



**A STUDY OF THE CONCEPT OF RIGHT VIEW
(SAMMĀ-DIṬṬHI) IN THERAVĀDA BUDDHISM**

BHIKKHUNI TRAN THI VY

A Thesis Submitted In Partial Fulfilment Of
The Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts
(Buddhist Studies)

Graduate School
Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University
C.E. 2017



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The Graduate School of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University has approved this thesis entitled “A Study of the Concept of Right View (Sammā-diṭṭhi) in Theravāda Buddhism” in partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies.

.....
(Phramaha Somboon Vuddhikaro, Dr.)
Dean of Graduate School

Examination Committee

.....
(Assoc. Prof. Dr. Suvin Ruksat)

Chairperson

.....
(Phramaha Somphong Khunakaro, Dr.)

Member

.....
(Phramaha Nantakorn Piyabhani, Dr.)

Member

.....
(Asst. Prof. Dr. Sanu Mahatthanadull)

Member

.....
(Dr. Veerachart Nimanong)

Member

Supervisory Committee:

Asst. Prof. Dr. Sanu Mahatthanadull
Dr. Veerachart Nimanong

Chairperson
Member

Researcher:

.....
(Bhikkhuni: Tran Thi Vy)

- Thesis Title** : A Study of The Concept of Right View (*Sammā diṭṭhi*) in Theravāda Buddhism
- Researcher** : Bhikhuni Tran Thi Vy
- Degree** : Master of Arts (Buddhist Studies)
- Thesis Supervisory Committee**
- : Asst. Prof. Dr. Sanu Mahatthanadull, B.A. (Advertising), M.A. (Buddhist Studies), Ph.D. (Buddhist Studies)
 - : Dr. Veerachart Nimanong, Pāli VI, B.A. (Buddhist Studies & Philosophy), M.A. (Philosophy), Ph.D. (Philosophy)
- Date of Graduation** : March 20, 2018

Abstract

This qualitative research has three objectives, namely, (1) to study the concept of Right view in *Theravāda* Buddhism. (2) to study doctrines related to the Right view in *Theravāda* Buddhism. (3) of analyze the teaching on Right view according to the perspective of Buddhist scholars.

The present thesis is an analytical study of the concept of Right view in *Theravāda* Buddhism. It begins with exploring the background of these terms which are found in the discourse. The main purpose for studying the term *Sammā-diṭṭhi* is to trace it back to discover what was said in the discourse and their development. What content is provided by the discourse and scholars. The observation proceeds by first selecting key Pāli term that involves the theory of knowledge, and then by isolating their meaning in the process of knowing.

Secondly, the thesis is concerned with the concept of Right view in Suttanta and Abhidhamma Pitaka. Furthermore, the studies of the research go on to examine Mundane Right View (*lokiyasammā-diṭṭhi*)

and The Supramundane Right View (*lokuttarasammā diṭṭhi*). The mundane Right View provides an understanding of the moral law of cause and effect (kamma), the supra mundane Right View leading to the cultivation of the Noble Eightfold Path includes the correct understanding of the Four Noble Truths.

The last part of this thesis deals with the books written and composed by well-known Buddhist scholars, especially Ven. Ledi Sayadaw, Ven. Sri Dhamananda, Ven. P.A. Payutto, Ven. Buddhadasa, Ven. Ajahn Chah. Moreover, the researcher wants to analysis on the significance of Right view in Buddhist practice as well as in daily life application.

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I am grateful to my mother, Ms Truong Thị Mùi, my father, Trần Thế Lưu and family and all Buddhists who have supported me to study abroad. Without those mentioned above, and those of who I do not name here, it would not be easy for me to complete this thesis.

Bhikkhuni Tran Thi Vy

March 6, 2017

List of Abbreviations

A.D	: Anno Domini
B.E	: Buddhist era
C.E	: Christian era
Ed.	: Edited
Etc.	: Et cetera and others
Ibid.	: Ibiden/ in the same book
MCU	: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University
No.	: Number
Op.cit.	: Opera citato/ as referred
P(p).	: Page (s)
Pub.	: Published, publication
S	: Sanskrit
Tr.	: Translated
Vol(s)	:Volume(s)

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Chapter I

Introduction

1.1 Background and Significance of the Problems

In the Indian society at the Buddha's time besides the serious caste discrimination, there were many doctrines and sects to outdo one another. However, their most common goals are only around the question "What is the nature of life?" and to seek liberation with a lot of different methods. In the Brahmajala Sutta¹, sixty-two varieties of philosophical theories prevailed at that time². Accordingly, many people worshiped the cow³, some inclined to practice self-purification or exhorted nudity⁴. So, it can be said that religious and philosophical systems were rich different and colorful at that time. People, therefore, felt confused. They did not know what was right and what was wrong, and what really brought benefits to their life.

¹D.I.34

²The sutta discuss the sixty-two beliefs which are devoutly practiced by ascetics in India. All sixty-two wrong views are based on considering the self or "soul" of a person, to be self-sufficiently knowable and the universe to be truly existent. See Paul Fuller, **The Notion of Ditthi in Theravāda Buddhism**, (London: Taylor Francis publishers, 2005), p.42

³In the religion of Hinduism, a "cow" is thought to be sacred, or very holy. The cow also represents ghee and strength. In the Hindu tradition, the cow is honored, garlanded and given special feedings at festivals all over India, most importantly the annual Gopashtama festival. See Marvin Harris, **India's Sacred Cow**, Slovene Anthropological Society 2012, p. 46

⁴**Digambara** (Sanskrit "sky-clad") is one of the two major schools of Jainism, they don't wear any clothes as it is considered *parigraha* (possession) which ultimately leads to attachment. Ashim Kumar Roy, **The History of The Jains** (First Published, 1984 Gitanjali Publishing House) p. 5

Realizing that, after the Buddha attained enlightenment He preached the first sermon titled “*Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta*”⁵. In this sermon, He showed the nature of all things and expounded the Middle Path or Noble Eight-Fold Path that he discovered. Besides, He exhorted the five ascetics to avoid two extremes, i.e. the indulgence in sensual pleasures (*Kama-sukha*) and the devotion to self-mortification (*Attakilamatha*)⁶. The Buddha knew that these two extremes would neither lead to super-knowledge nor enlightenment, and it belong to wrong views. So, in the Noble Eight-Fold Path (*ariyo atthaṅgiko maggo*), the first factor is Right View (*sammā-ditṭhi*) or Right Understanding, the keynote of Buddhism. The Buddha started with Right View in order to clear the doubts of the monks and guide them on the right way.

In *Theravāda* Buddhism, the concept of *Sammā-ditṭhi* is penetrating insight into the nature of reality defines as knowledge of the Four Noble Truths. In the *Sammāditṭhi* sutta, the Venerable Sāriputta says:

*“When, friends, a noble disciple understands suffering, the origin of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the way leading to the cessation of suffering, in that way he is one of right view.”*⁷

Right view is also often described as the forerunner of the other limbs of the Eightfold Path. This is because it enables one to understand how the other limbs are helpful and to judge what correct practice is. For example, it would be impossible to practise right action without an

⁵S.V.326

⁶S.V.420

⁷M.I.102

understanding of what are right or wrong actions. It provides an initial view according to which we then orientate ourselves.

The Buddha's teaching is based on understanding. Without understanding, there can be no Nibbana or other spiritual attainment. It is clear that the Noble Eightfold Path leads us to attain final deliverance that is Nibbana. Especially, Right View points in the right direction, towards nibbanic bliss. It is not only like a compass on a journey but also the basis of all Buddhist practice. Without right view we have continued to go around in the cycle of birth and death. When a meditator penetrates into the true nature of mental and physical processes, he does not take them to be a person or a being, a soul or a self. Then he has purified his view, he has attained *Ditthi visuddhi*.⁸

People suffer with their craving for the pleasures of the senses and become unsatisfied and disappointed until they can replace their cravings with new ones. People suffer too when they are unable to see the world as it really is and live with illusions about life and fears, hopes, facts and behaviours based on ignorance. Craving and ignorance are the two main causes of suffering. Our happiness and the happiness of those around us depend on our degree of *Sammā-ditthi*. The way to end suffering in life is to understand what causes it. So, realizing deeply what is going on inside and outside of us is the way to liberate ourselves from the suffering that is caused by wrong perceptions⁹. Right View is not an ideology but it is the insight we have into the reality of life. And it

⁸Ven. Matara Sri Nanarama, **The Sevent Stages of Purification and Insight Knowledge**, (Srilanka: Buddhist Publication Society), 1993, p. 43

⁹Thich Nhat Hanh, **The Heart of the Buddha's Teaching** (New York: Broadway Books), 1998, p. 51.

focuses directly on the core of the Buddha's philosophy. From the beginning to the end of the Buddha's teaching we find it everywhere.

Ven.. Ledi Sayadaw, Ven. Ajahn Chah, Ven. P.A. Payutto, Ven. Sri Dhammananda, Ven. Buddhadasa are the outstanding scholars in this issue which we could find in this contemporary *Theravāda* Buddhism. These both inside and outside are their countries. Their explanations of Right View the most abstract idea, is very interesting to study in this contemporary time. For example, Ven. Ajahn Chah said: “If we have right view then wherever we stay we are content. But most of us have wrong view. It’s just like a maggot”.¹⁰

Bhikkhu Seelawimala says: “*Sammā-diṭṭhi* has shown us that the method is to understand one's own problem, the cause of the problem, the solution and the way to be followed for the solution. This is a universal method for any human problem”.¹¹

If the notion of Right view is applied to all over the world, thousands of animals will be saved, old unsound and non-human customs or religious wars causing misery to innumerable people will end. Once people have Right view, we will know suffering, the cause of suffering and find the way to eliminate suffering in the most decent way. In this manner, we live happily and don’t hurt each other.

This thesis will examine the concept of Right View and its importance in *Theravāda* Buddhism, especially to apply it to our daily life.

¹⁰Ven. Ajahn Chah, **A Taste of Freedom**, (Bangkok: The Sangha, Bung Wai Forest Monastery publishers, 1991). p.94.

¹¹Bhikkhu Seelawimala, **The Middle Way**, (London: S. Godage and Brothers publisher, 2009), p. 37

1.2 Objectives of the Research

1.2.1 To study the concept of Right view in Theravāda Buddhism.

1.2.2 To study doctrines related to the Right view in Theravāda Buddhism.

1.2.3 To analyze the teaching on Right view according to the perspective of Buddhist scholars.

1.3 Statements of the Problems Desired to Know

1.3.1 What is the concept of *Sammā-ditṭhi* in *Theravāda* Buddhism?

1.3.2 What are the the doctrines related to the Right view in *Theravāda* Buddhism?

1.3.3 What are the teachings on Right view according to the perspective of Buddhist scholars?

1.4 Definitions of the Terms Used in the Research

1.4.1 *Sammā-ditṭhi* (Right View)

The term *ditṭhi* indicates a way of seeing, *Sammā* means Good, right or correct view, an accurate understanding of the nature of things, defines as knowledge of the Four Noble Truths¹².

1.4.2 *Ditṭhi* (View)

¹²M.I.46

View or position (Pali *ditṭhi*, Sanskrit *dr̥ṣṭi*) is a central idea in Buddhism. In Buddhist thought, a view is not a simple, abstract collection of propositions, but a charged interpretation of experience which intensely shapes and affects thought, sensation, and action. Having the proper mental attitude toward views is therefore considered an integral part of the Buddhist path, as sometimes correct views need to put into practice and incorrect views abandoned, and sometimes all views are seen as obstacles to enlightenment.

1.4.3 Theravāda

Theravāda means "Doctrine of the Elders," is the school of Buddhism that draws its scriptural inspiration from the Tipitaka, or Pali canon, which scholars generally agree contains the earliest surviving record of the Buddha's teachings. The *Theravāda* Scripture are known as the Tipitaka written in Pali language.

1.4.4 Wrong View (*Micchā-ditṭhi*)

Wrong view or wrong understanding is called ditthi. It may also mean wrong belief, Wrong-view sees things as they are not, and seeing things in such a way has an effect which is detrimental, it produces what ought not to be done: 'is not' produces an 'ought not'. All sixty-two wrong views are based on considering the self or "soul" of a person, to be self-sufficiently knowable and the universe to be truly existent.¹³

¹³M.I.172

1.4.5 The Eternalist – View

Eternalism is the view that each space time moment exists in and of itself, which holds that the self and the world are eternal.¹⁴

1.4.6 The Annihilationist-view (*uccheda-ditthi*)

Annihilationist is the view which holds that the self and the world will cease.¹⁵

1.5. Scope of the Study

1.5.1 Scope of Sources of Scripture

The scope of research is to study the concept of Right View as appeared in the Pali Canon, Commentaries and related documents. Also, the interpretation of Right View through selected scholars in Buddhism.

1.5.2 Scope of Contents

The research work will have limited study of A study of the concept of right view according to the perspective of Buddhist scholars. In the chapter II scope is limited to the concept of right view in *Theravāda* Buddhism and in the chapter III scope of limiting will be on the doctrines related to right view in *Theravāda* Buddhism, and finally, in chapter IV will be limited in the concept of right view according to the perspective of Buddhist scholars and chapter V will be limited to conclusion and suggestion.

¹⁴V.102

¹⁵D.I.37

1.6 Review of Related Literature and Research Works

1.6.1 Paul Fuller, **The Notion of Diṭṭhi in Theravāda Buddhism**, London: Taylor Francis publishers, 2005.¹⁶

Abstract: The notion of 'view' or 'opinion' (*ditthi*) as an obstacle to 'seeing things as they are' is a central concept in Buddhist thought. This book considers the two ways in which the notion of views is usually understood. Are we to understand right-view as a correction of wrong-views (the opposition understanding) or is the aim of the Buddhist path the overcoming of all views, even Right view (the no-views understanding)? The author argues that neither approach is correct. Instead he suggests that the early texts do not understand Right View as a correction of wrong view, but as a detached order of seeing, completely different from the attitude of holding to any view, wrong or right.

Arguing that by the term "Right View" we should understand an order of seeing which transcends all views, this book makes a valuable addition to the study of Buddhist philosophy.

1.6.2 Ven. Ajahn Chah , **A Taste of Freedom**, The Sangha, Bung Wai Forest Monastery publishers, 1991.¹⁷

Abstract: Venerable Ajahn Chah always gave his talks in simple, everyday language. His objective was to clarify the Dhamma, not to confuse his listeners with an overload of information. This book is important because it shows the real views and he called it is Right View “The Place of Coolness”. His view concerned with an exploration of

¹⁶Paul Fuller, **The Notion of Diṭṭhi in Theravāda Buddhism**, (London: Taylor Francis publishers, 2005)p.35

¹⁷Ven. Ajahn Chah, **A Taste of Freedom**, (Bangkok: The Sangha, Bung Wai Forest Monastery publishers, 1991), p.91

Right View within the discourses and the stratum in commentarial traditions in connection with actual practice. He also gives a practice-related perspective involved in the teaching and practicing.

