CHAPTER SIX
CONCLUSION

Buddhism has flourished in most regions of Asia, in some cases for more than two thousand years. Its heritage has been preserved in written texts, architectural structures, political systems, and village customs. Not unsurprisingly, its view of animals is complex. Periodically shifting and, to a substantial extent, determined by cultural attitudes that often predate the emergence of Buddhism itself.¹

In Lord Buddha’s view, everybody yearns for happiness. To harm others in order to serve one’s own happiness is totally inappropriate. Thus, not to harm others is the most appropriate way to find one’s own happiness. In his personal life, Lord Buddha had a special respect for life, even towards the tiniest of the tiny insects or plants. He presented himself as a quintessential example and made rules for the members of the Samgha to not to throw the remains food on green vegetation or in the water where small insects live. He advised his lay-disciples not to kill living beings to offer food to him or to the members of his Samgha. He pointed out that people by abstaining from killing accumulated much merit. He criticized all forms of animal sacrifices as cruel, irresponsible and wasteful which invited dire consequences through the retributive karma of such actions.

It is undeniable that animals have feelings. An injured animal, such as a pet dog or cat, reacts much the same as we might when we are hurt. It screeches, yelps, or cries. This is not surprising since animals have nervous

systems similar to ours with respect to feeling physical pain. No doubt some animals can suffer emotionally and psychologically as well. Since the capacity for suffering is well developed in animals, as it is in humans, both equally deserve to be treated with kindness.

If we do not kill animals it means we protect our bodies as well as improve the loving kindness and getting merit in the future. The human beings should not only love one another but should also love animals. Avoiding all harm to other beings including not eating them or using products made from them is an excellent exercise in mindfulness, and can certainly increase compassion and empathy towards the suffering of others through it. It warns us that eating meat can injure our potential for developing universal compassion. Moreover, when we do not kill any animals that means we care our earth mother and take care of our children. So we cannot attain enlightenment by eating animals.

The Buddha explained that a monk may eat meat provided it is ‘pure in three respects’ (tikotiparisuddha): the monk has not seen, heard or suspected that the animal has been killed specifically for him.\(^2\) The foregoing argument should not be taken as a justification for meat-eating. Our concern is to speculate on the rationale behind the three-fold rule on this subject enunciated by the Buddha and to refute the charge that the Buddha’s rule involves a moral contradiction with the other parts of the Buddha’s teaching such as his insistence on loving-kindness and the precept on the taking of life. Buddhist vegetarianism is originally derived from the Buddha’s condemnation of animal sacrifice but has perhaps also been influenced by the practices of certain Hindu and Jain renouncers. The

\(^2\) Vin. I. 237-238.
principle of non-violence (*ahimsā*) is thus expressed in the edicts of King Aśoka, which prohibit animal sacrifice and place restrictions on the consumption of meat and the categories of animals which can be killed. The question is often raised as to whether the Buddha himself was vegetarian. Various canonical sources insist that the Buddha never ate meat. Despite this, one widespread tradition suggests that the Buddha died from eating contaminated pork. This legend has been the subject of much debate over time, and exegetes have attempted to lessen the scandal of a meat-eating Buddha by arguing that the term translated as “pork” actually referred to a mushroom dish.

Nowadays, Thousands-millions and billions of animals are killed for food. We eat meat they will kill animals more for my eating. If we become vegetarian we will rescue about 600 million animals from killing by butcher from slaughter house every year. We human beings can live without meat, especially in our modern world. We have a great variety of vegetables and other supplementary foods, so we have the capacity and the responsibility to save billions of lives. There are many individuals and groups promoting animal rights and following vegetarian diet.

*Karma* rules the lives of animals and humans alike. The Buddha taught that life is a stream of becoming in which no permanent self-endures.

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3 It has been pointed out by some scholars that even the rule of Pure in Three Ways (*tikotiparisuddha*) is most probably an interpolation and that the Buddha could never have condoned the eating of meat (see, for instance, K.T.S. Sarao, *Origin and Nature of Ancient Indian Buddhism*, Delhi: East Book Linkers, 1989: Chapter 4).

4 Bernard Faure, *Unmasking Buddhism*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2009: 118. This is also noteworthy that as the Buddha was invited by Cunda to his last meal a day earlier, if Cunda had served him meat, then it would have violated the Rule of *Tikotiparisuddha*. Thus, it is quite certain that the last meal of the Buddha could not have been pork (See K.T.S. Sarao, *Op. Cit*; Chapter 4).

