

The Way to Welfare of Mankind in the Buddhist View

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Abstract

This paper attempts to prove "The Way to Welfare of mankind (*bahujanahita* and *bahujanasukha*), in the Buddhist view". The solution to the problem is that the way to welfare of mankind is a necessary factor for human society. All human beings are in search of welfare of mankind, different society try to obtain welfare of mankind in different ways. This paper will contribute towards the way to the welfare of mankind in the Buddhist view.

Keywords: Welfare, Mankind, Buddhist view

Introduction

All human beings, in the final analysis, face the same basic phenomena of birth, decay and dissolution spelt out as the first Noble Truth.

That at the same time, human beings are capable of our coming these problems by attaining the very highest moral and spiritual level by a development of the human potential through an extension of human capacity. Human life is so placed in the cosmic scheme of things that human beings alone enjoy the best opportunity of transcending the unsatisfaction of existence into the state of Nibbana or highest happiness the state of Highest Happiness (*Paramam Sukham*) in this very life (*dittheva dhamma*).

Human beings are equal in that they face the same basic problems and passes a common but unique potentiality to attain the highest. It is from the point of view of its goal that Buddhism evaluates all action. Hence Buddhist thought as in accord with this and other Articles in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to the extent to which they facilitate the advancement of human beings towards the Buddhist goal, to attain which, of course, Buddhism compels none.

In this light, human rights, in the Buddhist view, are interests leading to the welfare of mankind (*bahujanahita and bahujanasukha*) interests arising from the individuals own needs (*attahita*) and from his sense of duty and obligation towards all sentient beings (*parahita*). These needs are justified as long as such interests are not based as Buddhism puts it on greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*), the three unhealthy main springs of motivation which are common among worldling¹.

Happiness and well-being of mankind (bahujanahita and bahujanasukha)

Happiness and well-being of mankind has resulted in the idea of a "common good of all mankind" an idea appearing for the first time in human thought. It follows that the idea of the "common good" must necessarily involve the right of recognition of everyone, everywhere as a person before the way, leaving no room for any distinctions from the point of view of the way this is the ideal at which all must aim. Thus the "well-being and happiness

¹ Buddhism and Humman Rights, p-24, 1991

of mankind" is Key concepts in the present context. However, if in actual practice, there be instances where no justice is properly meted out, yet justice is to be expected in terms of "conditionality" or the way of cause and effect as discovered by the Buddha.

Buddhist teaching constantly harps on the value and dignity of the human being. Among two planes of existence namely, the "human" (*manusa*) and "divine" (*dibba*) in either of which one may work towards one's emancipation, a premium is placed by Buddhist thought on existence as a human being (*manussattam*) which is social to be achieved with difficulty (*dullabham*). The human plane is to be preferred to the divine, since the former offers a better opportunity than the latter for understanding reality, which is essentially dukkha or suffering. While Buddhism asserts that Buddhas appear only in the human realm, Buddhist mythology refers to heavenly denizens looking forward to a "fortunate birth" (*sugati*) in the human plane¹. Moreover, the Buddhist religious life had been designed to lead one "in the world itself" (*dittheva dhamme*) to emancipation and not to reach a heaven. It will be appreciated then, that in the Buddhist context, one needs adequate recognition as a person before the law, for mundane matters themselves need evaluation as means to an end.

Thus, the worth of the individual taken in the idea of the "common good of mankind demands that the problems of the weak, the down-trodden, the humble, the needy and the defenseless in society also require the care and the attention of the law as extended to any other segment of society. If the authority of the Law is to reflect the "individuals own needs" (*attahita*) and obligation towards all sentient beings (*parahita*), recognition before the Law is a basic human right, whatever the circumstances of a victim of discrimination may be.

The way to welfare of mankind in three Mental states (cetasika)

The Buddha has actually shown the way by which a relevant social and international order can be established, ultimately leading to the happiness and welfare one of mankind. This is the Mental states (*cetasika*) within should also be counted the basic and essential Buddhist views of obscene of greed (*Alobha*), absence of hated (*Adosa*) and obscene of delusion (*Amoha*)². The components of the Important Mental States (*cetasika*) are as follows.

Cetanā³ (urging exhortation)

Cetanā is the stimulating force (urging, exhortation) to do evil or good deeds. If one's "cetana" or volition is strong, his consciousness is serious in doing anything. If one's "cetana" or volition force is weak, his consciousness is mild in doing anything. Volition is also called "kamma" because it is the main source of every action whether good or bad.

Viriya⁴ (diligence)

Viriya means diligence or effort, Endeavour or energy. To do every action diligently without hesitation, is the nature of *viriya*. Great and grand deeds cannot or bad. Sustained mental exertion as one of the six mental concomitants that combine with either moral or immoral thoughts (pakkaṇaka cetasika).

¹ Itivuttaka, p-34, 1960

² A Manual of Abhidhamma, Abhidhammattha-sarigaha, p-120-122, 1996

³ The Teaching of the Buddha, Basic level, p-292

⁴ Ibid, p-292

Chanda¹ (desire)

Chanda is the desire to do something good or bad. Great and grand tasks cannot be introduced without *chanda*. Chanda is the desire to do 5th, one of the 52 mental concomitants, *chanda cetasika*. Showing favoritism out of love a state of mind obsessed by desire.

Moha² (delusion)

Moha means ignorance or delusion or bewilderment not knowing something as they truly are. It clouds the true nature of an object. When one is overwhelmed by *moha*, one cannot discriminate right from wrong. He may think what is right to be wrong and what is wrong to be right. The characteristics of concealing the true nature of mind and matter and the four noble truth is the nature of *moha*.

