CHAPTER IV

Buddhist Economics in Pèlî Literature

4. 0. Introduction

Today we are living in a world where people have to work very hard physically and mentally. Without hard work, there is no place for people in the modern society. Very often keen competition is going on everywhere. One is trying to beat the other in every sphere of life and man has no rest at all.

Poverty and wealth are inter-related. When one is poor and destitute, his life is miserable and he is incapable of obtaining the bare necessities for living: food, clothing, shelter and medicine. In Buddhism they are called the 'basic requirements of living' (cattaro paccayÈ). Among these four, food is said to be the first requirement of living beings (sabbe sattÈ ÈharatiÔÔhitikÈ) it is also stated that this body subsists on food with which it continues to subsist (ayaÑ kÈyo ÈharaÔÔhitiko, ÈbhraÑpaticca tiÔÔhati anÈharn na tiÔÔhatÈ-Bojjhanga Sanyutta). The body needs food to appease hunger, which is compared to the most serious illness (jigacchÈ paramÈ rogÈ)\(^1\) and it is also said to be like a burning fire (natthi

\(^1\) Dhp.120
Khudê same aggi). It is so acute that there is no pain equal to it (khudê same natthi narassa aÒaÑ).

Unlike olden days, money is an essential factor for human beings to survive today. People in the Stone Age era never thought of money. Neither hunters nor shepherds thought of money. All those people had a few needs and they were happy with what they could get. In the beginning food was prominent among other needs. People wore leaves to cover their naked bodies. They lived in the caves and on or under the trees. They found their own medicines for their ailments. There were no barriers for those people to travel from place to place or to find lodgings to stay temporarily or permanently.

As time passed by, clothing and food of people changed to different varieties. Then they exchanged one variety to another with others according to their needs. Problem of permanent shelter arose when shepherd era was disappeared. As they began to stay at one place they increased their attachment and selfishness.

Those who think that Buddhism is interested only in lofty ideals, high moral and philosophical thought, and that it ignores the social and economic welfare of people, are wrong. The Buddha was interested in the happiness of men. To him happiness was not possible without leading a pure life based

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on moral and spiritual principles. But he knew that leading such a life was hard in unfavorable material and social conditions.

Buddhism does not consider material welfare as an end in itself: it is only a means to an end - a higher and nobler end. But it is a means which is indispensable, indispensable in achieving a higher purpose for man’s happiness. So Buddhism recognizes the need of certain minimum material conditions favorable to spiritual success - even that of a monk engaged in meditation in some solitary place.

The Buddha did not take life out of the context of its social and economic background; he looked at it as a whole, in all its social, economic and political aspects. His teachings on ethical, spiritual and philosophical problems are fairly well known. But little is known, particularly in the West, about his teaching on social, economic and political matters. In this chapter I will discuss about the Buddhist Economic that how to develop Economic and to follow the Right Livelihood (samma Ējiva) according to Buddhism.

### 4.1. Buddhist Attitude towards Wealth

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3. MA I (PTS), P.290 f. (Buddhist monks, members of the order of the Sangha, are not expected to have personal property, but they are allowed to hold communal (Sanghika property).
In the *Aggaṭāsutta* of the *Dīghanikāya*\(^4\) the Buddha says that first people who came to New Sphere from Brahma World had very easy life. The plants bore fruits in the same day after people plucked grains from them in the morning. Those grains also were very soft and sweet. They did not have husks and could be eaten instantly.

But those beings increased more craving and began to collect more and more. Hence, being unfair to others who lived with them, eventually natural facilities disappeared. And their life became harder and harder. They had to cultivate and eat. The need of a ruler also arose, as properties were not shared evenly.

The beings that mentioned in the *Aggaṭāsutta* also were one family with equality in the beginning but later as their desire improved sexual difference was visible. Then some males with curiosity looked at opposite sex for long that they began to hug and had sex openly. Others looked down this action questioning them how could they commit such immoral actions towards the members of same group. Anyway this was the beginning of a family and they found shelter for the first time to enjoy their mundane pleasures.

In the study of the word 'economics', it originally simply means the administration of household resources. The earliest of the modern definitions were usually in terms of wealth. For

\(^4\) DN, III, P. 79.
example, Adam Smith called his famous work 'An inquiry into the Nature and causes of Wealth of Nation'. J. S. Mill, considered economics as the 'practical science of production and distribution of wealth'.

Nowadays definition lays more emphasis on the problems of exchange and price determination. Some even define it in terms of welfare, thus representing economics as a means of studying how through increased production the standard of living of people could improve.

Alfred Marshall sees it not only as a study of wealth but also as a study of man. Some of the latest definitions are based on the theory of scarcity and choice which gives economics yet another dimension.5

What becomes clear from these above mentioned numerous definitions is that economics is a complex, yet composite subject, to a large extent concerned with activities and to a lesser extent with motives of man adopted by him in the process of securing all kinds of things with which he aims to satisfy his various wants.

These definitions make it clear that economics also explains the causes upon which the material well being of mankind depends, the causes that influence and control the production of goods and their distribution etc.

As human activities and motives are involved in all aspects of economics it inevitably gets linked up with ethics. In spite of this natural linkage economists are not generally and directly concerned with the ethical aspect of human behaviour involved in economics.

But on the contrary whatever interest shown by the Buddha on problems of economics is primarily due to ethics involved in it. Buddhism is primarily an ethical religion whose main objective is the moral, ethical and spiritual development of an individual's character.

According to Buddhism all human activities should be made subservient to ethical or moral advancement. Hence economics which comprises of numerous human activities is made subservient to ethics, thus lending itself open to ethical evaluation.

In the Buddha's opinion, regarding the human nature, one of the four cardinal wishes of an individual is "May wealth by lawful means come to me (bho gÈ me uppajantu saha dhammena)." All wish to be rich and wealthy. The Buddha was well aware of this inherent human nature. According to him, this is something which is desirable, dear and delightful but hard to win (iÔÔhÈ kantÈ manÈpÈ dullabhÈ lokasmiÑ). Once an individual is rich and wealthy, he wants to be widely known among his kinsmen and teachers (yaso maÑ abbaggacchantu
saha โอติหิ saha upajjhйyehi) and wishes to have a long life (ciraњ jйвйmi dйgham addhйyum pйlemй).\(^6\)

These three conditions alone do not make the life happy, successful and complete, of an individual who believes in reincarnation. With the fulfillment of wealth, good report and long life he wishes: "When the body breaks up, after death, may I attain the happy destination, the heaven world (кйяassa bhедй paraњ maranй sugатйњ saggaњ lокањ uppajjйmй)\(^7\)

According to this explanation, economic condition is the most fundamental and significant factor in a perfect and contented life. When it is not strong and stable, the individual becomes miserable without any hopes. The means to achieve all this hopes and prospects is his wealth. Reputation, long life and happy destination after death are rarely won by the poor, because these are resultant conditions of wealth.

There are various other instances in the Pйї canon where the Buddha has recognized the prominent role that wealth plays in the human society. A careful scrutiny would reveal that the Buddha was very much alive to the fact that economic condition is one of the deciding forces both in individual and state affairs.

\(^7\) Ibid.
4. 1. 1. The Three kinds of Man on Wealth

As the Andha-sutta of A~guttara-nikÊya states, there are three persons found existing in the world. The three are the blind (andha), the one-eyed (ekacakkhu) and the two-eyed (dvicakkhu).