1.6.3 Ven. Ledi Sayadaw, **A Manual of the Path Factors**, Printed for free Distribution by A Association for Insight Meditation, 2013.¹⁸

Abstract: This book states about the relationship between the Right view and some basic the Buddha's teachings such as Karma or The Four Noble Truths. This knowledge that realises and understands the path leading to the cessation of suffering is Right View regarding the path leading to the cessation of suffering (*sammādiṭṭhi-ñāṇa*). Moreover, it also points out that how to establish morality, concentration and wisdom.

1.6.4 Ven. P.A. Payutto, **Good, Evil and Beyond**, Buddhadhamma Foundation, Thailand publisher, 1996.¹⁹

Abstract : This book states that the teaching of Kamma; better know as Karma to most, is a path based not on fear of a higher authority, nor dogma, but rather founded on a clear understanding of the natural law of cause and effect as it relates to human behavior. Kamma means work or action or "deeds willfully done". Actions that are free of intention are not considered to be kamma in the Buddha's teaching according to the author. The work is a scholarly approach, and yet tries to simplify the Buddhist themes so often misunderstood or considered beyond the scope of the layman, making it more available on the practical level. Guided by

¹⁸Ven. Ledi Sayadaw, **A Manual of the Path Factors**, (Printed for free Distribution by A Association for Insight Meditation, 2013), p.28

¹⁹Ven. P.A. Payutto, **Good, Evil and Beyond**, (Bangkok: Buddhadhamma Foundation Publisher, 1996), p.41

wrong view, everything else goes wrong. With right view, actions are guided in the right direction.

1.6.5 Phramaha Somphong Santacitto Phaeng Charoen, An Analytical Study of The Concept of Dhamma As Natural Law In *Theravāda Buddhism*, Thesis Master of Arts, Ibsc, Mahachulalongkorn university, 2006

Abstract: The thesis is a textual study, which begins with an exploration and examination of the background and concept of the term Dhamma, including the pre-Buddhist period and its usage on the part of wanderers contemporary with the Buddha. The term Dhamma is a profound term, having many different connotations, depending upon the context in which it is encountered. For instance, the term is used to refer to nature, natural law, as well as the Buddha's teachings, and the various practices that lead to nibbāna. Here, Right view denotes the right way of seeing towards the Four Noble Truths.²⁰

1.7. Research Methodology

This work is a documentary research. Its methodology can be divided into stages as follows;

1.7.1 Collecting data from the primary sources; five Nikāya , Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā), Sub-commentaries (Tika).

1.7.2 Collecting data from the secondary sources; researches, theses, books, journals, documentary related with this research and the

²⁰Phramaha Somphong Santacitto Phaeng Charoen, An Analytical Study of The Concept of Dhamma As Natural Law In *Theravāda Buddhism*, Thesis Master of Arts, (Ibsc: Mahachulalongkorn university, 2006), p.82.

books written and composed by well-known Buddhist scholars, specially Ven. Ledi Sayadaw, Ven. Sri Dhamananda, Ven. P.A. Payutto, Ven. Buddhadasa, Ven. Ajahn Chah.

1.7.3 Discussing, analyzing and systematizing the collected data order to construct the outline of the study.

1.7.4 Formulating conclusions, identifying significant results, and areas for further research.

1.8 Advantages Expected to Obtain from the Research

1.8.1 Knowing the concept of Right view as appeared in Theravāda Buddhism.

1.8.2 Understanding the doctrines related to Right view in Theravāda Buddhism.

1.8.3 Knowing the teaching of Right view according to the perspective of Buddhist scholars.

Chapter II

The Concepts of Right View in Theravāda Buddhism

In this chapter, it will be studied the definition of the term of right view in *Theravāda* Buddhism, The Term of Right View in Pali Canon, Right View in the Abhidhamma Pitaka, Classification of Right View, The Mundane Right View (*lokiyasammā-diṭṭhi*) the supreme Mundane Right View (*lokiyasammā-diṭṭhi*).

2.1 The Definition of the term Right view in Theravāda Buddhism and Its appearance in Suttas and Abhidhamma

Under the title of the Definition of the Term Right View in *Theravāda* Buddhism, the researcher will describe the meaning of Right View tipitakas such as *Pāli* Canon, Suttanta Pitaka and Abhidhamma pitaka in order to deeply understand the definition of Right view.

2.1.1 The Term of Right View in Theravāda Buddhism

The Pali term *Sammā-diṭṭhi* has been translated as a “*Right View*”, *Right Understanding*, *Right Vision*, *Right Perspective*. The term *sammā* (right) indicates that all such components are the opposite of their *micchā* counterparts. It also conveys a sense of comprehensiveness, which implies avoidance of shortcuts in deciding what is right and wrong.

“*Diṭṭhi*” has generally been translated as view, belief, opinion, or a way of seeing. In the ultimate sense, Right View is to understand life as it really is. It can be described as the basic core of the Buddhist

philosophy which is essentially the correct understanding of the Four Noble Truths. Right view is a clear understanding of the various dhammas which express in one way or the other the central Buddhist principle, i.e., the knowledge of Dependent Origination. Moreover, it is the realization of the three characteristics of existence (*Tilakkhaṇa*), namely, impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*), and non-self (*anattā*). It is also mentioned as knowing evil, the roots of evil, goodness and the roots of goodness.

In “*Sammā-diṭṭhi*” Sutta, Sāriputta said:

“When, friends, a noble disciple understands suffering, the origin of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the way leading to the cessation of suffering, in that way he is one of right view.”²¹

In the Magga-vibhanga Sutta, the Buddha has described the Right View as follows:

“And, what monks, is Right View? Knowledge with regard to stress, knowledge with regard to the origination of stress, knowledge with regard to the stopping of stress, knowledge with regard to the way of practice leading to the stopping of stress: This monk, is called Right View.”²²

In Buddhism, right understanding means the understanding of suffering or the unsatisfactory nature of all phenomenal existence, its arising, its cessation and the path leading to its cessation. Right understanding, right views, or knowledge of the Four Noble Truths. This

²¹M.I.93

²²S.106

understanding is the highest wisdom which sees the ultimate reality. That is to say to see things as they are. Although there is no specific definition for the term *Sammā-diṭṭhi* in Buddhism, generally speaking, Right view is view things objectively; seeing them and reporting them exactly as they are without being influenced by prejudice or emotion. Right view helps differentiate the true from the false, and determines the true religious path for attaining liberation.

In the Sabbasava Sutta, the Buddha has described the Right View as the first of the seven methods that a disciple can practise in order to eliminate the influxes, cankers or fermentations that keep beings in the cycle of birth and death (*samsara*).²³

Right View is the essential and foremost factor that will help one to cultivate the rest of the factors of the Noble Eightfold Path, through the three stages of morality, concentration and wisdom and finally attain Right knowledge and Right liberation as a liberated Noble person.

2.1.2 Right View as appeared in Suttas

Sammā-diṭṭhi can be found in *Suttañta Piṭaka* and *Abhidhamma Pitaka*. The researcher will describe the meaning of Right Vies according to *Suttañta Piṭaka* and *Abhidhamma pitaka* in different way.

a. Right View in Sammā-diṭṭhi Sutta

In this sutta, Sāriputta mentions four things resulting in sammādiṭṭhi: The first is moral causation, the wholesome and unwholesome states of mind that have to be clarified. The second is nourishment or nutriment. The third is the four noble truths. The fourth is

²³M.I.167

by way of dependent origination²⁴. Ven. Sāriputta instructs that Right view can alternately be attained by the thorough understanding of the unwholesome and the wholesome, the four nutriments, the twelve nidanas or the three taints.

In this discourse, Ven. Sāriputta expands the discussion in several directions. He begins by focusing on two concepts that underlie the structure of the Four Noble Truths: the dichotomy of skillful and unskillful action, and the concept of nutriment.

Ven. Sāriputta then identifies the following sixteen cases (*pariyāya*) through which a noble disciple could achieve right view:

- The Unwholesome and the Wholesome
- Nutriments
- The Four Noble Truths (discussed as one case)
- The twelve causes (*nidana*) of Dependent Origination (discussed as twelve individual cases)
- The Taints

Ven. Sāriputta describes the "unwholesome" (*akusala*) as entailing ten different actions of three different types:

Physical actions: killing (*pāṇātipāto*), stealing (*adinnādānaṃ*) and sexual misconduct (*kāmesumicchācāro*);

Verbal actions: lying (*musāvādo*), divisive speech (*pisuṇāvācā*), harsh speech (*pharusāvācā*) and idle chatter (*samphappalāpo*);

²⁴M.I.46

Mental actions: covetousness (*abhijjhā*), ill will (*byāpādo*) and wrong view (*micchādiṭṭhi*).

The "root of the unwholesome" (*akusalamūla*) is threefold:

- Greed (*lobho*)
- Hatred (*doso*)
- Delusion (*moho*)

The wholesome (*kusala*) entails abstention (*veramaṇī*) from the aforementioned unwholesome physical and verbal acts as well as non-covetness (*anabhijjhā*), non-ill will (*abyāpādo*) and right view (*sammādiṭṭhi*). The wholesome's root (*kusalamūla*) is nongreed (*alobho*), nonhatred (*adoso*) and nondelusion (*amoho*).

Nutriments

Ven. Sāriputta describes the "nutriments" (*āhāro*) as fourfold:

- Physical food (*kabalīṅkāro*)
- Contact (*phasso*)
- Mental volition (*manosañcetanā*)
- Consciousness (*viññāṇa*)

The arising (origin) of nutriment is due to the arising of craving. The cessation of nutriment is the cessation of craving. The way leading to the cessation of nutriment is the Noble Eightfold Path. Understanding nutriment, its origin, cessation and the way leading to its cessation, the noble disciple abandons greed, aversion, conceit and ignorance, arouses wisdom, ends suffering and is one of right view.

Four Noble Truths

Ven. Sāriputta describes the Four Noble Truths using traditional canonical phrases:

- Suffering (*dukkha*) is birth, aging, sickness, death, ... in short, the five aggregates of clinging.
- The origin of suffering (*dukkhasamudaya*) is craving (*tanha*) ... for sensual pleasures, being and non-being.
- The cessation of suffering (*dukkhanirodha*) is ... the letting go and rejecting of craving.
- The way leading to the cessation of suffering (*dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā*) is the Noble Eightfold Path (*ariyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo*).

Understanding suffering, its origin, cessation and the way leading to its cessation, the noble disciple abandons greed, aversion, conceit and ignorance, arouses wisdom, ends suffering and is one of right view.

Twelve Causes

Ven. Sāriputta then describes individually each of the twelve causes (represented in the sidebar to the right) of Dependent Origination using traditional canonical phrases, starting with "aging and death" (*jaramarana*) and regressing to "ignorance" (*avijjā*).²⁵

In this formulation, the next further back cause is the "origin" of the current cause. Thus, for instance, the origin of "aging and death" is

²⁵These formulaic phrases for the twelve causes can also be found, *Paticca-samuppada-Vibhanga Sutta* (S.II. 122)

"birth" (*jati*), the origin of "birth" is "becoming" (*bhava*), etc. Here, the origin of "ignorance" is the "taints" (*āsava*). The cause's cessation is its temporal predecessor's cessation (for instance, old age and death cease when birth ceases). The way leading to the cessation of any of these twelve causes is the Noble Eightfold Path. Understanding any one of these twelve causes, its origin, cessation and the way leading to its cessation, the noble disciple abandons greed, aversion, conceit and ignorance, arouses wisdom, ends suffering and is one of right view.

Taints

Naturally following through on his assertion that ignorance arises from the taints, Ven. next enumerates the three taints (*tayo āsava*):

The taint of sensual desire (*kāmāsavo*)

The taint of being (*bhavāsavo*)

The taint of ignorance (*avijjāsavo*)

The origin of the taints is in turn ignorance (*avijjā*).

Understanding the taints, their origin (ignorance), cessation (the cessation of ignorance) and the way leading to their cessation (the Noble Eightfold Path), the noble disciple abandons greed, aversion, conceit and ignorance, arouses wisdom, ends suffering and is one of right view.

Understanding (*pajānāti*) these twenty actions and six roots, the noble disciple abandons greed, aversion, conceit and ignorance, arouses wisdom, ends suffering and is one of right view. From the second section to the end of the sutta, all the expositions are framed in accordance with the same structure, which reveals the principle of conditionality as the scaffolding for the entire teaching. Each phenomenon to be

comprehended by right view is expounded in terms of its individual nature, its arising, its cessation, and the way leading to its cessation.

Ven. Sāriputta instructs that right view can alternately be attained by the thorough understanding of the unwholesome and the wholesome, the four nutriments, the twelve nidanas or the three taints.²⁶ "Wrong view" arising from ignorance (*avijja*), is the precondition for wrong intention, wrong speech, wrong action, wrong livelihood, wrong effort, wrong mindfulness and wrong concentration.²⁷ The practitioner should use right effort to abandon the wrong view and to enter into right view. And Right mindfulness is used to constantly remain in right view.

It suggests that to achieve Right View one has, first, knowledge of what is wholesome and unwholesome; second, knowledge of the four truths; and third, knowledge of Dependent Origination. This is the content of right view, this is what right view proposes. We know from other parts of the *Nikāyas* that knowledge of the four truths or knowledge of dependent-origination is the right-view achieved at stream attainment. It is the knowledge that, “all that is subject to arising is subject to cessation.”²⁸

In the same way that one should act in a manner reflecting the knowledge of “what is unwholesome and what is wholesome” or the right view that “actions have consequence” to achieve the right view of stream-attainment, one should not adopt a right view, the content of which is the four truths or dependent origination, but act in a way that reflects a

²⁶Bhikkhu Ñānamoli, **Sammā-diṭṭhi Sutta and Its Commentary**, (Buddhist Publication Society, 2008), p.52

²⁷S.I. 45

²⁸M.I.180

knowledge of *dukkha*, its arising, cessation and the way to its cessation, namely, with an attitude free from craving. This is right view. It signifies the cessation of craving.

In sum, *Sammā diṭṭhi-sutta* gives sixteen right views. All of them, except the first view on *kusala* and *akusala*, follow the same format. In fact, they could all be interpreted as mention above, and this could be understood as a concise summary of Buddhism: what is unwholesome and what is its cause? What is wholesome and what is its cause? Right-view constitutes the answer to this question in the form of The Four Truths and Dependent-origination.

b. Apanṇaka Sutta

This sutta was taught by the Buddha to the people of Sala in Kosala, who did not accept any of the doctrines visited by the leaders of the various sects. The Buddha showed them the right path to lead them astray. The wrong views of the sects, as opposed to right view, were enlightened by the Buddha; The disadvantages of wrong view, and the benefits of right understanding are explained²⁹.

