

Chapter V

Conclusion and Suggestion

5.1 Conclusion

The analytical study of the application of emptiness (Suññatā) in daily life in this thematic paper has started with an analytical study of the concepts of emptiness (Suññatā) both in Tipitaka and in the view of Buddhadasa Bhikkhu which are of importance for further study of how to apply emptiness (Suññatā) in daily life in accordance with the concepts of emptiness (Suññatā) in Tipitaka and Buddhadasa Bhikkhu's view. Buddhadasa Bhikkhu is famous as a rational thinker for the modern world, he holds the view that practicing Dhamma and day-to-day work must go together side by side; they should not be separated from each other as some people thought. Buddhadasa Bhikkhu has his view that the practice of Dhamma is there in the work with 'empty mind' or 'cit-wang', and working with 'empty mind' is the great practice of Dhamma. In other words, to do work of any sort without grasping or clinging is a way to practice Dhamma. For this reason Buddhadasa Bhikkhu encourages all old and young Buddhists to perform every kind of task with the 'empty mind' either at the office or at home or do work of all kinds with a mind that is void or without attachment of the sense of 'I' or 'mine' which will bring about the happiness and efficiency in daily life's work and all activities.

Buddhadasa Bhikkhu's interpretation of emptiness (Suññatā) as 'empty mind' is relevant to the concept of emptiness in the lack of 'self' or 'Anattā' which is only one perspective of emptiness among the three contexts approached in Tipitaka. For the purpose of this thematic papers on the application of emptiness (Suññatā) in daily life, thus the concept of emptiness (Suññatā) in Tipitaka has been analyzed into the three contexts as meditative dwelling or Suññata-vihāra, the lack of 'self' or Anattā and awareness-release or full awareness so that emptiness (Suññatā) could possibly be more widely applied in daily life's work and activities. Upon the study of the first context, the concept of emptiness (Suññatā) as 'Suññata-vihāra' or 'the abiding in Voidness' has a wider meaning, embracing Jhāna, Samādhi, Vipassanā and even Nibbāna the final goal of the religious life. In Buddhist teaching, therefore, the term 'Suññata-vihāra' should be understood as the abiding state of him who has succeeded in the religious training and enjoyed its fruits. Upon the study of the second context, the concept of emptiness (Suññatā) as the lack of self or Anattā refers to the emptiness of self or things pertaining to 'self' both in the internal and external sense media. Whatever sense of 'self' as one's own penchant for 'I-making' and 'my-making' that may surround these objects is not inherent in them. Seeing the artificiality of 'I-making' and 'my-making' in this way helps lead to a sense of disenchantment with these 'makings', thus helping to abandon any clinging associated with them. Thus emptiness in this sense relates directly to the third of the three characteristics, ie. Anattā or non-self. Upon the study of the third context, the concept of emptiness (Suññatā) as awareness-release or full awareness is the awareness-release by method of contemplation upon the internal-external voidness with full awareness

which can keep one always awaken or fully aware of what one is doing, thus no unwholesome states of covetousness and grief do invade. Thus it will protect (i) one's mind from being invaded and disturbed by the evil, unwholesome states of covetousness and grief, (ii) one's talk not to be associated with lower and vulgar talk but to be associated with ending or releasing from suffering, and (iii) one's thought not to be associated with lower and vulgar thought but to be associated with noble thoughts, leading forward to salvation.

Upon the analytical study, the 'empty mind' interpreted by Buddhadasa Bhikkhu is relevant to one of the three contexts of emptiness (Suññatā) in Tipiṭaka as the lack of self or Anattā, even differ only in name, but not in actuality. Buddhadasa Bhikkhu has interpreted 'empty mind' or 'cit-wang' into two meanings, first is the emptiness of all things in the world and second is the characteristics of the non-clinging mind due to the void of 'self' or 'any belongings to self'. The first emptiness is an object of knowing or realization. The second emptiness is the empty mind itself being empty of 'self' or 'any belongings to self' as 'I' or 'mine' or egoism, in other words it is the remainderless extinction of 'I' and 'mine', the utter destruction of self. The phrase the remainderless extinction of 'I' and 'mine' means the non-arising of ego-consciousness. In term of the practice, it means preventing the feeling of 'I' or 'mine' arising, and to practice in this manner is consistently also meant 'cit-wang' or 'empty mind' interpreted by Buddhadasa Bhikkhu.

The application of emptiness (Suññatā) as meditative dwelling is associated with void-concentration (Suññata-samādhi) abiding with meditative dwelling (Suññata-vihāra) in all kinds of work and activities, for instance, learning in a class, working on a job, having a thought, staff

meeting in the conference room, driving a car, eating and drinking, practicing mindfulness of breathing and others by keeping the mind empty of what not being here at the moment, but what not empty is the good attention or awareness of what being here at the moment upon void-concentration (Suññata-samādhī). .