Individuals are composites of perception, feeling, volition, intelligence, and form, all subject to the law of karma.

Buddhists believe that we have lived many lives already and are likely to be reborn many more times. This is also likely to encourage Buddhists to consider the long-term effects of their actions on the planet. The law of karma states that our actions have consequences. Buddhists should be mindful of the consequences of their actions on the environment and on future generations.

Buddhism shows that both animals and human beings are the products of ignorance conjoined with craving, and that the differences between them are the consequences of past Karma. In this sense, though not in any other, ‘all life is one’. It is one in its origin, ignorance-craving, and in its subjection to the universal law of causality. But every being’s Karma is separate and individual. So long as a man refuses to become submerged in the herd, so long as he resists the pressure that is constantly brought to bear upon him to make him share the mass mind and take on the identity of mass activities, he is the master of his own destiny. Whatever the Karma of others around him may be, he need have no share in it. His Karma is his own, distinct and individual. In this sense all life is not one, but each life is a unique current of causal determinants, from lowest to highest in the scale. The special position of the human being rests on the fact that he alone can consciously direct his own personal current of Karma to a higher or lower destiny. All beings are their own creators; man is also his own judge and executioner. He is also his own saviour. He was reborn in many lives-sometimes as poor animals, sometime as long living gods and sometimes as human beings. He always tried to learn from his mistake and develop the ‘ten perfections’. This was so
he could purify his mind and remove the three root cause of unwholesomeness the poisons of craving, anger and the delusion of a separate self. By using the perfections, he would someday be able to replace the poisons with the three purities—nonattachment, loving-kindness and wisdom.\textsuperscript{6}

Buddhism teaches the doctrine of karma, which is the law of cause and effect relating to our actions. Karma means that whatever one sows, one reaps, be it good or evil. The consequences of meritorious acts are always good. Evil acts, on the other hand, ensure painful retribution. Buddhists are aware that we are constantly creating new karma by our actions. One who believes in the law of causation, therefore, will be careful not to cause pain to people, animals, plants, or the earth itself, for harming them is simultaneously harming oneself.

Buddha-nature is the true nature of the consciousness of every sentient being. And since that consciousness is inherently pure, it represents the potential for each of us to become a perfectly enlightened Buddha. People must cultivate it. The Buddha-nature is like a seed, a kernel; every one of us has planted within us.\textsuperscript{7} The Buddha pointed out that the cycle of birth and rebirth depended upon the merit and demerits of the karma.\textsuperscript{8} The Mahāyāna tradition emphasizes the phenomenal nature of the world of experience and the Buddha-essence or Buddha-nature of all sentient beings. Every sentient creature is believed to possess the innate potential of Buddhahood, regardless of its place in the rebirth realm. The one who aspires to

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Buddhahood, the bodhisattva, teaches all sentient beings the emptiness of phenomenal things, and the possibility of attaining by transfigured perception. Mahāyāna’s affirmation of spiritual potential or Buddha-nature in all sentient life, coupled the Theravādin emphasis on compassion and karma, gave rise to the centrality of vegetarianism in Buddhist thought and practice.

In some of the *Jātakas*, animals have played undisputed role. They are literary made to act, speak, suffer and behave in every aspect like human beings. The stories are perfect illustrations of both how Indian feel about animals and their intimate understating of their reactions. The stories really reflect the Indian concept of the brotherhood of all living things including vegetation, from the lowest to the greatest, as beings bound to the wheel of life.\(^9\)

The Buddha, it is believed, used these tales to stress the importance of human values, which contribute to harmony and progress, and to explain concepts such as rebirth, karma. Explain that the *Jātaka* Tales are a method of teaching Buddhists the lessons of *karma*, *samsāra* and *dharma*. Similar to the students’ mapping of the upward and downward movement of the characters in *Four on a Log*, the overall structure of the *Jātaka* Tales is the movement through the cycle of *samsāra* followed by the Buddha before reaching enlightenment. He is said to have lived 550 lives- some in human form, some in animal form and with each life his example carried a lesson. The stories of his many lives are known collectively as the *Jātaka* Tales.