The blind is the person who does not have the person to acquire wealth unattained or to increase the wealth he has (anadhikataÑ vÈ bhogaÑ adhigaccheyya adhigataÑ vÈ bhogaÑ phÈtiÑ kareyya) and the eye fit to see states that are good and bad, blameworthy and praise worthy, mean and exalted, light and dark. The one-eyed is the person who has the eye to acquire the wealth but does have the eye to see states of good and bad, blameworthy and praiseworthy, mean and exalted, dark and light. The two-eyed is the person who has both, the eye to acquire wealth and the eye to see states of good and bad. 8

The clear indication of this sutta is that the third person, the two-eyed, is the best and most exemplary. According to this sutta, a person who sees good and bad but is not wealthy cannot lead a successful life. He is not considered even to be a one-eyed person. This indicates that the wealth is a must for a complete and joyful life. Buddhism does not praise poverty.

8 Ibid, I, P. 128-129.
Furthermore, this *sutta* implies that a poor person who does not have enough wealth to satisfy his fundamental needs cannot be truly virtuous because he is always frustrated due to lack of resources to fulfill his bare necessities. In other words, it is very much easier for a wealthy person to be virtuous. According to this *sutta*, wealth and virtues go hand in hand. Integration of both wealth and virtues produces the ideal man as in case of the two-eyed person.

Economic condition is definitely a greater social force than caste. As the Venerable Kaccāna convinced Avantiputta, the king of Madhura, if a worker (Suddo) were to thrive in wealth or corn or gold or silver (*ijjheyya dhanena vÊ dhaÒÔena vÊ rajatena vÊ jÈtar|pena vÊ*), he could have not only another worker but also a noble (khattiyo), a brahmin (brÈhmaÓo) or a merchant (vesso) as his obedient servant. This is one of the arguments that Buddhism adduced against the caste supremacy of Brahmins. "If this being so" Avantiputta declares: "these four castes are exactly the same. I do not see any difference between them in this respect."9

Even in the caste-ridden society in India in the sixth century B.C., the economic condition seems to have been considered a more valid criterion in gauging authority as well as superiority of individuals. The Buddha appears to have realized the everlasting value of the economic factor over other social conditions.

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factors like caste, creed and religion in changing and reshaping the society.

The *Aggaśutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya*\(^{10}\) categorically states that the changes that took place in the economy of the extant society in the form of private property and cultivation paved the way for administrative developments on the one hand and the social developments on the other. The economic changes explained in the *Aggaśutta* forced the people to select a king for better administration of the society. On the social front, they produced various human grades which latter came to be known as castes.

The election of a king was the origin of the ruling class of *khattiyas*. Those who wanted to put away evil and immoral customs were called the Brahmins. There were some others who, adopting the married life, started various trades. They were called the merchants. Finally, those who lived on hunting and similar trifling pursuits became workers.\(^{11}\)

By sketching out these developments, the *Aggaśutta* points out the impact that can be brought out in a society by its economy. All these developments would not have taken place if the people remained as before without entering into the systems of private property and organized cultivation.

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\(^{10}\) DN, III,P.79

4. 1. 2. The Two kinds of Person about Wealth

In one of classifications, the Buddha divides person into *tama* (dark) category and *joti* (light) category. There are two persons in each category. The outstanding characteristic of *tama* persons is that they are poor. The *joti* persons are "having great treasure, great wealth, ample hordes of gold and silver, ample aids to enjoyment and ample stores of money and corn."

The Buddha goes on to say that one *tama* person, who is poor and devoid of faith and mean, goes from darkness to darkness while the other *tama* person, who is poor but of generous heart and faith, goes from darkness to light. Similarly, one *joti* person, who is rich and devoid of faith and mean, goes from light to darkness while the second *joti* person, who is rich and of generous heart and faith, goes from light to light.¹²

It is obvious that this exposition keeps the rich person in a more advantageous position. The poor is not altogether condemned. Nevertheless, he is not the ideal person even if he is of generous heart and faith. To be the ideal person, according to *Theravàda* Buddhism, one should be both rich and good.

The effect and impact of wealth on the individual and his response and attitude towards wealth are one of the subject-

matters in numerous sermons of the Buddha and his contemporary bhikkhu-disciples. One of the major reflections that the people have at the old age, at illness and at the loss of relatives is that "it is now not easy for me to acquire wealth not already acquired or to use to advantage the wealth already acquired (na kho pana mayÈ sukaraÑ anadhikatÈ vÈ bhogÈ adhigantuÑ adhigatÈ vÈ bhogÈ phÈtiÑ kÈtuÑ)."

Loss of wealth (bhogapÈrijuÒÒa) causes people to go forth from home to homelessness, having cut off hair and beard, having donned saffron garments. Loss of wealth is defined as gradual diminution of riches of a person, who is rich, of great possessions, very wealthy.

A man gets really upset when his earnings are not according to his endeavours. The Buddha observes: "If, Monk, a young man rouses himself, exerts himself, strives thus, but if these possessions do not come to his hand (evaÑ uÔÔhahato evaÑ ghaÔato vÈyamato te bhogÈ nÈbbhinippajjhanti), he grieves, mourns, beating his breast and wailing, he falls into disillusionment and thinks: indeed my exertion is in vain, indeed my striving is fruitless."

In a world which is incomplete and unsatisfied, a slave to craving (uno loko atitto taÓhÈdÈso), it is natural for the

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14. Ibid.
15. MN, I, P.88.
16. MN,II, P.68.
people to run after wealth. Their greed for wealth is an inherent evil. The rich people quite often do not give their acquired property to others because of their ignorance. The human nature is such that they make a hoard of wealth out of greed.\textsuperscript{17}

The irony of the people of this nature is that they do not enjoy life with the wealth they have. Once, King Pasenadi of Kosala informed the Buddha of a person in this category as follows: "At SÈvatthi there has just died a burgess who was a wealthy man. He died intestate, and I come from seeing that his moneye property was conveyed to my palace eight millions in gold, Lord, to say nothing of the silver. And yet that burgess's food consisted of sour husk-gruel left over from the day before. And his clothing - hempen garments in thrice lengths (sewn together in two seams). And his carriage - he drove about in a rotten little chariot rigged up with a leaf-awning."

Then the Buddha observes addressing King Pasenadi of Kosala: "Even so, Sir, even so. A mean man who has acquired a great fortune cheers and pleases therewith neither himself nor his parents, nor his wife and children, nor his workers, craftsmen and servants, nor his friends and colleagues; nor does he institute for recluses and Brahmins any offering stimulating spiritual growth.

Those riches of his, not being rightly utilized, are either confiscated by kings or taken by robbers, or are burnt by fire, or

\textsuperscript{17} MN, II,P.72.
carried away by flood, or are appropriated by heirs for whom he has no affection. That being so, Sir, riches that are not rightly utilized run to waste, not to enjoyment". The Buddha has compared the person of this nature to a lake with pure water lying in a savage region.\textsuperscript{18}

Quit often, the wealth turns the people to the wrong direction. How it changes them is amazing and unbelievable. As King Pasenadi of Kosala states: "Few are those persons in this world who, when they have gained great wealth and treasure, are not carried away and become intoxicated thereby and indulge in greed of sense desires and misconduct themselves among their fellow men. But very many are they who, when they are thus placed, do these things." The Buddha had no hesitation to confirm this view afterwards.\textsuperscript{19}

As King Pasenadi of Kosala points out and the Buddha endorse afterwards, the eminent people of authority, owing great treasure, great wealth, immense aids to enjoyment, immense supplies of goods and corn, have no fear and shyness to commit immoral acts or to behave unethically at public places because of and in connection with their worldly desires.

