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The Concept of 'Dhamma' in Thai Buddhism: A Study in the Thought of Vajiranana and Buddhadasa

Pataraporn Sirikanchana

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The Concept of ‘Dhamma’ in Thai Buddhism: A Study in the Thought of Vajiranana and Buddhadasa

Abstract
Dhamma is one of the most important and most difficult concepts in Pali Buddhism. Its significance lies in the fact that the term points to both the essence and the goal of Buddhism. Its ambiguity, however, results from the variety of the term's interpretations depending on its contexts. This dissertation analyzes the concept of dhamma in the writings of the two foremost interpreters of Thai Buddhism in the modern and contemporary periods, Vajiranana (1860-1921) and Buddhadasa (1906- ), who, in differing ways, attempt to recover the original teaching of the Buddha’s dhamma. The study first describes the range of meanings of the term in the Pali canonical materials, and selected western interpreters, before focusing on its normative and popular significance in Thai Buddhism. After discussing the historical context in which Vajiranana and Buddhadasa have worked, the dissertation then provides a detailed exposition of their interpretations of dhamma. Through an analysis of their institutional roles and written corpus, the dissertation establishes the distinctive nature of the substance and method of their teachings. We find that Vajiranana closely follow the Theravada scholastic tradition as epitomized by Buddhaghosa; and that his strong emphasis on dhamma as moral norm is consistent with the efforts of the Thai government of his days to use religion to help build a strong nation-state. Buddhadasa breaks away from traditional Theravada exegetical methods and attitude toward scriptures. Advancing a theory of religious language/truth not unlike Madhyamika, he emphasizes the ontological nature of dhamma. In particular, he interprets dhamma in terms of the Thai term for "nature," dhammajati, which he equates with "the normal" (pakati), dependent origination (paticcasamuppada), and emptiness (sunnata).

In addition to analyzing the content of their thought to get at their distinctive interpretations of dhamma, the dissertation also contrasts the styles of Vajiranana and Buddhadasa in terms of Weberian-type categories, viewing Vajiranana as a charismatic priest and an ideal of the Buddha’s right-hand disciple--a scholar-administrator (ganthadhura) monk--while Buddhadasa is a charismatic prophet and an ideal of the Buddha’s left-hand disciple--a forest-dwelling meditator (vipassanadhura) monk.

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THE CONCEPT OF DHAMMA IN THAI BUDDHISM:
A STUDY IN THE THOUGHT OF
VAJIRANANA AND BUDDHADASA

PATARAPORN SIRIKANCHANA

A DISSERTATION
in
Religious Studies

Presented to the faculties of the University of Pennsylvania in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

1985

Supervisor of Dissertation

Supervisor of Dissertation

Graduate Group Chairperson
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PREFACE

The transliteration of Pāli terms in this dissertation follows the standard form of Davids, T. W. Rhys, and Stede, William, eds. The Pāli Text Society's Pāli-English Dictionary. London: The Pāli Text Society, 1979. And the transliteration of Thai terms generally follows a modified version of Phya Anuman Rajadhon. Thai Language. Bangkok: The National Culture Institute, 1956. Personal names and titles, however, are romanized according to the popular use in English, for example, King Ramkhamhaeng (not King Rām Kamhaeng) and King Vajiravudh (not King Vajirāvudh).

I would like to give my special thanks to Professor Donald K. Swearer who initially provides me with his helpful advice and materials for the transliteration of Thai terms throughout this dissertation.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The term "dhamma" is perhaps the most important term in Pāli Buddhism because its discovery entitled Prince Siddhattha as the Buddha. Despite its crucial position in Buddhism, "dhamma" is ambiguous in that it is liable to several interpretations. In this chapter, I will review the meanings of dhamma as it appears in the canonical Theravāda Buddhist texts, the commentaries, and in both normative and popular dimensions of Thai Buddhism. Each of these four areas will be explored in some detail in order to provide an introduction to the central focus of this dissertation: an analysis of the interpretations of "dhamma" by the two foremost modern Thai monastic expositors, Vajirañāṇa and Buddhadāsa.

Meanings of Dhamma in the Pāli Tipitaka

One can find several meanings of dhamma in the Tipiṭaka, the principal authoritative texts of Theravāda.
Buddhism. In this section, I will identify some of the more important meanings of dhamma in these Scriptures to illustrate the wide range of meaning given to the term. Then I will present the interpretations of this term by (Mrs.) C. A. F. Rhys Davids, Wilhelm and Magdalene Geiger, and John Ross Carter, in order to show how some western scholars have dealt with these multiple meanings.

The Variety of Canonical Meanings of Dhamma

In order to facilitate understanding the several canonical meanings of dhamma, I will group them into two broad categories: external (or physical) meanings and internal (or spiritual) meanings. External meanings of dhamma refer to matters external to and independent from the individual human mind and judgment, for example, the law of cosmic order, natural phenomena, or the way things really are. This can be called the ontological meaning of dhamma. The internal meanings of dhamma depend on the human mind and construction. Such meanings are mentioned in the Tipitaka as moral law, righteousness, duty, truth, and norm. These meanings of dhamma are epistemological and moral.

The External Meanings of Dhamma
The external meanings of dhamma in the Tipitaka are presented by the Buddha in order to help his audiences cultivate a basic understanding of the world and to lead them to his ethical teachings as being in accord with reality. Dhamma here generally means "phenomena" or the Law of Nature, as revealed in the the Buddha's teachings of truth. Dhamma as phenomenon or phenomena can be found in the passage: "ye dhammā hetuppabhavā tesam hetum Tathāgato āha," which means "of the phenomena arisen from a cause, the Tathagato has expressed that cause (Vinaya.i.40)." This was the Venerable Assaji's response to the layman Sariputta's question about the principal doctrine of his tradition. After reflecting on the answer, Sariputta saw the meaning of dhamma and revealed it to Moggallana. In this passage, dhamma is the crucial term. Here, it refers to the fundamental nature of things or the way the world really is. "Ye dhammā hetuppabhavā tesam hetum Tathāgato āha" thus signifies the truth in the teachings of the Buddha which points to the causal, relational nature nature of all phenomena. This interpretation of dhamma constitutes its basic ontological meaning.

Although the external meaning of dhamma refers to phenomena, the Law of Nature, and the Buddha's teachings about reality, all three meanings are related to one another. As the Law of Nature which includes the Law of
Dependent Origination (paticcasamuppāda) and the moral law, dhamma is the absolute law governing the universe and its beings, for example, the growth of trees, the cycle of human life from birth, old-age, illness, and to death. The Law of Nature mandates that everything is transitory, changeable, and mutually interrelated. That is, all things have causes, change, and perish according to their causes. As the Buddha once said to the Brahmin Pokkharasādi: "Whatsoever has a beginning in that is inherent also the necessity of dissolution."¹

The Buddha's teachings are the words of truth that reveal the Law of Nature and the cosmic order to which all things are subject. According to the Sāmañña-phala Sutta, once the Buddha explained to King Ajātasattu that a Buddha was the one who saw the Truth and preached that Truth:

Suppose, O King, there appears in the world one who has won the truth, an Arahat, a fully awakened one, abounding in wisdom and goodness, happy, who knows all worlds, unsurpassed as a guide to mortals willing to be led, a teacher for gods and men, a Blessed One, a Buddha. He, by himself, thoroughly knows and sees, as it were, face to face this universe, including the worlds above of the gods, the Brahmās, and the Maras, and the world below with its recluses and Brahmans, its princes and peoples, and having known it, he makes his knowledge known to others. The Truth, lovely in its origin, lovely in its progress, lovely in its consummation, doth he proclaim, both in the spirit and in the letter, the higher life doth he make known, in all its full-ness and in all its purity.²

The Internal Meanings of Dhamma

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While the external meanings of dhamma refer to "things existing" regardless of human involvement, the internal meanings of dhamma refer to certain qualities, values or principles existing in the human mind or depending on human interpretation such as moral law, righteousness, and duty. Here, I will divide the internal meanings of dhamma into epistemological and moral meanings.

Epistemologically, dhamma is the truth about the nature of things as represented in the Buddha's teaching and penetrated by human knowledge and wisdom. It is the truth needed by those who want to purify themselves, to end suffering in this world, to gain happiness and virtue, and to reach nibbāna. The Buddha preached the dhamma in order to provide knowledge of both the external world and one's own self to humankind. Knowledge of the external world (the ontological dimension of dhamma) helps human beings properly understand their relationship to the cosmos and thus to be able to live according to its law. Knowledge of one's own self (the internal knowledge of dhamma) on the other hand, helps human beings understand themselves so that they can find the way to end their suffering and attain nibbāna. The Buddha expressed the purpose of his preaching of dhamma to Uttiya, the Wanderer, as follows:

With full comprehension, Uttiya, I teach dhamma to disciples for the purification of beings, for the overpassing of sorrow and despair, for the going to an
end of grief and dejection, for reaching the Method, for the realizing of nibbāna.

The epistemological meaning of dhamma (the knowledge of the truth) closely relates to the ontological meaning of dhamma (the truth of the nature of things) and to the moral meaning of dhamma (the truth of human morality in thought and conduct).

The Buddha particularly emphasized the moral sense of dhamma since it led to the end of suffering and nibbāna. Dhamma as moral law was praised by the Buddha as the best law of human conduct. The Buddha preached that there were three general types of human conduct: dominated-by-self (attādhipataya), dominated-by-world (lokādhipataya), and dominated-by-dhamma (dhammadhipataya). And the best type of human conduct, according to the Buddha's teaching, is that which follows dhamma:

Now I have fellows in the righteous life who abide in knowledge and insight (of dhamma). If I, who am one that went forth under this well-proclaimed Dhamma-Discipline, should dwell in sloth and negligence, it would be unseemly for me. Then he thus reflected: Energetic shall be my striving and my attention shall be established unshaken. Calmed shall my body be, not turbulent. Controlled shall be my mind and one-pointed.

Thus, likewise, making Dhamma predominant he abandons evil, cultivates goodness, abandons things blameworthy, cultivates things blameless and keeps himself in utter purity. This, monks, is called "dominance of Dhamma."

According to this moral law, those who act according to dhamma will receive goodness and happiness in return, and those who act against it doom themselves to suffering.
Dhamma in some passages of the Tipitaka means righteousness:

Monks, whatsoever beings at early dawn, at noon, and at eve practise righteousness of body, speech and mind,—such have a happy dawn, a happy noon, a happy evening.

Dhamma as duty or obligation means practising virtue, namely, the dhamma of a monk is his duty to preserve the precepts. Throughout the Tipiṭaka, one finds many of the Buddha's teachings concerning the duty of householders, monks, kings. In the Sigālovāda Suttanta, for example, the Buddha taught the reciprocal duties of parents and children, teachers and students, husband and wife, friends, master and servant, and monks and laity.

In summary, dhamma generally means the teaching of the Buddha which is presented ontologically, epistemologically, and morally to humankind so that all human beings can live happily in this world and can find their peace and freedom from pains in nibbāna. Because dhamma has so many varied meanings depending on its context, the term not only stands as the central concept/symbol of Theravada Buddhism, but has posed an interpretative problem for students and interpreters of the tradition. In the following section, I will demonstrate how the term "dhamma" is a problem in Buddhist study and how western scholars have tried to cope with its ambiguous sense.
The Western Interpretations of Dhamma

Many western scholars of Buddhism have found that the several meanings of dhamma in the Pāli texts cause serious problems in understanding the Buddha's teaching. They have sought the central meaning of the term believing that properly understanding dhamma will lead to an understanding of the essence of Buddhism. Mrs. C. A. F. Rhys Davids, Wilhelm and Magdalene Geiger, and John Ross Carter illustrate the attempt of western scholars to analyze the meaning of dhamma.

Mrs. C. A. F. Rhys Davids (1858-1942) interpreted the term "dhamma" from the root «dhar (support, sustain, maintain, hold, and keep). While the context-dependent meanings of dhamma include Right, Good, Justice, Moral Law, Ideal, Truth, Law, System, and Doctrine, she emphasized two: dhamma as norm, and dhamma as phenomenon.

The meaning of dhamma as norm is "an impersonal eternal order of things, according to which all things, animate and inanimate, gods included, lived, moved, and had their being." In other words, dhamma is a universal law that governs all things in general (niyamatā or dhammatā), and the Law of Dependent Origination (paticcassamuppāda) which governs human life process. C. A. F. Rhys Davids, following Buddhaghosa's exposition, divided the order of things into five categories:
And he [the Buddha] illustrates each of the five phases thus:—(1) by the desirable and undesirable results following good and bad action, respectively; (2) by the phenomena of winds and rains; (3) by rice produced from rice-seed, or again, by sugary taste resulting from sugarcane or honey; (4) by conscious processes, quoting from the Abhidhamma-Pitaka (Patthāna):—"Antecedent states of consciousness with their properties stand to posterior states with their properties in the relation of efficient cause." For instance, "in sense-cognition, the receptive and other phases of consciousness come to pass after, and because of, the sensation of sight"; (5) by the natural phenomena occurring at the advent of a bodhisat in his last rebirth, i.e., of one who, when adult, will become a saviour of the world, or Buddha. Hence we may define the dhamma-niyāma as the order of things concerned with the production by the cosmos of its perfect or norm type. And we may say that our notion of moral law is covered by the first and last branches of the fivefold order, namely, the why we should be good, by the kamma-niyāma, and the why we try to better our good, by the dhamma-niyāma.  

The meaning of dhamma, according to C. A. F. Rhys Davids, replaces traditional Brahmanical notions of cosmogony and theodicy with the idea of a universal law of all moral and spiritual beings. For Mrs. Rhys Davids, dhamma theory challenges the idea of Ātman or an Eternal Soul. She sees the denial of soul as unique to Buddhism. Other Indian traditions use the soul theory to explain the work of the moral law and the concept of retribution, i.e., the individual soul will carry the fruits of a person's deeds (kamma) after death and will produce happiness or suffering according to the value of his deeds. Buddhism, however, explains that the theory of no-soul (anattā) makes the law of kamma work, for if there were an individual soul within human beings, it would have to be eternal
and unchanging, and thus would neither be subject to in-
firmities nor affected by good and evil. C. A. F. Rhys Davids points out that the Buddha's teaching of anatta deals particularly with the impermanence of the self at any given moment, the connection between the self and any past or future existence through transmitted energy, or evolution, and the absence of an absolute or god-like soul in mind or body. Mrs. Rhys Davids also refers to Buddhaghosa's observations in the Visuddhimagga that all classes of conditioned things are no more than compositions of the five aggregates—physical body, feelings, perception, (volitional) mental formations, and consciousness—and, thus, afford no foothold for a soul or animistic beliefs.

In denying the theory of an eternal soul, Buddhism substitutes a view of personhood characterized by material (rūpa) and non-material (nāma) factors in a state of interdependent process. This view of phenomenal and moral existence is based in a theory of causation formulated as the Law of Nature (niyamatā or dhammatā) and the Law of Dependent Origination (patīccasamuppāda). Niyamatā explains the processes of inanimate phenomena in nature, and patīccasamuppāda, which C. A. F. Rhys Davids called the Chain or Wheel of the Twelve Bases, explains human existence and process of life. For example, because of ignorance, human beings mistakenly believe that all
worldly things are permanent and can be subject to their will. Instead of searching for the end of suffering, they indulge in acquiring worldly happiness and cause trouble to others. Since all things in the world are impermanent and changing according to their causal conditions, an individual may receive what s/he does not want, and may not be able to get what s/he wants, and, thus, bring him/herself into misery (dukkha).

The theory of patīcchasamuppāda is crucial in Buddhism because it demonstrates that human nature is susceptible to evil and suffering. The knowledge of patīcchasamuppāda prepares a person to attain absolute liberation (nibbāna). In the light of these considerations, C. A. F. Rhys Davids summarizes this aspect of the Buddha's dhamma as follows:

Man consisted of six constituent elements (earth, i.e., extended element, water, heat, air, space and consciousness); he had six fields of contact with the eternal world (mind being the sixth); in eighteen ways through the six fields of contact and their effect on thoughts, words, and deeds, he was affected by that world; and there is a fourfold platform, whereon if he stands, the surgings of fancy make no headway, and he is fit to be called sage and saint. That platform is (1) Ariyan insight, i.e., knowledge how to destroy all sorrow; (2) Ariyan truth or Nibbāna (i.e., Nirvāṇa); (3) Ariyan resignation, namely, of all conditions leading to rebirth; (4) Ariyan peace, i.e., the tranquillization of lust, hate, and illusion.

For C. A. F. Rhys Davids, the most important meaning of dhamma is "norm." She contends that the significance of this interpretation is made clear in the only sutta in
the Theravāda canon which approaches a cosmogony, the *Aggāñña-sutta*. In the *Aggāñña-sutta* of the Sutta Piṭaka, dhamma as norm converts a chaotic, poor state of life into a harmonious, peaceful, prosperous, and virtuous one. This *sutta* portrays the beginning of human institutions and society, and the contrast of life before and after the introduction of the norm. Prior to dhamma, life was meaningless with no distinction between good and evil. Human beings, as well as animals, lived day by day without a future or hope of improvement. Life, then, was perilous and unpleasant since everyone acted according to their own desire. Later, people began to realize the defects of living without law. They, thus, agreed to live together in a community and choose a leader to regulate their community and bring them peace and happiness through the creation of the "norm."\(^{19}\)

According to C. A. F. Rhys Davids, the introduction of "norm" in the *Aggāñña-sutta* also demonstrates that, in contrast to the view expressed for example in *Ṛgveda* 10.90, differences among human beings are not caused by birth. According to the *Aggāñña-sutta*, human beings differ from each other because of their own deeds. Dhamma as norm also refers to the essence of the Buddha's teaching as embodied in the concepts of dhammatā and paticca-samuppāda. Thus, for C. A. F. Rhys Davids, the meaning of dhamma as norm is central.
Although the term \textit{dhamma} (\textit{dharma}) is also used in other Indian philosophical systems, as Mrs. Rhys Davids indicates, the term \textit{abhidhamma} was invented exclusively by Buddhists and used in the sense of an "ultra-dhamma" covering the study of theory and logical method.\textsuperscript{20} \textit{Abhidhamma} systematizes the \textit{dhamma}; and, hence, it does not add to the Buddha's teaching.\textsuperscript{21} Mrs. Rhys Davids sees the \textit{abhidhamma} as an essential means by which the Buddha's \textit{dhamma} was preserved and explained:

\textit{Abhidhamma} was an instrument for regulating the mind. According to the greatest of the scholastic commentators of the fifth century A.D., Buddhaghosa, it was calculated to check those excesses in thought away from the norm, which were shown, by the Buddha, to lead to loss of mental balance, craziness, insanity.\textsuperscript{22}

Unlike Mrs. Rhys Davids, for Wilhelm Geiger, \textit{abhidhamma} does not systematize \textit{dhamma}; it is only an elaborated, repeated version of it:

The \textit{Abhidhamma} is not a systematic philosophy, but merely a supplement to the \textit{Dhamma}. The work belonging to it mostly contain merely detailed elucidations of various topics dealing with ethics, psychology or theory of knowledge which are mentioned in the canon.\textsuperscript{23}

For Geiger, the \textit{Abhidhamma} only reiterates the content of the Buddha's \textit{dhamma} in the \textit{Sutta} and the \textit{Vinaya}, and deals mainly with the classification of psychical phenomena, types of human personalities, causality, and applied logic. C. A. F. Rhys Davids thinks that the addition of the \textit{Abhidhamma} to the \textit{Dhamma} is important for clarifying the Buddha's teaching, Wilhelm Geiger considers it exces-
sive and thus unnecessary for the Dhamma. Consequently, Wilhelm and Magdalene Geiger do not hold that *abhidhamma* is a higher *dhamma*, higher philosophy, or metaphysics. Rather, the Abhidhamma-piṭaka represents only a collection of fragments taken from the two original Piṭakas, the Dhamma and the Vinaya. Thus, originally, the *abhidhamma* was only a *mātikā*, or table of contents to the canon. And they assert that the three-part division of the Canon as Tipiṭaka—the Sutta, the Vinaya, and the Abhidhamma—exists only in the commentaries.

Mrs. Rhys Davids and the Geigers also disagree about the relationship between the meaning of *dhamma* and ātman or brahman. While Mrs. Rhys Davids asserts that *dhamma* which is impersonal is not ātman or brahman generally understood as a God or a Soul, Wilhelm and Magdalene Geiger do not see a sharp contrast between them. For the latter, brahman connotes an impersonal quality rather than a Creator God. In Pāli Dhamma, they hypothesize that *dhamma* functions as a metaphysical concept representing "highest being," hence, replacing the concept ātman-brahman." They "buddhicize" the meaning of brahman by taking such phrases as "(Tathāgato) brahmačakram pavattati (a Tathāgata) sets rolling the Brahma-wheel)" to be an explication of *dhamma*. They explain that brahman or ātman as used in the Buddhist texts signifies moral qualities such as righteous-
ness and virtue and not the soul. Thus, following the Buddha's teaching in the Aggañña-sutta, a person of any caste will find his/her destiny according to his/her present moral conduct which is governed by norm, the universal law of justice, or, as one may call it, dhamma.

In the Geigers' view, dhamma incorporates many meanings. Like the Latin "res," it can mean "thing, object, subject, matter," on concrete as well as abstract levels, the corporeal as well as the spiritual. Dhamma, however, can also be translated as "righteous matter (Rechtssache), righteous case (Rechtsfall), punishment (Strafsache), perishableness (Vergehen), failure (Verfehlung), fact (Umstand), situation (Lage), condition (Zustand), relation (Verhältnis), moment (Moment), characteristic element (characteristisches Element), quality (Eigenschaft), power (Kraft), and capacity (Vermogen)." In short, dhamma embraces all things including nibbana. While they see dhamma as a very inclusive term, they believe that the most important meaning of dhamma is the Law of Causation, particularly the law of Dependent Origination (paṭiccasamuppāda).

In support of this contention, they quote a passage from the Majjhima-nikāya: "ye paṭiccasamuppādām passati so dhammaṁ passati (whoever sees the paṭiccasamuppāda sees the dhamma)."

The development of western interpretations of
"dhamma" has been carefully examined in John Ross Carter's *Dhamma: Western Academic and Sinhalese Buddhist Interpretation, a Study of a Religious Concept*. According to Carter, the study of *dhamma* did not originate in the West, but "begins with a study of a noble quest undertaken and carried through to completion by the Buddha and held out before Buddhists for centuries as that with which one should become engaged." Carter himself does not advocate any specific interpretation of *dhamma*. Rather, he surveys the meanings of *dhamma* in the Tipitaka and the interpretations of classical and Sinhalese commentators and also by western scholars. With the normative view of Buddhaghosa in mind, Carter sees *dhamma* as representing the salvific truth of Theravada Buddhism in the tradition's authoritative teaching (*pariyatti*), its way of living (*patipatti*), and in the Reality rediscovered by the Buddha (*pativedha* or *nibbāna*). The Buddha is remembered by the Buddhists primarily because he discovered this salvific truth and delivered it to humankind for their salvation. As the canonical and commentarial sources, as well as modern interpretations, make clear, "*dhamma*" is the most difficult, ambiguous and profound term in Buddhism. As the Buddha, himself, proclaimed: "This *dhamma* won by me is deep, difficult to see, difficult to understand, tranquil, excellent, beyond dialectic, subtle, intelligible to the learned."
In spite of the profundity and ambiguity of the term, the Sutta, Vinaya, and Abhidhamma share a basic common understanding of dhamma as representing the doctrine of the Buddha. The Sutta portrays dhamma as the truth about phenomena and the basis of morality for both monks and laity with the emphasis on the mutual duty and obligation between monks and laity and among lay people themselves, including moral cultivation to end suffering in this world. For example, when the Venerable Upālla did not understand the meaning of dhamma and asked the Buddha to expound it, the Buddha answered as follows:

"These doctrines [of other teachers] lead one not to complete weariness (of the world), nor to dispassion, nor to ending, nor to calm, nor to knowledge, nor to the awakening, nor to the cool"—regarding them definitely as not Dhamma, not the discipline, not the word of the Teacher. But the doctrines of which you may know: "These doctrines lead one to complete weariness, dispassion, ending, calm, knowledge, the awakening, the cool"—regard them unreservedly as Dhamma, the discipline, the word of the Teacher."

In a similar vein, once when the Buddha arrived at the Kosalan village named Sala, the brahman householders asked him what causes one person to go to heaven after death and another to go to hell. The Buddha answered that dhamma makes one go to heaven, and adhamma makes one go to hell. Adhamma is evil formations through actions, speech, and thought such as killing living creatures, stealing, having intercourse with anyone protected by a guardian, intentional lying, having ill-will towards
others, and so on. And dhamma represents the opposite.36

The Vinaya, on the other hand, emphasizes dhamma as the Buddha's doctrine of monastic obligation and morality. For example, the Buddha prescribed that the duty of monks is to proclaim the dhamma (the norm or doctrine), and it is the dhammic duty of the monks to take care of the sick in the Order.37

Finally, the Abhidhamma treats dhamma primarily as the doctrine of spiritual practice and purification in order to attain nibbāna. The many technical classifications of dhamma in the Abhidhamma should be seen not simply as an arid scholastic philosophy, but as having a spiritual or salvific intent:

The subject in both [the Sutta and the Abhidhamma] is practically the same. Its main difference in treatment, briefly stated, may be said to consist in the fact that in the Sutta the doctrine [dhamma] is more or less explained in the words of the philosophically incorrect "conventional" everyday language (vohāra-vacana) understood by anyone, whilst the Abhidhamma, on the other hand, makes use of purely philosophical terms true in the absolute sense (paramattha-vacana). Thus, in the Sutta it often is spoken of "individuals," "persons," of "I," "you," "self," even the rebirth of "self," etc., as if such so-called individualities really existed. The Abhidhamma, however, treats of realities (paramattha-dhamma), i.e., of psychical and physical phenomena, which alone may be rightly called realities, though only of momentary duration, arising and passing away every moment... The study of the Abhidhamma requires a previous thorough acquaintance with the fundamental teachings and ethical aims of Buddhism; and it is only to them who have fulfilled this preliminary condition that, by thus recapitulating their learning, and by philosophically deepening their
insight, the Abhidhamma may prove to be of real benefit. 38

According to Carter, the meanings of dhamma in the Tipitaka and Buddhaghosa's commentaries, differ greatly from the beliefs of most lay Buddhists. The meaning of dhamma in the Tipitaka, for example, is found through a philosophical study of the Tipitaka itself and does not depend on popular approval.

Having examined the range of doctrinal meanings of dhamma in the Tipitaka and extended this introduction to the meaning of the term by a brief examination of western interpretations of dhamma, I will now outline both the normative and popular meanings of dhamma in Thai Buddhism. The normative meaning of dhamma follows the exposition of Buddhaghosa who was formally held as the "great commentator" by Thai monarchs and Sangha leaders. The popular meaning of dhamma, on the other hand, developed from the traditions of Thai folk culture.

Buddhaghosa's Expositions of Dhamma

Buddhaghosa held that the Buddha's dhamma was intended primarily to prepare human beings for nibbāna. His work deals particularly with the nature of phenomena, the practice of the human mind to overcome ignorance in order to see things as they are, and the steps to end suf-
ferring. The technical nature of much of Buddhaghosa's writing reflects the scholasticism of the Abhidhamma. Buddhaghosa's expositions are dominant in Sinhalese Buddhism; and they came to be the matrix of normative Thai Buddhism. To help clarify this point, I will first trace briefly the history of the link between Indian and Sinhalese Buddhism, the transmission of the Buddha's teaching according to the Theravāda tradition to Sri Lanka, and the legitimation of Sri Lanka as preserver of the original teaching of the Buddha.