This teaching is given in response to the Brahmin “telling the Buddha that they have no teacher in whom they could place any confidence. In the course of the instruction, the Buddha details why the doctrines of nihilism (materialism) amoralism and determinism are not only false but have harmful effects personally and socially and that affirming karma and rebirth has its “sure” advantages.

²⁹U Ko Lay, **Guide to Tipitaka**, (Delhi: Sri Satguru Publication, 1990), p. 25

The Exalted One then explains how our religious practices should not harm ourselves or other. This teaching clearly alludes to the middle way explained in such discourses as the Dhammacakkapavattana sutta. He gives a group of Brahmin householders an "incontrovertible teaching" that will help them steer clear of the tangle in contentious views an unwholesome action is one based upon greed, hatred and delusion, and a wholesome action on generosity, loving-kindness and wisdom. A wholesome action is one that will lead towards good wholesome bodily, verbal and mental conduct.

In the *Apaṇṇaka-sutta*, all three of this Right View is found. One of the aims of the sutta is to explain that certain cognitive acts lead to either wholesome or unwholesome courses of action. At this stage of the path, *Sammā-ditṭhi* does not signify non-attachment from the act of cognition, but the correctness of the course of action and this in turn leads to the cessation of craving and attachment. Here, emphasizes this aspect of Right view. The aim of the Buddhist path, in some respects, is to clean the mind of defilements. Cleansing (*vodāna*) from craving can be demonstrated by calm, cleansing from views can be demonstrated by insight.

c. Kaccāyanagotta Sutta

While the Exalted One was at *Sāvatti* the venerable *Kaccāyana* of that clan came to visit him, and saluting him sat down at one side. So seated he asked the Exalted One, saying: “Lord, we hear the phrase ‘right view, right view.’ Now how far is there a right view”?

The Buddha said: “By and large, Kaccayana, this world is in bondage to attachments, clingings, and biases. But one such as this does

not get involved with or cling to these attachments, clingings, and fixations of awareness, biases, or obsessions; nor is he resolved on “my self.” He has no uncertainty or doubt that, when there is arising, only suffering is arising; and that when there is passing away, only suffering is passing away. In this, one’s knowledge is independent of others. It is to this extent, Kaccayana, that there is right view.”³⁰

The Buddha described Right View not as a guiding theory, but as the transformation of perception that results from living the dharma. By “seeing” (*passati*) with “right wisdom” (*sammapannāya*) the uprising and passing away of the world “as it really is” (*yathābhūta*) that the question of existence or non-existence is dispelled. He gave wise answers to these questions. This was the teaching of the "Middle Path". The "Middle Path" distinguished the Buddha’s Teachings from other religions. It is the way to avoid the two extremes of suffering and luxury, and emphasizes non-attachment. These two main themes of the Middle Path supplement each other and lead us to perfection. If there was only theory to explain the Law of Dependent Origination without the emphatic proof of personal practice and experience, the Path could not fulfill religious faith in helping followers disentangle themselves from suffering, thereby attaining ultimate freedom.

On the other hand, if the Path only taught us the ways of practice without theoretical or intelligent guidance, it might be defeated by our lack of wisdom, and we might become a theistic follower. The Noble Eightfold Path of the Middle Path fulfills human religious expectations by encouraging moral practice. In addition, it has the intelligent guidance of

³⁰S.II.81

the Law of Dependent Origination and of Emptiness. In summary, right view is a contemplation of suffering and its cessation. At the same time, if this does not amount to emphasizes the unity of wisdom and faith. This is the special characteristic of Buddha's teaching same thing, it is a practice aimed at the cessation of the unwholesome and the cultivation of the wholesome.

d. Mahācattārisaka Sutta

This sutta brings out a special analysis of the Noble Eightfold Path. There, the Buddha explains to the monks the noble right concentration with its supportive conditions and requisite factors, which are right knowledge, or insight. He explains that cultivation of the noble eightfold path of a learner leads to the development of two further paths of the Arhants, and right liberation, or release. These two factors fall under the category of wisdom.

“What, monks, is noble right concentration with its supports and requisites? That is, right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort and right mindfulness - that unification of mind equipped with these seven factors is called noble right concentration with its supports and requisites.”³¹

The Noble Eight Fold Path is considered to be the process of learning both in mundane and supramundane levels. He expounded on each of eight terms in both mundane and supramundane levels with simplified dualistic words such as “right” and “wrong” respectively. Moreover, he did not describe the eight-fold path just as two levels, but

³¹M.II.83

also explained the working process of each factor in the path. Both paths are composed of eight wholesome qualities or factors that can be incorporated into three fold training.

Right understanding is of the highest importance of the Eightfold Noble Path, for the remaining seven factors of the path are guided by it. Buddhism offers the middle way, as a simple moderate lifestyle eschewing both extremes of self-deprivation and self-indulgence. Its important characteristics are contentment with basic human needs, and reduction of wants to a minimum, frugality and contentment.

This right view is still with influxes; it is on the side of merits and is productive of sariic assets. About this right view, this discourse has very little to say, the greater attention is focussed on that right view which is noble, influx-free, supramundane, and constitutes a factor of the path. It is explained as the right view that comes up at the supramundane path moment. It is noble, ariya, influx-free, anasava, and conducive to transcendence of the world.

Furthermore, Mahācattārīsaka-sutta explains *sammā-ditthi* as wisdom (*paññā*). He describes right-view at this stage as “liberating insight”. This consists of the investigation of dhammas in such practices as meditation. Understanding of the Wrong View as the Wrong View and Right View as the The Buddha has described Right View as the Right View. Here, the Wrong View consists of the ten wrong beliefs described above as the, *dasavattuka micca ditthi* while the Right View consists of the ten right beliefs described as the *dasavattuka sammā-ditthi*.

Right view is the ground, the condition, from which kusala dhammas come into being. Right view could be a right belief, from which

other wholesome dhammas are produced, but it is more likely that right view implies an act of wholesome cognition, in which the nature of reality is glimpsed, and from which wholesome acts of body, speech and mind are produced. To put another way, seeing things as they are produces a transformation of actions of body, speech and mind.

2.1.3 Right View in the Abhidhamma Pitaka

Abhidhamma philosophy is claimed by orthodox authorities to be the most profound and important part of the teachings of the Buddha. In this section, the researcher will focus the definition of Right View based on Abhidhamma and Vibangha.

a. Abhidhamma

In the Abhidhamma, *sammā diṭṭhi* is also explained as *paññā*: The wisdom which there is on that occasion is understanding, search, research, searching the truth, discernment, discrimination, differentiation, insight, intelligence, incitement; the faculty of wisdom, the power of wisdom, the sword of wisdom, the light of wisdom, the torch of wisdom, the absence of delusion, searching the truth, right-view this is right-view³².

Paññā and *sammā diṭṭhi* should be regarded as that which knows the Four Noble Truths and hence the highest wisdom, follows from various passages repeated in the Nikaya Abhidamma text.³³ The Abhidhamma describes views as a form of clinging and attachment. As

³²C.A.F. Rhys Davids, **The Abhidhamma-Pitaka and Comentaries**, (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 136

³³R.Gethin, **Wrong View and Right View in The Therāvada Abhidhamma**, (London: University of Bristol Published, 2009), p. 216

the sutta states, the Buddha is not attached to this knowledge, the knowledge of *paticcasamuppada* of rise and fall, of the four truths. The sutta is, in effect, stating that he is not attached to knowledge, to his view, and it is this that, to a large extent, makes it correct knowledge or right-view and this is exactly what is stated here.

According to Abhidhamma the “awakening factor of investigation of dhamma” like *sammā diṭṭhi*, can be seen as equivalent to the Dhamma of *paññā*. Yet this is only so at that moment of attaining the transcendent paths and fruits, and thus not all instances of *paññā* are instance of *dhamma vicaya-sambo-jjhaga*”³⁴. When the Abhidhamma states that right-view occurs as a mental concomitant of ordinary, sense sphere, skillful consciousness – a kind of consciousness that the commentaries suggest might occur when we give a gift, or turn away from harming a living creature or taking what is not given, or perform some other meritorious and auspicious action – it is not suggesting the occurrence of a dispositional attitude towards propositions of Buddhist teachings, nor acquaintance with basic Buddhist doctrine, nor even a theoretical understanding of Buddhist doctrine. Rather we must take it at face value; the Abhidhamma is claiming that at the time of the occurrence of that consciousness some kind of direct awareness of the nature of suffering, its arising, its cessation, and the path leading to its cessation occurs.³⁵ The content of right-view is the knowledge of the cessation of craving and attachment.

³⁴Dhs.14

³⁵Ibid, 216

b. Vibangha

In the *Magga-vibhanga Sutta: An Analysis of the Path* the Buddha says that right view is simply “knowledge with regard to stress,” the “origination of stress,” the “stopping of stress,” and the “way of practice leading to the stopping of stress” – or, in other words, knowledge of the Four Noble Truths. In essence, the Buddha is saying that, ultimately, right view means to have deep, penetrating, and transformative insight into all of the Buddhist teachings, which deal primarily with what leads to suffering, and how to let go of what leads to suffering.³⁶

“Therein what is right view? That which is wisdom, understanding, absence of delusion, truth investigation, right view, truth investigation awakening factor, path constituent, included in the path. This is called right view”³⁷.

Right view in Vibangha has special meaning which differs from that popularly meaning attributed to it. Actually, it is the application of insight to the five aggregates of clinging and understanding their true nature. Therefore, it can be rendered as understanding oneself or self-examination and self-observation.

To grasp these truths is to understand the intricacies of nature. A person who fully understands these truths is truly called “Intuitively Wise”. The Buddha compared wisdom to an eye (*Paññācakkhu*). Wisdom is no more than *Sammā-dit̥ṭhi*. We can see the actuality of life through the eye of *Sammādit̥ṭhi* and understand the Four Noble Truths.

³⁶Sue Hamilton, **Early Buddhism: A New Approach. The I of the Beholder** (New York: Richmond Published, 2000), p. 183

³⁷Vibh. 73

In conclusion, Right View in Vibangha is the essential and foremost factor that will help one to cultivate the rest of the factors of the Noble Eightfold Path, through the three stages of morality, concentration and wisdom and finally attain Right Knowledge and Right Liberation as a liberated Noble person -arahat. Right View supports wisdom. Wisdom in this sense is the understanding of things as they are, as explained in the teachings of the Four Noble Truths.

2.2 Classification of Right View

In Maha-cattarisaka Sutta the Buddha said:

*"What is right view? Right view, I tell you, is of two sorts: There is right view with fermentations (asava), siding with merit, resulting in the acquisitions (of becoming); and there is noble right view, without fermentations, transcendent, a factor of the path."*³⁸

2.2.1 The Mundane Right View (*lokiyasammā-dit̥ṭhi*)

Mundane Right View is having a correct understanding of the moral law of cause and effect, that is, wholesome volitional physical, verbal and mental actions will produce good results while unwholesome volitional actions will produce bad results. This view is based on Buddha's statement that:

“Beings are the owners of their deeds, the heirs of their deeds, they spring from their deeds, are bound to their deeds, have their deeds as

³⁸M.II. 117

their refuge. It is deeds that divide beings into the inferior and the superior”.³⁹

Wholesome volitional actions are based on wholesome roots of non greed (*alobha*), non aversion (*adosa*) and non delusion (*amoha*), while unwholesome volitional actions are based on unwholesome roots of greed (*lobha*), aversion (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*). Mundane Right View applies to the mundane world of the cycle of birth and death and any wholesome actions performed may be with the expectation of receiving a good outcome either in this life or future lives.

Mundane right view means an ordinary worldling’s knowledge of the efficacy of moral causation or of actions and their results. Therefore, mundane right understanding means the knowledge that accord with the Four Noble Truths. This is called mundane because the understanding is not yet free from taints. This may be called “knowing accordingly.” It is the right understanding of the law of Kamma. Sāriputta said, “When a noble disciple understands what is kammically unwholesome, and the root of unwholesome kamma, what is kammically wholesome, and the root of wholesome kamma, then he has right view.”⁴⁰

The wisdom, the faculty of wisdom, the power of wisdom, the investigation of states enlightenment factor, the path factor of right view in one whose mind is noble, whose mind is taintless, who possesses the noble path and is developing the noble path. Thus, it would seem that there is kind of right view that it purely of a mundane nature, while the

³⁹Mahathera Nanyane Ariyadhamma, **The Short Analysis of Kamma**, (Sri Lanka : Buddhist Publication Society, 2001) p.25

⁴⁰M.I.97

attainment of the supramundane path would require the cultivation of the higher level of right view.

Having this type of view will bring merit and will support the favourable rebirth of the sentient being in the realm of samsara. This right view is still related to cankers (*āsava*), accumulation of merit (*puññabhāgiya*) and resulting in good rebirth. Moreover, it still has cankers because there is craving for merit and clinging after death⁴¹.

2.2.2 The Supramundane Right View (*lokuttarasammā-diṭṭhi*)

The supra-mundane right view is concerned with the principles essential to liberation. It does not aim merely at spiritual progress in the realm of life after life cycle, but at emancipation from it. This superior right view leading to liberation, according to the Buddha, is the understanding of the Four Noble Truths.

*“ What is the right view that is without fermentations, transcendent, a factor of the path? The discernment, the faculty of discernment, the strength of discernment, analysis of qualities as a factor of Awakening, the path factor of right view in one developing the noble path whose mind is noble, whose mind is free from fermentations, who is fully possessed of the noble path. This is the right view that is without fermentations, transcendent, a factor of the path. ”*⁴²

⁴¹M.III.72 The Buddha explains: “ And what monks, is the right view that has cankers, that is on the side of merit, that ripens unto cleaving (to new birth)? There is (result of) gift...offering...sacrifice; there is fruit and ripening of deeds well done or ill done; there is this world, there is a world beyond; ... This, monk, is a right view that has cankers is on the side of merit...

