
ВСЕМИРНАЯ ИСТОРИЯ

УСЕАГУЛЬНАЯ ГІСТОРЫЯ

WORLD HISTORY

УДК 94(34)+294.3

ПРАВИЛА ПОВЕДЕНИЯ В ОТНОШЕНИИ ОКРУЖАЮЩЕЙ СРЕДЫ В ПАЛИЙСКОЙ ЛИТЕРАТУРЕ: ОПЫТ ИЗУЧЕНИЯ

ЧОВДУРИ УПЕНДА РАО¹⁾

¹⁾Университет Джавахарлала Неру, Нью-Мехраули роуд, Нью-Дели, 110067, г. Дели, Индия

Предлагаются пути решения современных экологических проблем, базирующиеся на древнем образе жизни в том виде, в каком он представлен в Тхераваде (палийской литературе), где описана всеобщая взаимозависимость мира. Показывается, что различные компоненты окружающей среды связаны между собой. Обеспокоенность состоянием окружающей среды не является феноменом последних лет. Единение с матерью-природой выступает жизненно важным элементом индийской культуры. Отношения между культурой и экологией были неотъемлемой составляющей древнеиндийского общества. Внимание к вопросам окружающей среды всегда считалось существенной частью буддийской литературы. Наши предки верили в связь человека с природой и настаивали на гармонии человека и матери-природы. Индия является одной из древнейших цивилизаций с богатым культурным наследием. Сегодня люди могут наслаждаться природными ресурсами благодаря их разумному потреблению и распределению в прошлом. Необходимо понимать, что природные ресурсы, доступные человеку, являются ограниченными и их использование вызывает проблемы с окружающей средой. Палийская литература показывает, что основоположником того дружественного окружающей среде образа жизни, которого люди придерживались в древности, был Будда, а также его последователи.

Ключевые слова: окружающая среда; пали; палийская литература; Будда; экология; буддийская литература; джатак; Джамбудвипа; леса; деревья; животные; птицы; санскрит; экологический кризис; срединный путь; индийская культура; Ангулимала; сельское хозяйство.

Образец цитирования:

Човдури Упенда Рао. Правила поведения в отношении окружающей среды в палийской литературе: опыт изучения. *Журнал Белорусского государственного университета. История.* 2023;4:23–29 (на англ.).
EDN: OLDPZO

For citation:

Chowduri Upendra Rao. Environmental ethics in Pali literature: a study. *Journal of the Belarusian State University. History.* 2023;4:23–29.
EDN: OLDPZO

Автор:

Човдури Упенда Рао – профессор; профессор школы санскрита и индийских исследований.

Author:

Chowduri Upendra Rao, full professor; professor at the School of Sanscrit and Indic studies.
skt.scholar@gmail.com



ПРАВИЛЫ ПАВОДЗІН У АДНОСІНАХ ДА НАВАКОЛЬНАГА АСЯРОДДЗЯ Ў ПАЛІЙСКОЙ ЛІТАРАТУРЫ: ВОПЫТ ВЫВУЧЭННЯ

ЧАЎДУРЫ УПЕНДА РАО^{1*}

^{1*} Універсітэт Джавахарлала Неру, Нью-Мехраулі роўд, Нью-Дэлі, 110067, г. Дэлі, Індыя

Прапаноўваюцца шляхі вырашэння сучасных экалагічных праблем, заснаваныя на старажытным ладзе жыцця ў тым выглядзе, у якім ён выкладзены ў Тхеравадзе (палійскай літаратуры), дзе апісана ўсеагульная ўзаемазалежнасць свету. Паказваецца, што розныя кампаненты навакольнага асяроддзя звязаны паміж сабой. Занепакоенасць станам навакольнага асяроддзя не з'яўляецца феноменам апошніх гадоў. Яднанне з маці-прыродай выступае жыццёва важным элементам індыйскай культуры. Адносіны паміж культурай і экалогіяй былі неад'емным складнікам старажытнаіндыйскага грамадства. Увага да пытанняў навакольнага асяроддзя заўсёды лічылася істотнай часткай будыйскай літаратуры. Нашы продкі верылі ў сувязь чалавека з прыродай і настойвалі на гармоніі чалавека і маці-прыроды. Індыя з'яўляецца адной са старажытнейшых цывілізацый з багатай культурнай спадчынай. Сёння людзі могуць атрымліваць асалоду ад прыродных рэсурсаў дзякуючы іх разумнаму расходванню і размеркаванню ў мінулым. Мы павінны разумець, што прыродныя рэсурсы, даступныя нам, з'яўляюцца абмежаванымі і іх выкарыстанне выклікае праблемы з навакольным асяроддзем. Палійская літаратура паказвае, што заснавальнікам дружалюбнага навакольнаму асяроддзю ладу жыцця, якога людзі прытрымліваліся ў старажытнасці, быў Буда, а таксама яго паслядоўнікі.

