integral part.\textsuperscript{311}

Etymologically speaking the term ‘Economics’ has its roots in ancient Greece as the term is derived from the word ‘\textit{Oikonomikos}’, meaning ‘Household Management’ and now is commonly defined as ‘a science which studies human behavior as a relationship between ends and scares means which alternative uses.’\textsuperscript{312}

One thing is clear from the above discussion that economic safeguard and growth is a complex process. It is influenced by natural resources and both economic and non-economic factors. Role of natural resources has always been recognized in economic development. As a matter of fact, natural resources often decide the limits of development. Among the economic factors which determine the development process in any country, the most prominent are the available capital stock and the rate of its accumulation, capital output ratio in various sectors, agriculture surplus, conditions in foreign trade and economic system. In addition, some non-economic factors such as size and quality of human resources, political freedom, social organization, education and corruption free bureaucracy will play its role in determining the safeguard and pace of economic growth. In a country’s economic development, the role of economic factors is decisive. The stock of capital and the rate of capital accumulation in most of the cases settle the question whether at a given


\textsuperscript{312} Lionel Robbins in \textit{The Penguin History of Economics} by Roger E. Backhouse, 2002.
point of time a country will grow or not. There are few more factors responsible for having a sort of bearing on economic growth but their importance is hardly comparable to that of capital formation. 313

The surplus of food grains output available to support urban population, foreign trade conditions and the nature of economic system are some such factors the role of which in economic growth has to be analyzed. The strategic role of capital in raising the level of production has traditionally been acknowledged in economics. It is now universally realized and accepted that a country which wants to accelerate pace of safeguarding the economic growth has to save a high ratio of its income, with the objective of raising the level of investment. Whatever be the economic system, a country cannot hope to achieve economic progress unless a certain minimum rate of capital accumulation is realized. However, if some country wishes to make spectacular strides, it will have to raise its rate of capital formation still higher. Japan had precisely done it during the late 70’s. It had stepped up its saving rate to 37 percent of the Gross Domestic Product. Until recently, in some other countries such as South Korea, Thailand, Malaysia, Hong Kong and Singapore saving rates were as high as 33% or even more. The high rate of capital formation in all these countries provides an explanation of their high rates of growth in recent years.

Further, increase in agriculture production accompanied by a rise in productivity is important from the point of view of the development of a country. However, what is more important is that the marketable surplus of agriculture increase. The term ‘marketable surplus’ refers to the excess of output in the agricultural sector over and above what is required to allow the rural population to subsist. The importance of marketable surplus in a developing economy emanates from the fact that the urban industrial population subsists on it. With the development of an economy, the ratio of urban population increases and increasing demands are made on agriculture for food grains. These demands must be met adequately otherwise the consequent scarcity of food in urban areas will arrest growth. In case a

country fails to produce sufficient marketable surplus, it will be left with no choice except to import food grains which may cause a balance of payment problem. Until 1976-77, India had to face with precisely this problem. In most of the years during the earlier planning period, market arrivals of food grains were not adequate to support the urban population.314 In order to avert food crisis the government needed to import food grains in large quantities. This indeed solved the food problem. However, at the same time it involved large scale spending of foreign exchange which if used for other purposes, would have contributed more to the economic growth of the nation. Hence, if some nation wants to step up the tempo of industrialization, it must not allow its agriculture to lag behind the supply of the farm products particularly food grains, must increase, as the setting up of industries in cities attracts a steady flow of population from the country side.

6.2 Can a person prosper without Economic Safety?

While talking about economy, it does not seem practical to assess the growth of an individual if the matter is related only to livelihood i.e., food, clothing, shelter etc. However, at some level this economic stability becomes just a means for material need. Although, the Buddha never specifically taught about the subject of economy, yet his teachings on the four basic requisites of life e.g., food, clothing, shelter and medicine find their mention at various places throughout the Buddhist literature. The Books of Discipline for the Monastic Order stipulate the attitude and conduct of the Buddhist monks and nuns who are supposed to adopt the four requisites as they have to depend entirely on donation for their material needs. The discipline also contains standard and regulations for ensuring the four requisites, which once supplied, will be consumed in peace and harmony rather than contention and strife. Buddhist monks are forbidden from demanding special food or requisites. A monk must be contented with little. The monastic discipline exemplifies a life style which makes use of the least possible amount of material goods. The motive behind it was that the monks and

nuns can devote as much of their time and energy as possible in the study, practice and teachings of the dhamma. It also enables them to live a life that is an independent of the social mainstream as possible, so that their livelihood is not at all geared to any socially valued gain. All the Buddhist monks, be they arhants or newly ordained, live their life according to this very basic principle of minimal amount of material possession and an optimum of devotion to dhamma practices.

To live happily without any abundance of material possessions, monks rely on sīla—morality or good conduct.\textsuperscript{315} It may be mentioned here that most of the teachings of the Buddha are directed towards the monastic community, there is no indication anywhere in the scriptures that the Buddha neither wanted householders to live like recluses nor is there any indication that the Buddha wanted everybody to become a member of his monastic community. In establishing the monastic order, the Buddha created an example of righteousness, a community that could nourish society with the dhamma and provide a refuge for those who wished to live life dedicated to dhamma only.

Monastic life has been designed by the Buddha in such a manner that one feels comfortable even when the four requisites are in low supply. In this regard, monks and nuns serve as living example that life can be happy and fulfilling even when the four requisites are not plentiful. However, most of the lay people see the four requisites as a basis on which to build more wealth and comfort. As lay people are supposed to require more material goods than recluses because of their demanding responsibilities, such as raising children, running business, donating for social cause, helping the needy ones etc., the fact remains that all basic needs of life can be met through the four requisites. Practical teachings on economic matters for the householders are contained in various discourses of the Suttapiṭaka. In the discourses the Buddha stresses four areas in which lay people may relate skillfully to wealth.\textsuperscript{316}

**Acquisition:** Wealth should not be acquired by exploitation but through efforts and intelligent actions. It should be acquired in a morally sound way.

\textsuperscript{315} Vism., 16
\textsuperscript{316} D. III, 1888; A. V, 176-82.
Safekeeping: Wealth should be saved and protected as an investment for the further development of livelihood and as an insurance against future adversity. When accumulated wealth exceeds these two needs, it may be used for creating social benefit by supporting community works.

Use: Wealth should be put to the following use:
   a) To support oneself and one’s family.
   b) To support the interests of fellowship and social harmony, such as in receiving guests or in activities of one’s friends or relatives.
   c) To support god works, such as community welfare projects.

Mental Attitude: Wealth should not become an obsession, a cause for worry and anxiety. It should rather be related to with an understanding of its true benefits and limitations and dealt with in a way that leads to personal development.

The Buddha praises only those wealthy people who obtain wealth through their own honest labour and used it wisely, to beneficial ends. That is, the Buddha praises the quality of goodness and benefit more than wealth itself. According to the ethical teachings of the Buddha, wealth should be used for the purpose of helping others; it should support a life of good conduct and human development. According to this principle, when wealth arises for one person, the whole society gets benefited, although, it belongs to one person but it is just as if it belongs to the whole community. A person who generates wealth in this manner generates great benefits around him. Guided by generosity, such a person feels to represent the whole society and in return gain the respect and trust of the community to use his wealth for beneficial purposes. The Buddha teaches that a householder who shares his wealth with others, follows the path of the noble ones, and thereby becomes able to prosper in a smooth manner: “If you have little, give little; if you own a middling amount, give a middling amount; if you have much, give much. It is not fitting not to give at all. Kosiya, I say to you, share your wealth, use it. Tread the path of the noble ones. One who eats alone eats not happily.”

317 www.dharmanet.org/samples/paramissample.html.
6.3 How should an individual lead a Happy Economic Life?

The *Abhidhammapiṭaka* contains the Buddha’s most sublime teachings. However, it does not directly deal with economic set up but contains a strong and effective connection because it analyzes mind and its constituents in minute details. Mental factors are the root of all human behavior, including, of course, economic activities. Negative mental constituents such as greed, aversion, delusion and pride motivate economic activities as do the positive constituents such as non-greed, non-aversion, non-delusion, faith, generosity, good-will and so on. In this respect, *Abhidhamma* involves the study of economics vis-à-vis providing the most fundamental basis of a true and noble economic life.\(^\text{318}\) Similarly, the more esoteric practices of Buddhism particularly mediation is indirectly related with leading a happy economic life. Through mediation and mental training we come to witness the stream of causes and conditions that begin as mental conditions and lead to economic activities. With this insight, we can investigate our mental process and make sound ethical judgments. Further, mediation helps to see how ethical and unethical behaviors are the natural consequence of the mental conditions which motivate them. One must agree with the fact that individuals, groups, societies or nations are neither good nor bad rather it is the mental state of mind that controls our behaviour in the ethical or unethical direction. Greed, hatred and delusion drive us to unethical acts while the wisdom and desire for true well-being guide us to ethical behavior and a good life.

With meditation we gain perspective on our motivations; we sharpen our awareness and strengthen free will. Thus, when it comes to making economic decisions, decisions about our livelihood and consumption, we can better resist compulsions driven by fear, craving and pride and choose instead a moral course that aims at true well-being. In this way, we begin to see how mental factors form the

\(^{318}\) P.A. Payutto, op. cit., p. 82.
basis of all economic matters, and we realize that the development of this kind of mental discernment leads the way to true economic and human development.

Perhaps, through meditation it is possible to realize a higher kind of happiness i.e., inner peace and when we have that kind of peace, we can use wealth which is no longer necessary for our happiness, and then we use the same for the noble cause. As advised by the great Master, one should realize the fact that wealth is simply the means to an end. To be more precise, wealth is not happiness but the means to happiness. However, some people still have a misconception about the spiritual value of wealth. For them, the real motive of work is to earn money only. However, the question is when they are rich, are they really happy? One cannot surely claim that wealthy people are happier than poor ones. Because the people who have immeasurable or enormous wealth or property does not have peace of mind they always fear of losing the money or loss in their business, theft, kidnapping etc. Similarly, we have seen that name, fame and power never make one happy though one may be happy up to some extent but not fully satisfied. One must realize that these external sources are not the sources of real happiness. Therefore, the Buddha classifies the happiness\textsuperscript{319} attained through wealth for lay persons (\textit{Kamabhogī-sukha})\textsuperscript{320}, into four categories. Let us examine all of them one by one in order to understand the real meaning for leading a happy economic life:

a) \textit{Atthi-sukha}: The happiness of possessing wealth leading to the pride, satisfaction and security of having wealth, rightfully acquired through the sweat of one’s own brow and the strength of one’s own arms. Economic stability is one of the factors for leading a successful life. Having sufficient wealth is essential for progress in the world. Happiness is attained when the wealth earned is through honesty and by hard work. In the \textit{Sigālovādasutta} the Buddha advises to earn wealth without causing harm and pain to others. On another occasion, the Buddha mentions to refrain

\textsuperscript{319}\ A., I, Swamīai Dwarkadās Shastri (ed. & tr.), op. cit., 2002, p. 112. The Buddha classified happiness into two kinds. These are: \textit{Sāmisa sukha} and \textit{Nirāmisa sukha}.

\textsuperscript{320}\ A., II, 69, also P.A. Payutto, \textit{A Constitution for Living}, op. cit., p. 41.
from trading in five kinds of wrongful ways. A person who has a lot of wealth but does not have a sense of contentment cannot enjoy *Atthi-sukha* or the pleasure of having.

b) **Bhoga-sukha**: The happiness of spending wealth; the pride and satisfaction of knowing that one has used one’s wealth, rightfully gained, for the support of oneself, one’s family and one’s dependents and for the noble cause. According to Buddhist ethics, wealth is not hoarding or for exclusive personal use of the earner, instead, it is to be shared. This is the basis and significance of Buddhist economics.

c) **Anaṇa-sukha**: The happiness of freedom from debt; the pride and satisfaction of knowing that one is free, not indebted to anyone. However, it is to be noted here that one should not take in a sense that one should not get into debt at all. It seems quite impractical. The aims of this point are that one should try to reduce the desires so that one has not to go for debt all the time. In *Sāmaññaphalasutta* the Buddha explains how a person could borrow money and develop economically and be happy. What the Buddha emphasizes here is the importance of utilizing the credit for a productive purpose and also the repayment of loans at the earliest possible opportunity without cheating the lender. Buddhism discourages obtaining credit for consumption. The satisfaction one gets from being free from debt in this sense is *Anaṇa-sukha*. If one possesses economic strength but does not repay loans he always suffers and is not in a position to enjoy this *sukha*.

d) **Anavajja-sukha**: The happiness of blameless conduct; the pride and satisfaction of knowing that one has acted honestly, faultlessly and blamelessly in body, speech and mind. This *sukha* must be enjoyed in all stages of economic activities i.e., production, distribution and consumption. The difference here is that enjoyment does not refer to enjoyment of wealth acquired by any means or use of wealth in the

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321 D., I, Swami Dwarkadas Shasta (ed. & tr.). op. cit., p. 80.
consumption of anything as envisaged in western models; but the strategy adopted to acquire wealth has to be rightful means and the use of wealth for consumption has to be on blameless things. Righteous and blameless activities are those which do no harm either to the doer or to others. This would provide solutions to most of the evils of the modern society. This enjoyment has to be cultivated not only in the process of building the economic foundation but also after achieving economic stability.

It is pertinent to mention here that the first three kinds of happiness are materialistic but the last one brings the greatest happiness. Thus the Buddha reminds that economic and material happiness are nothing before the spiritual happiness arising out of the faultless and good life.

6.4 Buddhist Ethics and Modern Global Economic Scenario

At the time of the Buddha the complexities in economic sector were not like those of today because during that span of time the society was deeply rooted to its place in the natural world. Economics were more localized. Relations among people and between culture and nature were relatively unmediated. Direct observations and experiences of the natural world provided the basis for ethical decisions in individual lives. Buddhist teachings and precepts were formulated within the context of societies shaped by these direct connections to community and to the world. It is about the constantly changing cycles of the natural world: birth and death, joy and sorrow, the opening of flower, the waxing and waning of the moon; it is about the impermanence and interdependence that characterize all that lives. However, in the present day global industrial world, complex technologies and large scale social institutions have led to a fundamental separation among people as well as between humans and the living world. Since our daily life seem to depend largely on man-made world e.g., on the economy, electric power, cars and highways, the medical system etc., it is easy believe we depend more on the technosphere than on the biosphere.