⁴²M.II.239

The understanding of karmic and rebirth, as implicated in the Four Noble Truths, leading to awakening and liberation from rebirths and associated dukkha in the realms of samsara.⁴³

The supramundane right view is concerned with the principles essential to liberation. It does not aim merely at spiritual progress in the realm of life after life cycle, but at emancipation from it. This superior right view leading to liberation, according to the Buddha, is the understanding of the Four Noble Truths. It is wisdom, the faculty of wisdom, the power of wisdom, a factor of enlightenment. This right view is of the one whose mind is free from cankers and is called a constituent of the path.⁴⁴

Right View in *Theravāda* Buddhism does not refer to mere intellectual or theoretical understanding of the principles of Buddhist philosophy. It is the intuitive understanding through self-examination and self-observation leading to personal realisation of the real nature of all phenomena. Thus, while the mundane Right View provides an understanding of the moral law of cause and effect (*kamma*), the supramundane Right View leading to the cultivation of the Noble Eightfold Path includes the correct understanding of the Four Noble Truths, Dependent Origination and the three universal characteristics of impermanence, suffering and non-self. During one's spiritual journey through the path of liberation towards Nibbana, Right View will clear any misunderstanding that may arise in relation to the reality of physical and mental phenomena and help to objectively see their real nature instead of

⁴³Bhikkhu Bodhi, **In the Buddha's Words: An Anthology of Discourses from the Pali Canon** (Wisdom Publications, 2005), p. 147

⁴⁴M.III.72

what they appear to be. One needs to gain the final realisation through personal experience and intuitive understanding that all phenomena, both physical and mental, are just what they are, arising due to certain preconditions and ceasing to exist when those preconditions which are also impermanent in nature change or cease to exist.

In conclusion, Mundane right view accepts the content of the first two knowledges, on kamma and rebirth. Transcendent right view accepts the third knowledge, in which the Buddha's discovery of the four noble truths led to his awakening. The final level of right view, which lies beyond the transcendent, accepts a step that isn't mentioned in the standard description of the third knowledge, but which the Buddha elsewhere states was a crucial stage on the path: the total abandoning of the path itself. To accept the Buddha's awakening on conviction is to accept the validity of the working hypotheses that he presents as right view.⁴⁵

Table 1: Two Kinds of Right View

Name	Pāli Name	Meaning
Mundane Right view	Lokiya sammā diṭṭhi	Understanding of moral law of cause and effect (kamma)
Supramundane Right view	Lokuttara sammā diṭṭhi	Understanding of the Four Noble Truths

⁴⁵Paul Fuller, **The Notion of Ditthi in Theravada Buddhism**, (London : Taylor & Francis, 2004), p.89

2.3 Cultivation of Right View

Sammā diṭṭhi which is translated as Right View occurs at the very beginning of the Noble Eightfold Path, thus, the importance of its cultivation for the realisation of the path and its fruits. The various ways in which *sammādiṭṭhi* could be cultivated have been set out comprehensively by the Arahath Sariputta in the *sammā diṭṭhi Sutta*.

The practitioner should use right effort to abandon the wrong view and to enter into right view. And Right mindfulness is used to constantly remain in right view⁴⁶. The cultivation of right view of the higher level would firmly set one on the correct path and be the stepping stone to the practice of the other seven factors of the noble eightfold path which would ultimately result in the attainment of Nibbana.

Conditions for the arising of Right View

1. Voice of another (Parato Ghosa) i.e. by listening to a sermon, dhamma discussion etc.

2. Wise attention (*Yoniso Manasikara*) these conditions have been set out in the *Mahavedalla sutta*⁴⁷.

In the *Maha-cattarisaka Sutta*, the Buddha also points out that a number of aspects of the Eightfold Path are particularly interdependent. He explains how some degree of right view allows us to even discern right resolve. Then we need right effort as we attempt to abandon wrong resolve and enter right resolve. Right mindfulness, in turn, keeps us on

⁴⁶M.I.54

⁴⁷M.II.165

task in our effort. Therefore, then He says, “Right view, right effort, and right mindfulness – run and circle around right resolve⁴⁸.”

The *Kosambī-sutta* clearly explains that the content of *sammā-diṭṭhi* is Dependent Origination, that there can be an initial knowledge of this process, and that it is possible to cultivate and enhance this knowledge. This is the operation of right-view, which first understands Dependent Origination (rise and fall), and is a vision of the path, the way to the cessation of all *dukkha*.

2.4 Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, the researcher has described the term of Right View based on Abhidhamma Pitaka, Suttanta pitaka and Pāli canon in *Theravāda* Buddhism, classification of that is Mundane Right View, Supramundane Right View and cultivation of Right view. The researcher believes that the knowledges that are related to *sammā diṭṭhi* (Right View) in this chapter will offer differences of Right View to the learners who are interested in *sammā diṭṭhi* (Right View) of the Buddha’s teaching.

⁴⁸M.III.173

Chapter III

The Doctrines Related to Right View in Theravāda Buddhism

In this chapter, the researcher will present the Doctrines Promoting Right View and the Doctrine Antagonistic to Right View.

3.1. The Doctrines Promoting Right View

In the Buddha's teaching, there are the doctrines that developed *sammā diṭṭhi* (Right View). It found in the four noble truths, in the law of *Paticcasamuppāda* (dependent origination) moreover *sammā diṭṭhi* (right view) has its own characteristic and it could be related to the law of law of Kamma.

3.1.1 The Four Noble Truths

The Four Noble Truths are the central teaching of the Buddha. He declares his teaching to be the middle path which is not the same with other contemporary teachings and even declares that his method avoids them. The importance of the Four Noble Truths can be seen by noticing that the Buddha taught them in his very first sermon and that he repeatedly taught the same to his disciples. Venerable *Sāriputta* addressed bhikkhus:

Friends, bhikkhus, just as the foot prints of all moving things get included in the footprint of the elephant and it becomes the biggest. Just so all things of merit get included in the four-noble

*truth. Four Noble Truths of the universal suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering and the path leading to the cessation of suffering.*⁴⁹

The Right view of the Four Noble Truths develops in two stages. The first is called the right view that accords with the truths (*saccānulomika sammā diṭṭhi*); the second, the right view that penetrates the truths (*saccapauvedha sammā diṭṭhi*). The former requires a clear understanding of the meaning of the Four Noble Truths and their significance in our lives. Knowledge of the Four Noble Truths acquired through learning process is called *sutamayapaññā*. This knowledge is deepened by reflecting upon them in the light of experience and the knowledge acquired thus is called *cintamayapaññā*. Still, the knowledge is defective since it is a matter of concept rather than realization.

The Buddha “it is through not realizing, though not penetrating the Four Noble Truths that this long course of birth and death has been passed through and undergone by me as well as by you. What are these four? They are the noble truth of suffering; the noble truth of the origin of suffering; the noble truth of the cessation of suffering; and the noble truth of the way to the cessation of suffering. But now, bhikkhus, that these have been realized and penetrated, cut off is the craving for existence, destroyed is that which leads to renewed becoming, and there is no fresh becoming.”⁵⁰

⁴⁹M.I. 65

⁵⁰D.I. 16

Right view as well as wrong view conditions our action. The Buddha teaches that actions which are molded by those opposite views lead to their own results. The wrong view will lead us towards courses of action that bears results in suffering while the right view will guide us towards right actions, and there by towards the cessation of suffering. The Buddha declared that he sees no single factor so responsible for the arising of unwholesome states of mind as wrong view, and no factor so helpful for the arising of wholesome states of mind as right view.⁵¹ Right view refers to understanding of the “Four Holy Truths.” It also can refer to insight into the nature of the Dharma Body of the Buddha.

The First Noble Truth is the foundation of Right Understanding, and at the same time Right Understanding is the foundation of the First Noble Truth. Each part of the Buddha dharma is a reflection of another, like a many faceted jewels. In other words, it is the right understanding of the law of Karma (*kammasakatā sammā diṭṭhi*).

3.1.2 The Law of Dependent Origination

The Law of Dependent Origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*) is mentioned throughout the canon from which it is clear that it is regarded as a fundamental truth of the cosmos that exists independently of the arising of enlightened beings:

“Whether a Tathāgata appears or not, this condition exists and is a natural fact, a natural law: that is, the principle of conditionality. The Tathāgata, enlightened to and awakened to

⁵¹A.I.124

*that principle, teaches it, shows it, formulates it, declares it, reveals it, makes it known, clarifies it and points it out, saying, "See here conditioned by ignorance are volitional impulses. This suchness, monks, this invariability, this irreversibility, that is to say, the law of conditionality, I call the principle of Dependent Origination."*⁵²

To understand the *paṭiccasamuppāda* is said to be one of the right views (*sammādiṭṭhi*). From the arising of ignorance is the arising of the kammic formations; from the stopping of ignorance is the stopping of the kammic formations. This noble eightfold way is itself the course leading to the stopping of the kammic-formations, that is to say, right view...When a noble disciple comprehends condition thus, its arising, its end, and the course leading to its end thus, he is called an ariyan disciple who is possessed of right view, of vision, one who has come into this true Dhamma, who sees this true Dhamma, who is endowed with the knowledge and lore of a learner, who has attained the stream of Dhamma, who is an ariyan of penetrating wisdom, and who stands knocking at the door of the Deathless.⁵³

According to Buddhism there is no first cause. Ignorance or craving are not regarded as a first cause. Things are neither due to one single cause nor are they causeless. Searching for a first cause, a Creator God and such, has little value from the Buddhist point of view, because it is not essential to a meaningful life. Such reflection can still be passed

⁵²S.II.15.

⁵³S.II.43

over, as the value of dependent origination in terms of life fulfillment already covers the desired benefits.⁵⁴

As explained in the formula of dependent origination, things have multiple causes. Craving, like all other things, physical or mental, is also conditioned, interdependent and inter-relative with other things. It is neither a beginning nor an end in itself. Through craving is cited as the proximate cause of suffering, it is not independent, but interdependent.

Understanding dependent arising enables us to reject fallacy and possess the Right View to be totally free from suffering. It is false to believe that a “person” is present and reincarnates into a certain sentient being due to kamma. If one erroneously believes consciousness is ego, then he will experience suffering, and will be unable to free himself from suffering. Therefore, one must know the nature of consciousness, which is dependent arising. In this way, one can totally eliminate suffering using the Right View, the right understanding.

The *paṭiccasamuppāda* is regarded as the middle teaching (*majjhenedhammasāsanā*) and taught as an impersonal, natural truth, a description of the nature of things as they are, avoiding the extreme theories or biased views. The cycle of dependent origination accounts for the problem of dukkha in two ways: the first deals with the *samudayavāra* (origination mode) which is a description of the arising of dukkha, corresponding with the second noble truth, the cause or origin of dukkha, whilst the second deals with the *nirodhavāra* (cessation mode),

⁵⁴P.A.Payutto, **Dependent Origination** (Bangkok: Buddhadhamma Foundation Published, 1995), p. 18

and consists of a description of the cessation of suffering, corresponding with the third Noble Truth.⁵⁵

It is through right view that one sees cause and effect, the arising and ceasing of all conditioned things. The truth of the Dhamma can be only grasped in that way, and not through blind belief, wrong view, speculation or even by abstract philosophy.

3.1.3 The Three Characteristics

Right Understanding (*Samma ditṭhi*) or Vision is essentially the true understanding of the Four Noble Truths, which can be regarded as the forerunner of the entire path. When we understand that life is subject to dukkha and accept that there is a way out, we can set about treading the path that the Buddha prescribed. Right understanding is not a mere intellectual or theoretical understanding of Buddha's teachings. It is an intuitive realisation of the true nature of things. That is, with the development of insight, he or she realizes the three Characteristics.

The Buddha presented the teaching of three characteristics to describe this natural law of flux. The teaching is outlined in this way:

Whether the Tathàgata were to appear in this world or not, this principle would still prevail as an enduring aspect of the natural order:

All compounded things (*sankhara*) are Anicca...

All compounded things (*sankhara*) are dukkha...

All dhammas are without essence or self (*anatta*)...⁵⁶

⁵⁵Ibid,101.

The Tathagata, having achieved enlightenment, understands this principle. He declares it, teaches it, and sets it down as a model to reveal, explain, and facilitate an understanding that all compounded things are impermanent, all compounded things are dukkhas and all dhammas are without essence or self (*anatta*).⁵⁷

The Buddha himself stresses the importance of the *paṭiccasamuppāda* when he said:

*“One who sees dependent origination (paṭiccasamuppāda) sees the Dhamma; one who sees the Dhamma sees dependent origination.”*⁵⁸

All things exist in a state of flux, made up of interdependent conditioning factors, which arise and pass away in unbroken succession: things are impermanent. Because of their instability and casual dependence, things are subject to stress and friction, revealing an inherent imperfection. Since each component likewise exists as a continuous and causally dependent flow, things do not have a distinct individuality. They do not have a true substance or core. Impermanence (*anicca*) means that the compounded things are constantly being born and dying, arising and passing away. *Dukkha* means that as they are constantly being conditioned by conflicting and opposing forces, they are unable to maintain any constancy. Not-self (*anāṭṭa*) means they are not a self or intrinsic entity, they merely follow supporting factors. Any form they take is entirely at the direction of supporting factors. This is the principle

⁵⁶A.I. 285.

⁵⁷A.I. 286.

⁵⁸M.I.191

of the condition arising, the most basic level of truth. *Anāṭṭa* is very controversially difficult to be understood and it is unique in Buddhism, because it could not be found in any other religions at all.

Once we understand that existence is universally characterized by impermanence, suffering and not-self, we eliminate our attachment to existence. Once we eliminate our attachment to existence, we gain the threshold of Nirvana. This is the purpose that understanding the three characteristics serves. It removes attachment by removing delusions, the misunderstanding that existence is permanent, is pleasant and has something to do with the self. This is why understanding the three characteristics is part of the contents of wisdom, it is right view.

3.1.4 The Law of Karma

The law of kamma or moral law is a natural law of cause and effect, of action and reaction. This is the principle of kamma,⁵⁹ or the law of action and result (*kammaniyāma*). It also falls under the fifth *niyāma*, that of the *dhammaniyāma*. It specifically refers to the process of volitional activities and explains how certain actions lead to corresponding consequences, why people are born with certain peculiarities of character, and human behavior in the context of mental construction and proliferation. The law of kamma is based on the principle that all actions inevitably lead to results proportionate in nature and degree to the deed.

⁵⁹S.II.132. Etymologically, kamma means “work” or “action.” But action is based on intention or deeds willfully done. Actions that are without intention are not considered to be kamma in the Buddha’s teaching.

