

# BUDDHIST ETHICAL DOCTRINES AND ITS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE SOCIETY

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## Abstract

The Buddha explains in the Samanamandika Sutta, purity of livelihood as an aspect of sila. In this Sutta, that wholesome verbal and physical deeds and as well as purity of livelihood are included in morality 'Ajiva parisuddha' or purity of livelihood denotes use of wholesome verbal and physical actions as means of livelihood and this is same as right livelihood of the Noble Eightfold Path. According to the Sabbasava Sutta clothes, food, shelter and medicine are Professionals' basic requirements. Clothes are necessary to protect oneself from cold and heat, flies and mosquitoes, wind and rain, to cover one's nakedness and so on. In the last part I expressed Buddhism and Economic Development, which means economic based on Buddhism, the Buddhist doctrine and development, and ethic of wealth: peace with economical progress. There are of course, multiple and complex factors which are conducive to peace, both in the "inner" and "outer" senses of the term. We confront with the challenge to focus the attention on one fundamental issue, namely, the absence of spirituality and moral values in the economic realm. This chapter has generously used the doctrine as stated in Dhammacakkapavattanasutta, Mahaparinibbanasutta, Paticcasamuppada, Mahanidana Sutta, Kutadanta Sutta, Agganna Sutta, and Metta Sutta, etc.

**Key-Words:** Buddhism, Ethics, Livelihood, Eightfold Path, Economics, Development...etc.

## 1. Introduction:

I have exposed three parts of Buddhist economic ethics of integrity. They are; a) Framework of Buddhist Economics, b) Buddhist Economic Philosophy for Local and Global and c) Buddhism and Economic Development. In the first part I have mentioned that what is economics? What is Buddhist economics can do? Buddhist economics can change? What do economists do? Recent development in Buddhist economics.

Exactly, economics is the study of how individuals, families, businesses, and societies. People often confuse wants with needs. When they use the word need, they actually mean that they want something which they do not have. Obviously, everyone needs certain things to survive such as food, clothing, and shelter. Business people make decisions daily about what to produce now, what to produce later, and what to stop producing. Traditionally, economists have classified these productive resources as land, labor, capital, and entrepreneurship.

Indeed, the very term "Buddhist economics" is oxymoronic. Buddhism is spiritual, not conceptual, and economics is a system of concepts. Interdependence in Buddhist economics is expressed in three ways; 1) involve using resources to enhance the quality of life for ourselves and for others, 2) integrate caring for Nature and our environment into all activities and 3) involves reducing suffering and practicing compassion, both nearby and internationally. Economists analyze how the super-rich apply their profits. Economics is concerned with the ways individuals live, do businesses, and nations choose to use their limited resources.

Buddhism and economics seemingly far from one another. Most of people consider that Buddhism is an ascetic religion with no attention in worldly dealings. It is wrong. Buddhism has a well-built social aspect and Buddhists are often promised in progressive social transformation. Buddhism presents for mainstream economics. Buddhism contests this

vision by a different idea, which is “Anatta”, “no-self”,<sup>1</sup> which is a collection of commonly changing bodily and spiritual elements.

Secondly, I mentioned about Buddhist economic philosophy for local and global, which are the economical philosophy and its profit, moral of money making, and the noble eightfold path and social development. Western economic models are not suitable for Buddhist states because they are based on many metaphysics. The main object of Buddhist life is liberation from all suffering. The Buddhist final goal is to achieve Nibbana, which can be approached by purification of the human character with good intentional integrity.

## 2. The Noble Eightfold Path and Social Development:

Well known are the numerous views put forward by many scholars to show that the Buddhist path to emancipation. Some consider that this path is not for the laity but solely for monks. Some others hold this path to be leading to a sort of private emancipation, ignoring common social good. Whatever may be the intentions of these critics, if any of these criticism could be established with supportive evidence from early texts, then it has to be granted that Buddhist teachings are not by any means capable of influencing the process of socio-economic development, and hence, it is futile to attempt to find guidance from such a teaching for any kind of constructive social reformation.

