

# Political Buddhism: The Consistency of Buddhist Teaching with the Principles of Democratic Governance

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## Abstract

This article examines the consistency of the teachings of Buddha with the principles of democracy. It is contended that both philosophical approaches requires agreement and support of all segments of society, both citizens and those who control the governance of their society. This requires agreement as to what constitute moral behavior and whether that should be led by those in control of society or by the majority of people that are citizens of that society. In this respect it is pertinent in a society that perceives itself as devoutly Buddhist to examine what effects Buddhism has on the leaders and the citizens.

**Keywords:** Political Buddhism; Consistency Buddhist teachings; Principles of Democratic Governance

## Introduction

Humans are social creatures and our success has been built upon forming social groups ranging from intimate family groups, wider kinship groups and, with invention of agriculture, to villages cities, and countries. Thailand is a mixture of people from different origins that have become bound together by a common philosophy. The Kingdom of Thailand is bound together by the power of the Buddhist teachings and Mithras to the ruling monarch. This is the main principle of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Sahel is important in governing the country. The doctrine of Buddhism is vast and classified into several categories. Each doctrine each category is intended to explain the occurrence of both a cause and a way to solve each problem. Moreover, the level of depth and breadth of the doctrine far. Also aims to meet the needs of different levels of the community.

Since ancient times in Sukhothai until now, has adopted the doctrines of the Buddha to guide the administration of the country The Kingdom ruled under a democratic system with the King as the Head of State The rule of kings like Sanghavatthu still reflect the adoption of Buddhism as a political influence of major importance in governing the country and helping to maintain peaceful coexistence of the different peoples of the Kingdom. The principles of Buddhism are still cited by politicians as a major guiding force in the governance of the Kingdom.

## The meaning and importance of democracy.

Democracy as we know it was born in ancient Greece and the word is derived from “demos” which means the people, and “kratos” which means power. Democracy devolves ultimate power to the people and not to an elite group of powerful rulers.

Recent definitions of democracy are perhaps exemplified by United States President Abraham Lincoln who concisely captured the essence of democracy as a: "government of the people, by the people, for the people (*that*) shall not perish from the land earth.'

Linclon's definition includes three key ingredients: 1) a government of the people; 2) government by the people, 3) government for the people. The emphasis is clearly on ultimate control by the people not an elite cadre (Veerasai et al, 1999).

Also found Many famous political scientists define a democratic regime as varied as Harold Laski, "is the essence of democracy. The desire of human beings to respect and maintain their own importance. Including equality between individuals in the economy Politics" (Cheuathong, 2015)

***"It has been said that democracy is the worst form of government except all the others that have been tried."***

Lord Bryson's "democratic means. The government took a majority of the people support the principle "(in essence, the idea is that the decision by a majority).

Magneto IFOR "Democracy is the form of government and way of life. Democracy, both sides will need to act together "(the essence of democracy. This opinion focuses on the meaning of democracy as well as the style and philosophy of government in the lives of the common man

A.Ranny; Form of government in which the regime based on the principles of sovereignty of the people. Democracy Hearing comments from the public. And ruled by a majority vote.

C.E. Merriam; The concepts and practices geared towards the welfare of the common people. The common intention of the people as a guide

Sukom Nuansakul and Wisit Tawesage define the meaning of democracy as that form of government based on the sovereignty of the people, whether it is a presidential democracy.), or parliament democracy is the ultimate authority to determine dominance in public, it's a total democracy.

In Thailand the word "democracy" may be split into two words are public, which means that the people and the sovereign, which means that the maximum power of the earth. When combined, so mean. The supremacy of the rule of the people or the public. This is unclear because Thailand is a constitutional monarchy like Britain where the monarchy is respected by the people but has limited political power – they are moral, cultural and spiritual

guides but in Britain the power lies with the politicians and her the military. In Britain the military would never take over.

### **The main principles of the rule of democracy.**

Predee Pranomyong discussed in the book. Constitutional prerequisites for public : A political system that can provide two important reasons for the system to exist: (Supsin, 2003)

1. A justice system can only exist as long as it meets the needs of the people and then it will be suppressed by public dissent.

2. In a democracy unhappiness with the leadership result in their dismissal by the free votes of the citizens who are lawfully eligible to vote.

3. The majority to rule, but the rights and treatment of majorities must be respected and catered for.

4. The Rule of Law requires the following:.

1) The law must reflect the wishes of the people.

2) law enforcement will have equality for all citizens

3) The public must be protected from injustice from the legal processes.

5. All who are involved in enforcing the law must act in the interest of the public and with respect to the laws of the land

6. The Government should provide the necessary checks and balances to maintain society but with minimal interference in the lives of individual citizens.

7. All citizens are deemed to be equal under a democratic system

8. Humans are deemed to be rational beings but individual opinions must give way to the collective views of the majority.

9 Democracy recognizes different views and that different political parties may exist to represent the diverse opinions of the public.

10. An optimistic view is that individuals has innate goodness and does not need much control by government.

11. Citizens must have the freedom to express themselves as long as it does not interfere with the rights and liberties of other citizens.

12. The means of arriving at a destination is as important as the destination - the journey is as important as arriving.

### **Buddhism in Thai Society**

Buddhism or Buddhism (Pali: buddhasasana With spring's Sasna, Sanskrit: buddhasasana Buddhist) religion with Buddha as a prophet. Preaching enlightenment as Buddha himself taught as an important doctrine, Buddhist monks formed a community of religious leaders to educate and seek adherence to the teachings of the Buddha.