In the Samyutta Nikāya, the Buddha said:

“Ānanda, “Monks! Intention (cetanā), I say, is kamma. Having willed, we create kamma, through body, speech and mind.”⁶⁰

The law of kamma is based on the axiomatic principle that all actions inevitably lead to results proportionate in nature and degree to the deed. It is volition (*cetanā*), wholesome or unwholesome. The kammic law operates on its own, requiring no assumption of a God, and has nothing to do with the idea of reward or punishment. The Buddha says: “Whatever sort of seed is sown, that is the sort of fruit one reaps; the doer of good reaps good; the doer of evil reaps evil; by you, dear, has the seed been sown; thus, you will experience the fruit.”⁶¹

In addition, kamma is only one part of the process of dependent origination. It is divided into three parts: the defilements (*kilesa*), kamma, and the fruits of action (*vipāka*).⁶² The principle of dependent origination explains the complete process of action and the fruits of action, starting from the defilements that bring about kamma. Right view regarding the karma (*kammassakatā sammā-diṭṭhi*) means, that only two things, wholesome (*kusala*) and unwholesome (*akusala*) actions performed by all beings, are their own properties that always accompany them wherever they may wander in many existences. Volitional activities also called kamma-formations. These postulates the kammic cause for new

⁶⁰A.III.215: *Cetanāhaṃ bhikkhave kammaṃ vadāmi.*

⁶¹S.I.27

⁶²Vism.81.

appearance (*bhava*), thereby extending the cycle of birth (*jāti*) and aging-and-death (*jarāmaraṇa*) or *saṃsāra*.

The *Anguttara Nikayā* says that the cause of kamma is wrong view, which is synonymously used with ignorance.⁶³ When the foundation for a fruitful life is an understanding of the moral law of kamma. Kamma is volitional action, action that expresses morally determinate intentions or volitions. We need to recognize clearly that wholesome and unwholesome deeds produce corresponding good and bad results. As a person sows, so shall he reap. Good begets good, and evil begets evil. This retributive power is inherent in volitional action or kamma. Dependent origination is understood, kamma is also understood.⁶⁴

Good results from good action and bad results from evil acts are evident realities is *kammassakāta sammādiṭṭhi*, the right view that one's kamma is one's own. So, understanding the kammic moral law of cause and effect, we will learn to control our actions in order to serve our own welfare as well as to promote the good of others. Only the wholesome and unwholesome actions of all beings are their own properties that always accompany them wherever they may wander in many existences. This is Right View. The right view of kamma and its fruits provides a rationale for engaging in wholesome actions and attaining high status within the round of rebirths, but by itself it does not lead to liberation...This superior right view leading to liberation is the understanding of the Four Noble Truths.

⁶³A.I. 32

⁶⁴P.A. Payutto. op.cit. p.145.

3.2 The Doctrines Antagonistic to Right View

This chapter gives a comprehensive account of the various views that are explicitly stated to be wrong views in the four primary Nikāyas. To develop Right View or Perfect View, we must first be aware of two views which are considered imperfect or wrong. There are three kinds of *Micchadit̥ṭhi* Such as *sassata-dit̥ṭhi natthika-dit̥ṭhi* (the view of nihilism). Researcher will describe all the Wrong View we need to recognize clearly that wholesome and (externalist-view), *uccheda-dit̥ṭhi* (the annihilationist-view), and in detail in order to understand.

3.2.1 The Eternalist-view (*sassata-dit̥ṭhi*)

The first view is eternalism. This doctrine or belief is concerned with eternal life or with eternal things. Before the Buddha's time, it was taught that there is an abiding entity which could exist forever, and that man can live the eternal life by preserving the eternal soul in order to be in union with Supreme Being.⁶⁵

Eternalism states that the universe does not really exist, and that all matter does not exist outside of one's imagination. Only the mind or the conscious truly exists. All else is a figment of the imagination, an illusion created by the mind. Eternalists claim that other than the conscious, nothing else exists: the universe, other people, and even their conscious are not real.⁶⁶

⁶⁵Sri Dhammananda Maha Thera, **What Buddhists Believe**, (The Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation Published, 1993), p. 124

⁶⁶Orlando Jay Smith, **Eternalism: A Theory of Infinite Justice**, (United State: BiblioBazaar Published, 2008), p. 55

In *Brahmajāla Sutta* the Buddha says: “There are, bhikkhus, some recluses and brahmins who are eternalists, and who on four grounds proclaim the self and the world to be eternal. And owing to what, with reference to what, do these honorable recluses and Brahmins proclaim their views? There are some ascetics and Brahmins who are Eternalists, who proclaim the eternity of the self and the world in four ways.

"Here, monks, a certain ascetic or Brahmin has by means of effort, exertion, application, earnestness and right attention attained to such a state of mental concentration that he thereby recalls past existences - one birth, two births, three, four, five, ten births, a hundred, a thousand, a hundred thousand births, several hundred, several thousand, several hundred thousand births. ‘There my name was so-and-so, my clan was so-and-so, my caste was so-and-so, my food was such-and-such, I experienced such-and-such pleasant and painful conditions, I lived for so long. Having passed away from there, I arose there. There my name was so-and-so ... And having passed away from there, I arose here.’ Thus he remembers various past lives, their conditions and details. And he says: ‘The self and the world are eternal, barren like a mountain-peak, set firmly as a post. These beings rush round, circulate, pass away and re-arise, but this remains eternally. Why so? I have by means of effort, exertion, attained to such a state of mental concentration that I have thereby recalled various past existences. That is how I know the self and the world are eternal ...’ that is the first way in which some ascetics and Brahmins proclaim the eternity of the self and the world.⁶⁷

⁶⁷D.II.57

Eternalists are like materialists in that they only acknowledge a part of the truth; eternalists intentionally ignore the effects and interactions of external objects and matter on our conscious and thoughts. Our loved ones who live with us also have feelings and thoughts, and simply stated, have a conscious of their own. Anyone can see this even in our most basic of activities. We cannot simply acknowledge our own conscious only.

In Buddhism, this teaching is called *sassata ditthi* the view of eternalists. Such views still exist even in the modern world owing to man's craving for eternity. The Buddha denies his teaching of eternalism because when we understand the things of this world as they truly are, we cannot find anything which is permanent or which exists forever. Things change and continue to do so according to the changing conditions on which they depend. When we analyse things into their elements or into reality, we cannot find any abiding entity, any everlasting thing. This is why the eternalist view is considered wrong or false.

3.2.2 The Annihilationist-view (*uccheda-ditthi*)

The view held by the nihilists who claim that there is no life after death. It belongs to a materialistic philosophy which refuses to accept knowledge of mental conditionality. To subscribe to a philosophy of materialism is to understand life only partially. Nihilism ignores the side of life which is concerned with mental conditionality. This nihilist view

of existence is considered false because it is based on incomplete understanding of reality.⁶⁸

They believe that the person is composed of the “four great elements”, hence there is no self. Morality has no value.⁶⁹ The view that “actions have consequences” (the right-view of affirmation) is denied because this law cannot be known by “perception”. It cannot be known by any “valid means of knowledge”, hence it does not exist. And The person is composed of the four great elements; when he dies, earth returns and goes back to the element of earth, water returns and goes back to the element of water, fire returns and goes back to the element of fire, wind returns and goes back to the element of wind, while the senses disappear into space.⁷⁰ That is why nihilism was also rejected by the Buddha. The teaching of kamma is enough to prove that the Buddha did not teach annihilation after death; Buddhism accepts “survival” not in the sense of an eternal soul, but in the sense of a renewed becoming.

The Dhammasangani uses the phrase “non accomplishment in view” to refer to the view of nihilism and “accomplishment in view” to refer to the opposite view, the rightview which affirms that “there is what is given”, etc.⁷¹ This right-view shall be referred to as “the view of affirmation”. According to the Dhammasangani all wrong-views are non-accomplishment in view, and all right-views are accomplishment in view.

⁶⁸Thanissaro Bhikhu, **The Truth of Rebirth**, (Metta Forest Monastery Published, 2012), p. 28

⁶⁹Sue Hamilton, **Early Buddhism : A New Approach. The I of the Beholder** (Oxford: Taylor and Francis Published, 2000), p. 183

⁷⁰Ibid,117.

⁷¹Steven Collins, **Selfless Persons**, (UK: Cambridge University Press,2000) p. 116

The Buddha also refused to get involved in speculations regarding the universe. He stated very clearly that the problem facing mankind is not in his past or his future but in the immediate present. Knowledge about Eternalism or Nihilism can in no way help man to break the present fetters which bind him to existence and which are the source of all his feelings of discontent which arise from his inability to completely satisfy his cravings. The Buddha stated that before one can begin to tread the path which leads to Nibbana one must have Right View. Only when one knows clearly what one is seeking will one be able to attain.

3.2.3 The view of nihilism (*natthika-diṭṭhi*)

Nigantha Nātaputta is the name by which the Jaina teacher, Mahāvīra, was known to his contemporaries. He was also called *Vardhamāna*. Nāta (or Nāya) was the name of his clan says *Nāta* was the name of his father), which belonged to *Vesāli*.⁷²

Nigantha Nātaputta was the only one who advocated for living morality, but his views are presented a rigid attribution of moral consequence to every action, intentional or unintentional. Scratching your body, for example, was considered to be a destruction action or kamma that would have dire consequences and would keep your soul bound to a potentially endless series of rebirths. In his view, this Kamma clung to the soul like a toxic creeper and the best thing was to avoid any kind of action that would increase the infestation. This meant eating as little as possible pulling out body hair to avoid having mites that one might the

⁷²Jeffery D. Long, **Jainism**, (London: I.B. Taurist Publisher, 2009), p. 113

accident tally kill and avoiding damaging creatures to the extent of sweeping the ground in front of you as you walked a long.⁷³

In the *Sāmannaphala Sutta* is usually understood as being the view of the Jains: “A Nigantha is bound by a fourfold restraint. What four? He is curbed by all curbs, enclosed by all curbs, cleared by all curbs, and claimed by all curbs. And as far as a Nigantha is bound by this fourfold restraint, thus the Nigantha is called self-protected, self-controlled, Nigantha Nataputta teaches the Dhamma to his disciples in this way, lord: 'All those who take life are destined for a state of deprivation, are destined for hell. All those who steal... All those who indulge in illicit sex... All those who tell lies are destined for a state of deprivation, are destined for hell. Whatever one keeps doing frequently, by that is one led (to a state of rebirth).' That's how Nigantha Nataputta teaches the Dhamma to his disciples established.⁷⁴

The phrase “curbed by all curbs, enclosed by all curbs, cleared by all curbs, and claimed by all curbs”, may involve a pun on the word *vāri*, which can mean “water” or “restraint”. The passage is perhaps meant to parody one free from bonds, and yet bound by the bonds of restraint, bound by the very restraints that are meant to bring freedom.

Importantly what the Buddha really wanted was to shatter false beliefs of Jainists, and not to have them in his fold. He never encouraged conversion. For instance when Upali tried to embrace the Buddhism, the Buddha did not accept ruling that it would disgrace Jainism. He requested

⁷³Kristin Beise Kiblinger, **Buddhist Inclusivism: Attitudes Towards Religious Others**, (New York: Ashgate Published, 2005) p. 91

⁷⁴D.II.96

Upali to continue alms to the Jain saints, even though he was disheartened with his original faith.

3.3 The Two Extremes

Wrong view could be related to the two extremes that destroy one's conscious of wisdom. These two extremes of sensual pleasure and Self- Mortification should be realized.

3.3.1 Sensual Pleasure

Indulgence in sensual pleasures is the indulgence in diserable sense objects such as sight, sound, smell, etc., which is low, common, unworthy and unprofitable. Sensual desire is the first item on the many Buddhist lists of obstacles to awakening and spiritual freedom. It is the first of the Five Hindrances. The Pāli word for sensual desire is kama chanda. Chanda simply means desire. Kama is a strong word referring to sense pleasure, sensual passion, and sexual lust. Together they refer to compulsive preoccupation with sensual pleasure and comfort.

Beginning his first sermon "Setting in Motion the Wheel of The Dhamma" the Buddha says: "Bhikkhu, these two extremes should not be following by one who has gone forth into homeless. What are the two? That which is this pursuit of sensual happiness in sense pleasures, which is low, vulgar, the way of the ordinary person, ignoble, not connected to the goal; and that which is this pursuit of self-mortification, which is painful, ignoble, not connected to the goal. Bhikkhus, without veering towards either of these two extremes, the One Attuned to Reality has awakened to the middle way, which gives rise to vision, which gives rise

to knowledge, which leads to peace, to higher knowledge, to full awakening, to *Nibbāna*.”⁷⁵

During the Buddha’s time some people held the belief that heavenly happiness could be enjoyed in this very life, waiting for bliss in the future is foolish. According to the Buddha, it is wrong view, since sensual enjoyments just lead to arising craving and clinging that is the cause of *saṃsāra*.

The Buddha himself experienced this extreme for thirteen years as prince; He knew that this enjoyment is practiced by worldlings, but not by noble persons. It will not lead to welfare and happiness. There are five kinds of desirable sense-objects, namely: pleasurable sight, sound, smell, taste and touch. In brief, all the material objects, animate or inanimate, enjoyed by people in the world.

In the *Catukka Nipata* the Buddha says:

“Bhikkhus, is the bond of sensuality? Here, someone does not understand as they really are the origin and the passing away, the gratification, the danger, and the escape in regard to sensual pleasures. When one does not understand these things as they really are, then sensual lust, sensual delight, sensual affection, sensual infatuation, sensual thirst, sensual passion, sensual attachment, and sensual craving lie deep within one in regard to sensual pleasures. This is called the bond of sensuality.”⁷⁶

⁷⁵S.II.140

⁷⁶A.II. 99

Sensual pleasures have a powerful impact on the mind, reverberating in consciousness as sensual images, fantasies and thoughts, and causing longing, agitation and dissatisfaction. This can be very unhelpful if one is trying to calm and clarify the mind. For these reasons, the Buddha advocated a careful but realistic attitude towards pleasure. He advised us to “see the satisfaction in sense pleasures, the danger of them and the escape from them”⁷⁷, and to develop a healthy means between sensual indulgence and extreme asceticism. The Buddha also encouraged us to see that there is a higher and more refined pleasure than that produced by the stimulation of the senses.

“Whatever priests or contemplatives who have dwelt or will dwell or are dwelling free from thirst, their minds inwardly at peace, all have done so having realized as it actually is present the origination and disappearance, the allure, the danger, and the escape from sensual pleasures, having abandoned sensual craving and removed sensual fever⁷⁸.” Therefore, the Buddha advises his disciples to avoid it.