The Buddha in his inaugural discourse the Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta<sup>2</sup> presents the Noble Eightfold Path which is described as the Noble Truth. In the Cūlavēdalla Sutta,<sup>3</sup> Bhikkhunī Dhammadinnā explains to Visakhā, that the Noble Eightfold Path is included in the threefold training - namely, morality (sīla) concentration (samādhi) and wisdom (paññā) factors right speech, right action and right livelihood included in morality right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration included in concentration and right view and right thought included in wisdom.<sup>15</sup> It is seen that Ven. Sāriputta<sup>4</sup> also analyses the path in the *Saccavibhanga Sutta*. Therein it is said that Right Speech is abstention from lying, harsh speech, slandering and idle talk; Right Action is abstention from killing, stealing and sexual misconduct and right livelihood is avoidance of an unrighteous livelihood.<sup>16</sup> Right effort is the exertion made to cultivate wholesome things so far not cultivated and to nurture further what has already been cultivated. Right Mindfulness is to ponder over the Four Foundations of Mindfulness i.e. the body, feeling, mind and mind-objects and to live with awareness and alertness, exerting to bum out all defilements, ill will and grief.

As explained by the Buddha in the Nagara Sutta he obtained this understanding while he was yet a Bodhisatva.<sup>5</sup> He, understanding that the world is established in suffering, further pondered over as to how suffering is caused. Then he knew that it is dependency arising, and that with the gradual cessation of causes and conditions that cause suffering, suffering itself will cease to be. To describe this practice leading to the ending of suffering he used a simile. A certain man wandering in the forest sees an ancient path used by the people of old. Treading along that path this man sees an ancient city with beautiful gardens, parks, ponds, motes and a wall. Later he informs about his discovery to the King or to a Minister. Then that King or Minister going along that path sees for himself the real situation and builds a city there. Subsequently this city becomes prosperous, populated and famous. Monks, I, too saw the Ancient Path (*puranam maggam*), the Ancient Highway. Thus Ancient Path is the Noble Eightfold Path which the Buddha tread and subsequently declared to all.

The Mahacattārisaka Sutta<sup>6</sup> is of great significance among the Suttas dealing with the Noble Eightfold Path. The explanation of the gradual manner in which each preceding factor beginning with Right View, leads to the succeeding one is also noteworthy. It also describes the two-fold nature of the path one having defilements, sharing merit and maturing substratum of experience and the other devoid of defilements and supra-mundane.<sup>18</sup>

The Nagara Sutta presents the process of understanding the prevalence of dukkha up to the realization of the goal as a gradual personal experience the Buddha had since the time he was a Bodhisattva. This path, which was acknowledged even by the former Buddhas, is not a creation of the Buddha, but a mere discovery of this. It is a path that would be endorsed by any intelligent person, and a path that could be followed by others.

The Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta says that this is a path that should be seen, understood and cultivated. Understanding alone will not sufficient each individual has to tread upon it by himself. It is not a divine creation nor a divine revelation, nor a gift from an external power nor even an object of faith. It is a path that should be and could be discovered by human intelligence, a path to be followed with self-reliance and with self-confidence. Even the Buddha are mere guides; emancipation is one's own responsibility and those who firmly resolve and strive diligently will be successful in realizing the goal. The path discards all kinds of prayer, invocations and rituals etc. that are common in other religions. Through this

<sup>1</sup>. Samyutta Nikaya, Vol. II, P. 93.

<sup>2</sup>. Apādāna, Aṭṭhakathā, Vol. I, P. 335-338.

<sup>3</sup>. Majjima Nikāya Aṭṭhakathā, Vol. II, P. 255.

<sup>4</sup>. Samyutta Nikāya, Vol. I, 191.

<sup>5</sup>. Cariyā Piṭaka Aṭṭhakathā, P. 35.

<sup>6</sup>. Majjima Nikāya, Vol. III, P. 117.

path it is expected to bring about a total development of personality that transgresses all fields connoted by such terms as religion, philosophy ethics, science etc. Philosophy is the preceding factor in this path. Each one has to follow it individually, and this is to be done not in solitude, but in the socio-economic field.

