THE ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGY IN BUDDHISM

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ABSTRACT

Psychology emphasizes an analytical study of the mind, whereas Buddhist psychology studies not only an analysis of the mind and its concomitant, but behavior as a whole, with the mind as the predominant element of study. This research paper is an attempt to study psychological aspects in Buddhism with finding the quest whether Buddhism is considered as psychology or not, demonstrating the foundations of Buddhist psychology, analyzing early Buddhist term in psychology and the role *Dhamma* as a Buddhist psychology.

Keywords: Buddhism, Psychology, Foundation of Buddhist psychology, Mind, *Dhamma*.

INTRODUCTION

Buddhism emerged over two thousand and six hundred years ago by the Enlightened One, widely known as the Buddha Goutama. Early Buddhism was remarkably ahead of its time. The entire teachings of the Buddha touch upon the philosophical, sociological, ethical, spiritual and doctrinal aspects earnestly, while exploring a psychology that occurs through analyzing the mind and its various factors.

Psychology is defined as the science of the mind that introduces an individual classification and criteria of mind and brings to light the emotional, behavioral, internal factors, quality, functions and processes. Buddhism is referred to as a practical psychology due to its intrinsic nature to interact with these major psychological factors. It explains critical factors of mental phenomena through psycho-analysis of consciousness, sub-consciousness and empirical consciousness. Hence, it is clear that modern day psychology has its root in these ancient Buddhist teachings.

DEFINITION OF PSYCHOLOGY

The word 'psychology' is a Greek term which is generally considered as the science of the mind. Etymologically, the Greek word 'psychology' is derived from the Latin terms – *psyche* and *logos*, where '*psyche*' refers to the mind, soul or spirit, and '*logos*' refers to knowledge, discourse or study[1]. Webster's Dictionary defines psychology as the science of mind, the study of mental and behavior characteristics of an individual or group[2]. Literally, psychology is the scientific study of mental function and behavior.

Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, the relevance of Buddhist teachings to modern psychology has been of great interest to academia and respected western scholars[3]. While the term 'psychology' cannot be found in Buddhist Pali and Sanskrit scriptures, the terms 'consciousness' (*viññāṇa*) 'mind' (*mano* or *citta*) are found extensively throughout

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[1]Richard Gross, **Psychology: The Science of Mind and Behavior** (London: Hodder Education, 2010), p.2.

[2]Virginia S. Thatcher, Ed., **The New Webster Encyclopedic Dictionary of the English Language.** Vol. 1 (New York: Grolier Incorporated, 1967), p.673.

[3]Rahu Sarath-Chandra, **Basic Buddhist Psychology: The Building Blocks** (Queensland: Washington Enterprises, 2006), pp. xi-xvi.

various Buddhist discourses (*sutta*). The *Pali-English Dictionary* by T.W. Rhys Davids defines consciousness (*viññāṇa*) as a mental quality as a constituent of individuality[4]. In addition, Dr. M. W. Padmasiri De Silva provides four definitions for consciousness (*viññāṇa*), viz., (i) cognitive consciousness, (ii) survival factor, (iii) the medium in which *jhānic* or spiritual progress takes places, and (iv) a sort of noetic sentience[5]. Moreover, Padmasiri De Silva distinguishes consciousness (*viññāṇa*) in two distinct types – short range and long range. The concept of consciousness (*viññāṇa*) as 'short range' refers to one of the five faculties (*pañca-khanda*), whereas the concept of consciousness (*viññāṇa*) as 'long range' refers to consciousness as a link in the chain of causation (*paṭiccasamuppāda*)[6]. From a Buddhist perspective, the concept of 'consciousness' (*viññāṇa*) parallels its coherence and nuance to the modern day concept of 'psychology'. In fact, the studies of the Buddhist view of consciousness (*viññāṇa*) and psychology explicitly analyze the nature of mind and its various factors.

IS BUDDHISM CONSIDERED AS A PSYCHOLOGY?

Buddhism is undoubtedly a non-aggressive doctrine, a moral philosophical system, refuting all dogmatic views, mere faith, belief and superstitions. Buddhism asserts that the mind is the root and forerunner for every single action (*kamma*)[7]. By controlling and taming the mind, one can relinquish the circle of existence (*saṃsāra*). The intention of Buddhism is to cease suffering through an introspective and deepened understanding of the nature of the mind while cultivating moral virtues. The Buddha's first sermon, 'Setting the Wheel of *Dhamma* in Motion' (*Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*) states the noble truth of the cessation of suffering (*dukkhanirodho ariyasaccaṃ*)[8]. Regardless of the methodology of the Buddha's doctrine (*dhamma*), an intellectual hypothesis often occurs among Buddhist academia and scholars as to whether Buddhism is considered a psychology or philosophy. Pioneer Buddhist scholar Caroline AF. Rhys Davids in her book *Buddhist Psychology* clarifies:

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[4]T.W. Rhys Davids, and William Stede, **Pali-English Dictionary** (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, 2007), p. 618.