According to the Mahāvamsa, Buddhism entered Sri Lanka through the efforts of King Aśoka (273-232 B.C.E.) who sent Mahinda Thera and four other monks to the island in order to propagate Buddhism. The arrival of Mahinda in Sri Lanka during the reign of King Devanampiya-Tissa (247-207 B.C.E.) promoted the establishment of Buddhism as the main religion of the island, the formation of the monastic order (the Mahāvihāra Fraternity) and the firm establishment of the Buddhist teaching in Sri Lanka. According to the Mahāvamsa, Buddhaghosa came from India to Sri Lanka in the early Fifth Century. There is, however, very little solid evidence about Buddhaghosa's life. In fact, we have biographical information primarily from the Dipavamsa and Mahāvamsa, the famous ancient chronicles of Sri Lanka.

Born a Brahmin, Buddhaghosa later studied the Ti-
piṭaka, and became so knowledgeable in Buddhist doctrine that he was named Buddhaghosa, the voice of the Buddha. To understand Buddhaghosa's contribution to the development of a Theravāda Buddhist "orthodoxy," it must be pointed out that the Indian/Sri Lankan religious situation was pluralistic and eclectic. After the time of Asoka up to the time of Buddhaghosa, Theravadin forms of Buddhism competed with Mahāyānism and Hinduism; and popular forms of Buddhism had become assimilated with popular Indian cults. This can be considered the period when Buddhism was declining in India, and, consequently, the motive for Buddhaghosa's journey to Sri Lanka in order to search for and organize the orthodox teachings of the Buddha.

After arriving in Sri Lanka, Buddhaghosa became familiar with the Sinhalese Atthakathā (commentary) tradition attributed to Mahinda. Buddhaghosa was convinced that these Atthakathā contained the true meaning of the Buddha's teaching. He then asked the Mahāvihāra monks for permission to translate them from Sinhalese into Pāli in order to revive and promote the dhamma in India. According to the Mahāvamsa, the Mahāvihāra monks tested Buddhaghosa's ability by asking him to translate two stanzas from the Atthakathā. Buddhaghosa thoroughly understood the two stanzas and elaborated upon them by consulting the Tipiṭaka. The Mahāvihāra monks, astounded by his profound knowledge of the doctrine, allowed him to
use their Sinhalese collection of the Buddhist texts. Having consulted the canonical texts and commentaries in the Sinhalese version, Buddhaghosa composed his famous commentary, the Visuddhimagga (Way of Purification). The Visuddhimagga is widely accepted by Buddhist scholars as the first and most important commentarial work of Buddhaghosa. It presents step-by-step methods for the realization of nibbāna beginning with strict discipline and then proceeding to different levels of meditation leading to nibbāna.

The Visuddhimagga is considered by Thai scholars as a veritable encyclopaedia of Theravāda Buddhism because it contains all the important Buddhist concepts and teachings found in the Pāli Canon. It arranges them in a systematic sequence aimed at making the Buddha's teaching easy to follow and practice, and also gives a detailed exposition of those concepts and teachings. As J. Gray comments: "If he [Buddhaghosa] had written nothing else, it [the Visuddhimagga] alone would have secured for him undying fame." 45

In Ceylon, Buddhaghosa's contribution is predominant:

It was Buddhaghosa who developed and perfected the Buddhist system of thought. According to some, Buddhism which now prevails in Ceylon is virtually the religion as interpreted by Buddhaghosa. The explanation of the sacred texts, literary and philosophical, which has prevailed since his time, is really the explanation of Buddhaghosa and his school. 46
When Sinhalese Theravāda Buddhists reached Burma and Thailand, they brought with them a doctrinal tradition rooted in Buddhaghosa's commentaries, especially the *Visuddhimagga*. As the most systematic exposition of the teachings of the Theravada position, "Buddhaghosa-Buddhism" became the normative doctrinal view throughout Theravāda Asia. As evidence of Buddhaghosa's significance for the Theravāda, it should be noted that, in the tradition, he is simply referred to as "the commentator."

The basic meaning of *dhamma*, according to Buddhaghosa, is the teaching of the Buddha. Following the citation of a passage in the *Majjhima-nikāya*, he praised the value of *dhamma* in his *Visuddhimagga*:

> Even a single stanza of the Blessed One's teaching is good in the beginning with the first word, good in the middle with the second, third, etc., and good in the end with the last word, because the *Dhamma* is altogether admirable.

Buddhaghosa divided the Buddha's *dhamma* into the teaching of the Law of Nature and the teaching of the Ninefold Supramundane States (*lokuttara dhamma*). *Dhamma* as the Law of Nature is also called the Law of Causation or Condition (*paccaya*) which includes the law of cause and effect, the moral law, and the teaching of the Noble Path. The teaching of the Law of Nature is the introduction to the Truth about the nature of things and of life in general. It reveals that everything in
nature and in all activities is interrelated through cause and effect. For example, the causes of the emergence and growth of a mango tree are a mango seed, water, soil, and so on. Without these causes, there will be no mango trees. Similarly, the moral teaching of the Buddha reflects the causal relation between a moral act and its result. This is the Law of kamma in which good deeds yield good effects such as happiness and prosperity, to the doers; and evil deeds result in evil effects such as suffering and poverty. The understanding of the Law of Nature and its truth is necessary for the attainment of nibbāna.

The teaching of the Noble path also portrays the causal relation of suffering and the end of suffering. One should first see the causes of one's suffering and then try to eliminate those causes by following the Noble Eightfold Path in order to attain nibbāna. If one does not understand the cause of suffering and the effect of the end of suffering, one certainly cannot follow the Noble Path properly.

Secondly, dhamma, according to Buddhaghosa, is the Buddha's teaching of lokuttara-dhamma or the supramundane states: the Four Paths, the Four Fruits, and Nibbāna. The Four Paths consist of four stages in the pursuit of the goal: the sotāpatti-magga or the Path of the Stream-entry, the sakadāgāmi-magga or the Path of the Once-
returning, the anāgāmi-magga or the Path of the Non-returning, and the final stage, the arahatta-magga or the Path of the Arahant. The Four Fruits are the realization or the attainment of those who follow the Four Paths. Those who follow the sotāpatti-magga will attain the sotāpatti-phala; those who follow the sakadāgāmi-magga will attain the sakadāgāmi-phala; those who follow the anāgāmi-magga will attain the anāgāmi-phala; and those who follow the arahatta-magga will attain the arahatta-phala. Nibbāna is the unconditioned state of ultimate liberation. Buddhaghosa’s understanding of dhamma particularly emphasizes nibbāna and the moral practices required to attain it. This is well-illustrated in his discussion of the Law of Causation. Its most important aspect, according to Buddhaghosa, is the law of Dependent Origination (paticcasamuppāda), which he analyzes in terms of its components: paticca and samuppāda.

The word "dependent (paticca)" indicates the combination of the conditions since states in the process of occurring exist in dependence on the combining of their conditions; and it shows that they are not eternal, etc., thus denying the various doctrines of Eternalism, No-cause, Fictitious-cause, and Power-wielder.

and

The word "origination (samuppāda)" indicates the arising of the states, since these occur when their conditions combine, and it shows how to prevent annihilationism, etc., thus preventing the various doctrines of Annihilation of a Soul, Nihilism, "there is no use in giving," etc., and Moral-infficacy-of-action, "there is no other world," etc.; for when
states are seen to arise again and again, each conditioned by its predecessor, how can the doctrine of Annihilationism, Nihilism, and Moral-inefficacy-of-action, be maintained?

According to these passages, the Buddhist meaning of paticcasamuppāda denies a nihilism which would hold that all things and activities are void. The nihilistic view denies moral responsibility, asserting that there is no need to do good because there is no soul to be reborn and accumulate the results of good or evil deeds. Buddhaghosa argues that the theory of paticcasamuppāda affirms that all things have their own causes and effects and, thus, that life continues as long as its cause still exists. Similarly, moral acts yield moral retribution. As long as human beings perform volitional acts (kamma), they create a process which reflects the cause and effect of their actions.

Buddhaghosa does not, in fact, deny the existence of a "soul," but he qualifies it. He views "samuppāda" as "co-arising" which affirms that anything can exist if it has a cause. Thus, if the "soul" exists, it must exist conditionally, i.e., it arises out of a certain cause and exists according to a certain condition. The "soul," consequently, is not an eternal soul which can move from body to body after a physical death. It is a life energy or a natural force which somehow arises out of its cause as a fruit arises from its seed:
In continuity the fruit
Is neither of nor from another,
Seeds' forming processes will suit
To show the purport of this matter.

The canonical Theravāda doctrine of no-soul and the denial of transmigration in Buddhism do not conflict with Buddhaghosa's exposition of rebirth in the next life, since continuity from the present life to life after death needs no permanent soul as its agent; it is like a fruit which proceeds from a seed, yet is different from the seed. The acceptance of the existence of a "soul-force" though in a conditional form, leads Buddhaghosa to affirm the connection between the past, present, and future life after death as a continuum of rebirths. This position is evidenced in his explanation of the effect of a meritorious deed in the next life:

While the Blessed One was teaching the Dhamma to the inhabitants of the City of Campa on the banks of the Gaggara Lake, it seems, a frog (manduka) apprehended a sign in the Blessed One's voice. A cowherd who was standing leaning on a stick put his stick on the frog's head and crushed it. He died and was straight away reborn in a gilded divine palace—twelve leagues broad in the realm of the thirty-three (Tāvatimsa). He found himself there, as if waking up from sleep, amidst a host of celestial nymphs, and he exclaimed "So I have actually been reborn here. What deed did I do?"
For Buddhaghosa, patticasamuppāda closely connects with and explains the course of kamma (volitional act) through the three phases of life: past, present, and future. Buddhaghosa refers to ignorance and craving as the two outstanding causes of kamma. He explains that ignorance particularly means not knowing the Four Noble Truths: suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path leading to the cessation of suffering. When one is ignorant, ignorance will conceal the truth of suffering. Ignorance leads the actor to an unhappy destiny because s/he will perform various kinds of kamma such as killing living things that will lead him to be reborn in hell or among the hungry ghosts.

Craving, on the other hand, is the principal cause of kamma leading to a happy destiny. Buddhaghosa points out that those who crave to be reborn in the realm of the deities will perform various kamma such as abstention from killing, and will practice meditation. Though craving may yield positive results at first, in the end it leads to suffering because it always betrays the expectation of the cravers. Since ignorance is not knowing the origin of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the way leading to the cessation of suffering, it thus leads human beings to and imprisons them within suffering:
Owing to his unknowing about suffering's origin he embarks upon formations that, being subordinated to craving, are actually the cause of suffering, imagining them to be the cause of pleasure. And owing to his unknowing about cessation and the path, he misperceives the cessation of suffering to be in some particular destiny (such as the Brahma world) that is not in fact cessation; he misperceives the path to cessation, believing it to consist in sacrifices, mortification for immortality, etc., which are not in fact the path to cessation; and so while aspiring to the cessation of suffering, he embarks upon the three kinds of formations in the form of sacrifices, mortification for immortality, and so on.

Although Buddhaghosa begins his explanation of paṭiccasamuppāda with ignorance, he does not necessarily intend to present ignorance as the first cause of all human suffering. It functions as one way to begin his exposition of the Buddha's teaching. For Buddhaghosa, teaching paṭiccasamuppāda is the same as teaching the dhamma. He refers to the following passage in the Pāli Canon: "Dhamma is good in the beginning, the middle, and the end (Majjhima-nikāya.i.179)." For example, the entire dhamma is good in the beginning with virtue as one's own well-being, good in the middle with serenity and insight and with path and fruition, and good in the end with nibbāna. Or one can say that dhamma is good in the beginning because it suppresses the hindrances through hearing it, good in the middle because it brings the bliss of serenity and insight through practice, and good in the end because it brings unshakeable balance through the fruit of the way. Since dhamma is good...
in the beginning, in the middle, and in the end, the Buddha and his disciples may select any part of it to begin their teaching. For example, the Buddha may begin with the bliss of nibbāna and then the way to attain it; or he may begin with the path towards nibbāna and conclude his preaching with its goal, nibbāna.

Similarly, the doctrine of paticcasamuppāda is the whole truth, and, thus, can be preached from the beginning, from the middle up to the end, from the end, and from the middle back to the beginning. Buddhaghosa points out that the Buddha teaches paticcasamuppāda by explaining it from the beginning up to the end of its cycle by presenting avijjā (ignorance) as the cause of mental formations (avijjapaccaya saṅkhāra). Nevertheless, the Buddha also teaches paticcasamuppāda from its middle part up to the end by presenting vedanā (feelings) as the cause of desire and so on. In the third method, the Buddha teaches paticcasamuppāda, from the end of the cycle back to its beginning, that aging-and-death is conditioned by birth which is conditioned by becoming and so on. And in the fourth method, the Buddha teaches the paticcasamuppāda from the middle up to the beginning, i.e., that craving is conditioned by feelings which are conditioned by contact and so on.59

Like the Law of paticcasamuppāda, the teaching of the Noble Path presents the truth that all things arise
from causes and that the cessation of a cause leads to the cessation of its effect. The Noble Path also reveals the truth of suffering and the cessation of suffering by following the Eightfold Path of Right View, Right Thought, Right Speech, Right action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration. Though both paticcasamuppāda and the Noble Path deal with the truth of suffering and the cessation of suffering, they are used differently in order to lead human beings to nibbāna. Paticcasamuppāda is to be understood and destroyed in order to be free from its cycle and to attain nibbāna. The Noble Path, on the other hand, is to be followed with wisdom in order to be free from the life cycle and, thus, to attain nibbāna.

Buddhaghosa's interpretation of dhamma as set forth in the Visuddhimagga and other commentaries was accepted as the most authoritative teaching (pariyatti) in the Sinhalese Buddhist tradition. Buddhaghosa's interpretation of the abhidhamma has been equally normative in Sri Lanka and throughout Theravāda Buddhist Asia.

Buddhaghosa explains that the abhidhamma is different from the dhamma as it is more difficult to understand, and deals with more profound subjects than does the sutta (the dhamma). Here, abhi means preponderance and distinction, for example, abhideva means "the god who is specially distinguished and surpasses
others in age, beauty, dominion, pomp, and other attainments; the peerless god. Accordingly, Buddhaghosa believes that the abhidhamma is superior to and more important than the dhamma. He evaluates the abhidhamma as follows:

And the tradition has it that those bhikkhus only who know Abhidhamma are true preachers of the Dhamma; the rest, though they speak on dhamma, are not preachers thereof.

Here, abhidhamma means the knowledge of the Abhidhammapitaka, the last section of the Tipitaka. Those who know the Abhidhamma are the true preachers because the Abhidhamma fully explains the Buddha's teaching, discusses the range of the distinctions between mind and matter, different kinds of kamma and its results, and so on. Thus, a monk who studies the Abhidhamma will have a better knowledge of the Buddha's dhamma and is eligible to preach the doctrine properly. On the other hand, those who do not know the Abhidhamma do not have the proper knowledge and skill to be a good preacher.

According to Buddhaghosa, the Abhidhamma is studied and accepted by the devā (deities) and the arahant, and, thus, should be upheld. Buddhaghosa points out that anyone who prohibits the teaching of the Abhidhamma obstructs the expansion of the Buddha's teaching, and should be punished:

He who prohibits (the teaching of) Abhidhamma gives a blow to the Wheel of the Conqueror, denies
omniscience, subverts the Teacher's knowledge full of confidence, deceives the audiences, obstructs the path of the Ariyas, manifests himself as advocating one of the eighteen causes of dissension in the Order, is capable of doing acts for which the doer is liable to be excommunicated, or admonished, or scorned (by the Order), and should be dismissed after the particular act of excommunication, admonition, or scorn, and reduced to living on scraps of food.

Theravādins in Burma and Thailand, as well as Sri Lanka, accept the significance of the Abhidhamma as asserted by Buddhaghosa. Especially in Burma where Buddhism flourished in the reign of King Anawratha (1044-1077), the Abhidhamma became the most important Buddhist doctrine and was strongly supported by him. Meditation, perceived as the means to master the Abhidhamma, also became the most crucial part of Buddhist life in Burma. In Thailand, though the study of the Abhidhamma is not as prevalent and highly valued as in Burma, Buddhaghosa's exposition of dhamma and the Abhidhamma is crucial, especially in monastic education and normative Thai Buddhism.

Buddhaghosa's commentarial work reached Thailand through several channels, especially through diplomatic contact between Sri Lanka and Thailand, and the transmission of his work through Burma. Since Buddhaghosa's work entered Thailand primarily through contact between rulers, it was thus made known and studied among the upper class, the learned who worked with or had a close contact with the rulers rather than among the common people. Buddhaghosa's exposition of dhamma was also closely adhered
to by learned monks who considered it to represent the
original teaching of the Buddha as preserved by the Mahā-
vihāra tradition, the the dominant Theravāda lineage in
Sri Lanka.
The Normative Buddhist Interpretation

Of Dhamma in Thai Buddhism

In Thailand, Theravāda Buddhism can be interpreted on two levels: normative and popular. By normative tradition, I mean the beliefs and practices according to the prescription of the state and the monastic authority whose purposes are the standardization of Thai Buddhism and the preservation of the pristine form of Theravāda Buddhist doctrine and practice according to the Pāli Canon. By popular tradition, I mean the beliefs and practices of Thai Buddhists in general whose goal is neither the preservation of the original teaching of the Buddha nor the realization of nibbāna, but the application of the Buddha's words to their lives and to solving their immediate problems. Though popular forms of Buddhism dominate Buddhist practice throughout the country, they are not advocated by the state or learned monastic leaders as the right form of Theravāda Buddhism.

Theravāda Buddhism elsewhere in Asia, i.e., Sri Lanka, Burma, may also be analyzed in terms of normative and popular dimensions. Whenever Buddhism becomes a part of folk life, it is inevitably transformed in order to meet the needs of a larger and more diverse populace. Both
normative and popular Buddhism are important aspects of Thai Buddhist thought and practice. Normative Buddhism serves as the ideal of Buddhism, the ultimate answer to human suffering in this world, the model of monastic life, and the path for being a holy person. Popular Buddhism, on the other hand, is the source of religious remedies to particular personal and social problems in a community. Its ritual and ceremonial aspect overshadows its philosophical aspect. Both normative and popular Buddhism exist together side by side in order to satisfy all kinds of needs in a community. Here, I will deal particularly with the normative Thai Buddhism and its interpretations of dhamma which basically follow Buddhaghosa's exposition.

The concept of norm is rather obscure and its definitions are still ambiguous and controversial among sociologists. Jack P. Gibbs remarks that in all sociological texts one can find no agreement in generic definitions of norm and no clear-cut classification of types of norms. He cites, as examples, some definitions of norm presented by scholars. For instance, Robert Bierstedt defines a norm as a "a rule or a standard that governs our conduct in the social situations in which we participate." For Leonard Broom and Philip Selznick, "the norms are blueprints for behavior, setting limits within which individuals may seek alternate ways to achieve their goals. Norms are based on cultural values, which are justified by
moral standards, reasoning, or aesthetic judgment."\textsuperscript{66} Because the concept of norm cannot be defined easily and clearly, some sociologists choose to generalize it merely as "a rule, standard, or pattern for action (from the Latin \textit{norma}, a carpenter's square or rule)."\textsuperscript{67} Jack P. Gibbs points out that there still are several questions concerning the definitions of norm, namely, how much deviation is allowed before the standard is no longer a norm, and whether a norm must be supported by or consistent with collective values.\textsuperscript{68} According to Richard I. Means, norm and value are not the same. Thus, norm needs not be consistent with or be supported by collective values. He explains that "values are not to be confused with ethics; although the two are intimately related, they are not the same thing. Ethics are the normative standards of conduct derived from the philosophical and religious traditions of society."\textsuperscript{69}

Norm in the sense of ethics and the collective or social values of a particular community may be thought of as an institutional norm:

The most definite, strongly held, and socially obligatory norms regulating conduct may be called institutional norms. In any group or society there are certain norms that are widely known and accepted, supported by legitimate authority, and incorporated into the individual's social conscience early in life.

Thomas Ford Hoult agrees with this explanation. For him, norm is not a more general value of thought or con-
duct but rather an "institution" which denotes a standardized mode of activity. In dealing with normative Thai Buddhism, I will use "norm" and "normative" in this sense because its doctrine was interpreted and set up as standard of Buddhist morality by the Saṅgha, the monastic institution of the Thai society.

In Thailand, one can roughly divide Buddhist beliefs and practices into two forms as mentioned earlier, at least for analytical purposes. I will call normative Buddhism that form which tends to hold to the Pāli Canon and is recommended by the State, the Council of the Elders (Mahāthera-samāgama), and the learned as the pure form of Buddhism. Popular Buddhism, though is widely accepted by the majority of Thai people, is not recommended by the State and the Saṅgha as the pure form of Buddhism. Since normative Buddhism is primarily concerned with ethics, it views Buddhist beliefs and practices as "what ought to be." Popular Buddhism deals especially with rituals and ceremonies, it thus demonstrates "what is" rather than "what ought to be."

In order to understand the origin and the development of normative Buddhism in Thailand, I will refer briefly to the history of the arrival of Theravāda Buddhism in that country. Theravāda Buddhism may have arrived in Thailand from India before the First Century. Kusalasaya asserts that this is supported by various

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archaeological remains, such as the Wheel of the Law (Dhamma-ckkha), the Buddha's footprints, and inscriptions in Pāli, all of which were found in excavations at Nakorn Pathom, near modern Bangkok, once a center of the Mon Dvāravatī Kingdom (established in ca. 50 B.C.E.).

Prince Dhani Nivat also believes that Theravāda Buddhism entered Thailand before the First Century, probably in the time of King Aśoka (273-232 B.C.E.), who sent two missionary monks, Sona and Uttara, to Suvarnabhūmi, an area incorporating Lower Burma and part of Central Thailand. In Nakorn Pathom, archaeological remains evidence Mauryan patterns such as the deer and wheel motifs with the quotations: "Ye dhammā hetu pabhavā." Prince Damrong Rajanubhab, the Father of modern Thai historiography, agrees that the earliest evidence of the arrival of Buddhism in Thailand is in Nakorn Pathom, and that the first form of Buddhism introduced in this region was Hinayana or Theravāda Buddhism. According to some archaeological evidence such as stūpas (relic mounds) and Buddhist sanctuaries, found in Lopburi, it is certain that Theravāda Buddhism existed in Thailand in the Lopburi period (ca. Eleventh Century) as well. There is some evidence indicating that Theravāda Buddhism from Burma also entered Lānnā, the Northern Kingdom of Thailand, in the Eleventh Century, in the reign of King Anawratha of Burma. King Anawratha (1044-1077) was the ruler of Pagan who esta-
lished the Burmese Empire and promoted Theravāda Buddhism. He expanded his power and, at the same time, spread Theravāda Buddhism over Lanna, Lopburi, and Nakorn Pathom in Thailand. Prince Damrong explains further that:

By this time Buddhism in India was almost extinct. Like the people of Siam, the people of Pagan had first received the Theravada form of the Hinayana from Magadha; but later on, when they lost contact with India, they developed their own form of Hinayana. This was the form of Buddhism that Anuruddha [Anawratha] implanted in Northern Siam when he conquered it.

Apart from India and Burma, Thailand also received the Theravāda tradition from Sri Lanka; Buddhaghosa's expositions prevailing in Sinhalese Buddhism were thus transmitted to Thai Buddhists. In 1153, King Parakramabahu (1153-1186) reigned over Sri Lanka. The Theravada chronicles depict him after the model of King Asoka, the great supporter of Buddhism. He invited Mahā Kassapa Thera to preside over a Council to reform the monkhood and unite the Order into one tradition. During his reign and after, Buddhist monks from nearby countries, including Thailand, went to Sri Lanka to study this form of Buddhism. Thai monks also obtained the ordination rite from Sri Lanka, and returned to Thailand as monks of the Sinhalese sect (Lankāvanâsa). In the thirteenth century, these monks established themselves in Nakorn Sri Thammaraj. Later, Ramkhamhaeng (ca. 1279-1298), a great king of Sukhodaya Kingdom, invited the Venerable Preceptor from Nakorn Sri Thammaraj to Sukhodaya and founded Sinhalese Buddhism.
in his Kingdom.

The story of the arrival of Theravāda Buddhism in Thailand is also narrated in some Thai chronicles and legends such as the Jinakālamālīpakaraṇam (Sheaf Garland of the Epoch of the Conqueror)\(^79\) and Tamnān Pūn-mu'ang Chiangmai (Legend of Chiangmai).\(^80\) Nevertheless, these sources are not entirely consistent with one another. They merely present an overall picture that Buddhism entered Thailand from different places: India, Burma, and Sri Lanka. By the early Bangkok period, Buddhaghosa was considered the most important commentator by Thai Buddhists. His commentarial work has been treated as a manual of Buddhist studies since then. Rama I (1782-1809), the first king of the Bangkok period, also considered Buddhaghosa's work important for the examination of Buddhist knowledge. He based the oral examination of Thai monks on some of Buddhaghosa's important commentaries such as the Visuddhimagga and the Dhammapada-atthakathā. This examination is classified into nine grades, and monastic ranks are based, in part, on a monk's ability to pass these exams. In this way, Buddhaghosa's interpretation of the Buddhadhamma is built into the structure of normative Thai Buddhism.

After the reign of Rama I, the Pāli examination based on Buddhaghosa's texts continued to be held to determine the knowledge of monks. In the reign of Rama III
(1824-1851), Prince Mongkut, the king's brother, was ordained at Wat Smorai, a suburban monastery exclusively devoted to the "forest-dwelling monks (araṇṇavāsī)" who practiced meditation. He found that the practices of these monks did not conform to the teaching of the Buddha. Instead, these monks tended to focus on the achievement of psychic power in order to gain favor and respect from lay people rather than with the attainment of nibbāna. Moving to Wat Mahādhātu, Mongkut found that the monks lacked a proper knowledge of the Pāli scriptures, and thus often misinterpreted the Buddha's doctrine. With the support of King Rama III, Mongkut founded the Dhammayutika-nikāya in 1833 in order to enforce strict monastic rules on monks and make them conform to the original teaching of the Buddha. The Dhammayutika-nikāya provides a strict interpretation of the Vinaya, for example, the style of wearing the monastic robes, the eradication of all supernatural beliefs and practices, and the emphasis of living in seclusion in order to attain nibbāna. Monasteries of the older of the Thai Buddhist "schools (nikāya)," the Mahānikāya, on the other hand, may not enforce the monastic rules and allow monks the opportunity to become fortune-tellers and magicians. The Mahānikāya—a monastic tradition in Thailand—dates from the introduction of Theravāda Buddhism into the country. At that time, there was only one monastic Order referred to simply as the Thai
Sangha. With the establishment of the "Dhammayutika-nikāya," the term "Mahānikāya" was employed to differentiate the old school from the new one.

