

THE CONCEPT OF YONISOMANASIKĀRA ‘PROPER ATTENTION’ AS A BUDDHIST WAY TO SOCIAL PEACE

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ABSTRACT

The topic of this study is the concept of Yonisomanasikāra ‘Proper Attention’ as a Buddhist way to social peace. There are three objectives, namely: - 1) To study the concept of “Yonisomanasikāra (Proper attention)” in Buddhist canonical texts and other related contexts, 2) To examine the Theravāda Buddhist perspective on the cause of social conflict and way to prevent conflict, and 3) To apply Yonisomanasikāra ‘Proper Attention’ as a Buddhist way to social peace. Research methodology will be methods and theory used in the field of peace studies, specifically religion and peace. The results show that the Concept of Yonisomanasikāra can be described as thinking in terms of causal relationships, such as the consequences of one’s thoughts and actions, or exploration of the conditioned nature of phenomena which will lead to the development of insight or wisdom. Yonisomanasikāra was instrumental in arousing the wisdom that led to realization; and that Greed (Lobha) is also one of the causes of social conflict. Non-Greed (Alobha) is the way to prevent that greed (Lobha). Anger (Dosa) is one of the causes of social conflict. Loving-kindness (Adosa) is the way to prevent that anger (Dosa). Ignorance (Moha) is one of the causes of social conflict. Wisdom (Amoha) is the way to prevent that ignorance (Moha). Social peace is a way of sustaining social life distant from internal conflict. It is one of the objectives of social politics, which offer peaceful solutions to the disputes and conflicts that may arise from disagreements and social tensions among national and international various sectors of society. Peace is a concept of societal friendship and harmony in the absence of hostility and violence. This study is significant because of: 1) Knowing about the concept of Yonisomanasikāra (Proper Attention) in Theravāda Buddhism, 2) Clearly understanding the cause of social conflict and way to prevent conflict, and 3) Realization of the application of Yonisomanasikāra ‘Proper Attention’ as a Buddhist way to social peace.

Introduction

Nowadays Buddhism becomes popular as a religion of peace and non-violence when the wars in the Middle East and Africa, and the terrorist activities in every part of the world are occurring. This work aims to realize peace with special reference to the story of the Pacification of the Relatives of the Buddha in the *Dhammapada* commentary. To study the concept of *Yonisomanasikāra* ‘proper attention’ in Buddhist canonical texts and other related contexts. To examine the Theravāda Buddhist perspective on the cause of social conflict and way to prevent it. It also applies *Yonisomanasikāra* ‘proper attention’ as a Buddhist way to social peace.

The story of the Pacification of the Relatives of the Buddha (*Ñāṭikalahavūpasamana Vatthu*, *Sukhavagga*, Verse 197) is in the *Dhammapada* commentary of the Acariya Mahābuddhaghosa.¹ The story was related to Buddha’s relatives who were quarrelling over the use of the water from the *Rohini* river. *Kapilavatthu*, the town of the *Sakyans* and *Koliya*, the town of the *Koliyans* were situated on either side of the *Rohini* river. The cultivators of both towns worked the fields watered by the *Rohini* river.

One year, they did not have enough rain and finding that the paddy and other crops were beginning to shrivel up, cultivators on both sides wanted to divert the water from the *Rohini* river to their own fields. Those living in *Koliya* said that there was not enough water in the river for both sides, and that if only they could channel the water just once more to their fields that would be enough for the paddy to mature and ripen. On the other hand, people from *Kapilavatthu* argued that, in that case, they would be denied the use of the water and their crops would surely fail, and they would be compelled to buy from other people. They said that they were not prepared to go carrying their money and valuables to the opposite bank of the river in exchange for food.

Both sides wanted the water for their own use only and there was much ill will between them due to abusive language and accusations on both sides. The quarrel that started between the cultivators came to the ears of the ministers concerned, and they reported the matter to their respective rulers, and both sides prepared to go to war. The Buddha, surveying the world with his supernormal powers, saw his relatives on both sides of the river coming out to meet in battle and he decided to stop them. All alone, he went to them by going through the sky, and stopped immediately above the middle of the river. His relatives seeing him, powerfully and yet

¹ Buddhaghosa, *The Dhammapada Commentary*, Eugene, Watson Burlingame, (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1982), 354.

peacefully sitting above them in the sky, hid aside all their weapons and paid obeisance to the Buddha.

Then, the Buddha said to them, “For the sake of some water, which is of little value, you should not destroy your lives which are of so much value and priceless. Why have you taken this stupid action? If I had not stopped you today, your blood would have been flowing like a river by now. You live hating your enemies, but I have none to hate; you are ailing with moral defilements, but I am free from them; you are striving to have sensual pleasures, but I do not strive for them.” Then the Buddha spoke in verse as follows:

Susukham vata jivāma

verinesu averino

verinesu manussesu

viharāma averino.

Indeed, we live very happily,

not hating anyone among those who hate;

among men who hate we live without hating anyone.² At the end of the discourse, many people attained *Sotāpatti* Fruition.