According to this the Noble Eightfold Path is solely for monks, and the lay cannot follow it. Regarding the Noble Eightfold Path, the suttas say that it is the best path and the only path for the purity of vision. The Mahāparinibbāna Sutta<sup>7</sup> records that the Buddha just before his demise, addressing Subhadda, said that in whatsoever dispensation the Noble Eightfold Path is not found in it there will not be a true monk of the first, second, third or fourth stage, and that in his own dispensation are found the Noble Eightfold Path and consequently also the monks of the four stages. The Buddha describes also the systems of other teachers as being void of true saints for these systems lack the Noble Eightfold Path. As explained in the Nagara Sutta this only path, the path with one and only goal, was not exclusively preached for monks, but for monks, nuns as well as, male and female lay disciples. This itself is sufficient to reject the view that the path is meant exclusively for monks.

Naturally, a question arises as to how a pleasure enjoying layman who is married and with family and engaged in activities connected with production of goods and a monk who has renounced household life, its pleasures as well as encumbrances and all activities connected with production of goods follow this same path Having a single goal. The three qualifying terms *sāsava puññabhāgiya* and *upadhi vipāka* are important. The term *sāsava* connotes that at this level of practice the path is not free from defilements. *Puññabhāgiya* connotes that it tends to produce merit and *upadhi vipāka* means that it contributes to mature sansaric consequences such as rebirth in good destinies.

The *DhammacakkapavattanaSutta* discards the practice involving indulgence in sensual pleasures (*Kāmasukhallikanuyoga*) as being low, vulgar, worldly, ignoble and conducive to harm. Similarly, it discards the practice of self-mortification (*Attakilamathanuyoga*) as being suffering, ignoble, conducive to harm, and words and its fruitfulness.<sup>8</sup>

The above discussion paves the way for a number of conclusions regarding the influence of the Noble Eightfold Path on worldly well-being, material progress, and socio-economic development. One has to reach the goal by making the journey himself, through firm resolve and through effort after seeing the true nature of things. It could also be concluded that as the Buddhist path to emancipation is a fruitful path equally open to both the pleasure enjoying house holders as well as to monks who have renounced household pleasures and all related activities, an individual is able to actively engage in socio-economic activities while following this path.

The *DhammacakkapavattanaSutta* refers to the Noble Eightfold Path as the Middle Path (*majjima paṭipadā*) because it abandons the two extreme paths. This avoidance of the extremes is a characteristic of all eight factors of the path. Just as a middle doctrine is followed in the sphere of philosophy rejecting Annihilationism and Etemalism, in ethics this Middle Path also followed. Right Livelihood, which is included in morality (*sīla*) develops on this basis. The admonition to follow the Middle Path is applicable with regard to the enjoyment of material wealth too. This Middle Path provides a philosophy to the present consumer oriented society which is engaged in limitless destruction of resources as well as unlimited consumption are to set aright its misguided economic system. In fact, this Middle Path presents the most needed philosophy to solve the numerous problems that arise when reorganizing the economic system which has brought into existence of millions and millions of people who are submerged in dire poverty, and also a relatively small population who are reaping the maximum benefits of technology, have got bewildered through prosperity.

Thus, economics is not a goal, but a step in the path that makes an individual a person fit to march towards the goal. The significance of this philosophy is specially seen at a time like the present, when certain recent events are forcing the intellectuals to reassess the numerous problems and conflicts that have arisen in the prevailing economic system, which considers economy as the highest goal to be attained by the individual at the expense of everything else. The economists have advocated and economy sans - morality, and this has caused many dilemmas. And it is in this context that one sees the real significance of a doctrine that advocates that there cannot be an economic system devoid of morality and Right View. The present is not satisfactory it is imperative to realize a satisfactory state. Hence, the highest bliss (*paraman sukham*) becomes the goal.<sup>9</sup>

### 3. Buddhism and Economic Development:

The successful economies are high rates of accumulation of human and physical capital together with technological progress. But this statement then raises the crucial question: why do some nations successfully achieve this outcome while others fail? The contemporary philosophers are highlighted the fact that high rates of growth seem to occur in a subset of poor countries rather than in all low-income countries as the transitional dynamics of the Solow neoclassical growth model imply. Given that capital and technology can migrate across political boundaries, the persistence of significant differences in the level of output per worker suggests the presence of persistent barriers to growth and development. Now, an obvious deterrent is that free capital from rich to poor countries arises from the greater risk involved in investing in countries

<sup>7</sup> Dīgha Nikāya Aṭṭhakathā, Vol. II. P. 106

<sup>8</sup> Netti Petaka, P. 65.