As the scale of economy grows, it also become increasingly difficult for us to know the effects of our actions on nature or on other people. These forms of
separation stem from and reflect a fragmented world view that is essentially anti-ethical to the Buddha’s teachings. Modern society is indeed based on the assumption that we are separate from and able to control the natural world. Thus the structures and institutions on which we depend are reifications of ignorance and greed or in other words denial of the interdependence and impermanence.

Being a humble, noble and sincere student of the Buddhist Studies, it becomes the prime concern and duty for the researcher to examine the present economic trends carefully in the light of Buddhist teachings. The very first doubt arisen in mind during the research of this particular theme was what the global economy really stands for. The answer which, mostly agreed upon by the modern researchers and economists, is that it is a world in which people everywhere eat the same food, wear the same clothing and live in houses built from the same material. It is a world in which every society applies the same technologies, depends on the same centrally managed economy, offers the same western education to its children, speaks the same language, consumes the same media images, holds the same values, and even thinks the same thoughts. In brief, it is confining the whole world towards a monoculture shunning down the cultural diversity.

Contrary to the claims of its promoters, a centrally planned global economy does not bring harmony and understanding to the world by erasing the difference among common mass. As an answer offered by Buddhism to this dilemma is that many western scholars have failed to address the disturbing social and economic impact of globalization. The major reason of this failure seems to be lack of knowledge about the fact that Buddhist teachings refer to the state of world as it is, unaffected by human intervention. In other words, it refers to the natural world and not to an artificially constructed ‘techno sphere’ and its corrupt economic system. As the prime motive of Buddhist ethics is to minimize the desire and suffering of man while modern Western economics promotes doing business based on individual, self-interested, profit-maximizing ways, Buddhism suggests an alternative strategy. The underlying principle of Buddhist economics is to minimize suffering of all sentient
beings, including non-human beings. From the Buddhist viewpoint a project is worthy to be undertaken if it can reduce the suffering of all those who are affected.

Further, any change in economic-activity system that reduces suffering, should be welcomed. The suffering-minimizing principle can be formulated to reveal that the goal of economic activities is not to produce gains but to decrease losses. Whereas in the Modern Global Scenario, the focus of multinational marketing agencies is to encourage the desire of people for products in order to get more and more profit. However, psychological research shows that materialistic value orientation undermines well-being. People who are highly focused on materialistic values have lower personal well-being and psychological health than those who believe that materialistic pursuits are relatively unimportant. These relationships have been documented in samples of people ranging from wealthy to poor and from teenagers to elderly.

6.5 **Buddhist Ethics and Consumerism**

Consumerism can generally be defined as the offshoot of materialistic approach towards market values. Literally, the term stands for social and economic order and ideology that encourages the acquisition of goods and services in ever-greater amounts. In the domain of economics, consumerism refers to economic policies placing emphasis on consumption. In an abstract sense, it is the consideration that free choice of consumers should strongly orient the choice of what is produced and how and therefore orient the economic organization of a society.\(^ {322}\)

However, according to Swagler and Roger the term consumerism has several definitions.\(^ {323}\)

These definitions may not be related to each other and are little bit in conflict with each other. One sense of the term is to describe the efforts to support consumer’s interests. Consumerism is the concept that consumers should be informed decision

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makers in the marketplace. In another aspect it is defined as the concept that the marketplace itself is responsible for ensuring social justice through fair economic practices. Also, according to one more way it refers to the field of studying, regulating, or interacting with the marketplace. The consumer movement is the social movement which refers to all actions and all entities within the marketplace which give consideration to the consumer.

While the above definitions were being established, other people began using the term to mean high levels of consumption. This definition gained popularity during the 1970s and began to be used in the way of measuring the standard of living by the amount of annual consumption i.e., assuming that a man who consumes more is ‘better off’ than the one who consumes less. Under such materialistic approach consumption the end goal and purpose of all economic activity. This leads to maximizing, which in turn fuels optimal production effort. The need for indulging human satisfaction sharpens the focus for maximizing production and consumption. Such a belief was further aggravated by the corporate culture of generating maximum profit with minimum cost. In the striving process, these corporations incite emotions of maximum greed and desire which fires up the consumerist culture, which desire products that illogically exceed normal human needs. Worse yet, sophisticated and intensive marketing campaign ingrain in the popular belief that happiness can only be achieved from indulging ones desire in acquiring infinite wealth and the enjoyment of limitless commodities is simply a means to human well-being.

So far as Buddhist ideology is concerned, it is observed that wealth itself is not bad but the man’s endless craving for wealth is the challenging issue at hand. While the materialist person is mainly interested in accumulating goods, a practicing Buddhist is mainly interested in liberation. Contentment is truly a great wealth and wisdom is better than wealth, as it leads to the highest goal in this life. Herein, contrary to the modern economic concept of consumerism the traditional Buddhist thoughts distinguish between two kinds of consumption: ‘right’ consumption and

324 “Hananti bhogā dummedham, no ve pāragavesino / Bhogatanhāya dummedho ;hanta aṁne’ va attānam //”, Dhp., 355.
‘wrong’ consumption. Right consumption is the use of goods and service to satisfy the desire for true well-being. Wrong consumption is the use of goods and services to satisfy the desire for pleasing sensation or ego-gratification. Consumption may satisfy sensual desire but its true purpose is to provide well-being. For instance, in the basic need for food, the biological purpose of eating is to nourish the body, to provide it with strength and well-being. Supplanted over this biological need is the desire for enjoyment, for delicious taste.

Ven. P.A. Payutto comments: “At times, the desire for taṇhā may be at odds with well-being and even be detrimental to the quality of life. If we are overwhelmed by taṇhā when we eat, rather than eating for the purpose of nourishing the body and providing it with well-being, we eat for the experience of the pleasant taste. This kind of eating knows no end and can lead to problems in both body and mind. The food may be delicious, but we may end up suffering from indigestion or obesity. On a wider scale, the social costs of overconsumption, such as depletion of natural resources and cost incurred by health care, not to mention crime, corruption and wars, are enormous.”325

As the Buddhist perspective is based on the stream of cause and effect, the specialized thinking of economics identifies only part of the stream: demand leads to consumption which leads to satisfaction. For modern economists, as Payutto says “When it is consumed, that demand is satisfied. Modern economic thinking stops here, at the satisfaction of the demand. There is no investigation of what happens after the demand is satisfies.”326 On the other hand the Buddhist ethical system is of the view that when consumption enhance true well-being, it is said to be successful and if it merely results in feeling of satisfaction then it is failure one.

An important aspect of Buddhist economics consumerism is that is a ‘middle way’. The Buddhist way of life is referred to as the middle path and each of its eight constituents are called ‘Sammā’, which means right or correct e.g. Sammā-ājiva. Each

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326 Ibid, p. 27.
constituent is Sammā because it gives rise to the optimum benefit in its respective sphere. The path is a middle-way between too much and too little. It is just right so the middle way means ‘just and right amount’.

Schumacher in his beautiful work Small is Beautiful opines that the presence of Right Livelihood in the Eightfold Path of Buddhism necessitates a Buddhist economics. What may be added to that statement is the fact that it also makes inevitable the presence of Wrong Livelihood. Similarly, right economic activity implies wrong economic activity as well. Here, a ‘correct or right’ economy is a middle-way economy. Buddhism is full of teachings referring to the middle-way, the right amount, knowing moderation and all these terms may be considered as synonyms for the idea of balance or equilibrium. Knowing moderation is referred to in the Buddhist canon as Mattaṅñutā.\(^{327}\)

Thus, Mattaṅñutā is the defining characteristic of Buddhist economic. Knowing the right amount in consumption refers to an awareness of that optimum point where the enhancement of true well-being coincides with experience of satisfaction. In the teaching it is laid down that monks and nuns should make use of the requisites offered to them, it is stressed that they should consider the reason and purpose of their consumption, as in the traditional formula: ‘Paṭisaṅkhā yoniso piṇḍipātaṃ…; wisely reflecting, I take almfood.’ Whatever is consumed must firstly be reflected upon wisely. This principle is not restricted to monastic rather it is applicable to all Buddhist followers. The principle in relation to consumption is not to consume playfully, not to be infatuated with consumption and not to consume for ornamentation or decoration, but for subsistence of the body, for life to go on, for the relief of physical discomfort and painful feelings such as hunger, and to live comfortably enough to practice higher level of dhamma. The other three supports viz. dwelling, clothing and medicine, also apply similar principle as follows: dwelling-for protection from natural dangers such as wind and sunlight; clothing- protection from harmful animals, insects, cold, heat etc.; and medicine- protection against

\(^{327}\) Mentioned by Phra Phaitoon Pukkaeo in A Study of the Social Aspects of early Buddhist Philosophy, op.cit, p. 147.
illness. Whenever and whatever we consume, we should understand the meaning of what we are doing and should consume in such a way to experience result that conform to that purpose. Just the right amount or middle way lies here. When a person reflects on consumption and understands that its purpose is to maintain health and support a good and happy life, then true well-being or quality of life will be what one desires from it.

It, thus, may be withdrawn from the above discussion that economic activity is a means and not an end in itself. The economic results that are desired are not the real goal but a way to it, i.e., they are supporting base for the process of human development that leads to better life. In the case of food it means not just eating in order to enjoy the taste but to attain physical as well as mental strength for enabling one to have attentive attitude that will further develop one’s wisdom. There is a mention of incident in the life of the Buddha, wherein, he gave food to the poor peasant, not just in order to ally his hunger but so that he could listen dhamma discourse afterwards. The creation of economic prosperity is an important task, but economic progress and prosperity must be related to the goal, to lead to a quality of life that prepares people to develop their potential, to create, or practice for, a wholesome life. Hence, consumption is a means to an end.

6.6 Buddhist Ethics and Just Economic Order

Human quest for a just world order emanates from the feeling that the world order in existence is unjust, or the justice available is not sufficient. The former opinion means that justice does not exist, as such. The latter opinion means that justice, although available, is not enough. The latter situation may be true to some extent in the case of many issues like human rights, democracy, liberalization etc. but in the case of world economic system the former situation holds good. Injustices galore are there in the world economy and economic exploitations are both organized and rampant. The widespread injustice in the economic world order may be assigned to two aspects. One relates to the basic fallacies in economic theories and the other to the ill and maligned practices. One may refer to the former as the failure of
conception and the latter to the result of hegemonies of individuals, families, corporations and nations.

The development of world economy as we find today may be assigned to two juxtaposed sets of economic theories that were conceived and developed in the last couple of centuries; namely capitalism and communism. Herein the researcher has tried to limit the focus on capitalism only as communism is now a case of miscarriage of justice and has consequently been relegated to the dustbin, if not buried to the grave, of history. The most important factor for human beings is to satisfy their basic requirements in an adequate way. If they are not provided proper ways to create means of subsistence and satisfy their urges, they cannot play a positive role in a society. Instead, they are forced to adopt undesirable means of livelihood that promote deviation from the harmonious model of the society. They will always be at the mercy of others who will exploit them and use them for their own benefit. It is also necessary for a society to produce potential members. It cannot be strong and stable if it fails to produce potential members and fails to provide proper facilities to satisfy the basic needs of its members. Furthermore, the purpose of a system - social and political - is to enable humans to lead life in a righteous, dignified and peaceful way. This is possible only when the system makes adequate provisions for food, clothing, shelter and taking care of the health of its members. In the absence of these, the order or system is meaningless. These are basic issues which needs sincere efforts to be solved.

There are a number of ailments in economic theories and wide ranging corruptions and injustices in practices. However, one basic aspect relates to the justification of maligned concept of interest provided by conventional economics and practices emanated there from. This has encouraged the concept that growth can be based on future income. It may come to be understood that an individual and an economy should plan growth based on income which has not yet been earned. Economy consumes more than what it can pay. Individuals are caught in the trap of unbridled consumption and nations are trapped in deficit financing wherein fresh
loans are taken to pay off old loans and new currencies are printed to cover up the gap between expenses and income.

The solution lies in correction of fallacies in theories, and corruptions and injustices in practice. No short cut method, other than course-correction, is available to human society for a just world economic order. As mankind is reaching at the threshold of the twenty-first century, a question of global character is on the minds of many people: What this 21st century is going to deliver to the present day society and to the generations to come, is an important question.

At the outset, we have realized the global character of a number of crucial problems that are confronting us. Thus, we will be able to mobilize the wisdom and the strength of peoples of the whole world to solve them in a better way. For instance, the problem of war and peace, the problem of building up a new economic order and a new world moral order, the problem of protecting our environment and many others. A problem such as war which concerns the survival of humankind cannot be entrusted to a handful of militarists and politicians. This explains why the world peace movements were and are attracting a large number of people from many different strata. Nearly every country in the world, all continents, all races, all age groups, all professions, all political ideologies and all religious denominations have representatives in the peace movement. Only such a peace-protecting force, so mighty and so dynamic, has the power to stop the danger of a nuclear war, to fight against devilish warmongers, and to guarantee the victory of peace and progress. Only with such a global outlook towards the problem of war and peace can the peace movements score such an historic victory.

The danger of a global nuclear war has mobilized the world peoples' force against its occurrence. The closing years of twentieth century were and are witnessing some historic steps towards an era without nuclear and chemical weapons. Humankind seems relieved by the agreement on disarmament of medium-range missiles between the Soviet Union and the United States, but we cannot lessen our vigilance. Although the danger of a nuclear war has been lessened, wars with all their cruel and inhuman manifestations are still prevalent. Political and military violence
persists among a number of nations, among peoples of racial differences and even among peoples of the same ideology and of the same political outlook, among comrades and friends in arms. In recent years, the relations between nations have undergone a major change, being characterized more and more by peaceful coexistence, mutual understanding, negotiation instead of confrontation, market frontiers rather than war frontiers. As to the internal political situations of many countries there has been a positive trend towards large democracy, the avoidance of oppression, cultural and intellectual coercion, and more respect and understanding towards different ways of thinking.

Thus we are preparing for an era of real peace, peace for the whole planet, not only for some regions, but peace for all human beings. All kinds of wars, not only nuclear war, should be banished. All these manifestations of violence should be done away with forever. We see that, and this is our second lesson, every crucial and critical problem of global character should be solved not only with a global outlook and a global force, but deeply and thoroughly from within every being. And here, with its special deep psychology and deep insight, Buddhism can offer many contributions.