The Definition of Yonisomanasikāra

Yonisomanasikāra stands for a form of “proper attention” that is “thorough” and “penetrative”, and therefore also “wise”. To explore the connotations of Yonisomanasikāra, the present article will begin by examining the terms *Yoniso* and *Manasikāra* individually, followed: There are two parts in the word ‘*Yonisomanasikāra*’: *Yoniso* and *manasikāra*. **Yoniso** means “down to its origin or foundation,” i.e. thoroughly, wisely, properly, judiciously. [Antonym: *Ayoniso* – disorderly, improperly.]³ *Yoniso* the term *Yoniso* derives from *Yoni*, which stands for a “womb”, a “matrix”, or a “place of origin”. Thus, *Yoniso* can convey the sense of doing something “thoroughly” or “penetratively,” in the sense of going “down to its origins.”⁴

Manasikāra translated literally, *Manasikaroti* means to “do” or to “make” something “in the mind”. Being one of the constituents of *nāma*. *Manasikāra* an ever-present aspect of

² Mya D. Tin, *The Dhammapada: Verses and Stories*, (Yangon: Burma Tipitaka Association, 1986), 492.

³ Buddhaddatta, *Maha Nāyaka Thera, The New Pāli Course*, (Sri Lanka: Buddhist Cultural Center, 1977), 231.

⁴ Davids T. W. Rhys and William Stade, *Pāli English Dictionary*, (London: Pāli Text Society, 1998), 521.

the mind.⁵ as such, *Manasikāra* lies at the origin of all experienced phenomena, *Manasikārasambhavā sabbe dhammā*; since once attention arise, phenomena will arise, *Manasikārasamudayā dhammānaṃ samudayo*. *Manasikāra* is the mind's first 'confrontation with an object' and 'directs the associated mental concomitants to the object'.⁶

Taking into account the need of avoiding the dire consequences of wrongly directed *Manasikāra*, the Buddha would teach his disciples how attention should be directed, *Evameṃ manasikarotha, mā evaṃ manasākattha*. This "how" of directing attention, as one might well suspect from the thrust of the present article, should do *Yoniso*, that is: "wise", "thorough" and "appropriate". *Manasikāra* means doing in the mind,⁷ i.e. attention, pondering, fix thought.⁸

The Concept of Yonisomanasikāra

The Concept of *Yonisomanasikāra* can be described as thinking in terms of causal relationships, such as the consequences of one's thoughts and actions, or exploration of the conditioned nature of phenomena which will lead to the development of insight or wisdom. The concept of *Yonisomanasikāra* originated from religion concepts and practices. Its original purpose was to stop a person from biased thinking, negative emotion, or adhering to bad experience, then, thinking in a good way. **The Aṅguttara Commentary**⁹ explains *Paratoghosa* in the context of giving rise to right view as that of "hearing the true Dharma" (*Saddham masavana*). According to **the Majjhima Commentary**,¹⁰ another's voice is the listening to conducive *Dhamma* (*Sappāya dhammassavana*), and adds that wise attention is the method of the Buddhas and the all-knowing Buddha's, since there is no *Paratoghosa* for them. *Paratoghosa* is the means of the listeners or holy disciples (*Sāvaka*).

Although ultimate realities exist as the concrete essences of things, they are so subtle and profound that an ordinary person who lacks training cannot perceive them. Such a person cannot see the ultimate realities because his mind is obscured by concepts, which shape reality into conventionally defined appearances. Only by means of wise or thorough attention to things (*Yonisomanasikāra*) can one see beyond the concepts and take the ultimate realities as one's

⁵ Bhikkhu Bodhi, and Allan R. Bomhard, *A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma: The Abhidhammatthasangaha of Ācariya Anuruddha*, (Charleston: Charleston Buddhist Fellowship, 2007), 56.

⁶ Tin M. Mon, *The Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma*, (Yangon: Mya Mon Yadanar Publication, 1995), 70.

⁷ Bhikkhu Ñānamoli, *The Guide, (Netti-pakaranam)*, (London: Pāli Text Society, 1977), 17.

⁸ Davids T. W. Rhys and William Stade, *Pāli English Dictionary*, 521.

⁹ Manotathapurani Buddhaghosa, *Vol. II*, (London: Pāli Text Society, 1967), 157.

¹⁰ Bhikkhu Bodhi, *The Discourse on the Root of Existence (Majjhima Commentary), Vol. II*, (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1980), 346.

object of knowledge. Thus, *Paramattha* is described as that which belongs to the domain of ultimate or supreme knowledge.¹¹

As such, *Yoniso* means “down to its origin or foundation,” that is to say, going down to the roots of reality. In practice, this refers to what is impure as impure, what is painful as painful, what is not self as not self, and what is foul as foul, that is, to see things as they really are. “Attention” (*Manasikāra*), according to the *Abhidhamma*, is the very first stage of the mind’s encounter with an object,¹²

The Buddha says there are four factors that can help us reach the Noble Eightfold Path:

- (1) associating with superior persons;
- (2) hearing the true *Dhamma*;
- (3) wise attention; and
- (4) practice in accordance with the *Dhamma*.