[5]M.W. Padmasiri De Silva, **Buddhist and Freudian Psychology** (Colombo: Lake House LTD. Publishers, 1973), p.9.

[6]*Ibid*.

[7]Dhp. 1 & 2.

[8]Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta, SN. 56.11.

> "Buddhist philosophy is ethical first and last. This is beyond dispute. But among ethical systems there is a world of difference in the degree of importance attached to the psychological prolegomena of ethics. In ethical problems we are on a basis of psychology, depending for our material largely upon the psychology of connotation or will, with its co-efficient of feeling and intelligence."[9]

Moreover, professor M. W. Padmasiri De Silva in his remarkable book *Buddhist and Freudian Psychology* asserts Buddhism as a psychology from a moral perspective:

> "The Buddha was interested in the fundamental tragedy of man: the suffering individual. Thus it was an ethico-psychology with therapeutic basis. Buddhism as a therapeutic system is based on a study of human psychology. But though it is a psychological theory, it has a practical aim. The Buddha makes a psychological analysis of mind and its state with a moral purpose, the purging of the mind of unwholesome states (*kilesa*)."[10]

Psychology emphasizes an analytical study of the mind, whereas Buddhist psychology studies not only an analysis of the mind and its concomitant, but behavior as a whole, with the mind as the predominant element of study. In fact, the Buddha's central discourses on Dependent Origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*) and the Four Foundations of Mindfulness (*cattāro satipatthānā*) unarguably presents a psychological analysis of mind and its state with a moral purpose through relinquishing the mind's unwholesome states (*kilesa*) and three types of cankers (*āsava*)[11], viz., sensuous desire (*kāmāsava*), existence (*bhavāsava*) and ignorance (*avijjāsava*).

FOUNDATIONS OF BUDDHIST PSYCHOLOGY

The foundation of Buddhist psychology is unquestionably defined as the study of mind, which is also classified as an inner science from a modern psychological perspective. Early Buddhist discourses extensively demonstrate three terms of mental

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[9] Caroline A.F. Rhys Davids, **A Buddhist manual of Psychological Ethics** (New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1975), p. xvi.

[10] Silva, **Buddhist and Freudian Psychology,** pp. 29-30.

[11] Nibbedhika Sutta, AN. 6.63.

processes, viz., thought (*citta*), mind (*mano*) and consciousness (*viññāṇa*) which explains the entirety of psychology in terms of Buddhist introspection. These three terms are considered the foundations of Buddhist psychology and explored in greater depth.

First, the Pali word *'citta'* derives from the root (√) *'cit'* (to think of an object)[12], and it is common to all classes of consciousness. The *Pali English Dictionary* by A. P. Buddhadatta Mahathera, defines thought (*citta*) as the key to Buddhism in its entirety[13]. Regarding the early Buddhist discourse 'Two Sorts of Thinking' (*Dvedhāvitakka Sutta*), the Buddha expresses two kinds of thinking (*citta*) - wholesome thinking (*kusalā citta*) and unwholesome thinking (*akusalā citta*)[14]. Moreover, the Buddha instructs on how to combat the arising of unwholesome thoughts with wholesome thoughts in 'The Removal of Distracting Thoughts' (*Vitakkasanthana Sutta*):

> "Here, bhikkhus, when a bhikkhu is giving attention to some sign, and owing to that sign there arise in him evil unwholesome thoughts connected with desire, with hate, and with delusion, then he should give attention to other sign connected with what is wholesome."[15]

Furthermore, depending on the way of thinking (*citta*), one can be decisive in one's viewpoint from different intellectual perspectives. The Buddha classified sixty-two kinds of wrong views (*diṭṭhi*) 'The All-embracing Net of Views' (*Brahmajāla Sutta*) as thus: (i) four kinds of beliefs in eternity (*sassata diṭṭhi*), (ii) four kinds of dualistic beliefs in eternity and non-eternity (*ekacca sassata diṭṭhi*), (iii) four views of the world being finite or infinite (*antānanta diṭṭhi*), (iv) four kinds of ambiguous evasion (*amarāvikkhepavāda*), (v) two doctrines of non-causality (*adhiccasamuppannavāda*), (vi) sixteen kinds of belief in the doctrine of percipient immorality (*saññīvāda*), (vii) eight kinds of belief in the doctrine of non-percipient immorality (*asaññīvāda*), (viii) eight kinds of belief in the doctrines of

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12 Davids & Stede, **Pali-English Dictionary,** p. 226.