<sup>9</sup> Dr Dharmasena Hittiarachchi, Buddhist Economic Philosophy; As Reflected in Early Buddhism, published by the Educational Publications Department, Printed by the State Printing Corporation, 2001, Sri Lanka, P. 77-88.

characterized by macroeconomic instability, trade barriers, inadequate infrastructure, poor education, ethnic diversity, widespread corruption, political instability, disadvantageous geography and frequent policy reversals.

Buddhist economist has provided a useful framework for highlighting the distinction between the proximate and economic growth. These categories highlight three major research areas, within a voluminous and rapidly expanding literature, that have dominated growth analysis in recent years. Many social scientists would argue forcefully that the influence of culture should be added to the list of important deeper determinants of economic performance. It is certainly the case that economic historians have given much greater consideration to culture as a determinant of economic performance than economists. The central question in growth analysis is: which of the causal relationships matters most? However, I also note that geography is the only exogenous factor in his threefold taxonomy, with integration and institutions 'co-evolving with economic performance. The causal interrelationships indicated by the two-way direction of some of the arrows, suggest that there are complex feedback effects at work. Therefore, empirical work, in the form of endless cross-country regressions, that attempts to establish clear lines of causality must be treated with 'extreme care'.<sup>10</sup>

#### 4. Economic Depended on Buddhism:

We have earlier pointed out the four possible ways to organizational form, a religious movement can be supported by the economic leaders. A good financial basis does constitute a dominant source of strength to any religious movement. Buddhism could show such a significant role in the political, educational and religious life of these countries because they had considerable economic assets. They even received some state subsidies for carrying out their various activities. In a sense they could be regarded as states within states.

Before rise of Buddhism, the kings had developed the practice of making grants to individual Brahmin teachers. King *Bimbisāra* of Magadh made grants to the Brahmin *Brahmadatta* of Anga. There are other such references in the contemporary Buddhist literature. Buddhism also received the support of kings and financial magnates. Prasenadi, the king of Kosala is stated to have professed his adherence to Buddhism. But Ajatasatru did not possibly render any support to the Samgha in Buddha's life-time. But according to the Mahapariniyana Sutra of the Dīgha Nikāya, he is reported to have built a stupa over some portions of the relics of Buddha. Perhaps one of the factors why the five heretical teachers could not succeed in organizing any big movement was that they did not receive adequate financial support.

Ajatasatru, King of Kāsi promises to give a thousand cows to Depth Balaki for a speech on brahman. Janaka's magnificent munificence was the subject of talk in the contemporary metropolises and rural areas. Buddhism was more fortunate in the gifts and grants that it received from kings and rich merchants. It may be hazarded that possibly the support of the mercantile community of Rajagir to Buddha might be a counteracting step to the royal pressure on them because Rajgir being the capital of Magadhan kings, due to physical proximity, the kings might have exercised pressure on the *setthhis*. Bimbisara made liberal grants to Buddhism.

One institutional change came with the pouring in of gifts and grants. Originally the *bhikkhus* used to reside in very ordinary and sequestered places exposed to all kinds of privations. But when devoted followers began to build *Vihāras*, Buddha allowed the *bhikkhus* to reside even in these comfortable dwellings. Some famous *Vihāras* presented to Buddha were *Veḷuvana Kalandakanivāpa*, the *Jetavana* at *Sravasti*, Jīvaka's *Ambavana* and Maddakuchchi Mrigadava.

We have referred to the growth of trade and commerce in the country after the seventh century B.C. but that should not lead us to infer that the economy was industrial. The trade and commerce was in agricultural products and not in industrial commodities. According to the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta* of the Dīgha, it appears to have been a practice of contemporary kings to take care of the clothing, food, shelter, medicine, protection, watch and ward of the *bhikkhus*. It may be possible that the religious philanthropy of the contemporary kings might have been one of the factors for the development of monasticism. The Spread of Buddhism, points out that the Vaisya community in Rajagir furnished the largest number of converts. Buddha is said to have allowed the use of sugar to the *bhikkhus* when one merchant offered to give sugar to the Sangha.