King Pasenadi of Kosala informs the Buddha that he has seen people of this caliber telling lies deliberately in his

\textsuperscript{18} SN, I, P.89-90.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid, P.73-74.
judgment hall. Being disgusted of this situation, he declares: "Enough of the judgment hall for me. My valiant friend may win fame as a judge."²⁰

According to the Commentary the meaning of the king's expression is this: "I am sick of it. Let any fine fellow show what he can do as judge. If they go to such lengths to my face who I am their feudal lord, what will they not do among themselves. What have I to do with such bride-eating liars?"²¹

What these people do not understand properly is that both rich and poor die alike (aÉÉÈ daliddÈ ca phusanti phassaÑ).²² All have to leave whatsoever property they have, grain-store and hoarded wealth, silver and gold.²³ They can take none. Riches are something that people get rid of at death. Sometimes, heirs carry their wealth at death (dÈyÈdakÈ tassa dhanaÑ haranti), because wealth does not follow him who is dying (namÈyamÈnaÑ dhanaÑ anveti). Most of the moneyed people do not understand that there are certain things that they cannot achieve through wealth. One such thing is long life (na dÈghamÈyuÑ labhate dhanena). Similarly, the old age cannot be banished by property (na cÈpi vittena jaraÑ vihanti)²⁴

According to TheravÈda Buddhism, wealth is necessary evil. It is necessary because human life is incomplete and

²⁰ Ibid, P.74.
²² MN, II, P.73.
²³ SN, I, P.93.
²⁴ MN, II, P.73.
devoid of comfort, joy and many achievements without wealth. It is evil because it makes humans corrupt, cruel, greedy and unsatisfied. Yet even if wealth is made in a moral way, and used to benefit oneself and others, one should not have a greedy attitude to it. It is to be properly understood that the Buddha's teachings on wealth and economy pinpoint this dichotomy.

On account of this duality of wealth, the Buddha explains the utility of wealth, ways and means of earning wealth on the one hand and exposes its disadvantages and unwholesome effects on the other. Inorder to understand the middle-path attitude that the Buddha advocates towards wealth, one has to be fully aware of what he has said about these topics.

4. 2. The Buddhist Right Livelihood on Wealth

In the first sermon, Buddha has explained Noble Eight paths, which is called the Middle Way. In that contents Buddha recommends right livelihood to follower. This right livelihood comprises with abandoning evil trades called trade of living beings, trade of flesh of beings, trade of arms, trade of poison and trade of intoxicant drinks and drugs. Under the modern economics, productivity, consumption and distribution play an important role. The repercussion of consumption is insignificant. But we can see the evil effects of certain kinds of products, consumption and distribution.

Arms trade has violated the peace and harmony in the countries. All those trades have caused a lot of damages for not only to individual but also to whole society. Mr. E. F. Schumacher has tried to integrate Buddhist teaching with modern economics for the first time using this concept of right livelihood in his book ‘Small is Beautiful’. If we are going to supply all demands, which unsatisfied human mind has been seeking for, the world will be in a mess. Therefore modern economics must follow certain ethics considering man’s well being rather than trying to make profits and amusements.  

According to Vasala and PrÈbhava suttas, he who being rich does not support mother or father who are old or past their youth is an outcast who will never prosper. The ParÈbhava sutta further states that the person who enjoys alone his sweet things having had ample wealth, assets and property, will degenerate for ever.  

In the A~guttara-nikÈya the Buddha says that there are five advantage in riches (paÒcime ÈnisÑsÈ bhogesu). With the help of riches, one makes (1) oneself (2) parents (3) wife, children and workers (4) friends and colleagues happy and glad, and (5) one institutes offerings for recluses and

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Brahmins.\textsuperscript{29} In the \textit{Sañyutta-nikÊya} too, the Buddha has reckoned the same advantages of wealth.\textsuperscript{30}

Regarding a person who spends money on these purposes the Buddha declares that his case may be compared with a lovely lake of clear, cold, delicious and crystalline water with good shores, which lies near a village or township, where people can draw and drink from it, bathe in it, and use it for any other purpose.

The Buddha further says that riches of that person go to enjoyment and not to waste. On another instance in the \textit{A~guttara-nikÊya}, namely in the \textit{Pattakamma-sutta}, the Buddha extends the list of purposes for which wealth should be spent. There he states that there are four deeds to be done with acquired wealth (\textit{cattÈri kammÈni kattÈ hoti}).\textsuperscript{31}

Firstly, the person who acquires wealth make himself, his parents, children and wife, his servants and workers, his friends and comrades happy and cheerful. Secondly, he makes himself secure against all misfortunes whatsoever, such as may happen by way of fire, water, the king, a robber, an ill-disposed person or an heir, by taking steps for his defense. Thirdly, he is a master of the fivefold offering: namely, to relatives (\textit{ÒÈtibali}), to guests (\textit{atithibali}), to departed one (\textit{petabali}) to the kings (\textit{rÈjabali}) and to the gods (\textit{devatÈbali}). Fourthly, he offers gifts

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{29} AN, (Trans), ed. R. Morris and E. Hardy, London:PTS, 1885-1900, III, P. 279.
  \item \textsuperscript{30} SN, (Trans), ed. V. L. Feer, London: PTS, 1884-1904, I, P.90.
  \item \textsuperscript{31} AN, II, P.67.
\end{itemize}
to all such recluses and Brahmins who abstain from sloth and negligence, who are bent on kindness and forbearance and who discipline themselves.

The *Pattakamma-sutta* goes on to state that if the wealth of anyone be spent on other purposes disregarding these four deeds of merit, such wealth is called "wealth that has failed to seize its opportunity, failed to win merit, unfittingly made use of (bhogÈ aÔÔhÈnagatÈ apattagatÈ anÈyatanoso paribhuttÈ)."\(^{32}\)

In the *DhanaÒjÈni- sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikÈya*, there is a discussion between the Venerable Sariputta, one of the two chief bhikkhu-disciples of the Buddha, and *DhanaÒjÈni*, a Brahmin about householder's duties and obligations. Obviously, the householder should have wealth to fulfill those. There *DhanaÒjÈni* asks: "How could I be diligent, Good SÈriputta, when there are my parents to support, my wife and children to support, my servants and work people to support, when there are services to perform for friends and acquaintances, services to perform for relatives, services to perform for guests, rites to perform for ancestors, rites to perform for the gods, duties to perform for the king and his body of mine too must be satisfied and looked after?" \(^{33}\)

When all these teachings of the Buddha and his close disciples are taken together, it can be concluded that

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\(^{32}\) Ibid.  
Theravāda Buddhism recommends five spheres on which the earnings should be spent. They should be used for self-happiness, happiness of others, self-defence, tax and other state duties and merit.

This clearly proves that Theravāda Buddhism upholds a pragmatic view on economic affairs. The Buddha's most elaborate and eloquent analysis of the Right livelihood how to spend wealth is found in the Sañyutta-nikāya.34

According to that, there are three ways of dealing with wealth. Firstly, it can be hoarded without spending for one's ease and pleasure, without sharing it with others or spending on meritorious deeds (*na attānaṁ sukheti pāṇeti na sañvibhājati na puññaṁ karoti*). Secondly, it can be spent for one's ease and pleasure, without sharing is with others or spending on meritorious deeds (*attānaṁ sukheti pāṇeti nasañvibhājati na puññaṁ karoti*). Thirdly, it can be spent for one's ease and pleasure, sharing it with others and spending on meritorious deeds (*attānaṁ sukheti pāṇeti sañvibhājati puññaṁ karoti*).