[13] A. P. Buddhadatta Mahāthera**, Concise Pali-English Dictionary** (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, 1994), p. 103.

[14] Dvedhāvitakka Sutta, MN. 19.

[15] "*Idha bhikkhave bhikkhunā yaṃ nimittaṃ āgamma yaṃ nimittaṃ manasikaroto uppajjanti pāpakā akusalā vitakkā chandūpasaṃhitāpi dosūpasaṃhitāpi mohūpasaṃhitāpi, tena bhikkhave bhikkhunā tamhā nimittā aññaṃ nimittaṃ manasikātabbaṃ kusalūpasaṃhitaṃ*", Vitakkasanthana Sutta, MN. 20; Trans. by Bhikkhu Ñaṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi, **Majjhima Nikāya: The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha** (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1995), p.211.

neither percipient nor non-percipient immorality (*n'evasaññī-nāsaññītvāda*), (ix) seven kinds of belief in annihilation (*ucchedavāda*) and (x) five kinds of belief in the doctrines of Nibbāna here and now (*diṭṭhadhammanibbānavāda*).[16] The Blessed One admonished all wrong-view (*diṭṭhi*) as mentioned above. By contrast, according to the 'Discourse on Right View' (*Sammadiṭṭhi Sutta*), the Buddha's chief disciple Sāriputta explicitly delivered an exposition on right view as follows:

> "When a noble disciple has thus understood suffering, the origin of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the way leading to the cessation of suffering…he here and now makes an end of suffering. In that way to a noble disciple is one of right view… and has arrived at this true Dhamma".[17]

Buddhism precisely expresses right view as understanding what is wholesome and what is unwholesome; it is the full comprehension of the Four Noble Truths (*cattāri ariyasaccāni*) and not holding on to an eternalistic view concerning soul (*atta*).[18] Thought process (*citta*) psychologically leads a being (*puggala*) to judge reality and view whether it is right or wrong. Moreover, the Buddha asserts the world is led by thought (*citta*), thereby highlighting its power either for good or for bad[19]. Hence, the statement certainly implies that thought (*citta*) process leads an individual (*puggala*) to understand each view, whether it is right or wrong, and points the mind in the state of wholesome actions.

Second, the Pali word '*mano*' is defined as mind[20]. Buddhism precisely illustrates the nature of mind as flickering, unstable and restless; the Buddha describes the nature of mind:

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[16] Brahmajāla Sutta, DN. 1.

[17] *Yato kho āvuso ariyasāvako evaṃ dukkhaṃ pajānāti, evaṃ dukkhasamudayaṃ pajānāti, evaṃ dukkhanirodhaṃ pajānāti, evaṃ dukkhanirodhagāminiṃ paṭipadaṃ pajānāti so sabbaso rāgānusayaṃ pahāya paṭighānusayaṃ paṭivinodetvā asmīti diṭṭhimānānusayaṃ samūhanitvā avijjaṃ pahāya vijjaṃ uppādetvā diṭṭheva dhamme dukkhassantaṅkaro hoti, Ettāvatāpi kho āvuso ariyasāvako sammādiṭṭhi hoti. Ujugatāssa diṭṭhi. Dhamme aveccappasādena samannāgato āgato imaṃ saddhammanti,* Dvedhavitakka Sutta, MN. 19; Trans. by Nyanamoli & Bodhi, 135.

[18] *Ibid.*

[19] David J. Kalupahana, "**The Foundations of Buddhist Psychology**", *New Horizons in Buddhist Psychology* (2010), p.83.

[20] Nyanatiloka, **Buddhist Dictionary: Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines** (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 2004), p.96.

"The mind is difficult to control; swiftly and lightly, it moves and lands wherever it pleases."[21]

David J. Kalupahana defines mind (*mano*) under the category of faculties of sensory perception[22], whereas Mrs. Edwina Pio defines the mind as the intellectual functioning of consciousness[23]. Buddhism refers to the mind as the root of every single action[24] and the world that is led around by the mind[25]. This statement undoubtedly implies that it is the mind (*mano*) that abides at the center of all mental faculties and explicitly demonstrates its integral relevancy to Buddhist psychology.