Among these four factors, wise attention plays a very important role. Wise attention helps us to overcome the five hindrances and develop the seven factors of enlightenment. It is by wise attention that one transcends the level of an ordinary person and reaches the level of a noble one, an enlightened person. But what exactly is meant by wise attention? The Pāli expression translated as wise attention is *Yonisomanasikāra*. *Yonisomanasikāra* applies the method of dependent origination in unique ways to the understanding of human existence.

Theravāda Buddhist Perspective on the Causes of Social Conflict

The Buddha appeared at a time of political, social, and spiritual unrest in ancient India. Theravāda canonical texts provide testimony to the prevalence of wars between kings and the republican states. The texts also show that the Buddha reflected upon social conflicts arising from crime and poverty, and interminable disputes and confrontations among the many competing religious and philosophical schools of the time.¹³

There are the causes of social conflict according to Buddhism, the answer appeared over 2550 years ago in the teaching of the Buddha. He says that there is no doubt that worldlings experience with *dukkha* (pain, suffering, conflict) owing to the defilements (*Kilesā*). the Buddha had not only the right compassionate strategies, but also the right messages.

¹¹ Bhikkhu Bodhi, *A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma: The Abhidhammattha Sangaha of Ācariya Anuruddha*, (Washington: Buddhist Publication Society, 1993), 26.

¹² Piya Tan, *Sutta Discovery*, (Singapore: The Minding Center, 2007), 170.

¹³ Mahinda Palihawadana, *Conflict and Violence in Modern Sri Lanka Edited by Haninda, Deegalle*, (London: Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies, 1996), 67.

According to the Buddhist psychology, the ten defilements point of view are - social conflicts arise from greed or attachment (*Lobha*) hatred (*Dosa*), delusion or ignorance (*Moha*), pride or conceit (*Māna*), false views (*Diṭṭhi*), skeptical doubt or indecision (*Vicikicchā*), sloth (*Thīna*), restlessness (*Uddhacca*), moral shamelessness (*Ahīrika*) and moral fearlessness (*Anottappa*).¹⁴ So, to end political conflicts, people have to kill off those defilements from their minds.

According to the Buddha, they appear in the mind and destroy one's life in the same way that the bamboo, reed, and banana plant are destroyed by their fruits. therefore, according to Buddhist psychology, all temptations brought about by the defilements are regarded as the causes of social conflict. Moreover, we can say that ignorance (*Avijjā*) is the root cause of political conflict and we can say that craving (*Taṇhā*) is the source of social conflict.

It is clear then that Buddhist approach to political conflicts is *Ahiṃsā* (nonviolence), to be achieved by practicing the *Dhamma* of the Buddha. So, practicing the *Dhamma* is the basic requirement for ending social conflicts, as it is said in the *Dhammapada*:

Just as a beautiful flower, lacking in scent, cannot give the wearer the benefit of its scent, so also, the well-preached words of the Buddha cannot benefit one who does not practice the Dhamma.¹⁵

The Sāmagāma Sutta,¹⁶ records, the following four types of conflict are best resolved by way of a formal process (*Adhikaraṇa*), to use a broader term, via mediation which are as follows:

1. Conflict due to a verbal dispute (*Vivāda*),
2. Conflict due to an accusation (*Anuvāda*),
3. Conflict due to an offence (*Āpatti*),
4. Conflict due to proceedings (*Kicca*).

Non-violence and peace are the quintessential teachings of Buddhism. These teachings have been strongly represented in its value system. This does not mean, though, that Buddhists have always been peaceful; Buddhist countries have had their fair share of war and conflict for most of the reasons that wars have occurred elsewhere. The canonical texts of Theravada Buddhism are testimony to resolving social conflicts arising from crime and poverty, and interminable disputes and confrontations among the many competing religious and

¹⁴ Tin M. Mon, *The Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma*, 264.

¹⁵ Mya D. Tin, *The Dhammapada: Verses and Stories*, 138-139.

¹⁶ Bhikkhu Ñanamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi, *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha (Majjhima Nikāya)*, Vol. II, (Boston: Wisdom Publication, 2005), 243.

philosophical schools of the time.

Conquer the angry one by loving-kindness;
conquer the wicked by goodness;
conquer the stingy by generosity, and
the liar by speaking the truth.¹⁷

From above it can be seen that there are many kinds of conflicts in the world but in this research, three kinds of conflicts will be highlighted. They are intrapersonal, interpersonal and social conflicts. Wherever, they are not really good not only in individual but also in the human societies. These conflicts can create disputes in any society and destroy unity and harmony of the community.

Greed (Lobha) as One of the Roots of Social Conflict

Buddhists believe in *Kamma* (Action) and the result of one's action. *Kamma* is of three kinds, namely *Kāyakamma* (Bodily action), *Vacīkamma* (Verbal action), and *Manokamma* (Mental action). The evil actions performed by three kinds of action are unwholesome actions. One's unwholesome actions produce unhappiness to one and one's environment.

Actually, the evil actions performed by greed (*Lobha*) of action is unwholesome actions. One's unwholesome actions produce unhappiness to one and one's environment. Greed (*Lobha*) roots lead to inner social conflict. The Greed (*Lobha*) is coming from on your own wish. The root of greed (*Lobha*) gives rise to resentment, against those who obstruct the gratification of desire or compete in the chase to gain the desired objects – whether sensual enjoyment, power, dominance or fame, in this way greed (*Lobha*) leads to conflict and quarrels.