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In the *Jātaka* Tales, each story contains a life lesson, often told with humor, and a reminder that one’s *karma* is bound to one’s actions. This lesson plan is designed to bring the meaning of *karma* and the related concept of *samsāra* to life through the reading of the *Jātaka* Tales. This lesson can be used either as an extension of lessons of the birth of Buddhism and the history of Asia, or as an introduction to world literature.

Moral teachings are put in the mouths of an animals, to show that they too have a share in our evolution, and there are lesions that we men can learn from animals; wisdom from the elephant, devotion from the dog, caution from the tortoise, fickleness of mind from the monkey and how to avoid that all, and so through many tales.

*Jātaka* have their origin with the origin of Buddhism in the sixth-fifth century CE and are tales about his previous lives while he was on the path to become a Buddha. In the book on the Buddha’s previous existences, or *Jātaka* Book, 547 of the stories of his previous lives have been collected together. Buddhist generally accept the *Jātaka* as being likely, if not literally true, and hold the stories as sacred for teaching and inspiration. Many of the *Jātakas* can be classified as fables, since Buddha was frequently an animal in previous lives.

In Theravāda countries, several of the longer *Jātaka* tales are still performed in dance, theatre, and formal recitation to this day, and several are associated with particular holidays on the Lunar Calendar used by

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Cambodia, Thailand and Laos. *Jātaka* stories remain very popular in South and Southeast Asia today, where the *Jātaka* book is well known.\(^\text{13}\)

There is general opinion that these stories are of immense value as they help to know adequacy the history, religion, geography, social and economic condition prevalent in the society during the period. Thus there is no comparison with other literary works. The *Jātaka* stories have enriched the literature of many other people directly or indirectly and therefore they have greater value in universal literature, not only as regards literature and art, but also from the point of view of the history of civilization. They represent almost all aspects of human society right from the monarchs, minister, counselors, and physicians to the lowest strata including snake charmers, blacksmiths, horse trainers, the people engaged in different professions in the society, besides representing flora and fauna.\(^\text{14}\)

The views of the Buddhists on the world and its temporary tenants, whether men, animals, or trees, are totally different from our own, though we know how even among ourselves the theories of heredity have led some philosophers to hold that we, or our ancestors, existed at one time in an animal, and why not in a vegetable or mineral state. It is difficult for us to enter fully into the Buddhist views of the world; it is important not to imagine that highly educated men among the Buddhists were not so silly as to accept the *Jātakas* as ancient history.\(^\text{15}\)

The *Jātaka* stories, over millennia, have been seminal to the development of many civilisations, the cultivation of moral conduct and good behaviour, the

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growth of a rich and varied literature in diverse parts of the world and the inspiration for painting, sculpture and architecture of enduring aesthetic value. The Buddha himself used *Jātaka* stories to explain concepts like *karma* and *rebirth* and to emphasize the importance of certain moral values. It is in continuation of this noble tradition that these stories are now retold in print to an audience which had been denied access to them by language and other cultural barriers. These stories are ever more relevant in the fragmented societies of today, where especially children, in their most formative years, seek helplessly for guidance in steering their lives to success and fulfillment.

It is not uncommon for the Bodhisattva (the past-life Buddha) to appear as an animal as well. The stories sometimes involve animals alone, and sometimes involve conflicts between humans and animals; in the latter cases, the animals often exhibit characteristics of kindness and generosity that are absent in the humans. The rich narrative literature of Buddhist traditions presents Śākyamuni Buddha’s career as a Bodhisattva in hundreds of inspiring stories. The Jātaka literature as contained in the Pāli commentary on *Jātaka* of the Pāli Canon and *Jātakamālā*, the Sanskrit compilation of the Mahāyāna tradition, recounts many lives in which he practiced the ten or six perfections or *Pāramitās*.

The *Jātaka* tales are a huge source of wisdom. They have had a profound influence over mankind since time immemorial and they find reflection not just in Indian literature, but also the literature of the whole world. All *Jātaka* stories hold out advice on developing moral conduct, good

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behavior and they teach us how to correct our ways. They played and continue to play a vital role in the cultivation of peace and generosity. Jātaka stories took a prominent place in primary education in Buddhist vihāras. Jātaka stories speak eloquently of those human values, which contribute, to harmony, pleasure and progress. These stories are ever more relevant in the fragmented societies of today, where especially children, in their most formative years, seek helplessly for guidance in steering their lives to success and fulfillment.