Ключавыя словы: навакольнае асяроддзе; палі; палійская літаратура; Буда; экалогія; будыйская літаратура; джатакі; Джамбудвіпа; лясы; дрэвы; жывёлы; птушкі; санскрыт; экалагічны крызіс; сярэдні шлях; індыйская культура; Ангулімала; сельская гаспадарка.

ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS IN PALI LITERATURE: A STUDY

CHOWDURI UPENDRA RAOA

^a Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Mehrauli Road, New Delhi, Delhi 110067, India

This research article shows the solutions to the environmental problems faced by the present generation, based on the ancient lifestyle as depicted in the Theravāda Pali literature, wherein the mutual interdependence of the world has been described. The article says that the various components of the environment are mutually dependent. Environment awareness is not a recent phenomenon. The vital element of the Indian culture is its unity with the mother nature. The relationship between culture and ecology was an integral part of ancient Indian society. Environmental ethics has always been upheld as an inherent part of Buddhist literature. Man and nature relationship was at the centre of the vision of our ancestors, they stressed on the harmonious of human living with the mother nature. India is one of the oldest civilisations in the world with its rich cultural heritage. Today people enjoy natural resources because of the wise resource management and allocation strategies adhered by their ancestors. We need to note that available natural resources are limited, and the exploitation of these resources is causing the environmental crisis. Pali literature shows the ancient environmental friendly way of life, lead by the Buddha and his followers.

Keywords: environment; Pali; Pali literature; Buddha; ecology; Buddhist literature; jātaḥ; Jambūdvīpa; forests; trees; animals; birds; Sanskrit; ecological crisis; middle path; Indian culture; Angulimala; agriculture.

Introduction

Paryāvaraṇam (environment) is a Sanskrit word which is made up of two words, *Pari* and *Āvaraṇam*. *Pari* means «around» and *Āvaraṇam* means «to surround», in such a way that surrounds from all directions. What is surrounding us? As a matter of fact, the earth, air, fire, water, and space are surrounding us. These are the five gross

elements, often depicted in Pali and Sanskrit literatures with the name of pañca mahā bhūta. Whatever exists in the environment, influencing the human beings directly or indirectly, can be known as the environment. Environment is life, life cannot be imagined without the environment.

Pali literature

Pali is a significant language that contains the unparalleled teachings of the Bhagavān Buddha. Being the ancient language of India, Pali preserves Indian history

and several other aspects of Indian culture. Therefore, forgetting this language proves a significant loss in human history. Pali is also one of the most ancient

languages, which shows a dynamic role in the linguistics of the entire Jambūdvīpa. The Pali language and literature have influenced the Indian languages and literatures. Pali has the extensive literature, both canonical and non-canonical. Buddhist ethics preserved in Pali have much to offer to the environmental crisis, but when we say Buddhism, we must make it clear that

which sect of Buddhism are we speaking, as today Buddhism has expanded very vastly. Therefore, I will try to enumerate the environmental awareness as found in the Pali Theravāda Buddhist literature, because I want to concentrate on a portion of Buddhist Pali literature for better research-oriented results on environmental issues.