The Buddha further states that there are two kinds of individuals in the third category. On the one hand, there are individuals who spend wealth for their ease and pleasure, share it with others, do merit spending it but make use of the wealth with greed and longing. According to the Sañyutta-
**nikÊya**, they are guilty of offence, heedless of danger, blind to their own salvation (*te ca bhoge gadhito mucchito ajjhÈpanno anÈdÈnavadassÈvi anissaraÖapaÒòo paribhuÒjati*)

On the other hand, there are individuals who make use of their wealth for ease and pleasure, sharing and doing merit without greed and longing. They are guiltless of offence, heedful of danger and alive to their own salvation (*te ca bhoge anadhigato amucchito anajjhÈpanno ÈdÈnavadassÈvi nissaraÖapaÒòo paribhuÒjati*)

The *SaÑyutta-nikÊya* goes on to say that the person who spends his wealth only for his own ease and pleasure completely abandoning and ignoring the aspects of sharing and doing merit is still better than the person who hoards money for nothing.

The most beautiful position of Buddha’s analysis is that there is no use of wealth if it is not spent for ease and pleasure, sharing and merit; even if it is earned lawfully without violence. The ideal position, according to this analysis, is spending wealth earned lawfully without violence on one’s ease and pleasure sharing it with others and using it for meritorious deeds without greed and longing.35

As a matter of fact, the Buddhist principle which advocates the balance between income and expenditure,

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35. Ibid.
between earnings and spendings, is called even-life (samajÊvitÈ). This is one of the four conditions which lead the layman to a happy and prosperous life. It is explained in the discourses as follows:

"A person while experiencing both gain and loss in wealth continues his business serenely, not unduly elated or depressed. He think: thus my income, after deducting the loss, will stand at so much and my out-goings will not exceed my income. Just as one who carries a scale, or his apprentice, knows, on holding the balance that either by so much it has dipped down or by so much it has tilted up. Even so, a person scales his income and expenditure. If this person has but small earning and live on a grand scale, it will be rumoured of him: "This man eats his wealth like a fig tree glutton (udumbarakhÊdikaÑ vÊyaÑ kulaputto bhoga khÊdati)."

And if his earning be great and he lives meanly, rumour will say of him: "This man will die like a starveling (ajeÔÔhamaraÑ vÊyaÑ kulaputto marissati)."

4. 2. 1. Right livelihood in Buddhism

This fifth item in the Noble Eightfold path means the right way of earning one's living. It also brings out the Buddhist

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36. AN, IV, P. 281.
37. Ibid, P. 324.
economic system. Schumacher\textsuperscript{39} is one of the Western economists who understood this fact and hence he writes:

"Right Livelihood is one of the requirements of the Buddha's Noble Eightfold Path. It is clear, therefore, that there must be such a thing as Buddhist Economics."

V. P. Varma\textsuperscript{40} who makes an in-depth study of Buddhist Ethics observes:

"Although according to the scheme of the eightfold path, the concept of samyaka ajiva is a norm for the ascetic seeking the goal of emancipation, still it is possible to extend the sphere of its operation"

The Varma goes on to discuss about the economic aspect of an individual's life. As he admits that the Noble Eightfold Path is valid equally for both the clergy and the laity, Varma does not hesitate to identify 'Samma ajiva', and Buddhist economic philosophy.\textsuperscript{41} Prof. Jotiya Dhirasekara\textsuperscript{42} shows how the Buddha explains, in the Samanamandika sutta, purity of livelihood as an aspect of sÊla. In this sutta the Buddha says that wholesome verbal and physical deeds as well as purity of livelihood are included in morality.\textsuperscript{43} "Ajiva parisuddha' or purity of livelihood denotes use of wholesome verbal and physical

\textsuperscript{39} E.F.Schumarcher, Small is is Beautiful, ABACUS edition 1974, P. 44.
\textsuperscript{40} V.P.Varma, Early Buddhism and Its Origins, P.184.
\textsuperscript{41} See Supra Section I 109-I, III.
\textsuperscript{42} Jotiya Dhirasekera, Buddhist Monastic Discipline. 1982,P.55.
\textsuperscript{43} M II, P.22.
actions as means of livelihood, and this is same as right livelihood of the Noble Eightfold Path. Even the *Andha sutta* of the *Anguttaranikay* makes it clear that right speech and right actions constitute right livelihood. *SÉla*, the first item in the threefold training into which the Noble Eightfold Path is categorized, also constitute of right verbal and right physical action. Thus it is seen that Buddhist Economics is closely linked to the ethics, and it is its most distinctive feature.

In the last mentioned *Sutta*\(^{44}\) the person with two eyes is described as having 'noble thoughts', clarity of mind' and also one who possesses wealth acquired through effort and righteousness. As *Samanamandika Sutta*\(^{45}\) explains 'SÉla' as being caused by thoughts devoid of craving, hatred and confusion, it is possible to consider noble thoughts' (seÔÔha sankappa) referred to in the *Andha sutta* as also denoting thoughts devoid of these three defilements. 'Samma Sankappa' or Right Thoughts the second item in the Noble Eightfold Path consists of thoughts free from sensuous desires (*nekkhamma*) ill-will (*vyapada*) and cruelty (*avihimsa*). It is seen that 'nekkhamma' denotes also absence of craving; and *avyapada* and 'avihimsa' denote absence of hatred. Absence of confusion is a characteristic common to both these aspects. Thus the 'noble thoughts' of a person who possesses two eyes is the same as 'sammÈ sankappa' in the Noble Eightfold Path.

\(^{44}\) A. I. P. 128ff.
\(^{45}\) A. I. P. 120.
According to the *Mahacattarisaka- Sutta*, samma ditthi precedes sammÈ sankappa, and thus it is seen that right livelihood is based on sammÈ diÔôhi and sammÈ sankappa; this is the philosophy that regulates Buddhist Economy.

Wisdom is endowed with such noble qualities as charity, friendliness and compassion. Herein it is worth noting the observations made by Ven. Piyadassi on Samanamandika Sutta. He says:

'Words and acts are thoughts manifested. In Buddhism both motive and effect should be taken into consideration. However, good the motive may be, if the effect is not going to be healthy, we should refrain from such misguided words and deeds."

It is Right View (sammÈ diÔôhi) which precedes Right livelihood (sammÈ Èjiva) that enables one to distinguish right livelihood from wrong livelihood (micchÈ Èjiva). From what has been discussed so far it is seen that one of the criterions on which good and bad are distinguished is intention (cetana). Therefore, any virtuous mode of living not motivated by craving, hatred or confusion comes under right living. Wealth could be earned righteously only through such a mode of living.

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47. M. III, P.71.
The texts present a number of other criteria to distinguish good from bad. As pointed out earlier, the *Nibbedhika pariya-sutta* \(^{50}\) puts forward intention (*cetana*) the criterion. The *dhammapada*\(^{51}\) mentions fruit or the effect of a deed as the criterion of deciding its ethical quality. This does not mean that one has to wait until the fruition of a deed to decide whether the deed is good or bad. The criterion presented in the *AmbalaÔÔhika Rahulovada-sutta* \(^{52}\) which considers the individual and society as a single unit, is quite popular with writers dealing with ethics and morality. According to this *sutta* whatever deed that is done for the well being of oneself and others is good and the opposite kind of deed is bad. The 'attupanayika' criterion (i.e., taking oneself as the standard) is presented in the *Veludvara-Sutta*.\(^{53}\)

The *Dhammapada*\(^{54}\) also presents the same criterion. According to the *Metta Sutta*\(^{55}\) a good action is that which receives the praise of the wise. The *Anguttaranikaya*\(^{56}\) presents conscience (*attadhipateyya*), public opinion (*lokadhipateyya*) and compliance with the *Dhamma* (*dhammadhipateyya*) as three 'authorities' (*Adhipateyya*) that help to distinguish good from bad.