3.3.2 Self- Mortification

Before Shakyamuni became a Buddha (waking up to the truth of reality) that he tried extreme self-discipline that included abstaining from all forms of indulgence, which was called the practice of asceticism. His self-mortification included eating just one grain of rice a day, and sometimes walking around with one arm in the air for weeks. In his search for an end to suffering, Gautama became like an addict to

⁷⁷M.I.85

⁷⁸Ibid, 92

asceticism. Realizing that a weak body could not do the work of freeing the mind, he abandoned the practice of fasting.⁷⁹ Buddha says "flesh may wither away, blood may dry up but until I gain enlightenment, I shall not move from this place".⁸⁰

The practice of self-mortification, which forms the other extreme practice, results only in self-torture and suffering. It is not the practice of the Noble Ones; hence it is ignoble, unclean and does not tend to one's welfare. The practice of self-mortification was based on the belief that luxurious living would cause attachment to sensual pleasure, and that only austerities such as denying oneself food and clothing remove sense-desires and bring about eternal peace, the state of the unaged, undiseased and deathless.⁸¹

Some self-mortifiers lie on prickly thorns covered only by a sheet of cloth, some remain in sitting posture for days, while others keep to standing only, neither lying nor sitting down and so on. According to them, the earnest, tireless effort required for meditation amounts to self-mortification. This view is diametrically opposing to the exhortation of the Buddha. He even declared ascetic practices as obstacles to a higher life.⁸²

The practice of self-mortification does not lead to calmness. While self-mortification is practiced, gross defilements remain

⁷⁹Venerable Nārada Mahāthera, **The Buddha and His Teachings**, (Taiwan: Buddha Educational Foundation Taipei, 1998), p. 64

⁸⁰M.I.179

⁸¹Mahasi Sayadaw, **The Great Discourse on The Wheel of The Dhamma**, (Bangkok: Buddhadhamma Foundation Published, 1998) p. 42

⁸²U. Dhammaratana, **Guide Through the Visuddhimagga**, (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 2011) p. 56

suppressed but subtle defilements continue to arise. For example, the defilement of wrong view of self, conceit and even wrong belief in how to practice may still have occasion to arise. Thus, the Buddha explicitly advised those who had gone forth from the world to avoid them. There is addiction to indulgence of sense-pleasures, which is low, coarse, the way of ordinary people, unworthy, and unprofitable; and there is addiction to self-mortification, which is painful, unworthy, and unprofitable. Avoiding both these extremes, the Tathagata (The Perfect One) has realized the Middle Path; it gives vision, gives knowledge, and leads to calm, to insight, to enlightenment and to Nibbana.

The Buddha said that by realizing the mistake of both these two extremes, He followed a middle path. He discovered this new path by Himself. The Buddha termed His new system "*Majjhima patipada*", the "Middle Path". Unlike the two diametrically opposite extremes he rejected; this middle path produces spiritual insight and intellectual wisdom to see things as they truly are. When insight is clarified and the intellect is sharpened, everything is seen in its true perspective.

The middle way describes the middle ground between attachment and aversion, between being and non-being, between form and emptiness, between free will and determinism. The more we delve into the middle way the more deeply we come to rest between the play of opposites. Sometimes Ajahn Chah described it like a koan, where "there is neither going forward, nor going backward, nor standing still."⁸³ To discover the middle way, he went on, "Try to be mindful, and let things

⁸³Ajahn Chah, **Food for The Heart**, (Boston: Wisdom Publication, 2001), p.55

take their natural course. Then your mind will become still in any surroundings, like a clear forest pool. All kinds of wonderful, rare animals will come to drink at the pool, and you will clearly see the nature of all things. You will see many strange and wonderful things come and go, but you will be still. This is the happiness of the Buddha.”

In Anguttara Nikaya, there are two Dhammas make Wrong view arising :

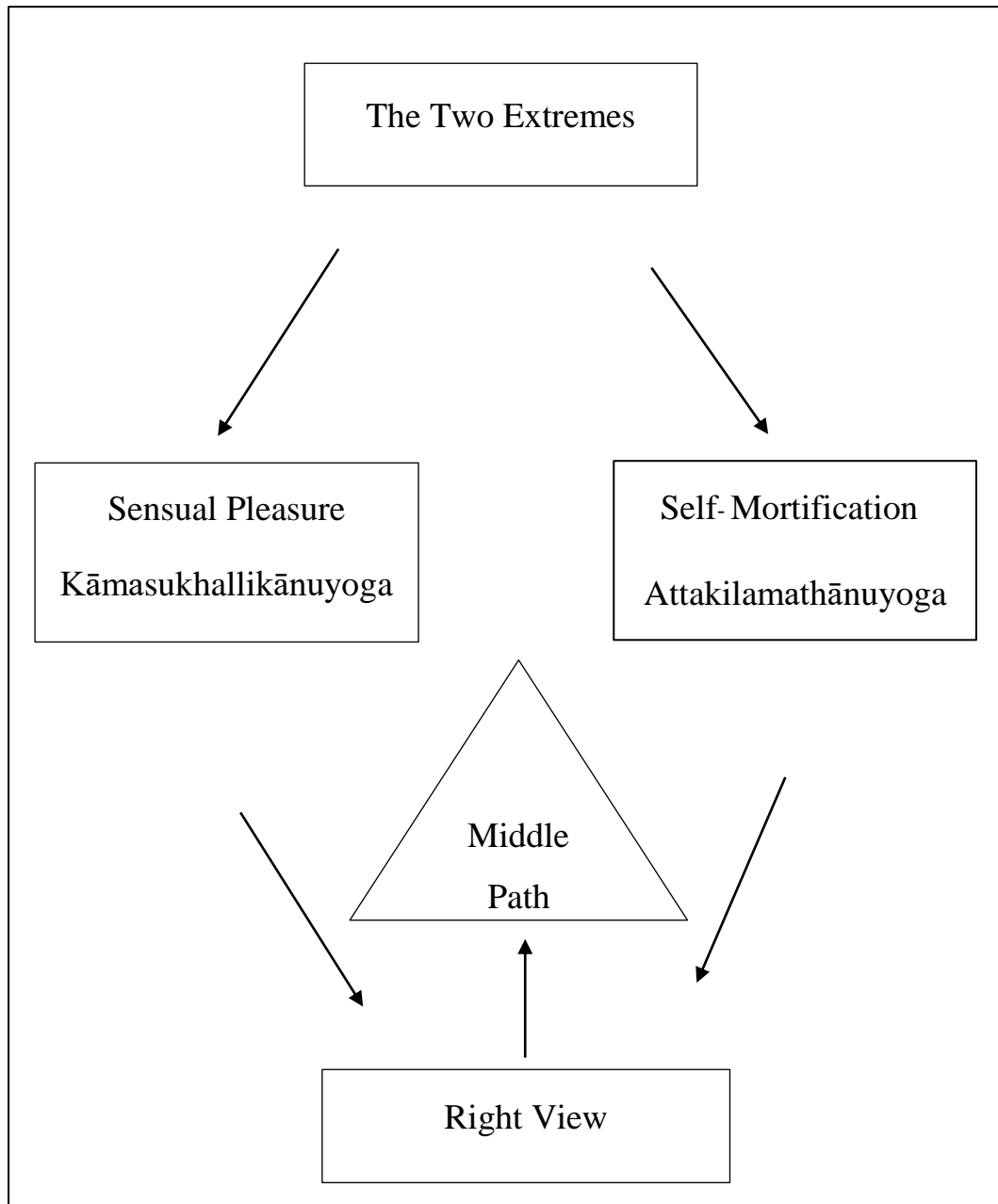
1. Voice of another (Parato Ghosa)
2. Unwise attention (Yoniso Manasikara)

Wrong view is one of four mental defilements know as cankers that need to be eliminated. The Buddha exhorted his disciples to avoid these doctrines, because He know clear that those would neither lead to enlightenment or liberation.

3.4 Concluding Remarks

Wrong view is primarily a form of greed, while ignorance is primarily a form of delusion. It makes one confuse about the nature of actuality and it cannot help one to distinguish between right and wrong doctrines about the nature of actuality. Moreover, it is one of the four mental defilements known as cankers or influxes (*asava*) that need to be eliminated in order to progress on the path of liberation from suffering and the cycle of birth and death. The Buddha points out many times that we need to reflect on what we think, because thoughts lead to actions. For instance, in a sutta called “The Seed” in the Anguttara Nikaya , he reminds us that wrong views lead to wrong decisions, and wrong

decisions lead to wrong speech and action, and so on, until we reach “wrong release.” By “wrong release” the Buddha is referring to the ends put forth by other religions or philosophies: a secure place in heaven, dissolution into an eternal world soul, and the termination of suffering by suicide would all be examples of “wrong release,” which are all built upon prior views. The opposite is true of what the Buddha sees as right views.

Table 2: Right View between Two Extremes

Chapter IV

The Concept of Right View According to the Perspective of Buddhist Scholars

In this chapter, the researcher will study the concept of Right view composed by well-known Buddhist scholars, specially, Ven. Ledi Sayadaw, Ven. Sri Dhamananda, Ven. P.A. Payutto, Ven. Buddhadasa, Ven. Ajahn Chah, the content are (1) perspective of Buddhist Scholars, (2) Comparison of The Concept of Right View between Theravāda and Buddhist Scholars.

4.1 The Perspective of Buddhist Scholars

The concept of Right view has been composed by well-known Buddhist scholars. The meaning of the Right will be different from the point of views of the Buddhist scholar with Theravāda Buddhism. On the other it could be defined the meaning of right view in similar point of view between the Theravāda Buddhism and Buddhist scholars.

4.1.1 Ven. Ledi Sayadaw

Ledi Sayadaw was an influential Buddhist monk. He was recognized from a young age as being developed in both the theory (Abhidharma) and practice of Buddhism and so was revered as being scholarly. He wrote many books on Dhamma in Burmese and these were accessible even to a serious lay person, hence he was responsible for spreading Dhamma to all levels of society and reviving the practice

of vipassana meditation, making it more available for renunciates and lay people alike.

Ledi Sayadaw gives an extremely clear and detailed explanation of the Buddha's teaching. According Ledi Sayadaw, there are Three Kinds of Right View:

a. *Kammassakatā Sammādiṭṭhi*: Right View Regarding Kamma.

Right view in this case of beings, only two things, wholesome and unwholesome actions performed by all beings, are their own properties that always accompany them wherever they may wander in many existences.

b. *Dasavatthuka Sammādiṭṭhi*: Right View of ten kinds of subjects.

(1) *Aṭṭhi dinnam*:

Right View that almsgiving, such as giving to dogs, fowls, birds, layfolk, bhikkhus, etc., if performed with benevolence, in a previous existence, yields beneficial results in subsequent existences.

(2) *Aṭṭhi yitṭham*:

Right View that liberality, if extended with belief in past kamma and with faith in and respect for the virtuous qualities of recipients, yields beneficial results in future existences.

(3) *Aṭṭhi hutam*:

Right View that, gifts, even on a small scale (*āhuna, pāhuna*), if made in previous existences with good will, yields beneficial results in future existences.

(4) *Aṭṭhi sukata dukkātnam kammānam phalam vipāko:*

Right View that cruel deeds done to beings in previous existences yield bad results in subsequent existences, and that refraining from such evil acts yields beneficial results.

(5) *Aṭṭhi mātā:*

Right View that good and evil deeds done to one's mother yield good and evil results respectively in subsequent existences.

(6) *Aṭṭhi pitā:*

Right View that good and evil deeds done to one's father yield good and evil results respectively in subsequent existences.

(7): *Aṭṭhi sattā opapātikā*

Right View that there really exist beings by apparitional rebirth who are invisible to human eyes. Beings by apparitional rebirth mean those that do not take conception in the womb of a mother. Due to the force of their previous kamma they are born complete with the limbs and organs of the body, which will not develop further but remain as they are.

(8) *Aṭṭhi ayam loko:*

There really exists in this world which is under our very eyes.

(9) *Aṭṭhi paro loko:*

There are exists the other worlds or planes where one may arise after death.

(c) *Catusacca Sammādiṭṭhi:* Right View of the Four Truths.

(1) *Dukka samudaye nānam* : Penetrative insight into the Truth of Suffering.

(2) *Dukkha samudaye nānam* : Penetrative insight into the Truth of the Origin of Suffering.

(3) *Dukkha nirodhe nānam:* Penetrative insight into the Truth of the Cessation of Suffering.

(4) *Dukkha nirodhagā minipatipadāya nānam:* Penetrative insight into the Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering.⁸⁴

If one has succeeded in establishing purity of morality and purity of mind, one should immediately try to establish oneself in Right View and Right Thought the path factors of wisdom with a view to eradicating the first stage of personality-belief. To establish the two path factors of wisdom one must gain the five kinds of purity of Wisdom (*paññāvisuddhi*) in due order to purity of view (*ditthi visuddhi*), purity by overcoming doubt.

⁸⁴Ledi Sayadaw, **The Manuals of Dhamma**, (Yangon: Vipassana Research Publications, 1999), p. 212

4.1.2 Ven. Ajahn Chah

Ven. Ajahn Chah was a famous meditation master in Thailand. His discourses were always from the heart, from the depths of his own meditative experience.

Ajahn Chah was used to emphasize on Right View (*Sammā ditṭhi*). For him, Right View can be expounded on in many different ways but fundamentally it understands the nature of kamma, the fact that all actions have some sort of result. That is a fundamental basis for Right View; particularly from the perspective of the mundane, day-to-day level of how we live. It is being able to consider and reflect on how our actions bring results.⁸⁵

Moreover, to establish Right View means firstly that one has a trustworthy map of the terrain of the mind and the world – an appreciation of the law of kamma, particularly and secondly it means that one sees experience in the light of the Four Noble Truths and is thus turning that flow of perceptions, thoughts and moods into fuel for insight. The four points become the quarters of the compass by which we orient our understanding and thus guide our actions and intentions.

So, really being attentive to our actions, recognising that we can choose between that which is going to bring benefits into the world around us, creating well-being and happiness for ourselves and others, or those things that are unskillful and will create disharmony, create a sense

⁸⁵Ajhan Chah, **Right View- The Place of Coolness**, (Bangkok: Wisdom Publication, 1999), p.34

of disease within our heart or conflict with others. To be really clear because we have to live with the fruits; that's a fundamental Right View.

These two qualities, virtue and Right View, are what Ajahn Chah used to emphasize over and over and over again. These are what we need for laying the foundations for practice. You might ask, 'Well, why didn't he talk about meditation?' Well, he did. But if we don't get those foundations of virtue and Right View, then our meditation is not efficacious.

For him, The Buddha's teaching is contrary to our hearts. People want to indulge in greed and hatred but the Buddha won't let them. They want to be deluded but the Buddha destroys delusion. So, the mind of the Buddha is contrary to that of worldly beings. The world calls the body beautiful; he says it's not beautiful. They say the body belongs to us, he says not so. They say it's substantial, he says it's not. Right view is above the world. Worldly beings merely follow the flow of the stream.

If we know the truth of our various moods we arrive at contentment. Whether it's hot or cold we are satisfied, with many people or with few people we are satisfied. Contentment doesn't depend on how many people we are with; it comes only from right view. If we have right view then wherever we stay we are content.⁸⁶

In our practice we must have right view. If our view is right then everything else is right: right view, right intention, right speech, right

⁸⁶Ven.Ajahn Chah, **A Taste of Freedom**, (Bung Wai Forest Monastery publishers, 2001), p.81

action, right livelihood, right effort, right recollection, and right concentration. When there is right view all the other factors will follow on.