Buddha and environment

Buddha has accepted the importance of forest and peaceful life of solitude as the most favourable condition for the highest attainment in life. Therefore, he chose the Uruvela forest and Nirahjana River as the most suitable places for meditation. Important events in the life of Buddha happened in the lap of nature, spanning from his birth to Mahāparinirvāṇa. When Mahāmāyā Devī was going to her mother's house, she gave a birth under a Śāla tree (a kind of very tall tree) in the Śālavana (grove of Śāla tree) named as Lumbini between Kapilvastu (capital city of Shakya) and Devadāha¹ (the ancient capital of Koliya Kingdom, located 7 km east of Lumbini). He took *pāyasa* (sweet mixed milk-rice) served by Sujāta under the banyan tree. He attained enlightenment under the shade of Aśwatha tree, spent four weeks enjoying the liberation under the Aśwatha, Ajapāla and Rājayatana trees respectively after attaining enlightenment. Ultimately Mahāparinirvāṇa happened under the Śāla tree. The 24 Buddhas in Buddhist tradition, also attained enlightenment under one or the other tree like Aśwatha,

Śāla, Vaṭa, Punḍarika, Śirīṣa, Udumbara Nāga and Kadamba, etc. It is known from the jāta stories that out of the 550 that the Bodhisattva was born in different forms, 43 times he appeared in the form of a tree-deity. In Tripitaka texts it is said that there are 6400 species of the fish in Jambūdvīpa, 4500 species of birds and 2400 species of beasts. There are 10 000 species of trees, 8000 species of grass, 740 types of medicinal herbs and 43 types of aromatic plants (Dvādaśaviharaṇa Sūtra²). Green forests provide us with very useful things for our survival. The Therīgāthā of Khuddakanikāya of Pali literature is very unique in this aspect.

In Angulamāla Theragāthā (name of a sutta found in Theragāthā text) we find that Angulamāla says with perplexed state of mind: «I remained under the trees of forest and caves of mountains» (Theragāthā, p. 170). In the same text in another sutta named «Aniruddha Theranāthā», the Aniruddha says that it may be a village or forest down or up but the place where Arahants wander, is a beautiful place. The Pali verse as follows:

*Gāme vā yadi vā'raññe ninne vā yadi vā thale
yatthārahanto viharanti taṃ bhūviṃ rāmaṇeyyakam* (Dhammapada, p. 27).

Further, he points out an important fact that in the beautiful forests an ordinary man cannot relish because he is always in search of sensual pursuits, whereas a scholar with dispassion can find a great deal of peace and happiness there. The significance of tree worship was prevailed even before the Buddha, which is available in entire Indian literature in the form of protection of the plants, protection of the environment and depiction of natural beauty. In Pali literature, *vana* (forest), *upavana* (garden), *atavī* (forest), *ārāma* (Buddhist hermitage, a place for self-training), *vihāra* (monastery, it can be described as a residence for monks, a centre for religious work and meditation and a centre of Buddhist learning),

trees, lakes, hills, wind, etc. have been discussed at various places. The whole life of Buddhist monks was spent near forests and various trees, because for the great experience of meditation, quiet, lonely, deserted places, and green, natural environment are most required. Along with forests, rivers, mountains, caves etc. there are also suitable places for the spiritual practices. Once a Bhārdwāja Brāhminā went to the forest where Buddha was absorbed in a deep meditation. He thought that in an empty and deserted forest, where there is no song, no instrument, yet this ascetic is sitting in a lonely forest with a great happiness, how is it possible? The Pali verse depicting of this meaning is as follows:

*Gambhīra-rūpe bahubherave vane, suñam aranñam vijanam vigāhiya
aninjamānena thitena vaggunā, sucārurupam vata bhikkhu jhāyasi* (Samyuttanikāya, p. 29).

Everyone is familiar with the importance of the forest. The existence of life can be possible due to the existence of forests on the earth. Earth, water and remaining gross elements are the sources of our life. Because of water all living beings are living on the earth. There is an invaluable heritage of nature, and important foun-

dations of natural resources are available on the earth. Today, the destruction of forests is being a big reason for the distortion of nature. Due to the cutting of trees, humans are facing many problems. The ground water levels are decreasing, there is a decrease in oxygen, there is no rain, agriculture and environment are being affected

¹*Deva* means in Sanskrit «God» and *Dāha* means «a pond hence». So, the literal meaning of Devadāha is «pond of the gods». It is believed that the Gods and Goddesses and saints bathed in this pond. Prince Siddhārtha himself is believed to have bathed in this holy pond during his visit here in Devadāha.