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\(^{50}\) M. III, P. 71.
\(^{51}\) A. III, P.410.
\(^{52}\) Dhp. Stanza, 67, 68.
\(^{53}\) M. II, P.414.
\(^{54}\) S. V. P. 352.
\(^{55}\) Dhp. Stanza, 129, 130.
\(^{56}\) Sn Stanxa, 145.
Now a question arises as to whether the Buddha, while discussing matters related to spirituality, offered advice pertaining to economic matters? As already shown, the Buddha, in fact, did give such advice. There are many *suttas*, which either wittingly or unwittingly some scholars have failed to take notice of, that deal with matters related to economic affairs. The Kamabhogi of the *Anguttara nikãya*, the *Rasiya sutta* of the *Samyutta nikãya* are just two of them.\(^{57}\) Commenting on the latter Tachibana\(^ {58}\) says that the Buddha's ideal in accumulating and distributing wealth is found in it. However, it is seen that this *Sutta* contains something more than this for, it deals not only with the above two aspects, but also with enjoyment or consumption as well as the philosophy behind it. Even the *Kamabhogi- Sutta*\(^ {59}\) emphasises these aspects.

Thus in the *Rasiya- Sutta*\(^ {60}\) the Buddha says a lay individual who is given to enjoyment of pleasures becomes laudable if he

(1) Earns wealth righteously

(2) Pleases himself and makes himself happy,

(3) Divides his wealth properly and utilizes it also for meritorious purposes, and

\(^{57}\) See Kamabhogi sutta in A and Rasiya sutta in S. VI, P.330.
\(^{58}\) Tachibana, The Etics of Buddhism, Delhi, 1968, P. 127, Note I.
\(^{59}\) A, VI, P. 176.
\(^{60}\) S. IV, P.530.
(4) Enjoys it without falling into a wrong course, without getting infatuated, without incurring guilt knowing its evil consequences and having knowledge regarding escape therefrom.61

The Kamabhogi- Sutta says that an individual endowed with these qualities is the highest, superior, noblest and most excellent. Thus, undoubtedly those four aspects are of vital importance with regard to the Buddhist economic philosophy.

4. 3. The Economic and Moral Values in Buddhism

The ethic-economic values are closely related to each other. The economic values are brought into being by man's conduct and are inseparably bound up with them. The birth of private property and classes, that is, the appearance of the economic basis of slave society, brought into being a sort of moral code of a different kind. There arose ideas justifying the rule of the slave-owner over the slave and also institutions protecting this rule. Similarly, the basis of feudal society gave rise to a different kind of morality which protected feudal ideas and institutions. Under capitalism, the bourgeoisie dominates economically, and therefore, bourgeois ideas and institutions prevail and are used by the bourgeoisie to fight the proletariat and to perpetuate its own rule.

In capitalist society, the bourgeoisie, however, is opposed by the proletariat who forms their own ideas and set up their own institutions. They become aware of the need of abolishing capitalism and set up their own organizations to fight against it. The ethical structure also possesses relative independence which I manifested in the continuity of its development. The ethical structure of any society also has non-transitory features which are important for the man-kind. These include man's general moral standards and the finest creations of literature and art. Because of its continuity, the ethical structure of each society is very complex.

The ethical structure of any society, if it is of fine type, plays an active part in the development of its economic basis. It rather maintains and enhances the basis for rapid development. Contemporary economic basis of society is being preserved, maintained and refined, by the socialist state and laws, morality and education, etc. even with state legislation, without a sort of moral code, the people cannot do anything for their well-being. This is the basic idea that the Buddhism wishes to convey to the people who hander after wealth and material properties.

Evidently, if the economic determinism is the first thing, it is not the last thing. The economic basis of human society will not be maintained and developed unless people devotedly abide themselves by responsibility, that is, by ethical principles. The Buddhist social ethics is always of supreme value. It
induces in man a sense of responsibility, a sense of non-exploitation, and a sense of service towards humanity. It has a genuinely democratic character without which no economic equality will be achieved. The significance of ethical conduct influences the development of the economic basis. It makes society as a whole advance towards more progressive living. The ethical structure of Buddhism will prove a decisive factor in the successful building of economic society. Buddhism has no class with the rise of material abundance provided it is reasonably peaceful in its achievements.

The Buddhist ethical system sets up the service of one's fellow-man as the ultimate human goal. It holds that the individual can find his own highest goal in working for the good of all, which, of course, includes himself and his family. It refuses to accept the reduction of human motivation to only Marxist economic terms, to only Freudian sexual instincts, and to only Charvakean pleasure-seeking activities. It does not mean that it opposes economic development, rather it purifies man's economic acquisitive tendency in so far as it teaches that no individual should earn his livelihood by exploitation. He must earn and save only that which is necessary in life. If man's mind is convinced that he has to co-operate with other and to share the sorrow of other fellow-being, he would naturally oppose exploitation of man by rule.

The fundamental aim of Buddha was the service of humanity on this earth as contrasted with the salvation of the
individual in some other world. He encouraged all men to improve their life in this world. His philosophy was not merely negative, it was essentially positive. It is believed that Nature is man's home. In it he ever lives and moves and has his being. This is the good earth and upon it man can create a worthwhile and happy existence for all human beings. In the Buddhist ethics science is the only dependable guide to truth. Science is nothing but another name for correct reasoning. Such reasoning is the basis of all right understanding.

The universe is an order which takes no account of man's good or harm except in so far as he controls parts of it towards satisfying the needs of his life. The Buddha laid an emphasis on responsibility, individual and social (collective). He inspired people for attaining the highest achievement in life, however, with a difference in the method of one's attainment. Devotion towards the welfare of mankind is found in his philosophy. Everything for the sake of man, for the benefit of man, is the perennial theme of Buddhism.

The Buddha was concerned, although in a different way, with the evil consequences of man's 'egoism and greed'. Buddhism, in most of the Asian countries like Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Japan, is determined to restore to man a social existence which was denied in the past. The great value of Buddhism, in the present situation, is that it fosters a sense of responsibility and equality, peace and righteousness, among the peoples of the world. This is found not merely in the
analysis of the organizational principles of the Buddha's Sangha but also in the very theoretical basis of early Buddhism.

The Buddha was aware of that: "By a carving for riches the foolish person destroys himself as he destroys other". "...the delusion of self leads man to strive to profit himself and injure other. The passionate sense of egoism is the root of the world's unhappiness." 62 He, therefore, always stressed the need of being "self-purified", "self-controlled", for becoming a true social man. In other words Buddhism came as a revolution of self-change and as a new state of the generic human-self. The Buddhist humanism emphasizes that the enemy of human society is the egoistic need; the drive to own and possess things. In future the society of the world, which Buddha foresaw, true man was to emerge, free from greed because released from the corruption of private property and individualism; he would be new man, become fully developed 'social man'. This is the humanist basis of Buddha's Dhamma. 63

4. 4. The Economic Ethics in Buddhism

Lay economic ethics taught in early Buddhism thus focused upon three areas: (1) accumulating wealth through hard work, diligence and setting certain restraints on one's own

consumption; (2) choosing and pursuing the right occupation (i.e., avoiding occupations such as killing animals, trade in weapons, and the like); and (3) sharing wealth honestly acquired with family, friends and the sangha. Such merchant-type values in early Buddhist lay ethics contrasted sharply with the economic ethics of Brahmanism, which reflected the patriarchal clan-based ethics of an agricultural society.