And since the main teaching of the Buddha was that actions bring their due effects under immutable law, against which all prayers are unavailing, and that each life is the outcome of previous lives, it is not surprising that part of his method of impressing this on his listeners was by means of the descriptions of the past lives of himself and of others, showing not only the relationship between people but also in graphic form what evil is like and what good qualities are like.18

It could be said that the Jātaka Tales are a method of teaching Buddhists the lessons of karma, samsāra and dharma. Similar to the students’ mapping of the upward and downward movement of the characters in four on a log, the overall structure of the Jātaka Tales is the movement through the cycle of samsara followed by the Buddha before reaching enlightenment. He is said to have lived 550 lives some in human form, some in animal form and with each life his example carried a lesson. The stories of his many lives are known collectively as the Jātaka Tales. Each tale emphasizes a virtue that is practiced to perfection.19 This lesson is designed

to bring the meaning of karma and the related concept of *samsāra* to life through the reading of the *Jātaka* Tales. It can be used either as an extension of lessons of the birth of Buddhism and the history of Asia, or as an introduction to world literature.

In 300 BCE, the *Jātaka* Tales were written to provide Buddhist followers access to gain knowledge and morality. They have been translated into different languages and spread around the world. Ever since, *Jātaka* tales have become story books that are both enjoyable as well as knowledgeable. Originally written in Pāli language, *Jātaka* Buddhist tales have been translated in different languages around the world. *Jātaka* tales are an important part of Buddhist literature. *Jātaka* stories represent former incarnations of Buddha, at times like an animal, a bird and sometimes like a human being, the future Siddhārtha Gautama.

The *Jātaka* tales have stood the test of time and will continue to do so, as long as man remains in material pursuit and is led by greed and selfishness. After thousands of years, the *Jātakas* are still as fresh as ever. They are an immortal part of literature, still providing fresh insights, still opening doors for new realizations and still changing lives. There’s a deep truth in each tale, such as show kindness to animals and be honest and you will be rewarded for your honesty. As per the laws that govern retributive karma, what you send out will come back to you. And this principle is very clearly brought out in the *Jātaka* tales. These tales are stories that the Buddha told about the many times he was reborn on Earth, sometimes as a prince or a poor man, sometimes as an animal or a tree. These stories

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celebrate the wonderful joy, compassion, wisdom, and kindness that the Buddha showed in each of these lives to help others. The One, who has resolved to become a Buddha, strives in each of his births to become better and wiser, till at last he becomes a Buddha.\textsuperscript{21}

All ancient civilizations had taken upon themselves the responsibility of maintaining moral values in society. Though they had different values systems, yet a common factor in those times was propagating moral teachings through story telling. In Buddhist communities too, \textit{Jātaka} tales were a major source for inculcating in people a deep sense of moral values.\textsuperscript{22} The Buddha took birth again and again in different life forms and species to bring home the virtues of compassion, truthfulness and exemplary life.

These stories can serve as examples in guiding children to imbibe good moral values in their daily activities. By reading these stories, children and adults can develop their knowledge and learn how to face the difficult situations in modern life. They can easily develop human values and good qualities like patience, forbearance, tolerance and the four sublime states of mind-loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equality. The major purpose of these stories is to develop the moral and ethical values of the readers. Without them, people cannot be peaceful and happy in their hearts and minds. And the reader will find that these values are very different from those of the wider, violently acquisitive, ego-based society.\textsuperscript{23}

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The stories teach valuable lessons to correct our current lifestyle. Today those who are enslaved to the modern development of science and technology have become lazy due to easy availability of things they need. They get used to giving up their effort to achieve goals when there are even minor difficulties. They give up, change their minds, and try something else. We need to preserve these qualities for the future peace and happiness of the world. Jātakas teach the way leading to Buddhahood. They are the landmarks of that Path. Even the hard-hearted may be softened by them. For the benefit of mankind these stories are written and they are in accordance with the course of facts as recorded by scripture tradition.\textsuperscript{24} The Jātaka tales depict the Buddha in several of his births in form of animals. These stories, though simple, are high on moral content which is considered good for one’s emotional, moral and spiritual health. The Buddha is the protagonist and the central character in each of these stories.