Third, consciousness (*viññāṇa*) is defined as a mental quality[26] and an intimate part of the human personality. According to Buddhist discourse, the human personality can be analyzed through five groups (*pañca-khanda*), which are also known as five modalities in terms of a psychological perspective[27]. The five aggregates (*pañca-khanda*) - material form (*rūpa*), feeling (*vedanā*), perception (*saññā*), dispositions (*saṅkhāra*) and consciousness (*viññāṇa*) psychologically defines the behaviors of the body, motivating affects, the six-senses, cognitions and images, and awareness respectively[28]. Furthermore, the chain of dependent origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*) analyses name and form (*nāma-rūpa*) which depends on consciousness (*viññāṇa*) and again, consciousness (*viññāṇa*) depends on name and form (*nāma-rūpa*)[29]. On the epistemological value of consciousness, the Buddha's chief disciple Sāriputta states in Majjhima Nikāya:

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[21] [21]"*dunniggahassa lahuno-yattha k1ma nip1tino*", Dhp. 35 ; Trans. by K. Sri Dhammananda, **The Dhammapada** (Kualumpur: Sasana Abhiwurdhi Wardhana Society, 1992), p.100.

[22] Kalupahana, "**The Foundations of Buddhist Psychology**", *New Horizons in Buddhist Psychology* (2010), p.83.

[23] Edwina Pio**, Buddhist Psychology: A Modern Perspective** (New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1988), p.33.

[24] Dhp. 1 (lines 1-2).

[25] "*Cittena niyati loko*"; Devatāsaṃyuttaṃ, SN. 1.62; Trans. by Bhikkhu Bodhi**, Saṃyutta Nikāya: The Connected Discourses of the Buddha,** (Boston: Wisdom Publication, 2000), p. 130.

[26] Davids & Stede, **Pali-English Dictionary,** pp.618-619.

[27] Kalupahana, "**The Foundations of Buddhist Psychology**", *New Horizons in Buddhist Psychology* (2010), p.87.

[28] *Ibid*.

[29] Nidānasaṃyuttam, SN. 12.2

> "Wisdom and consciousness, friend - these states are conjoined, not disjoined, and it is impossible to separate each of these states from the other in order to describe the difference between them. For what one wisely understands, that one cognizes, and what one cognizes, that one wisely understands."[30]

As exemplified by Eminent Sāriputta, the most fascinating feature of the study of consciousness is that wisdom cannot flourish alone without awareness of consciousness (*viññāṇa*). The role of consciousness plays an important part in Buddhist psychology for its functions in determining the continuity of the human personality. In fact, Buddhist psychology defines 'consciousness' (*viññāṇa*) as an instinctive quality for deep analysis with all its ambiguous mental factors and conditions.

EARLY BUDDHIST ANALYSIS OF PSYCHOLOGY

Buddhism analyzes the psychological perspective of cognitions based on the forces and conditions of the mind. The aim of Buddhism is to eradicate sufferings (*dukkha*) through realizing the noble truths (*ariyasaccāni*) which the Buddha himself announced in the first sermon at Varanasi[31]. In first sermon 'Setting the Wheel of Dhamma in Motion' (*Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*), the Buddha points out eight types of sufferings where the first group of sufferings are categorized under bodily suffering – birth, old-age and death, and the second group of sufferings are mental- sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress and despair are categorized to under mental suffering[32]. By contrast, on the basis of stages and conditions, suffering can be divided into two- lower and higher stages. The lower state of suffering is experienced as physical pain of the body, privation and discomfort, whereas the higher state of suffering is experienced as mental pain such as a man's illusion with reality, life disappointments, dissatisfaction and desire[33]. The heart of Buddhist teaching is that the

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[30] "*Yā cāvuso paññā yañca viññāṇaṃ ime dhammā saṃsaṭṭhā no visaṃsaṭṭhā. Na ca labbhā imesaṃ dhammānaṃ vinibbhujitvā vinibbhujitvā nānākaraṇaṃ paññāpetuṃ. Yañcāvuso pajānāti taṃ vijānāti. Yaṃ vijānāti taṃ pajānāti",* Mahāvedalla Sutta, MN. 43; Trans. by Ñaṇamoli and Bodhi**, Majjhima Nikāya: The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha** , P. 388.

[31] Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta, SN. 56.11

[32] *Ibid*.