The rural economy of India at the coming of Buddhism was based chiefly on a system of village communities of landowners. The Jātaka bears very clear testimony to this. There is no such clear mention of towns like Rajagir, Champa, Pāṭaliputra, Vesālī, Kāsi, Sravasti, Ujjine, Taxila, etc. in the Buddhist literature, these towns were not renowned for any industry. Some of them derived their importance from being only capital towns. The development of big towns in Europe is a consequence of the Commercial Revolution during the latter part of the Middle Ages. The Indian towns associated with early Buddhism were much smaller compared to the towns of the 16th century in Europe. Perhaps a village economy and population are more receptive to religious ideas and movements. Towns, on the other hand, breed a materialistic and sensate outlook. The reason for this is that in the towns the struggle for existence is very hard.

There is keen competition and hence the minds of the townspeople are in constant tension. Most of the time their minds are engaged in the quest of material goods. They have to devise new ways and means to ascend in the economic ladder. After the end of the Middle Ages and with the growth of the renaissance, science, technology and commerce have become testimony in it to isolated large estates, or to great feudatories, or to absolute lords of the soil holding such estates.

<sup>10</sup>. Brian Snowdon, Modern Macroeconomics; Its Origins, Development and Current State, Howard R. Vane, Published by Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2005, P.633-635.

During the day of early Buddhism, Pāṭaliputra had not yet become a big town. It seems that Sravasti, Rajagriha and Gaya were the Mecca and Medina of early Buddhism. It is certainly true that Vaisālī plays a more important part in the development of Buddhism than Kapilavasthu, the birth-place of Gautama Buddha.<sup>11</sup>

##### 5. The Buddhist Doctrine and Its Impact for Development:

When Brahmin *Upatissa* (lay name of *Ven Sāriputta*) requested *Ven Assaji*, the junior most of the first five disciples of the Buddha, to explain in brief the teaching he followed the latter uttered the following stanza.

“*ye dhammā hetuppabhavā tesam hetum tathāgato āha  
Tesam ca yo nirodho evam vādī mahāsamaṇo.*<sup>12</sup>

This itself makes clear that the essence of Buddhism is the canon of Paṭiccasamuppāda or causality, that is, Dependent co-origination. The Buddha himself has declared that he succeeded in destroying all defilements and realizing emancipation. The *Mahānidāna Sutta* records how the Buddha admonished Ven. Ananda not to say that he can easily understand this doctrine which is really profound and which appears also profound. Further, the Buddha pointed out that beings languish in samsara due to their ignorance of this doctrine.<sup>13</sup>

The *Paccaya Sutta* begins by saying that it presents two points namely, causality and causally conditioned phenomena. What is meant by causality in this context? It is explained as the causal relation between factors leading to sansaric existence and the consequent suffering. The whole process is explained as follows: Depending on ignorance (*avijjā*) arise dispositions (*saṅkhāra*) depending on dispositions arises consciousness (*viññāna*), depending on consciousness arise psycho-physical personality (*nāma - rūpa*), depending on psycho-physical personality arise six gateways of sense perception (*saḷāyatana*) depending on six gateways of sense perception arises contact, (*phassa*) depending on contact arises craving (*taṇhā*); depending on craving arises clinging (*upādāna*); depending on clinging arises becoming (*bhava*); depending on becoming arises birth (*jāti*) and depending on birth arise decay death, grief, lamentation etc.<sup>14</sup>

“The difference between these two may be made clear if I try to compare this description with what a modern philosopher has to say about the content of our knowledge. Bertrand Russel said that, what passes for knowledge is of two kinds. First is knowledge of facts, second is knowledge of general connection between facts’.

The Buddha comprehends this and makes it known to others. Further, the *Sutta* enumerates four characteristics of Paṭiccasamuppāda namely, objectivity (*tathatā*) necessity (*avitathatā*), invariability (*anaññathatā*) and conditionality (*idappaccayatā*). The Buddhas can only make it known, others have to comprehend it by themselves, and it is in this context that the Buddha’s admonition that ‘*Tathagatas* are only teachers, and striving should be done you yourselves’ becomes meaningful. Even with regard to Paṭiccasamuppāda there appear to be much misconception. We can now see the character of chain of causation, it is intended to explain the coming into being of misery.