The Buddha himself used Jātaka stories to explain concepts like karma and rebirth and to emphasize the importance of certain moral values. Buddhist animal tales “illustrate and underscore the position that life from one form to the next is continuous,” through reincarnation, and that compassion for all creatures is foundational in the Buddhist religion.\textsuperscript{25} In the Jatakas, animals have their own lives, their own karma, tests, purposes, and aspirations. And, as often brief and painful as their lives may be, they are also graced with purity and a clarity which we can only humbly respect, and perhaps even occasionally envy. Jataka stories focus on animals as individuals, with personality, volition, flaws, and moral excellence. The

Jatakas help remind Buddhists of the significance of other species, and instruct Buddhists to live mindfully with an awareness of the likely effects of each and every action, and the knowledge that human actions toward spiders and piglets matter not only to the spider and the pig, but also in an ultimate sense to one’s future existences.

As a human being, one likes to be happy and peaceful. Therefore, we need to respect the happiness and peace of every living being, of animals. We are human beings we should love, sympathy and protect all animals. We will not destroy ancient forests that are homes to millions of animals, nor will he raise an animal to be destroyed to please his senses of vanity or appetite. Animals need our protection, our love to them. Around us, there are millions of animals live in the earth, if we love and protect them we will happy with them in this life and after life. A long time ago we realized that anyone who cares about the Earth really cares must stop eating animals. The more we read about deforestation, water pollution, and topsoil erosion, the stronger that realization becomes. The Buddha said time and time again in the sūtras such things as: “My followers should give up all evil actions that directly or indirectly injure others.”

The Buddha was a lover of nature. He spent long periods in forests, in caves and under trees and encouraged his monastic to do so. The rules of discipline for monastic deal with measures for the conservation of nature. Buddhists try to cultivate the positive qualities of mettā (loving kindness) and karuṇā (compassion) towards all sentient beings, including animals. Choosing to ignore the suffering of animals deepens negative habits and qualities of mind. Buddhists try to practice ahimsa (non-violence) and this applies to animals as well as humans. A disciple of the Buddha must
maintain a mind of kindness and cultivate the practice of liberating beings. If the person who eats meat it means he cuts off his seeds of great compassion. Whenever a Bodhisattva sees a person preparing to kill an animal, he should devise a skilful method to rescue and protect it, freeing it from its suffering and difficulties.

We humans are made entirely of nonhuman elements, such as plants, minerals, earth, clouds, and sunshine. For our practice to be deep and true, we must include the ecosystem. If the environment is destroyed, humans will be destroyed, too. We all Buddhists are impossible to distinguish between sentient and non-sentient beings. Every Buddhist practitioner should be a protector of the environment. Minerals have their own lives, too. The First Precept is the practice of protecting all lives, including the lives of minerals.

Compassion should be the basis of all our interactions with others, regardless of their views and actions in the area of animal rights. Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees.²⁶ We Buddhists express compassion for all sentient beings, but this compassion is not necessarily extended to every rock or tree or house. Most of us are somewhat concerned about our own house, but not really compassionate about it. We keep it in order so that we can live and be happy. We know that to have happy feelings in our house we must take care of it. So our feelings may be of concern rather than compassion.

As we know, our planet is our house, and we must keep it in order and take care of it if we are genuinely concerned about happiness for ourselves, our children, our friends, and other sentient beings who share this great

house with us. If we think of the planet as our house or as our mother-Mother Earth, we automatically feel concern for our environment. Today we understand that the future of humanity very much depends on our planet, and that the future of the planet very much depends on humanity. But this has not always been so clear to us. Until now, Mother Earth has somehow tolerated sloppy house habits. The mother earth is warning us that there are limits to our actions.

Interdependence is a fundamental law of nature. Not only higher forms of life but also many of the smallest insects are social beings who, without any religion, law or education, survive by mutual cooperation based on an innate recognition of their interconnectedness. The most subtle level of material phenomena is also governed by interdependence. All phenomena on the planet that we inhabit to the oceans, clouds, forests and flowers that surround us arise in dependence upon subtle patterns of energy. Without their proper interaction, they dissolve and decay. Ultimately, humanity is one and this small planet is our only home. If we are to protect this home of ours, each of us needs to experience a vivid sense of universal altruism. It is only this feeling that can remove the self-centered motives that cause people to deceive and misuse one another.

