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BUDDHIST CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

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**Abstract:**I have discovered that many monastic students have not read the Tipitaka, or if they have it is selective reading: mainly readings that focus on popular discourses. It is often my responsibility to convey the contents of various discourses to students. The inspiration behind this study of the discourses determines to give the greatest value to students, in terms of providing material that should generate greater intellectual ability amongst the students, if the chosen discourses are examined. Inside are several hermeneutical tools to assist students in examining material that they may be researching, such as: the sixteen hāras; sequences for conveying a meaning or for conveying phrases; the criteria from the Kesaputta Sutta; and for whatever else that there might be, many charts were designed from the compiled material from various sources to illustrate or explain the contents. The first section of discourses covers six selections related to social morality: five discourses and the Bhikkhu-Patimokkha. The second section of discourses covers training in higher mentality, and features seven discourses. The third section of discourses features material related to training in higher wisdom, as drawn from three selected discourses. The conclusion ascertains that the selected discourses also have the theme of 'progress' as a predominate characteristic, and therefore an analysis of progress concludes the study

**Keyword:**Tipitakas, Buddhist Wisdom, Knowledge , etc

A.INTRODUCTION:

There are many ways to enter into the realm of Buddhist wisdom - for many people there is: the standard meditative route where people are taught to reside in calm states or scrutinize their body-mental functionalities; for others they endeavor through the monastic realm of learning through discipline, meditation and eventually becoming wise; however, this work is inspired in a completely different manner. This singular endeavor has several layers of interpretation built into it: there is the proper doctrinal perspective of a gradual training, as well as the perspective of how someone should develop in cognitive or intellectual abilities. This endeavor devoured the Tipiṭaka, looking for the Buddha's most powerful lessons that could provide the greatest benefit towards raising the cognitive or intellectual level of the student-reader. In the sense that someone may be inspired by the wise words of a Buddhist-master, these words here are presented to assist in communicative action, or in a likewise manner: to assist in the development of personal cognitive- intellectual abilities or one's psychological abilities.

To acquiesce to traditional Buddhist teachings, the selections are organized through the Buddhist principle of the three-fold training, where criteria is determined bites moral benefit, meditational benefit and for the development of intellectual wisdom. Layered upon the previous criteria is the shroud of Buddhist Hermeneutics or the attempts at interpreting these texts to bring out greater intellectual awareness or to provide cognitive benefits for the student-reader. Again Buddhist lessons were selected primarily for their modern cognitive value though their ability to serve

one's intellectual development, and not as blatant examples of the three-fold training; although the teachings were arranged into circumstantial chapters pertaining to the beneficial criteria .The vision for this research arose from being a university-level lecturer for international Buddhist monks; and this endeavor on selected lessons is intended as a tool for these students who may not have a version of the Tipiṭaka with them; and thus, the selections endeavor to provide intellectual tools necessary for students to maneuver through various course-subjects and Buddhist Studies with critical perspectives necessary at times when students forget that they are Buddhist disciples acquiring necessary tools to assist themselves or society. Buddhists may wish to begin by using Buddhist tools .In former times, scholars could be found reading texts influential in shaping ideologies or methodologies. In the postmodern university-realm, reading a book is seen as an antiquated endeavor: data is sought from computerized internet searches, and compiled for presentation, with only a few lines of original material to link the borrowed concepts together. Few students seem to crave for wisdom as they have in previous generations. There are numerous anthologies of suttas available but this work aspires towards another aim: enabling monastic students to recollect the Buddha dhamma and reinforce the tradition of honor that being a Buddhist monastic entails, through reinforcement of regulations and that supramundane attainments are possible through endeavoring through daily strife and adequately and equally addresses any concerns for laity as well. One can claim that there is a critical-emphasis on adhering to regulation sand deepening the understanding of Dhamma at the root of these selections How does a scholar

try to represent the Buddhist teachings without violating modern copyright regulations? It is widely known that the gift of Dhamma is the highest offering, yet we are told to be vigilant of plagiarism. There is a strong reservation against representing the lessons; however, the suttas must be made available more freely otherwise the student would be conceptually lost without the accompanying lesson, many of which here are in a more condensed form. Some lessons will be periodically interrupted by a chart or commentary to emphasize some perception or intention, where a break can be made. Some footnotes from the original translator remain if the determination suggested the high-value of the material, while some are augmented by personal notes for elaborating the material to suit the objective of the analytical endeavor and offering. Therefore, the footnotes are an integral portion of the academic offering. But where should we start? According to some philosophers: the studying religions must consider not only ritualistic-participation but also intellectualization, a spacial-realm provided for advancing cognitive thoughts and action, of concerned principles into concrete endeavors- since the preservation and promotion of religion seems to be reflective rather than from a reductionistic explanatory manner. Habermas teaches for cognitive-development psychology: “cognitive development in the narrow sense, as well as socio-cognitive and moral development, are conceptualized as internally reconstructible sequences of stages of competence This allows for more engagement with religious truths, values and requirements of the system essential in the comprehension of the fundamental questions of truth, value and meaning developed from the scholarly/cognitive form of studying the Buddhist 'religion'.