Ahirika³ (shamelessness to do evil deeds)

Ahirika is shamelessness to do evil deeds. The persons having this nature think that "to do evil deeds" is the highest prestige for them.

Anottappa⁴ (fearless to do evil deeds)

Anottappa means fearless to do evil deeds. To do evil deeds regardless of their evil consequences is the nature of *Anottappa*.

Lobha⁵ (greed)

Lobha means attachment to the enjoyment of sensual pleasure. There is an old Myanmar saying, "The more one gets, the more one needs". The desire to attain *Nibbāna*, the desire to attain the path consciousness, the desire to be qualified in knowledge, the desire to give charity to the poor are not *lobha*, but they are *chanda*.

Māyā⁶ (deceit)

Māyā means concealing one's offences by deceiving others *Māyā* is kind of *lobha*.

Sātheya⁷ (pretension)

Sātheya means the pretension as if one were a man having great and grand prestige or he were a gentle one, a wise one, a noble one, Also *Sātheya* is kind of *lobha*.

¹ Iblid p-292

² Iblid p-292 - 293

³ Iblid p-293

⁴ Iblid p-293

⁵ Iblid p-293

⁶ The Teaching of the Buddha, Basic level, p-293

⁷ Iblid p-294

Diṭṭhi¹ (Micchādiṭṭhi) wrong belief

Diṭṭhi means not believing is *Kamma* and its result by viewing thus: good results do not arise although good deeds are done, evil results do not arise although evil deeds are done.

Dosa² (anger)

Dosa means hatred or anger. Despair, unhappiness fear, ill-will and peevishness describe the nature of *dosa*.

Issā³ (envy)

Issā means jealousy or envy. It has the characteristic of envying others success and prosperity.

Macchariya⁴ (stinginess)

Macchariya means stinginess, meanness, niggardliness. Being unwilling to let others have the same prosperity or the same dignity or the same authority that one possesses.

Saddhā⁵ (conviction)

Saddhā means will established conviction in the *Buddha*, the *Dhamma*, the *Samgha* and *kamma* and its results. It can purify the mind from its stains.

Sati⁶ (mindfulness)

Sati means mindfulness or heedfulness or awareness of arising and passing away of mind and matter. *Sati cetasika* being one out the 25 resplendent mental states present in all moral consciousness.

Hiri, Ottappa⁷ (shame, dread)

Hiri means moral shame to do evil-*ottappa* means moral dread to do evil. These two are called the two guardian principles of the world. Unless these two *dhamma* exists in the world, there will prevail no morality of conduct.

Alobha⁸ (absence of greed)

Alobha means absence of greed, or detachment. Giving one's properties to others is the nature of *Alobha*.

¹ Iblid p-294

² Iblid p-294

³ Iblid p-294

⁴ Iblid p-294

⁵ Iblid p-295

⁶ Iblid p-295

⁷ The Teaching of the Buddha, Basic level, p-295

⁸ Iblid p-295

Adosa¹ (Loving Kindness)

Adosa means absence of hatred. It is loving Kindness, fore balance or forgiveness. Wishing for the well-beings of others is the nature of *Adosa*. The mental factor of loving kindness (one of the 19 virtuous mental concomitants called *sabhana dhāraṇa cetasika*).

Amoha² (absence of delusion)

Amoha means absence of ignorance, delusion, bewilderment, capability of realizing right as right and wrong as wrong is the nature of *Amoha*.

The warning to avoid the “four avenues to unaware of mankind” are also relevant here; To begin with attitudes such as hatred (*dosa*) and prejudice (*chanda*) and non-understanding or in adequate appreciation of a given situation (*moha*) are among the springs of arbitrary acts. Such an act could also be the outcome of same from of fear (*bhaya*) on the part of the authorities so acting. On the other hand such acts are more often than not possible because they are family accepted not only by the victims but even by the community because of their ignorance (*moha*) that a right has been violated, and through fear (*bhaya*) to take appropriate action and seek a remedy even if one is aware of a violation of one’s right³.

Conclusion

In the Buddhist view the constitution and the ordinary ways of a country should have as the primary objective the material and the spiritual welfare of its mankind. As far as Buddhism is concerned this would include the freedom for as Buddhist to strive, to the best of their ability, to lead the ideal Buddhist life. Any obstacle placed in their lives, spiritual as well as material, in keeping with the Teaching of the Buddha. Against such violations it would be essential to have competent national tribunals which could provided appropriate remedies.

An effective remedy in the Buddhist view, the way to welfare of mankind, is to ensure the realization of three objectives. These are (1) that justice should be meted out to all alike, without any distinction; (2) that any remedial measure that may be considered necessary should be consonant with the dignity and worth of the human person and (3) that such remedial measures should chance one’s progress towards welfare or happiness and perfection in the Buddhist sense.

It is clear to us today that way to welfare of mankind contained in the Declaration cannot be achieved amidst the tensions and conflicts the economic and social inequalities and the inadequate co-operation in various fields among the nations and governments can act in accordance with the good deeds (*sucarita*) to be poor their resources to eliminate poverty, hatred (*doso*), prejudice (*chanda*), ignorance (*moha*), disease (*roga*), fear (*bhaya*), sorrow (*dukkha*) jealousy (*issā*) and greed (*lobha*) and observance of human rights and fundamental welfare of mankind will not emerge. Such an order can be established only by intense genuine and selfless human effort.

¹ Ibid p-295

² Ibid p-295

³ A comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma, p-85, 1993

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