The main purposes of the Dhammayutika-nikāya were to purify and establish the proper version of the Buddha's teaching as expressed in the Pali Canon and to select those commentaries judged to be the most authoritative interpretation of the dhamma. The texts which were rejected by Mongkut and his office were the Jātakas and some other Thai Buddhist texts because, in Mongkut's view, they were only popular myths. By comparison with the Mahānikāya, the Dhammayutika-nikāya has been more critical of the religion of the people or popular Buddhism in which the Jātakas, popular myths, and magical rituals play an important part. The Dhammayutika-nikāya justly may be considered normative Thai Buddhism, because it aims to portray the ideal of the Buddha's teaching and is generally viewed by Thai Buddhists as the most strict form of monastic practice. Given its normative significance, it will be helpful to review here the interpretations of dhamma by the Dhammayutika-nikāya's most eminent scholars and teachers, especially Prince Mongkut, Prince-Patriarch Vajirañāṇa, and Vajirañāṇa-vamśa.

As we have seen, Prince Mongkut was not satisfied with the popular Thai Buddhism of his day. He considered that its practices diverged from the Buddha's dhamma be-
cause of improper training and insufficient knowledge.
For Mongkut, in the first place, the spiritual meaning of dhamma was more important than its literal or physical meaning. In this regard, he pointed out that the central meaning of dhamma is closely related to nibbāna:

The Dhamma is generally defined as the knowledge of the Buddha, practices for the elimination of all defilements, and nibbāna, the state of freedom from suffering. Dhamma can be differentiated into sīla (the rule which curbs one from evil deeds, words, and thoughts), samādhi (the spiritual discipline through concentration on each single mind-object in order to avoid the arising of evil thoughts), and pāṇñā (the crucial means to destroying all evils). Dhamma can also be classified into the fourfold magga, the fourfold result of magga, and nibbāna.

Mongkut's exposition of dhamma is almost a repetition of Buddhaghosa's. First, Mongkut defined dhamma as the knowledge attained by the Buddha, the practice for the eradication of evil, and nibbāna itself. Similarly, Buddhaghosa in his Aṅguttara-nikāya-atthagathā (Manoratha-purāṇī), stated that dhamma could be understood as the authoritative teaching (pariyatti), practices according to the authoritative teaching (paṭipatti), and the realization of the practices according to the teaching (paṭivedha). Like Mongkut, in the Visuddhimagga Buddhaghosa interpreted dhamma as the Buddha's knowledge and teaching (which was good in the beginning), the practice toward nibbāna (which was good in the middle), and nibbāna (which was good at the end). Secondly, Mongkut differentiated dhamma into sīla,
samādhi, and pañña according to the steps of spiritual purification. These three steps are called tisikkha (the Three-fold Training). Buddhaghosa also devoted the entire Visuddhimagga to explaining the significance of sila, samādhi, and pañña as the path of purification presented in the Buddha's Dhamma. The first two chapters of the Visuddhimagga deal with sila and dhutanga (austere practices) in order to remove defilements), the next eleven chapters with samādhi, and the last ten chapters with pañña.

Thirdly, Mongkut, as well as Buddhaghosa, classified dhamma into fourfold magga (sotāpatti-magga or the path of the stream-entry, sakadāgāmi-magga or the path of the once-returning, anāgāmi-magga or the path of the non-returning, and arahatta-magga or the path of Arahants), fourfold phala or result (sotāpatti-phala, sakadāgāmi-phala, anāgāmi-phala, and arahatta-phala), and nibbāna.85

Like Buddhaghosa, Mongkut also held that the doctrine of paticcasamuppāda was the most important teaching (dhamma) of the Buddha as it revealed the source of human suffering. He also composed a book called the Paticca-samuppāda which followed Buddhaghosa's division of the cycle of Dependent Origination into the past, the present, and the future.

The second major spokesman for the normative Thai
Vajirañāṇa-vororasa or, simply, Vajirañāṇa (1860-1921). He was Mongkut's son and the most eminent Dhammayutika monk of his time, carrying on the religious reforms of his father. Vajirañāṇa wrote a considerable number of Buddhist commentaries, based on Buddhaghosa's exposition, and textbooks in Thai, especially for the study of Pali language and Buddhism. Like Mongkut, Vajirañāṇa's work primarily aimed at improving the monks' knowledge of the Tipiṭaka and elevating the moral standard of the monastic order and the laity.

In Vajirañāṇa's writings, the concept of dhamma is central for both monks and laity. It is illustrated and explained in various ways: dhamma as morality, as the law of nature, as the nature of truth, and as the Buddha's teaching. Like Buddhaghosa, Vajirañāṇa held that the first level of dhamma's meaning was simply the Buddha's teaching, an element of the Triple Gem (tiratana: the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha). It is the Buddha's teaching that protects people from evil deeds and guides them to virtue. Vajirañāṇa also differentiated dhamma, as the Buddha's teaching, into pariyattidhamma (the theory of virtuous deeds), patipattidhamma (the practice of virtuous deeds), and pativedhadhamma (the attainment of virtuous deeds). Vajirañāṇa affirmed that the Buddha's dhamma was crucial for Buddhists because it
represented the Buddha himself. Further, dhamma is available as a moral teaching that helps people to contend properly with their everyday problems and to cultivate loving kindness toward others. Those who are without dhamma, he explained, will be shaken by the vicissitudes of life, but those who keep dhamma will be able to handle their own suffering. It is the monks' duty to spread the Buddha's dhamma. Monks who merely study the dhamma but do not present it to others may soon forget its value as well. The exposition of dhamma thus benefits both the laity and the monks themselves.

Vajirañāṇa classified dhamma into four basic categories: morality, the law of nature, truth, and the Buddha's teaching. These categories will be set out briefly here, but will be elaborated in Chapter III.

As morality, dhamma is intended to help monks and lay people preserve their virtue as ideal members of their communities. Dhamma in this meaning is divided into morality of thought and morality of action. Morality of thought is, for example, bala (the dhamma of power) which is composed of saddhā (confidence), viriya (effort), sati (mindfulness), samādhi (concentration), and pāññā (wisdom). This morality of thought provides a spiritual discipline that becomes the foundation of right actions. For example, sappurisadhamma is a spiritual discipline and the foundation of right action; so, thinking of things
that will not harm oneself or others helps to create actions that are helpful to oneself and others. In other words, doing good is acting with good intention, good motive, good method, and good result.

Dhamma as the law of nature means the doctrine of nīvaraṇa and lokadhamma. Nīvaraṇa is the dhamma that hinders the mind from virtue and is divided into kāmachanda (sexual desire), bayāpāta (ill will), thinamiddha (sloth and torpor), uddhaccakukkucca (anxiety), and vicikicchā (doubt). Lokadhamma is the dhamma that dominates all creatures and is divided into lābha (gain), alābha (loss), yasa (fame), ayasa (obscurity), ninda (blame), pasansa (praise), sukha (happiness), and dukkha (pain). These two dhamma are conditions that exist in the world, shaping the human mind with happiness and suffering and obstructing the path toward true knowledge and liberation. They are conditions of life that make one happy or unhappy and thus should be perceived as temporary, perishable, and worthless so that one will not be moved by their becoming. Dhamma as the law of nature does not depend on human perceptions. It governs human thought and conduct as well as inanimate objects. It gives birth and destruction to all things and is called dhammaniyama (that which normally exists).

The third meaning of dhamma is truth. According to Vajiraṇa, the whole teaching of the Buddha deals es-
pecially with truth classified into two levels or types, mundane and supra-mundane. Mundane truth is the truth of compound things (*saṅkhata-dhamma*). Supra-mundane truth is the truth of non-compound things (*asaṅkhata-dhamma*) including nibbāna. *Saṅkhata-dhamma*, in Vajirañāṇa's view, is subject to five sabhavadhamma or causal antecedents: corporeality (*rupa*), feeling (*vedana*), mental formations (*saññā*), perception (*saṅkhāra*), and consciousness (*viññāna*). All mundane truths (*lokiya-dhamma*) are *saṅkhata-dhamma* because they are subject to causality and change. Even the supra-mundane truths (*lokuuttara-dhamma*) are partially *saṅkhata-dhamma*, since they are differentiated into levels. Only nibbāna, which is supreme *lokuuttara-dhamma* and free from the cycle of birth-and-death, is *asaṅkhata-dhamma*.

For Vajirañāṇa, the Buddha's teaching of truth is important because it reveals the temporality and uncertainty of this world as opposed to nibbāna. Thus, it prepares the listeners to withdraw from craving for worldly happiness and to turn to the quest of nibbāna.

The last person selected in this section as an example of the normative, Dhammayutika interpreters of dhamma is Vajirañāṇa-vānsa (1872-1958), the Supreme-Patriarch and a Dhammayutika monk who basically follows Buddhagho-sa's and Vajirañāṇa's expositions. He points to four basic
meanings of the term and derives dhamma from dhr meaning "sustain" in both negative and positive senses, namely, as a sustenance of either good or evil. Secondly, dhamma may signify only the "good" which leads a person to heaven and is opposite to adhamma, "evil," which leads him/her to hell. Thirdly, dhamma may signify the truth (sacca-dhamma) which is genuine and unchanging. Fourthly, dhamma may be defined as the Buddha's doctrine.\(^{93}\)

Vajirañāṇa-vamśa's exegesis of the Tipiṭaka passage "Ye te dhamma ādikalyāṇā majjhe-kalyāṇā pariyoṣāṇa kalyāṇā"\(^{94}\) follows Buddhaghosa's. In the light of his explanation, it means that the doctrine (dhamma) is beautiful in the beginning because the Buddha preached the dhamma to the audiences so that they could know the truth, beautiful in the middle because it presents the relation of cause and effect, and beautiful in the end because it can be experienced and accomplished through practice.\(^{95}\)

Vajirañāṇa-vamśa asserted that the most general, all-embracing meaning of dhamma is dhamma as the Buddha's teaching. Thus, "ye te dhamma ādikalyāṇā majjhe-kalyāṇā pariyoṣāṇa kalyāṇā" refers to sāsanadhamma (the Buddha's teaching).\(^{96}\) The Buddha's teaching also demonstrates the truth (saccadhamma). It is not the truth itself but the means to the truth realized by wisdom (paññā) and practice.\(^{97}\)

According to Vajirañāṇa-vamśa, the recognition of
dhamma through wisdom enables one to differentiate good from evil. There are three kinds of "good" in this world: "good" according to social or popular values (loka-dhipataya), "good" according to personal values (atta-dhipataya), and "good" according to the dhamma (dhammadhipataya). The teaching of the Buddha recommends the knowledge and practice according to dhamma and the ability to penetrate the "good" according to dhamma. The other two kinds of "good" are not recommended or emphasized in the Buddha's teaching.

The ability to differentiate good from evil comes from the ability to understand the truth of life which is the relation of cause and effect. Those who do good will receive good in return such as being reborn in heaven, happiness, and wealth. And, those who do evil will receive evil in return such as hell, suffering, and poverty. The effect of good and evil may occur in this life or in life after death. Vajirañāṇa-vaṃsa follows Buddhaghosa's interpretation of life as a continuing process represented by the chain of the patīccasamuppāda. The consequence of good and evil is born through successive lives by the patīsandhi-viññāna (the rebirth-linking consciousness or soul). The knowledge of cause and effect, especially of the patīccasamuppāda, will make one realize that good and evil, happiness and suffering, and other phenomena are conditional and uncertain. Eternal peace and nibbāna are
attained only when one is free from the paticcasamuppāda.

In summary, Mongkut, Vajirañāṇa, and Vajirañāṇa-vamsa took Buddhaghosa's interpretation as the standard for understanding the dhamma, because they believed it to be the most reliable basis for understanding the Buddha's teaching. All three agree that accurate knowledge of the Tipiṭaka is crucial for appropriate practice by Buddhists. They believe that many of the popular myths, cults, and folk ways of practice were a consequence of lack of knowledge of the doctrine. Like Buddhaghosa, they held that the Abhidhamma was the important source of the knowledge and practice of dhamma which led to nibbāna. Their concept of dhamma is normative in the sense that it attempts to hold fast to the ideal as embodied in the Tipiṭaka and Pāli commentaries as a standard for all. Their interpretation focuses on the individual's attempt to cultivate him/herself spiritually and morally until nibbāna is realized. This normative sense of the dhamma is supported by the state through an elaborate structure of monastic education and organization. In various ways this dimension of the Thai Buddhist interpretation of dhamma as teaching and practice stands at odds with the popular sense of this crucial concept.

The Popular Interpretations of Dhamma
The popular interpretations of dhamma in Thai Buddhism depend on the beliefs and practices of the majority of lay Thai Buddhists. In order to classify this distinction, I will first differentiate popular Buddhism from normative Buddhism, and then discuss the popular treatments of dhamma and other concepts relating to it.

Popular Buddhism refers to the tradition as commonly practiced by Thai people especially in rural areas. Unlike normative Buddhism, it neither adheres to nor attempts to conform with the essence of the Buddha's teaching because most common people feel that the ideal taught by the Buddha is too profound and difficult to be accomplished in this life, and that it cannot solve their immediate problems. The majority of Thai people are poorly educated. They depend on monks' teachings and sermons for the knowledge of dhamma. Since they are not scholars or learned, they are not interested in dhamma philosophically. They rather use dhamma in order to facilitate their daily life such as in rituals and ceremonies.

One can say that popular Buddhism is the consequence of human attempts to survive in the often confusing and conflicting world of everyday problems and difficulties. It is the attempt to overcome natural cruelty, evil power, and to struggle to attain happiness now or in the near future. For example, when a Thai villager is desperately in need of some money, s/he may pay homage to a Buddha
image and ask for it. Such practice is normal and well-accepted in popular Buddhism but is condemned in normative and doctrinal Buddhism. The attempt of Thai Buddhists to cope with their problems in simple ways welcomes the practice of "animism" within Buddhism and transforms ideal or doctrinal Buddhism into syncretic Buddhism (a mixture of Buddhism and other religious and magical traditions). By animism, I mean the belief in spirits and sacred powers in either natural or man-made objects. According to Max Weber, animism is the belief in spirits or souls dwelling continuously and exclusively near or within a concrete object or process. These spirits may possess and dominate events, things, categories, and behavior, and may temporarily incorporate themselves into things, plants, animals, or people. William R. Catton, Jr., defines animism as follows:

Animism means the beliefs in spirits, including those of non-human origin along with those of deceased or absent humans. Religiously, animistic peoples impute to such spirits the power to control events and to bring about good or evil results, and are, therefore, concerned with placating them. A thoroughgoing animism of the sort characterizing many preliterate peoples imputes spirits to rocks, trees, mountains, jungles, etc. - objects we could call "inanimate."

According to these and similar definitions of animism, many popular practices of Thai Buddhists are animistic, such as the ceremony of invoking the rice spirit (tham khwan khao). In this ceremony, the farmers carry
rice to the threshing ground and gather scattered fallen rice in the field. While they are gathering the rice, they chant: “O Rice Goddess, come you up into the rice barn. Do not go astray in the meadows and fields for mice to bite you and birds to take you in their beaks. Go you to the happy place, to rear your children and grandchildren in prosperity. Come you! Kuu!” By such an informal ritual the farmers hope to guarantee protection by the rice spirit. While such an act has nothing to do with normative Thai Buddhism, it is considered by them as an aspect of Buddhist belief and practice.

The syncretic nature of popular Thai Buddhism has an impact on the standing and interpretation of many important Buddhist concepts such as dhamma, kamma, and nibbana. Their meaning is often contextual, more dependent on ceremony and ritual than doctrinal definition.

In popular Buddhism, dhamma has only two prominent meanings: the words of the Buddha as revealed in the Tipitaka and commentaries, and the sermons of monks. These meanings are adapted to the ceremonial context in which the animistic beliefs of the people prevail.

Dhamma: the Word and the Teaching of the Buddha

The first meaning of dhamma in popular Thai Buddhism to be discussed here is the teaching or, if you will, the
words of the Buddha. For most lay people, *dhamma* is usually combined with *sila* to mean the five Precepts: to abstain from killing, from stealing, from sexual misconduct, from false speech, and from being intoxicated. Before such ceremonies as the consecration of a new house, householders will take a vow to observe the Five Precepts. This vow is made in front of the monks who perform the ceremony, and other invited guests. In actuality, the vow of the Five Precepts fits into a magical, protective ritual which has little to do with the normative dhammic or ethical ideal of canonical Buddhism. Lay behavior at the ceremony itself will probably include drinking to the point of drunkenness. Rather than seeing such behavior as breaking a precept, however, it should be seen in an entirely different context, namely, popular, magical Buddhism. In this context, *dhamma* and *sila* have little to do with the knowledge of the texts (*pariyatti*), the practice according to the texts (*patipatti*), and the experience gained through this knowledge and practice (*pativedha*). In popular Buddhism, *dhamma* is understood especially as the sacred words uttered by the monks during a ritual or a ceremony which are thought to have the power to protect and/or grant such benefits as long life, success, and happiness. For most Thai Buddhists, the *dhamma* as the words of the Buddha in the Tipitaka is sacred, and, thus, has a supernatural power to confer the
blessings of a good life on human beings.\textsuperscript{103} This power is always used as a public magic or white magic as it is "always directed toward the welfare of the group which performs it."\textsuperscript{104} \textit{Dhamma} as the sacred and magical words of the Buddha has a healing power, a blessing power, and a protective power for the ceremonial participants when uttered during a ceremony. John E. de Young notes that an amulet or water in a bowl becomes sacred and has a protective power, according to folk belief, after the power of the sacred words of the Pāli \textit{dhamma} has been transferred into it while the monks are chanting the Pāli verse in an invocation ceremony.\textsuperscript{105}

The First Precept prohibiting killing takes precedence over other precepts not only for social reasons, but because the kammic law and the fear of retribution make village folk feel uneasy about taking life. This fear is also reenforced by the sermons of monks who describe the punishment and suffering a killer will get in the next life such as being reborn in the same position as his victim. Buddhist tales in the Sutta, for example, the \textit{Jātaka}, and Thai fables, such as the \textit{Story of the Venerable Malai}, also portray the suffering of a person who is punished by kammic law because of his evil deeds, such as killing animals, in his past life.\textsuperscript{106} The positive virtue of loving kindness (\textit{mettā}) is not the only reason that prevents one from killing. On the popular
level, the fear of the kammic retribution plays an even more important role.

That most Thai Buddhists relate dhamma to a moral action in an animistic manner can be seen in their emphasis on the concepts of reincarnation, the transmigration of the soul, and the three realms of existence, i.e., the previous, the present, the future life after death. Their interpretations are based, in part, on their own experience within Thai society, a social class system in which poor and illiterate farmers are placed in the lowest position, and the rich and most powerful are placed at the top. This hierarchical awareness is reflected in the Thai Buddhist cosmology which posits the realms of animals, hungry ghosts, and so on, which are lower than even illiterate farmers, and the realm of deities which is higher than the position of the king. This awareness also leads to a connection between the previous life, the present life, and the life after death. The realm of animals, for example, indicates the punishment for an evil previous life that caused one to be reborn as an animal in the present. The realm of the gods becomes a reward for meritorious deeds in past lives. Thus, if one does not want to be reborn as an animal, one should do good in this life; if one wants to be reborn as a deity, one should avoid evil deeds and make merit in this life.

Thai villagers' personal experiences also confirm an
"animistic transformation" of dhamma. Stories of a person returning from the dead prevail in many Thai villages. These are even published in Thai magazines and popular religious books. Such stories reassure Thai Buddhists that the present life is somehow connected an earlier life with the next life after death. The belief in reincarnation, reward and punishment, is based as much, if not more, on popular lore, than on canonical teaching, passed on through stories and village sermons.

According to normative and doctrinal Theravāda Buddhism, the Buddha's dhamma asserts that moral action and its consequence are personal in the sense that they belong exclusively to the doer and are non-transferrable. In popular Buddhism, on the other hand, merit-making is transferrable and sometimes collective, for example, as part of a public ritual or ceremony. Most Thai Buddhists believe that their merit can be transferred to the deceased through the magic power of the dhamma chanted by monks during a ceremony. S. J. Tambiah observed that in village ceremonies in Northeast Thailand the transference of merit to the deceased was performed by the monks, and reflected belief in the supernatural power of the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha. The meritorious power was "activated" as the monks chanted: "As result of the power of the Budhha, the Dhamma, and the Saṅgha, may blessing accrue and may the gods protect those present."
The world of popular Buddhism is full of magical and animistic power. Even the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha are endowed with such supernatural power. The Buddha in popular Buddhism is not only the discoverer and the preacher of the dhamma but also a superhuman-being. When he was alive, he had extraordinary markings and qualities; and, after his death, his relics (mahādhatu) and his consecrated images have a magical power. Similarly, his dhamma also possesses various kinds of supernatural power. The Sangha and its monks represent not only human beings who have renounced the household life in order to seek salvation as ascetics. Holding much more to Buddhist precepts than do the laity and living austere lives, monks are thus regarded by Buddhist laity as superior to normal human beings and as having access to mystical and magical powers. When monks chant the dhamma or utter the sacred words of the Pāli texts, their chanting is held as powerful and effective in fulfilling the goal of the ceremony.

It is worth noting that Thai Buddhists in general never define dhamma as nibbāna and do not see that nibbāna is crucial as their final goal. They neither wish to attain nibbāna nor do they consider it a reward for their meritorious deeds. Rather, they think that nibbāna is too far away to reach; and they prefer being reborn in a more comfortable life, in heaven or in a rich family. Nibbāna is commonly thought to be the exclusive goal of
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monks. Charles Keyes points out that, in popular Buddhism, the ultimate goal of the Buddhists seems to be the rebirth in the realm of Maitreya (Pāli – Metteyya), the future Buddha.\textsuperscript{110} The Tipiṭaka, however, does not emphasize or even suggest that the realm of Maitreya is more desirable than nibbāna or can provide nibbanic happiness. In the Cakkavatti-sīhanāda-suttanta of the Dīgha-nikāya, the story of Maitreya and his role on earth are mentioned very briefly by the Buddha who says that he will come to purify the dhamma and bring it back to its original form, at which time the whole world will be full of happiness and prosperity.\textsuperscript{111} In short, nibbāna is something unaccessible and thus undesirable in popular Buddhism for it is beyond reach and irrelevant to present life.
Dhamma as the Sermon of the Monk

The second meaning of dhamma in popular Buddhism is the sermon, the chanting, the sacred words, and the spells, delivered by monks. The power and the authority of monks, in the eyes of most Buddhists, also lies in the belief that they are the dhammic heirs of the Buddha mentioned in the Tipiṭaka. Monks thus have a duty to proclaim and propagate the dhamma. In Thailand today, the people also understand dhamma through the terms "dhammadūta" (the messenger of dhamma) and "dhammacārika" (the wanderer for dhamma). Many village monks who read the Pāli texts superficially or have no knowledge of their subtle meanings may transmit misconceptions to laity. Some monks teach that building a wat (temple) or donating money to the monastery are the greatest merit. Some preach that giving (dāna) performed in this life will be rewarded with joy and happiness in heaven. That dāna is particularly emphasized in popular Buddhism is probably due to the Vessantara Jātaka (the Tale of Prince Vessantara) in the minor collection of the Sutta-pitaka which portrays the merit of dāna as crucial to the enlightenment of the Buddha. In this Jātaka, Prince Vessantara, the Buddha-to-be, must fulfill his last and greatest meritorious deed, dāna, in order to accomplish the quality of a Buddha. Af-
ter having given away his wife and children to a beggar, he reincarnates as Gotama the Buddha in the following life. Thus, Thai Buddhists consider dāna as crucial and probably the most important among Buddhist practices. They are not so interested in the Buddha's dhamma which emphasizes sīla (the moral discipline), samādhi (the right concentration), and pañña (the wisdom arising from sīla and samādhi). Dāna, or generosity, for these Buddhists, is rather more important than sīla, samādhi, and pañña because it provides the greatest merit; for example, in the case of Prince Vessantara, it helps fulfill the duty of the bodhisatta and enables him to become the Buddha in his following life. In Thailand, the virtue of dāna is celebrated every October with the festival of Thet Mahā Chāt (the Sermon of the Great Life of the Buddha) during which monks recite the life of Prince Vessantara from beginning to end to lay audiences in the preaching halls of the monasteries. Those who listen to the whole recitation are believed to gain great merit and, hence, an appropriate reward. Thai villagers who have faith in the efficacy of the monks' preaching seek a heavenly rebirth instead of trying to eliminate desire in order to end suffering and attain nibbāna.

In popular ritual and ceremony, the Buddha's dhamma is transformed into magical power through chanting. For example, in the ceremony of consecrating water to be
sprinkled on the lay congregation as a blessing, the monks chant the Ratana-sutta, in the Sutta-nipāta as sacred words in order to sacralize the water. The content of the Ratana-sutta is, in fact, praise of the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Saṅgha. Spiro notes that in Burma many passages in the Sutta are used for magical effect in different contexts. For example, the paritta which includes the Ratana-sutta will be chanted as a spell to protect a house from evil spirits and other dangers. The chanting of the paritta in such a case is a magical formula which functions as a spell.  

The paritta is a collection of sutta texts constituted in Sri Lanka as a body of magical chants with special protective powers. These texts epitomize the way in which dhamma on the popular level is effectively transformed into a spell. This tradition goes back to the Khanda paritta in the Kullavagga of the Vinaya-piṭaka in which the Buddha, after being informed that a monk had died of snakebite, teaches that human beings should love and be merciful to all kinds of serpents so that the latter will not harm them. Monks, in other words, as those who study dhamma, have the power to protect and prevent injury. The notion of the power of dhamma is, therefore, transferred to the monk as someone who embodies it himself. This belief yields many consequences. For example, according to the Buddha's dhamma, mettā is sympathy,
friendliness, and amity; but the popular level it is also understood as passionate and sexual love. Monks, then, may be solicited to help a lay person win the love of another. A village monk may make a charm (rag-yom) to coerce someone's love.\textsuperscript{117} The rag-yom consists of two dolls, male and female, bound together with a sacred thread. Here the monk as the embodiment of \textit{dhamma} is invested with the magical power to create romantic love, an understanding of \textit{mettā} directly at odds with the canonical sense of the term. Instead, this practice of rag-yom fits precisely Sir James Frazer's definition of magic:

If we analyze the principles of thought on which magic is based, they will probably be found to resolve themselves into two: first, that like produces like, or that an effect resembles its cause; and, second, that things which have once been in contact with each other continue to act on each other at a distance after the physical contact has been revered.\textsuperscript{118}

In popular Buddhism, one does not live according to the law of nature, but attempts to overcome and transform it through cultic and ceremonial participation. For example, a farmer may not let nature take care of his/her crops but tries, instead, to use a ritual and ceremony in order to force nature to bring the best to his/her field. During a drought season, s/he may set up a ritual in order to have enough rain for his/her field. In this context, \textit{dhamma} is never understood as the moral or natural law by which one ought to live. Here, the meaning of \textit{dhamma} is not based textually in the Tipiṭaka and the commentaries. Its
meaning is derived particularly from the attempt of the villagers to cope with his/her immediate problems.