²The name Dvādaśaviharaṇa Sūtra is a reconstruction of the Sūtra's original Sanskrit name.

either by no rains or the excessive rains, and the noise pollution is another huge problem. The level of noise pollution will be less in the city where more and more trees are flourished. During his preaching, Lord Buddha used to promote the conservation and importance of the nature, and by making many vihāras, gardens, fo-

*Rukkhamūla-senāsanam nissāya pabbajjā
Pūtimuttibhesajjam nissāya pabbajjā* (Mahāvaggo, p. 85).

After the initiation into Pravrajyā, living under the trees is essential for a monk, and the medicine of cow-urine must be used throughout his life. The Vanaropa Sutta (one of the sermons) emphasises on the importance of environment that the person, who plants trees in gardens, forests, and builds bridges

*Ārāmaropā Vanropā, Ye Janā Setukārakā.
Papānca Udapānam ca, Ye Dadanti Upassayam
Tesaṃ divā ca ratto ca, sadā puññam pavaḍḍhati.
Dhammathā Silasampannā, Te Janā Saggagāmino* (Saṃyuttanikāya, p. 381).

In Pali literature the seed is the main source, and the rain is considered the best for it. Many contexts are available in the Pali literature which give an importance to agricultural work.

I cultivate, I sow, and I eat by plowing, sowing. Therefore, I call myself a farmer, but I do not see your agriculture. Brahmin Kasi Bhāradhwāja said rather sharply to the Buddha: «O, Śramaṇa, I plough, and I sow, and when I have ploughed and sown, I eat. You, Śramaṇa,

*Kassako paṭijānāsi, na ca passāma te kasim
Kasim no pucchito brūhi, yathā jānemu te kasim* (Suttanipāta, p. 141).

Then Buddha says this very important thing. Faith is the seed, austerity is the rain, wisdom is his yoke and plough. His pole is modesty, mind is the strap and he has

*Saddhā bijam, tapo vuṭṭhi, paññā me yuganangalam,
hiri isa, mano yottam, sati me phālapācanam.
Kāyagutto vacīgutto āhāre udare yato
saccam karomi niddānam, soraccam me pamocanam,
viriyam me dhuradhorayham, yogakkhemādhivāhanam
gacchati anivattantaṃ, yattha gantvā na socati.
Evam esa kasi katthā, sā hoti amatapphalā:
etam kasim kasitvāna sabbadukkhā pamuccatīti* (Suttanipāta, p. 20).

In Anguttara Nikāya, three quick actions of the farmers have been explained, namely *idha, bhikkhave, kassako gahapati achchāchikāni karaṇīyāni, katamāni tīni seegham khetta sukam karoti sumtiktan... khetta sukthe karitva... bijāni patitthāpeti* (Anguttara, p. 104). The farmer plows quickly, plows properly and sows the seed in it, then irrigates it with water, removes it when it is in excess. Similarly, the one who donates food gives strength, the one who donates clothes gives character: *Annado balado hoti, vatthado hoti vannedo* (Saṃyuttanikāya, p. 361). Donations of food and clothes are given more importance, and these two things result from agriculture. We can find importance of agriculture and folklife in Pali literature.

*Channā kuti āhito gini, ath che pathayasī pavassa deva.
Andhaka maksā na vijjare, kachhe rulhateine charanti gāvo.
Vuṭṭhim pi saheyyum āgatam, atha che pathayasī pavassa deva* (Suttanipāta, p. 41).

rests, mountains, and riverbanks as his abode, and by making living places inside the forest areas. While giving initiation to the monks, he had specified the four Niśrayas (means) of life-sustenance, out of which two (Śayanāsana and Bhaiṣajya) were completely related to the nature.

over the rivers, arranges the drinking water, and digs wells, gets merits through his virtues, and therefore such person is considered a virtuous man, because by following the path of Dharma, humans can attain heaven. This meaning is conveyed by the following Pali verses:

should plough and sow too for having done so, you may eat». In other words he says that if you want to eat, you should work, if you don't work, you shouldn't eat. Be like me, I work, then I eat, so you also should work first, then eat. One should not depend upon other people. But Buddha says: «O, Brahmin, I too plough and sow, and when I have ploughed and sown, I eat». So, the Brahmin Kasi Bhāradhwāja is rather surprised at this, and he says to Buddha:

mindfulness for share and goad. Being well-organised in act and word, he is eating every day, with truth, he clears the weeds, and his attainment of Nirvaṇa is reaping the crop.

