

Materializing the neither Win nor Lose, a Buddhist Theory of Reconciliation with Parallel to Win-Win Theory

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Introduction

One of the most applicable theories of conflict transformation and reconciliation is, transcending of zero-sum (win-lose) phase to arrive at a positive-sum (win-win) agreement. Many conflicts and wars end on the phase of win-lose. In win-lose phase, even though violent behaviour of conflict was over, it would be impossible to reconcile the hearts of the confronted parties of a conflict. To reconcile the heart wounds of both parties there must be a win-win agreement. But instead of the above Western theory, Buddhism elaborates neutral theory which can be known as "Neither win nor lose" theory. For an example, Buddha explained futility of victory and defeat over a war to King Pasenadi, who was frustrated after three defeats at the hand of King Ajatasattu. The explanation as follows "Victory breeds hatred, for the conquered sleep in sorrow; casting aside victory and defeat, the peaceful one dwells at ease" (Dph.207). Here, Buddha mentioned the person who has peaceful mind (upasanto) dwell without attaching to the concepts like win or lose.

He employed the above theory in several occasions to transform conflicts into peaceful conditions. On the other hand, he assisted to the lower caste people like Sunīta, Sōpāka to come up to the peaceful condition from their unfair social status. Once occasion Buddha mediated to solve the war arises on the matter of water in Rōhini River, between the two tribes known as Sākya and kōliya. Buddha tried twice to persuade King Viḍuḍhabha to desist from his revengeful massacre of the Sākya. At same time, he interfered to transform the ideological conflict arise between two groups of monks in town of Kōsaba into constructive positive level. Even though first attempt was unsuccessful, He let to the confronted parties

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to understand the meaninglessness of their conflict while He was keeping silence.

Objectives

The research area of this paper is to study practical aspect of “Neither win nor lose theory” a theory of Buddhist reconciliation, instead of “Win-in theory.” The objective of the research is to disclose the uniqueness and applicability of “Neither win nor lose theory in Buddhism than the “Win-win theory” of Western and to materialize this Buddhist theoretical teachings in a society with conflict to bring peace.

Methodology

The comparative method was employed in the research to analyze the data, and also the data from the primary and secondary sources related to the field were collected through the libraries and E- library and discussed with scholars in the field.

Results

The theories and methods of reconciliation mostly are discussed in Western Philosophy and it is rare to find out categorically explained Buddhist theories on reconciliation. Therefore, most important result of this research is, finding a Buddhist teaching on the topic of reconciliation. Especially, Instead of “Win-win” Theory Buddha has elaborated “Neither Win nor Lose” Theory. This theory of Buddhism can be applied to any conflict based society to transform the destructive violent behaviour of conflict into constructive peaceful level.

Conclusion

Wining and losing are two relative concepts that depend on the each other; when there is no win there is no lose, as well as when there is no lose there is no win. Buddha understood this game of language; the language is a conventional (sammuti) condition created by man himself. In absolute (paramattha) level, conventional concepts that created by man do not exist. The person who has neutral mind (upasanta) understands the above nature of conventional concepts. So he has no any revengeful attitudes toward any party as he is freed from clinging into concepts like winning or losing. It does not need to implement reconciliation programme among such persons as they are already reconciled. Though the win-win theory stakeholders of a conflict bring into a delusion but “Neither win nor lose” shows the reality of the wining and the losing.

Keywords: Neither win nor lose, Win-win, Reconciliation

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