Support for this influence of merchant-class values upon early Buddhist lay ethics can be found in early Buddhist suttas and stories which refer to lay wealth in a way which tends to assume a certain amount of wealth already being held, and in the strong emphasis upon giving and receiving rather than the high value put in Brahmin ethics upon sacrifices. 64 The influence of merchant-class ethics is also apparent in the three main themes of such suttas and stores: (1) diligence and honesty in acquisition of wealth; (2) restrain of one's own consumption in order to accumulate wealth; and (3) reinvestment of this wealth to produce more wealth, merit and happiness for self and others.

The best-known early sutta which exhibits these themes was the SêngêlovÈda -sutta or Admonition to SêngÊla, sometimes referred to as the Buddhist laymen's Vinaya. In it an ethic of iligent accumulation of wealth through hard work,

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64. Kutadanta sutta of DN
restrained consumption, and reinvestment of profits into one's business is stressed, as in the following passage:

The wise and moral man

Shines like a fire on a hilltop
Who does not hurt the flower.

Such a man makes his pile
As an anthill, gradually.

Grown wealthy, he thus
Can help his family
And firmly bind his friends
To himself.

He should divide
His money in four parts;
On one he should live,
With two expand his trade,
And the fourth he should save
Against a rainy day. 65

What is particularly interesting about this passage is that it urges that only a fourth of all one's wealth should be consumed for daily living while the other three-fourths should be saved, most of it to be reinvested in one's trade. This reflects a merchant based mentality which while perhaps not ascetic in the same sense as the so-called protestant ethic, does put a strong emphasis on saving and reinvestment. The *sutta* goes

65. DN, III. 180ff.
on to give specific advice on who to avoid squandering this accumulated wealth by avoiding such things as idleness, bad friends, addiction to intoxicants, roaming the streets at odd hours, frequenting shows, and indulging in gambl

Other early suttas emphasize strongly the virtue of nonattachment to wealth as the foundation of all morals in society. This can be seen in both the CakkavattisÊhanÈda and kutadANTA- Suttas, in which the generosity of a righteous king for the destitute becomes the basis for the establishment of virtue and prosperity in lay society. At the same time, a lack of such generosity was presented as the beginning of a steady expansion of vice and evil and a steady decay of society.66 Suttas such as the MahÊsudassana -sutta, moreover, by stressing the impermanence of all wealth and worldly possessions, no matter how great their extent, reinforced the value of nonattachment to wealth.67

With the passage of time, the lay virtue of generosity and giving only became more and more predominant. This was reflected in the many stories in the suttas of unbridled generosity leading to good karma and spiritual advancement. At the same time, while suttas pointed out the dangers of wealth in terms of creating craving, poverty was never advocated for the laity, but was viewed as a "suffering in the world for a layman."

Yet even though giving became the supreme lay virtue, there was a subtle difference between the earlier suttas, in which giving to both the poor and the sangha was urged, and later suttas, in which giving to the sangha was the main theme. In this way dīna (giving to the sangha) became the central concept of lay economic ethics. By giving to the sangha, the individual not only furthered his own soteriological quest and karma, but benefited the society and contributed to the betterment of others' karma through supporting the educational act of spreading the Dharma.

4. 5. The Buddhist Way for Achievement on Wealth

The Byaggapajja-sutta delineates this position in obvious terms. When the Buddha was residing in Kakkarapatta, a Koliyan town, a householder named Dēghajēōu visited him and made the following request: Lord, we householders are immersed in the round of pleasure; we are cumbered with bed-mate and sons; we delight in the muslins from Benares and in sandalwood; we deck ourselves with flowers, garlands and cosmetics; we enjoy the use of both silver and gold. Lord, to such as us, let the Buddha teach the Dhamma; teach the things which will be to our advantage and for our happiness here on earth, for our advantage and happiness in the world to come.68

4. 5. 1. The Four kinds of Way to achieve on Wealth

This request did not irritate the Buddha. He showed no sign of disappointment in DēghajÉ́OU's request for instructions towards mundane prosperity and happiness. The Buddha readily fulfilled DēghajÉ́OU's request with usual enthusiasm and energy. It is on this occasion that he made known the four conditions that lead to a householder's advantage and happiness on earth, namely achievement in alertness (uÔÔhÈnasampadÈ), achievement in wariness (ÈrakkhasampadÈ), good company (kalyÈÔamittatÈ), and evenlife (samajÈEvitÈ).69

These characteristics undoubtedly relate to economics. They were enumerated and explained to a householder who wanted the Buddha to preach a doctrine to people like him "absorbed in the affairs of the world." The Buddha thus told him about these four principles that would lead to happiness in this world.

Here achievement in alertness (uÔÔhÈnasampadÈ) means whatever one's occupation is, be it that of a farmer, a labourer, a professional man, a trader or an industrialist -he should be skillful and industrious. He should never be indolent. Such a lazy man would always postpone work attributing it to

69. AN, IV, P.282.
external reason such as hot and cold weather or to time, morning or night, or to other reasons saying: I am now hungry 'Now I am too full' etc.

He will thus not engage himself in work and thus lose his productivity. A nation too likewise would be industrious, ever vigilant and productive.

'Achievement in alertness (uÔÔhÈnasampadÈ)' or being vigilant is highly praised by the Buddha in many a discourse. Once, king Pasenadi asked the Buddha if there is anything of profit attainable in the things of the present world which would also be of value in the world beyond. The Buddha replied: "Vigilance."70

The second characteristic, achievement in wariness (ÈrakkhasampadÈ) is the care of one's possessions without allowing it to get wasted unnecessarily. Whatever one has acquired "by constant diligence by the strength of his limbs, by the sweat of his brow, by well-concerted plans," he must safeguard it. Wealth needs such protection from thieves, fire, floods, danger arising from authorities and from enemies and disagreeable relatives.

The third characteristic of economic development is good company (kalyÈÓamittatÈ) or the association with able, constructive and good people. Such people should be

70 SN. I, P.87.
educated, thus intellectually developed, capable of discerning what is right and wrong and providing useful advice when such advice is needed. They should be people who will not tempt or lead one into the commission of counter-productive activities.

Finally, the necessity of leading a balanced life is emphasized. Here, having realized the difficulty of earning wealth, one should spend it carefully- becoming moderate in his expenditure. A life-style of conspicuous consumption has to be abandoned. A simple style of life founded on maintaining one's mental as well as physical wealth is the basis of a balanced way of living. Living without becoming a weight on oneself as well as on others is commended in Buddhism.

**4. 5. 2. The Four kinds of Happiness on Wealth**

The Buddha, moreover, points out that there are four kinds of happiness to be won by the lay people who enjoy the pleasures of sense from time to time and when occasion arises (*cattērimēni sukhēni adhigamanēyēnē gihēnē kē mabhoginē kēlena kēlaṅ samayena samayaṅ upēdēya*). Those are happiness of ownership (*atthisukha*), happiness of wealth
(bhogasukha) happiness of debtlessness (anaÓasukha) and happiness of blamelessness (anavajjasukha).\textsuperscript{71}

It will be seen that the first three kinds of happiness are directly based on wealth and the forth one has an obvious impact of wealth since it is a consequence of the first three.