During the rainy season, the Dhaniya Gopa, who is living in a natural, delightful environment, being pleased with the life of a householder, begs Meghadeva (cloud god) that he should be on the bank of the Mahī River. «I am living with my relatives, I have covered the hut, I have lit the fire, O Meghadeva! If you want, shower a lot. Flies and mosquitoes are not here, cows graze on the grass grown on the bank of river, they bear it if it rains. Now O God! If you want, shower a lot. Here the natural love of this contented cowherd, living on the banks of the river during the rainy season is unique». The above meaning is conveyed in the following Pali verses:

Dhaniya Gopa was one of the cowherds in those days. Dhaniya Gopa literally means, the one whose wealth is the cattle, and according to the commentary, his herd consisted of 30000 herds of cattle. In the Bhayabherava Sutta, Buddha explains about the importance of Araṇyavāsa (living in forests) and says that he lives in Araṇya Vanakhanda (forest areas) for two reasons: with the thought of my happiness in this birth, for the mercy on future people, so that they too can be a part of this success by following me after taking renunciation. In the context of Devadatta³ (literally means god-given) in Mahāsāropama Sutta of Majjhima Nikāya, the Buddha tactfully explains to the monks the analogy of the huge tree, saying that a man who goes out to search for the essence, and finds a huge tree with essence, but he only plucks its branches, leaves and copal considering them as essence, but neglecting the real essence. Likewise, a lazy monk without understanding the essence of Dharma, is attracted by only parts of a branch of palāśa (a kind of tree), like an ordinary man. Therefore, such a monk gets only sorrow in the world.

In Buddhist sūtra texts we often find the descriptions of the donations of forests, comforts, vihāras, gardens, etc. Some of the noteworthy are, Magadha's (a famous kingdom in ancient India) king Bimbisāra donated Veṇuvana to Buddha and his monks. Likewise, Śrāvastī's⁴ Sreṣṭhī (businessman) Anātha piṇḍika (a famous merchant) donated a huge, resourceful, and beautiful Jetavana to Buddha. Vaishali's Ambapālī⁵ courtesan donated the beautiful Āmravana (Mango grove) and Shrāvastī's Mrigāramātā (another lady devotee) donated the Pūrvārāma Vihāra to Buddha. Buddha has termed Vihāra Dāna (donation of groves) as the best Dāna (donation). The Āmravana of Rājgriha's⁶ Jīvaka Kaumārabhr̥tya, (famous pediatrician in Buddha's time), and «Madrakukṣi's Mṛgadāva» (deer park) are some of the very famous viharas in ancient India. Similarly other forests and comforts are also mentioned everywhere in the Pali Piṭaka literature (Pali canonical literature). The following is a list of various forest lands and various groves donated to Buddha in ancient India. Mṛgadāva, where the Buddha reached and lived, such as «Isipatana Migdāva», (the deer park at present day

Sarnath, near Varanasi City), Subhaga-vana of Ukkāṭha, Kappasiya Vanakhanda on the Vāranāsi-ūruvela Road, Sālavana of Gosinga, Tapodārāma of Rājagṛha, Kannakattala Migdaya at Uju, Andhavana near the Śrāvastī, Paṭalīputra's Kukkuṭārāma, Kajangal's Mukheluvana, Kaushambi's Ghoṣitārāma, Nālakapan's Palāśa-vana, Nāla's Pāvārikambavana, Mithila's Makhādeva Amravana, Saket's Añjana-vana, Sihavana, Mahāvana, Tapovana, Kāraṇḍaka, Dandakāranya and Sāgauna-vana near the Himālayas, etc. where the four exiled sons of King Ikshvāku lived. In the same way, the mention of many mountains, seas, lakes and rivers, etc. is also significant in this regard.