In summary, dhamma in this context is the Buddha's teaching as interpreted, chanted, and preached by monks in a rural context. The meaning of dhamma is fully manifested especially in rituals and ceremonies in which monks chant Pali stanzas, namely, the paritta, which uneducated, village Buddhists believe have a sacred power. Dhamma according to popular belief differs from the normative, doctrinal dhamma. It focuses on the concepts of the transmigration of the soul, supernatural power, divine interference and assistance in human activities, and the preference of heaven and the paradise on earth to nibbāna. Since most Thais are illiterate, they pay no attention to the more philosophical, soteriological meanings of dhamma in the Pali texts. Thus, they adapt the meaning of the term to suit their way of life. Essentially the meaning of dhamma becomes animistic. This misconception of dhamma in Thai Buddhism is critical for it tends to lead to a form of Buddhist practice reformers, the likes of Vajirañāṇa and Buddhadāsa, find objectionable. They believe that if Thai Buddhists understood the true nature of dhamma, they would follow a path or practice approximating more closely the normative ideal embodied in the doctrine. In the following chapters, I will discuss the distinctive roles of Vajirañāṇa and Buddhadāsa in recovering the meaning of dhamma.
and their influence on Thai Buddhists then and now.
NOTES


   In the *Pāli Text Society's Pāli-English Dictionary* (1979) edited by T. W. Rhys Davids and William Stede, however, *dhamma* is derived from the root *dhr* meaning "hold, support" (p. 335). Mrs. C. A. F. Rhys Davids probably did not use the original *dhr* but rather used *dhar*, in which the root vowel is strengthened in order to be ready for a conjugation, for example, *dhr* > *dhar* > *dhareti* (he holds). Like Mrs. Rhys Davids, A. K. Warder also uses *dhar* to explain the origin of the verb *dhareti*. See further in A. K. Warder, *Introduction to Pāli* (London: The Pāli Text Society, 1974), p. 21.


In other words, the first category or the first phase is the order of act-and-result (kamma-niyama); the second is the inorganic order (utu-niyama); the third is the organic order (pija-niyama); the fourth is the dependent origination (paticcasamuppada), and the fifth is the order of dhamma as norm which is the effort of nature to produce a perfect type (dhamma-niyama).

13 Ibid., pp. 34-35.
14 Ibid., pp. 138-139.
15 Ibid.
16 Ibid., p. 74.
17 Ibid., pp. 68-69.
18 Ibid., p. 235.
20 C. A. F. Rhys Davids, Buddhism, A Study of the Buddhist Norm, p. 36.
21 Ibid., pp. 41-42.
22 Ibid., p. 39.
25 Ibid.
26 Ibid.
27 Ibid., p. 119.
29 Magdalene Geiger and Wilhelm Geiger, Pāli Dhamma, p. 80.
Ibid., p. 88.

31 Majjhima-nikāya.i.191, in ibid., p. 12.


33 Ibid., p. 179.


35 Majjhima-nikāya.i.285-290, ibid., pp. 343-349.


37 Vinaya.viii.26, ibid., pp. 84-85.


39 The Mahāvihāra Order supported by King Devanampiya-Tissa after the arrival of Mahinda was the most important Theravāda Buddhist Order in Anurādhapura, the royal capital of Ceylon from the Third to the Tenth Centuries C. E.


Ibid.

Ibid., p. 485.

Ibid., p. 598.

Ibid.

Ibid., p. 640.

Ibid., p. 223.

Ibid., pp. 602-603.

Ibid., p. 656.

Ibid., p. 610.

Ibid., p. 230.

Ibid., p. 231.

Ibid.

Ibid., pp. 600-601.


Ibid., p. 37.


Ibid., p. 12.

Dhani Nivat, *A History of Buddhism in Siam*, p. 3.


According to the *Jinakālamālipakaranam*, Buddhism entered different parts of Thailand in different times. For example, Buddhism was known in Haripunjaya long before the arrival of Princess Cāmadevī. "It is said that in the
past five clansmen, Vāsudeva, Sukkadanta, Anusissa, Buddhajaṭila and Subrahma, companions of one another, entered the Order in the Dispensation of the Enlightened One, learned the Three Pitakas, and considering the exacting nature of the Vinaya, reverted to the low-life and left the household life (again) to become ascetics (p. 97).

We know that when Camadevi left the city of Lava in the Eleventh Century to rule Haripunjaya, she brought 500 great Elders versed in the Three Pitakas along with her (p. 100). And in ca. 1339, the Elder Sumana who had received an ordination in a Lanka tradition entered Sukhodaya and performed all monastic duties there (p. 117).


Tamnān Phūn-mu'ang Chiangmai [The Legend of Chiangmai] recounted the introduction of Buddhism in Northern Thailand that Phyā Mengrai was the first ruler of Northern Thailand who met the five great monks, followed their instruction, had Buddha images made, and built a Buddhist monastery. Phyā Mengrai knew that Buddhism prospered in Burma and thus wanted to spread the Buddhist doctrine in his kingdom.

The era used in this Tamnān is very complicated. The death of the Buddha was recorded as occurring in the year 148 or 543 B.C.E. It states that Phyā Mengrai met the five monks in the year 648 (p. 20) which could be understood here as in 252 C.E., and that Phyā Mengrai went to Burma, in the year 652 or 256 C.E., to befriend Phyā Angwa in order to bring the Buddhist doctrine to Thailand (p. 24). If we follow the era used in this Tamnān, we will find that the reign of Mengrai is historically misleading since, according to common view of Thai historical records, Mengrai ruled the Northern part of Thailand in ca. Thirteenth Century.


Dhani Nivat, A History of Buddhism in Siam, pp. 30-32.


The Sappurisadhamma is composed of the following principles:
1. Keeping oneself in right faith, moral shame, moral dread, extensive information, right effort, mindfulness, and wisdom
2. Discussing other things that will not harm oneself or others
3. Thinking of things that will not harm oneself or others
4. Doing whatever will not harm oneself or others
5. Having right opinion in the truth: "Good action yields good result, and vice versa,"


Buddhaghosa, The Visuddhimagga, pp. 514-518.


The Buddha's dhamma in popular practice has magical power because here it does not convey the philosophical teaching of the Buddha to the people but helps them overcome their misery and ensnare luck in an unusual manner. According to Malinowski's explanation, "magic is a special type of ritual activities which help man to control change, to eliminate accidents, to foresee an unexpected turn of natural events, and to make human handiwork reliable and adequate to all practical requirements (p. 39)." It is used as "something which over and above man's equipment and his force helps him to master accident and to ensnare luck (p. 39)."


The dhammadūta is a monk in the Phra Dhammadūta Program which is an attempt by the government to draw the people from the alien ideology of communism and encourage the people to use the Buddha's dhamma in their daily life by adhering to the Five Precepts. This program was established in 1964 by the Department of Religious Affairs and works among Thai villagers in many parts of the country. The other program, Phra Dhammacārika Program, was set in 1965 by the Tribal Welfare Division in order to integrate the minorities, especially the hill-tribe people, by means of dhamma. Its aim is to strengthen the link between the Thais and the minorities, and to indoctrinate the tribesmen with loyalty to the nation and strong faith in Buddhism.


The paritta, which means protective charm or spell, is generally used in popular Buddhism and is divided, according to its service, into the khandha paritta (used for protection against all dangerous creatures), morā paritta (used for protecting those in danger of arrest and/or freeing those who have been arrested), the ātānātiya paritta (used to fight against all dangers from evil spirits and supernatural beings), angulimāla paritta (used for eliminating difficulties and danger of childbirth), vattaka paritta (used for protection against fire), bojjhanga sutta (used for protection against illness), pubbanha sutta (used for protection against epidemics especially from an orbit of stars and
planets, maṅgala sutta (used for protection from all dangers and for the fulfilment of one's goal, mettā sutta (used for protection against all evil spirits, and ratana sutta (used for protection against all supernatural dangers. See further in Melford E. Spiro, Buddhism and Society (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), pp. 263-271.

116 Ibid., p. 144.


CHAPTER II

THAI SOCIO-POLITICAL HISTORY
DURING THE TIMES OF VAJIRANĀṆA AND BUDDHDĀSA

Vajirāṇāṇa and Buddhādāsa are two of modern Thailand's most distinguished interpreters of dhamma. Yet the periods and social situations of their work differ significantly and have influenced their understanding and exposition of the concept of dhamma in the Buddhist Scriptures in distinctive ways. In this chapter I shall show how the different periods of Thai socio-political history in which Vajirāṇāṇa and Buddhādāsa have lived have had impact on their life and work. The chapter is divided into two parts: the first deals particularly with the Thai socio-political situation in Vajirāṇāṇa's time and the second part with contemporary Thailand in which Buddhādāsa is still active. On the assumption that society and the individual necessarily interact closely with one another, this chapter should help provide an understanding of the motives and causes for the distinctive interpretations of dhamma.
The reigns of kings Rama V or Chulalongkorn (1868-1910) and Rama VI or Vajiravudh (1910-1925) marked the beginning and most important phase of Thai modernization, in particular the acceptance of Western ideas and technology and the adaptation of Western civilization to Thai culture. The term "modernization" is rather controversial, of course, and conveys different meanings to different scholars. Here, in the case of Thailand in the late Nineteenth Century, the term "modernization" refers to a change in and an improvement of various aspects of society in order to facilitate both individual and social development, for example, the use of a tractor instead of a buffalo to plough fields, and the establishment of public schools so that all people—men, women, noble people, and common people—would have an equal chance to be educated. The introduction of Western culture into Thailand and the Western education of some Thai elites at that time were important factors in Thai modernization. For Norman Jacobs, modernization and Westernization in Thailand are closely connected:

We will use "modernization" to denote the maximization of the potential of the society within the limits set by the goals and the fundamental structure
The stimulus for modernization may be external, or internal, or both. In Asia, when the stimulus has been external and has come from the West, then the stimulus is termed the challenge of westernization.

In the reigns of Rama V and Rama VI, the impact of the West influenced Thai politics and administration. However, westernization was not the only characteristic of Thai modernization. The introduction of a more centralized, bureaucratic system of administration also characterized Thai modernization. According to James L. Peacock and A. Thomas Kirsch, "the more modern a society, the more centralized it is: the more tightly its parts become coordinated with another under some central control." Under Rama V's administration, central control was strengthened by dividing the country into administrative sections. Formerly, the country had been divided into the inner provinces under the authority in the capital, the outer provinces under the responsibility of the appointed provincial lord, and the dependencies under the responsibility of native rulers. In the reign of Rama V, the provincial government system was reformed; and the country was divided into provinces, districts, subdistricts, towns and villages administered by royal officers who received monthly salaries directly from the king. These units were ruled by individuals appointed by the king and were regularly inspected by the king's representatives.

Modernization is also characterized by a bureaucrata-
tic system of administration:

As a society modernizes it becomes increasingly bureaucratized. Bureaucracy proliferates not only in government but also in firms, schools, and other institutions that organize functionally specific offices with well-defined lines of authority.

Bureaucratic reform and reorganization were particularly highlighted during the reign of Rama V. Ministries were established and new administrative functions were introduced. In order to facilitate the administrative procedure and improve the capacity of each office, Rama V established ten Ministries to take care of different types of state work:

1. The Ministry of the Interior was in charge of Northern Thailand and Laos
2. The Ministry of Defense was in charge of Southern and Eastern parts of Thailand, and Malaya
3. The Ministry of Nakorn Barn was in charge of police, military recruitment and penitentiary services
4. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was in charge of foreign affairs
5. The Ministry of Finance was in charge of taxes, public revenue, and public expenditure
6. The Ministry of the Royal Household was in charge of palace affairs
7. The Ministry of Agriculture was in charge of agriculture, forestry, trade, and mining
8. The Ministry of Justice was in charge of all legal
cases, both civil and criminal

9. The Ministry of Public Works was in charge of construction, postal and telegraphic services, railways, roads, and canals

10. The Ministry of Education was in charge of education, schools, and hospitals.

These Ministries worked directly under the king's supervision.  

The process of modernization reflected new values; and new methods were introduced for greater efficiency. For example, with the promulgation of the Slavery Act in 1911, Rama V ended the practice of slavery. Moreover, he issued the Gold Standard Act which fixed the value of the baht (the Thai monetary unit) to gold in order to standardize the Thai currency system for domestic and international exchange and commerce. Further discussion of modernization during the reigns of Rama V and VI will be taken up in the following section.

Causes and Necessities of Modernization

In the Reign of Rama V

In the reign of King Mongkut (1851-1868), Rama V's predecessor, Western civilization and technology began to enter Thailand. For the first time the country was opened to Westernization. Walter F. Vella sees King Mong-
kut's openness to the West in the following terms:

He [Mongkut] was extremely interested in Western inventions and Western learning; he mastered several foreign languages and was a student of Western astronomy; and he was proud of his success in securing a diplomatic "alliance" with Western nations. Mongkut equated his personal achievements with national achievements and therefore undoubtedly considered his reign "Western" and "enlightened" and his nation, like himself, "westernized." 

Though Thailand in the time of Mongkut began to be Westernized, only certain western techniques and methods were borrowed without widely modernizing the country as was to be the case under Rama V and Rama VI. Western techniques and methods adopted in the reign of Mongkut were limited to such practices as employing Europeans in governmental service, in royal education, in royal medical service, and in setting up a government printing press and mint. In the reign of Rama V, Westernization and modernization greatly increased and expanded. The cause and necessity for this issued both from the extreme threat of Western imperialism and from certain social and political pressures within the country.

The Threat of Western Imperialism

During the first half of the Nineteenth Century, Western imperialism had spread throughout Asia. In China, Western power took the form of economic and political imperialism. In the early Nineteenth Century, the British
government tried to have more Chinese ports opened to foreign trade in order to export native products and raw materials from China, and sell their own products such as opium, to the native people. The Chinese government tried to stop the opium trade between the British and the Chinese merchants by confiscating and destroying a large amount of the opium stored in Canton. This action led to the Opium War with Great Britain; and, in 1842, the Chinese government had to submit to the British government and open more ports to British traders. Japan, similarly, was forced to open its ports to the United States in 1853. Since the American request was backed by an imposing fleet of steam warships, Japan could not refuse.

The cases of China and Japan greatly worried Rama V. He was afraid that Thailand would fall into the same situation. During that period, Thailand was a buffer area between the British and French powers in Southeast Asia. The British dominated Burma and Malaya (now Malaysia) to the West and South of Thailand. At the same time, France ruled over Indo-China, north and east of the country. In 1893, France invaded the territory on the left bank of the Mekong River. M. Pavie, the French Minister to Thailand, demanded the withdrawal of Thai troops from the left bank and payment for damage done to French subjects. Rama V's resistance to French imperialism led the French authorities to move warships into the Gulf of Thailand. 10
Consequently, Rama V had to surrender the area on the left bank of the Mekong River and islands in the River to France in order to preserve Thai independence.

Western countries also demanded extraterritorial rights which would allow them to exercise their judicial system over their own people in foreign countries. This extraterritorial right was sought because of Westerners' suspicion of the native legal processes. Rama V realized that the traditional judicial system had many flaws which discredited the whole system in the eyes of Westerners. At that time, all Thai judicial processes were under different administrative authorities which allowed the administrative system to interfere with the principle of justice. Besides, there existed no systematic legal practice because the Thais usually settled their problems unofficially such as by asking one who was respected by both parties to decide the case. Rama V thus formalized the Thai judicial system by establishing the Ministry of Justice to deal with all law-suits. In 1897, he also founded the Law School as a State institution to train lawyers under the supervision of the Ministry of Justice. The improvement of the Thai judicial system, however, was no protection against Western claims for extraterritorial rights. Rama V finally had to cede parts of the country, Battambong, Siem reap, and Sisophon, to France in 1907, and Kelantan, Trengganu, Kedah, and Perlis to Great Bri-
tain in 1909, as an exchange for the withdrawal of the extraterritorial rights of the two countries from Thailand.12

**Internal Problems and the Need of Reformation**

The threat of Western imperialism can be considered as only one—and not the most important—motive for Thai modernization during the reign of Rama V. Domestic problems were also compelling reasons for modernization: the growing need for the reform of government, education, the economy and various aspects of Thai society. According to David K. Wyatt, the internal motives were more important than the external ones:

The course of modernization throughout the reign of King Chulalongkorn, but especially its first decade, was heavily determined by considerations of domestic politics, and only to a lesser degree by foreign pressures and influences.13

There were five especially important domestic considerations that encouraged Rama V to modernize Thailand:

1. The conflict between the king and his regent
2. The clash of administrative policies between modern and traditional officials
3. The inefficiency of the Thai administrative functions themselves
4. The need to elevate the status of the country in order to be accepted by others as a civilized country
5. The policy to preserve the image of the king as the righteous ruler and the patriarchal leader of the people

Each of these merits examination in some detail.

The Conflict between the King and His Regent

Rama V was only fifteen years old when he ascended the throne in 1868. Sri Suriyawong, the Secretary of State for Defence who controlled the armed forces and was the most powerful officer at that time, was appointed regent. Rama V was always in poor health and seemed to be too weak for the task of ruling the country. Sri Suriyawong managed to appoint a "second king," Prince Wichaichan, in order to replace Rama V if he happened to be unable to carry on his task. According to Wyatt, the act of appointing this second king put pressure on Rama V:

Prince Wichaichan's appointment had been forced upon the king, and the regent used him as a counterpoise to the power of the king. Chulalongkorn appears to have viewed Wichaichan's attempts to claim a status equal to that of Phra Pin Klao [the second king during the reign of Mongkut] as a challenge to the power and authority of the absolute monarchy.14

It appears, then, that Rama V had to prove that he was capable and suitable to be the ruler of the country. And he chose to do this by championing modernization.

The Clash of Administrative Policies
Rama V was the first king of Thailand to realize that Western techniques and methods were important to the development of the country. He thus sent his sons and many noblemen to study in Europe. By the late nineteenth century, some princes and noblemen had graduated and returned home. They became leaders and administrators in many Thai governmental offices. They were eager to use their Western knowledge to develop the country. Their administrative policies were totally different from traditional officials. In 1887, a group of western-trained princes and officials submitted a petition to the king concerning immediate problems facing the country, and strongly urged the establishment of a constitutional monarchy. Rama V did not think that it was an appropriate time to replace the ruling system of an absolute monarchy with that of a constitutional monarchy. This issue became the focus of disagreement between those who wanted to change the country according to Western models and those who wanted to retain the old system. Rama V realized that such conflict and dissension among Thai officials could obstruct the progress of the country and weaken the whole nation. He thus appealed to the loyalty of both groups, warning them to work together for the unity and well-being of the entire country:

We should not be misled in adopting the ideas of
those European officials in our administration because their principle of working is totally different from ours. . . . If we allow political parties in our country, there will be only a few members in each party while there are hundreds of conservative officials who do not want to belong to any party. . . . This will lead to disputation and disunity among officials. And it will be difficult to get anything done and accomplish our goal.

Therefore, I think that the attitudes of both the progressive and the conservative are not suitable to our country at this moment. They will destroy our solidarity and obstruct the progress of our country. 16

The conflict of opinion and disunity among his officials pushed the king to change the administrative system in order to reduce the tension between the two parties.

The Inefficiency of Thai Administrative Functions

Before the reign of Rama V, the governmental system was not structured in terms of ministries and departments. It was roughly divided into a few sections such as the territorial departments of the North and the South, with total responsibility for overseeing all services and administrative functions concerning all domestic affairs. Such a general structure resulted in overlap and inefficiency. Rama V thus established different ministries in order to create more specialization and create greater governmental efficiency, for example, the Ministry of the Interior ran the provincial administration and took charge of corvee, and the Ministry of Justice dealt with all legal problems and judicial processes. 17 With this re-
formation of the administrative system, the government could work more efficiently and, thus, provide more benefits and services to the people and the country.

The Need to Elevate the Status of the country

Westerners at the time of Rama V and before generally regarded Thailand as an underdeveloped and uncivilized country. According to Sir John Bowring (1792-1872), the Governor of Hong Kong and Minister to China who came to visit King Mongkut on a diplomatic mission in 1855, Thailand was far behind the western world in many aspects. For example, an accused was proved guilty or innocent through an ordeal instead of a trial in the Court of Justice. In criminal cases, the accuser and the accused were demanded to prove their case by remaining under water for a while, walking barefoot over burning coals, washing their hands in boiling oil, or eating charmed rice. Those who remained longer under the water, walked over burning coals without being burnt, had their hands unharmed in boiling oil, or did not suffer a stomach-ache after having eaten charmed rice, were proved innocent; and those who could not pass the test were proved guilty.

Such practices as noted by Sir John Bowring were regarded obsolete and unjust in the eyes of many westerners during that time. In order to achieve both
its domestic and foreign policy goals, Thailand needed to be regarded as trustworthy and reliable. Rama V, therefore, sought to improve the international image of the country through modernization. The most important single activity in this process was the abolition of slavery.

During the reign of Rama V, there were seven types of slaves in Thailand:

1. Those who sold themselves to creditors in order to pay off their debts or their parents' debts; they would become free whenever they redeemed themselves with money

2. Those who were children born from slave parents in creditors' houses

3. Those who inherited their status from parents

4. Those who were given away as gifts

5. Those who were taken by someone as slaves because they were helped out of difficulties

6. Those who were taken by someone as slaves because they were fed during the time of famine

7. Those who were prisoners of war

The abolition of slavery was not an easy process because it affected the benefits of the masters and the lifestyle of the slaves themselves. The masters wanted the slaves to serve them or help them with their work. The slaves did not know how to support themselves after being freed. Rama V had to manage the plan very carefully. He did not free the slaves at one time but gradually
issued edicts by which slavery would be abolished. In 1874, eleven years after Lincoln's proclamation of the abolition of slavery in U.S.A., Rama V promulgated the Act for Determination of Values of Slaves' Children which gradually reduced the price of slaves as they grew up until at the age of 21, a slave's price was eliminated and s/he could be free. And the older the slave was, the less price s/he had and the easier it was to pay it off in order to redeem him/herself. In 1895, Rama V issued an Act on Slavery in order to abolish the second type of slavery, slaves born from slave parents in creditors' houses. Through this Act, people were also forbidden to sell or buy slaves. And finally, in 1911, Rama V promulgated The Slavery Act of the Ratanakosin Era #130 which ended slavery entirely in the country. David M. Engel notes that the abolition of slavery in the reign of Rama V was crucial for the status of the country:

It is likely that he [Rama V] was sensitive in this regard to the image of Thailand in the eyes of the western countries. If the custom of slavery in Thailand was regarded by them as backward or as a symbol of the injustice of Thailand's laws, then it was essential for purposes of national self-protection that the custom be abandoned no matter how well-entrenched it had become.

The next step taken by Rama V to raise the status of the country was to reorganize and reform the court system. In order to organize all legal activities handled by various departments and ministries, it was necessary to
establish a ministry that would be solely responsible for court administration and judicial processes. Rama V thus created the Ministry of Justice in 1892 in order to consolidate various departmental courts into one ministry. By 1903, most provinces around the country were brought under the central control of the Ministry of Justice in Bangkok. The reform of the judicial system was an effort not only to centralize the legal system but in doing so to challenge the Western insistence on extra-territorial rights.

The Preservation of Kingship

The model of a Thai king in the monarchic system is that of a patriarchal and righteous ruler of his people. This model is derived from the example of Ramkhamhaeng (1279-1298), a great king of Sukhodaya Kingdom. David K. Wyatt describes the ideal relationship between the king and his people as follows:

Ramkhamhaeng paints a picture of an idyllic kingdom free of constraints, presided over by a just, benevolent, and thoroughly accessible monarch beloved by his people. He is generally referred to as "Lord Father [Thai: Po Khun]," and the social relationships described in the inscription invariably connote a familial style. Through the passage quoted, and elsewhere in the inscription, there is an implicit contrast drawn between the king's apparent paternal benevolence and accessibility and the opposite qualities—rigid social hierarchy, arbitrary administration of justice, heavy taxation, and so on—of some other unspecified rule,
presumably the style of Angkor [the first capital of the Khmer Empire established by Yasovarman I (889-900)].

As such, the king should accomplish his duty (dhamma) as follows:

1. He should provide food and clothing for his people
2. He should enact laws that guarantee the welfare of his people
3. He should establish laws that provide justice for his people
4. He should protect his people through military power.

Rama V tried to fulfill those traditional monarchial duties and responsibilities through such reforms as the abolition of slavery to establish social equality and greater justice for all citizens, and the reorganization and reform of government administrative procedures. He believed that the king, as the symbolic center of the country, was necessary to provide a common bond of unity. Without the king the process of modernization might be impossible because the people would have no one to follow and depend on, resulting in disunity and the destruction of the country in the face of change and reformation. He commented on the crucial role of the king as follows:

The Thai people once united in thought because they followed the policy of the king. Everyone agreed that the king's opinion was right. And thus matters
could be settled easily. They followed the example of the king for generations. The judgments of all the monarchs in this dynasty were righteous. They were deeply merciful towards their subjects. Thus, all the subjects were pleased with them and willingly followed them.

According to Rama V, the king is the center and the pillar of the nation. He is the only one who can initiate and carry out the plans for the entire country. Indeed it would appear that the success of Rama V's program of modernization validated his vision of the role of the monarch in Thai society.

The Forms of Thai Modernization
During the Reign of Rama V

In the previous section, we traced the meaning and the causes of Thai modernization during the reign of Rama V. In the areas of Buddhism and education, Vajirañāṇa was the major instrument of the king. Because Vajirañāṇa's teaching will be analyzed in detail in the following chapter, I will limit the scope of the presentation here to the forms of modernization in which Vajirañāṇa participated. In the light of Vajirañāṇa's work and writings during the reign of Rama V, one can conclude that his participation in the modernization process was limited to the realms of religion and education. In this section, we will consider his work of (a) monastic
organization and reform, and of (b) the establishment of a monastic and public educational system and Buddhist academies of higher learning.

Vajirāṇāṇa's Monastic Reforms

A formal monastic organization has existed in Thailand since the Sukhodaya Kingdom nearly 800 years ago. In the reign of King Mongkut (Rama IV), the monastic order was divided into four khana (sections): southern, northern, central, and Dhammayutika. The king appointed monks who held ecclesiastical ranks as the head of each khana. The monastic organization and administration reflected a close relationship between the king and the monastic Order; for example, all monks with ecclesiastical ranks receive an honorarium from the Royal Treasury and an allotment of rice from the Department of Lands (krom nā).

Before the monastic reform by King Chulalongkorn (Rama V), the conduct of many monks had become quite corrupt, for example, some earned a living as merchants, some trespassed on people's land in order to work in the fields, and some enjoyed gambling. Such conduct undermined the people's faith in Buddhism, since Thai Buddhists considered monks as the dhammic heirs of the Buddha and a sacred component of the Triple Gem in Buddhism. In
addition, Buddhist monasticism at that time lacked its own administrative center. The Order depended primarily on the state which loosely administered and regulated monastic matters. Vajirañāṇa, who was then the abbot at Wat Bovornives, saw that the situation called for reform. With Rama V's support and patronage, he undertook a major monastic reorganization. In general, Vajirañāṇa and the king saw the monastic order not as an exclusive, isolated community, but one that functioned with both religious and social obligations to the lay community. Monks should be well-disciplined and well-trained in the knowledge of Buddhism not simply for themselves, but so that they could preach the doctrine to lay people. In Vajirañāṇa's view, the Order needed to be regulated, organized, and educated for internal reasons, to be sure, but also in order to function as a proper instrument of state policy, and to serve the lay community properly. In other words, according to Vajiranana, Rama V's and Rama VI's plans to develop and modernize the country would be carried out more easily if they were supported by the Saṅgha whose members were related closely to and were able to influence lay people.