[33] Anagarika B. Govinda, **The psychological Attitude of Early Buddhist Philosophy** (Delhi: Eastern Book Linkers, 2012), p. 64.

nature of suffering originates more in the mind, than in the body. Early Buddhism explicitly emphasizes the crucial exposition of the mind, as Nyanaponika writes:

> "Mind is the starting point, the focal point, and also, as the liberated mind of the saint, the culminating point."[34]

Venerable Nyanaponika's observation of the mind precisely illustrates the mind's tendency for proliferation while the purified state of mind illustrates the state of liberation. Hence, from a psychological perspective, early Buddhism analyzes mental suffering where the instinctive nature of mind is evaluated extensively.

NATURE OF THE MIND

Early Buddhist teaching clearly highlights the nature of mind as flickering, unstable and very difficult to restrain[35]. It also notes the mind's ongoing proliferating tendency (*papañca*) that repeatedly multiplies thoughts, concepts, views, attitudes and beliefs. Buddhism strictly claims that wholesome or unwholesome thoughts arise from the proliferating mind (*papañca*).[36] The early Buddhist analysis of sensory processes demonstrates how this mind causes proliferation due to its dualistic subject-object mode of thinking. Regarding the sermon 'The Discourse on Honeyball' (*Madhupiṇḍika Sutta*), Venerable Mahākacchāna observes subject-object dualism in relationship to the proliferating mind as follows:

> "When the agent sees (perceives) anything (object), the object arises into the mind, and creates consciousness-these three contacts make mind consciousness".[37]

The statement above describes how the mind, upon sensory contact, analyzes the object in order for it to be recognized. If the object is unknown, the mind formulates and repeatedly speculates concepts and views of the object. According to the Pali Canonical texts, the mind's sensory processes and cognitive events can be further explained as '*papañca*',

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[34] Nyanaponika, **The Heart of Buddhist Meditation** (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 2005) 21.

[35] "*phandanaṁ capalaṁ cittaṁ- durakkhaṁ dunnivārayaṁ*", Dhp. 33.

[36] Madhupindika Sutta, MN. 18.

[37] "*cakkhuñ ca paṭicca rūpe ca upajjati cakkhu viññānaṃ. ṭinnaṁ saṁgati passo", Ibid.*

the fabricating or proliferating mind and '*vitakka*' as an initial reflection of the mind[38]. In addition, both signify the mind's complex process. Furthermore, Dr. Sorakkulame Pemarathana clarified the function and processes of *papañca* and *vitakka* as follows:

> "While *vitakka* refers to the initial reasoning about the perceived sensory object, the subsequent cognitive event, *papañca,* refers to the tendency of the mind to proliferate thinking and reasoning about perceived object via concepts and view (*saññā*)."[39]

'*Vitakka*', or applied thought, is also closely associated with meditational practices. The processes and functions of the mind, in terms of an early Buddhist psychological perspective, clearly indicates the proliferating tendency (*papañca*) as a foremost instinctive nature of the mind.

MANAGING OF THE MIND

Progressive psychology integrates Buddhist thought on how to protect the mind against the mind's natural tendency to proliferate (*papañca*). Early Buddhist teaching applied a method for taming and training the proliferating mind through a practice of mindfulness (*sati*) meditation and discernment (*sampajañña*). These two mental states lead the mind to acquire serenity from which to develop insight knowledge (*ñāṇa*). Accordingly, the Buddha admired those who could guard their minds from deluded, destructive thoughts and relayed that a guarded mind brings happiness[40]. Buddhism asserts that one should restrain, curb and subdue the mind by one's own thought (*cetasā*)[41].

Ancient Buddhist teaching explicitly advises to refrain from greed (*lobha*), delusion (*moha*) and hatred (*dosa*) and asserts that these three unwholesome states of mind are impediments and obstacles to mental uplift. According to the chain of causation (*paṭiccasamuppāda*), ignorance (*avijjā*) is the root for becoming and the cause for rotated

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[38] Davids & Stede, **Pali-English Dictionary,** P. 620.

[39] Sorakkhulame Pemarathana, "***Early Buddhist Insights in Proliferating Concepts and Views***". *New Horizons in Buddhist Psychology* (2010): 124.

[40] "*cittassa damatho sādhu- cittaṃ dantaṃ sukhāvahaṃ*", Dhp. 35.

[41] "*Cetasā cittaṁ samannesati*", Vitakkasanthana Sutta, MN. 20.