The evil roots that caused rise to conflict is greed (*Lobha*). These roots are manifested in ten immoral actions such as killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, backbiting, abusing, slandering, coveting, ill-will, and upholding wrong view. Conceit does not arise in greed (*Lobha*) consciousness, together with misbelief. *Diṭṭhi* is connected with wrong view, while *Māna* is concerned with egoism. Both of them, say the commentators, are like two lions that cannot live together in one cave.¹⁸

Craving (*Lobha*) is the very origin or cause of suffering (*Dukkha*) in the lives of all beings throughout all their existence. According to Buddhist psychology, most of our conflicts

¹⁷ Mya D. Tin, *The Dhammapada: Verses and Stories*, 236.

¹⁸ Nyanaponika Thera, *The Roots of Good and Evil*, (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1978), 96.

are due to our passionate craving. In other words, unlimited or uncontrolled self-interest can create serious political conflict. Unlimited craving can lead nations to exploit others for their own benefit which results in creating conflicts with the exploited nation.

Early Buddhist chronicles describe the history of social conflicts, and indicate that sense pleasures were the forerunner of such conflicts. Therefore, we can say that craving is the main sources of social conflict.

This unmoral Chanda should be distinguished from immoral greed (*Lobha*) which is clinging to an object.

There are three kinds of *Chandas* – namely,

(I) *Kāmacchanda*, which is sensual craving (*Lobha*), one of the five Hindrances (*Nīvarana*). This is ethically immoral.

(II) *Kattuamyatā Chanda*, the mere wish to do. This is ethically unmoral.

(III) *Dhammacchanda*, righteous wish. It is this *Dhammacchanda* that impelled Prince Siddhartha to renounce Royal pleasures.¹⁹

As regards to social conflicts, *Sakka* the king of Devas asked the Buddha: all classes of living beings who wish to live in peace without enmity and conflict, but in fact there are conflicts and violence between different beings? The Buddha answered: conflicts have their roots in desire (*Chanda*), selfishness (*Macchariya*), jealousy (*Issā*), and diverted and bias view (*Papañca saññā saṅkhā*),

Greed is the root of heedlessness,

A cause of strife is greed.

Greed into enslavement drags.

A hungry ghost one will in future be.

The Buddha who greed's nature fully knows

I worship Him, the Greed-free One.²⁰

Anger (Dosa) as One of the Roots of Social Conflict

The evil actions performed by anger (*Dosa*) of action is unwholesome actions. One's unwholesome actions produce unhappiness to one and one's environment. Anger (*Dosa*) roots lead to inner social conflict. Anger (*Dosa*) is a natural human response and part of the fight or

¹⁹ Mahāthera Nārada, *A Manual Abhidhamma Being Abhidhammattha: Sangaha of Bhaddanta Anuruddhācariya*, (Kuala Lumpur: The Buddhist Missionary Society, 1965), 115.

²⁰ Nyanaponika Thera, *The Roots of Good and Evil*, 14.

flight safety system which can help us to stay safe and defend ourselves in dangerous situations.

The anger (*Dosa*) destroys one first before it destroys others. Not only inflated anger (*Dosa*) as the one present in an angry person but also depressed anger (*Dosa*) as the one felt by a sad or depressed person are destructive. Anger (*Dosa*) gives rise to stress and strain, mental depression and mental tension which in turn gives rise to many diseases. It is wise never to allow anger arise in the mind for it brings about only bad effects. We should develop loving-kindness to drive away anger as soon as anger arises.²¹

The evil results of anger (*Dosa*), the Buddha preached in *Dukanipāta* in *Aṅguttara Nikāya* are –

1. Ugly physical appearance,
2. Being unable to sleep soundly
3. Loss of one's property,
4. Inability to live in prosperity and peace,
5. Inferior reputation,
6. Shunning by good friend, and

7. Being destined to hell or world of animal or world of *Petas* or world of *Asūras* after passing away from human world.²²

In Buddhism, anger (*Dosa*) is generally described as the ignorant response to an unpleasant feeling. Every kind of action, speech and thought done by one whose mind is deluded by hatred, his bodily behavior, verbal behavior and mental behavior are said to be unwholesome and blameworthy, and it cause painful results and brings both one's own affliction or the affliction of others. To be able to destroy anger that causes both physical and mental suffering, it is very important to understand anger (*Dosa*) and its characteristic (*Lakkhaṇa*), function (*Rasa*), manifestation (*Paccupaṭṭhāna*), and proximate cause (*Padaṭṭhāna*) as found in the Buddha's teaching especially in the *Visuddhimagga* – Path of Purification.²³

Hate is the root of turbulence,
And ugliness results from hate.
Through hatred much destruction comes,
To an infernal world one will in future go.

²¹ Tin M. Mon, *The Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma*, 72.

²² Bhikkhu Bodhi, *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha (Aṅguttara Nikāya)*, Vol. I, (Boston: Wisdom Publication, 2012), 95-96.