In order to establish a self-administering Saṅgha (monastic order), Vajirañāṇa created a comprehensive ecclesiastical system. He classified Thai monasteries into two types: wat thae (permanent residential tem-
ple) and *wat phamnak* (temporary residential temple). A *wat thae* was a temple in which a monk received the ordination and stayed during his monkhood while *wat phamnak* was a temple in which an itinerant monk could pass the night or stay temporarily during his travels. Each was ruled by the head of the monastery elected by the *chao khana* (head of a monastic division). The administration of these monasteries was run under a hierarchical order. The abbot took care of his monastery under the supervision and inspection of the *chao khana* who worked for the Supreme Patriarch, the head of the entire Sangha. The head of a monastery or of a particular monastic division was responsible for all legal processes (*adhikaranā*) in his compound.32 All monks were regulated in this hierarchical system. They were under the direct monastic administration of an abbot (head of a monastery) who, in turn, was under the head of a monastic division. Vajirañāṇa also prescribed a common set of monastic rules and disciplines, for example, the monastic rules concerning the admission of those who sought ordination and the style of wearing monastic robes. These prescriptions were intended to regulate the monks' conduct and to promote monastic self-administration.

In order to strengthen the provincial monkhood by means of a law that would establish a uniform hierarchy and formalize the relations between the state and the
Sangha, Rama V issued the Sangha Law of 1902 which outlined explicitly the duties of abbots and members of the provincial hierarchy. Under this Law, the center of monastic administration in Bangkok could project and enforce a model for Buddhist practice throughout the country. Craig J. Reynolds notes that "in this way the civil and ecclesiastical officials in Chulalongkorn's reign reinforced and restated the relationship between the king's domain and the Buddha's domain." In other words, the king worked closely with Vajiranana in order to help develop and administer the Sangha such as regulating the payments for titled monks; while Vajiranāṇa, as the Head of the Saṅgha, propagated the moral policy of the king among Thai Buddhists.

Monastic and Public Education

In the early 1890's, Vajiranāṇa began to plan a monastic educational system. His aim was to equip a monk with the knowledge of Pali so that he could master the Tipiṭaka and would be able to rise to higher monastic rank. If he returned to secular life, such a person would have an advantage in entering governmental service. The Pāli knowledge of a monk was tested by an examination on Buddhist texts such as Buddhaghosa's commentaries, the Atthakathā-Dhammapada, and Visuddhimagga. In order to
train a monk to pass the Pali examinations, Vajirañāṇa planned a curriculum and created textbooks. With his encouragement, Rama V established two Buddhist academies so that all monks and novices could study Pāli and Buddhist scriptures. The first such institution for Pāli education was the Mahāmakuṭa Royal Academy established in 1893 at Wat Bovornives.

The establishment of the academies was intended to improve public education as well as the monastic education of Dhammayutika monks. Public education was served by two programs according to its goals: in Bangkok, it was to produce advanced students who could continue studies abroad and return to work for the state; and provincial education was designed to provide elementary knowledge to students outside Bangkok. These provincial students were taught in local monasteries by monks who were graduates of the Buddhist academy in Bangkok. Education in Bangkok was managed by the Ministry of Education, and education in the provinces by the Ministry of the Interior.

As most Thais were Buddhists, Rama V sought also to cultivate their moral conduct by emphasizing the Buddha's teachings in his educational programs. He suggested that textbooks for lay education should simplify the moral teaching and present it from the elementary to the advanced level. In order to make the Buđdha's
teaching accessible to lay people unaccustomed to the language of the Buddhist texts, Rama V asked Vajiranana and his staff to write a series of sermons and send them to the provinces to be used by provincial monks in their preaching to lay audiences on Buddhist holy days.\textsuperscript{36} In order to facilitate lay education, Vajirañāṇa wrote many texts on secular and religious knowledge, for instance, \textit{Pañcasīla Pañcadhamma} (Five Precepts and Five Ennobles), \textit{Manuṣya-vidyā} (Science of Being Human), \textit{Buddha Prawat} (Story of the Buddha's life), and the \textit{Navakovāḍa} (Teachings for Novices). These books are primarily excerpts from the \textit{Tipiṭaka} and Buddhaghosa's commentaries.

Through the creation of new textbooks and the instruction of monks, lay people had a chance to be educated. Rama V chose Wat Bovornives as the major academic institution because it was centrally located and was a former residence of King Mongkut.\textsuperscript{37} The decision to centralize Buddhist education at Wat Bovornives, however, caused some problems since it was a Dhammayutika monastery, not the Mahānikāya. Vajirañāṇa realized that the establishment of only one Buddhist academy at Wat Bovornives was not sufficient to fulfill the development of Buddhist education in Thailand because Dhammayutika monks were disinclined to travel to another monastery for their studies. Vajirañāṇa, therefore, wanted to establish more centers of Buddhist education in other monasteries.
Rama V, himself, was also aware of the poor record of education of Mahānikāya monks. Consequently, in 1896, he established Mahachulalongkorn Royal Academy at Wat Mahādhatu, the major Mahānikāya monastery in Bangkok.

Rama V's educational reform was an aspect of Thai modernization in the sense that it rejected the traditional idea that education was restricted only to the nobility and the rich, and that common people had no need to be literate. In addition, from the beginning of public education, women also had an opportunity to study for the first time, and thus the traditional belief that education was for men only was replaced by the modern concept that education was for all.
The Nature of Modernization

During the Reign of Rama VI

The process of modernization did not end with the reign of Rama V but continued to flourish during the reign of Rama VI or King Vajiravudh, his son. The reign of Rama VI was characterized by the attempt to continue the efforts of modernization from the previous reign, but at the same time preserve the traditional values of Thai culture. Walter F. Vella commented on the dual aspects of modernization in the reign of Rama VI as follows:

Chulalongkorn seemed only partially to realize that too great a reliance on Western ideas might have adverse effects on the faith of the Thai in their cultural values. Wachirawut [Vajiravudh] was more keenly aware of this problem. He pointed out that European institutions had been created by Europeans for Europeans and declared that it was absurd for the Thai to adopt blindly all European institutions, manners, and customs.

Rama VI attempted to synthesize tradition and change in the crucible of nationalism. Thus, in assessing the reign of King Vajiravudh, we must examine first the way in which modernization tendencies begun during the time of his predecessor were continued, and, second, the attempt to unite the country through the concept of nationalism.
Like Rama V, Rama VI saw that it was necessary for Thailand to adopt some aspects of Western civilization. He, thus, reformed the country according to Western models. His reforms, which still affect the Thai way of life today can be described as a social, political, and educational reforms. For example, in 1913, he introduced the use of a surname in order to stimulate family pride and unity; in 1916, he established the first university of Thailand, Chulalongkorn University; and in 1917, he introduced the use of the national flag, the trai-rong (three-colored), which reflected the unity of the nation, the religion, and the monarchy.

These social reforms, which followed western patterns, were intended both to change the westerners' image of the country and to strengthen the unity of the Thai people. The image of the country had been damaged by the practice of polygamy before Rama VI's reign:

Polygamy had been one Thai practice that had consistently aroused Western antipathy. And Siamese kings, starting with Vajiravudh's grandfather [King Mongkut], had been on the defensive about the practice. Vajiravudh, at once more familiar with Western notions of propriety and more anxious than any of his predecessors to excise customs that Westerners regarded as barbaric or uncivilized, spake out frequently against their multiple marriages.

Rama VI himself gave up the practice of polygamy,
eliminating the royal harem and entering a monogamous marriage near the end of his life. And in order to cultivate a monogamous system in Thai marriage, in 1913, he issued a law requiring Thais to have surnames, that the surname would be the permanent family name which would be handed down in the male line, and that a married woman must bear her husband's surname. In connection with the introduction of a surname, marriage became a legal matter that needed registration.

In order to develop the education of the people, Rama VI replaced the Thai tradition of building temples for merit with the building of schools for the education of the people. He explained his reform as follows:

I am certain that this meritorious act will yield better results than the building of a temple for a shelter of sham monks who don yellow robes in order to escape their obligations. . . . If anyone wishes to make merit, achieve beneficial ends, and please his Majesty, let him build schools. To build new temples is not to my liking.

To encourage the significance of education, Rama VI established a new private school in 1911, the Royal Pages College. This school followed the model of an English public school which was a boarding school with live-in teachers. And in 1921, with the assistance of a brilliant Western-trained official, Chaophraya Thammasakmontri, he promulgated an act of compulsory education for all boys and girls from the age of seven to fourteen.

Rama VI's contribution to Thai education and the
family system continued Rama V's policies of modernization. He believed that the adoption of Western ways should, however, respect Thai cultural values. By adopting Western attitudes, methods and worldview, he believed that the Thais would lose their own identity and national pride. On the other hand, by preserving Thai values exclusively, he thought that the country would lose its opportunity to be developed technologically, and to keep up with its progressive neighbors. He attempted to reconcile both dimensions through the concept of nationalism.

The Rise of Thailand through Nationalism

For Rama VI, "nationalism" was the principal means to make modernization effective and useful for the Thais and to raise the country's status in the estimation of westerners. To understand Rama VI's meaning of "nationalism," one should know what he meant by the "nation":

The term jāti [chāt - in Thai, or "nation" --in English] literally means family line or caste. For example, the jāti of the brahmans is the family line of those priests who have succeeded one another for generations; the jāti of kings is the family line of those successive warriors. Jāti can be literally translated as "race." The brahman race is the race of those who were born brahmans. The warrior race is the race of those who were born warriors. Later, we Thai used the term "jāti" to call a group of people who live together. This new usage of the term is not wrong because the people of the Thai jāti are those who were born Thai or in the group of people who call themselves Thai.
Rama VI argued that the relationship of a man to his nation (jāti) was as profound and undeniable as that to his family; a man could exist only within his nation. From this perspective, then, a "nationalist" is bound to love his countrymen as his brothers. According to Rama VI, the characteristics of a nationalist are pride in one's nation, the adoration of one's nation, and the devotion to one's nation.\(^4\)

The love of one's fellow nationals should be so profound that one is willing to sacrifice one's own life for them. Such a nationalistic spirit was manifested, in particular, by an organization founded by the King, the Wild Tigers (sīa-pā):

The characteristics of wild tigers are: a preference for roaming in the forest and in the wood; a good sense of direction and observation of place; knowledge of the direction of the sun, the wind, footprints, and so on; and, the wisdom to take care of themselves. They must be strong, patient, courageous, and brave. They must scarcely think of themselves. If it is necessary, they will sacrifice their lives in order to save their fellow nationals, their king, their nation, and their religion.\(^4\)

The Wild Tigers was a special volunteer force on the order of a national guard established by Rama VI in 1911. The duties of the Wild Tigers included performing humanitarian deeds such as fighting crimes and fires, but, above all, protecting the king, the nation, and the religion.

The Wild Tigers took the following vow:

First, the Wild Tigers will be loyal to the king. Secondly, the Wild Tigers will fight against enemies who intrude into the country and against those who incite civil war in order to preserve the nation and the
Buddhist religion. Thirdly, the Wild Tigers will obey their leader, and will not cause disruption to their company.

The Wild Tigers were trained to regard the king as the only righteous holder of the national power and Buddhism as the only true religion of the Thais. Rama VI believed that with the king as the center of national power and Buddhism as the center of the Thai spirit and morality, the people would be united and take pride in their nation. In order to use Buddhism to shape nationalistic development, Rama VI gave a special interpretation of Buddhist doctrine. He argued that the Buddha's teachings supported armed defense of the country. For example, killing an enemy in order to protect one's country was not a sin:

Those who boast of their knowledge of Buddhism always say that a Buddhist precept obviously forbids killing; and thus Buddhism must obstruct the duty of a soldier. Those who speak in this way do not really know the Buddha's doctrine. The Buddha never blamed or discouraged the soldier. If he meant to prohibit warfare, he would not have encouraged soldiers to remain soldiers instead of ordaining as monks. It is obvious that the Buddha saw the necessity of having soldiers protect the country and his religion. If the kingdom is harmed or destroyed, Buddhism can no longer exist.

In the reign of Rama VI, the role of Buddhism was changed from a religion of salvation to a religion of the good citizen and supporter of the nation. The changing role of Buddhism was illustrated in Rama VI's plays, speeches, essays, and poems. For him, a true Thai was a
good Buddhist and a nationalist. He asserted that the Buddha supported love toward the king who held the power of the whole community, the love of the nation, and the love of the religion which was the foundation of all virtues. Rama VI believed that the cultivation of nationalism would bring about pride in the nation, stimulate the qualities of good citizenship, and help elevate the status of the country in the eyes of others.

Rama VI's administration and modernization of Thailand, however, led to the country's economic crisis. The king had spent much of the royal and state budgets to promote his administrative policies:

The Privy Purse and Ministry of the Palace were consuming nearly 10 percent of the annual budget. The segment of the wild Tiger Corps directly under the king accounted for 1.6 million baht alone in 1924-25, out of a total royal budget of 9 million baht (the real expenditures probably were in excess 12 million baht) and a state budget of 96.4 million baht. Numerous attempts were made to curb the financial chaos--financial commissions, like that of 1912, were twice appointed to recommend economics, for example--but none had much success. The economic failing of the reign, it would appear, were twofold: royal profligacy and the inability of the king to establish and maintain effective procedures to control public expenditures. The day of financial reckoning might be postponed, but not for much longer.

More was involved, of course, than official balance sheets. The distribution of the state expenditures had everything to do with the efforts government was making to develop the country. For all its stress on education as the prerequisite to economic and political development, only slightly more than 3 percent of the budget was devoted to that purpose in 1924-25, while 23 percent was going to military expenditures and more than 10 percent to royal expenditures.
The economic problems of Rama VI produced a serious financial deficit for his successor.

The Procedure of Modernization
During the Reign of Rama VI

In the reign of Rama VI, Vajirañāṇa was one of the most important figures in helping the king promote nationalistic sentiment among Thai Buddhists through his interpretation of the Buddha's teachings. In this section, we will focus on Vajirañāṇa's attempts to cultivate a nationalist spirit among the Thai and his efforts to organize the Saṅgha.

The Cultivation of Thai Nationalism

Like Rama VI, Vajirañāṇa believed that it was necessary for the Thai to be aware of the external and internal enemies of the country which endangered king, nation, and Buddhism. He expressed this concern in his writings and sermons. His interpretation of Buddhist doctrine in order to use it as a means to cultivate a nationalistic spirit pleased the king. He taught that the Buddha's teachings promote community:

In order to enjoy happiness and prosperity, people who live together in any community must each live
in righteousness. The dhamma naturally protects the community, allowing it to exist in peace, happiness, and security. All wise men who have been religious teachers have therefore always taught men to do right.\textsuperscript{52}

He also referred to the Buddha's insistence on a standard of righteousness for all citizens\textsuperscript{53}, and he declared that all Thais had the duty to preserve "the Right" and sacrifice everything for its sake:

> When Right (dhamma) is in question, Wealth, even Life itself, all must be sacrificed should the occasion so demand it.\textsuperscript{54} Any other policy is thereby practically forbidden.

This high regard for a normative "Right" leads to nationalism because anything which is against righteousness is interpreted as being destructive to the nation and, thus, must be destroyed. He also asserted that it was the righteous duty of the Thai to defend their country:

> The Defence against external foes is one of the policies of governance, and is one that cannot be neglected. War must be prepared for, even in time of peace, otherwise one would not be in time and one would be in a disadvantageous position towards one's foes.\textsuperscript{85}

This position supported the nationalistic policy of Rama VI who had argued that the first Buddhist precept did not prevent taking life in order to protect one's country; rather, it only forbade killing with bad intention or with selfishness such as killing for one's own benefits or with ill-will.

\textit{The Development of Monastic}
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The Development of Monastic
Administration and Regulation

In Vajiraṇāṇa's hands, the cultivation of a nationalistic spirit became a means to strengthen the lay community. The Saṅgha, however, was strengthened by the development of a national system of administration and regulation. Vajiraṇāṇa thus continued his work on monastic reform begun during the reign of Rama V. Rama V had established a system of monastic ranks in which administrative positions were correlated with academic positions. The higher Pāli degree a monk had, the higher monastic rank he could obtain. The Pāli examination was used for appointing a monk to a higher position and for selecting ecclesiastical administrators:

A scholar was ideally expected to return for testing until he passed the highest grade (prayok 9) or was made phra rāchākhana, an ecclesiastical honorific sometimes compared to "bishop." With royal favor, rāchākhana status was possible any time after passing parian [an accredited Pāli scholarship] grade 5. Such "monks of the royal khana [chapter of monks]" were installed as abbots of royal monasteries and held high-level positions as administrators of the Saṅgha. Not unexpectedly, the system was sometimes purposefully manipulated, with monks engaging in study simply in the hope of gaining desirable positions.

During the reign of Rama VI, Vajiraṇāṇa improved the monastic system of promoting monks to a higher ecclesiastical position. With this new system, a monk who had a Pāli degree without an ecclesiastical rank and a monk who had an ecclesiastical rank without a Pāli degree could be
supported and promoted equally by the State. Thus, a titled monk (phra khanācharn ek) who held the First Class Pāli degree and worked in the Academic Office such as teaching Pali and composing Buddhist texts and the Head of the Ecclesiastical District (chao khana monthon) in the Administrative Office were equal in ecclesiastical rank and received the same amount of monthly support of 22 baht (about one U. S. dollar) from the king. In 1913, Vajirañāṇa set forth the rules for the selection and duties of monastic preceptors. He also engaged in inspection tours to strengthen the relationship between the provincial monasteries and the monastic center in Bangkok.
Vajiranana's contributions to Thai Buddhism basically followed the policies of Kings Rama V and Rama VI and can be roughly classified into institutional development and spiritual cultivation. His influence on institutional development during Rama V's reign is summarized in his impact on monastic organization and regulation and on monastic construction and renovation.

Vajiranana's work on monastic organization and regulation can be differentiated into the introduction of systems of self-administrative and self-governance in the Sangha and the regulation of monastic discipline and education. Worth mentioning here as examples of the former are the following:

1. His appointment of a group of monastic administrators to take care of valuable monastic properties and buildings

2. His regulations on residential registration; that is, all tenants, monks, novices, and lay attendants who lived in a monastic compound should be registered

3. His restructuring of the Sangha into the northern, southern, central, and the Dhammayutika divisions

Vajiranana's efforts to improve the monastic dis-
cipline and education during the reign of Rama V included, for example, his encouragement of the study of monastic discipline, the regular practice of chanting, and Pali study and examination. The development of monastic education was evidenced particularly in the establishment of the two monastic academies: the Mahāmākūṭa and Mahachulalongkorn Royal Academies.

Apart from his work concerning monastic organization and regulation, Vajirāṇāṇa also undertook the task of monastic construction and renovation. For example, at Wat Bovornives he directed the excavation of a canal and repair of a dam, ordered construction of individual dwellings (kuti), and the construction of an artesian well and water pumper.

Vajirāṇāṇa paid attention not only to institutional development but also to spiritual cultivation. During the reign of Rama V, he wrote several articles and composed many books to cultivate public morality and to educate monks, for example, the Navakovāda and Kamma-kilesa-kathā. Moreover, his many sermons were intended to lead monks and lay people to conduct themselves according to Buddhist norms interpreted in terms of monarchy and nationalism.

Vajirāṇāṇa's work, both in institutional development and spiritual cultivation, was more and progressive. His endeavor to develop the Buddhist Sangha and to cultivate Buddhist morality was reflected in his re-organization of
the monastic administration and his development of Buddhist education. In his restructuring of the monastic administration, he improved the ecclesiastical system used in selecting and appointing monks to a higher ranks. In his development of Buddhist education and moral cultivation, he helped Rama VI promote the concepts of nationality and nationalism among Thai people, expanded Buddhist moral education to many more provinces, and included the study of ethics in the Pāli examinations for monks.

Vajirañāṇa's contributions to Thai Buddhism during the reigns of Rama V and Rama VI helped create an ethos of public spirit and national unity. This aspect of Vajirañāṇa's thought was very much a part of his exposition of "dhamma" which will be discussed in detail in Chapter III.
Unlike Vajirañāṇa, Buddhaddāsa has lived and worked in Thailand during a time of constitutional monarchy, when the role of the king has been tempered by a parliamentary government and threatened by military power; a time in which Thailand has struggled to formulate a socio-political ideology. Born in 1906 in a middle-class family of Southern Thailand and ordained in 1925, Buddhaddāsa has witnessed various crises in contemporary Thai history, such as the revolution of 1932 in which the absolute monarchy was superseded by a qualified democracy and a constitutional monarchy, and the introduction of a socialist movement and ideology which has challenged traditional national institutions including both Buddhism and the monarchy. These events profoundly influenced Buddhaddāsa's thought.

In the following, I shall explore the Thai socio-political situation since the revolution of 1932 and its effect on Buddhaddāsa's work. This section will be divided into four parts. The first three cover the periods when the country was ruled by a military government and challenged by a socialist ideology which led to a political crisis and a militant movement in Buddhism. Here, the focus will be on the ways Buddhaddāsa reacted to this situation. The fourth and the last part will summarize Buddhaddāsa's con-
tributions to contemporary Thai Buddhism.

The Military Government
And the Anti-Communist Policy

A significant change in Thai politics after the reign of Vajiravudh (1910-1925) has been the altered role of the king and his declining power as a consequence of a growing military, and the introduction of a constitutional form of Thai democracy. The challenge to the absolute monarchy came about largely as a consequence of western education among the Thai elites. During Prajatipok's or Rama VII's reign (1925-1935), western-educated Thai elites who had been sent to continue their studies abroad began to return home after graduation from Europe and America. As they assumed positions in the Thai governmental bureaucracy, they began to challenge traditional Thai notions of kingship on the basis of Western democratic theory.

The traditional concept of Thai kingship was closely related to a hierarchical conception of cosmic and social order, especially as developed in the ancient religious text, Traiphüm Phra Ruang (Three Worlds according to King Ruang), compiled by King Lithai of Sukhodaya in 1345. In this text, the status and position of all beings are classified according to their merit, the denizens of hell with the least merit, then animals, human beings, and,
finally, deities. Among human beings, the king is believed to have the most merit, thereby making him the ruler of his kingdom.

However, the Traiphüm's cosmology lost credibility in the face of the challenges of scientific knowledge introduced by western education:

No longer was it [the Traiphüm] an unquestioned instrument for communicating Buddhist values and Buddhist culture. The explanations in the Traiphüm for natural phenomena—planetary movements, weather, biological processes—were shaken by explanations offered by Western Science.

According to that scientific view, for example, the earth is not the center of the universe, and rain does not fall because a great serpent thrashes its tail as the Traiphüm has it. Hence, the king also may not be an invincible human being of the greatest merit as the Traiphüm insists. In response to this challenge of Western scientific thought, Rama VI attempted to demythologize the traditional Thai conception of kingship while retaining its centrality for Thai personal identity and nationhood. This effort can be illustrated by the Thai flag designed during Rama VI's reign. In 1917, Rama VI first introduced the Thai flag of three colors, the trai-rong, as the national flag replacing one depicting a white elephant (the Thai symbol of the absolute monarch) on a red background. The trai-rong flag has five stripes of red, white, and blue. The blue-colored stripe is the widest,
occupying the central third of the total area and signifying the monarchy. The white stripe symbolizes Buddhism and the red stripe the Thai nation. As the blue-colored stripe is the widest and across the center of the flag, it points to the king as the most important pillar of the entire nation.

After the death of Rama VI, the country faced critical economic problems. In David K. Wyatt's words, "the finances of the state were in chaos, the budget heavily in deficit, and the royal accounts an accountant's nightmare of debts and questionable transactions." These problems were caused by over-expenditures in the reign of Rama VI as mentioned earlier. Rama VII could not solve this problem satisfactorily. Besides, the Western-trained intellectuals in his reign began to question the administrative ability of the king. With a free press, these intellectuals gained more public support. A group of Thai elites and administrators who had western education then demanded a constitution in order to reorganize and systematize the administrative functions of the country. They carried out this plan through a coup d'etat in 1932 which ended 150 years of absolute monarchical rule. Following the overthrow of the absolute monarchy, Thailand has modernized in many aspects, but recent Thai governments have basically upheld a qualified democratic government effectively controlled by the military,
and unified symbolically by the king. We shall examine this period of recent Thai political history during the rule of Phibun (1938-1944 and 1948-1957) and Sarit (1957-1963) which provides the context for Buddhadasa's early development.

**Thailand under Premiers Phibun and Sarit**

Marshal Phibunsongkhram or Phibun was the Premier of Thailand from 1938 to 1944 and again from 1948 to 1957. His primary concern was to diminish the power of the king, to cultivate Thai nationalism, and to modernize the country. From 1932 to the first regime of Phibun, the Prime Minster and the king were not on good terms with one another. Phibun considered the monarchy unnecessary, economically wasteful, and obstructive to national development. In order to secure his power against such political threats as the Bovaradej royalist rebellion of June 1933, and to reduce the economic waste associated with court entertainment and royal cadres like the the Wild Tigers, he formed a bureaucratic government establishing himself as the political leader (phūnam, literally, political savior) of the nation. He "became the guardian of the national will whose decisions were to be unquestionably followed and obeyed by the grateful public." Under this political system, peasants were no longer subjects who had
to live and work for the king. They became citizens of the state with constitutional rights and privileges.⁶⁶

Another attempt by Phibun to reduce monarchical power was the promotion of democracy. This can be seen in his promulgation of the Sangha Act of 1941 which allowed the Sangha to have its own internal administrative and judicial functions instead of depending directly on royal policies or state administration as typical of the reigns of Rama V and Rama VI. Nevertheless, the Sangha was subject to state politics because "the appointments made by the Supreme Patriarch had to be countersigned by the Minister of Education, and the Secretariat that implemented Sangha policy and decisions was a department of the Ministry of Education."⁶⁷

Throughout his first period of premiership (1938-1944), Phibun's role as the phūnam had been challenged by Pridi, one of the two Regents at that time. While Phibun accepted the Japanese presence in Thailand in 1941, the liberal Pridi supported the Allies and formed the illegal Seri Thai movement against the Japanese army. The sign which indicated Phibun's loss of popularity among Members of Parliament, after his welcome of the Japanese's landing in Thailand, was the Parliament's refusal to pass a government bill intended to move the capital from Bangkok to Petchabun.⁶⁸ Phibun thus resigned on July 26, 1944. Considering Pridi as an able democratic leader who would
be acceptable to the Allies and restore the status of the country, the Parliament appointed him as sole Regent of the country and chose Khuang Aphaiwong, the Deputy Speaker of Parliament who was acceptable to Pridi and Phibun, as the leader of the government.

In 1945, the Japanese submitted to the Allies. Khuang resigned because his close relationship with Japan made him suspect by those who supported the Allies. His resignation gave an opportunity to other politicians to lead the government and negotiate with the Allies. The most suitable person to carry out such a responsibility was Seni Pramoj who was then the ambassador to Washington and an organizer of the Seri Thai movement. With Pridi's support, Seni became the Prime Minister in 1945.

The turning point of Pridi's political power was marked by King Ananda's return to Bangkok from Switzerland in December 1945. With the king's attainment of the age of 21 and a legal maturity, the role of the Regent was thus ended. Pridi was honored with the title of Elder Statesman by the Parliament. His duty at this time was to give national and political advice to the king and the Parliament. Seni's government which Pridi supported did not last long. After successfully negotiating with the Allies, with the result that Thailand joined the winning side and the country's name was restored to respectability after the damage caused by Phibun's acceptance of the
Japanese landing, Seni resigned in 1946 to let Pridi become Prime Minister in response to popular demand. Pridi inaugurated the constitution of 1946 which paved the way for the national election and the democratic system of the government. However, he did not remain in office long. After King Ananda's murder in June 1946, his popularity declined and he was forced to resign from office. The Thai government during this time was unstable and weak. The last civilian leader of the government was Khuang who was overthrown in 1948 by the Khana Ratthaprahan, a military group that demanded the return of Phibun and the military government.

