CHAPTER VI

Conclusion

The common belief that to follow the Buddha’s teaching one has to retire from a normal family life is a misconception. It is really an unconscious defence against practicing it. There are numerous references in Buddhist literature to men and women living ordinary, normal family lives who successfully practiced what the Buddha taught and realized Nibbâna. Vacchagotta the Wanderer, once asked the Buddha straightforwardly whether there were laymen and women leading the family life who followed His Teaching successfully and attained the high spiritual states. The Buddha categorically stated that three were many laymen and women leading the family life who had followed His Teaching successfully and attained the high spiritual states.

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 on moral and spiritual principles. But he knew that leading such a life was hard in unfavourable 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 favourable to spiritual success- even that of a monk engaged in meditation in some solitary place.¹

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 teaching 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.

**Chapter (1) Social Ideal in the PÈli literature**

In the first chapter, I have mentioned the situation of pre-Buddhist in India such as the Indus Valley Civilisation and Hinduism. With regard to Hinduism, there are three main Gods. They are Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. The main Hindu books are the four Vedas. They are Rig Veda, Sama Veda, Yajur Veda and Atharava Veda.

After that I have shown about Buddhism with a brief biography of the Buddha and the Buddha’s point of view on caste system and the Buddhists attitude for human welfare.

¹. MA I(PTS), P.290f
The Buddhist view points on women’s status in the society are very special. The Buddha gave women full freedom to participate in religious life. And then I have discussed how Buddhism is important for modern society and modern people to develop individual in the society.

Chapter (2) Social Relationship in PÊli Literature

The second chapter deals with social relationship between husband and wife, parents and children etc. described in PÊli literature. I have mentioned the duties and obligations of each and every individual member in any family and also in the society in briefly according to Singalovada sutta. It is called layman Vinaya which is most important and applicable for every society.

With regard to duties I have discussed about it in detail between parents and children, teacher and pupil, husband and wife, friend and companion, employer and employee and lay adherent and monk how to do their duties each other in individual as well as in the society from Buddhist point of view. That could bring about harmony and happiness every family and society.

Chapter (3) Buddhist Ethics in PÊli Literature
In the third chapter, I have mentioned the definition of morality (sīla) and Eightfold Nobel Path (Ariya-AÔÔha~gika-Magga) which is called the way of life in the Buddhism. It deals with Buddhist Ethics. There are five precepts which are most important for every one as well as in the society. It is especially for layman. The Buddhist ethic is harmonious to any society and the modern society as well. The life of the Buddhist layman is regulated by the five precepts. These constitute the minimal requirements for ethical day to day living, to be beneficial both to the individual and to the community. Moreover, I have discussed about Ten evils (dasa akusala).

In the Buddhism, the distinction between what is good and what is bad is very clear: all actions that have their roots in greed, hatred, and delusion that spring from selfishness foster the harmful delusion of selfhood. They are called Akusala kamma. All those actions which are rooted in the virtues of generosity, love and wisdom, Are meritorious-Kusala Kamma.

Chapter (4) Buddhist Economics in PÊli Literature

In the fourth chapter, I have discussed Buddhist attitude on wealth that requirement in today world. With regard to Economic condition there are three kinds of men on wealth and also two kinds of person described in Buddhism. And then I have mentioned the four kinds of way to achieve on wealth.
There are four kinds of happiness that advised the Buddha to layman. It is necessary for them.

With regard to economic, I have mentioned that how to do to develop on wealth according to Buddhism. Moreover, I have discussed about Right Livelihood (samma Ėjiva) which is most important one in the Buddhism.

According to Buddhism, wealth is not 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.

**Chapter (5) Buddhist Political Ideal in PÊli Literature**

In the fifth chapter, I have discussed the Buddha’s political ideal which is described in Theravada Buddhism. Regarding politic, I have mentioned such as the nature of king, the Buddha and his contemporary kings and also origin of the state. And then I have stated administrative principles of righteousness as well as the Buddha’s view on the republic state at the time of the Buddha.

Further more, I have explained the Maurya Dynasty like Chandragupt and his son Bindusara and grandson Asoka. Especially I have mentioned about the life of King Asoka and his work on Buddhism in this chapter.
In Buddhist terms, scientific and technological progress has in no way resulted in the reduction of the unwholesome roots of human behaviour, namely, greed, hatred and delusion. As long as these roots of unwholesome behaviour are not drastically reduced or are kept within reasonable limits, it would not be possible to think of peace, harmony, happiness and contentment in society.

The relevance of Buddhism to the modern social context lies in the fact that it offers a philosophical middle way that recognizes in principle the norms of scientific rationality, while rejecting both the extreme materialist world-view of modern science and the metaphysical and dogmatic fundamentalism of traditional religion.

Modern science does not provide us with the knowledge of what is morally right or wrong, good or bad. When human beings are not concerned with such knowledge, and do not care to pursue the principles of a morally good life, social interaction among humans is not likely to become very different from that among brutes.

One of the most important feature that distinguishes life among humans from life among brutes is that human beings desire not only to live, but also to live well. They search for meaning life, and seek to attain rationally justifiable social, ethic, economic and political ideal and goals. In this respect Buddhist teaching has much to offer to modern man.
In this study, I have shown the relevant materials of Buddhism and put them into practice in modern society. This research presents both the traditional approach as well as modern approach. With regard to social, ethic, economic and political ideal, various and practical frameworks based on PÊli sources and other secondary materials are used extensively in this research.

This research is to support the Buddha’s teaching in areas related to social welfare. That is why this study focuses on social, ethics, economic and political ideal described in PÊli literature. My work is to focus on Buddha’s teaching and its ideal with regard to social, ethics, economic and political ideal. It is to apply them in modern society of modern age.

It may give a direction to the solution to the problems which involved in social life. It may help to understand the Buddha’s thoughts on the principles of healthy and honorable polity that aims at welfare of human in the society.