In addition, Ajahn Chah also explains when wisdom views things correctly with insight, this right view then leads to right intention, right speech, right action, and so on. This all involves psychological conditions that have arisen from that pure knowing awareness. This knowing is like a lantern shedding light on the path ahead on a dark night. If the knowing is right, is in accordance with truth, it will pervade and illuminate each of the other steps on the path in turn.

The right abiding place for monks, the place of coolness, is just right view itself. We shouldn't look for anything else. The essence of Buddhism is peace, and that peace arises from truly knowing the nature of all things. If we investigate closely, we can see that peace is neither happiness nor unhappiness. Neither of these is the truth⁸⁷.

4.1.3 Ven. P.A. Payutto

Ven. P.A. Payutto is a well-known Thai Buddhist monk, an intellectual, and a prolific writer.

According to Ven. Payutto, Right view (*Sammā ditṭhi*) means thus the starting point or leading factor practice along the middle way and it is knowledge of the truth to see things as they truly are and to see how things exist according to causes and condition and considered to be the actual cause of intelligence (wisdom, rationality) and right view is to discern and understand things according to the truth, penetrate the nature

⁸⁷Ibid, 101

of conditioned phenomena, so that one lives and act with right view. One knows how to relate to the world correctly and shares blessings with other, endowed with a bright, independent, and joyous mind, free from suffering. Right view makes up the group of wisdom the development of this factor is refers to as training in higher wisdom.⁸⁸

The understanding of right view in the teaching of Ven. Payutto is a factor one of the noble eightfold paths are called middle way in Buddhism that lead to realize the true nature of dhamma as reality. Right view makes wisdom developed that could see cause and effect and right is to see or realize the true as they are originally. Moreover, Ven. Payutto described the factors of right as follow.

In sum, there are two factors giving rise to right. First is faith (*saddha*) which is refers to the trust in or a reliance on the wisdom of others. It arises as a response to the teaching of other people and it marks the beginning of spiritual practice by way of external conditions. Second is wise reflection (*yoniso-manasikara*), which refers to and ability to think for oneself or to think correctly. It marks the beginning of spiritual practice by way of internal conditions.⁸⁹

Right view develops ordinary people who begin with faith, relies on other ability to apply wise reflection. Transcendent right view in particular which fathoms the truth and completely dispels mental impurity is unable to arise with wise refection. Generally, it is understood that *Sammā ditṭhi* could be translated that correct view. When we see

⁸⁸Bhikkhu P.A. Payutto, **Buddhadhamm: The Laws of Nature and Their Benefit to Fife**, (Thailand: Buddhadhamma Foundation, 2017), p. 994.

⁸⁹Ibid,101

deeply, it is not just correct view but believing in the doing wholesome thing and have the true skill avoiding unwholesome thing for example, a person who possesses only this level of right view, however, try to give the best emphasis of moral conduct and wisdom. On the other hand, *Sammādiṭṭhi* could be defined that a lam or a compass which allows one to see the path forward to the right direction of goal.

Furthermore, Ven. P.A. Payutto mentioned the cultivation of right view form the Tipitaka in order to understand the meaning of right view as follow. Monk, there are two factors conducive to arising of right view: they are *paratoghosa*: the ‘proclamations of other: external influence of inducement: other people’s teaching advice, explanation, and transmissions, advertisement, information, news, written material, and schooling. Here, it refers specifically to wholesome teaching; in particular to the transmission of dhamma teaching, and to the knowledge and counsel receive from virtuous friends. This an external, social factor and *yoniso manasikāra*: wise reflection, analytical reflection, reasoned or systematic attention. To know how to reflect on thing in an objective way, to apply reasoned thought, to inquire into the origin of things, to trace the entire trajectory of phenomena, and according to its interrelated causes and conditions, without allowing personal craving or attachment to interfere. This is an internal, spiritual factor. It can be described as the way of wisdom.⁹⁰

Ven. P.A. Payutto has been described the meaning of concept of right view which is develops ordinary people who begin with faith on

⁹⁰Bhikkhu P.A. Payutto, **Buddhadhamm: The Laws of Nature and Their Benefit to Fife**, (Thailand: Buddhadhamma Foundation, 2017), p. 101

Theravāda Buddhist doctrine which are noble eightfold paths, the four noble truths and realize the cause and effect in detail.

4.1.4 Ven. Buddhadasa

Buddhadasa was a famous and influential ascetic-philosopher of the 20th century. Known as an innovative reinterpreter of Buddhist doctrine and Thai folk beliefs, Buddhadasa fostered a reformation in conventional religious perceptions in his home country, Thailand, as well as abroad. He says that in knowing dependent origination one achieves supreme or supra-mundane Right View. Such a Right View is not prone to nihilism or the concept of a continuing existence.⁹¹ The language of dependent origination or the perfect Dhamma language can help us perceive the truth in phenomena. It is different from ordinary languages that are polluted by concepts of continuing existence. For instance, in the Right View (*Sammādiṭṭhi*), there are other worlds, parents, heaven, hell, kamma, initiator and receiver of the kamma, the present life and the next. All these are explained according to the language of ordinary people. In the Intermediate Right View, there are only suffering and cessation of suffering. A suffering entity or “person” that is ending the suffering is neither mentioned nor acceptable. In the Perfect Right View, or undistorted supra-mundane realm, dependent arising is perceived as is, neither existing (*atthita*) nor nonexistent (*natthita*). Seen from the Middle Path the process of dependent arising, which operates according to the principle “this exists therefore that exists, this ceases to be therefore that ceases to be,” is perceived as devoid of ego, person, heaven, or hell. A

⁹¹Ven. Buddhadasa, **Paticcasamuppada: Practical Dependent Origination**, (Bangkok: Foundation of Sublime Life, 2000), p. 55

perception of this level is called Truthful Middle Path because it is prone neither to nihilism nor the concept of a continuing existence.

Right view which is spoken of in the language of relative truth for ordinary people says that there exists a present world and a future world, fathers and mothers, hell and heaven, deeds and the doers of deeds, this life and the future life. All of this is said according to the idiomatic vernacular, as understood and clung to by ordinary people. When we come to the middle level of right view, however, as it manifests itself as one of the eightfold path, we find that things are not talked about as on the lower level. There is only talk about suffering and the complete cessation of suffering. There is no mention of the person who suffers, or of the person who extinguishes suffering. And yet this is also called right view. Finally, we come to right view on the highest level, the level of the supramundane, which is the view that sees real Dependent Origination.

Ven. Buddhadasa says in the “Gems of Buddhism Wisdom”, there are two sorts of understanding: 1) An accumulated of memory, an intellectual grasping of a subject according to certain given data; 2) Real deep understanding, a penetration or an intellectual seeing a thing in its true nature, without name and external label. This penetration is possible only when the mind is free from all impurities and is fully developed through meditation. In the first meaning, Right View can be a clear awareness to the Mind and Right View in second meaning is the feeling of sensation. In general, this is a discussion of Right Understanding describing how the four noble truths from which the

dependent appearance and the knowledge end mental fermentation and come to the basic dichotomy between right and wrong action. ⁹²

4.1.5 Ven. K. Sri Dhammananda

Venerable K. Sri Dhammananda was a SriLanka Theravāda Buddhist monk who wrote many books on Buddhism for free distribution.

According to Ven. Sri Dhammananda Right View means that one understands the nature of what are wholesome karma (merits) and unwholesome *karma* (demerits), and how they may be performed with the body, speech and mind.⁹³ By understanding karma, a person will learn to avoid evil and do good, thereby creating favorable outcomes in life. When a person has Right Understanding, he or she also understands the Three Characteristics of Life (hat all compounded things are transient, subject to suffering and without a Self) and understands the Law of Dependent Origination. A person with complete Right Understanding is one who is free from ignorance, and by the nature of that enlightenment removes the roots of evil from the mind and becomes liberated. The lofty aim of a practicing.

Buddhist is to develop the mind to gain Right Understanding about the self, life and all phenomena. Right Understanding and Right Thought, which are Wisdom factors, will lead to good, moral conduct. In the book “Practical Buddhism” Ven. Sri Dhammananda mentions about

⁹²K.Sri.Dhammananda, **What Buddhists Believe**, (Malaysia: Buddhist Missionary Society Published, 2004), p. 132

⁹³Ibid,84

Right view as a clear understanding of the Four Noble Truths is fundamental to the practice of Buddhism⁹⁴. Without an understanding of these four important truths, we will not realise the nature of human problems and will have to continue experiencing suffering.

We struggle to escape from unsatisfactoriness, but without the necessary insight we will not find the way to remove the root cause of our problems. In fact, through ignorance we create more problems as a result of our misguided conception of the world. In only one religion Buddhism are the Four Noble Truths explained with such clarity.

As *Sammā diṭṭhi* has been defined in different way according to the Buddhist scholars such as Ven. Ledi Sayadaw, Ven. Sri Dhamananda, Ven. P.A. Payutto, Ven. Buddhadasa, and Ven. Ajahn Chah. Definition of right view, kinds point of view such *Catusacca Sammādiṭṭhi: Right View of the Four Truths and Aṭṭhi sattā opapātikā* and so on. In this content, the research uses the sources for the book by those Buddhist scholars, published book and unpublished books in order to deeply understand the meaning of right view from the Buddhist scholars.

4.2 Comparison on the Concept of Right View between Theravāda Buddhism and Buddhist Scholars.

As this study has been studied, it could be realized that the meanings of *Sammā diṭṭhi* different point of view of Buddhist scholar. Some of the scholar defines *Sammā diṭṭhi* according the way of people

⁹⁴Ven. Sri Dhammananda, **Practical Buddhism**, (Buddhist Missionary Society Published, 2007), p.55

understanding that is indirectly from the Pali term. Some the Buddhist scholar uses the term of *Sammā diṭṭhi* as right view and explain form definition that is related to the term of *Sammā diṭṭhi*. Now, the researcher would like to use comparisons of the concept of right view between Theravāda Buddhism and Buddhist scholars.

4.2.1 Similarity to the *Theravāda* Buddhism

The similarity of *Sammā diṭṭhi* could be describe with the *Theravāda* Buddhism and Buddhist scholars with the different point of their views such as the point of view of Ven. Ledi Sayadaw, Ven. Sri Dhamananda, Ven. P.A. Payutto, Ven. Buddhadasa, Ven. Ajahn Chah. Firstly, the researcher would to trade back to the point of view of Ven. Ledi Sayadaw on the definition of right view. Ven. Ledi Sayadaw mentioned that right view as realization of wholesome Kamma and unwholesome kamma that performed regarding to the action and right view is the eradication to the stage of personal belief.⁹⁵ He has described that there are many kinds of right view which is regarded to kamma and ten kinds of subjects base on right view.

The definition of right view which is expounded by Ven. Ajahn Chah is similar to point of view of Ledi Sayadaw. Both of them tried to lead understanding of right view to realize the nature of kamma. Actually, the context of right view in Buddhist teaching is to realize insight and mental factor especially the four noble truths. To realize the true knowledge or nirada, one has to fulfill right view. Without right view, it

⁹⁵Ledi Sayadaw, **The Manuals of Dhamma**, (Yangon: Vipassana Research Publications, 1999), p. 212

will be not possible for one to attain the right concentration. It is very clear if right view is related to three-fold training which is Sila, Sammadhi, and *paññā*. It directly means panna which is wisdom. The points of views of those two Buddhist scholars are directly concern with the wisdom the lead to insight knowledge.

The most common definition for right view by Ven. P.A. Payutto is knowledge of the four noble truths. Ven. P.A. Payutto described the meaning of right view as follow. Right view is knowledge of suffering, knowledge of the origin of suffering, knowledge of the cessation of suffering, knowledge of the way leading to the cessation of suffering⁹⁶

According to the statement of right view by Ven. P.A. Payutto, suffering is to be known, the origin of suffering is to destroyed, the way to leading to the cessation of suffer is to practiced. The one who feels suffering, that one need to understand his suffering by wisdom. The statement on right by Ven. P.A. Payutto is similar to the point of view on right view of Sri Dhammananda. Sri Dhammananda described right view as follow. Right View means that one understands the nature of what are wholesome karma (merits) and unwholesome karma (demerits), and how they may be performed with the body, speech and mind.⁹⁷ Both those Buddhist scholars mentioned the definition of Right view as understanding or knowledge and wisdom. It could be said that *sammā diṭṭhi* is right understanding of the Four Noble Truths.

⁹⁶Bhikku P.A. Payutto, **Buddhadhamm: The Laws of Nature and Their Benefit to Fife**, (Thailand: Buddhadhamma Foundation, 2017), p. 92.

⁹⁷Ven. K. Sri Dhammananda, **What Buddhists Believe**, (Buddhist Missionary Society Published, 2007), p.84

4.2.2 Difference to the *Theravāda* Buddhism

There are many scholars has been stating the meaning of *Sammā ditṭhi* in different way of *Theravāda* Buddhism. Actually, those scholars just described with *Nikaya*. It is not different with original definition. In *Majima Nikaya* “right view is the path which is defined as knowledge of the Four Noble Truths. We may understand that the conceptual comprehension of the four truths falls under mundane right view, while the direct penetration of the truths by realizing *Nibbāna* with the path constitutes supramundane right view.”⁹⁸ The scholars such as Ven. Ledi Sayadaw, Ven. Sri Dhamananda, Ven. P.A. Payutto, Ven. Buddhadasa, Ven. Ajahn Chahm, described the right view in different way by the method of practical ways with definition of right view in *Theravāda* Buddhism.⁹⁹

Bethany Lowe described about the right view in *Theravāda* Buddhism that “right view in Buddhist teaching can realize the potential for increased insight and mental well-being in the practitioner. The original buddhist teaching of the four noble truths and the twelve links of conditioned existence constitute a more positive framework into which these challenging contemplation can be fitted (as provided by *Dhammacakkappavattana*, *sammā ditṭhi* conon) the third noble truth, pointing to the possibility of the cessation of the cessation of suffering, is the crucial gateway that distinguishes Buddhist soteriology from mere endurance of life and makes spiritual the practices can be recommended

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⁹⁹Bethany Lowe, *Dangerous Dhrma, Death, and Depression: the Importance of Righ View for Practicing Contemplation Within a Western Buddhist Tradition*, Thailand, 2012, P. 34

for the practitioner who is prone to low mood. Thus, when practiced correctly Buddhism has beneficial results to offer for the welfare of those whose mental health is most at risk but has potentially the most to gain.”¹⁰⁰ The meaning is not different but the ways of the practitioner on the right view are different. Buddhist scholar tried to use the easy way to described to the Buddhist follower.