First of all, Buddhism welcomes all peace movements and exhorts its practitioners to participate in these movements. To protect peace is to protect life and that is to put into application the first moral precept of Buddhist ethics. Buddhism is against all expansionist wars, which always include annexation of territory and wealth and interference into the internal affairs of other countries and nations. This is a violation of two very important moral precepts of Buddhist ethics: not to take what is not given\textsuperscript{328}, and not to commit actions that bring demerit. Buddhism denies all violent actions and manifestations under any pretext except in legitimate self-defense as well revealed in this gāthā:

\begin{quote}
"Na hi verena verāni, sammantī’da kudācanaṃ / \\
Averena ca sammanti, esa dhammo sanantano //\textsuperscript{329}"
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{328} S. Tachibana, \textit{The Ethics of Buddhism}, op. cit.
\textsuperscript{329} Dhp., verse no. 05.
Buddhism advocates any collective or individual endeavor which aims to create an atmosphere of mutual understanding, trust and respect among people, nations and human beings. Buddhism encourages dispelling prejudices, inferiority and superiority complexes, all of which are very harmful to human dignity and human values. Buddhism considers it of prime importance to build up a new economic order and a new moral order which would mitigate the anger and turmoil of the present international political as well as economic atmosphere. As it is seen, the current economic situation polarized between a few industrialized, well-developed and wealthy countries, and many poor countries, famished and underdeveloped, is built upon unfair trade, with raw materials purchased at a very cheap price, and with manufactured goods sold at a very high rate. This unfair trade cannot be continued any longer because it nurtures war and violence.\textsuperscript{330}

Furthermore, Buddhism is of the view that in order to wipe out this present day polarized economy and to build up a new world economic order with more justice and equality we should set up a new moral order based upon a new way of thinking and on some humanitarian principles readily accepted by mankind. Without a world moral order serving as an ethical foundation it would be very difficult to successfully establish a new world economic order. Even if it were to be successful, it would not be able to last long. The polarized situation would re-establish itself once again, even worse than before. That is why, to our thinking, priority should be given to establishing a new moral order based upon some basic humanitarian principles accepted by the world community. In the current crisis, Buddhism with its tradition as a religion for peace will be able to offer its worthy contributions.\textsuperscript{331}

One of the greatest contributions Buddhism can make to a new world moral order is its theory of ‘no-self’. This concept of Buddhism can play key role towards generating moral way of life for the present day society. The sickly psychic tendency

http://www.hawaii.edu/uhip/buddhism.html

\textsuperscript{331} Ven. Thich Minh Chau in his article \textit{Five principles for a new global moral order} published online at www.budsas.org/ebud/ebdha166.html.
of the modern society is to seek sensual pleasures and to accumulate maximum wealth. In order to guarantee individual enjoyment one tries to secure as much material property for oneself as possible. However, material property is limited while the greed of humans is unfathomable. That is why there is no way to escape from disputes and fights between human and human, between nation and nation, between people and people. And in this lies the root cause of war. With the theory of ‘no-self’, we can say that Buddhism has dug up the very root of wars, conflicts and contentions. With an insight into ‘no-self’ an individual once enlightened will escape the grip of both lobha (greed) and dosa (anger). One may be greedy for oneself, but when there will be no point of self the greed will automatically vanish. Similar is the case with anger. When the self is contradicted unsatisfied anger will arise. But when the self is not their anger will automatically disappear.

Another expression which has a similar connotation is ‘for the sake of others’. A Buddhist who is having the essence of ‘no self’ would fully devote his thoughts, words and bodily activities towards the welfare of all sentient beings. The validity of fact can be realized through the concept of ‘Bodhisattva’ in Mahāyāna Buddhism. As we are aware about the ideal of Mahāyana Buddhism i.e., Bodhisattva is nothing but a continuation of the principle of ‘no self’ and ‘for the sake of others’. As advocated by the Buddha in the Mahāvagga: Oh monks you should go forth, for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of love and compassion for the world, for the happiness of the deities and men. . . . You should preach the Dhamma excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle, excellent in the end, complete in meaning and in words. You should promote the holy life, extremely good and extremely pure.

Naturally, Buddhism does not praise a life of poverty and asceticism. Nor does Buddhism extol a low and bestial way of life of running after material sensual desires which reduce one into a weakling in body and a dullard in mentality. On the other hand, Buddhism has great appreciation for mental joy and happiness, dedication to moral living, and an exultation of enlightened bliss and liberation. Buddhism advises people to return to their own true self, to their own true personality, and to a way of life in harmony with society. Harmony should be engendered between oneself and
nature, body and mind, compassion and wisdom, and feeling and intellect. Buddhism affirms that all people are capable of achieving such a harmonious inner way if only one so desires and if one acts in accordance with teachings of the Buddha and in conformity with his way of life of virtue and wisdom. It extols a way of life that avoids the two extremes of indulgence in vulgar, low sense desires and bodily mortification and asceticism—a way of life leading to lasting joy and happiness. This is a way of life that all people from the East and from the West, male and female, young and old, religious and non-religious are able to lead and enjoy. That is the most famous eightfold way of life—a way that encompasses virtue, meditation and wisdom.

Such a moral way of life will bring about concentration of inner mind. Such a concentration of inner mind will guarantee the clarity of wisdom. And a person of wisdom will be able to look at things as they truly are.

Now it is time for world to return the basic principles of Buddhism to their original brilliance and simplicity. Thanks to this brilliance and simplicity, Buddhist principles can enter deeply into the hearts of people and are welcomed and accepted by a large portion of people in this world, becoming their basic principles of life. The principles are converted into their daily physical, vocal and mental activities. They become an invincible material force to change this world of war and insecurity into a world of peace and happiness, and thus to convert the era of the 21st century into an era of humanity, an era in which humanistic values will be the yardstick, the criteria of all values. Happiness or unhappiness of humans will be the red thread, the dividing line, clearly distinguishing truth from untruth, victory from defeat, right view from wrong view—an era in which man himself will become the supreme enlightened judge evaluating all political and social systems. Mankind will decide which system is the best and which one with full of vitality, which will be ultimately outmoded and withdrawn from the historic arena.
CHAPTER 7
APPLICATION OF BUDDHIST ETHICS IN THE MODERN LIFE

Modern era is the era of science and technology. However, unfortunately in this mad race, we are losing human values. Though advancement in science and technology is good and is the need of time, yet one must understand the values of morality in human life. It is a proven fact that science can be harmful as well as beneficial for humanity, what matters, is how we use it. In the present chapter it has been observed and focused that if we keep the progress of science in parallel to ethical teachings, we can make this world a happier place to live in. Besides this, study has also been carried about the Buddhist perspective on the present day issues such as poverty, employment, ecological imbalance, euthanasia, suicide, bio-ethics, globalization etc.

7.1 Buddhist Ethics, Poverty and Employment

Poverty is something that no one wants to encounter and experience. It is a natural instinct that everybody wants to be rich and live a life of comfort. Poor people in the society are ironically not seen with good intentions. In its real sense poverty refers to the deprivation of basic human needs, which commonly includes food, water, sanitation, clothing, shelter, health care and education. Poverty, as ordinarily understood in early Buddhism, consists of the absence of basic material requirements for leading a decent life free from hunger, exposure and disease. Buddhism recognizes the importance of such minimum material needs even in the case of those who aspire to their spiritual goal. Basic needs of a monk or nun indeed provide a useful benchmark for measuring that level of subsistence below which human beings should not be allowed to fall. The four requisites of a Buddhist renunciation are food sufficient to alleviate hunger and maintain one's health, clothing sufficient to be socially decent and to protect body, shelter sufficient for serious engagement with cultivating mind, and health care sufficient to cure and prevent disease. Buddhism
considers people who voluntarily renounce worldly possessions and pleasures in favor of a life of such minimal needs as belonging to the community of noble ones (ariyapuggala).

Poverty is actually like a store house or one can say the beginning point of all kinds of suffering in human life. As, rightly said by the Buddha in Aṅguttaranikāya (chakkanipāta), ‘Poverty is a cause of suffering in the world’. As of poverty, people borrow money from others; borrowing brings about suffering. Because of debt, they have to pay interest; to pay interest brings about suffering. When they cannot pay interest in time, they are supposedly pressed for payment; the requirement of payment brings about suffering. When they are pressed for payment and they cannot pay, they will be charged; the charge brings about suffering. After the charge, if they cannot repay, they will be sentenced to jail; imprisonment brings about suffering. Monks, all of these; poverty, debt, payment of interest, pressure for payment, the charge and the imprisonment bring about suffering to the world.

However, religions have a long and complex history with questions about poverty, class stratification and other economic matters. On the one hand, most of the religions have embedded within their traditions explicit statements about the importance of helping the poor and the dangers of too much accumulation of wealth. On the other hand, successful religions typically attach themselves to powerful political and social forces—forces which, almost by definition, value the accumulation of wealth and often do little to help lift up the poor.

As a fact, from the Buddhist perspective, excessive wealth and an extravagant way of life can become a source of attachment and create a fear of loss and of ceaseless craving. However, Buddhism does not see wealth as intrinsically evil and does not claim that the state of nibbāna is more difficult for the wealthy to attain. On the contrary, rich people are in privileged position to practice the virtue of generosity and traditional Buddhism partially connects economic success in present, to the acts of charity in the past during pervious lives. Wealth itself is not the problem, as long as it is attained by honest means and used for the benefit of wider society. Some currents in the Buddhist tradition encourage charity to the monastic community in particular,
in order to accumulate spiritual merit for future lives. However, Buddhism also advocates compassionate giving to the poor and the sick as a virtue in its own right. According to one account, the Buddha walked thirty miles to teach a poor person and first made sure that he was fed before focusing on spiritual matters:

“Jighacchā paramā rogā, saṅkhārā paramā dukhā /
Etatā nātvā yathābhūtā, nibbānaṃ paramā sukhaṃ //”

This gāthā also symbolizes that when the Buddha talks about poverty, he does not simply mean by the worldly poverty. Instead he also emphasizes on spiritual or dhammic poverty too. As he says, one who has no confidence in wholesomeness, no moral shame and dread, makes no effort to learn and practice dhamma and has no wisdom to realize dhamma, is poor in spirituality. He further explains it that because of spiritual poverty, such a person commits unwholesome actions through mind, speech and body; unwholesome mental, verbal and physical actions include the borrowing of debt. When he does bad actions mentally, verbally and physically, he tries to cover up his wrong actions; this symbolizes the payment of interest. Because of the covering up of wrong actions, his bad behavior or reputation will be spread; bad behavior or bad reputation symbolizes the pressure for payment. After this, anxiety, distress and worry will follow him everywhere; this symbolizes the charge. Because of unwholesomeness, when he dies, he is reborn in the bad or suffering realms; this symbolizes imprisonment.

This is great teaching of the Buddha, to show to the world the real poverty both worldly and spiritual. In his teaching, there are proper solutions; for instance, the solution to worldly poverty is contentment; in the first place; people must be contented with what they have, so that they do not borrow money, causing more and more debt. Contentment is a real solution to the worldly poverty as beautifully explained in the Dhammapada:

“Ārogya paramā lābhā, santuṭṭhī paramā dhanāṃ /
Vissāsa paramā nātī, nibbānaṃ paramā sukhaṃ //”

332 Dhp, verse no. 203.
333 Ibid., 204.
Solution to spiritual poverty is ‘confidence in wholesomeness, moral shame and dread, the effort to learn and practice dhamma and the wisdom to realize dhamma. It is certain that if people have confidence in wholesomeness, moral shame and dread, an effort to learn and practice dhamma and wisdom to realize dhamma, they will definitely be very rich in dhamma; they will be so rich that they can achieve the supreme stage of enlightenment.

According to Buddhism both types of poverty are not good as both lead to woeful state of living. As a way of life which advocates eliminating dukkha, Buddhism does not and cannot value poverty that is a source of dukkha. In the Aṅguttaranikāya, for example, Buddhism does value non-attachment towards material goods and promotes the virtue of having less wants, yet that is not the same as encouraging poverty. In other words, the problem of world poverty is not primarily an economic one. It is a matter of our collective intentions and therefore our values. That brings us back to religion, and the need for religious institutions which understand that market emphasis on acquisition and consumption undermines their most important teachings.

Whereas on the part of Employment, the Buddhist ethics very strictly emphasizes that any means of earning should be through rightful ways. Looking at the literal side of the term Employment, we find that it is a relationship between two parties, usually based on a contract, one being the employer and another being the employee. We humans have created an elaborate civilization in which we depend on each other to perform many labors. Whatever work we do provides goods or services to others, and for this we are paid to support ourselves and our families. It is the only way of sustenance in this world. Today we find innumerable ways of earning our livelihood. Here arises a question whether all type of livelihood is recommended or should there be some restrictions? In order to meet his day to day requirements man has started adopting such means of employment that are generally forbidden by the religious and spiritual saints. From the Buddhist perspective in this context, we find that, at the very outset, the Buddha very strictly advises to the mankind that the way of livelihood should be through right and good means as clearly mentioned in the
Noble Eightfold Path in the form of Right Livelihood. For right earning it has been advocated by the Buddha that one should not indulge in five types of trades. These include: trade in weapons, trade in human beings, trade in flesh, trade in intoxicants and trade in poison. However the list is not fully comprehensive, and mentions only the trades which were prevalent at the Buddha’s time. The Brahmajālasutta of the Dīghanikāya also mentions the list of wrong livelihood.  

According to Angraj Chaudhary no doubt, man must live and the means of his livelihood are matters of his greatest concern as we know that a hungry man is an angry man because satisfying one’s hunger is the basic need of life, even more basic than satisfying sexual desire. But he should earn his livelihood by right means to maintain harmony in the society as the dishonest way of employment may create chaos among the people.

If we keenly observe the modern situations, we see that what the Buddha said regarding the right way of livelihood is very much relevant in modern times. Right livelihood not only creates the sense of love and friendship among individuals rather it encircles even the whole globe. In the present era of globalization when the world market is wholly dependent on each other’s efforts and sincerity the importance of right way of employment at par with the norms mentioned in the form of Buddhist ethics are very much relevant.