²³ Bhikkhu Ñānamoli, *The Path of Purification*, (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 2006), 97.

The Buddha who hate's nature fully knows

I worship Him, the Hate-free One.²⁴

In Buddhism, there is no such thing as righteous anger. The Buddha never allowed anger of any kind or reason to be happened in one's mind. As all kinds of anger, even the subtlest level or briefest duration, have the unwholesome consequences which prohibit attaining the freedom from all sufferings, ultimate achievement of a Buddhist. It must be acknowledge as being like deadly poison to the mind and thus avoided whenever possible.

Ignorance (Moha) as One of the Roots of Social Conflict

The evil actions performed by ignorance (*Moha*) of action is unwholesome actions. One's unwholesome actions produce unhappiness to one and one's environment. Ignorance (*Moha*) roots lead to inner social conflict. Delusion (*Moha*), taking the form of ignorance, is a state of confusion, bewilderment and helplessness. In its aspect of false views, delusion (*Moha*) issues in dogmatism; it takes on a fanatical, even obsessive, character, and makes the mind rigid and encapsulated.

Moha means delusion, ignorance, dullness. Ignorance (*Moha*) has the nature of concealing the true nature of the sense objects. On account of concealing nature of ignorance (*Moha*), the bad nature of *Ducaritas*, the good nature of *Sucaritas*, the true nature of *Dukkhasaccā*, the existence of the past existence and future existence, the principles of *Paṭiccasamuppāda* are veiled preventing the living beings from seeing the true nature of things.

There are two kinds of Ignorance (*Moha*). They are

1. *Anusaya-moha*, and
2. *Pariyuṭṭhāna-moha*.

Anusaya-moha means the delusion lying latent in the mind of living beings. *Pariyuṭṭhāna-moha* means the delusion that occasionally arises together with the consciousness.

As *Moha* blinds our mental eyes, we cannot see the extremely rapid and incessant arising and perishing of mentality and materiality and the consequent four characteristics mentioned above. When we cannot see the true nature of things, we get confused and take the opposite characteristics to be true. So, we see things as *Nicca* (permanent), *Sukha* (pleasant), *Atta* (self or person) and *Subha* (beautiful).²⁵

²⁴ Nyanaponika Thera, *The Roots of Good and Evil*, 14.

²⁵ Tin M. Mon, *The Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma*, 69.

It clouds one’s mental eyes and prevents one from seeing the true nature of things – impermanent (*Anicca*), non- satisfactory (*Dukkha*) and ego-less (*Anatta*). Generally, policy makers formulate and pursue policies without proper understanding of the real issues, because of their own ego or wrong perceptions. Consequently, due to their ignorance they become blind to reality and entangle in serious Social conflict.

Delusion is the root of all this misery,
 Creator of all ills is ignorant delusion.
 Mind’s blindness from delusion stems,
 As a dumb animal, one will in future live.
 The Buddha who delusion’s nature fully knows
 I worship Him, the Undeluded One.²⁶

Theravāda Buddhist Perspective on the Way to Prevent Conflict

The Theravāda Buddhist perspective on the way to prevent by a peaceful means is well indicated in the life-story of the Buddha who actually intervened on one occasion to prevent a conflict in a peaceful manner. Actually, according to the *Dhammapada* said for way to prevent it,

“There is no fire like passion;
 there is no evil like hatred;
 there is no ill like the body;
 there is no bliss that surpasses the perfect peace.”²⁷

Generally comparing with major world religions, the core meaning inside Buddhism is a religion of peace. The *Pāli* verse in *Dhammapada*, makes this abundantly clear.

“Hatred is, indeed, never appeased by hatred in this world.
 Hatred is only appeased by Loving-kindness (or, non-enmity).
 This is an ancient law.”²⁸

The *Pāli* term for “eternal law” here is *Dhamma*, or the Buddhist teachings. So, this verse on non-enmity has to do with a tenet of the Buddhist faith that is fundamental, namely, peace and non-harm. Clearly, Buddhism was the most social of religions the applications and

²⁶ Nyanaponika Thera, *The Roots of Good and Evil*, 14-15.

²⁷ Mya D. Tin, *The Dhammapada: Verses and Stories*, 498.

²⁸ Ibid., 19.

expounded in a long series of discourses.²⁹

By considering these three modes of Theravāda Buddhist toleration, I therefore hope to reflect further on an important line of inquiry provoked by the work of Wendy Brown. This line of inquiry approaches toleration (or tolerance, in Brown's terms) as a putative political virtue that always "iterates the normalcy of the powerful and the deviance of the marginal," and jumbles together a number of possible dispositions toward the "other": aloof indifference, grudging (and temporary) acknowledgment, and chauvinistic self-centrism, as well as deep acceptance.³⁰

This is the reason why the Buddha states:

By oneself indeed is evil done and by oneself is one defiled; by oneself is evil not done and by oneself is one purified. Purity and impurity depend entirely on oneself; no one can purify another.³¹

There is no doubt that the ultimate goal of Buddhism is to overcome conflict primarily at the level of individual consciousness. This is evident from the answer that the Buddha had given to a person who questioned him about the doctrine he propounded. The doctrine of the Buddha is such that one who lives in accordance with it succeeds in living in the world without coming into conflict with anyone.³²

Non-Greed (Alobha) as the Way to Prevent Greed (Lobha)

Buddhists believe in *Kamma* (Action) and the result of one's action. *Kamma* is of three kinds, namely *Kāyakamma* (Bodily action), *Vacīkamma* (Verbal action), and *Manokamma* (Mental action). The good actions performed by three kinds of action are wholesome actions. One's wholesome actions produce happiness to one and one's environment.