The statements “From arising of this that arises” and ‘on the cation of this that ceases’ bring out a cause and effect relation like showing how the fruit arises from the seed. The *Samyutta nikāya* explains the operation of this cause and effect relation not only in the biological sphere, but also in other spheres as moral sphere etc. This dual relation that is embodied in this formula should be clearly understood.

This fundamental formula has been used on various occasions in numerous ways in early Buddhism. The Twelve Linked formula is only one such exposition. The number of factors and the factor heading the list is not the same always. When dealing with human suffering what is used generally is the Twelve Linked Formula. In the *Dvayatanupassana Sutta* the formula is given as consisting of eleven factors, some of which are different from those found usually enumerated. The *Mahānidāna Sutta* has two enumerations, one of nine and another of ten factors, and the formula begins with *viññāna* (consciousness). The *Upanisa Sutta* lists twenty-two factors. Though normally *avijjā* (ignorance) is given as the cause for arising of dukkha, the *Dhammacakkapavattana* cites *taṇhā* (craving) as the cause.<sup>15</sup> This is because Buddhism cites neither a first cause nor a single cause, and this is seen from such canonical statements as the first beginning of samsara is not perceivable. The Paṭiccasamuppāda formula is not a linear enumeration of factors of Causality, but a circular one, and could commence from any point. *Avijjā* is a causally dependent factor, and some scholars have drawn attention to this fact mentioned in *Avijjā Sutta*. The *Sammāditṭhi Sutta* itself says that *Avijjā* arises due to defilements.

What all this clearly shows is that the Paṭiccasamuppāda formula does not name a first cause or a single cause for the rising of the causally dependent phenomena. The *Bija sutta* of the *Khandhakasamyutta* explains on ethical and biological ground that for a seed to sprout, the seed should be in perfect condition but this alone is not sufficient for there should be water and

<sup>11</sup>. Dr. Vishwanath Prasad Varma, *Early Buddhism and Its Origins*, Published by Munshiram Munoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd, 1973, P. 337.339.

<sup>12</sup>. *Apādāna*, Vol. I, P. 27.

<sup>13</sup>. *Dīgha Nikāya*, *Aṭṭhakathā*, Vol. II, *Mahānidāna Sutta*, P. 72.

<sup>14</sup>. *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*, *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, P. 259. *Abhidhamma*, *Aṭṭhakathā*, Vol. I, P. 113.

<sup>15</sup>. *Apādāna*, *Aṭṭhakathā*, Vol. I, P. 335-337.

the soil should be fertile. The arising of consciousness too is explained similarly. The *Accayika Sutta* explains the causal connection of conditions that contribute to produce a good harvest. These explanations show that any change that takes place in conditions affects the causally conditioned phenomena. By this Buddhist doctrine of causality such other causal theories as divine creation (*Issaranimmanavāda*) the theory which holds that everything happens as consequences of former deeds (*pubbekatahetuvāda*) and also the theory which rejects all causes and conditions (*ahetu appaccayavāda*) get nullified. Besides, the *paṭiccasamuppāda* theory affirms the existence of free will.

Thus in the *Aggamiya*, *Cakkavattisihanāda*, and *Kūṭadanta suttas*<sup>16</sup> the Buddha cites political and socio-economic factors as causes of social suffering. In Suttas such as *Mahānidāna*, *Kalahavivāda* etc., he pays more attention to psychological factors. Leaving the political and socio-economic factors for a detailed analysis later, it is relevant here to examine the psychological causes. The *Mahānidāna*, the *Dasuttara* and some *suttas* in the *Aṅguttaranikāya* are important in this context. In these, the process leading to suffering is explained as starting from *taṇhā* (craving). It is shown that craving leads to pursuit, pursuit to gain, gain to decision, decision to desire and passion, these to tenacity, tenacity to possession, possession to avarice, avarice to protection and guard, these to many malpractices such as coming to blows, strife, contradiction, retort, quarrelling slander, lying etc. The *Aggañña Sutta* also gives a somewhat similar account when it describes the evolution of social institutions.<sup>17</sup>

This makes it clear that division among the people is not due to divine creation, nor the result of former deeds, nor the result of some kind of determinism, an external force, an incomprehensible fate or even due to some accident. One who accepts the operation of causal laws can grasp this fact clearly. This understanding enables one to know that everything is mutually dependent and their existence and continuation rest on this mutual dependence. This knowledge makes one realize that one's duty is another's right and prompts him to perform his duty properly. This will bring about cessation of causes leading to breach of peace and harmony. Among people who not merely have got familiarized with terms such as 'democracy' and 'socialism' but have well grasped the true sense of such terms, progress or development will take place effortlessly.