(*samsara*) existence. As long as the mind is not properly managed, it is agitated by different objects while consistently fabricating. By contrast, in the discourse 'The Foundations of Mindfulness' (*Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*), the Buddha emphasized four areas of concentration (*cattāro satipaṭṭhānā*) – (i) the contemplation of the body (*kāyānupassanā*), (ii) the contemplation of feeling (*vedanānupassanā*), (iii) the contemplation of consciousness (*cittānupassanā*), (iv) the contemplation of mental objects (*dhammānupassanā*)[42]. In the same discourse, the Blessed One claimed that the direct path (*ekāyano maggo*) to purification of being is through these four foundations of mindfulness[43]. Moreover, in sustaining mindfulness and awareness, the Buddha also advises to observe wisely (*yoniso manasikāro*) and watch reality as it is (*yathābhūta ñāṇadassana*). While observing the mind, the Blessed One advised the lay follower Bahiya thus:

> "When you have seen, there will be only what is seen. When you have heard, there will be only what is heard. When you have sensed, there will be only what is sensed. When you have cognized, there will be only what is cognized."[44]

The Buddha's discourse on the four foundations of mindfulness (*cattāro satipaṭṭhānā*) introduces a practice that is consistent with thinking as it is (*yathābhūta ñāṇadassana*) through wise attention (*yoniso manasikāro*). Combined with meditation, the practice of inner solitude curbs and manages the thinking mind into a lucid state of inner rapture and serenity. Early Buddhist teaching on mindfulness meditation or wise observation of reality is undoubtedly an effective way to manage the mind through a systematic format which is respectfully accepted by modern psychologists.

THE '*DHAMMA*' AS A PSYCHOLOGY

The timeless teaching of the Buddha, which he taught for forty-five years in ancient India, is widely known as '*Dhamma*' (Pali), or '*Dharma*' (Sanskrit). The Pali word '*dhamma*' has various meanings, but in this case, '*Dhamma*' refers to the teaching or doctrine of the

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[42] Satipatthana Sutta, MN. 10.

[43] *Ibid*.

[44] "*diṭṭhe diṭṭhamattaṃ bhavissati, sute sutamattaṃ bhavissati, mute mutamattaṃ bhavissati, viññāte viññātamattaṃ bhavissatī*" , Bāhiya Sutta, Ud. 1.10. `

Buddha[45]. On one occasion, the Buddha instructed his attendant, venerable Ānanda, about the value of *Dhamma* as follows:

> "Ānanda, it may be that you will think: 'The Teacher's instruction has ceased, now we have no teacher!' It should not be seen like this, Ānanda, for what I have taught and explained to you as Dhamma and discipline will, at my passing, be your teacher."[46]

The entire teachings (*dhamma*) of the Buddha have a strong linkage with psychological contents that appear extensively throughout the Buddhist discourses (*sutta*). The Buddha was undeniably a great psychologist who skillfully responded to all inquiries through his profound, subtle and middle way teachings, i.e. *Dhamma*. While the Buddha listened to questions from a visitor or wanderer, at the onset the Blessed One analyzed each question, observed the level of questioner's knowledge level and responded accordingly. The Buddha described four skillful ways of dealing with questions- (i) some questions should be given a direct answer, (ii) some questions should be answered by way of analyzing them, (iii) some questions should be answered by counter-questions and (iv) some questions should simply be put aside[47]. Hence, a psychological investigation became a method of responding to questions posed by seekers of the *Dhamma*. The Buddha refused to address metaphysical questions. These speculative questions were not conducive to liberation from suffering (*dukkha*)[48]. Further, the Buddha prohibited his disciples and followers from demonstrating any psychic powers and miracles. Regarding the "*Kevatta (kevaddha) Sutta*", when the householder Kevaddha (Kevatta) asked the Buddha to perform superhuman feats and miracles, the Blessed One replied:

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[45] Davids & Stede, **Pali-English Dictionary,** PP.335-337.

[46] "*Siyā kho panānanda tumhākaṃ evamassa, atītasatthukaṃ pāvacanaṃ, natthi no satthāti. Na kho panetaṃ ānanda evaṃ daṭṭhabbaṃ. Yo kho ānanda mayā dhammo ca vinayo ca desito paññatto so vo mamaccayena satthā ti*", Mahāparinibbāna Sutta, DN. 16; Trans. by Maurice Walshe, **Dīgha Nikāya: The Long Discourses of the Buddha** (Boston: Wisdom Publication, 1995) 269-270.