Gijjhakūṭa, Pāṇḍava, Vebhāra, Isigila and Vepulla (all these are the names of mountains) Gayaśīrṣa Mountain of Gaya, Himavanta, Mallagiri, Ahoganga, Isidhara, Udayaka-pabbata, Meru, Yugandhara, Chittakūṭa and Tikūṭa mountains, etc. are the famous ones which are mentioned in Pali literature. This shows the rich environmental heritage of India. Likewise, the lakes Anotatta, Kanamunda, Khema, Chakkadaha, Chhaddanta, Siṃwalī, etc. are mentioned in Pali. The rivers Gangā, Yamunā, Achiravatī, Sarabhū, Hemavatī, Nerañjarā, Nammadā, Kosikī, Sīdā, Miga-sammatā, Vettavatī, Bhāgīrathī etc., are also mentioned in Pali.

Buddha had made many rules for the protection of flora and fauna, if any monk harms flora by cutting trees, grass, etc., he will be blamed for pācittiya (a kind of mistake). Even in the law of Varṣāvāsa (rainy season retreat) the matter of conservation of plants is propounded in a different way, because, if a monk goes everywhere in the rainy season, he will destroy numerous types of animals, leaves, and grasses on the way. Adharma (sin) occurs due to this kind of violence against animals and plants because they will be destroyed due to human movements. The 13 kinds of Dhūtānga-education have been given to monk to follow. Mainly there is a law to accept Āraṇyakāṅga (living in forest) and V.ṛk.samūlikāṅga (living under the trees). According to the monastic rules of Buddha dharma a monk should give up sleeping and eating inside the village, but should accept the Araṇyavāsa, and in that Araṇyavāsa the seeker will be engrossed in contemplation and meditation, as said in Visuddhimagga:

*Pavivitto asansidho pantasenāsane rato.
āradhayanto Nāthassa Vanavasena Mānasam.
Eko arññe nivasam, ye sukham labhte yati.
Rasam tassa na vindanti, api deva sa-indakā* (Visuddhimagga, p. 48).

In Theragāthā, the monks love of nature has been explained very beautifully, because the life of the monks was deeply related to the nature, as Vanavattha (a monk) describes the beauty of the self-satisfied mountains by

the Sthavira Dharmasādhana (a monk). These mountains covered with Indragopa of beautiful, cool and holy water, having colours like blue clouds, he finds very delightful as he describes this in the following Pali verse:

³Devadatta was a cousin and brother-in-law of Gautama Siddhārtha. He later became a Buddhist monk but known as a divisive figure in Buddhism.

⁴During the 6th century BC, Shrāvastī was the capital of the Kingdom of Kosala. It was a prosperous trading centre and it was known for its religious associations.

⁵Āmrpālī was a celebrated royal courtesan of the republic of Vaishali in ancient India around 500 BC. Following the Buddha's teachings, she became a Buddhist nun. She donated Ambapali vana to Buddha.

⁶The word Rājgriha literally means «the city of kings». It is a historic town in the district of Nalanda in the state of present Bihar in India.

*Nīlabbhavannā ruchirā, sitwārī sucindharā.
indagopaka saṁcannā, te selā ramayanti maṁ* (Theragāthā, p. 7).

Description of the dance of peacocks and their beauty according to Chudaka Sthavira is very impressive. The peacocks with their beautiful crest, beautiful eyes, blue neck, beautiful face and speech are dancing graceful-

ly on the green grassy land. Here, the healthy and human-friendly forest life filled with beautiful melodies of birds such as peacocks has been described in one of the texts of Pali literature named «Theragāthā».

*Nandati morā suśikhā, sumeruvuṇā,
sunīlagīvā sumukhā sugajjino* (Theragāthā, p. 7).

Similarly, due to the chirping of birds and due to the chirping of crickets the monk Rāmaneyaka Sthavira concentrates his mind in meditation. Monk Godhika while doing meditation in the rainy season says, that it is raining musically, and during this rain my cottage is

covered in all directions, oh cloud God, you can rain, as much as you want. In the same way the winter season was spent by Udayī monk. The spring season has come, the earth is covered with green grass, the forest blocks have become dormant, the roads have become passable:

*Angārino dāni dumā adante,
Phalesino chadanam vippahāya,
Te acchimantova pabhāsanti* (Theragāthā, p. 117).