Some recent scholars are puzzled to how Buddhism that teaches to work for one's own well-being, could justify service for social well-being. Prof. Gunapala Dharmasiri offers an answer to this on the basis of *Paṭiccasamuppāda*. The doctrine of inter-dependence rules out the possibility of a separate soul because nothing can be independent in a world where everything is inter-related to everything else. I cannot think of myself as separate from the rest of the universe because, for example, if I take my body, my body is dependent on plants, animals, water, oxygen, etc. My mind also exists dependency because the existence of thoughts is dependent on same data which are derived from the external world of objects and persons.

Even at present there is a large section of the population who refuse to acknowledge this true position, but prefer to continue to do metaphysical, mythical and superstitious belief, and undergo suffering and dissatisfaction without making any attempt to change the prevailing social conditions. Some suffer in silence, some others repent and regret. Yet there are some others who resort to prayer and chanting. None who has properly understood the doctrine of *Paṭiccasamuppāda* would remain silent sacrificing the present. Fruitful social revolutions, social reformations and development activities are usually set in motion by individuals who have really grasped the meaning of *Paṭiccasamuppāda*.<sup>18</sup>

## 6. Buddhist Ethic of Wealth: Peace with Economical Progress:

On the "application" of Buddhist teachings has come out a lot of literature. it is fascinating to see how little attention has been paid to serious application of Buddhist principles in the modern practice of daily life. Perhaps the most ironic of all is the fact that the leadership in Buddhist countries have paid service to the ideals of the Buddhist traditions Buddhist developing countries at best.

There are of course multiple and complex factors which are conducive to peace, both in the "inner" and "outer" senses of the term. However, when we take *Buddhadasa Bhikkhu* seriously, we are confronted with the challenge to focus the attention on one fundamental issue, namely, the absence of spirituality and moral values in the economic realm. I take this position to mean that the quest for moral values" and "spirituality in economics is the key to peace.

So it seems that although economics does begin and end with abstract values, namely, demands or desires and consumption or satisfaction, the process between these two end points has been taken up by quantitative calculation, to the extent that economics has been believed to be a science. In this sense the values of neutrality have taken precedence over moral issues in economics and has effectively concealed the process of neutralization of all values. No doubt that a society which moves on with basically economic force should face so much confusion of the soul which manifests itself in so much strife and violence.

<sup>16</sup>. *Dīgha Nikāya*, *Aṭṭhakathā*, Vol. I, P. 263.

<sup>17</sup>. *Dīgha Nikāya*, *Aṭṭhakathā*, Vol. III, P. 43

<sup>18</sup>. Dr Dharmasena Hittiarachchi, *Buddhist Economic Philosophy; As Reflected in Early Buddhism*, published by the Educational Publications Department, Printed by the State Printing Corporation, 2001, Sri Lanka, P. 89-98.

It is fascinating to see that so much of the literature on Thai Buddhism has dealt with the way of the monks, and much less on the way of the laymen, particularly on the noble ways (*ariya magga*). Right livelihood (*sammā-ājīva*) is prescribed as the fifth of the eight ways, starting from right understanding (*sammā-diṭṭhi*) to right concentration (*sammā-samādhi*). According to Buddhadasa Bhikkhu, *sammā* means "righteous," which indicates being correct and sufficient. In the economic sphere, having sufficient is a prerequisite for physical well-being as well as a pre-condition for peace and order in a given society. In the *Cakkavattisīhanāda sutta* of the Dīghanikāya, the decline of a human society is described.