[47] "*Cattārimāni bhikkhave pañhavyākaraṇāni. Katamāni cattāri: Atthi bhikkhave pañho ekaṃsavyākaraṇīyo, atthi bhikkhave pañho vibhajja vyākaraṇīyo, atithi bhikkhave pañho paṭipucchā vyākaraṇīyo, atthi bhikkhave pañho ṭhapanīyo.Imāni kho bhikkhave cattāri pañhavyākaraṇ* ", Pañha Sutta, AN. 4.42.

[48] Avyākata Sutta AN. 7.51.

> "Kevaddha, this is not the way I teach Dhamma to the monks, by saying: 'Go, monks and perform superhuman feats and miracles for the white-clouded laypeople!'"[49]

The Blessed One explicitly stated his rational and empirical spirit in the 'Kalama Sutta: To the Kalamas' as follows:

> "Do not go upon authoritative tradition; nor upon what has been acquired by repeated hearing; nor upon rumour; nor upon what is in a scripture; nor upon speculative metaphysical theories, reasons and arguments; nor upon a point of view; nor upon specious reasoning; nor upon accepting a statement as true because it agrees with a theory that one is already convinced of; nor upon another's seeming ability; nor upon the consideration."[50]

Thus, the *Dhamma* is a practice, a discipline of free investigation, independent of mere blind faith, belief and dogma and the science of thought. When viewed as a hypothesis, the *Dhamma* suggests an experiment with clear evidence. When viewed as the study of the nature of the mind, the *Dhamma* is unarguably defined as psychology. The Buddha exposed his subtle, yet profound teachings from a mental perspective in order to understand the nature of the human personality, encourage right view, and help to eradicate suffering from releasing the mind from ignorance, greed and hatred. Metaphysical inquiries, psychic abilities and superhuman feats were not essential to the path to liberation. Purification of mind was the supreme goal.

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[49] "*na kho ahaṃ kevaḍḍha bhikkhūnaṃ evaṃ dhammaṃ desemi 'etha tumhe bhikkhave gihīnaṃ odātavasanānaṃ uttarimanussadhammā iddhipāṭihāriyaṃ karothā'ti*", Kevaddha Sutta, DN. 11, Trans. by Maurice Walshe, **Dīgha Nikāya: The Long Discourses of the Buddha,** P. 175.

[50] "*Alaṃ hi vo kālāmā kaṅkhituṃ alaṃ vicikicchituṃ, kaṅkhanīye ca pana vo ṭhāne vicikicchā uppannā, etha tumhe kālāmā mā anusasavena, mā paramparāya, mā itikirāya, mā piṭakasampadānena, mā takkahetu, mā nayahetu, mā ākāraparivitakkena, mā diṭṭhinijjhānakkhantiyā, mā bhabbarūpatāya, mā samaṇo no garū'ti. Yadā tumhe kālāmā attanā'va jāneyyātha: ime dhammā akusalā, ime dhammā sāvajjā, ime dhammā viññūgarahitā, ime dhammā samattā samādinnā ahitāya dukkhāya saṃvattantī'ti: atha tumhe kālāmā pajaheyyātha*." Kalama Sutta, AN. 3. 65.

NATURE OF BUDDHIST PSYCHOLOGY IN RELATION TO MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

Both Buddhist psychology and modern psychology examine the nature of the mind, particular to mental wellness or illness, normal or abnormal behavior and the range of emotions and mental disorders. In modern time, psychologists are called upon to support those with mental illness and problematic behaviors. The common Pali term coined by Buddhism for explaining 'madness' (mental illness or psychosis) is *ummatta* which refers to anindividual who is 'out of one's mind'[51]. According to the Pali literature, various examples of psychotic behavior appear through such characters as Patācara[52] and Kisāgotami[53]. However, both Buddhist and modern psychology examine mental illness, psychosis and problematic behavior through not only an individual's thoughts and emotions, but actions as well. For instance, emotions precede the thought process to conduce a feeling of happiness (*sukha*) or sadness (*dukkha*). In fact, an emotion is defined as the consequence of feeling found within the mind.

In addition, the Buddhist method of mindfulness practice is explicitly incorporated into current psychological treatments. Modern psychologists and psychotherapies are extensively applying mindfulness based stress reduction (MBSR- developed by Jon Kabat-Zinn) and cognitive-behavioral therapy to alleviate mental illness. Most psychologists have accepted Buddhist therapeutic value and methodology on mindfulness training and its application to reduce stress, develop an understanding of emotions and the value of wholesome behavior. Eminent western teachers, Jack Kornfield, Sharon Salzberg, D.T Suzuki, Joseph Goldstein and Jon Kabat-Zinn have shown how mindfulness based therapy can be applied to reduce stress, fear and mental illness while uplifting the mind to a stable condition. Furthermore, another productive technique is cognitive-behavioral therapy which emphasizes how to reflect upon thought process, emotions, actions and feelings. The methodology of cognitive-behavioral therapy and approaches to behavioral modifications are like a carbon copy of Buddhist teachings[54]. Dr. Padmal De Silva agrees that modern

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[51] Buddhadatta, **Concise Pali-English Dictionary ,** P.65.