The good actions performed by non-greed of action is wholesome actions. One's wholesome actions produce peace to one and one's environment. Greed (*Lobha*) roots lead to inner social conflict. The root of greed (*Lobha*) gives rise to resentment, against those who obstruct the gratification of desire or compete in the chase to gain the desired objects – whether sensual enjoyment, power, dominance or fame, in this way greed (*Lobha*) action leads to conflict and quarrels. That's why, we need to apply non-greed (*Alobha*) action has the

²⁹ Kosambi, *The Culture and Civilization of Ancient India in Historical Outline*, (India: Reprint, 1992), 106.

³⁰ Wendy Brown, *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), 8.

³¹ Mya D. Tin, *The Dhammapada: Verses and Stories*, 421.

³² Bhikkhu Ñānamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi, *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha (Majjhima Nikāya)*, Vol. II, 109.

characteristic of the mind’s lack of desire for an object, or it has the characteristic or non-adherence, like a water drop on a lotus leaf. These applications of proper attention (*Yonisomanasikara*) revealed the understanding of how to apply greed (*Lobha*) is a condition of giving (*Dāna*)

For living beings greed (*Lobha*) is an inner enemy. Greed (*Lobha*) tends to make the eye of wisdom blind. Greed (*Lobha*) gives trouble to the living beings. Therefore, that greed (*Lobha*) has to be eliminated by exercising wisdom. After eliminating of *Lobha*, *Lobha* must be classified into three categories. They are

1. Strong *Lobha*,
2. Moderate *Lobha*, and
3. Weak *Lobha*.

When the greed (*Lobha*) is strong, the greed (*Lobha*) cannot be contained in mind. It manifests in bodily, verbal and mental actions. This greed (*Lobha*) must be eliminated with morality. Such elimination can be done in an instant because, while one is observing the precepts, the greed (*Lobha*) is extinguished. When the precepts are not observed, greed (*Lobha*) can appear again. The one who observes precepts may desire other’s possession but he does not reach to the state of committing physically. Similarly, sexual misconduct or telling lies or taking intoxicants does not reach to the state of physical action.

The moderate *Lobha* is the greed that happens only in mind. This kind of *Lobha* can be eliminated with the practice of concentration (*Samādhi*). *Jhāna* concentration is more powerful than *Sīlakusala*. *Samādhikusala* is powerful enough to keep it for some time. This way of elimination of greed (*Lobha*) is called abandonment of moral defilements by *Jhāna* (*Vikkhambhanappahāna*).

Non-craving (*Alobha*) has the characteristic of the mind’s lack of desire for an object, or it has the characteristic of nonadherence, like a water drop on a lotus leaf. Its function is not to lay hold (or not to grasp), like a liberated *Bhikkhu*. It is manifested as not treating (the desire-evoking object) as a shelter (or non-craving), as a man who has fallen into filth (will not cling to it).³³

Greed is a cause of harm,
Unrest of mind it brings.
This danger that has grown within,

³³ Nyanaponika Thera, *The Roots of Good and Evil*, 21.

Blind folk are unaware of it.
A greedy person cannot see the facts,
Nor can he understand the Dhamma.
When greed has overpowered him,
In complete darkness, he is plunged.
But he who does not crave and can forsake
This greed and what incites to greed,
From him quickly greed glides off
Like water from a lotus leaf.³⁴

Non-greed (*Alobha*): Non-greed Non-attachment has the characteristic of the mind's lack of desire for its object, or non-adherence to the object like a drop of water on a lotus leaf. Its function is not to lay hold, and its manifestation is detachment. It should be understood that non-greed is not the mere absence of greed, but the presence of positive virtue such as generosity and renunciation as well.³⁵

The greed infatuated by which
beings go to evil destiny,
those of insight give it up
because they fully understand that greed;
and having thus discarded it,
they never return to this world.³⁶

Loving-kindness (*Adosa*) as the Way to Prevent Anger (*Dosa*)

The good actions performed by loving-kindness of action is wholesome actions. One's wholesome actions produce peace to one and one's environment. Anger (*Dosa*) is a natural human response and part of the fight or flight safety system which can help us to stay safe and defend ourselves in dangerous situations. Anger (*Dosa*) is like putting a lighted match to one's own home. Anger (*Dosa*) is setting fire to one's own home, which is filled with hay. First his own house burns and then the neighbour's house. Anger (*Dosa*) is a live fire. The person himself will not realize that he has destroyed everything, because the damage is not visible on

³⁴ Nyanaponika Thera, *The Roots of Good and Evil*, 42.

³⁵ Bhikkhu Bodhi, *A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma: The Abhidhammattha Sangaha of Ācariya Anuruddha*, 86.