Global environment crisis in present times

Today's man has learned to construct beautiful buildings with all comforts, but being entangled in the net of Samsāra (worldly matters) he is not able to realise how the environment is constantly being polluted by such technological developments. Factories and vehicles are discharging the gasses, as a result, we are not able to receive pure and clean air. Even oceans are polluted with marine food, oils and industrial waste. In those days as evident in the texts of Theravada Buddhism, Bauddha Bhikṣus (Buddhist monks) were used to live happily in the forests and villages. Therefore, even today Buddhism can show solutions to the environmental crises in the age of globalisation by following the ancient Indian methods which can be seen in the Pali literature. Today I wonder what kind of scientific progress or human comforts are achieved by a man! The entire atmosphere is going to be damaged by the so-called industrial development. But in old days green forests and species living there could experience an immense peace and bliss. Sitting under the trees Buddhist monks peacefully meditated with the inner *prajña* (wisdom) and like a mountain in the forest, they never moved to the various disturbances of the world. The ancient India has reached to the status of ecological religion. The relationship between Buddhist ideas and the natural resources can be scrutinised within few important ways. Firstly Buddhists have treated nature as a teacher. Secondly, in Buddhism nature was respected as a spiritual force, Thirdly as per the teachings of Buddha, nature became the way of life to Buddhist monks. But yet one can never find environmental movement in any Pali or Sanskrit text, because it wasn't needed at that time. People had a continuous connectivity with the nature. Just see the life of Buddha, all significant events occurred in the countryside and are associated with trees and forests. His birth at Lumbini as his mother took hold of a branch of a Sala tree, his early experience of meditative absorption

beneath the rose apple tree, his enlightenment beneath the Bodhi tree and his *parinirvāna* (death) happened between the twin Sāla trees.

Today's man turned to ignore the fact of the mutual interdependence of all processes of the world. Various components of the environment are mutually dependent. For instance, an environmental control system is a critical subsystem of offshore wind farms, which is responsible to adjust and maintain a normal operational condition. For the environment control system, if humidity, salinity, temperature is at a more stressful state, the deterioration of the devices in the environment control system is accelerated, which will likely decrease the reliability of the environment control system. Additionally, the deterioration of the environment control system also effects its operation state, and then the state of its working environment is influenced and gets worse accordingly. Human society affects environmental change but the human society also is vulnerable to these changes. This relation has generated a number of theories that either focus on how we affect the environment or how the environment effects on us. Few theories explicitly focus on the interaction based on the Buddhist dependent origination theory. Therefore, we can say, by harming nature, man is harming himself. Like a famous line in Sanskrit, *Dharma eva hanti dharmo rakshit rakshitah* «Dharma destroys them, who destroy it, but the same will protect them if they protect it». Likewise, we can say that *vrkṣa eva hanti, vrkṣo raksati raksitaḥ* (trees protect men when he protects the trees).

Jātakapali contains the information about peaceful rural life of that period. People nurtured various animals especially cows. The herdsman could recognise each cow based on the marks on it. Villagers used the vessels of bronze, wood, and fruit shells unlike plastic, which is used by the present generation. Jataka tales «Loska» and

«Takka» state that villagers used to establish schools and build residential quarters for teachers in a peaceful area amidst of forest trees. A monk should satisfy by residing beneath the tree. Monks loved the mountains. They used to reach beautiful mountains for peaceful meditation in solitude. They relished at the sight of a large cluster of huge trees, herds of animals, lovely creepers, birds, flowers, and peacocks. All these were enhancing the peace and the beauty of forests situated on the mountains.

In Tālapuṭa Theragāthā we can find a noble dream of a Tālapuṭa. He proclaims: «When shall I alone wander in the caves of mountains, and treat all things as impermanent?» (Theragāthā, p. 201). The same monk feels in other Gāthā: «After hearing the melodious sounds of peacocks and other birds, when shall I awake during the morning in the forest? He further says that now enough of the household life, and thus he feels to depart into forest. We find plenty of such Gāthas in Theragāthā alone» (Theragāthā, p. 202–203).