### 7.2 Buddhist Ethics and Conflict Resolution

“Sarve bhavantu sukhinaḥ, sarve santu nirāmayāḥ /
Sarve bhadrāṇi paśyantu, mā kaścid duḥkhabhāga bhavet //”

The golden lines of Indian culture having the essence of universal brotherhood and world peace, deliberately, is being denied its due recognition in the mad race of materialism. As with the invention of new technologies and advancements of ideas and thoughts in almost all the spheres of life, human being is confining himself into a small chip, which we term as ‘Global Village’. People in a village live together in

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close proximity and share the problems, sorrow and moments of joy together. Despite having trivial differences the mutual relation in nutshell remains cordial. The concept of global village has also brought the people residing in different parts of the globe closer through fast growing means of transportation and communication. A person suffering from visibly incurable diseases may get the prescription of proper medicines from a medical expert residing in some other corner of the world in minutes through internet; two or more persons can have teleconference and exchange of ideas through telephone, face book, web camera and so on. However this globalization still has to cover a long distance in developing humanity. A stronger nation does not feel any hesitation in threatening and terrorizing a weaker nation and within no time invades the weaker one. Intrusion in the territorial jurisdiction of some other countries by man less Drone aero planes may be taken as the negative consequence of globalization.

Terrorist activities conducted and executed by Al-Qaida and various such outfits in the name of Jihad can easily be noticed. It has resulted in creating a sense of fear psychosis among the common man. Today all individuals, communities and nations are facing the terror and pain of violence. Everybody is suffering with uncertain violence such as psychological impact-arising from economic instability, social-originating from conflicts of ideologies and faiths and political such as arms race, war and terrorism. Scientific and technological advances have undoubtedly made our life quite easier and pleasant but the lust for more and being more powerful than others has resulted in shattering the ethical and spiritual values. Man is killing man intentionally in the name of religion, region, country or community and thereby creating a sense of insecurity, hatred and ill-will in the society. Sometimes, it seems unbelievable, how a man- who himself claims to be a social creature of the nature, can act like this. Although we all are aware of the consequences that violence always inflicts pain and sorrow, still we are becoming more and more violent day by day. History has witnessed innumerable instances of dictators including Aurangzeb, Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin etc., who caused terror, inflicted sorrow and destruction on this only life-discovered planet. Despite these past sad experiences, we are once again on the
same path that leads to hatred, ill-will, bloodshed etc. This is the harsh reality and we have to accept this whether we like it or not.

However the scenario is not that much gloomy as sometimes viewed out of disappointment. This terrific picture does not mean that there is no way to bring peace back to this world. Even in the darkness of hatred, ill-will, conflicts etc. there is a ray of hope and the ray of hope emanates from the Buddha’s message of love, compassion, selfless joy in others happiness and equanimity (mettā, karunā, muditā and uppekkhā) technically known as the four sublime states (Brahmavihāra), all leading to creation of non-violence and peace.

Not only Buddhism but even some other religious systems and many social reformers of the modern times like Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., Mother Teresa, Aung San Suu Kyi, Nelson Mandela, Kofi Anan etc., realized the relevance of non-violence as a constituent for leading a happy spiritual, social as well as political understanding and in spite of great difficulties and resentment, worked for the establishment of non-violence in one way or the other in the society. In nutshell they all proclaimed and worked for ‘Vasudhaiva Kuṭumbakam’

We know that every religion of the world talks about world harmony and brotherhood but as the modern era is the era of scientific inventions and developments and once the great Noble Prize winner scientist, Albert Einstein said, ‘If there is any religion that would cope with modern scientific needs, it would be Buddhism.’ Buddhism in my humble opinion can provide worthy goals for scientific advancements which is presently facing a hopeless impose of being enslaved by its inventions. Buddhist ethical doctrines, thus seems quite suitable and impressive towards conflict resolution and leading humanity towards global peace as proclaimed by the Buddha himself:

“Na hi verana verāni, sammantidha kudācanam //
Averena sammanti, esa dhammo sanantano //”336

This Buddhist doctrine which the great Master preached about 2600 years ago, seems to be relevant even in the modern era of globalization and turmoil This

336 Dhp., verse no. 05.
indicates that Buddhist concept of non-violence, love, compassion, good-will etc. are the foundations of human life. It is because, when we cultivate such feelings in ourselves we enter into the state of eternal satisfaction and we feel the whole universe as our own family.

Before proceeding further let us have an understanding of the terms such as conflict and non-violence (ahiṃsā). The term ahiṃsā is not available in the Pāli literature, as we find today. However as a concept it is very much prevalent in the form of mettā, karuṇā, avera etc. It is indeed an attitude of mind. Apparently it is, sometimes misunderstood as negation of violence which may be mistaken as a neutral attitude also. However, in the Buddhist parlance it is not only negation of violence rather a positive condition of mind which gets expression through love, sense of cooperation, mutual trust and respect, loving-kindness, compassion etc. Conflict resolution or non-violence is a means to interact with others in the society, school, college & university, world fora, travel and so on. The concept of ahiṃsā has evolved from logical thinking and from experience. It has emerged from the doctrine of equality of all souls. Everyone wants to live, nobody likes to die. Violence—just opposite to ahiṃsā enters first in our thought, it then manifests itself through speech and then through physical deeds. That is why Buddhism believes that world peace can only be achieved if we first establish peace within our mind

“Mano pubbangamā dhammā mano saṭṭha manomaya”337

The Indian religious tradition has generally laid emphasis on the inner powers of mind, but Buddhism has given special importance to mental culture. George Grimm in his book, The Doctrine of Buddha, emphasizes on the significance of mental aspects. The inner power of mind and resources are infinite, and Buddhism aims at developing them fully through the process of meditation clearing all cobwebs of kilesas (defilements). It is the thought, volition, cognition that matters most in the development of personality. It has rightly been said that wars first begin in the mind of men and then appear in physical form. This is the reason the Buddha identifies volition or determination of mind as the action-‘Cetanā’haṃ, bhikkhave, kammaṃ

vadāmi. Catayitvā hi kammaṃ karoti manasā vācāya kāyena va’. Dhammapada says that a misdirected mind can engulf a man in the worst misery which even an enemy cannot, and the right mental attitude can do more good than even one’s own parents:

“Diso diṣṭaṃ yantaṃ kayirā veri vā pana verināṃ /
Micchā paṇihitaṃ cittaṃ pāpiyo-naṇ tato kare //
Na taṇ mātā pitā kayirā aṇñe yāpi ca ṇātakā /
Sammā paṇihitaṃ seyyaso naṇ tato kare //”

Buddhist school Yogācāra or Vijñānavāda developed the theory of ‘mind only’ (cittamātratā). This idealist school believes that external objects are merely projections and therefore derives inspiration from the sayings of the Buddha in which he had emphasized the cultivation of mental culture.

We find the Buddha often saying to his disciples even in early texts as the Aṅguttaranikāya: ‘Mind Bhikkhus, is pure in itself. It is only defiled by outside impurities.’ Internal purification or citta-visuddhi is more important than outward rituals. A dip in the Gaṅgā with a defiled mind will not bring salvation. Right mental attitude— cultivation of feelings of friendliness (metta), compassion (karuṇā), becoming happy in the happiness of others (muditā) — can alone bring peace and happiness to all.

The Buddha reveals that peace comes from within and suggests not for seeking it without. The idea is that anger and other negative states of mind are the cause of wars and fighting. Buddhism believes that we people can live in peace and harmony only if we abandon negative emotions such as anger in our mind and cultivate positive emotions such as love and compassion for others, as it is strongly believed that the minds of all the living creatures are somehow interconnected and interrelated, whether someone is consciously aware of it or not. In other words, each being has his own transmitting and receiving stations and is constantly broadcasting to all others his or her state of mind and in a similar fashion receiving the same. Each thought in our mind, brings the world either a little closer to the brink of global disaster or move the world a little farther away from the brink.

338 Ibid, 42-43.
As to the interrelations between the minds of beings, the being we may be about to harm or even kill, from a Buddhist point of view, may will be our dear ones from former lives because Buddhism sees the problem of conflict or violence as a karmic one. As Bhikku J. Kashyap, in Buddhism for Everybody says: ‘The totality of such impressions accumulated during the entire span of one’s life is transmitted as one’s kamma to his next birth’. Positive impression results positive consequences and vice-versa. In other words, if one plants a mango seed, one gets mango. Similarly, if someone plants the seed of violence, he gets violence and if one plants the seed of non-violence, he gets non-violence in return.

Although the ideal of non-violence is universal, Indian religions in general and Buddhism in particular considers it to be the foundation of the entire code of ethics. Hinduism too has established ‘Non-Violence is the Supreme Virtue’. The concept of non-violence in Buddhism is not limited to refraining from mental, verbal and physical injury to human beings. It encompasses abstaining from injury to all living creatures including plants and animals as the Enlightened one proclaimed: “Do not harm others”.

In Buddhism, nothing is more important than life, because life is the basic force of universe, of which we and every living being on this planet are an integral part. But in today’s world, the sanctity of life is not universally accepted throughout the world. We are killing our fellow beings in military conflicts throughout the world. In addition, anger runs so deep in some particular culture that it led to destruction and loss of life at large. On the contrary, from the Buddhist perspective, if we truly value life, it becomes our moral duty to take constructive actions both at individual as well as at collective levels to create the sense of non-violence in the world around us.

Buddhism always strived for the establishment of world peace. This fact can be supported with the fact that if someone wishes to take refuge into Buddhism whether as a lay disciple or wants to adopt a monastic life he/ she has to follow this much concept of Buddhism in letters and spirit-

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339 Ahimsā Paramo Dharmaḥ.
“Pāṇātipātā veramanī Sikkhāpadan Samādiyāmi”

It is quite interesting to note here that the five principles of Pañcasīla in the Indian foreign policy were taken from the Buddhist legacy of five norms of human behavior. Moreover, the great emperor of India Aśoka had applied the Buddhist principles to his administration. If a country is ruled with such qualities termed as ‘Ten duties of the King’ as given in the Jātaka texts, it is needless to say that the country and world must be happy. The Buddha not only taught non-violence but he even went to the battle field and intervened personally and prevented war in the case of dispute between Śākyas and Koliyas who were on the verge of fighting on the question of water of the river Rohinī.

The Buddha constantly explained that the world is full of suffering. There is no place for any ordinary individual. The only peaceful state for a human being is Enlightenment. But this state does not abolish violence. What it does, however, is to allow the mind to be completely detached from fear and bodily attachment. After all, assassination attempts were made even on the Buddha himself.

More than any other religion or philosophy, Buddhism presents a clear vision of peace. The Noble Eightfold Path—Sammā ditthi, sammā saṅkappa, sammā vācā, sammā kammanta, sammā ājīva, sammā vāyāma, sammā sati, sammā samādhi, unambiguously maps out the way to achieve personal peace. It is a perfect way shown by the Buddha for a tensionless, tranquil and peaceful life. It is a self discipline of body, word and mind. It is the path of self-purification. The essence of the path has been put forth in one verse by the Buddha:

“Sabbapāpassa akaraṇam kusalassa upsampadā / Sacitta pariyodapanam, etaṃ Buddhāna sāsanaṃ //”

If everyone could but perfect his/her own life, world peace would come almost naturally. Buddhism preaches love, kindness, compassion and respect for all lives.

342 Dhp., 183.
To sum up, it is pertinent to mention here that in order to achieve universal brotherhood and peace, we need to generate a good and kind heart not only for our loved ones but for the whole humanity even to our enemies, without which, we can achieve neither universal happiness nor lasting world peace. The human qualities given by the Buddha such as morality, compassion, good-will, love etc. must be cultivated and sustained through systematic means of life in a conducive social environment so that a more humane world may emerge. These qualities must be inculcated right from the childhood. We cannot wait for the next generations to make this change; we have to make efforts ourselves in this context.

7.3 Buddhist Ethics versus Ecology and Environment Protection

Buddhist Ethics being a term of wide and rich connotation represents the Buddha; his philosophy, texts and contemporary holy practices and teachings of learned Buddhist recluses. Buddhism can rightly be considered as the religion of environment friendly or in other words an ecological religion. So far as the term ‘Ecology’ is concerned, generally it is defined as that branch of biology which deals with the relations between organisms and their environment. It is concerned with the spacing and interdependence of people and institutions. It is derived from the Greek word oiko(s) meaning ‘house’. 343

However, by Environment we mean the sum total of all living organisms and non-living things that surround an organism, or group of organisms. Environment includes all elements, factors and conditions that have some impact on growth and development of certain organisms. It consists of both biotic as well as abiotic factors that have some influence on organism. Abiotic factors such as light, temperature, water, atmospheric gases get combined with the biotic factors (all surrounding living species). Environment often changes after some time which is evident by the fact that many organisms have ability to adapt to change. In the recent decade environment has become widely discussed topic across the globe due to rapid increase in the

temperature of earth. Global temperature has increased by 1°C within the past century and will continue to rise by 1°C to 3°C over the next century\textsuperscript{344}, if we remain ignorant and neglect the adverse changing climatic conditions of the environment, it will result in making the life harder.

In search of personal comfort and pleasure man has damaged all the resources and has degraded environment up to its brim. It is the man who can make this beautiful earth either heaven or hell as once the Father of Nation, Mahatma Gandhi remarked: ‘Earth has everything for one person’s need but nothing for any person’s greed.’ The exploitation of natural resources has led to the ultimate issue of global warming and change in the clock of natural environment which is the key for existence of human being on this only life discovered planet.

A clean and healthy environment is a part and parcel of the wealth and quality of life that we desire for ourselves now and for our children in the future. People demand that air they breathe, water they drink, and food they eat should be pollution free. They wish to live undisturbed by noise and enjoy the beauty of the countryside, unspoiled coastlines and mountain areas. They also aspire a world that is not threatened by climatic change. Healthy and balanced natural system is essential for supporting life on this planet. Society relies on the nature to provide us with the resources for our survival such as air, water, food, building materials, fibers, medicines etc. and being a supreme creature we have a responsibility to preserve the actual value of nature both for ourselves and for our future generation.

In recent decades, there has been a growing realization that the quality of air, water, soil and food affect the quality of our health and life. This ranges from increased allergies, respiratory disease and cancer pertaining to disorder of the body’s hormone and fertility system and even premature death. Increase in green house effect due to the activities of human being has imposed a serious threat to the natural cycle of the environment. Temperature for the last few years has shown rise, due to which many land areas of the world are submerging in the sea. Melting of Polar ice and glaciers is adding fuel in the fire. The meet of all heads of nations held at Copenhagen

\textsuperscript{344} Singh Savindra, \textit{Environmental Geography}, 2000.
is the ultimate alarm regarding our concern for preservation and maintenance of natural cycle of environment to preserve life on this earth.