In a real socio-cultural context, this dialectical relationship must be very delicate, and a well-balanced and appropriate relationship quite difficult to achieve. Even during the time of the Buddha himself, there were many eases of offerings from the laymen and lay women which were deemed inappropriate by the Buddha. In some sense, the 227 rules of conduct for monks in the *Vinaya* are not only a prescription for monks' practice in relation to the lay world, they are also a system of rules which prescribe an appropriate utilization of things fourth for any emergency. Taken together, these two sermons hardly portray a Buddha who is against wealth as such it is the Buddhist ethics of acquiring wealth and the Buddhist ethics of spending wealth which are the major concern. One can say that these instructions indicate what being correct means in the term *sammā-ājīva* or right livelihood.

Another point which should be added here is that right livelihood includes an overcoming of "selfishness." This point can serve as a direct critique of the existing practice of economics whose unquestioned assumptions about unlimited human desires in a sense celebrates unbridled selfishness. As Buddhadasa Bhikkhu puts it: As long as the economic system is based on selfishness, encourages selfishness, supports and protects selfishness, justifies and legitimizes selfishness. It would tail Buddhist economics, therefore, must overcome selfishness in both the worldly and spiritual spheres.

It is important to note that economics needs a moral dimension if it is to be understood as a human activity which can lead to the overcoming of selfishness. The aims and purposes of economics is, on the one hand, not simply to get rich or grow in number and size, or to accumulate the most means to satisfy one's desires, whether banal or subtle, but it involves the taking care of other people within different circles of relationship as exemplified in the above sermon for Anathapitidika. On the other hand, earning wealth is not condemned, bill legitimate ways of earning needs to be the pre-condition otherwise, not only does it not make economic sense to be unethical in many circumstances, it also can easily create a devastating moral situation for all.

At one level, the Buddha instructed people how to spend their wealth wisely; at another level, he offered a new definition of what wealth means. In the *Dwa-sutta* (the sutta on money), the Buddha discussed arya a sab (noble wealth) in the following passage: "Behold, oh monks! There are seven kinds of wealth. What are they? They are 1) *saddhā* (faith). 2) *sīla* (morality), 3) *hirī* (shame). 4) *otappa* (fear of sin), 5) *suta* (being well-teamed), 6) *cāga* (charity), and 7) *panna* (wisdom)".<sup>19</sup>

It is only natural for the Buddha to argue for new definitions of what wealth means. This attempt is necessary for it points to the inadequacy of the "worldly understanding of wealth as owning tangible means of livelihood and satisfaction of desires. To be true to the spirit of Buddhism, a vision of more noble wealth should be created to counterbalance the worldly version, as well as to uplift the human spirit to search for higher value in life."<sup>20</sup>

## 7. Conclusion:

Principles of perception laid down in the ways of modern science and the materialist outlook associated with it. They are the most central influences on the intellectual life of modern man. A great section of modern intellectuals subjected to these powers have rejected metaphysics and dogmatic religion along with a host of traditional moral values. Scientific perception has certainly occasioned in incredible material progress. However, it could not be demanded that human beings in the modern world are living to be relax able lives, feeling safe and secure, and that their interests will not be unjustly harmed by fellow human beings. The willing conflicts are flagrant in the modern world. Actions of terrorism, violation of human rights, racial and other types of discrimination, violence against blameless human beings are terrible moral crimes that we commonly see in many parts of the world. It seems to be poverty and destitution in surprisingly.

In Buddhist terms, scientific and technological progress has in no way occasioned in the reduction of the unwholesome roots of human behavior, namely, greed, hatred and delusion (*lobha*, *dosa* and *moha*).<sup>154</sup> As long as these roots of unwholesome behavior are not extremely reduced or are saved within sensible boundaries, it would be impossible to reflect of peace, harmony, happiness and gratification in society. The significance of Buddhism to the modern social situation stands up the fact that it deals with a philosophical middle way that recognizes in code the rules of scientific perception, while eliminating both the extreme materialist world-view of modern science and the metaphysical and dogmatic fundamentalism of traditional religion.

<sup>19</sup>. Abhidhamma, Paṭṭhāna, Vol. IV, P.11. Abhidhamma, Aṭṭhakathā, Vol. I, P 188.

<sup>20</sup>. Chanju Mun, Buddhism and Peace, Theory and Practice, Published by Jung Bup Sa Buddhist Temple of Hawaii, Printed in USA, 2006, P. 250-259.