\textit{Atthisukha} is having wealth acquired justly and lawfully. The bliss and satisfaction come to him who has the thought that "I have wealth". \textit{Bhogasukha} is enjoying wealth thus acquired and doing meritorious deeds therewith. The bliss and satisfaction come to him who has thought that "I enjoy my wealth and do merit with it". \textit{anaÓasukha} is having no debt, great of small, to any one. The bliss and satisfaction come to him who has the thought that "I own no debt" \textit{anavajjasukha} is blessing with blameless action of body, speech and mind. The bliss and satisfaction come to him who has the thought that "I am blessed with blameless action of body, speech and mind"\textsuperscript{72}

The life, obviously of the layman, is wretched and miserable without wealth according to the Buddha. Acquiring wealth in youth when that can be enjoyed to the utmost is once stressed in the \textit{Dhammapada}.\textsuperscript{73}

Even though the concept of self-employment was known in India in the sixth century B.C., the Buddha was of the opinion

\textsuperscript{72} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{73} Dhp, ed. V. Fausball, Luzac & Company, London, 1900, Verse No. 155-156.
that the state should create the job opportunities and manage the overall economy of a county. Two important discourses in the PÊÄi canon discuss the responsibility of the state in economic affairs and the impact of government financial policy on the people. Both, namely the *K|Ôadanta-sutta* ⁷⁴ and *CakkavattisÊhanÈda-sutta*, ⁷⁵ are incorporated in the *DÊghanikÊya*. An analysis of the relevant sections of these two discourses would reveal that *TheravÊda* Buddhism maintains its own economic and political philosophy.

4. 6 . The Way to maintain the Country

In the *K|Ôadanta-sutta*, the Buddha informs the monks how the chaplain of king *MahÊvijjita* advised the king when he wanted to perform a great sacrifice to ensure his comfort and welfare for many years to come. The chaplain went on to say:" Your majesty's country is harassed and harried. There are dacoits about who pillage the villages and towns and who make the roads unsafe. So long is that is so, your majesty would be acting wrongly to levy a fresh tax.

⁷⁴ .DN, I, P.126.
⁷⁵ .Ibid, III, P. 57.
But perhaps your majesty might think: I will soon put a stop to these scoundrels' game by punishment and deportation and fines and imprisonment and death. But their dacoity cannot be satisfactorily put down in that manner. The remnants who were left unpunished would still go on harassing the realm.

Now there is one method to adopt to put a thorough end to this disorder. Whoever there may be in this royal realm who devote themselves to keeping cattle and cultivating the soil, to them let his majesty give food and seed-corn (seed-paddy) (ye te bhoṭo raṭṭo vijite uśahanti kasigorakkhe tesaṁ bējabhātāṁ auuppadetu)\textsuperscript{76}

Whoever there may be in this royal realm who devote themselves to trade, to them let his majesty give capital (ye te bhoṭo raṭṭo vijite uśahanti vaṭṭijēya tesaṁ pēbhataṁ anuppadetu).\textsuperscript{77} Whoever there may be in this royal realm who devote themselves to government service, to them let his majesty give wages and food (ye te bhoṭo raṭṭo vijite uśahanti rējaporise tesaṁ bhattavetanaṁ pakappetu). The those men, each following his own business (sakammapasutē), will no longer harass the realm; his majesty's revenue will go up; the country will be quiet and at peace, and with their children in their arms will dwell with their open doors.\textsuperscript{78}

\textsuperscript{76} Ibid, I, P.135.
\textsuperscript{77} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{78} Ibid.
The *sutta* goes on to say that the king accepted what his chaplain had said and acted accordingly. Those men, busy with their own business, harassed the country no more. The revenue went up and the country became quiet and was at peace. The people, pleased and happy, dwelt with open doors (*apÊrthagharê*).\(^7^9\)

From these *sutta*s we come to know that a ruler who allows poverty to develop is sowing the seeds of crime and social conflict. Systemic poverty threatens law and order and thus inhibits both social cohesion and personal morality. If a ruler allows poverty to develop, this will lead to social strife, so that it is his responsibility to avoid this by looking after the poor and even investing in various sectors of the economy.

The significance of the above passage quoted from the *K|Ôadanta-sutta* lies in the fact that the Buddha recognizes the fundamental problems of a country and recommends the remedial measures. In any country, the priority among its problems should go to food. The Buddha acknowledges it when he gets the chaplain to advise the king to give food to farmers and workers. They represent the greater part of the population. The first and the foremost step that can be taken to maintain law and order and to establish peace of a state is to provide the farmers and workers with food.

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\(^7^9\) Ibid, PP. 135-136.
This can be achieved, according to the Buddha, only through organized cultivation. The duty of the state is to supply whatever is necessary to the cultivators. Specifically, the seed-corn and paddy are mentioned because the continuous supply of grain can be guaranteed only if the state is able to supply them to the cultivators.

In India in the sixth century B.C., trade was second only to agriculture as a source of wealth and revenue. As the PèÄi canon records, there were trade routes connecting India to the countries of the external world in this era. The importance of trade and business was known to the Buddha so much so that he opined that the state should extend its fullest cooperation to its development.

The way that Buddha recommends for the state to help in the development of trade and commerce is to bear the capital expenditure of private business undertakings. In this respect, the words "whoever there may be who devote themselves to trade, to them let his majesty give capital" are of paramount importance.

They clearly show that the Buddha did not approve the state control of trade and of agriculture too. He wanted the state to play the role of a guardian in the fields of trade and agriculture. As the owner of land and other natural resources of the state, the king is expected to shoulder this responsibility.
Finally, the problem of wages, according to the *Kñôadanta-sutta*, is one of the prime concerns of the state. A county will face nothing but chaos when "those who devoted themselves to the government service" are not adequately paid. The Buddha highlights two aspects of this perennial problem. One is that the state should find ways and means to pay for the satisfaction of the government servants. The other is that the government servants should devote themselves to the state servant.

While the duty of the state in looking after its workforce by giving reasonable salaries is being reminded of, the inefficient, inactive and unproductive service of employees is condemned here. It should be remembered that *Theravâda* Buddhism not only reminds the individual of this rights to which he is entitled but also teaches him the responsibilities that he should carry out for common benefit.

The *Kñôadanta-sutta* is of paramount significance in the sense that it indicates that economic prosperity and peace in a country depend on its potential to create opportunities for employment. Three spheres of employment potential enumerated in the *sutta* are agriculture, trade and government service. The implied principle of the *sutta* is that each individual should be employed according to his ability.

For example, a person who shows skills in agriculture should not be employed either in trade or in government
service. The Buddha wishes that the state should employ its citizens only on merit irrespective of any favour. The state should not waste its human resources.

As the word *sakammapasutÈ*\(^\text{80}\) indicates, each and every adult should be employed without leaving room for idlers. Then only the revenue of the state will go up. Levying fresh taxes is not the solution for revenue increase. The king is specifically advised not to levy fresh taxes when the country is undergoing hardship.

The *K|Ôadanta-sutta* records the following advice of the chaplain to the king: "Should his majesty before or during the great sacrifice or when the great sacrifice has been offered, feel any such regret as: great, alas, in the portion of my wealth used up in this way, let him not harbour such regret".\(^\text{81}\)

The king is requested here not to feel sorry for spending vastly on gigantic state ventures. The state has to take the risk of investing wealth in colossal projects. Sometimes they can fail. Nevertheless, the state cannot abandon such adventures merely because of failure. If the state does not have the determination to proceed with such investments, ways and means for the "comfort and welfare for many years to come" will neither be tried nor achieved.

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\(^{80}\) DN, I, P. 135.

\(^{81}\) Ibid, I, P. 138.
When the king Mahēvijita was ready to perform his sacrifice on the advice of his chaplain, the eminent and rich people of the country and of the towns went to him taking with them large funds of money and said: "This great fund of money, Sir, we have brought here for his majesty to accept at our hands and use". Then the king said: "My friends, I have ample funds available, all obtained honestly from revenue. Please keep your funds and let me offer you some more. The Kādanta-sutta goes on to say that the people having been thus declined their generous offer, decided to distribute their funds on charity.\textsuperscript{82}

No comment is needed to understand the implied meanings of the weighty words used in the king's remark. The economic principle which lies behind them however needs a brief comment. The eminent people brought the money to the king from remote villages and towns. The king did not want to use the funds so brought to a function which was to be performed in the capital city. He wanted them to take the money back to their areas and utilize it there.