Since antiquity religious philosophies leave a deep influence on view, value, attitude, motivation and decision-making capacities of human beings that can change the behavior of individuals, groups and society. It defines the place of human in nature including how they should act towards non-human beings and other phenomena. The Buddhist philosophy has established beyond doubt that human desires are the real cause of ecological imbalance. Awareness of maintaining balance with ecology and protecting environment has, no doubt, been generated among the people in recent times as people have realized the importance of their healthy surroundings but this awareness has been reflected in the Buddha’s teachings delivered nearly 2600 years ago.

Beginning with Buddhist notion of human personality and its account of the interdependence between personality (man) and ecology. As conceived in Buddhism a human being is a constituent of Pañcaskandha (five aggregates), namely, rūpa (physique), vedanā (feelings or perceptions), samjñā (definite conceptions), samskāra (impressions of such perceptions and conceptions) and vijñāna (consciousness of all such factors). The successive latter ones originated from the former ones. All these five factors go on continuously originating the other, whereby they seem to constitute a group or aggregate called personality.\(^\text{345}\) As a human being is an aggregate of five skandhas, his existence depends on the external world or nature or ecology. Without the involvement of ecology, a human being cannot come into existence. In this sense, ecology participates in the existence and continuation of personality. So Buddhist conception implies that human being is a part and parcel of ecology. This interdependence has primarily been brought about in Buddhist theory Paṭiccasamuppāda:

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\text{“Imasmiṃ sati idaṃ hoti, imass’ uppādā idaṃ uppajjati /} \\
\text{Imasmiṃ asati, idaṃ na hoti, imassa nirodhā imaṃ nirujjhati.”}^{\text{346}}
\]


So keeping this interrelation in mind, the Buddha has emphatically taught the world ‘do not kill others’.\(^{347}\) He was very much against the killing of other creatures which reflects from this small incident wherein in his childhood he had arguments with his cousin Devadatta over shooting a Swan. He also disapproved the killing of a snake by a child and said:

\[ "\text{Sukhakāmāni bhūtāni, yo daṇḍena vihiṃsati /} \\
\text{Attano sukhamesāno, pacca so na labhate sukham //}^{348}\]

According to the accounts of the Buddha’s life, we observe that, the Enlightened Master had a very close proximity with the nature. He was born under Sāla tree at Lumbinī; engaged himself in spiritual practices in the forests; attained enlightenment under Bodhi tree at Bodhgaya, preached his first sermon at Deer park at Sarnath and ultimately left this earth to enter into Parinibbāna again under a pair of Sāla tree.\(^{349}\) He was so fond of nature that almost all the monasteries made in the early Buddhist period were in the forest areas. The Buddha also exhorted the monks to protect forests:

\[ "\text{Araññakāni senāsanāni, pantāni appasaddāni /} \\
\text{Bhajitabbāni muninā, etāṃ samanassa patirūpa //}^{350}\]

His constant advise to his disciples was to resort to natural habitats such as forest groves and glades, where they could zealously engage themselves in mediation undisturbed by and unaffected from human activities. As documented in Thera Gāthā and Therī Gāthā, the Buddha and his disciples regarded natural environment as a source of great joy and aesthetic satisfaction.

Furthermore, if we observe closely we find that Buddhist ethics have put a very high practical attitude towards animals and plants. Even trading of animals is forbidden for the Buddhist followers.\(^{351}\) Among the Buddhists larger and old trees are particularly preserved. In monastic rules, if a monk or nun fells a tree or asks

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\(^{347}\) It is the first moral precept of the Buddha’s ethical doctrine of Pañcaśīla.

\(^{348}\) Dhp., Verse no. 131.

\(^{349}\) P.V. Bapat (ed.), 2500 Years of Buddhism, op.cit. p. 18.

\(^{350}\) Sn., verse no.149.

someone to do so, he or she gets an offence requiring explanation.\textsuperscript{352} Buddhist recluses are not allowed to wander during the rainy season so as to avoid injury to life of insects and trample growing crops and grass.\textsuperscript{353} There is a scientific meaning attached to such propositions. We can well trace the genesis of scientific thoughts in the Buddha such as that of deforestation and soil conservation which the modern day scientists and environmentalists advocate for. Buddhism teaches that construction of parks and pleasure groves for public use is a great deed and gains much spiritual merit.

To rescue the universe, Buddhism offers the way to live in harmony with the earth and her species. And perhaps that is the only and best way to end the crisis of environment and to restore this earth for the mankind.

7.3.1 Buddhist Ethics and Bio Ethics

At the very outset let us examine the literal meaning of the term Bioethics. It has been derived from the Greek word \textit{bios}-life and \textit{ethos}- behavior. The term had been coined by Fritz Jahr in 1926. In 1970, the American biochemist Van Rensselaer Potter also used the term with a broader meaning including solidarity towards the biosphere, thus generating a discipline representing a link between biology, ecology, medicine and human values in order to attain the survival of both human beings and other animal species.\textsuperscript{354}

According to the \textit{Oxford Advanced Learner Dictionary}\textsuperscript{355}, the term stands for moral principles that influence research in medicine and biology. However, the field of bioethics has addressed a broad swathe of human inquiry, ranging from debates over the boundaries of life (e.g. abortion, euthanasia) surrogacy, the allocation of scarce health care resources (e.g. organ donation, health care rationing) to the right to refuse medical care for religious or cultural reasons. Bioethicists often disagree

\textsuperscript{352} Vin., IV, London: PTS, pp. 34-35.
\textsuperscript{353} Vin., I, op. cit., p. 37.
\textsuperscript{354} \url{http://www.wikipedia.com}.
among themselves over the precise limits of their discipline, debating whether the field should concern itself with the ethical evaluation of all questions involving biology and medicine, or only a subset of these questions. Some bioethicists would narrow ethical evaluation only to the morality of medical treatments or technological innovations, and the timing of medical treatment of humans. Others would broaden the scope of ethical evaluation to include the morality of all actions that might help or harm organisms capable of feeling fear.

R.L. Soni has very rightly written: “It is indeed a matter of supreme interest that the noble profession of medicine and the corpus of thought known as Buddhism are both concerned in their own way in the alleviation, control and ultimately removal of human sufferings.” In a similar vein, under its entry on Buddhism, the Dictionary of Medical Ethics points out that the principles governing Buddhism and the practice of medicine have much in common. If we seek a doctoral basis for the link between medical practice and Buddhist doctrine, we will find it in the Four Noble Truths. It is under the First Noble Truth that the Buddha sets out the basic problem faced by mankind.

As the First noble truth points out, all forms of embodied existence are unsatisfactory by virtue of the physical and mental suffering which is inherent in them. It states: ‘Birth is suffering, sickness is suffering, old age is suffering, death is suffering; pain, grief, sorrow, despair and lamentation are suffering.’ The four physical aspects of suffering mentioned, namely birth, sickness, old age and death, may involve physical pain to a greater or lesser degree. When Buddhism characterizes these experiences as ‘suffering’, however, it means more than that they are ‘painful’. The word translated as suffering includes physical pain but denotes more broadly the profound dissatisfaction of the very mode of being within which birth and death occur. The dissatisfaction stems from the fact that existence as we know it is constantly exposed to the possibility or risk of pain in the situations described.

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357 Ibid.
Many religious communities have their own histories of inquiry into bioethical issues and have developed rules and guidelines on how to deal with these issues from within the viewpoint of their respective faiths. Jewish, Christian and Muslim faiths, each of them has developed a considerable body of literature on these matters. In the case of many non-western cultures, a strict separation of religion from philosophy does not exist. In many Asian cultures, for example, there is a lively discussion on bioethical issues. Buddhist bioethics, in general, is characterized by a naturalistic outlook that leads to a rationalistic and pragmatic approach. Damien Keown is one of the leading Buddhist bio-ethicists. In India, Vandana Shiva is the leading bioethicist speaking from the Hindu tradition.

As far as the relation between Buddhism and Bio-life is concerned, the Pali literature mentions the knowledge and practices in this regard. Mahāvagga, contains a long discourse of the Buddha on medication and other essential commodities for life.\(^{358}\) Milindapañha also talks about the anatomical and physiological details of human body.\(^{359}\) It mentions its familiarity with both the nuances of treatment and the nature of medicine. The treatment of pain and fever is mentioned and the surgical method for healing wound is known. The text refers to five kinds of drugs made from herbs. It also mentions the variety of medicinal and life saving drugs available in the Himalayan regions.

Itivuttaka\(^{360}\) records the Buddha as a Bhisako (Physician) and Sallakatto (Surgeon). As the main task of a physician or surgeon is to diagnose and to remove disease and provide relief to the patient, the Buddha shows the path of removal of suffering through the doctrine of Four Noble Truths. Jātakas furnishes some names of the medical authorities like Dhanavantari, Vetaranī or Vetarna, Bhoja, Ālambayana, Nimi and Naganjit (Naggajji). Milindapañha further describes the name of Nārada, Dhanvantari, Angirasa, Kapila, Kandaraggisama, Atula and Pubba

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\(^{360}\) Iti. I, IV, London: PTS, 1890.
Kaccāyana, who were well versed in knowing thoroughly the rise of diseases with their causes, nature and prognosis along with cure and management: “Sabbe pi ācariyā rogu’ppattiñ ca nidānañ ca sabhāvañ ca samuṭṭhānañ ca tīkicchāñ ca kiriyañ ca siddhāsiddhañ ca.”

To sum up, we can see that the literature provides ample evidence that medicine and healing were integral part of Buddhist tradition since its inception. Medical part of the monastic code of Buddhism contains many accounts of the treatment of monks in the Buddhist monasteries. Thus Buddhism has a long history and contribution towards the world of medical science as well.

7.4 Buddhist Ethics versus Science, Technology and Information Revolution

In the modern times, science is playing a vital role in paving the way for technological advancement. With the help of scientific and technological development, man has achieved new dimensions in his development and has improved his quality and comfort of life by adding several amenities and facilities. The industrial development is proceeding at a very rapid pace; similarly, revolution in the transportation sector has also occurred not only in developed countries but also in developing countries. In the field of agriculture, resource utilization, power consumption, and engineering and in other scientific fields man has achieved success of high level.

Scientific revolution has made this world a global village wherein everything for the comfort of man is available, but the one factor that is exploiting the human nature is this technological age is the flood of information. It would not be proper to say that information is bad but when this information is given in a wrong perspective, at wrong time and to those who do not need it at all, it creates problems of frustration; disappointment, unrest etc. for the last few centuries we have done unbelievable progress in technology but on the other hand we have put the whole humanity on the heap of destruction, and unrest and as a result a debate has started - should there be a demarcation form this scientific revolution and advancement so that

it can be utilized by the benefit of mankind? Rather it becomes a curse because it is said that ‘technology produced the crisis and technology can solve it.’

It is generally believed that the modern evolution of science came out from religious concepts and thus the very beginning of an intellectual tug of war started between the religious gurus, thinkers, philosophers at the one hand and scientists on the other. However, they came to a general conclusion that despite a deeper sense of investigation into the search of truth, both religion and science are by and large independent and autonomous rather than conflicting realms, with each discipline having their own domain and methods that can be justified on its own terms. One of the most prominent scientists to promote this view is paleontologist Stephen Jay Gould. In his book *Rocks of Ages: Science and Religion in the Fullness of Life*, he argues that religions and science are logically distinct and fully separate in terms of their styles of inquiry and goals. However, interestingly he suggests that they are not irrelevant to each other and emphasizes the need to integrate insights from both in order to build a rich and full view of life.

Similarly, theologian Langdon Gilkey is of the opinion that religion addresses the questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life, our ultimate origin and destiny, and the experiences of our inner life. Science, in contrast, supposes to explain objective, public, repeatable data with theories that are logically coherent and experimentally adequate, presenting quantitative predictions that can be tested experimentally.

Not all scientists or all religious believers go along with the amicable assertion of the non-overlapping domains of religions and science. Zoologist Richard Dawkins argues that religious beliefs are not outside the domain of science and there are consequently incompatible differences between science and religion. Since religion do make claims about the nature of existence, but does not confine solely to questions

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364 Ibid.
of meaning and value, religious beliefs and dogmas should be subjected to scientific criticism.  

If we observe deeply, we find that most of the religious philosophies arose from the fear of some supernatural forces. Man at early stage was not aware of the reason of the events such as floods, earthquake, volcanic eruptions etc. nor did he understand the cause of these natural calamities and so started worshipping them because of one reason or the other. He thought that there is some supernatural power behind all these phenomenal occurrences and thus he (man) has no control over these. However, when we study Buddhism instead of taking more interest in the origin or creation of the universe, and Brahma, shows more concern into the origin and cause of suffering and presents a path leading to freedom from the same. The Buddha considers the source of suffering which according to him must be clear to all. He starts with the investigation of the law of cause and effect. Ignorance of the law of cause and effect is the cause of suffering. By solving the problem of human suffering through the use of wisdom instead of faith and laying emphasis on human deed or action, Buddhism shifts religion from the directives of God to human endeavor, i.e., the law of *Kamma* (action).

Awareness of dangers to human existence and human suffering are the common concern of both science and religion. Desire to escape dangers gave origin to religion, but aspiration to be independent of danger and desire to understand nature’s truth gave origin to science. However, the experts have different opinions on this point. Religion gave an immediate answer to man at the time of dangers, suffering and the answers came directly from the intuitive experience of the master himself, but science provides the answers by collecting material or physical facts, through experiments and analysis. Religion has its roots in faith and therefore uses faith to preserve its teaching, provides an unchanging belief system, which must be adhered to an upheld, while science has its essence preserved through verifiable truths and valid method of experimentations.