When Phibun returned to power in 1948, he renewed his efforts to modernize and westernize the country. In particular, in 1952 he elevated the National Council of Culture which he had founded in 1942 to the Ministry of Culture, and appointed himself its first minister. Through the Ministry of Culture, Phibun attempted to modernize the country by enforcing a European way of life in Thai society. He believed that "in order for the country to be modernized, the people must look modern and civilized. Thus he [Phibun] urged people to dress like Europeans, prohibited the chewing of betel, encouraged the use of business cards, and suggested that husbands kiss their wives before going off to work."70

Phibun's economic and political programs were nar-
rowly nationalistic. He was quite aware of the growth of the economic power of Thailand's Chinese minority. He tried to encourage Thais to enter business and trade in order to challenge the economic power of the Chinese. Phibun's fear of the Chinese was linked to his concern about their connection with their communist motherland. For Phibun, communism was a danger to Thailand because it was the enemy of Thai democratic sovereignty. He declared his opposition to communism in regard to Thailand's foreign policy as follows:

This government [Phibun's] will promote a solid friendship with all nations and follow all international agreements, esteem the ideals of the United Nations, and faithfully secure its friendship with liberal democratic allies in order to fight against the communist intruders for the sake of justice and peace.71

Phibun's policy was exemplified by the presence of Thai troops in Korea in 1950 and by Thailand's membership in SEATO in order to resist the invasion and expansion of communism in Southeast Asia. Exploiting the threat of communism, Phibun's government became a functional dictatorship:

A large number of the appointed members of the legislature and of the ministers were army or police officers, and officers of the armed services held the chief positions in the service. The press was rigidly controlled.72

Though Phibun's government was reasonably successful in cultivating a spirit of Thai nationalism and in modernizing various aspects of Thai life, the economic
situation of the country remained relatively weak, and he failed to gain support from the royalists and the royal family. Dissatisfaction with Phibun's regime led to a coup d'etat in 1957, engineered by Field Marshall Sarit. Sarit's rule was also a military dictatorship. Unlike Phibun, however, he sought to legitimate his own rule and authority through a restoration of the sacral power of Thai kingship:

Most of all, the Revolution holds that the king and the Thai nation are inseparable. In Thai history, the king has been the symbol of national unity, and beloved by the people since the beginning. The Revolutionary Party will secure the institution of kingship with all its power, will do anything to promote the sacred and venerable status of the king, and will not allow any wrong action toward the king, his royal family, and the royal customs, which the Thai nation has always highly respected.\(^7\)

Sarit's loyalty to the king and the royal family encouraged royal activities and reassured their safety outside the palace:

After Sarit's 1957 coup, the king, queen, princess mother, and others in the royal family began to travel widely throughout the country, and to participate in many religious and secular ceremonies in Bangkok.\(^4\)

Sarit's political ideology followed that of Rama VI in the attempt to secure and protect three Thai institutions: the nation, the religion, and the king. And, for Sarit, the most dangerous enemy of these institutions was communism. Throughout the entire period of his rule, martial law was in effect to control communist activities
in the country and to prevent any attempt to undermine
nation, religion, and king:

Between October 1958 and June 1963, 1080 persons
were arrested on charges of being communists. This
group included many student leaders who had partici­
pated actively in the protest against Phibun. The
prime minister made extensive use of the power vested
in Article 17, executing several political leaders
without trial. 

Many of Sarit's policies were founded on his concern
about a communist invasion. In one of his declarations,
he asserted that the communists tried various ways to in­
fluence Thai political, economic, and social life, that
they used all kinds of cunning methods and a large amount
of money both covertly and openly to undermine the country,
to overthrow the throne, to abolish Buddhism, and to de­
stroy all beloved Thai institutions. Out of this fear,
Sarit prohibited the trade and use of opium and heroin
because, as he claimed, they were the tools of communism
to undermine the Thai economic and national solidarity. Moreover, he issued the Sangha Act of 1963 in order to
prevent a communist takeover of the Sangha. As a conse­
quence of this Act, democratic features of the Sangha
were abolished. Administrative power was in the hands of
the Supreme Patriarch. The Council of Elders functioned
merely as an advisory body; and the cabinet system, the
ecclesiastical courts and the assembly were abolished. What bothered Sarit was the communists' propaganda which
tried to persuade the Thais that Buddhism and communism
shared the same doctrine, and that those who believed in communism could gain the same religious benefits as those who believed in Buddhism. Sarit argued that communist doctrine was different from Buddhist doctrine because communism aimed at the eradication of all institutions. In particular, communism taught that religion was an opiate and thus useless to a society. In order to protect Buddhism and kingship from the danger of communist ideology, Sarit revived some Thai ceremonies which promoted the sacred role of the king and religion, e.g., the ceremony of raek nā (the First Ploughing) in which the king or his representative ploughed the land and sowed rice seeds along the way in the beginning of the rainy season.

During the time of Sarit, various political leaders also advocated an anti-communist policy. Seni Pramoj, later to be elected Prime Minister of the country, held that communist doctrine adhered to a materialistic worldview while Buddhism was a spiritual doctrine and aimed at purifying the mind and conduct. He argued that communist ideology appealed to people because of a world-wide materialism. Furthermore, he contended, communists always claim that their doctrine is supported by scientific fact; that is, it denies all hypotheses and beliefs which could not be proved scientifically such as belief in a world beyond, rebirth and life after death. Seni sought to discount the communists' claims on both scientific and
political grounds in order to prevent a Marxist takeover in Thailand. He asserted that evolutionary theory was based on the connection of all phenomena from the past, the present, and the future. Consequently, Marxists erred in claiming that scientific knowledge denied life before the present and after death. He also warned audiences of the deceptiveness of terms used by communists such as "liberal democracy (Thai—seri-prachâthipatai, Pāli—seri-pajādhipataya)," "new democracy (Thai—prachâthipatai-mai)," or "democracy of the proletariat," because their real meanings were distorted and misrepresented according to Marxist political purposes.  

While Sarit and his supporters were waging a war against communism in order to protect Buddhism and other traditional institutions, one Thai monk interpreted Buddhism in another way. He did not wage a war against anyone or any doctrine. Instead, he spoke of the immediate value and actual benefits of Buddhism for those who practiced it properly. He was Buddhadāsa-bhikkhu ("the servant of the Buddha") who is now teaching in Chaiya, Southern Thailand. His work during the period of anti-communism is worth studying as a Buddhist "alternative" to the chauvinistic nationalism of Sarit's period.

Buddhadāsa's Work during the Period of Anti-communism up to 1973
Buddhadāsa-bhikkhu (1906– ), one of the most famous monks in Thailand today, has eschewed ecclesiastical office and has been critical of the hierarchical structure and institutional preoccupation of Thai monasticism. He emphasized the "original situation" of early Buddhism, that monks should live not too close or too far from lay people, in order to have the privacy to practice and meditate on the Buddha's teaching but, at the same time, to be able to teach lay people and guide them in the proper way of life. In 1932, he established Suan-Mokkhabalārāma (the Garden of Liberation), a center of Buddhist study and contemplation, in the isolated location of Chaiya in Southern Thailand. Buddhadāsa's work primarily concerns the preservation and promulgation of the primordial meaning of the Buddha's teachings as recorded in the Tipitaka. He holds the Sutta, in particular, to be the Buddha's truth and the means to save humankind from suffering in this world.

During Sarit's regime, Buddhadāsa's work was not especially critical of the Thai political and social system, emphasizing rather a proper way of living and moral cultivation in order for people to live happily together. His teaching focused on detachment from one's self (atta), and the concept of Empty Mind (suññatā, chit-wāng, or khwām vāng). Non-attachment was seen as
the key to human happiness. He emphasized that by being free from attachment to oneself, one would no longer desire to have or to be anything and thus would be liberated from the influence of defilements (*kilesa*). He further insisted that human beings waged war in order to rule the world or to gain various material benefits. War, therefore, could not be eliminated until defilements and ego-centeredness were overcome. And the only way to get rid of defilements, according to Buddhadasa, was through proper belief and practice conforming to the Buddha's teaching.

After Sarit's death in 1963, Buddhadasa's teaching assumed a more critical social and political posture. This change may well have been due to more freedom of speech and political expression after the time of Sarit, although we can also notice a shift in his understanding of the dhamma. I will discuss Buddhadasa's work from 1964 to 1973 during which time his teaching was widely publicized.

From 1964, Buddhadasa began to refer more frequently to the current social, political, and economic situation. He still emphasized the concept of the Empty Mind or the elimination of attachment to one's self (*tua-kū, khong-kū* or "my-self-belongs-to-me" concept), but these traditional teachings were discussed in terms more relevant to such actual conflicts as those between capitalists and laborers.
Anyone who works with an Empty Mind will not be conscious of his own action. With an Empty Mind, a humble laborer will not be so sensitive to his inferior status that he will adopt dishonest methods to fight capitalists. If a laborer works with an Empty Mind, he will have no discomfort. But, if he allows himself to think of his "self," he will feel disappointed with his own destiny as a poor laborer.

It should be noted here that Buddhadasa is not criticizing the selfishness of capitalists as evil. He is, in effect, trying to calm the laborers so that they will not move against their employers and cause trouble to others. It seems that Buddhadasa wanted everyone to improve him/herself and be content with the outcome. Thus, he encouraged laborers to work only for the sake of their work so that they will not fall into the trap of materialism. For Buddhadasa, those who work for money, food, desire, fame, and honor, are materialists, but those who do their duty for duty's sake are spiritual followers or the followers of dhamma. Buddhadasa pointed out that the concept of "Duty for Duty's sake" was similar to the concept of working with an Empty Mind, and was necessary for the reconciliation of capitalists and laborers and for the peace of the whole world:

With the ideal of working for work's sake, the capitalists and the laborers will love each other because the capitalists will be pleased and feel that the laborers are their beloved children, and the laborers will be pleased with the merits of their work. If the laborers work for money, the capitalists and the laborers will feel frustrated with one another and hate each other. These facts can be found everywhere in this
From 1967 to 1973, Buddhadasa's work took a new turn, influenced in part by his dialogue with other religions; yet, his teaching was still based fundamentally on the doctrine of the Empty Mind. He often asserted that a "Liberated Heart" or "Empty Mind" was the most important teaching of the Buddha. For Buddhadasa, "Empty Mind," non-attachment, and freedom from defilements are essentially the same. But Buddhadasa's insistence on the centrality of non-attachment or "Empty Mind" was problematic for many Thai Buddhists. They misunderstood this teaching and Buddhadasa's lifestyle as promoting an otherworldliness antithetical to acting in the world. They saw the "Empty Mind" as eliminating all motives for acting in the world, and of promoting laziness and a "do-nothing" attitude. For Buddhadasa, however, the "Empty Mind" was essential to overcoming attachment and, hence, necessary to a life of moderation and balance:

If one understands the meaning of the Empty Mind correctly, one will know that the poor should continue to help themselves without mental anxiety. The poor should believe firmly that everything proceeds according to the Law of kamma. Thus, while our poverty today may be a result of our bad deeds of yesterday, by acting morally in the present, we can overcome poverty in the future.

For Buddhadasa, the doctrine of the Empty Mind frees one to act fully in the present without being distracted by an expectation of its result. With an "Empty Mind", a
person can focus himself and concentrate better on his work. Buddhadasa also believes that if one looks into the essence of all religious teachings, it will be seen that all religions encourage human beings to get rid of their selfishness and to live fully in the present. He points out that Buddhism and Christianity share the same understanding regarding the doctrine of the Empty Mind:

Christianity also preaches the doctrine of anattā or suññata: "Those who have wives should think as though they had none. Those who have property should think as though they have none. Those who are happy or sad should feel as though they were not. Those who buy something from the market should not bring anything home." This teaching illustrates the concept of anattā [no-self].

Buddhadasa seems to consider all religions similar to one another in their spiritual doctrine or ideal; however, he differentiates Buddhism from communism because the latter is materialistic. For him, anything relating to materialism or the material world tends to trap human-kind in illusion and defilement. From 1967 to 1973, he focused his interpretation of Buddhism on the notion of non-attachment, contrasting this teaching with communism which advocated a position of materialistic possessions. Buddhism teaches human beings to improve their mind first, while communism teaches human beings to satisfy material needs first.

Because of the administrative failure of the government at social, political, and economic levels of the
country, communist ideology appealed to many Thai university students and scholars. The second half of the Twentieth Century saw the development of anti-government student movements and the emergence of a militant Buddhism.

The Rise of the Student Movement

The first organized student movement directly involved in Thai politics emerged in December 1968 when college students from fifteen institutions set up a Student Volunteer Group to observe the National Election. In 1969, a group of students founded the National Student Center of Thailand (NSCT) which aimed to check Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn's government and administration. In its early days, the NSCT won a considerable public support because it appeared as a nationalistic organization. In particular, it campaigned to boycott Japanese goods which saturated the Thai market in order to stimulate the failing economic situation of the country. As Frank Reynolds observed, during this period "the growing Japanese influence in the Thai economy, the escalating price of rice and other basic commodities, for which government policies and corruption were blamed, nurtured a growing unrest and bitterness among the populace."

Thailand Under Political Crisis
And Militant Buddhism (1973-1976)

On October 6, 1973, the NSCT's role moved from the economic to the political arena. Thirteen university students and professors distributed leaflets at the Monument to Democracy in Bangkok urging the people to rally for a new constitution. All of them were arrested and charged with treason for hatching a communist plot to overthrow the government. This incident led to massive demonstrations against the government, a brutal clash of police with a group of demonstrators, and a collapse of Thanom's government. From 1973 to 1975, a socialist viewpoint spread rapidly in Thailand because of the increasing freedom of speech and action. Several books on Marxism and Maoism were widely published, read, and used by students and scholars. At this time, the Rightists (an anti-Communist group) began to move against the NSCT and its supporters, accusing them of being enemies of the nation, the religion, and the king.

The so-called Rightist movement against the NSCT led to the emergence of militant Buddhism headed by Kittivuddho Bhikkhu, a nationalist Buddhist monk. Ordained in 1957, Kittivuddho rapidly developed a reputation as a public speaker and a persuasive expositor of Buddhist scriptures. In 1967, he established the Abhidhamma Foundation College at Wat Mahādhatu, and the Cittabhāvana.
College at Chonburi province. The former was intended to provide an education based on the *Abhidhamma* which Kittivuddho considered important for a proper knowledge of Buddhism; the latter emphasized social activism and the promulgation of the Buddhist faith. At Cittabhāvana College, monks and novices were taught and trained to "guide those who are Buddhists in finding moral bases for their actions, and to convert those who are not Buddhists." By the end of 1975, Kittivuddho openly declared himself a leader of the *Nawaphon* movement, a Rightist movement claiming to protect the institutions of the nation, the religion, and the king against Leftists (pro-Communists). In the middle of 1976, Kittivuddho's role shifted from a Buddhist interpreter to a militant religious leader who claimed that killing Communists was not a sin. In the Thai magazine *Jaturat* of June 29, 1976, Kittivuddho offered this justification:

> Whoever destroys the nation, the religion, or the monarchy, such bestial types (man) are not complete persons. Thus, we must intend not to kill people, but to kill the Devil (*Māra*); this is the duty of all Thais. . . . When we kill a fish to make a stew to place in the alms bowl for a monk, there is certainly demerit in killing the fish, but, we place it in the alms bowl of a monk and gain much greater merit.

Outfitted with that understanding of Buddhist precepts, Kittivuddho, the *Nawaphon*, and other Rightist groups such as the Village Scouts initiated a violent massacre at Thammasat University, in October 1976, where
many students whom they believed to be Communists and communist supporters were killed or injured. Understandably, this event raised several searching questions for Thai Buddhists, for example, whether Buddhism can allow the killing of living beings, or whether Buddhism can be a militant religion. In his teaching after 1973, Buddhadasa tried to answer some of these questions.

Buddhadasa's Teaching

During the Period of Militant Buddhism

Buddhadasa seemed to anticipate a bloody confrontation of the "Leftist" (pro-communist) and the "Rightist" (anti-Communist) movements in Thailand. In April 1976, six months before the peak of the militant Buddhist movement and the bloody attack on students at Thammasat University, Buddhadasa warned Thai Buddhists that they should not use violent methods against others:

According to the ideal for all religious practitioners, Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike, blood-thirsty activities are to be avoided. Some religious disciples may be misled that their religions allow violent methods, and thus frequently let themselves get involved in bloody movements. This is, in fact, not the intention of any religion or religious leader.

Buddhadasa argued that Buddhists should act against Communists only by peaceful means:

We must fight against an undesirable doctrine by improving our own actions. A hateful confrontation
always leads to bloodshed. Non-violence is a superior method. For the Thais who hold fast to Buddhism, non-violence will help them to act according to the moral principle.

He made a similar point metaphorically—Thais should "set a house fire in order to welcome the jungle fire." This metaphor refers to the fact that if a jungle fire moves towards a house near the forest, those who live in the house should clear the surrounding area with another fire so that there will be an empty space the jungle fire cannot pass. The lesson is clear—if one wants to resist the invasion of Communism, one should improve one's own country first so that when the Communists arrive, they will find no one receptive to their appeal.

For Buddhadasa, Communism can be eradicated from Thailand only if the Thai cultivate loving-kindness towards each other. In such an ethos there will be no need to kill Communists. He points out that communism thrives only when people hate one another, for example, when the rich hate the poor or the poor hate the rich. Buddhadasa's position obviously differs radically from that of Kittivuddho. While Kittivuddho argues that it is legitimate to kill Communists because they are devils or Māra and not human, Buddhadasa offers a positive solution; preaching that one should cultivate one's highest nature, especially loving-kindness and non-violence, in order to establish conditions inimical to communism.
Buddhadāsa's Observations of The Thai Understanding of the Buddha's Teaching

For Buddhadasa, what threatens Buddhism is not Communism or, indeed, any outside ideology, but Buddhists themselves. He points out that Buddhism is undermined because Buddhists, both monks and lay people, understand the Buddha's doctrine only superficially or even misunderstand it altogether. They become materialistic or they believe in world-rejecting mysticism and spirits, preferring a heavenly reward to nibbāna. Buddhadasa notes that the Thai misunderstanding of the Buddha's doctrine can be found in their daily life, festivals, and ceremonies. For example, a man might be ordained as a Buddhist monk not because he wants to seek salvation or attain nibbāna but for many lesser reasons. Some anthropologists have corroborated Buddhadasa's criticism. According to B. J. Terwiel who did field-work in a Thai village from 1967 to 1970, a man may ordain in order to fulfill a promise to the gods, to escape poverty, to flee from a wife, to save money, to eat better food than at home, or to join his friends in the monastery. After his ordination, he is still, in effect, a layman in a yellow robe. And because he has no intention of attaining nibbāna or acquiring knowledge of the Buddhist scriptures in order to understand the Buddha's
teachings properly and teach lay people, he becomes a poor monastic exemplar, finding pleasure in a kind of "monastic materialism."

Terwiel's study suggests that materialism among monks can also be found even in simple acts like eating and drinking. Instead of eating in order to live, some monks particularly enjoy specially prepared food and drink. Although they eat only two meals a day, Terwiel observes that many of them appear well-fed, even obese, and that, during the afternoon and evening, "they may drink tea, coffee or lemonade, chew betel leaf with areca fruit and lime and smoke tobacco".108

In addition, some monks practice sooth-saying in order to gain more fame and offerings from lay people. Some become astrologers and fortune-tellers.109 And some are magicians who make sacred medallions for lay people.110

Since so many monks are not effective resources for the laity's knowledge of Buddhism, lay Buddhists often lack guidance in improving their own understanding and moral standards and are not instructed in the way towards nibbāna by monks. Thus, instead of paying attention to the Buddha's teaching about the elimination of suffering, Thai Buddhists tend to be more interested in self-serving ceremonies and rituals. During funerals, for instance, it is unlikely that they will contemplate the Buddha's teaching about the temporariness of human life. Rather,
they usually will use the occasion as simply a social gathering in which they meet with friends to feast, play games, and gossip. Most Thai Buddhists take the Five Precepts casually, misunderstanding that their offerings to monks and regular participation in religious ceremonies compensate for neglecting the Precepts. For example, gossip is a demeritorious deed (pañca); but in Thailand, "a community without gossip is almost beyond imagination." And though to be heedlessly intoxicated is a demeritorious deed, Thai lay Buddhists do not strictly abstain from intoxicants:

Alcoholic beverages are sold openly, under government monopoly. They can be consumed in all public cafes and restaurants and drunken people are no rare sight.

Not only do most Thai lay Buddhists take the Five Precepts casually but they also crave a heavenly reward instead of seeking nibbāna, believing that nibbāna is too difficult to attain and too far away. Thus, they, "make merit" in order to be born in heaven or in a wealthy family. Poor people and farmers usually think that if they were rich they could make more merit by offering more money to monks or donating more as religious contributions. According to Buddhadasa, this misconception is partly due to some monks' misinterpretation of doctrine such as monks' teaching that the more offerings one gives to the Saṅgha, the more rewards one can get in the next
Buddhadasa's Criticism of Thai Buddhism

Buddhadāsa believes that this situation calls for a proper knowledge of the Buddha's teaching. Thus, he tries to expound the essence of Buddhism to his audiences so that they will be able to practice properly.

Buddhadāsa finds that a serious flaw in Thai Buddhism today is its allowance for and adoption of materialism and animism. By materialism, Buddhadaśa means the tendency to emphasize such aspects of religion as the construction of religious buildings and the making of medallions of "spiritual" dimensions like the cultivation of loving kindness towards others and the purification of mind. By animism, Buddhadaśa means the belief in a supernatural power inherent in objects like a small Buddha's image which can bring good luck or misfortune to those relating to them. According to Buddhadaśa, these materialistic and animistic elements in Thai Buddhism are defective factors which endanger the Buddha's doctrine and obstruct Thai Buddhists from realizing the end of suffering.

Buddhadāsa is particularly critical of Thai Buddhists' preoccupation with rituals and ceremonials, material offerings and expectations of a boon and worship of the Buddha's image which indicates their belief that a super-
natural power resides in and projects from the image. Buddhadasa insists that rituals and ceremonies are not the essence of Buddhism. They are only its external, decorative aspect. Those who participate in a religious ceremony usually intend only to see friends, chat, and have a good time. Even in a funeral ceremony, Buddhadasa notes, Thai Buddhists use the occasion to chat with friends, and to entertain themselves with movies and shows provided after the religious ceremony. Buddhadasa criticizes monks for deceiving lay people to donate money in order to set up movies or shows at festivals as a way of gaining more merit. These monks intoxicate people with material pleasure instead of giving them the dhamma; and these monks and lay Buddhists who participate in such entertainments are undermining Buddhism. Buddhists who intend to have fun or get drunk in the home of the deceased during a funeral rite lack a Buddhist spirit, sympathy, and loving kindness towards others:

During the funeral rite, the host has to prepare liquor and alcoholic drinks, kill an ox, buffalo, or pig, in order to cook food for the Buddhist guests who come to devour it in the house of the family of the deceased. This is an example of a lack of mercy in their heart. If Buddhists have loving kindness towards others, they will come to help the family of the deceased, instead of coming to eat their food like hungry ghosts.

Secondly, the procedure of merit-making is also materialistic because Buddhists usually expect a material reward, like happiness in heaven where there are many
luxuries and entertainments. According to Buddhadasa, many Buddhists take a meriterious deed as a good investment. For example, they invest one baht (about four cents) in making merit in order to ask for one or more paradise castles, physical beauty, and wealth, in their next lives. 118

Thirdly, heaven and hell in Thai Buddhist understanding are material realms. It is believed that heaven exists above in the sky and hell beneath the earth; that, in heaven, there are celestial castles in which reside deities and hundreds of their angelic servants; and that, in hell, there are many denizens who are tortured in flames until their evil sin is exhausted. 119 Buddhadasa explains that the true meaning of heaven and hell, according to the Buddha resides in sense perceptions: pleasant sense experiences are interpreted as heaven, unpleasant ones as hell. 120 In other words, heaven and hell are happiness and suffering which occur through our sense contact with the external world. Buddhadasa explains further that Thai Buddhists misunderstand the meanings of heaven and hell because they follow the Buddhist scriptures literally rather than metaphorically or spiritually. He opines that they tend to use "everyday language" instead of dhamma or "truth" language. "Heaven" in everyday language means the realm of gods, but "heaven" in dhamma language means mental/spiritual happiness.

Buddhadasa criticizes monks for being materialists.
They eat and sleep without serious interest in studying the doctrine.\textsuperscript{121} Because of the monks' lack of knowledge of the Buddha's teaching and their lax ways, they cannot convey the true meaning of the dhamma to the laity. At best they teach only simple moral principles instead of the essence of Buddhism, the doctrine of the \textit{paticcasamuppāda}.\textsuperscript{122} Buddhadāsa suggests that Thai Buddhists need to give up materialistic beliefs and practices in order to eliminate the sense of self-attachment and recover the Buddha's true teaching. He argues that if Buddhists understood the doctrine of the \textit{paticcasamuppāda}, they would know that \textit{nibbāna} is not too hard for them to attain in this lifetime.\textsuperscript{123}

Buddhadāsa's Contributions to Contemporary Thai Buddhism

Buddhadāsa's contributions to contemporary Thai Buddhism can be seen both in terms of his actual example and his interpretation of dhamma. As a monastic examplar he established a religious center, Suan Mokkha (the Garden of Liberation), in Southern Thailand in 1932. Suan Mokkha was developed as a place where Buddhist monks would live and study the Buddha's doctrine following the pattern of monastic life in the time of the Buddha. At Suan Mokkha, monks eat only once a day and spend the rest of the day
studying the Tipiṭaka, listening to Buddhadāsa's preaching, meditating, and working on the 150 acre site. The buildings include a "spiritual theatre," which is at one and the same time an art center, museum, and audio-visual theater. The central room is dominated by a large white circle at one end which symbolizes the truth of emptiness (suññatā) and non-attachment.

Buddhadāsa's interpretation of Buddhist doctrine is even more important than his hermitage in Southern Thailand, however. As we shall see in Chapter Four, the concept of dhamma figures prominently in his teachings. In particular, he uses the concept in a critical manner, suggesting that a dhammic understanding or use of dhamma language can help Thai Buddhists overcome their materialistic and animistic tendencies, cultivate proper beliefs and practices according to the Buddha's teaching, and understand the true meaning of dhamma which is the only means to end their suffering.
NOTES


5 Prachoom Chomchai, Chulalongkorn the Great, pp. 85-86.

6 Ibid., p. 58.

7 Ibid., p. 86.


9 Ibid., p. 334.

10 Prachoom Chomchai, Chulalongkorn the Great, pp.135-136.

11 Ibid., p. 131.


14 Ibid., pp. 57-58.


16 Chulalongkorn, King of Thailand, "Phra Borom Rāchāthibai Ruang Sāmakhī [The royal exposition of unity]," Prachum Khlong Suphāsit Lae Ruang Sāmakhī [The...


21 Prachoom Chomchai, Chulalongkorn the Great, p. 59.

22 Ibid., p. 58.

23 Ibid., p. 61.

24 Ibid., p. 62.

25 Ibid., p. 58.

26 Ibid., pp. 131-2.

27 David K. Wyatt, Thailand: A Short History, p. 54.


33 Craig James Reynolds, The Buddhist Monkhood in Nineteenth Century Thailand, pp. 266-267.


Ibid.