The natural environment and the sentient beings living in it are very closely interlinked and interdependent. If we examine different animals, for examples, those whose very survival depends on taking others’ lives, such as tigers or lions, we learn that their basic nature provides them with sharp fangs and claws. Peaceful animals, such as deer, which are completely vegetarian, are gentler and have smaller teeth and no claws. From that viewpoint we human beings are supposed to have a non-violent nature. As to
the question of human survival, human beings are social animals. In order to survive we need companions. Without other human beings there is simply no possibility of surviving; that is the law of nature. Consciousness is something that we share with other animals, and if human lives possess unique value, it cannot be in virtue of our possession of consciousness alone.27

All the living beings in the six paths of existence are our parents. If we should kill and eat them, it is the same as killing our own parents. Since to be reborn into one existence after another is the permanent and unalterable law, we should teach people to release sentient beings. Life is so precious, when we appreciate and honor the beauty of life, we will do everything in our power to protect all life. A Buddhist’s behavior towards animals should help improve the quality of life of the whole world, not just for his or her own spiritual, material, and living fields. People acknowledge that in life we are inclined to see the happiness. We desperately want to keep up our happiness but it doesn’t work like that. It goes and then comes with suffering. The person who wants to be happy in the present life, he should practice the ethics of morality, equality and universal brother. This is an eternal truth taught by the Buddha.28

Buddhist environmentalists find in the causal principle of interdependence (pāṭiccasamuppāda) an ecological vision that integrates all aspects of the ecosphere particular individuals and general species in terms of the principle of mutual codependence. Within this cosmological model

individual entities are by their very nature relational, thereby undermining the autonomous self over against the other, be it human, animal, or vegetable. This planet is the place where life in its myriad forms in the shape of humans, animals, and plants exists as a cooperative microcosm of a larger ecosystem and as a community where humans can develop an ecological ethic. Such an ethic highlights the virtues of restraint, simplicity, loving kindness, compassion, equanimity, patience, wisdom, nonviolence, and generosity. These virtues represent moral ideals for all members of the Buddhist community consisting of both religious practitioners and lay persons which includes political leaders, bureaucrats and the ordinary citizens. We cannot find the joy of good behavior until we let go of the wrong. We tend to act with a mind filled with attachment, which leads us to all kinds of depravity. First we must oppose and give up this tendency. Then we can see how comfortable, relaxed, free, and peaceful we feel because such a life-style shall not be ethically reprehensible.  

There are many Animal welfare Societies around the world. Animal welfare laws need to be enacted for the protection of animals, and heavy penalties and punishment including long sentences of imprisonment and confiscation of vehicles used in illegal transport of animals should be imposed on these killers and abusers. Many of the earth’s habitats, animals, plants, insects and even microorganisms that we know as rare and seriously need to be protected for the sake of our future generations. We have the capability and the responsibility to do this. Thus, we must act before it is too late. If we want an end to violence, it means that we must first reject the slaughterhouse, the animal circus, and animal skins and remember that

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kindness to animals has been a cornerstone of every great religion in the history of the world.

All of us want to be healthy, live long, and hence desire to be free from illness. One important secret of this is not to eat meat. Out of a concern for the total living environment, Buddhist environmentalists extend loving kindness and compassion beyond people and animals to include plants and the earth itself. Though the harsh realities of survival in this cruel and competitive world stare us in the face, yet we must realize we will no longer have the present beautiful heaven on Earth planet if we continue to live in an irresponsible manner. Therefore, it is very important that we should protect our environment by practicing the Five Mindfulness Trainings advocated in the Buddha’s teachings. Protection of animals is an integral part of this issue.

In the third century BCE, after Aśoka was converted to Buddhism he took many measures for the humane treatment and protection of living beings through his Dhamma Policy of loving kindness. He not only built hospitals for human beings but also built hospitals for taking care of animals. He also cut down on the killing of animals in the royal kitchen and ordered that guests be provided only vegetarian food in the royal kitchen. He also declared many animals as endangered species who could not be harmed in any way and whose meat could not be eaten. In the overall scope of the Buddhavacana, all occupations that are associated with the killing of animals fall outside the trades recommended by the Buddha as the means for a Right Livelihood. It was due to the efforts of great human beings like the Śākyamuni Buddha and King Aśoka that vegetarianism and compassionate attitude towards animals gained greater acceptance in the Indian society.
Thus, it may be said that the contribution of Buddhism is immense towards the animal rights’ movement and vegetarianism in the world today. A large number of men and women, especially the young, look forward to Buddhism and its message of mettā and karuṇā towards flora and fauna. It is in this light that the teachings of the Buddha have become even more important when we are faced with all sorts of violence committed in the present day globalizing world and profit-driven economic system.