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365 Ibid.
However, the following feature of Buddhism places it almost at par with science and scientific enquiry:

a) **Positivism**

b) **Pragmatism**

c) **Removal of Human misery**

a) **Positivism:** As reaction to speculation about transcendental reality and truth, Buddhism can be called as a positive philosophy. Guiding principle of the Buddha was that whatever is believed must be felt and unfelt should not be believed. Suffering is what everybody feels. It is, therefore, the truth of life and since suffering is an effect, it is liable to be eliminated. Everything that happens has a cause and when the cause is removed, the effect too is removed. Therefore, there is nothing speculative in ‘suffering’ and the ‘end of suffering’. It is a positivist philosophy in this sense and not in the sense in which contemporary logical positivist’s mentions. The latter are positivists in the sense that they do not attach any meaning to metaphysical inquiry, which according to them is meaningless in the sense that the words and language employed in this inquiry are simply ambiguous. As against this, the Buddha was a metaphysician as metaphysical meaning was implicit in whatever he said, but so far as the Buddha himself was concerned, he avoided metaphysical questions and exhorted his followers to keep their eyes open.

b) **Pragmatism:** It is a highly developed subjective trend of idealistic capitalism. According to Frolov, the principle of pragmatism is the core of pragmatist philosophy which determines the value of knowledge by its practical utility.\(^{366}\) It is deeply connected with the subjective interest of an individual. In other words, it is based on self experience. As a fact the Buddha’s doctrine is the doctrine of a practical man which he attained through self realization. The wisdom he attained was very much applicable to guide the human beings as well as to penetrate through the nature of all existence. Teachings of the

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Buddha are capable of verification as these teach the truth that can be realized by any seeker of truth.

c) **Removal of Human Misery:** Natural calamities such as earthquake, flood, and volcanic eruption are ordinarily the source of misery. Men searches for refuge when they face such dangers. Religion is also one such refuge. Religion is generally seen as paying homage, offering sacrifices to God as a divine or supernatural power that is recommended for the removal of human suffering. However, this is not exactly in the case with Buddhism. As it clarifies, one has to look at the source of suffering which is a natural process and thus needs to be understood. So here, in this way, Buddhism shifts the solution of problem from the will of God to human endeavour in conformity to the modern science.

The major difference between Buddhism and Science is the methodology of removal of human suffering. In Buddhism the search for truth is conducted in conjunction with training to develop human potential. Development of human potential is what determines the use of knowledge. Knowledge eliminates the destructive influence of greed and hatred. Delusion is suppressed and then knowledge is used as a constructive way, which leads to final deliverance. On the other hand in science, search for knowledge is partial and fragmented. There is no total development of human being, and there is no guarantee that the knowledge gained will be used in ways that are beneficial. Science’s search for the truth of nature does not, therefore, help anybody, even the scientists, to attain contentment, to relieve suffering, to ease tension or to have a clear vision. Moreover, science opens the way for undesirable values which in turn sometimes subvert scientific development itself and lead man in the direction of greed, aversion and delusion. In nutshell, science does not deal with the fundamental truth of man and the world. That is why it has produced technical excellence and wealth. However, not everybody desires it, so if human misery has to be terminated, knowledge of the true being of man and of the world is needed. This is what exactly Buddhism does and it was due to this reason,
the famous Physicist and Noble laureate Albert Einstein once said, ‘If there is any religion that would cope up with modern scientific need, it would be Buddhism.

It would not be out of place to mention here the views of some more eminent scientists who place Buddhism and its doctrines at the forefront of scientific religions because of its rationality, reasoning and convincing argumentative temper.

Niels Bohr, who developed the Bohr Model of the atom, says: “For a parallel to the lesson of atomic theory...[we must turn] to those kinds of epistemological problems with which already thinkers like the Buddha and Lao Tzu have been confronted, when trying to harmonize our position as spectators and actors in the great drama of existence.”

Also, one more Nobel Prize winner and great philosopher Bertrand Russell describes Buddhism as a speculative and scientific philosophy: “Buddhism is a combination of both speculative and scientific philosophy. It advocates the scientific method and pursues that to a finality that may be called Rationalistic. In it are to be found answers to such questions of interest as: ‘What is mind and matter? Of them, which is of greater importance? Is the universe moving towards a goal? What is man's position? Is there living that is noble?’ It takes up where science cannot lead because of the limitations of the latter's instruments. Its conquests are those of the mind.”

However, following are the scientific methods that came into light before the researcher while working on the project showing a relationship with the Buddha’s views on suffering and its way of cessation. This comparison strongly establishes the deep relation between Science and Buddhism. Few of them are discussed as under:

**Scientific Methods:**

1. The first step and foremost step in the field of science is locating the problem.
    Scientists first clearly determine that there is a problem and proceeds to enquire into the cause of problem.

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368 Verhoeven, Martin J. in his article *Buddhism and Science: Probing the Boundaries of Faith and Reason*, Published in *Religion East and West*, Issue 1, June 2001, pp. 77-97.
2. Second step in scientific experiments involves the collection of data necessary for setting up hypothesis to explain the cause of problem.

3. In the third step efforts are being made for coming to a conclusion in scientific enquiry. Observation is the collection of data for supporting the theory. Moreover, experimentation is done repeatedly to substantiate the conclusion.

4. Data received from observation and experimentation is analyzed.

5. Finally, the result is established which becomes the scientific theory of law.

**Buddhist Methods:**

1. In Buddhism locating suffering in human life is the prime target as taught by the Buddha in the first sermon. So, this step of Buddhism can be compared with the first step of science.

2. In Buddhism the second method is the search for cause of suffering. This method is also like the doctor’s investigation before starting a prescription.

3. The third stage in Buddhism involves the cessation of suffering. This stage is like setting a hypothesis that suffering can be terminated.

4. The fourth step involves the path leading to cessation of suffering. In other words the method to solve problem. This process may be divided into the following steps:

   a) Experimenting with different methods and finding the best, for instance, when the Buddha was still Bodhisattva he used to live a life of luxury but later he renounced worldly life. Later he entered into the practice of extreme self-mortification, so this step has similar feature of the step number third of scientific approach.

   b) Analyzing the result of the past experiments and then choosing the best one, like in the case of Buddha. He considered all worldly happiness and extreme asceticism, which he himself experienced. This process of the Buddha has a close proximity with the ‘analysis step’ of scientific approach.

   c) Finally the Buddha concludes that the middle way is the best one which can lead to the cessation of suffering. This starts with right view or
understanding and ends with right concentration. This is similar to the last step of scientific approach.

With the advancement in the sector of technology and information the human life has indeed become more comfortable and easy but on the other hand human suffering has also reached at its maximum. The reason for this dilemma is that mankind itself has put too much of trust in scientific achievements by assuming it as the sole designer of life ignoring the fact that the real progress of life depends on the creator and master of Science and technology. Today modern man is so much enchanted by scientific and technological progress that he has developed a thinking that it is he who has conquered the nature and with this conquest of nature he can establish even heaven on this earth.

7.5 Buddhist Ethics and Healthy Literature

Depiction of human struggles and feelings is an essential part of Literature which further plays its essential role in building up the moral character of an individual, society or nation. As a fact, the future of any society or nation depends on how much aware, awakened, learned, intellectual, disciplined, responsible and progressive the people of that society or country are, in all the spheres of life. In this connection literature plays a vital role as it stands for reviving one’s soul and providing sophisticated direction to the rest of the society. The written words give us a deeper context into the lives and livelihood of the people distinct from ourselves. Furthermore, it is important also in a society, so that people have an outlet to reduce stress, learn about topics such as history, and be able to use their imagination to see a story from the narrator’s perspective. It also helps one to understand the world around as well as the past from a perspective one could never have on one’s own.

If seen etymologically, the term ‘Literature’ has been derived from the Latin word literature or litteratura which stands for ‘writing formed with letters’, although some definitions include spoken or sung texts. It can more strictly be defined as any written or spoken material. Broadly speaking, it is used to describe anything from creative writing to more technical or scientific works, but the term is most commonly
used to refer to works of the creative imagination, including works of poetry, drama, fiction, and nonfiction. Literature represents a language, people, culture and tradition. However, literature is more important than just a historical or cultural artifact. It introduces us to new worlds of experience. One may learn about books, enjoy the comedies and the tragedies of poems, stories and plays. Ultimately, one may discover meaning in literature by looking at what the author says and how he/she says it. In academic circles, this decoding of the text is often carried out through the use of literary theory, using a mythological, sociological, psychological, historical or some other approach. Whatever critical paradigm we use to discuss and analyze literature, there is still an artistic quality to the works. Literature is, thus, important to us because it speaks to us, it is universal, and it affects us.

However, here arises a question that should anything in written, oral or visual form be termed as literature or does there should be some specific motive, norms, and guidelines for literature. Also, does any written or oral material be put in the category of literature or only those matters which inculcate some moral, spiritual or social values among the readers be called a true literature.

During the course of research of this particular portion what the researcher realized is that though in one context the written things in published form may be termed as literature but does not all written and published material exhibit the real sense of literature of uniting the different sections of the society, creating a sense of togetherness etc. It is a matter of grave concern what we are serving to our young generation in the name of literature. Unfortunately the present day literature is full of biasness, hatred, violence, vulgarity and nakedness which is distracting the young mind from right and noble path and thus posing a great threat for the restoration of morality, harmony and peace of mind in the years to come. When we feed young minds with this type of literature, they will obviously be indulged in such activities that make them restless. Furthermore, the failure or one can say that the silent permission granted by the government and other controlling agencies in this regards adding fuel in the fire.
In this era of telecommunication, industrialization, modernization, urbanization and the so called ultra modern and highly sophisticated atmosphere the age old literary concepts of biasness are just irrelevant and in this scenario the literature published from any side must be based upon harmony, peace, equanimity and brotherhood instead of hatred, ill-will, disguised attentions and evil intentions that remain the divisive forces since the inception of Indian civilization.

Modern literature is totally materialistic. The only motive is to earn profit by attracting the young and teenagers ignoring the consequences of bad effect on their mind, personality and attitude. It is to be noted here that the concept of literature in context to India tradition is not new. Imparting morality and right knowledge was very familiar and of utmost importance through the means of literature even during the ancient times in our country. The history of imparting morality through it, means dates back to very early times say more than 2000 BCE or even earlier. But in the last few decades it has been seen that the literature full of nudity and biasness is being served to the young intellects. Besides this, the material both in written as well as in oral form is also available in the market targeting the particular religious groups; one of the reasons may be the feeling of revenge against the old age discrimination that was a part of Indian tradition and life style. However, the researcher does not intend to go into details of the controversies and arguments of the past but sincere and impartial efforts have been made to present a crystal clear picture of the real meaning of literature as well as the sayings and discourses of the Buddha.

It is simply because of the fact that a past is a past. What has happened in the past in no way is justifiable but does it make any sense that we continue the same tradition of hatred towards one another? If the answer is yes, then the researcher does not find logic to claim the modern society as the more civilized and educated one from the earlier one where such wrong practices were prevalent through literature and other means.
The early Buddhist literature commonly known as the Pali literature emphasizes on generating the values of love, equality, peace, prosperity, non-violence, equanimity and brotherhood so that new dimensions may be given to the humanity. Moral instructions are included in many Buddhist scriptures such as Vinaya and Sutta (Dīghanikāya, Majjhimanikāya, Dhammapada, Suttanipāta etc.). Accordingly the foundation of moral character depends on the practice of Pañcasīla, the observance of Āriyo-Atthaṅgiko Maggo etc. Besides, there are innumerable discourses in Buddhist traditions focusing on moral values.

The availability of literature in the market and on the social networking and other websites is the indications of the mental setup of man towards such destructive activities. This shows that up to what limit human being is in the grip of mental defilements. Why the focus is only on mind and the answer is that Buddhism has given special importance to mental culture. George Grimm in his book, The Doctrine of Buddha, subtitled The Religions of Reason and Meditation, emphasizes on its mental aspect. The inner power of mind and resources are infinite, and Buddhism aims at developing them fully through the process of meditation, clearing all cobwebs of kleśas (defilements). It is the thought, volition, cognition and action that matters most in the development of personality. As well mentioned in Dhammapada that a misdirected mind can engulf a man in the worst misery which even an enemy cannot and thus the Buddha stressed on the mindfulness meditation, which is clear from the very first two verses: “Manopubbaṅgamā dhammā mano seṭṭhā manomayā”\(^\text{370}\)

\(^{370}\) Dhp., verse nos. 1-2.

It is due to this fact that the Buddha has stressed on the practice of right mindfulness which, if developed, can help in preventing one from being astray by erroneous views and thought.

As far as material object of early Buddhist literature is concerned, we generally know that the Vinaya Piṭaka is concerned with the rules of discipline governing the Buddhist Saṅgha. It has three major sections: Suttavibhaṅga, Khandhakas, and Parivāra.
Suttavibhaṅga deals with the rules for Buddhist recluses (both bhikkhu and bhikkhunī). The Bhikkhu vibhaṅga enumerates 227 rules concerning eight classes of offenses, the first four of which involves expulsion from the Order. They are: incontinence in sexual intercourse, theft, taking life or inciting someone to commit suicide, and false boasting of supernormal attainments. For the other four classes suitable penance is required. The Bhikkhunī vibhaṅga providing similar guidance is somewhat longer.\(^\text{371}\)

The Khandhakas are subdivided into Mahāvagga and Cullavagga. On one side Mahāvagga\(^\text{372}\) covers the rules of admission to the Order, the procedure of Uposatha ceremony, the rules regarding the rainy season, the rules for articles of dress, medicine, food robes etc.; Cullavagga\(^\text{373}\) on the other hand deals with the rules of offenses that come before the Order, the re-instatement of bhikkhus, rules for dealing with questions that arise, miscellaneous rules for bathing and dress, dwelling, furniture and lodging etc., classes of bhikkhus and duties of teachers and novice, the ordination and instruction of bhikkhunīs and the accounts of the first two Buddhist Councils. However, Parivāra summarizes and classifies the rules of Vinaya, arranged as a kind of catechism for instruction and examination purposes.\(^\text{374}\)

So far as Suttapiṭaka is concerned, it comprises of five Nikāyas namely, Dīgha, Majjhima, Samyutta, Aṅguttara and Khuddaka. Generally all these Nikāyas contains the discourses of the Buddha which he delivered during the 45 years of his monastic mission. Of the Khuddaka, Dhammapada and Suttanipāta contain his ethical teachings. Whereas the Abhidhamma literature contains the philosophy of Buddhism in analytical form. It is based on the discourses of the Buddha many of which were philosophical treatises.\(^\text{375}\) The Abhidhammaic literature further having classification as Dhammasaṅgaṇī—the enumeration of the dhamma; Vibhaṅga—the supplement to the Dhammasaṅgaṇī; Dhātukathā—the relationship of the dhammas;
Puggalapaññatti—types of individuals; Kathāvatthu—refuting misinterpretations of the Pali Abhidhamma philosophy; Yamaka—a treatise of applied logic; and Paṭṭāna—which continues in six volumes from the foregoing Pakaranaś to the Buddhist philosophy of relation.376

Thus we see the Buddhist Literature commonly known as the Tipiṭaka contains the value oriented teachings and guidelines for constructing a noble and spiritual personality and hence contributes a lot in maintaining peace, harmony, mutual respect, and gratitude in the society.