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Vajiravudh, King of Thailand, Plukchāi Sūpā [Instilling the Wild Tigers spirit] (Bangkok, 1950), p. 3.

Walter F. Vella, Chaiyot, p. 126.

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Ibid., p. 40.


Vajiravudh, Plukchāi Sūpā, p. 56.

Ibid., pp. 42-50.


Ibid., pp. 51-55.
52. Vajiraṇāṇa-varorasa, Right is Right (Bangkok, 1918), p. 20.

53. Ibid., p. 22.

54. Ibid., p. 24.


59. Ibid., p. 91.


63. Ibid., pp. 241-242.


66. Ibid.

152


69 Ibid., p. 143.


72 The Thai cabinet, Chiwa Prawat Lae Phon Ngan Khong Chomphon Sarit Thanarat [The biography and work of Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat (Bangkok, 1964), p. 73.

73 David Morell & Chai-anan Samudavanija, Political Conflict in Thailand: Reform, Reaction, Revolution, p. 66.

74 Ibid., pp. 138-139.

75 The Thai cabinet, The Biography and Work of Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat, p. 70.

76 Ibid., pp. 33-39.


79 The Thai Cabinet, The Biography and Work of Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat, p. 192.


82 Ibid., p. 9.

83 Buddhadāsa-bhikkhu, "Dhamma Kū Yā Raksā Lok
[Dhamma is the medicine of the world]," Sāsanā Khū Arai [What is Religion?] (Bangkok: Dhamma-pūjā Press, 1977), p. 120. This lecture was presented in Thai at the Saṅgha Hospital in Bangkok in 1957 and was first published some time later.

84Buddhadāsa-bhikkhu, "Religion is the Hospital of the World," ibid., pp. 36-37. This lecture was presented in Thai at the Saṅgha Hospital in Bangkok in 1949.

85Buddhadāsa-bhikkhu, Dhamma Nai Thāna Srāng Tua [Dhamma as a means to build oneself] (Bangkok: Suvijan Press, 1968), pp. 46-47. This lecture was first presented in 1964.

86Ibid., p. 34.

87Ibid., p. 36.


89Ibid., p. 43.


92Buddhadāsa-bhikkhu, Sorn Phuttha-sāsanā Phān Thāng Khampī Bible [Teaching Buddhism through the Bible] (Bangkok: Dhamma-pūjā Press, 1971), pp. 15-16. Buddhadāsa referred to the teaching of St. Paul: "I mean, brethren, the appointed time had grown very short; from now on, let those who have wives live as though they have none, and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no goods, and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealing with it. For the form of this world is passing away." 1 Corinthians 7:29-31, The Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha, ed. Herbert G. May & Bruce M. Metzger (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 1384.

93Buddhadāsa-bhikkhu, Upasak Khong Karn Khao Thùng

94 David Morell & Chai-anan Samudavanija, Political Conflict in Thailand: Reform, Reaction, Revolution, p. 141.

95 Ibid., pp. 143-144.


97 David Morell & Chai-anan Samudavanija, Political Conflict in Thailand: Reform, Reaction, Revolution, p. 147.

98 Ibid., pp. 162-172.

99 Ibid., pp. 172-175.

100 Ibid., p. 256.


104 Ibid., p. 34.

105 Ibid.

106 Buddhadasa-bhikkhu, Chat Mankhorn Dai Duay Sasanā [Securing the nation through religion] (Bangkok: Somchai Press, 1981), p. 22. This message was delivered to the members of the Young Buddhists Association in 1979.


108 Ibid., p. 114.


110 B. J. Terwiel, Monks and Magic, p. 91.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.


113 Ibid.

114 Ibid., p. 252.

115 Buddhāsā-bhikkhu, *Upasak Khon Karn Khao Thung Tham*, p. 25.


119 Buddhāsā-bhikkhu, "Khoo Cheewit [Mate of life]," *Thamma-banyai Toh Hâng Sunak* [The dhammic lecture to recover a dog's tail] (Bangkok: Dhamma-dāna Press, 1982), pp. 36-37. Buddhāsā uses the metaphor "to recover a dog's tail, or to reconnect a dog's tail" as a reference to the Thai formal education nowadays in which moral lessons are neglected and dismissed from the curriculum. He explains that education without morality is like a dog whose tail is cut off and tries to deceive others that a dog without a tail is more beautiful than the one with it. Buddhāsā uses this metaphor to correct this misunderstanding by pointing out that a dog must have a tail, that, similarly, education must include moral lessons, and that education without morality is useless or even harmful to a society.

120 Ibid., pp. 37-39.


122 Ibid., p. 34.

123 Buddhāsā-bhikkhu, "Nibbāna Tee Nee Lae Diaw Nee [Nibbāna here and now]," *Thamma-banyai Toh Hâng Sunak*, pp. 127-139.
CHAPTER III

VAJIRAṆĀṆA'S INTERPRETATION OF DHAMMA

In discussing the concept of dhamma in the thought of VajiraṆāṇa and Buddhadasa. It proved to be difficult to separate this concept from the totality of their teaching. They see their teaching as an attempt to present the Buddha-dhamma. To that extent, therefore, the concept of dhamma becomes, in effect, the fundamental basis or orientation of their life and teaching.

For VajiraṆāṇa, the concept of dhamma is rooted in the Tipiṭaka and more fully elaborated in Buddhaghosa's commentaries. Thus, in order to investigate the meaning of dhamma, one must master Pāli, the language of the Tipiṭaka and Buddhaghosa's commentaries. The assumption is that a knowledge of the Pāli texts can lead to an understanding of dhamma; VajiraṆāṇa championed the importance of Pāli scholarship. He believed that dhamma was important for both monks and lay people. For the laity, he emphasized the moral dimensions of dhamma, and for monks, the more technical aspects of the category commonly associated with the abhidhamma.¹
Vajirañāṇa's emphasis on Pāli scholarship for monks was rooted in the traditional Theravāda belief in the monks as preservers and propagators of the Buddha's dhamma. The lay people supported the monks and benefited from the monks' preaching of the dhamma. Thus, while a monks' duty is to preach the dhamma, the laity's reciprocal duty is to live a moral life according to the monks' preaching.

This chapter will discuss Vajirañāṇa's interpretation of dhamma for both monks and laity. It will be divided into two parts. The first part will analyze Vajirañāṇa's exposition of dhamma; the second part will examine Vajirañāṇa's application of dhamma to the Thai social context.

The Meaning of Dhamma in Vajirañāṇa's Work

Vajirañāṇa interprets dhamma variously in his writings depending, in part, on the context. Yet, on balance, we conclude that he emphasizes the moral dimension of the concept. Philosophically, his discussion also includes such traditional meanings as the law of nature, "things" in general, and the nature of truth. Vajirañāṇa used these basic meanings of dhamma to support his understanding of the textual significance of the term as well as its social applications. For example, in the
Sermons for the Dead, Vajirañāṇa attempts to demonstrate not only Buddhist doctrine concerning the uncertainty of life, but also the dhammic character of the dead kings and their relatives who served as moral exemplars.

Frequently, Vajirañāṇa used the concept dhamma without focusing on a specific meaning, assuming that the context and the audience did not require a greater precision. In the Sermons for the Dead, for example, Vajirañāṇa praised King Rama IV as a righteous ruler of his country, and, in doing so, used the term, dhamma, in a variety of way:

He [Mongkut] was fond of dhamma. Without fear of unpleasant words and dangers, he still held to what was right. These qualities could be seen during his monkhood. He always tried to analyse pra dhammavinaya, led all Buddhists to behave according to the Buddha's words, and supported Buddhism generously. His adherents and followers continuously increased in number, until they formed a nikāya [sect] called khana Dhammayutika. This was accomplished by his power and augustness which are based on dhamma-thitthana, perseverance in dhamma.

In the first sentence, dhamma means righteousness in the sense that the king held to the right in all situations. Pra dhammavinaya, however, does not mean "righteousness and discipline," but the Buddha's moral doctrine and rules of practice. In the final statement, dhamma probably means Buddhist doctrine as a guideline for proper conduct. This example indicates the fluidity of the meaning of the term. A similar fluidity or multivalency is found in Vajirañāṇa's discussion of the term
dhammārammana:

Dhammārammana is a sense-object which occurs in the mind, or an object of the mind. Dhamma and ārammana mean the same thing: a mental object, and they are combined together as dhammārammana. There are so many meanings for dhamma. It can be "a virtuous state," e.g., "dhammo hve rakkhati dhammacāri" which means dhamma protects those who always behave according to it. Secondly, dhamma may signify a state of being good or bad, e.g., kusalā dhammā akusalā dhammā abyākatā dhammā, which means "all meritorious dhamma, all demeritorious dhamma which cannot be confirmed as meritorious or demeritorious." Dhammārammana is of this latter type.

Vajirañāṇa's uses of dhamma provide a good indication of the symbolic and multivalent nature of the term in Theravāda thought. For analytical purposes, we shall organize the various meanings Vajiranana ascribes to dhamma into five categories:

1. Dhamma as the Buddha's teachings
2. Dhamma as moral qualities
3. Dhamma as the law of nature
4. Dhamma as the nature of truth
5. Dhamma as "things" in general

Here, I will survey these meanings of dhamma in order to demonstrate how Vajirañāṇa used this central term in his work.

Dhamma as the Buddha's Teachings

Dhamma as the Buddha's teaching is for Vajirañāṇa...
above all else a historical teaching first presented to the five ascetics who had served the Buddha during his search for the ultimate truth of liberation. These ascetics were convinced by his dhamma (teachings, words of truth) and were the first of his disciples to live a homeless life. Vajirañāṇa emphasizes the fact that, according to the Tipitaka, these five ascetics did not preach the dhamma, but lived a homeless, secluded life in the wilderness—the ideal life according to the Buddha's dhamma. The first group who went forth to preach the dhamma of the Buddha was Yasa, a nobleman, and his 54 friends:

Now at that time there were sixty-one Arahants in the world [the Five Ascetics, Yasa and his 54 friends, and the Buddha]. Then the Exalted One said to the brethren: "I am released, brethren, from all bonds, those that are divine and those that are human. Ye also, brethren, are released from all bonds, those that are divine and those that are human. Go ye forth, brethren, go on your journey, for the profit of the many, for the bliss of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the welfare, the profit, the bliss of devas and mankind!"

Thus, one of the monks' duties is to preach the Buddha's dhamma to others. Vajirañāṇa differentiates the Buddha's dhamma from the teaching of others by noting these characteristics:

The Dhamma of the Buddha can be described as the teachings which intend to liberate a person from sexual desire, suffering, the accumulation of defilements, craving, greed, social pleasure, indolence, and fastidiousness.

This notion of the Buddha's dhamma is supported by
a passage in the Sutta:

Thus, monks, is dhamma well taught by me, made manifest, opened up, made known, stripped of its swathings. Because dhamma has been well taught by me thus, made manifest, opened up, made known, stripped of its swathings, those monks who are perfected ones, the cankers destroyed, who have lived the life, done what was to be done, laid down the burden, attained their own goal, the fetter of becoming utterly destroyed, and who are freed by perfect profound knowledge—the track of these cannot be discerned.

When Vajirañāṇa wanted to emphasize dhamma in the sense of the Buddha's teaching, he usually employed the word phra (Thai: good, holy) in front of the term dhamma. In Thai Buddhism, phra dhamma is always referred to as an element of the Triple Gem (phraBuddha, phra dhamma, and phrasaṅgha). Vajirañāṇa explained that phra dhamma was the Buddha's teaching that protects mankind from evil deeds, and guides humans to virtue. Dhamma in this sense is divided into three categories: pariyattidhamma (the theory of virtuous deeds), patipattidhamma (the practice of virtuous deeds), and pativedhadhamma (the attainment of virtuous deeds). This division follows Buddhaghosa's commentaries, the Samantapāsādīka (the commentary on the Vinaya) and the Manorathapurani (the commentary on the Aṅguttaranikāya), and is generally accepted by the Thai Saṅgha as the three stages of spiritual development in the Buddha's teaching.

Vajirañāṇa regarded the pariyattidhamma as the pillar of Buddhist moral practice. He referred to the task
of the Buddhist Councils which attempted to preserve all the teachings and regulations of the Buddha in the Tipiṭaka as the moral rules and guidance for all Buddhists after the time of the Buddha. Since the Tipiṭaka of the Theravāda Buddhists was written in Pāli, Vajiraṇāṇa encouraged Pāli education and examination for monks. As previously noted, Vajiraṇāṇa believed that a knowledge of Pāli was the crucial means to penetrate the meaning of the Buddha's teachings. Monks needed to know both lay and monastic aspects of dhamma so that, apart from their specific monastic duties, they could give advice to the lay community.9

According to Vajiraṇāṇa, after learning and understanding the pariyattidhamma, one was ready to move to the patipattidhamma or practice. In order to follow the patipattidhamma effectively, Vajiraṇāṇa proposed that one should practice the dhamma beginning at an elementary level and proceeding to higher levels. He believed that the Tipitaka presented the way of practice in stages: the first step was the practice of sīla (moral rules); the intermediate step was the practice of samādhi (concentration); and the final step was the practice of pāñña (wisdom).10 And thus, a proper and systematic way of learning and practicing dhamma leads to the right understanding of its meaning; one could not practice and understand the higher dhamma properly without beginning
with its earlier steps. For example, according to Vajiranāṇa, *sīla* was a moral rule or moral discipline which served as an initiator of spiritual virtues in the human mind, and helped the mind perceive the *dhamma*. In the monastery, *sīla* meant the *vinaya* (monastic rules) which the Buddha prescribed for the organization and regulation of the Buddhist monastic group. Without the *vinaya*, monks who come from different families and backgrounds would behave arbitrarily, and the dhammic norms would be problematic for the laity. While *sīla*, for Vajiranāṇa, was intended to be external or physical control in order to make human conduct appropriate for others, *samādhi* was internal or spiritual control which infused the human mind with the strength and consciousness to do good. Vajiranāṇa believed that the human mind was naturally pure and free of evil; however, it could be corrupted by mental hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*). *Nīvaraṇa* consists of sensual desire (*kama-chanda*), ill-will (*byapada*), sloth and torpor (*thīnamiddha*), anxiety (*uddhacca-kukkucca*), and doubt (*vicikicchā*). These hindrances obstruct the human mind from the will to work for good. The means to end *nīvaraṇa* is *samādhi* which clears the mind of all evil elements and helps it concentrate better on the *dhamma* (the Buddha's teaching).

After the mind has been cleared from hindrances by the power of *samādhi*, *paññā* (wisdom) can shine in one's
mind. Vajirānāṇa interpreted paññā in the Buddha's teaching to mean the capacity to understand things as they really are. Paññā cannot work without sīla and samādhi, i.e., a monk should be disciplined first and then free his mind from nīvaraṇa through the power of samādhi. The teaching of practice from the initial to the highest stage—from sīla to paññā—is affirmed in the stages of Buddhist realization of pāriyatti, paṭipatti, and paṭivedha. In the Dhammacakkappavattana-sutta, Vajirānāṇa opines, the Buddha preached not only the doctrine of the Four Noble Truths, the nature of suffering, the cause of suffering, the end of suffering, but also the way towards the end of suffering (pāriyattidhamma), the moral practice according to the knowledge of the pāriyatti-dhamma, and the result of this practice (paṭivedha-dhamma) which is finally nibbāna.
Dhamma as Moral Qualities

Dhamma as moral action is predominant in Navakovāda (Teaching for Novices), Vajirañāṇa's instructions for the new-ordained monks. Since new monks usually remain in the monastery only for one Buddhist Lent (vassa) or four months, Navakovāda attempts to summarize the dhamma completely and to present all the Buddha's moral teachings necessary both for monastic and secular life. Navakovāda is divided into three parts: the first deals with the Buddha's moral teachings for monks and laity and is indebted particularly to the Suttanta-piṭaka. The second part deals with the moral teachings exclusively for lay people, and the last part gives monastic rules. In the first and the second parts of the Navakovāda, dhamma as morality is clearly set forth. But as the Navakovāda does not give detailed explanations in this text, my exposition will be supplemented by references to other treatises by Vajirañāṇa.

Dhamma as Universal

Dhamma at this level is a moral law intended to help monks preserve their virtue as ideal members of the monastic order and to help lay people conduct themselves as ideal members of their community. In order to conceive
dhama in this sense, it is necessary to divide it into dhama for spiritual or inner discipline and dhama for moral action. The former is regulation of mind and will; the latter is regulation of external behavior.

Dhama as an Inner Discipline

This kind of dhama is to be maintained by both monks and laity. In the Navakovāda, Vajiraṇāṇa presents it in five categories:

1. Dhama of great assistance
2. Dhama that protects the world
3. Dhama which should be established in the mind
4. Dhama of power
5. Dhama of a good man

We shall examine each of these categories.

Dhama of Great Assistance. The Buddha preached the dhama of great assistance in order to help human beings interact properly with their environments. The dhama of great assistance is divided into sati (mindfulness) and sampajaṇāṇa (clear comprehension, awareness). In the Tipiṭaka, this dhama initiates mindfulness and awareness through concentration. Vajiraṇāṇa explains that sati and sampajaṇāṇa help create and preserve heedfulness in human thought and action. Those who have sati
and sampajañña will always be cautious in their actions. Vajirañāṇa refers to the Buddha’s preaching of the virtues of sati and sampajañña in the Mahāsatipatthāna-sutta. In this sutta, the Buddha preached to monks that sati (mindfulness) could eliminate suffering and lead those who possessed it to nibbāna:

The one and only path, Bhikkhus leading to the purification of beings, to passing far beyond grief and lamentation, to the dying-out of ill and misery, to the attainment of right method, to the realization of Nirvāṇa, is that of the Fourfold Setting up of Mindfulness.

Which are the Four? Herein, O bhikkhus, let a brother, as to the body, continue so to look upon the body that he remains ardent, self-possessed, and mindful, having overcome both the hankering and the dejection common in the world. And in the same way as to feelings, thoughts, and ideas, let him so look upon each, that he remains ardent, self-possessed, and mindful, having overcome both the hankering and the dejection common in the world.¹⁸

According to this passage, sati helps one to be master of one’s own thoughts and, thus, to be heedful about the world. Vajirañāṇa explains heedfulness as a state accompanying sati: whenever a person acts with sati, s/he is "heedful" in dhamma and only kusala-dhamma (good) arises, and all akusala-dhamma (evil) declines.¹⁹

Vajirañāṇa chose the occasion of the royal funeral of Rama V to expound sati and sampajañña. He reminded the participants that they should cope with their sorrow and grief through sati and sampajañña. Sati assists a person to think, speak, and act carefully at all times.
Those who have sati always remember all they did, are doing, and will do, and, thus, can act at their best. Sampajañña assists a person to realize what s/he is doing at that moment. Vajirañña indicated that those who could not control body, words, and acts, lacked sampajañña. Sati and sampajañña, for Vajirañña, can be compared to a coachman who controls a vehicle. Those who lack sati and sampajañña lose control of themselves like a carriage which is led astray by horses.20

Dhamma that protects the world. In the traditional Theravada view, this type of dhamma is defined as hiri (moral shame, conscience) and ottappa (moral dread, fear of shame). Once when the Buddha was at Jeta Grove, in Anāthapiñḍika’s Park, he preached this dhamma:

Monks, there are two states that are bright. What two? Sense of shame [hiri] and fear of shame [ottappa]. These two states are bright. Monks, these two bright states protect the world. What two? Sense of shame and fear of shame. Monks, if these two states did not protect the world, then there would be seen no mother or mother’s sister, no uncle’s wife nor teacher’s wife, nor wife of honourable men; but the world would come to confusion, promiscuity such as exists among goats and sheep, fowls and swine, dogs and jackals. But, monks, since these two bright states do protect the world, therefore there are seen mothers . . . and the rest.

In the Navakovāda, Vajirañña, following the Tipitaka, presents the dhamma that protects the world in terms of the categories of hiri and ottappa.22 However, a more extensive explanation of their meanings appear in one of
his articles instead of in Navakovāda:

Those who are in a noble family always embody the dhamma of proper conduct. What is their dhamma? It is the dhamma of hiri-ottappa. Thus, those who are in a noble family but are evil are usually blamed for not deserving their noble birth. Anyone who conducts him/herself with hiri and ottappa can be called a noble one.  

It is clear from this passage that Vajirañāṇa believed that nobility by birth should result in noble conduct. This belief can be traced to the traditional Thai concept of kamma, namely, that a good birth in the present is the outcome of good deeds in past lives. Thus, those born into a noble family should realize the virtue of their noble origin. Those born nobly but who do evil are to be blamed for not behaving according to their noble origin. According to Vajiranana, the essence of nobility resided not so much in the status of birth, but in human conduct. Thus, anyone who conducts him/herself with hiri and ottappa can be called noble. Vajirañāṇa argues that one should do good and avoid evil not because of his birth but because of his adherence to dhamma, i.e., hiri. Those who have wisdom perceive that all beings are subject to the Law of kamma, and are afraid to do evil which will yield evil in return. This fear of the Law of kamma and its retribution is ottappa. 

Wisdom is closely related to and crucial for hiri and ottappa. One cannot see the value of the doctrine of hiri and ottappa or can follow it properly if one lacks
wisdom. Vajirañāṇa contends that two kinds of wisdom promote hiri and ottappa in the human mind: āyakosala (wisdom of the cause of prosperity) and apāyakosala (wisdom of the cause of decline). Āyakosala is composed of hiri and ottappa which encourage a person to act only for the good and prosperity of himself and others. With hiri and ottappa, a person is conscious of the result of his/her conduct and, thus, will choose to do only that which yields a good result. Apāyakosala is the wisdom which helps a person to realize the causes of decline: ahiri (the lack of hiri) and anottappa (the lack of ottappa). With apāyakosala, a person realizes the danger of ahiri and anottappa and the necessity of hiri and ottappa. Whenever a person lacks hiri and ottappa, s/he lacks a moral discipline to restrain him/her from being indulgent in doing evil. Vajirañāṇa also asserts that those with wisdom will penetrate to the merit (kusala) and demerit (akusala) of actions and choose to pursue only the merit, which will bring prosperity to themselves and others.

Adhitthānadhama. Adhitthānadhama—literally the dhamma which should be established in the mind—promotes right view and self-detachment; thus, it should be established in human mind in order to secure one with virtues. In the Navakovāda, Vajirañāṇa introduces the four divisions
of adhitthānādhamma: paññā (wisdom— the ability to know what should be known), sacca (truthfulness— the ability to be determined and practical in true knowledge), cāga (renunciation— the ability to renounce all that is an enemy to truthfulness), and upasama (tranquility— the ability to withdraw oneself from the enemy of peace).  

Bala (the dhamma of power). Bala is originally mentioned in the Tipiṭaka in which the venerable Sāriputta recited the Buddha's teaching to his monastic brethren in order to preserve them as guidance of their holy life and for the welfare and happiness of all beings. Here, bala is "faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and insight." In the Navakovāda, bala is divided into saddhā (confidence), viriya (effort), sati (mindfulness), samādhi (concentration), and paññā (wisdom).

Sappurisadhamma (the dhamma of a good man). Sappurisadhamma was originally the teaching of the Buddha to the monks, as recorded in the Aṅguttara-nikāya of the Tipiṭaka, namely, the seven mental qualities which make a monk worthy of offerings, and a peerless field of merit. These qualities of a monk are expressed formulaically as: dhammaññutā (dhamma-knower), atthaññutā (meaning-knower), attaññutā (self-knower), mattaññutā (measure-knower), kalaññutā (time-knower), parisaññutā (assem-
bly-knower), and puggalāññutā (noble or base person-knower). These categories are expounded in the text in traditional terms. The dhamma-knower is the one who knows the saying, psalms, catechisms, songs, solemnities, speeches, birth-stories, marvels and runes. The meaning-knower is the one who knows the meanings of the dhamma stated previously. The self-knower knows the "self" in faith, in virtue, in learning, in self-surrender, in wisdom, and in ready speech. The measure-knower is the one who knows the proper measure in accepting the requisites: the robe, alms, lodging, and medicine. The time-knower is the one who knows when to recite, to question, to make an effort, and to be in solitude. The assembly-knower is the one who knows how to approach and participate with the assemblies of nobles, of brahmans, of householders, and of recluse. The noble or base person-knower is the one who knows that the person who follows the dhamma is noble and that the person who does not follow the dhamma is base.

In the Aṅguttara-nikāya, the Buddha preached the sappurisadhamma especially for the monks. In the Navakovāda, Vajirañāṇa broadens the interpretation of this dhamma to include lay people in order to apply it to the secular world as well as to the monastery. He divides sappurisadhamma into dhammaññutā (the ability to know the cause of happiness and suffering), atthaññutā (the
ability to know the consequence of its necessary cause), attaññutā (the ability to know oneself, i.e., to know how to behave according to one's own status, property, knowledge, and virtue), mattaññutā (the ability to be moderate in one's living), kalaññutā (the ability to know the proper time to do something), parisaññutā (the ability to know the community in order to behave accordingly), and puggalā-paroparññutā (the ability to know individuals in order to make friends with the good and avoid the bad). All these dhamma emphasize the mental discipline and purification of both monks and lay people as being more important than external regulations.

Dhamma as Right Action

After having kept the mind in good discipline, one is then ready to perform right actions. In Navakovāda, Vajiranana categorizes right action for both monks and laity, which were under a disciplined mind, as follows:

1. Sappurisadhamma
2. Sobhaṇadhamma
3. Vuddhidhamma
4. Cakkadhamma
5. Vesārajjakarana-dhamma

Sappurisadhamma. As a dhamma of the inner
discipline, sappurisadhamma helps one know oneself and others properly. As a dhamma of the right action, it helps one act properly out of such knowledge. In the Tipitaka, the Buddha preached this dhamma to monks in terms of the following categories: faith (saddhā), shame and fear of blame (hiri and ottappa), observance or hearing much (bahussutta), mindfulness (sati), wisdom (pañña), energetic (viriya), and possessing states of mind, consorting with good men (sappurisa), thinking as good men, advising as good men, speaking as good men, acting as good men, having the views of good men, and giving the gifts of good men. Vajirañāṇa, by way of comparison, exposit sappurisadhamma as: keeping oneself in right faith, moral shame, moral dread, extensive information, right effort, mindfulness, and wisdom; discussing with others things that do not harm one's own self or others; thinking of things that do not harm one's own self or others; talking about things that do not harm one's own self or others; doing whatever does not harm one's own self or others; having right opinion in the truth: "good action yields good results, and vice versa;" and giving alms with respect.