There are beneficial Buddhist skills of interpretation as well as structural criteria of interpretation because this endeavor is seeking to empower the intellectual development or competence of the university-student, some important criteria will be examined:

#### **BUDDHIST INTERPRETIVE SKILLS:**

Theravada Buddhists cannot think that textual interpretations are subjected to the basic interpretation of the gradual training path of the development of greater morality, concentration, and wisdom. William Grassie contributes a hermeneutical circle influenced by Paul Ricoeur: a reading of the texts leads to explanations of the point we may be reading, this leads to an appropriation of the concept, and upon another reading of the same texts, our knowledge may increase and thus this leads to another understanding. The hermeneutical circle continues in this way through our adaptive capacities. We can see that there are levels-upon-levels or layers of comprehension towards the development of wisdom. This on face-value pertains to the characteristics of a practitioner and not to the modern reader of critiques. Better than the gradual path (towards enlightenment) is the Vibhanga's Paṭisambhidāṁga this explanation contains an interesting self-system for analytical insight advocating the following four hermeneutical principles for the analyst (Vibhajjavādān discussed in more detail later :)

#### **ANALYTICAL INSIGHT OF CONSEQUENCE:**

Everything, internally and externally is capable of being analyzed in terms of it being an outcome of a previous condition.

#### **Analytical Insight of Origin:**

The apparent infinitude or endless process of continuity.

#### **Analytical Insight of Philology:**

Studying, thinking, and listening to understand with the proper ability to gain the proper or intended meaning out of what was said or read.

#### **Analytical Insight of Knowledge:**

To develop fully and correctly all that was previously drawn out. As with the gradual-path or adaptive capabilities as the concept, the conclusion of this device leads to the development of wisdom. This may be elaborated as the Buddha's assurance to “never permit loose thinking”

Where “precise terminology with clear definitions as to the meanings and scope of a term was of the greatest importance.” All of this 'comprehension is to be undertaken by the student. Precise and accurate

Understanding is important; one of the factors of the Eightfold Noble Path is Correct Understanding of which should guide intellectual-stimulation towards doctrinal appreciation and liberation.

#### **Structural Interpretive Skills:**

Buddhists often take these proper understandings of teachings and try to superimpose the doctrinal elements upon society. Sometimes this can be ineffective, through an improper understanding. From examining writings of Marx and Engels (Marxism - as one of the most prominent, but secular liberating social philosophies) they offer tools for perfected comprehension and striving with righteous or wholesome thoughts - concerning religion this suggests: Relating to structure, secular institutions and religious institutions seem to be at permanent odds. The below illustration is necessary to represent, because if Buddhism is a world-renouncing system (lokuttara-nature), then it becomes beneficial to comprehend the external world's imposition onto and into Buddhism, subversively – and this illuminates the rationality, or in the sense of Habermas: knowledge, for Buddhists to escape from existing suppressive institutions (lokiya-nature). This adds to proper understandings of doctrines and their applications and utilizations and how knowing- people must implement ideas whenever possible. External forces have imposed themselves upon Buddhism, through their seeking of legitimacy. Political-elite suggested that monks maintain monasteries these are often gifted to the Sangha to manage as if a temple is some sort of corporate-business. Offering ceremonies utilize time better suited for mediation or doctrinal practices; and the seeking of scientific truths in Buddhism enforce inquires that are: not situated towards the personal liberation from greed, hatred and delusion from the consciousness.

. Habermas teaches: “We can distinguish three aspects of argumentative speech. First, considered as a



process, we have to do with a form of communication that is improbable in that it sufficiently approximates ideal conditions... Second, as soon as one considered argumentation as a procedure, we have to do with a form of interaction subject to special rules. The discursive process of reaching understanding, in the form of a cooperative division of labor between proponents and opponents, is normally regulated in such a way that participants: thematize a problematic validity claim; relieved of the pressure of action and experience, in a hypothetical attitude; and test with reasons and only with reasons, whether the claim defended by the proponents rightfully stands or not. Finally, argumentation can be viewed from a third standpoint: it has as its aim to produce cogent arguments that are convincing in virtue of their intrinsic properties and with which validity claims can be redeemed or rejected. Arguments are the means by which inter subjective recognition of a proponent's hypothetically raised validity claim can be brought about and opinion thereby transformed into knowledge. ...The three analytical aspects distinguished above can provide the theoretical perspectives from which the familiar disciplines of the Aristotelian canon can be delimited: rhetoric is concerned with argumentation as a process, dialectic with the pragmatic procedures of argumentation, and logic with its products."What Habermas is saying is that in any argument, there are some ideal conditions that should be recognized between the opponent and proponent of the argument. The opponent and the proponent realize that they are both debating some point, and in this sort of procedure there are some basic rules that are perhaps unsaid between the two, but understood nonetheless between them. They have reached some understanding of the contention and have focused their minds upon this comprehended point of contention. Between the back and forth argumentation, some valid point is cognized, and both in the debate strive towards that ideal reality when seeking the truth of the scenario. There can be no winning through false ideals only rationality, as dangerous as that can also be, would win out in the argument if every point is correctly addressed. Once this coherence has been reached, the proponent becomes redeemed or the opponent may win his rejection. The valid point is then elevated as some point of knowledge between the debaters. In this sense, something is illuminated beyond just being pomposity due to the procedural and dialectic rendering of the strife the produce of course is the new-found logic between the individuals or participating groups. From the process of the adaptation experience, someone gains insight of any consequences of something experienced, here we see the beginning of the process set in motion by Habermas; then there is the insight of origin or continuity where the interaction between the protagonist and antagonist occurs where they both think about or comprehend the perspectives; and finally there is the insight of knowledge, where the two opponents argue but recognize each perspective and develop or build upon the previous knowledge. This is a process of the Buddhist adaptation- process with Habermas's Communicative-action theory both of which build from ignorance towards a more enlightened perspective, developed from such scrutinization afforded through the process of argumentation or investigation .Students must