7.6 Buddhist Ethics versus Euthanasia and Suicide

Since the inception of Buddhism as a religious as well as philosophical fold, non-killing or non-harming remained its core doctrine. Nowhere is Buddhist literature we find references where taking life of living being is permitted or justified. Buddhism being a religious setup, has always discouraged the act of harming others’ life. However, in the recent decades, the two major issues—Euthanasia and Suicide came into limelight thus compelling the modern philosophers, logicians and religious gurus to reconsider the line of demarcation of what is ethically right or wrong.

The Greek word ‘Euthanasia’ stands for good death or a happy death. In its broader sense it is defined as the easy and gentle death. Another name for bringing about an easy death is mercy killing. Commonly it is defined as the deliberate killing of a person who is very ill and going to die, in order to stop suffering or relieve pain.377

The word Euthanasia is also used, euphemistically, to describe practices and motives which have little to do with mercy. In discussing euthanasia it is essential to categorized it into the following three broader heads:378

376 Ibid.
378 Damien Keown, Buddhism and Bioethics, op.cit p. 169.
a) **Voluntary Euthanasia**: It involves the consent of the patient.

b) **Non-Voluntary Euthanasia**: It is a type of euthanasia where the consent of the patient is unavailable. The removal of feeding tubes from comatose patients; child euthanasia (which is illegal worldwide but decriminalized under certain specific circumstances) are the examples of non-voluntary euthanasia.

c) **Involuntary Euthanasia**: Involuntary euthanasia is the intentional killing of a person against his will.

Further, these three are grouped as:

a) **Passive Euthanasia**: Entails withholding of common treatments such as antibiotics necessary for the continuance of life.

b) **Active Euthanasia**: Entails the use of lethal substance or force to kill. It is the most controversial type of Euthanasia.

In the modern times, the legal procedure regarding the euthanasia varies from country to country as in USA and Canadian Provinces, voluntary euthanasia is legal whereas the non-voluntary is illegal across the globe and involuntary euthanasia is usually considered as murder.\(^{379}\)

Passive euthanasia was made legal in India on 7 March 2011 by the Hon’ble Supreme Court of India. The decision was made as part of the verdict in a case involving Aruna Shanbaug, who had been in a vegetative state for 37 years at King Edward Memorial (KEM hereafter) Hospital, Mumbai. The high court rejected active euthanasia by means of lethal injection. In the absence of a law regulating euthanasia in India, the court stated that its decision becomes the law of the land until the Indian parliament enacts a suitable law.\(^{380}\) However, the Active euthanasia, including the administration of lethal compounds for the purpose of ending life, is still illegal in India, and in most of the other countries.

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\(^{380}\) News published in The Hindu, 7 March 2011 regarding the famous Aruna Shanbaug case under the title: *Supreme Court disallows friend's plea for mercy killing of vegetative Aruna...*; and in The Times of India on the same date with headlines: *Aruna Shanbaug case: SC allows passive euthanasia in path-breaking.*
Again coming to the historic decision by the Hon’ble Supreme court of India, it is essential to have a look on the historicity of the incident. Aruna Shanbaug was a nurse working at the KEM Hospital on 27 November 1973 when she was strangled and sodomized by Sohanlal Walmiki, a sweeper. During the attack she was strangled with a chain, and the deprivation of oxygen has left her in a vegetative state ever since. She has been treated at KEM since the incident and is kept alive by feeding tube. On behalf of Aruna, her friend Pinki Virani, a social activist, filed a petition in the Supreme Court arguing that the ‘continued existence of Aruna is in violation of her right to live in dignity’. The Supreme Court made its decision on 7 March 2011.

The court rejected the plea to discontinue Aruna's life support but issued a set of broad guidelines legalizing passive euthanasia in India. The Supreme Court's decision to reject the discontinuation of Aruna's life support was based on the fact that the hospital staff that treat and take care of her did not support euthanizing her.

While rejecting Pinki Virani’s plea for Aruna Shanbaug’s euthanasia, the court laid out guidelines for passive euthanasia. According to these guidelines, passive euthanasia involves the withdrawing of treatment or food that would allow the patient to live. Forms of active euthanasia, including the administration of lethal compounds, legal in a number of nations and jurisdictions including Belgium and the Netherlands, as well as the US states of Washington and Oregon, are still illegal in India.

Elsewhere in the world active euthanasia is almost always illegal. The legal status of passive euthanasia, on the other hand, including the withdrawal of nutrition or water, varies across the nations of the world. As India had no law about euthanasia, the Supreme Court's guidelines are law until and unless Parliament passes legislation. India's Minister of Law and Justice, Veerappa Moily, called for serious political debate over the issue. The following guidelines were laid down:

- A decision has to be taken to discontinue life support either by the parents or the spouse or other close relatives, or in the absence of any of them, such a decision can be taken even by a person or a body of persons acting as a next friend. It can also be taken by the doctors attending the patient. However, the decision should be taken bona fide in the best interest of the patient.
• Even if a decision is taken by the near relatives or doctors or next friend to withdraw life support, such a decision requires approval from the High Court concerned.

• When such an application is filed the Chief Justice of the High Court should forthwith and constitute a Bench of at least two Judges who should decide to grant approval or not. A committee of three reputed doctors be nominated by the Bench, who will give report regarding the condition of the patient. Before giving the verdict a notice regarding the report should be given to the close relatives and to the State. After hearing the parties, the High Court can give its verdict.

After the court ruling The Telegraph consulted with Muslim, Hindu, Jain and Christian religious leaders. Though generally against legalizing euthanasia, Christians and the Jains thought passive euthanasia was acceptable under extremely unavoidable circumstances. Jains and Hindus have the traditional rituals Santhara and Prayopavesa respectively, wherein one can end one's life by starvation, when one feels their life is complete. Some members of India's medical establishment were skeptical about euthanasia due to the country's weak rule of law and the large gap between the rich and the poor, which might lead to the exploitation of the elderly by their families.

However, so far as Buddhist view is concerned, it is to be mentioned here that a lay devotee has to recite daily the oath: “I undertake the precept to abstain from destroying living beings.”

381 For Buddhist recluses the rules are more explicitly spelt out. For example, in the monastic code (Pātimokkha), it states: “Should any bhikkhu intentionally deprive a human being of life, or search for an assassin for him, or praise the advantages of death, or incite him to die (thus): 'My good man, what use is this wretched, miserable life to you? Death would be better for you than life,' or with such an idea in mind, such a purpose in mind, should in various ways praise the

advantages of death or incite him to die, he also is defeated and no longer in communion.”  

Buddhism places great stress on non-harming and on avoiding the ending of life, but somehow, Buddhist world is not unanimous on the view of euthanasia. As the teachings of the Buddha do not explicitly deal with such ultra modern concepts and issues; generally most of the Buddhist scholars are against involuntary euthanasia. Unfortunately, their position on voluntary euthanasia is also less clear. The most common position is that voluntary euthanasia is wrong, because it demonstrates that one's mind is in a bad state and that one has allowed physical suffering to cause mental suffering.

Meditation and the proper use of pain killing drugs should enable a person to attain a state where he is no more in mental pain, and thus no longer contemplates euthanasia or suicide. However this concept is less accepted by the medical experts.

The modern day scholars somehow win this debate with the medical expert with the argue that helping to end someone's life is likely to put the helper into a bad mental state, and this too should be avoided.  

Another difficulty comes if we look at voluntary euthanasia as a form of suicide. Though Buddhism does not see death as an end of life but simply a transition, thus, at the early stage of the Buddhist Saṅgha, suicide was in principle condemned as an inappropriate action. Interestingly the early Buddhist texts mention some incidents where the Buddha himself showed tolerance towards suicide committed by the monks. The suicide of Vakkali and Channa were committed in the face of painful and irreversible sickness. It is significant, however, that the Buddha’s praise of the suicide is not based on the fact that they were in terminal states, but rather that their minds were selfless, desireless and enlightened at the moments of their passing away.

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382 Thanissaro Bhikkhu, Buddhist Monastic Code I, Chapter 4, Parajika, 1994, Retrieved from access to Insight at http://www.accesstoinsight.org/lib/authors/thanissaro/bmc1/ch04.html.


384 M.-The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha, Bhikkhu Bodhi (ed. & tr.), op. cit., p. 1114-16.
Besides this, the Japanese Buddhist tradition includes many stories of suicide by monks, and suicide was used as a political weapon by Buddhist monks during the Vietnam War. However, these were monks, and that makes a difference. In Buddhism, the way life ends has a profound impact on the way the new life will begin. So a person's state of mind at the time of death is very important as their thoughts should be selfless and enlightened, free of anger, hatred or fear. It suggests that suicide and so euthanasia may be approved for people only who have achieved enlightenment and that the rest of us should avoid it. Putting a full stop on the discussion, it is to be mentioned here that before going for euthanasia, one should have a thorough analysis over the Pros and Cons on the individual’s rights as well as on the social setup of the society. Following points need a sincere consideration for making a final decision over the practice of legalizations of Euthanasia:

**Pros:**

1. Helps to alleviate suffering of terminally ill patient passing through unbearable pain.
2. Patient or his relatives can choose the way of induced death.
3. Helps in dying painlessly.
4. Allows an individual’s right to decide the value of life and death for himself.
5. If there is a thought that it can be misused, people can go for passive euthanasia.

**Cons:**

1. Mercy killing is a homicide and murdering another human.
2. Family members influencing the patient’s decision into euthanasia for personal gain like wealth inheritance.
3. Its legal status will empower the law abusers and will increase distrust of patients towards doctors.
4. It will cause decline in medical care and cause victimization of the most vulnerable society. It can easily be mishandled.
7.7 Buddhist Ethics and Globalization

Globalization is a process of international integration for the interchange of ideas, news, items, products, technology and such other aspects. It is like an umbrella where the global connectivity, integration and interdependence in the economic, social, technological, cultural, political and ecological spheres take place. It is basically a process inclusive of many such processes, perhaps as best understood as enhanced economic interdependence, increased cultural influence, rapid advances of information technology and novel governance and geopolitical challenges.\textsuperscript{385}

Etymologically speaking, Globalization is essentially a process of dramatic and drastic reduction of distances and isolation by electronic media and other powerful means of communication. This is indeed a new phenomenon, but the process of unification of people coming together, of ideas merging with one another, has been going on from time immemorial.\textsuperscript{386} However, 21\textsuperscript{st} century can truly be termed as the era of Globalization, as of technological and scientific inventions and advancement it has become possible to have a physical expression of globalization as well. As with the invention of new technologies and advancements of ideas and thoughts in almost all the spheres of life, human being is confining himself into a small chip, which we term as globalization. Despite having trivial differences; the mutual relation in nutshell remains cordial. The concept of globalization has also brought the people residing in different parts of the globe closer through fast growing means of transportation and communication. A person suffering from visibly incurable diseases may get the prescription of proper medicines from a medical expert residing in some other corner of the world in minutes through internet; two or more persons can have teleconference and exchange of ideas through telephone, face book, web camera and so on. However globalization still has to cover a long distance in developing humanity. A stronger nation does not feel any hesitation in threatening and terrorizing a weak nation and within no time invades the weaker one. Intrusion in

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{385} http://www.wikipedia.com
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the territorial jurisdiction of some other countries by man less Drone Aero planes may be taken as the negative consequence of globalization. Terrorist activities conducted and executed by Al-Quaida and various such outfits in the name of Jehad can easily be noticed. It has resulted in creating a sense of fear psychosis among the common man. Today all individuals, communities and nations are facing the bruise of terror and pain of violence. Everybody is suffering with uncertain violence such as psychological- arising from economic instability, social-originating from conflicts of ideologies and faiths and political such as arms race, war and terrorism.

Further, if seen minutely and according to the parameters of Indian tradition, life style and setup there seem more demerits. At the very first moment, it is to be realized that globalization is good for the rich countries like USA, UK, Russia, China etc., which can sell their sub standard or excess products at higher rates to the poorer countries. The fact can well be understood through the example of McDonald's, Coke, Starbucks and other big American brands. Due to globalization, many local brands and businesses in poorer or under developing countries go bankrupt and cannot survive the economic might of these rich countries. Local cultures and traditions are changing at a rapid pace as people no longer wear native or national costumes and aspire to look like Hollywood stars and wear jeans. People want to become like Westerns and consume everything bearing the brand name of Western countries. Also because of globalization, more and more people are learning and speaking English to the detriment of local languages. There are more international schools and the focus now is on the acquisition of this global language rather than their own local or mother tongue. Following are enlisted few more major merits and demerits of Globalization:

**Merits:**

1. Resources of different countries can be used for producing goods and services.
2. Consumers get much wider variety of products.
3. Consumers get the product they want at more competitive prices.
4. Companies are able to procure input goods and services required at most competitive prices.
5. Companies get access to much wider markets
6. It promotes understanding and goodwill among different countries.
7. Businesses and investors get much wider opportunities for investment.
8. Adverse impact of fluctuations in agricultural productions in one area can be reduced by pooling of production of different areas.

**Demerits:**

1. Developed countries can stifle development of undeveloped and underdeveloped countries.
2. Economic depression in one country can trigger adverse reaction across the globe.
3. It can increase spread of communicable diseases.
4. Companies face much greater competition. This can put smaller companies, at a disadvantage as they do not have resources to compete at global scale.

However, the Buddhist response to the globalization lies in its affirmation that everything that exists in this universe in inextricably bound with everything else, that is, if we disturb one thing, we disturb everything. Buddhism therefore advises not to upset anything that exists in our surrounding. The feeling of unity and oneness is further strengthened by the Buddhist practice of the four divine abodes— the four *brahmavihāra*. We do not have to die to go to heaven. We can create it for ourselves and our fellow beings here every day by practicing the four sublime states of *brahmavihāra* as taught by the Buddha. By constantly wishing for the well being of everything around us we ourselves become happy and we spread it around.

While preaching the middle path, the Buddha teaches that happiness at the mundane and transcendental levels can only be attained by avoiding extremes. Moderation is the key to ensuring the well-being of oneself and those around us. Another reason why the Buddhist Ethics are relevant in the scenario of globalization is that one does not need to convert to Buddhism and then follow the footsteps of the Great Master.

The Buddha emphasizes that we all have both unwholesome and unwholesome traits. The important issue is the practical matter of how to reduce our unwholesome characteristics and develop the more wholesome ones. This process is symbolized by
the lotus flower. Although rooted in the mud and muck at the bottom of a pond, the lotus grows upwards to bloom on the surface, thus representing our potential to purify ourselves. Our unwholesome characteristics are usually summarized as the three poisons or three roots of evil: lobha (greed), dosa (anger) and moha (delusion). The goal of the Buddhist way of life is to eliminate these roots by transforming them into their positive counterparts: lobha into dāna (generosity) dosa into mettā (loving-kindness), and moha into paññā (wisdom).