³⁶ Nyanaponika Thera, *The Roots of Good and Evil*, 108.

the outside, but everything from within is destroyed. These applications of proper attention (*Yonisomanasikara*) revealed the understanding of how to apply anger (*Dosa*) action is a condition of virtue (*Sīla*).

Loving-kindness (*Adosa*) is conducive to the acquisition of friends, for by loving-kindness friends are won and are not lost. Through Loving-kindness (*Adosa*) amongst those belonging to other parties he is happy, for the inimical person is devoid of the feeling of ill will even amongst the hostile. Through Loving-kindness (*Adosa*) there is insight into suffering, for one with a loving disposition has abandoned that grasping, the cause of vexation, and sees things as sorrowful.³⁷

The manner is determining factors in elimination anger as well as in practicing *Mettā* socially. Therefore, the society wishes to sustain the welfare of all the others. Consciousness (*Citta*) and mental factors (*Cetasikas*) led by Chanda to make donations, to observe precepts and to realize the *Nibbāna*. So, it is imperative to remove the close enemy of Loving-kindness (*Adosa*) and to establish true loving-kindness. Moreover, loving-kindness is not associated with grief (*Soka*).

Hate is a cause of harm,
Unrest of mind it brings.
This danger that has grown within,
Blind folk are unaware of it.
A hater cannot see the facts,
Nor can he understand the Dhamma.
When hate has overpowered him,
In complete darkness, he is plunged.
But he who does not hate and can forsake
This hatred and what incites to hate,
From him quickly hatred falls off
As from a palm tree falls the ripened fruit.³⁸

Non-hatred is a condition of virtue (*Sīla*); Through non-hatred one does not underrate or deprecate (an unattractive or disagreeable object), as the hater does. non-hatred one will admit an existing virtue (in a disagreeable or hostile object) and will behave accordingly, while

³⁷ Mahāthera Nārada, *A Manual Abhidhamma Being Abhidhammattha: Sangaha of Bhaddanta Anuruddhācariya*, 129-130.

³⁸ Nyanaponika Thera, *The Roots of Good and Evil*, 42.

the hater will disparage that virtue. With non-hatred, one does not have the suffering through association with the unbeloved; but the hater identifies himself with (his aversion against) the unbeloved and cannot bear association with him.³⁹

The hate enraged by which
beings go to evil destiny,
those of insight give it up
because they fully understand that hate;
and having thus discarded it,
they never return to this world.⁴⁰

Wisdom (Amoha) as the Way to Prevent Ignorance (Moha)

The good actions performed by wisdom of action is wholesome actions. One's wholesome actions produce peace to one and one's environment. Delusion (*Moha*), taking the form of ignorance, is a state of confusion, bewilderment and helplessness. In its aspect of false views, delusion (*Moha*) issues in dogmatism; it takes on a fanatical, even obsessive, character, and makes the mind rigid and encapsulated. These applications of proper attention (*Yonisomanasikara*) revealed the understanding of how to apply delusion (*Moha*) is a condition of mental development or meditation (*Bhāvanā*). He who stated that, "in meditation, proper attention (*Yonisomanasikāra*) is the most important stage to cultivate wisdom (*Paññā*). It is connecting to wisdom (*Paññā*) or a pathway to wisdom (*Paññā*)". In the other words, proper attention (*Yonisomanasikāra*) bridges mindfulness to wisdom (*Paññā*). "when mindfulness reminds of one thing to be recognized, proper attention (*Yonisomanasikāra*) will move that object around in order to present different angles necessary for wisdom to contemplate and liberate".

When *Moha* arises in one's continuum, there are ways to eliminate that *Moha*. The ways of elimination of *Moha* are-

1. Living relying on one's teacher,
2. Learning,
3. Repeated asking and discussion of the learning one has acquired,
4. Contemplation of Dhamma under favourable condition, and

³⁹ Buddhaghosa, *The Atthasālinī: Buddhaghosa's Commentary on the Dhammasaṅgāṇi*, (London: Pāli Text Society, 1897), 128.

⁴⁰ Nyanaponika Thera, *The Roots of Good and Evil*, 108.

5. Ability to differentiate right and wrong. These are the five factors that can eliminate *Moha*.

Paññā is wisdom, or knowing things as they really are. It is here called a faculty because it exercises predominance in comprehending things as they really are. In the *Abhidhamma*, the three terms – wisdom (*Paññā*), knowledge (*Ñāṇa*), and non-delusion (*Amoha*) – are used synonymously. Wisdom has the characteristic of penetrating things according to their intrinsic nature (*Yathāsabhāvaṭṭivedha*). Its function is to illuminate the objective field like a lamp. It is manifested as non-bewilderment. Its proximate cause is proper attention (*Yonisomanasikāra*)⁴¹

Delusion is a cause of harm,
Unrest of mind it brings.
This danger that has grown within,
Blind folk are unaware of it.
He who is deluded cannot see the facts,
Nor can he understand the Dhamma.
If a man is in delusion’s grip,
In complete darkness, he is plunged.
But he who has shed delusion’s veil
Is undeluded where confusion reigns;
He fully scatters all delusion,
Just as the sun dispels the night.⁴²

In Buddhist philosophy, ignorance (*Avijjā*) is placed as the first element in the chain of “causation” or “dependent origination” which leads to rebirth.⁴³ The Buddha taught that ignorance (*Avijjā*) consists in the fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of reality, and is symbolized by a person who is blind from birth.⁴⁴

The only way to remove ignorance (*Avijjā*) is to cultivate wisdom. Hence is the final analysis, what a Buddhist seeks is wisdom in order to experience liberation from rebirth (*Samsāra*), to attain *Nibbāna* and to become an *Arahant*, who is the embodiment of supreme wisdom.