[52] Patacara, Thig. 5.10.

[53] Kisagotami Their, Thig. 10.

[54] Padmal de Silva, "**Buddhist Psychology: Exploring Practical and Theoretical Aspects**", *New Horizons in Buddhist Psychology* (2010): 102.

behavioral therapy and cognitive-behavior therapy have foundations established in Buddhist teachings (*dhamma*), he states:

> "The range of behavioral and cognitive-behavioral strategies found in the literatures of the Dhamma is wide. The strategies include: reducing fear through graded exposure and reciprocal inhibition; using rewards for promoting desirable behavior; modeling appropriate behaviors to induce behavioral change; applying stimulus control to eliminate undesirable behavior; training social skills; practicing self-monitoring; controlling intrusive thoughts by distraction, by switching/stopping, incompatible thoughts, and by prolonged exposure to the unwanted intrusions; using intense, covert focusing on the unpleasant aspects of a stimulus or the unpleasant consequences of a response, to reduce attachment to the former and eliminate the latter; using a graded approach to the development of positive feelings towards others; use of external cues in behavior control; use of response cost to aid elimination of undesirable behavior; involving family members for carrying out behavior change programs; and so on."[55]

Modern psychological techniques like cognitive-behavioral therapy and mindfulness-based stress reduction are absolutely well defined, easy to absorb and empirically testable. On the other hand, Buddhist psychological methods like the four foundations of mindfulness meditation (*cattāro satipaṭṭhānā*), consistent with thinking as it is (*yathābhūta ñāṇadassana*) and wise attention (*yoniso manasikāro*) lead the mind into a lucid state of inner peace and produce constructive and productive thought through relinquishing problematic behaviors, mental disorders and psychosis. Thus, this statement implies that the nature of modern psychology has a strong connection to Buddhist psychology. In fact, modern mindfulness-based therapies are established on the theory of Buddhist teachings.

[55] Op.cit.103.

CONCLUSION

Psychology is defined as the science of the mind that introduces an individual's criteria of mental functions and factors, whereas applied Buddhism is recognized as the study of mind due to the Buddha's special concern relating to mental health rather than physical health. Referring to mental health, the Buddha explicitly remarked that it is very hard to find a being in the world who can acknowledge freedom from mental disease even for one moment[56]. The Buddha praised the person who could tame the mind from proliferation (*papañca*), greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*).

In summary, Buddhism is considered a psychology from both moral and applied perspectives. Early Buddhism analyzes a particular insight into the psychological perspective of cognitions based on the forces and conditions of the mind, and demonstrates that the foundation of Buddhist psychology is based on three terms of mental processes, viz. thought process (*citta*), mind (*mano*) and consciousness (*viññāṇa*). The Buddhist concept of 'consciousness' (*viññāṇa*) is parallel in its coherence and nuance to the modern day concept of 'psychology'. Early Buddhism, moreover, precisely indicates that the Buddha's teachings which are extensively known as '*Dhamma*' is a psychology due to its rational and insightful doctrine. The Buddha's intention was to share his knowledge (*dhamma*) in order for all understand the nature of the human personality, purify the mind and discover the path to freedom. Modern day therapies such as Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR- developed by Jon Kabat-Zinn) and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy can be traced to the early teachings of the Buddha since 600 BCE. In fact, these Buddhist teachings, such as the four foundations of mindfulness (*cattāro satipaṭṭhānā*), consistently seeing how things are (*yathābhūta ñāṇadassana*), and wise attention (*yoniso manasikāro*) are methods to manage the mind as integrated in today's modern therapies.

The dynamic feature of Buddhist teachings (*dhamma*) clearly implies that Buddhism was markedly ahead of its time in the development of psychology. Modern day therapies, such as Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction and Cognitive-Based Therapy have their practices rooted in the teachings of the Buddha.

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[56] Indriya Vagga, AN. 4.157; Trans. by Bhikkhu Bodhi, *Aṅguttāra Nikaya: The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha* (Boston: Wisdom Publication, 2012) 522.

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