Globalization is the latest expression of a long-standing strategy of development based on economic growth and liberalization of trade and finance. This results in the progressive integration of economies of nations across the world through the unrestricted flow of global trade and investment. The mainstream approach is generally rooted in the underlying assumption that globalization brings jobs, technology, income and wealth to societies. In order to make this strategy of globalization successful, all the societies must be willing to submit to the principles of the free market—limiting public spending, privatizing public services, removing barriers to foreign investment, strengthening export production and controlling inflation. However, this is very difficult task to achieve within a short span of time. As a result, most often, globalized production has led to a litany of social and ecological crises, poverty and powerlessness of the majority of people, destruction of community, depletion of natural resources and unendurable pollution.

However, the importance of self-limitation, which requires some degree of non-attachment, is an essential human attribute to remain happy according to Buddhism. From a religious perspective, when things become treated as commodities they lose their spiritual dimension. The commoditized understanding induces a sharp duality between humans and the rest of the world. All value is created by our goals and desires. The rest of the world has no meaning or value except when it serves our purposes. This now seems quite natural to us, because we have been conditioned to think and live this way. For Buddhism, however, such a dualistic understanding is delusive. The world is a web; nothing has any reality of its own apart from that web, because everything is dependent on everything else. The concept of interdependence
challenges our usual sense of separation from the world. The Buddhist path works by helping us to realize our interdependence and non-duality with the world and to live in harmony with it.

Modern Buddhism has become an intrinsic part of a globalized world. With its philosophy of the way of life, it takes special place in human and cultural identity. Some scholars recommend Post-Buddhism as a proper term for the new infusion of ideas and practices in an increasingly globalized world. However, modern Buddhism has showed its potential to transcend the crucial problems of modernity.
CHAPTER 8
CONCLUSION

8.1 Brief of the Findings of the Previous Chapters

Today in this fast track materialistic approach when there is tremendous development and discoveries in every field of life with luxury at its peak; does Buddhist Ethics make any sense of bridging gap between centuries old traditions and values with the present day ultra modern and sophisticated mindset of society, is the biggest question before the philosophers, thinkers, educationists and the learned scholars working in the various branches of Buddhist Studies.

If seen minutely, Buddhist ethics having its foundation about 2600 years ago, is no more applicable to the modern society, may be the view of some scholars. However, majority of scholars believe that these ethical values will never get old or irrelevant. Although some scholars are of the opinion that Buddhism is not a religious faith rather is a system of philosophy. Few are of the view that it is neither a religion nor a philosophy but a way of life. Remaining say that it is both religion and philosophy.\textsuperscript{387}

Irrespective of the issue and varied opinions whether Buddhism is a religion or a philosophy or neither religion nor philosophy or a science, psychology or a way of life; one thing is sure that it is the gist of reality of human life.

In the present research work the sincere efforts have been made by the researcher for the critical evaluation of all these opinions and what come as a result is; Buddhism is not merely a religion of ideals and philosophy, but a system of practical approach as well.

As a fact, Buddhism may be called a religion of analysis. It analyses every phase of cosmic phenomena, the constituents that go to make up human beings. It rejects every phase of superstitious belief that is based on mere tradition, speculation or revelation and teaches us to purify the heart and to avoid doing anything that is

correlated with covetousness, anger and lust. All that is pure and free from covetousness, anger and lust are productive of good and should be acted upon.\textsuperscript{388}

Need of self-actualization is also emphasized by the Buddha. It is due to this concept that mind has been compared with a mirror wherein one should have introspection or one should see whether one’s action is aimed at for the good of oneself and others. The Buddha’s ethical system also teaches to show tolerance, forbearance and brotherly affection towards all living beings without any distinction. Buddhist ethics finds its foundation in the fact of mundane experience rather than in any metaphysical speculation. Practice of ethical values in Buddhism is the foundation of living a pious and noble life that ultimately culminates in the attainment of *nibbāna*\textsuperscript{389}.

Further, the Buddhist ethical system is not only an analysis of the moral concepts or right or wrong but it also involves the proper knowledge and understanding of true nature of objects. Here one may enquire about real objective of proper understanding of things and the convincing reply may be that as Buddhism is firmly of the view that all the natural phenomenon occurring in the universe are depending on the other. In other words, Buddhism strongly advocates the theory of cause and effect (*paṭiccasamuppāda*):

\begin{quote}
\textit{“Imasmiṃ sati idaṃ hoti, imass’ uppādā idaṃ uppajjati / Imasmiṃ asati, idaṃ na hoti, imassa nirodhā imaṃ nirujjhati /”}.\textsuperscript{390}
\end{quote}

This shows how things in the universe are interrelated and interconnected with each other. Disturbing the happening of one thing may disturb the whole phenomenon. In relation to the present context it may rightly be said that if single action is taken towards destructive ideology, destruction it can cause in the society and vice versa. What comes as a conclusion during the course of present research work is summarized as below:

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{389} *Nibbāna* is the summum bonum of Buddhism. It is the culmination of all virtues of charity, self-sacrifice, morality, enlightenment, righteous endeavour, truthfulness, forgiveness, love, kindness, compassion, mercy etc. It is the end of all *Kleśas* (defilements) and *dukkha* (suffering).
\textsuperscript{390} A., 3 (2), Igatapuri: VRI, 1998, p. 156.
\end{flushright}
So far question of Buddhist ethics and its acceptability is concerned, as discussed in the First chapter what we find is the ethical doctrines of the Buddha does not have their foundation on any supernatural entity like God; rather having a strong social customary basis as Buddhism is of the view that an individual have to work for his/her salvation through own efforts. Buddhist ethics since its inception has been rational and reflective as opposed to the customary one. It allows the ethical agent to reflect on his conduct to find the underlying principles and reason. This enables one to differentiate between good and bad action, appreciate or condemn a particular customary conduct, and choose the right kind of action. This constitutes the autonomy of the moral agent, which should be the first prerequisite of any moral system. The centrality of ethics in entire Buddhism also accepts the centrality of each human being and within him the centrality of mind which is the source of all values, virtues and vices.

Since man is a being endowed with cognitive and effective character, Buddhist ethics emphasizes the primary necessity of understanding his whole nature and so it analyzes his disposition, will, motive, intention and purpose which together constitute his self and moral character.

What we observed in the very beginning of the work is that ethics does not merely mean to do good, rather it enhances our knowledge in understanding the worldly phenomenon in proper way. It also help is assisting the sense of cooperation and coordination amongst people at different levels and different fields.

The Second chapter ends with comments that though there is suffering in human life but there is also a cause of suffering and consequently there is also a way of the suffering. However, the Great Master showing the way also suggests practicing the threefold Path of Sīla, Samādhi and Paññā for the spiritual purification of the personality. This portion of work also reveals the importance of Pañcasīla; it is due to the pragmatic nature of the Buddha’s norms and guidelines that the then Prime Minister of India Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru had an accord of Political Pancsheel with his Chinese counterpart Chan en Lai in 1955.
We are well aware of the fact that Buddhism arose at the time when so many other contemporary religious thinkers were flourishing in the Indian subcontinent. So, while preaching and establishing the dhamma the Buddha was very much cautious regarding the acceptance of his teaching by the common people. Though, the ethical doctrines of the Buddha having the essence of socialization are very vast in nature so focus on few has been laid down in this particular portion. Furthermore the concept of Dasasīla and Sikkhāpadas are meant for developing a positive and right directed mind; hence leading the society towards the ideal state of prosperity and equanimity.

As concluded in the **Third chapter**, the Buddha has attached utmost importance to the flourishment of his Monastic Order so what we find in the form of various rules and procedures adopted by the Buddha for the all around development of Buddhist recluses such as in the form of ten yard stick which everyone has to follow who wants to enter the monastic life. The study also reveals that the Buddha has upkept the Sanātana tradition of imparting the values of morality to the new comers through the relation of life of Sāmaṇera under Probation and supervision of Ācariya and Upajjhāya. This concept further shows the relevance of guru-śiṣya that was basic foundation of Sanātana tradition.

Any ethical or religious system may be said to have a weightage only when it is translated into application, safeguarding the rights of an individual, group or community. The utility of Buddhist ethics can be well seen in the **Fourth chapter** through the basic formula adopted by the Buddha: *bahujaṁhitāya bahujaṁsukhya*. By keeping this at the fore front he started his mission of extinction of suffering from the life of people. Although, the Buddha’s primary concern is moral and spiritual enhancement, he equally focuses social front also. In a common sense the applicability of his doctrines ranges from simple individual acts of Right Livelihood in and outside and through various kinds of community development programmes.

Buddhism really provides a way of life. It does not confine itself only to the lofty philosophy, but, it also provides ample avenues for social and political welfare of all beings. No doubt, as discussed in the **Fifth chapter**, the Buddha was not a political thinker, yet in his doctrines we come across number of references of his
instructions to the then ruler for launching and initiating the policies for the welfare of the people of then society. His clear concept of state sovereignty and visionary approach makes him a great political advisor too. The relevance of political thought by the Buddha can also be realized from the fact that, somehow, directly or indirectly the Constitution of Union of India contains the Buddhist ethical concept of equality, peace, prosperity and brotherhood.

The Buddha, however, does not consider the machinery of administration as an important tool but the approach of the ruler or government towards the state is much emphasized. According to the Buddha, the machinery of the government is nothing more than the instrument of the ruler. The form of government is not emphasize by the Buddha but the person who controls the administrative power is; as he stresses the personal qualities of the ruler which determines the nature and quality of the government more than anything else. If the ruler, does not practice virtue and righteousness and works for his own self only, the machinery of government becomes the instrument of self-interest. On the contrary, if the ruler is virtuous and interested in the welfare of his subjects, the machinery of the government becomes the means for the distribution of social welfare.

As discussed earlier, during the time of the Buddha two types of government monarchical and republican were in existence, but, he never guarantee any system as the best one rather he paid attention to principles of rule as the important factor. He thus never emphasized on the form of government but on how it works for the common mass. Also, when we study Buddhist ethical code for political setup what we find is that, no new political system was started by the Buddha; in fact, he always tried to make better the existing ones. It is due to this reason that he was always ready to give advice to the ruler whenever asked for or whenever he feels it necessary.

As documented in Buddhist texts the various instructions regarding the material and economic welfare. The Sixth chapter ends with remarks that the Buddhist ethics can be applied to the modern world. Buddhist ethics are not limited to the monks and nuns only; rather, they can be applied to the average man’s daily life. Buddhism purports that an ethical life will help to develop human being physically,
mentally and intellectually. Being well established economically, one can maintain the basic necessities of life such as food, shelter, cloth and health-care. The most comprehensive discussion on concept of economic life can be traced in the discourse on Lion’s Roar of a Universal Monarch mentioned in *Cakkavattīhanāda-suttanta*.

The basic significant characteristic of Buddhist conception of economy is to minimize suffering for all living rather than giving importance to maximizing profits and individual gains. Buddhist Economic idea does not focuses in measuring the standard of living by the amount of consumption because according to Buddhist ethical system obtaining maximum well being as a result of minimum consumption is more important than obtaining maximum well being from maximum consumption.

From the study of the *Seventh chapter* it may be concluded that the ethical system of the Buddha was framed for the overall development of the human society. If the society has to survive and grow stronger in this modern era of 21st century, it is imperative for us to work towards reinforcing the social structure with desirable qualities preached by the Buddha. This will, however, be possible only through the development of both inner and outer qualities i.e., moral and spiritual development is necessary. Individuals have to be trained to have good thoughts, speech and action. They must have the feeling of earning righteous living in relation with others. The Buddha has given guidelines for bringing out the fundamental development of human society through ethical practice. Such a development will foster social welfare, harmony and happiness for one and all. At last but not the least, one should not ask for individual welfare but must consider the whole humanity as members of the family and should work for the spiritual and social upliftment of all. Besides, the present day issues such as euthanasia, globalization, ecology and environment, bio-ethics etc. are thoroughly discussed and studies has been carried for making a solution of these such issues through Buddhist way.
8.2 Further Suggestions

Although the Buddhist ethics has become a widely discussed topic today, however, unfortunately, it is frequently misconceived. In order to get a crystal clear idea of Buddhist ethics, it would be helpful to avoid certain mistakes right from the beginning point. First of all, Buddhism has been characterized by some people as an ascetic religion. In reality, asceticism was experiment by the Buddha but later he rejected the same before attaining enlightenment. Also, since the western term monasticism has been applied to the way of life and practice of the Buddhist recluses, they have been misunderstood by many as living apart from society in isolation from the world.\(^{391}\)

However, through deep study of the work it can be understood that Buddhist ethical system came into existence by disagreeing the two extremes of self indulgence and finally advocating the practice of middle way. From the root idea of Suffering and its way of removal, Buddhist ethics emerges as a unique entity in the world of ethics and hence become the essence of Buddhist tradition.

One may argue that there is nothing new in these observations as unwholesome behavior has prevailed since time immemorial. At the same time we tend to flatter ourselves believing that we are, now, more civilized, advanced, progressive, refined, cultured, scientific and modern in outlook and even conquerors of space and masters of ingenious inventions. No doubt, human species has progressed fast materially but unfortunately regressed spiritually, culturally and morally. This is perhaps one reason why the subject of being ethical is coming to the forefront and various views and suggestions are being aired by responsible persons among the clergy and laity of various religions including Buddhism.

In the present research work efforts have been made to compile the relation of Buddhist ethical code of conduct with the present day society and human problems, but, the debate regarding the relevance, applicability and adoptability of Buddhist ethics in day to day activities of human life in this so called ultra sophisticated and

\(^{391}\) P.A. Payutto, op.cit, p. 13.
rapidly changing scenario whether carry some weight or not, does not stop here and in the humble opinion of the researcher one cannot, generally, think of it.

If looked properly and impartially, the Buddha made his teachings applicable to the real life of people in the society of his time. Though the societal issues at the time of Buddha was not so much complexed as are in the present time, yet as analyzed in the previous chapters though the Buddhist ethical code and other doctrines does not directly addresses the modern day complexities but, if followed properly with a pure mind we can create heaven for ourselves here only. Though, as the modern society is making more and more development, the complexities of life is also increasing. So keeping all these factors in mind, it is essential to keep alive the discussion of traditional Buddhist teachings with the changing customs, values, rituals and interpretations.
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