The successor to the teachings of the Buddha is collectively known as the Triple Gem Thailand has adopted the practice of Buddhism as a way of life and which has become embedded in our cultural roots, identity and heritage. Thailand today. Has social practices and lifestyles based on the main principles of Buddhism which have been observed for a long period and continue to be observed. Buddhist doctrinal beliefs and practices have been infused into the lives of most Thai citizens. In Thailand. Buddhism provides a link between the teachings of Buddha and the awakening of the joy (Adivadhanasit, 2002) of Man (Man) refers to the high-minded morality, including the five precepts and Dharma (Dokbua, 2000) Buddhist religion. in order to play a role in the lives of people in Thailand,. Phra Dhammapitaka (P.A. Payutto) has discussed the importance of Buddhism, covering issues such as Buddhism as a philosophy without racism.

Thailand has a long history and association with Buddhism and it is inextricably mixed with everyday life and maintaining harmony and tolerance with differences in Thai society. The ancient connections with the origins of Buddhism in India can still be found in the many Pali words found in the language relating to Buddhism.

The principles of Buddhism are central to the everyday lives of Thai people at all levels, and of central importance is the temple. The temple, through the monkhood, has a long established a tradition of teaching and training the people as well as being a cultural and spiritual Centre and a hub of

activity for the local community. The temple took care of people from birth through marriage to the afterlife. (Pra Dhammapitaka P.A. Payutto, 1994)

Buddhism as a philosophy of democracy laid down democratic principles as follows: (Wangfaikaw, 2011)

1. Before his death Buddha laid down the principles for living in the book we call “The Book of Discipline”. :

2. Buddhism advocates the “middle way” which is the policy of sufficiency advocated by his Royal highness where greed is shunned and poverty is seen as a situation to be remedied.

3. Buddha saw the problems caused by the caste system where people were condemned because of their birthright and taught that the scavenger was as worthy of respect as anyone. This is a true principle of democracy

4. Buddhist monks have rights under discipline. Such as local priests Will be entitled to the distribution of pre-Buddhist visitors. The temple priests were entitled to the distribution of the respective years. Receive Katin and benefit in seeking a four-month winter robe equality. There is much more freedom to go to temple of any discrimination of any meditation.

5. The division of powers Thera adult acting administrative groups. The canonical discipline Buddha himself ordained As a Buddhist monk, who then commanded the investigations discipline. The case decided by the disciplinary function of the law is unfair discipline.

So it can be argued that Buddhism is not a direct study of political science but that the teachings of Buddhism on morality and behavior have a significant impact upon political decisions because they are deeply rooted in the norms and values of Thai society and form a code of behavior that bonds different segments of society together and helps maintain social cohesion. (The Constitutional Court, 2004)

- 1) Popular Sovereignty to show the public the real power in the ruling. People to express themselves, which is owned by the authority designated male guardian. And their representatives Including the power to withdraw in the event of a power illegally. Through the election of the people liberated secret and thoroughly. The exact timing is not mentioned in the Buddhist principle of Adhipateyya three main reasons. Is to be a big main Attadhipateyya It is the

world's largest And the Lokadhipateyya The main thrust is fairly large. Buddhism, which focuses primarily Dhamadhipateyya as a form of governance best.

2) Liberty means a person can do. Or refrain from doing anything you want. As long as the act or refrain from actions that do not violate the rights and freedoms of others that are protected by law, and not be contrary to public order or public morality by religion. So what are the penalties for breaching religious norms are you saying there are two justice systems-one legitimized by the state and the other "unofficial" Buddhist law- recent scams by monks suggest this may be the attitudes by some. Defined rights and duties In the discipline as clearly defined roles and disciplines in the Yattikam. Buddhist monks are made of square paragraphs 4 or more, including a prayer Pratimook Sanghakam and Krankatin action with 10 or more disciplines.

3) Equality is confident that in a democracy. If human equality is likely, although there can be a different matter. Human beings are able to live better together. Thus, equality means The basic equality in the same society with equality under the law is the same in religion. It can be seen clearly in the equality of caste, race, caste, whether as an individual, where it can be ordained in Buddhism. And in respect of the rainy season. Regardless of whether any caste, race, or the equivalent in respect of the Triple Gem

4) Rule of Law scheme is intended to give protection to the rights and fundamental freedoms of the people is important so parents will use any power. When a law authorizing it. In the Buddhist Vinaya This is a legal practice disciplines. To live together in peace. The aim is to have a group of people for a peace force to protect the people, to the entrenchment of the Sattatham. Is Buddhism

5) Majority Rule in a democracy is to govern in the public interest, so any decision whether to impose a male guardian. Or decision of the legislature, the executive and the judiciary. Must hold a majority basis. In Buddhism It uses a simple majority A judge granted the Kratin has to be asked whether the priests. A monk or a Buddhist deserve. The last monk at a Buddhist deserve. If a monk uttered verbally agreed together, "Amen" If a monk made any discipline. The decision was called "Jessica's Eipui" is suspended by a majority vote. The allegation and suspension Buddhist majority. The meeting made various

consortium must be unanimous. If a grievance with the veto (Veto) even when only a single monk protests.

## Conclude

Thai society has long held faith with the tenets of the true teachings of Buddha which incorporate the very essence of the major religions and philosophies and which underpin the very foundations of a democratic society. This requires that individuals should have freedom within the norms, values and rules of the society within which they live and that their individual voice can be heard and can count. The challenge for governments is to match that ideal and truly represent the people and not their own or secular interests.

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