One should stay with the benefactor. For example, even after the rivers Gangā, Yamunā, Aciravatī, Sarayū, etc. fall into the sea and rain water falls from the sky, there is no change, nor does it cross its limits, in the same way a monk gets benefit, hospitality, praise, worship, etc. Teachings should not be broken and should be as stable as the ocean. A monk, doing yoga should also be full of the qualities that exist in water, light, air, mountain, space, and moon, virtues. Even in the Mahā Rāhulovāda Sutta, the context of the same feeling of great elements like earth, water, fire, air etc. is exemplary for the monk. In «Bhaishajya Kandhaka» of Mahāvaggo, the method of consuming medicines made from the roots, flowers, bark, and fruits of natural plants has been prescribed for the sick monk. In this way, in entire Pali literature the references are mentioned at various places describing the importance of natural resources and their protection (Mahāvaggo, p. 335). Our ancient culture is known as Aranyaka or Tapovana (forest oriented) culture, but today the endless thirst of human beings is killing all the creatures of nature. But exploiting the nature with the approach of resource management leads us into many difficulties. Mainly we lose ethics and humanity and therefore many are involved in animal slaughter to keep the kitchens of the world constantly supplied with meat and the killing of peaceful creatures of the sea by rich countries. So, what to speak about other countries like Thailand, Sri Lanka, Burma, and Cambodia? Bud-

dism stands on the opposite of this. The first precept in Buddhist Pañcasīla emphasises on the abstention from animal killings: *pāṇātipātā veramanī sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi* (I undertake the precept to refrain from destroying living creatures).

Buddhism advocates the harmonious interaction between the beings and nature. In this way, it obviously leads to consider the possibility of vegetarianism. This vegetarianism eventually became common in India. The Ājīvakas (ancient Indian philosophers) and Jains were vegetarians. Some writers wrongly advocated non-vegetarianism for Buddhists. They say, as far as monks and nuns were concerned, it was acceptable to eat meat on the condition that they did not see, hear or suspect that the person offering the meal had killed the animal specifically for them (Dhammika, p. 10). But this does not seem to be logical. In the Pali Tipiṭaka texts the Jains have been the advocators of vegetarianism.

The jātika gives a good idea of the early Buddhist attitude towards animals and plants. The animals in these stories are often represented in a most sympathetic manner and sometimes in contrast to the greed, and due to cruelty of humans they suffer. Even plants were sometimes attributed with having the noblest human-like qualities. According to them, wayside trees lowered their branches so that hungry and weary travelers could reach their fruits. Early Buddhist texts caution that those who kill animals like fishermen, hunters for wild pigs and butchers, who slaughter bulls and goats will be reborn in purgatory.

Some scholars pointed out that the concepts of nature and environment can be seen in the doctrine of paticca Samuppada (dependent origination), because everything is somehow connected. In Buddhism, all phenomena are understood basically in terms of dependent origination, the idea of the interdependence and interaction among all existences. The environmental view of Buddhism is a life-centric one, and is a life-independent too. Both subject and its environment have a mutually interdependent and therefore have interconnected relationship. By understanding this we can develop harmony with nature. In Pali literature we not only find such environment related issues, but we can also find the deep philosophical and spiritual questions. In fact, today Buddhist philosophy is a famous term in the international academic world. Therefore, we have to read and spread the Pali literature to understand its numerous valuable morals, including the environmental ethics.

List of shorts

Anguttara Nikaya – Anguttara Nikaya (ekaka-duka-tikanipata) / ed. Bhikkhu J. Kashyap. Bihar, 2017 ; **Dhammapada** – Dhammapada / ed. Ven. Weagoda Sarada Maha Thero. Singapore : Singapore Buddhist Meditation Centre, 1993 ; **Dhammika** – *Dhammika S.* Nature and the environment in early Buddhism. Singapore : Buddha Dhamma Mandala Society, 2015 ; **Mahāvaggo** – Mahāvaggo (Vinayapiṭaka). Chakupat Lalitpur : Vipashyana Vishodhana Vinyasa, 1998 ; **Saṃyuttanikāya** – Saṃyuttanikāya. Varanasi : Bouddha Bharati, 2001 ; **Suttanipāta** – Suttanipāta / ed. Dwarikadas Shastri. Varanasi : Bouddha Bharati, 2005 ; **Theragāthā** – Theragāthā / ed. Swāmī Dvārikādāsa Sāstrī. Varanasi : Bouddha Bharati, 2003 ; **Visuddhimaggo** – Visuddhimaggo / ed. B. Shukla. Varanasi, 1969.

Received by editorial board 05.03.2023.