⁴¹ Bhikkhu Bodhi, *A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma: The Abhidhammattha Sangaha of Ācariya Anuruddha*, 90.

⁴² Nyanaponika Thera, *The Roots of Good and Evil*, 43.

⁴³ Bhikkhu Bodhi, *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha (Aṅguttara Nikāya)*, 160.

⁴⁴ Davids T. W. Rhys, *Buddhism. Its History and Literature*, (Lexington: Forgotten Books, 2012), 156-156.

The delusion blinded by which
beings go to evil destiny,
those of insight give it up,
because they fully understand delusion;
and having thus discarded it,
they never return to this world.⁴⁵

Social Peace

Social peace is a reality in the existence of humanity. Social peace requires establishing right relationships with others. It is an essentialness that humanity's longing with an optimist approach. Social peace is a way of sustaining social life distant from internal conflict. It is one of the objectives of social politics, which offer peaceful solutions to the disputes and conflicts that may arise from disagreements and social tensions among national and international various sectors of society. Thus, this reduces all kinds of social tensions and ensures social peace and it represents the ideal situation. It has been a major problem to ensure the social peace all along for every society.

The Buddhist way of social peace begins by cultivating and developing peace in oneself from micro to macro level. Inner peace and outer peace; internal and external peace are vital for the establishment of social peace. One who loves peace, he/she cultivates and develops inner peace first. Through the cultivation and development of inner peace, he/she express peaceful gesture verbally and physically that creates peaceful social environment in the domain he/she resides. Starting from the single individual, peace can be prevailed to others.

To me it seems that if we want peace in human society, we cannot ignore individuals. If there is no peace in the mind of the individual, I do not understand how there can be real peace in the world. If I have an agitated mind, always full of anger, hatred, illwill and animosity, how can I give peace to the world? I cannot because I have no peace myself. Enlightened persons have therefore said, "first find peace within yourself." One has to examine whether there is really peace within oneself.⁴⁶

Now what I have to say on the social of peace, truth, freedom, justice and love in Buddhism belongs partly to the common content and partly to the disparate element, which

⁴⁵ Nyanaponika Thera, *The Roots of Good and Evil*, 107-108.

⁴⁶ Satya N. Goenka, *Meditation Now: Inner Peace through Inner Wisdom*, (Washington: Vipassanā Research Publications, 2002), 36-37.

distinguishes Buddhism from other religions. It would be necessary for me to point out both, if I am to give a clear picture of the account given of these concepts in Buddhism.⁴⁷

With regard to ‘purifying the mind’: if the mind is overcome with defilements such as greed, anger, delusion, conceit, or wrong view, there will be much suffering. Therefore, one should diminish these mental defilements as much as one can, and, if possible, totally eliminate them to keep the mind pure.

Conclusion

Firstly, The Concept of *Yonisomanasikāra* can be described as thinking in terms of causal relationships, such as the consequences of one’s thoughts and actions, or exploration of the conditioned nature of phenomena which will lead to the development of insight or wisdom. wise attention is conducive to good meditation and the attaining of stream winning. Theravāda Buddhist concept of *Yonisomanasikāra* is the heart of Buddha’s teaching, and also *Yonisomanasikāra* or mindfulness is the path to deathless.

Secondly, according to Theravāda Buddhism, social conflict is an ongoing state of hostility between two groups of people. Ignorance (*Moha*) is one of the causes of social conflict. It means an absence of knowledge of suffering, absence of knowledge of the cause of suffering, absence of knowledge of the cessation of suffering, absence of knowledge of the way leading to the cessation of suffering. According to the Buddha, they appear in the mind and destroy one’s life in the same way that the bamboo, reed, and banana plant are destroyed by their fruits. therefore, according to Buddhist psychology, all temptations brought about by the defilements are regarded as the causes of social conflict.

Lastly, social peace is essential for cultures of peace, but only when it is inclusive of various groups and accompanied by tolerance of differences within society. Furthermore, it should be based on constructive goals that denote caring and social welfare rather than on destructive or exclusive means. The immense challenge is that tolerance and inclusiveness are not only the ultimate goal, but also that a minimal amount is necessary in order to start building social peace in diverse societies. The Buddhist way of social peace begins by cultivating and developing peace in oneself from mind to body level. Inner peace and outer peace; internal and external peace are vital for the establishment of social peace. If there is no peace in the mind of the individual, how there can be real peace in the world. The conversion that is needed is from impurity of mind to purity of mind.

⁴⁷ Jayatillake, *Buddhism and Peace*, (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1962), 5.

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