The application of emptiness (Suññatā) as the lack of ‘self’ or Anattā is related directly to ‘empty mind’ (cit-wang in Thai) being interpreted by Buddhadasa Bhikkhu. The empty mind means the state of mind which is free from getting a hold of egoism and all desires due to the lack of ‘self’ or ‘Anattā’ . Thus the mind is full of wisdom, can realize the reality of the world that it is naturally empty. Buddhadasa Bhikkhu emphasized that Dhamma can be practiced in conjunction with our daily tasks. Even we succeed or fail sometimes, we, with empty mind, will never stop or shrink back. Thus working with empty mind will result in the efficiency of work. In the view of Heidegger, the nature of the unthought, the nothing or emptiness, is crucial in thinking. The nature or functioning of unthought (or emptiness) determines the nature of what shall be thought. In this sense, the one great thought of each thinker is then the specificity and working of an unthought, his or her own particular working of emptiness.

The Application of emptiness (Suññatā) as a type of awareness-release or full awareness is of great importance for the well establishment of mindful awareness for the efficiency of work in daily life without depression. One with awareness-release can work efficiently and let go all tension and sufferings from work. It is also found that breathing meditation (ānāpānasati) is of great importance to help establish well

mindful awareness in work. This is confirmed by the Buddha abiding with ānāpānasati before reaching the enlightenment as well.

5.2 Suggestion

Over the investigation into the concepts of emptiness (Suññatā) in Tipitaka, it is found that the Buddha has taught emptiness (Suññatā) in three concepts. The first concept is emptiness (Suññatā) in the context of a meditative dwelling or Suññata-vihāra which boils down to the ability to center the mind in a particular mode of perception, to maintain it there, and then to notice the absence and presence of disturbance within that mode. The second concept is emptiness (Suññatā) is emptiness (Suññatā) in the context of the lack of self or Anattā. The third concept is emptiness (Suññatā) in the context of a type of awareness-release or full awareness.

With this finding out the conceptual meanings of emptiness (Suññatā) in the three contexts above, it has revealed that the interpretation of emptiness (Suññatā) as ‘empty mind’ in the view of Buddhadasa Bhikkhu and the three contexts mentioned in Tipitaka even come to differ only in name, but not in actuality. Still they are related and play a role in the application of emptiness (Suññatā) in daily life’s work and activities, which has launched a great responsiveness towards the Lord Buddha's intention to give usefulness from Buddhadhamma to a human being. With clear understanding of the concept of emptiness (Suññatā) in Tipitaka as well as that interpreted by Buddhadasa Bhikkhu, emptiness (Suññatā) can possibly be widely applied for working in daily life properly and efficiently.

Thus for the utmost benefit to all sectors concerned from the concept of emptiness (Suññatā) in Tipiṭaka as well as that interpreted by Buddhadasa Bhikkhu, both government sectors and private sectors should remark the importance of the concept of emptiness (Suññatā) in the three contexts above to be applied in daily life's work and activities so that the efficiency of work and happiness of life could be achieved. Anyhow the right understanding of the three contexts of emptiness (Suññatā) should be implemented clearly with regard to Buddhadasa Bhikkhu's notions and Tipiṭaka. Then any promotion to the public on the concept of emptiness and its application should be widely implemented in all levels and all sectors; for instance in a family, school, university, temple, government and private sectors. Anyhow any other research concerning emptiness (Suññatā) should be on further studies as suggestions :

1. A study on the application of 'empty mind' with regards to education, social science, politics, economics etc.
2. A study on the practice of Suññata-samadhi and Suññata-vimokkha.
3. A study on abiding with emptiness in daily's life.
4. A study on the application of emptiness for green world.
5. A study on the application of emptiness in the world of globalization.

Bibliography

I. Primary Sources

- Bhikkhu Ñānamoli. **The Path of Purification (Visuddhimagga) by Bhadantācariya Buddhaghosa**. Sixth Edition. Kandy Sri Lanka Buddhsit Publication Society, 1999.
- Bhikkhu Ñānamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi. **The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha : A New Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya**. USA : Wisdom Publications, 1995.
- Bhikkhu Bodhi. **The Connected Discourse of the Buddha : A New Translation of the Saṃyutta Nikāya**. Vol I-II. USA : Wisdom Publications, 2000.
- Hare, E.M. **Aṅguttara-Nikāya**. Vol. III-IV. Oxford : PTS, 1995.
- Maurice, Walshe. **The Long Discourse of the Buddha : A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya**. USA : Wisdom Publications, 1995.
- Rhys Davids, T.W. **Samyutta-Nikāya**. Part I. Oxford : PTS, 1996.
- _____. **Samyutta-Nikāya**. Part II. Oxford : PTS, 1994.
- Thanissaro Bhikkhu. **Cula-suññatā Sutta: The Lesser Discourse on Emptiness : M. 121**, 1997-2011.
- _____. **Maha-suññatā Sutta: The Greater Discourse on Emptiness : M. 122**, 2005–2011.
- Woodward, F.L. **Aṅguttara-Nikāya**. Vol. I-II. M.A.. Oxford : PTS, 1995.
- _____. **Aṅguttara-Nikāya**. Vol. V. M.A.. Oxford : PTS, 1994.
- Woodward, P.L. **Samyutta-Nikāya**. Part III. Oxford : PTS, 1995.

