

## **An Investigation on Buddhist Response to Social Conflict with Reference to the Kalahavivāda Sutta**

Ven . Wettewe Nanda<sup>1</sup>

### **Introduction**

There are many different categories of social conflicts observable at present in the world. They can be varied from personal or family levels to wars between nations. Whatever the category of conflict, it is important to identify the root causes of it so as to take any preventive measures to avoid such situations for the benefit of society at large. The main objective of this paper is to investigate the Buddha's explanation of this with reference to the Kalahavivāda Sutta, which is found in Pāli Tipiṭaka.

The belief that the only way to fight force is by more force has led to the arms race between the great powers. And this competition to increase the weapons of war has brought mankind to the very brink of total self- destruction. When the United Nations was formed after the horrors of the second World War, the heads of nations who gathered to sign the charter agreed that it should begin with the following preamble. Since it is in the minds of men the ramparts of peace should be erected. This very same sentiment is echoed in the first verse of the Dhammapada which states. All states have mind as their forerunner, mind is their chief, and they are mind made. If one speaks or acts, with a defiled mind, suffering follows one even as the wheel follows the hoof of the draught-ox. War and conflict can be defined in many different ways and the United Nations defined the military conflict 1960 there were more than 20 major wars in African countries such as Rwanda, Somalia, Angola, Sudan, Liberia, and Burundi. During the last 3000 years, men have fought 15000 major wars. Is it a characteristic of man?

Different religions have various opinions towards social conflicts. In certain situation they justify the war and conflicts which they might think that it would help spread or protect their religions. They may lead to killing many innocent people in the name of protecting their religion, which may not be the original intention of the founder of that particular religion.

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1. Master of Arts (Candidate), Sri Lanka International Buddhist Academy (SIBA), Pallekale, Kandy. wettewenanda79@gmail.com

The Bible and Quran teach deferent doctrines which tend people toward war based on their religious purposes. Christianity and Judaism describe God as “man of war” who is full of furry. The texts says, “He is a vengeful God whose” sword shall devour and be sated, and drink its fill of their blood. Main causes for the religious wars are due to this kind of teaching available in religious texts which may mislead the followers.

### **Research Problem**

There have arisen quarrels, disputes, lamentation, sorrow, along with selfishness, conceit and pride, along with divisiveness. Tied up with selfishness are quarrels and disputes. In the arising of disputes is divisiveness. From the dependent origination (Paṭicca Samuppāda), it is possible to see the relationship up to Nāma-Rūpa is the perception of Rūpa itself, and when Rūpa is not there, Phassā does not exist.

### **Research Methodology**

Information for this research has been collected from the primary Buddhist resources and the relevant books and articles written on this topic and other reading materials.

### **Result and Discussion**

Buddha never encourages any sort of wars or hatred, and in fact, he had directly involved himself in stopping such situations. In the dhammapada he has stated hatred cannot be overcome by hatred.

“Nahiverena verāni – sammantīdha kudācanaṃ  
Averenaca sammanti – esa dhammo sanattano”

Hatred is never appeased by hatred. Hatred is appeased by non-hatred. That is the Buddhist teaching about hatred. Peace cannot exist on this earth without the practice of tolerance. To be tolerant, we must not allow anger and jealousy to prevail in our mind. The Buddha says, “No enemy can harm one so much as one’s own thoughts of craving, hate and jealousy”. There are many places where the Buddha has explained the near causes for any social conflict. For example, according to Cakkavattisīhanāda Sutta When people try to collect material wealth it leads competition between people or groups of people or countries. Then it can gradually grow into conflicts. However, in another verse of the Dhammapada, it says,

“Yo sahaṣṣaṃ sahaṣṣena – saṅgāme mānuse jine  
Ekanca jeyya attānam – sace saṅgāme uttamo”

The man who wins himself from craving is the greater winning than who wins in thousand wars against others. According to Mahādukkhakandha sutta of Majjhima Nikāya Buddha has mentioned that the people go for battle and kill each other because of desire or lust or craving (“Kāma hetu, kāma nidāna, kāmanāmevāhetu”). Again, in Raṭṭhapāla Sutta, he has mentioned the people of this world are slaves of craving and hence, it is difficult to give up (Uno loke atitto taṇhā dāso). In the Kalahavivāda Sutta, Buddha explained not only the apparent nearby causes but also the root causes for all Quarrels and Disputes and in the following chapters of this paper, it would be explained in detail. As well as there are many suttas, Sakka-Pañha Sutta (DN 21), the Madhupiṇḍika Sutta (MN 18) and the Kalahavivāda Sutta (Sn 4.11).

It is possible to identify a flow of cause and effect combinations. If the cause is not there, there cannot be an effect or result. Therefore, it is possible to identify the nearby cause (Root Cause). If it is possible to remove the root cause, in turn it would remove each and every result.

### Conclusion

According to Buddha’s teachings, there is a way to end all kind of sufferings arise in different forms such as arise contentions and disputes, lamentation and sorrows along with avarice, selfishness and conceit, arrogance and slander. That is to identify the root cause, delusion about matter, and by developing the wisdom to see the truth as it is, one can eradicate all sort of suffering. May you all realize the ultimate truth.

**Keywords:** Buddhism, Kalahavivāda Sutta, Social Conflict, Tipiṭaka

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