The centralized form of state expenditure is obviously condemned here. The duty of the central government is not to absorb regional funds to the capital and spend them there. Instead, what the king suggests is to pump out the wealth hoarded up at the centre to the regions. If I may use the

\textsuperscript{82} Ibid.,.
twentieth century jargon, the *K/Ôadanta-sutta* recommends the decentralized budgetary system as the beat from of utilizing state money.

According to the *CakkavattisÊhanÈda-sutta*, one principle of the noble duty of a Wheel-rolling Monarch (*ariyaÑ cakkavattivattaÑ*) is giving wealth to the poor. The king is advised in the *sutta* in the following words: "Whoever in your kingdom is poor, to them let wealth be given (ye ca te *vijite adhanÈ assu tesaÑ dhanamanuppadeyyÈsi*)." \(^83\)

This is the principle par excellence because the expected results cannot be achieved by fulfilling the other aspects of the noble duty of a Wheel-rolling Monarch without giving wealth to the poor. The *sutta* speaks of a king who did his best by providing the due watch, war and protection to the people but led the country to long-continued and disastrous results by proving no help for the poor. "Because this was not done poverty became widespread." \(^84\) The motto employed throughout the *sutta* is "when the wealth is not provided for the poor, poverty becomes widespread (*adhanÈnaÑ dhane ananuppÈdÊyamÊne dÈÄiddiyaÑ vepullaÑ gacchati*)." \(^85\)

How should the state distribute its wealth among the poor in order to alleviate poverty and bring forward economic prosperity? The *sutta* gives a categorical answer to this

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\(^83\) DN, III, P.61.
\(^84\) Ibid, P.65.
\(^85\) Ibid, P.65f.
question in the following quotation: "When poverty had thus become rife, a certain man took what had not been given to him, in other words, committed theft. He was caught and brought before the ruler. "This man, they said, has taken that which was not given him; has committed theft." So the king asked the man: "Is it true that you have taken what was not given you, that you have committed theft?"

"It is true, Your Majesty."

"But why"

"Your Majesty, I have nothing to keep me alive"

Then the king provided him with some money, and said: "Use this, for yourself, and to maintain your parents, your children and your wife, and to carry on your business, and to such aims for holy men as shall be of value in the realms above." I shall use it as you say, Your Majesty" replied the man.

Now another man also took by theft what was not given him. He was caught and brought before the ruler with the same accusation saying: "This man, Your Majesty, has taken by theft what was not given him." The ruler spoke to him and provided him also with money as he had done for the first man. Thus people came to hear that the ruler was giving money to maintain those by theft had taken what was not given; and many others began to think: "Let us also commit theft." So, a case of theft having again occurred, the man was caught, and
being charged before the ruler, he was asked why he had stolen. Because, Your Majesty, I cannot maintain myself”, he replied. Then the ruler thought: "If I provide money for everyone who has committed theft there will be an increase of this stealing. I will put an end to this kind of thing; I will make the punishment fit the crime: I will have his head cut off"

So he commanded his men: "Look You are to bind this man's arms behind him with a strong rope and a tight knot, lead him around with a harsh-sounding drum, from road to road, from crossways to crossway, take him out by the southern gate, and to the south of the town, and in order to put an end to this you are to inflict on him the final penalty: "cut off his head"
"Very good, Majesty", answered the men, and did as they had been commanded.86

It is now obvious that Theravēda Buddhism does not recommend giving wealth on an individual basis as a state policy. As the Cakkavattisēhanēda-sutta observes, it aggravates the economic uncertainty and gives birth to new social problems. "From wealth not being provided for the destitute, poverty, stealing, violence, murder, lying, evil speaking, adultery, abusive and idle talk, covetousness and ill-will, false opinion, incest, wanton greed and perverted lust and finally lack of filial and religious piety and lack of regard for the

86. DN, III, PP.65-67.
head of clan became widespread. As a consequence of all this, the lifespan of human beings reduced."

Therefore the state should undertake the enormous responsibility of just and reasonable distribution of wealth among all its citizens. This is the Buddhist way for a violence free economically sound society which guarantees the individual freedoms.

The *Cakkavattisähanäda-suttas* divulges in unequivocal terms that a society of this nature cannot be created where and when the opportunity is open for a handful of individuals to hoard up the wealth of a country. *Theravāda* Buddhism therefore endorses the state intervention in a reasonable way in organizing the economy for the betterment and happiness of the many.

### 4. 6. Conclusion

The problems of poverty, wealth and economic resources are no longer confined to a particular nation or country in this world. These problems have grown out of proportion to other problems in today's world. Some scholars such as E. F. Schumacher and Glen Alexandrian, therefore, stress the validity of Buddhist economics in solving the world's economic problems. In particular, Glen Alexandrian *ibid* emphasises that, as modern economics confines its scope solely to statistics
without any concern for ethics, it must be replaced by Buddhist economics as it is applicable to all nations the world over.\textsuperscript{87}

Joseph Pears, who wrote Small is Still Beautiful twenty-five years after Schumacher, quotes Collins English Dictionary to show how economics' is viewed in modern times. The term 'economics' is defined as “the social science concerned with the production and consumption of goods and services and the analysis of the commercial activities of a society”. He further points out, according to this definition; it is not people, but goods and services and commercial activities that matter.\textsuperscript{88}

Buddhism advocates moderation in consumption. Once, the king of Kosala went to see the Buddha after a heavy meal, feeling sleepy and nodding most of the time in front of the Buddha. Straightaway the Buddha preached to him the benefits of knowing the limits of eating.\textsuperscript{89} Following the advice, he became slimmer and felt better and healthier. One day, he visited the Buddha again and expressed his appreciation of the Buddha’s admonition. Food is considered essential in every way, but over eating is not encouraged. The monks were asked to stop eating while there is still room left for four or five more morsels of food. The Buddhist attitude to food is clearly illustrated in the story of a person who went in search of his ox. A poor man went in search of his lost ox. On his way back, he came to Alavi and visited the Buddha. As he was tired and

\textsuperscript{87} Glen Alexandrian, Buddhist Economics, P. 629
\textsuperscript{88} Joseph Pearce, Small is Still Beautiful, P.4
\textsuperscript{89} DhA, 167
hungry, the Buddha asked devotees to serve him food. Only when he had finished his meal did the Buddha expound the *Dhamma*, explaining hunger as the greatest illness.\(^\text{90}\)

Wealth is not, according to Buddhism, an end in itself. It is only a means to fulfill personal, social and religious obligations. One has to behave as a bee in accumulating wealth. Then, little by little, wealth heaps up just as an anthill is built up by white ants. Wealth thus acquired can be used for five offerings.

In this chapter, I have discussed Buddhist attitude on wealth. There are three kinds of man on wealth and also two kinds of person. With regard to Economic I have shown how to achieve on wealth described in Buddhism. Moreover I have mentioned how to develop Economic and to follow Right Livelihood (*sammā-ājiva*) which is most important one in Buddhism.

In the next chapter I will discuss about Buddhist political thought. Economic and politics are closely linked together. It is necessary to examine the Buddhist political thought when inquiring into the Buddhist economic philosophy. This necessity is still more felt because of certain observations made by some modern scholars regarding Buddhist political thought.

\(^{90}\) *DhpA. P.165.*