_____. **Saṃyutta-Nikāya**. Part IV. Oxford : PTS, 1993.

_____. **Saṃyutta-Nikāya**. Part V. Oxford : PTS, 1994.

II. Secondary Sources

(1) Books

Buddhadasa Bhikkhu. **Sūnyatādharmma : Complete Book of Sūnyatā**.
Bangkok : Dhammaspha, 1992.

_____. **Buddha-Dhamma for Students**. tr. by Ariyananda Bhikkhu
(Roderick S. Bucknell). Chaiya, Surathani : Dhammadāna
Foundation, 2006.

_____. **Dhamma Likhit : Buddhadāsa's Handwritings – Thich
Nhat Hanh's Calligraphy**. Bangkok : BIA, B.E. 2552.

_____. **Handbook for Mankind**. Chaiya, Surathani : Dhammadāna
Foundation, 2005.

_____. **Heart-wood from the Bo Tree**. tr. by SuanMok. Chaiya,
Surathani : Dhammadāna Foundation, 2005.

_____. **Keys to Natural Truth**. tr. By Santikaro Bhikkhu. Bangkok :
Sukkhapabjai, 2008.

_____. **Paticcasamuppada : Practical Dependent Origination**. tr.
by Steve Schmidt. Bangkok : Thammasapa, 2002.

_____. **Some Marvellous Aspects of Theravāda Buddhism**. tr. by
Stephen R. Schmidt. Chaiya, Surathani : Dhammadāna
Foundation, 2005.

_____. **The Goal of Education - in Thai “Cutmai Khong
Kansuksa”**. Bangkok : Dhammabucha Press, B.E. 2522.

- _____. **The Method of Practising Samadhi-vipassana - in Thai “Withee Fuk Samadhi-vipassana”**. Bangkok : Samnak-phim Phutthasan, n.d.
- _____. **The Truth of Nature**. tr. by Ariyananda Bhikkhu (Roderick S. Bucknell). Bangkok : Amarin Printing and Publishing Public Co., Ltd., 2007.
- _____. **The A, B, C of Buddhism: The Meditative Development of Mindfulness of Breathing**. tr. by Stephen R. Schmidt. Chaiya, Surathani : Dhammadāna Foundation, 2005.
- _____. **True Happiness Exists Only in Work – in Thai “Khwaam Suk Thi Thae Mi Yu Tae Nai Ngan”**. Bangkok : Dharmabucha Press, B.E. 2521.
- _____. **Two Kinds of Language**. tr. by Ariyananda Bhikkhu. Bangkok : no publisher given, 1974.
- Buddhadasa Bhikkhu & Kukrit Pramroj. “How Should We Understand the Dhamma”. **The Chulalongkorn Journal of Buddhist Studies**. Vol. 2 No.1, 2003.
- Mendis, N.G.K. **The Questions of King Milinda**. Kendy : Buddhist Publication Society, 1993.
- Nyanaponika Thera. **The Power of Mindfulness : An Inquiry into the Scope of Bare Attention and the Principal Sources of its Strength**. Kendy : Buddhist Publication Society, 1986.
- P.A. Payutto. **Buddhadhamma : Revised Edition**. Bangkok : Mahachulalongkorn Printing, 2000.
- Sumedho, Ajahn. **The Way It Is**. London : Amaravati Publication, 1991.

Thanissaro Bhikkhu. **Awareness Itself : The Teachings of Ajahn Fuang Jotiko.** California : The Abbot Metta Forest Monastery, 1999.

_____. **The mind Like Fire Unbound : An Image in the Early Buddhist Discourses.** Massachusetts : Dhamma Dana Publications, 1993.

(2) Thesis

Charoon Vonnakasinanont. “An Analytical study of Self Rejection in Theravada Buddhism”. **M.A. Thesis.** Graduate School : Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, B.E. 2547.

Komentr Chinawong. “A Comparative Study of The Concepts of Anatta and Sunnata in Theravada Philosophy and The Philosophy of Nāgārjuna”. **M.A. Thesis.** Graduate School : Chulalongkorn University, B.E. 2544.

Phra Fong Abhivanno (Sawasdee). “An Analytical Study of Buddhaasa’s Conception of “The Empty Mind (Chit-Wang)””. **M.A. Thesis.** Graduate School : Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, 2002.

Phramaha Charan Vicāranamedhi (Nilaphan). “Analysis of the Concept of Santuṭṭhi in Theravada Buddhism”. **M.A. Thesis.** Graduate School : Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, 1998.

Biography

Name	: Phra Preeyong Medhino (Arphornsuwan)
Date of Birth	: February 25 th , 1957
Place of Birth	: Nakorn Pathom
Education	: B.Sc. (Agriculture) from Kasetsart University, B.E. 2523 M.A. (Buddhist Studies) from Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University B.E. 2546.
Working Experience	: Lendign Officer of Metropolitan Bank, B.E. 2524. Engineer of Mitsui Telecommunication, B.E.2526. Asst. M.D. of Calibration of Gem Co.Ltd., B.E.2535 Owner of Home English Center, B.E.2540 - 2546.
Present Status	: The Abbot, Wat Pipphalivanaram, Bankhai, Rayong.