Moreover, some scholar has described right view as the understanding of kamma and rebirth. According to the statement above right view is about understand the kammic law and right view is about to practice right emotion as well. Those understand of Kamma, Rebirth and Right emotion are “element of Right”¹⁰¹ Ledi Sayadaw described the two kinds of sammditthi which are “*namarupa pariggaha sammā diṭṭhi* and *hetu paccaya sammādiṭṭhi* are able to root out the coarse attaditthi which are actually or actively arising in beings. But they are not able to root out the subtle soul beliefs that lie latent in beings, nor are they able to root out the tendency to skeptical doubt. The proclivity the subtle soul belief is the root cause or the seed of all wrong views.”¹⁰² Those points of views by Buddhist scholar that we have mention above are different with the method of practice but not by definition. In *Theravāda* Buddhism, the concept of right view is about to understand all the suffering. To compare the definition of suffering of the concept of Sammadhi with the point of view of Buddhist scholars such as Ven. Ledi Sayadaw, Ven. Sri

¹⁰⁰Ibid,53.

¹⁰¹Ibid, 353.

¹⁰²Ledi Sayadaw, **The Manuals of Buddhism**, (Bangkok: Mahamakut Press Publisher, 2004), p. 169.

Dhamananda, Ven. P.A. Payutto, Ven. Buddhadasa, and Ven. Ajahn Cha is must be concerned with the way of their practice only.

4.3 The Roles of Right view in Buddhism and Its Benefits in Daily Life

4.3.1 The Roles of Right view in Buddhism

Right View (alternatively, 'right understanding' or 'right vision') consists partly of the beliefs which will help one towards enlightenment, but also of a full understanding of those beliefs and realisation of their full implications. Right view is thus central to wisdom in Buddhism¹⁰³.

Right View is also often described as the forerunner of the other limbs of the Eightfold Path: this is because it enables one to understand how the other limbs are helpful and to judge what correct practice is. For example, it would be impossible to practise right action without an understanding of what are right or wrong actions. It provides an initial view according to which we then orientate ourselves. In the Mahaccattarisaka Sutta, the Buddha explains how it is only with right view that you can discern right resolve from wrong resolve, right speech from wrong speech, up through right livelihood. In other words, you can't practice the other aspects of the Eightfold Path if you don't have the ability to discern when your actions exacerbate greed, hatred, delusion, and self-concern, versus when they lead to letting go, wisdom, and a decrease in harmful behavior. Right-view is the embodiment of serenity. The third knowledge is to understand that this view is unique to the

¹⁰³Christmas Humphrey, *The Wisdom of Buddhism*, (UK: Curzon Press, 2003),p. 63

Buddha's followers and that no other recluses or Brahmins possess such a view¹⁰⁴.

Right view is placed first because right view is the eye that guides and directs all the other factors. In the practice of the path, we need the vision and understanding supplied by right views, in order to see the way to travel along the path. Then we need the other factors, conduct or practice, in order to bring us to our destination. The importance of right view can be gauged from the fact that our perspectives on the crucial issues of reality and value have a bearing that goes beyond mere theoretical convictions. They govern our attitudes, our actions, and our whole orientation to existence. Our views might not be clearly formulated in our mind; we might have only a hazy conceptual grasp of our beliefs. But whether formulated or not, expressed or maintained in silence, these views have a far-reaching influence. They structure our perceptions, order our values, and crystallize into the ideational framework through which we interpret to ourselves the meaning of our being in the world. These views then condition action. They lie behind our choices and goals, and our efforts to turn these goals from ideals into actuality. The actions themselves might determine consequences, but the actions along with their consequences hinge on the views from which they spring. A decision on the question of what is real and true, it follows that views divide into two classes, right views and wrong views. The former correspond to what is real, the latter deviate from the real and confirm the false in its place. These two different kinds of views, the Buddha teaches, lead to radically disparate lines of action, and thence to opposite results.

¹⁰⁴ Vibh 328.

If we hold a wrong view, even if that view is vague, it will lead us towards courses of action that eventuate in suffering. On the other hand, if we adopt a right view, that view will steer us towards right action, and thereby towards freedom from suffering. Though our conceptual orientation towards the world might seem innocuous and inconsequential, when looked at closely it reveals itself to be the decisive determinant of our whole course of future development. The Buddha himself says that he sees no single factor so responsible for the arising of unwholesome states of mind as wrong view, and no factor so helpful for the arising of wholesome states of mind as right view. Again, he says that there is no single factor as responsible for the suffering of living beings as wrong view, and no factor so potent in promoting the good of living beings as right view.¹⁰⁵

In summary, the Pali Canon stresses that Right View consists in a complete understanding of the workings of kamma and rebirth, creating responsibility for our actions, which it is claimed will always lead to results for which we will be accountable. It also includes understanding of the possibility of spiritual progress, for without this there would be no positive effect from recognition of kamma and rebirth. An alternative way of putting this same point is in terms of understanding and awareness of the Four Noble Truths. The role of *sammā diṭṭhi* puts emphasis on the freedom from mental rigidity that stream-attainment accomplishes. A certain mental attitude is achieved in which the mind's tendency to grasp is eradicated. A new mental attitude is gained towards objects of cognition. Right view, as it functions on the path, is perhaps a different

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approach or behaviour towards cognitive experience, towards even “correct” Buddhist doctrines. It is the view that shapes experience.

4.3.2 The Benefits of Right View in Daily Life

Suffering never ends in this life, it is due to wrong views and cravings. Nowadays, we confuse right with wrong, true with false, it is difficult to discriminate. If there is not insight to realize the right from the wrong, we are easily deluded in the mystical doctrines and fall into heresy. Thus, it is not only a waste of life but also we have to go round in the cycle of birth and death. Therefore, Right view is similar to a lamp leading us in the dark, the first gateway to the Dhamma, the foundation of all the Buddha’s teaching.

The foundation for a fruitful life is Right view. We need to recognize clearly that wholesome and unwholesome deeds produce corresponding good and bad results. As a person sows, so shall he reap. Good begets good, and evil begets evil. This retributive power is inherent in volitional action or kamma. Inherent in the action is the power of producing its due result. This happens without the intervention or help of any external agency. Buddhism denies the existence of a Creator-God. Kamma is neither fate nor predestination, but our own willed action considered as capable of producing results. Understanding the kammic moral law of cause and effect, we will learn to control our actions in order to serve our own welfare as well as to promote the good of others.

It is lack of right understanding and ignorance of the underlying laws of life that account for the prevalence of materialism in today's world, even in the traditional homelands of the Buddha-Dhamma. When

people become convinced that everything perishes at death, they lose sight of lofty ethical ideals and become indifferent to the long-range consequences of their deeds. Their entire lives revolve around the blind pursuit of sensual pleasures. Thus we find that today people worship money regardless of how it is earned, hunt for pleasure no matter where it is found, chase power and fame regardless of the cost to their personal integrity. So, suffering never ends in this life, it is due to wrong views and cravings. Ajahn Chah call Right view is “the place of coolness, when we have right view then wherever we stay, we are content”¹⁰⁶.

“Our happiness and the happiness of those around us depend on our degree of Right View. Touching reality deeply - knowing what is going on inside and outside of ourselves - is the way to liberate ourselves from the suffering that is caused by wrong perceptions. Right View is not an ideology, a system, or even a path. It is the insight we have into the reality of life, a living insight that fills us with understanding, peace, and love.”¹⁰⁷ At the deepest level we have to see that all things that make up our being, the five aggregates, are impermanent, constantly changing, and therefore cannot be held to as a basis for security or unchanging happiness. Then we have to see that the cause of Dukkha lies in our own mind. Nobody is imposing it on us. We cannot put the blame outside ourselves. It is through our own craving and clinging that we produce suffering and pain for ourselves. Then when we see that the cause of the Dukkha lies in our own mind, we understand that the key to liberation too lies in our own mind. That key is the overcoming of ignorance and craving by means of wisdom. Then, to enter the path, we need the

¹⁰⁶Ibid,72

¹⁰⁷Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh, **The Heart Of The Buddha's Teaching**, (New York : Broadway Books Publisher, 1999), p.51

confidence that by following the Noble Eightfold Path we can reach the goal, the cessation of suffering. We can reach the end of suffering by cultivating the Noble Eightfold Path in its three stages of morality, concentration, and wisdom- *sila, samadhi, pañña*. Morality purifies conduct and concentration makes the mind calm. When the mind is calm and concentrated, wisdom arises, clear insight, the knowledge and vision of things as they really are. With the arising of wisdom, craving in all its forms is forever destroyed; the flame of life is then extinguished for want of fuel. The Unconditioned has been won - Nibbana, which is deathless, blissful, and real.

4.4 Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, the researcher has described the meaning of right view by Perspective of Buddhist Scholars who is expert in the teaching of Buddhist doctrine especially on the concept of Sammadhitthi: the scholar such as Ven. Ledi Sayadaw, Ven. Sri Dhamananda, Ven. P.A. Payutto, Ven. Buddhadasa, Ven. Ajahn Chah, and the researcher has mentioned comparison of The Concept of Right View between *Theravāda* and Buddhist Scholars. Besides, the roles and benefits of Right view have analysed to extending the meaning of right view in daily life .The sources here have been the books author by those Buddhist scholars and the book concerned to sammadhitti and some published and un-published.

Chapter V

Conclusion and Suggestion

5.1 Conclusion

This present research aims at studying the concept of *Sammā-diṭṭhi* (right view) in *Theravāda* Buddhism. Firstly, in the chapter II: the researcher has concluded the term of right view in pali cannon such as the term *Sammā-diṭṭhi* has been translated as a “Right View”, Right Understanding, Right Vision, Right Perspective. The term *sammā* (right) indicates that all such components are the opposite of their *micchā* (wrong, or false) counterparts Right View in Tipitaka, especially, in *Sammā-diṭṭhi* Sutta, Ven. *Sāriputta* instructs that Right view can alternately be attained by the thorough understanding of the unwholesome and the wholesome, the four nutriments, the twelve nidanas or the three taints. For the classification of Right View: which is Wholesome volitional actions are based on wholesome roots of non-greed (*alobha*), non-aversion (*adosa*) and non-delusion (*amoha*), while unwholesome volitional actions are based on unwholesome roots of greed (*lobha*), aversion (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*), and mundane right view gives clear understanding of the laws governing material and spiritual progress within the round of becoming, with the principles that lead to higher and lower states of existence, to mundane happiness and suffering. In the third chapter, the researcher has examined the Doctrines Related to Right View in *Theravāda* Buddhism. The researcher has found that Right view of the Four Noble Truths

develops in two stages. The first is called the right view that accords with the truths (*saccānulomika sammā diṭṭhi*); the second, the right view that penetrates the truths (*saccapauivedha sammā diṭṭhi*). The former requires a clear understanding of the meaning of the Four Noble Truths and their significance in our lives. Knowledge of the Four Noble Truths acquired through learning process is called *sutamayapaññā*, three characteristics such as All compounded things (*sankhara*) are *Anicca*, all compounded things (*sankhara*) are *dukkha*, all dhammas are without essence or self (*anatta*) has been found and two extremes of Sensual pleasure and Self-Mortification has been stated in this chapter.

Finally, in the chapter four, the researcher has described Concept of Right View According to The Perspective of Buddhist Scholars. According to Ven. Ledi Sayadaw, Right View Regarding Karma which is wholesome and unwholesome actions performed by all beings, are their own properties that always accompany them wherever they may wander in many existences, according Ajahn Chah Right View can be expounded in many different ways but fundamentally it is understanding the nature of karma, the fact that all actions have some sort of result. That is a fundamental basis for Right View; particularly from the perspective of the mundane, day-to-day level of how we live. It is being able to consider and reflect on how our actions bring results, according to Ven. P.A. Payutto, Right view (*Sammā-diṭṭhi*) means thus the starting point or leading factor practice along the middle way and it is knowledge of the truth to see things as they truly are and to see how things exist according to causes and condition and considered to be the actual cause of intelligence (wisdom), rationality, according to Ven. K. Sri Dhammananda, right view is about to understand the Law of Dependent

Origination. A person with complete Right Understanding is one who is free from ignorance, and by the nature of that enlightenment removes the roots of evil from the mind and becomes liberated and according to Ven. Buddhadasa, right view is the view of seeing real Dependent Origination. In addition, Right view is one of the best ways to engage Buddhism to society, culture, custom. The wisdom eyes aim at to realize the meaning of life seems to be a skillful for propagation Buddhism. Whenever Buddhism has entered new culture in the past, it has had hitch itself to a large wagon, at least temporarily. So, the roles of Right view in Buddhism and its benefits in daily life are very important. *Sammā-diṭṭhi* will help to eradicate suffering by overcoming ignorance and craving. Then enlightenment is the solution, and this can be achieved by the realization of what *sammādiṭṭhi* says. Therefore, right view is a universal solution for the suffering of mankind.

5.2 Suggestion for the Further Studies

This study focuses on Concept of Right View according to The Perspective of Buddhist Scholars. The quality of this research is documentary research. The research work is a few understandings on the Buddha's teaching especially on the concept of *Sammā-diṭṭhi* (right view). Therefore, the purpose of this research work has discussed on the point of views on right view by Buddhist scholar such as Ven. Ledi Sayadaw, Ven. Sri Dhamananda, Ven. P.A. Payutto, Ven. Buddhadasa, Ven. Ajahn Chah. For the further studies to the suggestion, the researcher deserve to offer recommendation is that the concept of right view on the in sight meditation so that the concept of right view will be more and more understood by meditator.

In fact, in the Pāli canon of five *Nikāyas* have various suttas mention about the doctrine of *sammā diṭṭhi*. Therefore, it is necessary to analyze and compare this concept between *Theravāda* Buddhism and perspective of Buddhist Scholars. These issues can be researched in future studies by any students of MCU who are interested in studied Buddhism fields regarded to the significance of *sammā diṭṭhi* in Buddhism.

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BIOGRAPHY

Name : Trần Thị Vy

Buddhist Name : Thích Nữ Huệ Nhiên

Father's Name : Trần Thế Lưu

Mother's Name : Trương Thị Mùi

Master Dhamma's Title : Most Ven. Thích Nữ Như Ân- Abbot of Huệ Lâm temple

Date of Birth : 02/11/1985

Date of ordination : 08/12/1997

Nationality : Vietnamese

Email : thetrongtimcon@gmail.com

Phone number : 0970309200

Present Address : MCU, 79 Moo 1, Lam Sai, Wang Noi, Ayuthaya, Thailand.

Education Background:

2013: Bachelor Degree of Philosophy Program, Graduate School, Vietnamese Buddhist University in Ho Chi Minh

2017: MA candidate, International Buddhist Studies College, Mahachulalongkorn University, Ayutthaya, Thailand .