learn to assess where the exertions of power or repression originate and where this can be measured, then someone can apply appropriate perspectives. Where is there something that is imposing an internal or external will upon the conventional or ultimate aim? This is the objective, along with the aspiration that the text will show how these intellectual tools can empower Buddhists (or anyone else) how to liberate themselves from institutionalized or personal oppression - as the diagram presents. Society can be additionally manipulated through regulations or fall under the influence from some charismatic figure, into collective-action. It can be seen that these selections attempt to liberate the reader from worldly oppression. A very good question, could be: "Where do we fit in?"non-canonical Buddhist text in the majority of Buddhist societies (thus less likely to be read) suggests to readers that the phrasing and meanings of the Buddha's dispensation should be known, as threads – to better in struct one's pupils/disciple; and thereby becomes most useful for monks conducting missionary activities. Despite the advantages of the intentionally-designed text, why is its material seldom employed, or rarely applied? This would then illuminate that the text should be immediately valued and utilized more often to distinguish, develop, and purify personality-types for students. Attention, therefore, is thus drawn towards the Puggalapaññatti an Abhidhamma text that illustrates different personality-characteristics; additional material concerning temperaments can be found in the Vimuttimagga and Visuddhimagga, respectively. Any teacher with this knowledge of temperaments and abilities can better instruct the newer generations of Buddhist - knowing these would greatly benefit Buddhists. George D. Bond writes: "Understanding the way in which the ...terms apply to the different types of persons, the interpreter would be able to make his preaching of the Dhamma more relevant to his contemporary audience." This idea runs parallel to the Buddha's suggestion for comprehending the student's main personality characteristic to ensure that a proper meditation technique is prescribed for the student. If attention is now drawn towards teaching-methodology, Dr. Justin McDaniel has expressed three types of sermons or preaching techniques, found in traditional Thai Theravada Buddhist sermon because knowing your audience is important:

Nissaya: This supporting- resource" is written for sermon preparations and as a guide to understand source texts. Narrative nissaya were for the monastic student with specific triggers to recollect general topics. Although nissaya lean heavily on source texts, only a few phrases are recollected allowing for creative interpretations. Nissaya , as defined by PTS Dictionary, means: leaning on, or nearby.

#### **NĀMASADDA:**

This is a more literal word for word translations from short textual passages, reserved for private monastic lessons, to learn about the function and origin of the syllables and analyzed against the textual demonstration, perhaps like a glossary. An aspect of the term, derived from the PTS Dictionary, suggests that nāmasadda as a term, recollects audible-veneration (sadda = sound).

**Vohara:**

This is an idiomatic, common speech (oratory), or mechanical technique that lift words skillfully and perhaps melodically (due to the cadence or pattern to the works) creatively, for oral presentations suited to audience levels. Audiences are mainly serious students sitting in public sermons and cite long passages with longer explanations taken from commentaries or other sources. As defined by PTSDictionary, Vohara means: common use or popular logic.

The determination is evident, sermon or lecture-texts have different functionalities due to the author's particular intention due to the nature of the audience.

**CONCLUSION**

Buddhism encourages the awareness of the ability to distinguish between wholesome and unwholesome circumstances; therefore, the work here is justified to take upon 'Mysterious cognitive' processes and utilize them to improve society suggesting that the inspirations cooperate with improving existing social institutions. Furthermore, an expression of the original intentions, of the Buddha needs to be explored; here the reference is to the renunciation concept (lokuttara-nature) and the usefulness of residing in the forests, and the associated influences (lokiya-nature) for later applications available for society: The insights gained from the tools presented above in this Buddhist research for improving or sharpening the critical analytical skills of Buddhist students can improve the thinking abilities of future Buddhist scholars.

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