As can be seen, Vajirañāṇa's method of exposition closely resembles the scholastic style of the Aṅguttaraniyā. Vajirañāṇa seems to emphasize the first meaning of the sappurisadhamma, keeping oneself in right faith, in moral shame, in moral dread, in extensive information,
in right effort, in mindfulness, and in wisdom. In his article "sappurisadhamma-kathā," Vajiraṇāṇa states that there are many sets of dhamma for being a good man, and that the seven dhamma worth mentioning are: saddhā (right faith), hiri (moral shame), ottappa (moral dread), bahusacca (extensive information or learning), viriya (effort), sati (mindfulness), and panna (wisdom). According to his interpretation, saddhā is a belief in a reasonable principle; that is, a belief in the kammic law and its retribution which prescribes that good deeds yields good results and vice versa. Hiri and ottappa purify a person's thought, word, and conduct, and thus bring peace to the community whose members adhere to them. Bahusacca, the quality of being well-learned, yields a sense of morality and responsibility. Viriya, the effort to avoid all evils and to preserve goodness, leads one to the end of suffering. Sati, the state of self-awareness before thinking, speaking, and doing, leads one to right thought, right speech, and right action. And finally, panna, the penetration into all principles and laws, especially the law of nature, leads one to the end of suffering and the attainment of true happiness in this world and the hereafter. These seven dhamma constitute the qualities of all good people, both monks and laity. In the Sappurisadhamma-kathā, Vajiraṇāṇa, however, does not mention the other six divisions of this dhamma.
One can notice that the sappurisadhamma follows the dhamma of great assistance and the dhamma that protects the world which form the morality of inner discipline. Thus, one can conclude that dhamma as moral action is based on the motives, methods, and results of actions, i.e., to do something good is to do it with a good motive, method, and expectation, so that an action will not harm the doer and others.

Sobhana Dhamma (dhamma of gracefulness). The dhamma of gracefulness as recorded in Vinaya.I.349, and in Aṅguttara-nikāya.I.94 of the Tipiṭaka, is the Buddha's teaching to monks concerning the conditions of religious attainments stipulated as khanti (tolerance) and soracca (modesty). Following the Tipiṭaka, Vajirañāṇa gives a short description, in the Navakovāda, of this dhamma as a restraint of one's action so that the action will be pleasant to others; a modesty and tolerance due to mindfulness, understanding, conscientiousness and fear of evil deeds.38

Vuddhidhamma (dhamma conducive to growth). According to the Tipitaka, the Buddha preached the vuddhi-dhamma to monks while staying near Kosambi in Ghosita Park, and it consisted of four states conducive to growth in wisdom:
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1. Association with a good man
2. Hearing the saddhamma (right doctrine)
3. Mental reflection on saddhamma
4. Behaving according to the dhamma

Vajirañāṇa adopts the Tipitaka's structure of the vuddhidhamma dividing it into sappurissamīseva (association with a sappurisa—one who conducts oneself well in actions, words, and thoughts), saddhammassavāna (listening to good teaching with respect), yonisomanasikāra (critical reflection in order to conceive good and evil), and dhammānudhamma-patipatti (to conduct oneself morally according to the perceived truth).

Vajirañāṇa gives no detailed explanation or interpretation of vuddhidhamma. He only summarizes the Buddha's teaching as recorded in the Aṅguttara-nikāya, and presents it in the most concise manner so that newly ordained monks can memorize it more easily.

Cakkadhamma. The Tipitaka records that once when the Buddha was staying at Campa, on the bank of Lake Gag-gara, with 500 monks, the venerable Sāriputta recited a certain doctrine to the monks that there were Four Things that helped human beings very much. They were called the four "wheels," and were described as "the orbit of a favourable place of residence, the orbit of association with the good, perfect adjustment of one's self, and the cy-
Closely following the Tipitaka, in the Navakovāda, Vajiraṇāṇa presents the composition of the cakkadhamma as: 
*patirūpadesavāsa* (living in a good environment), 
*sappurisupassāya* (association with good people), 
*attasammāpanidhi* (setting oneself in the right course), and 
*pubbekatapuṇṇatā* (having formerly done meritorious deeds).

For Vajiraṇāṇa, a stable environment is a crucial factor for the cultivation and practice of dhamma; one can more easily cultivate and purify one's mind and actions in good surroundings such as a good community. Thus, he encourages one to choose a good place and a good community to live in so that one can lead a righteous and happy life.

Vesārajjakaranadhamma. In the Tipiṭaka, the vesārajjakaranadhamma is the dhamma which gives confidence to a learner. The Buddha preached to monks that what was fearful to the one of little faith, the unvirtuous, the one of little learning, the lazy, and the one who lacked insight, was not fearful to the believer, the virtuous, the learned, the energetic, and the one with insight. Following the Tipiṭaka, Vajiraṇāṇa summarizes the vesārajjakaranadhamma, in Navakovāda, as *saddhā* (right faith), *sīla* (good conduct), *bahusacca* (great learning), *viriyarambhā* (exertion), and *paññā* (wis-
Vajirañāṇa intended to use this doctrine for making one an ideal monk as well as an ideal householder. This teaching overlaps with the doctrine of bala which focuses on spiritual awareness.

Dhamma Exclusively for Laity

Since monks must communicate with lay people, they need to know about lay morality in order to help lay people improve their moral conduct according to the Buddha's teaching. In the Navakovāda, Vajirañāṇa presents this dhamma in the ghipatipatti (moral practices of the house-holders). The ghipatipatti encourages lay people to associate with good companions, to be industrious, to avoid whatever will harm them personally and their community, and to contribute to their own community. As the ways of life and religious goals of laity and monks differ, the dhamma for lay people does not emphasize worldly detachment and a solitary life. In Vajirañāṇa's view, dhamma not only helps the laity to become good human beings but also good citizens. In the Navakovāda, this dhamma is differentiated into samparāyikattha-saṅvatta-nikadhamma (the dhamma which is conducive to benefits in the future), and the gharāvāsadhamma (the dhamma for lay people).
The **Samparāyikattha-sañvattanikadhamma**

According to the Tipitaka, once, while the Buddha was staying in Kakkarapatta, a Koliyan visited him and asked him to preach the dhamma which could provide the Koliyans with happiness here on earth and in the world to come. The Buddha answered that the four conditions which led human beings to happiness in this world were achievement in alertness, achievement in weariness, good company and an even life.\(^46\) The four conditions leading to advantage and happiness in the world to come were achievements in faith, virtue, charity, and wisdom. The achievement in faith, according to the Aṅguttara-nikāya, is faith in the enlightenment of the Buddha by believing in the truth that "he is the Exalted One, arahant, fully awake, abounding in wisdom and righteousness, the well-farer, world-knower, incomparable tamer of tamable men, teacher, and the awakened of devas and men."\(^47\) The achievement in virtue is the abstinence "from taking life, from stealing, from the lusts of the flesh, from lying, and from drinking liquor which are the causes of sloth."\(^48\) The achievement in charity is the purification from avarice and the delight in giving.\(^49\) The achievement in wisdom is the clear understanding of the rise and fall of things and of the Noble Paths towards the end of suffering.\(^50\) Instead of interpreting, analyzing, or clarifying the meaning of samparāyikattha-sañvattanikadhamma, Vajirañāṇa only briefly re-
capitulates the text: that the dhamma conducive to benefits in the future is composed of saddhāsampadā (accomplishment of confidence), silasampadā (accomplishment of virtue), cāgasampadā (accomplishment of charity), and paññāsampadā (accomplishment of wisdom).

The Gharāvāsadhamma (the dhamma for householders)

The gharāvāsadhamma is the dhamma for being a good householder. In the Tipiṭaka, Ālavaka-yakkha once asked the Buddha, while the latter was staying at Ālavī, how to live in this world without sorrow. The Buddha then preached the gharāvāsa-dhamma:

Whoso the layman's life doth seek
In pious faith and hath these four:-
Veracity [sacca] and self-control [dama],
steadfastness [khanti], generosity [cāga] -
When passed away, he'll weep no more.

In the Navakovāda, Vajirañāṇa only outlines the elements of the gharāvāsadhamma as sacca (truth and honesty to each other), dama (self-restraint), khanti (tolerance), and cāga (generosity). However, he explains this category of dhamma in detail in the Gharāvāsadhamma-Katha. Here, Vajirañāṇa interprets this dhammic category, and applies each of its elements to Thai society in general. Sacca (truth and honesty to each other) is the foundation of unity. For example, if husband and wife are honest to each other, they will
not commit adultery, and, thus, will help each other work for the happiness and unity of their family. Dama (self-restraint) is also the foundation of unity. Those who lack dama will be dominated by ill-will and anger, and thus their words and deeds can destroy their friendship with others. Khanti (tolerance) is the ability to resist the challenge of all defilements which might arouse anger, frustration, disappointment, and sorrow. Caga is giving and generosity based on mettā (loving kindness) towards others. Further analyzing these concepts, Vajirañāṇa remarks that giving and generosity require careful consideration and wisdom. Giving to an able but lazy person who intends to take advantage of kind people by living on their money is useless. The right practice of giving and generosity calls for the consideration of its result for the receiver such as curing sick people so that they can recover from their illness, supporting a person so that s/he can gain more knowledge and skill, and supporting a religion which teaches human beings to do good. Lay people who possess these four dhamma will attain the realm of happiness (su-gati) after death.⁵⁴

Since the lay community is composed of members who relate to each other according to their particular social status and roles, the dhamma of one is, thus, different from another according to one's duty and role in that
society such as the *dhamma* for parents and children, the *dhamma* for teacher and student, and the *dhamma* for husband and wife. Lay people who want to follow the Buddha's teaching and fulfill their moral life not only follow the norms of the teaching, but also choose to practice the *dhamma* according to their social roles and status.

**Dhamma Exclusively for Monks**

The *Navakovāda* presents the *dhamma* for monks in two of its three sections: the *dhammavibhāga* and the *vinaya-paññatti*. The *dhammavibhāga* deals with *dhamma* for both monks and lay people; the *vinaya-paññatti* presents the monastic rules exclusively for monks; and the *gīhi-patipatti* deals only with the *dhamma* for laity. In the *dhammavibhāga*, there are five *dhamma* for monks: *dhamma* for new-ordained monks, *dhamma* for memorable conduct, *dhamma* for the welfare of monks, *dhamma* which makes for protection, and the ethical precepts of the monks' life.

**Dhamma for new-ordained monks**

This *dhamma* is for those who have just begun to enter the monastic life. It is described in the *dhamma-vibhāga* as follows:

1. One should preserve the *patimokkha*, do whatever the Buddha taught and avoid all he forbade
2. One should keep all sensations in control, i.e., one should keep eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind from being satisfied or dissatisfied.

3. One should curb oneself from being overjoyed.

4. One should live in solitude.

5. One should cultivate right views.

These dhamma first appear in the Aṅguttara-nikāya which recounts Ānanda's response to the Buddha concerning the dhamma of the novices. According to Ānanda, the novices should be virtuous, live with all sensations well guarded, curb their words, be forest-dwellers, and have right views. To be virtuous is to live in the restraint of the pātimokkha (the fundamental rules of the Order). To live with all sensations well guarded is to be awake and watch one's sensations with wisdom. To curb one's words is to restrain oneself from being talkative. To be forest-dwellers is to live secluded in the wilderness. And, to have a right view is to see things as they really are.

Having prepared oneself according to these dhamma, a newly ordained monk should improve his conduct and participate morally and virtuously with his monastic fellows. The dhamma which will help the newly ordained monk to achieve this is the dhamma for memorable conduct which leads one only to prosperity.

Dhamma for memorable conduct (sārāniyadhamma)
This dhamma is composed of the following precepts:

1. One should have good actions such as being merciful to one's fellow monks both in their presence and behind their backs.

2. One should have good words such as being merciful in words such as teaching fellow monks with kindness.

3. One should have a positive mentality such as thinking only about beneficial things for other fellow monks.

4. One should share things properly gained with other monks and novices in order to eliminate the sense of possession.

5. One should preserve moral precepts as firmly as other monks and avoid conducting oneself in a disgusting manner.

6. One should share the same religious views with other fellow monks and avoid conflict caused by different opinions.

In his preaching and writing, Vajirañāna added nothing new to the Tipiṭaka. He merely transmitted the literal meanings of this dhamma to Buddhists. The sārāṇiya-dhamma taught by the Buddha to his monks consists of six ways of being considerate: amity in deeds towards his fellows both openly and in private, amity in words towards his fellows both openly and in private, amity in thoughts toward his fellow both openly and in private, sharing things gained properly with his fellows, living a
virtuous life with his fellows, and having a common noble view with his fellows.\textsuperscript{58}

Through these \textit{dhamma}, a monk will be loveable and be able to live harmoniously with his monastic peers. In order to promote harmony within the monastery and improve the relationship between monastic members, Vajirañåna also introduced another \textit{dhamma}--the aparihāriya-dhamma (\textit{dhamma} of welfare for monks).

\textit{Dhamma} for the welfare of monks (\textit{aparihāriya-dhamma})

This \textit{dhamma} is divided into seven precepts:

1. Monks should hold regular and frequent meetings
2. Monks should meet together in harmony, disperse in harmony, and perform the business and duties of the Order in harmony
3. Monks should introduce no revolutionary ordinance, break up no established ordinance, but train themselves in accordance with the prescribed training-rules
4. Monks should honour and respect those elders of long experience, the fathers and leaders of the Order, and deem them worthy of listening to
5. Monks should not fall under the influence of arising craving
6. Monks should be delighted in forest retreats
7. Monks should establish themselves in mindfulness,
with good thoughts for the happiness of those disciplined ascetics who have arrived and will arrive at the monastery.\textsuperscript{59}

The \textit{aparihāriyadhamma} for monks was once preached by the Buddha in order to secure and strengthen monastic unity. The Buddha decided to preach this \textit{dhamma} to monks after Vassakāra-brāhmaṇa had visited him in Rājagaha and learned from him that as long as the Vajjians were united, they could not be destroyed.\textsuperscript{60}

In the monastery, monks are trained to live a virtuous and simple life. In order to achieve this, monks should practice the \textit{nāthakarana-dhamma} (dhamma which makes for protection).

\textit{Dhamma} which makes for protection (\textit{nāthakaranadhamma})

This \textit{dhamma} consists of \textit{sīla} (good conduct), \textit{bahusacca} (great learning), \textit{kalayānamittatā} (good company), \textit{sovacassatā} (meekness), \textit{kiṅkaraṇīyesu dakkhatā} (willingness to give a helping hand), \textit{dhammakamatā} (love of truth), \textit{viriya} (the effort to do good and avoid evil), \textit{santutthi} (contentment in living), \textit{sati} (mindfulness), and \textit{paññā} (wisdom, the ability to penetrate to the truth of the nature of all things).\textsuperscript{61} The Buddha taught monks to guard themselves well through the cultivation of ten states: monks should be virtuous, hear much, be friends...
with good people, be easy to speak to, be willing to undertake all monastic activities, delight in dhamma, try to abandon bad qualities and acquire good qualities, be content with monastic life, possess mindfulness and good memory, and have the noble insight leading to the end of suffering.62

In the Dhamma-vibhāga, Vajiraṇāṇa 's exposition of the monks' dhamma closely follows the Tipiṭaka, especially, the Aṅguttara-nikāya, with little deviation from the classical Theravada norm. In order to remind monks of their duty to keep their dhamma strictly and carefully, Vajiraṇāṇa refers to another passage of the Aṅguttara-nikāya which presents monks' ethical precepts.

Monks' Ethical Precepts

These precepts are the dhamma that monks should keep remembering:

1. I (as a monk) am different from lay people and must perform actions that are proper to me

2. I (as a monk) depend on lay people for food and thus should be easy to feed

3. I (as a monk) should continue improving my actions and words

4. I (as a monk) should critique myself with moral precepts
5. I (as a monk) should be criticized with moral precepts by those who are religiously knowledgeable.

6. I (as a monk) may depart from my beloved ones.

7. I (as a monk) have my own *kamma*; if I do good, I shall have a good return, and vice versa.

8. I (as a monk) should keep asking myself: "As day passes by, what am I doing?"

9. I (as a monk) should keep asking myself: "Am I content with this quiet place?"

10. I (as a monk) should keep asking myself: "Am I virtuous, so that I may not feel embarrassed by being questioned later?" 64

The *Navakovāda* concludes its discussion of dhamma for monks with the *Vinava-pannatti*, an exposition of the 227 monastic rules originally recorded in the *Vinaya-piṭaka* including rules prohibiting a monk from being a match-maker and watching troops about to enter warfare. 65 Allowed for lay people, these activities are improper for monks who are the dhammic heirs of the Buddha, and, thus, are supposed to be respected by lay people. The transgression of these monastic rules yields certain punishment by the Saṅgha.

For Vajiraṇāṇa, monks differ from lay people by their status as the dhammic heirs of the Buddha and by their moral precepts which outnumber laity's according to the *Tipiṭaka*. Once, a person becomes monk, he is considered sacred and holy as the third part of the Triple Gem. Thus,
monks should attempt, through their practice according to the Vinaya, to preserve and cultivate ideal monastic virtues in order to be respected by all people. As we shall see, Vajirāṇāṇa's position differs from Buddhādāsa who focuses on an individual's virtue rather than his/her office and status, and he treats monks and lay people as equal until they have proved their virtue by their own deeds.
Dhamma as the Law of Nature

Dhamma as the Law of Nature, for Vajirāñāṇa, is the dhamma which dominates and regulates all beings in the universe. Buddhism conceptualized this principle as the Law of Dependent Origination (paticcasamuppāda). Vajiranana interprets the Law of Dependent Origination as a fundamental cause-and-effect principle underlying the whole universe: something (A) arises from their a cause (B), and whenever the cause (B) is eliminated, the thing (A) cannot arise. For example, feelings arise out of contact with sense objects; and when contact is destroyed, feelings cannot arise. This causal law of nature embodies the truth of all phenomena that anything which possesses the nature of birth also possesses the nature of destruction (vañ kīñ cit samudavadhamañ sabbantañ nirodha dhammañ). Thus, one should not become attached to phenomena since they are changing and temporary, should not regret their changing nature, and should live a heedful life.

The classical Theravada formulation of the Law of Dependent Origination consists of avijjā (ignorance), sañkhāra (mental formations), viññāṇa (consciousness), nāma-rūpa (mentality and corporeality), salāyatana (six senses), phassa (contact of the six-senses including consciousness with the six objects of senses), vedanā
(feelings), tanhā (craving), upādāna (attachment), bhava (kammic existence), jāti (birth, the appearance of the five aggregations), and a series of human suffering—jāra (old-age), maraṇa (death), soka (sorrow), parideva (lamentation), dukkha (pain), domanassa (grief), and upāyasa (despair). Vajiraṇāṇa tends to interpret these terms literally: birth is the birth of one's body, death is the physical death; and old-age means physical development from childhood to adulthood or the physical change from maturity to senility. Vajiraṇāṇa sees paticcasamuppāda as a process beginning with avijjā. It causes saṅkhāra which was the cause of viññāna, and so on. This causal process ends at old-age and death. Vajiraṇāṇa also interprets avijjā as having no beginning or origin. According to Vajiraṇāṇa, the causes of things in the present exist in our previous lives and the causes of our future life come from our present life. Life, contends Vajiraṇāṇa, does not end with death in this world but is a continuous process through the past, present, and future.

Beside the Law of Dependent Origination, the Law of Nature, for Vajiraṇāṇa, includes a basic natural element (lokadhamma) which dominates all beings. Lokadhamma, which is composed of lābha (gain), alābha (loss), vasa (fame), ayasa (obscenity), nīdā (blame), pasansā (praise), sukkha (happiness), and dukkha (pain).
affects human life and dominates all human beings who lack wisdom and ability to see things as they really are. These natural elements enter human life through sensations and dominate it as long as human beings are attached to them. For example, dukkha (pain) causes us trouble because we become attached to the object of pain. If we abandon all objects of pain, we will, consequently, be free from all pain. Lokadhamma exists, then, only temporarily. If we understand the changing conditions of the attributes of lokadhamma, we will not become attached to them or take them too seriously, and, thus, will be free from their influence.

Dhamma as the Nature of Truth

Speaking ontologically, "dhamma" is the law of nature, but speaking from an epistemological perspective, it is the truth about the nature of things. Dhamma as truth is classified into mundane truth (lokiya-dhamma) and supra-mundane truth (lokuttara-dhamma). Mundane truth is the truth of compounded things (saṅkhata-dhamma). All compounded things are changeable (anicca), subject to suffering (dukkha), and non-substantial (anattā). Supra-mundane truth is the truth of non-compounded things (asaṅkhata-dhamma) one of which is nibbana. According to Vajirañāṇa, the truth of saṅkhata-dhamma is that mun-
dane things are subject to five sabbhāva-dhamma consisting of corporeality (rupa), feeling (vedanā), perception (saññā), mental formations (sañkhāra), and consciousness (viññāna). Sañkhata-dhamma is always in the process of birth, existing, and deterioration. Sañkhāra is a sañkhata-dhamma because it is formed, exists, and disappears according to time and place, and situation. Mundane truth characterizes sañkhata-dhamma, Vajirañāṇa asserts, because compounded things are subject to causality and change; and even non-mundane truths are partially sañkhata-dhamma since they are differentiated into levels. Only nibbāna, the supreme lokuttara-dhamma which transcends the cycle of birth and death, is asañkhata-dhamma.72

According to the Buddha's teaching, the nature of sañkhata-dhamma involves deterioration: all things which come into being also cease to exist (vañkiṇci samudaya-dhamman sabbanta nirodha-dhammañ).73 Lokiyadhamma which characterizes sañkhata-dhamma does not encourage human beings to escape from this world of birth and death to nibbāna. Thus, lokiya-dhamma is not the noble truth which leads to the destruction of human defilements. Lokuttara-dhamma, on the other hand, is the noble truth which leads to the destruction of human defilements and the attainment of nibbāna.74

The meaning of dhamma as the Buddha's teaching em-
bodies or expresses the truth in its two aspects--lokiya-dhamma and lokuttaradhamma. But the significance of this epistemological dimension of dhamma is primarily moral or spiritual. In his article on the Dhammacakkappavattana-sutta, Vajiranāṇa emphasizes the value of the lokuttaradhamma as the Noble Eightfold Path, its results, and nibbāna, the ultimate goal. He demonstrates that the Noble Eightfold Path leads to the rise of wisdom, the destruction of defilements, and the knowledge of the absolute truth; that is, the knowledge of the end of suffering and nibbāna.⁷⁵

**Dhamma as Things in General**

Throughout his writings, Vajiranāṇa occasionally uses the term dhamma in a neutral sense to refer to things in general. This kind of dhamma is amoral, referring to a state or thing that is neither good nor evil in itself (abyākata).⁷⁶ Dhamma as things in general is divided roughly into corporeality (rūpa-dhamma) and mentality (nāma-dhamma):

All dhamma which can be thoroughly seen by the eyes, heard by the ears, smelled by the nose, tasted by the tongue, or touched by the body, are called rūpadhamma.

and

Nāmadhamma are those elements which cannot be seen by the eyes, heard by the ears, smelt by the nose,
tasted by the tongue, or touched by the body. 78

These dhamma are objects of the senses and the mind and are subject to the Law of Dependent Origination: "As to all dhamma which are created by causes, the Buddha has explained the cause of the birth and death of those dhamma (ve dhammā hetuppabhavā tesaṁ hetum Tathākato āha [Vinaya.i.40])." 79 Dhamma in the sense of the things of the phenomenal world is classified and characterized in the Abhidhamma. While Vajirañāṇa often seems to use dhamma in this sense, this level of meaning of the term is not the focus of systematic attention in his work.

Vajirañāṇa utilizes various traditional meanings of dhamma in his written work. However, on balance he seems to emphasize the meaning of dhamma as the Buddha's moral teachings rather than as the Law of Nature, things in general, or the nature of truth. His emphasis on dhamma as morality is consistent with his role as the head of the Thai monastic order and his use of Buddhism to abet the development of a modern nation state. In short, dhamma, for Vajirañāṇa was perceived principally as the underpinning of the Thai nation as a moral community rather than as a principle to challenge the attempt to understand its essence.
An Analysis of Vajirañāna's Dhamma

In the Thai Social Context

Vajirañāna's exposition of dhamma plays a significant role in Thai religious values and practices today. It supports the monarchical system through its concept of a righteous king; and it promotes nationalistic sentiments through a concept of unity among Buddhists and gratitude to the king. Further, it leads support to supernaturalism in popular Thai Buddhism through its positive assertions about life after death. I turn now to survey the role of Vajirañāna's dhamma and its influence on Thai concepts of kingship, nationality and nationalism, and on the beliefs and practices of Thai popular religion.

Thai Kingship

As already mentioned above, Vajirañāna assisted King Rama V's efforts to make Thailand a modern nation-state. While Vajirañāna obviously did not originate the concept of Thai kingship, his exposition of dhamma supports and strengthens the traditional view of the monarch as set forth in the Trai Phūm Phra Ruang (The Three Worlds According to King Ruang), a Fourteenth-Century treatise on cosmology and kingship. In order to show how
Vajirañāṇa utilized the concept of kingship as presented in the Sutta Pitaka and interpreted in the Trai Phūm Phra Ruang. I will first discuss the concept of Thai kingship in the Trai Phūm Phra Ruang, and then analyse Vajirañāṇa's exposition of dhamma as related to this traditional Buddhist concept of kingship.

The Trai Phūm Phra Ruang was written in 1345 by Phya Lithai, a famous Buddhist king of the Sukhodaya Kingdom. It was originally intended to "make the Dhamma more accessible to the laity," and to "strengthen his [the king's] hold on the loyalty of his subjects."

These intentions were carried out through the portrayal of the king as a bodhisatta, cakkavatti or dhammika-rāja, and Great Elect (mahāsammata). Phya Lithai portrayed the king as having substantially more merit and a better character than others in his kingdom. The king was a bodhisatta because he worked for others' welfare and prosperity, and, therefore, possessed more merit than other citizens. He was the Great Elect because all the people in his land chose him to be their ruler:

They then consecrate the Lord Bodhisatta to be their king by endowing him with three names; one name is Great Elect, another name is Khattiya, and another name is King. The reason that he is called Great Elect is because it is the people who appoint him to be their superior. The reason that he is called Khattiya is because the people agree to have him divide the highland fields, the lowland fields, the rice, and the water among them. The reason that he is called King is because he pleases the senses and the minds of the people--thus he is called King for that reason.
The Lord Bodhisatta is, in fact, a male; and the people raise him up to be king because they see that in appearance he is more handsome than other people; that he knows more than other people; that his mind is more refined and kinder than the minds of other people; and that his mind is more honest, more straightforward, and more concerned with merit than the minds of other people. Seeing that this is the case, they then, for that reason, appoint him to be their king, their lord, and their leader. The practice of calling him Ṛkhatṭiya has continued in the tradition until now.

In addition to being the bodhisatta and the Great Elect, the king is also the dharmika-rāja or the cakkavatti. The dharmika-rāja is the king who adheres to dhamma; the cakkavatti is the king who rolls the wheel (of dhamma) or the Universal Monarch. Phya Lithai wrote that the cakkavatti always made great merit in acting according to the dhamma, listening to the dhamma, and preaching the dhamma to his people:

Those who have known the virtues of the Lord Buddha, the Holy Dhamma, and the Holy Sangha; and those who have given alms, kept the precepts, and practiced the meditation concerning loving kindness, when they die, take their rebirth in heaven. But sometimes the result is that they are born to be great rulers and kings who have splendor and majesty, who have a great and infinite number of attendants, and whose conquest extends over the entire universe. Any or all words or orders that such a person says or utters, or anything he enforces, is generally in accordance with the dhamma. This person is one who is called a great cakkavatti king.

Such a king has this kind of merit, and he often had a strong desire to listen to the preaching of the dhamma. He generally listens to the preaching of the dhamma in the circles of the monks, the brahmin teachers, and the wise men who know the dhamma.
it is just as if the Lord Buddha had been born and was teaching the people to live according to the dhamma. At that time the great cakkavatti king then teaches the rulers to live according to the dhamma. He then speaks as follows: "Let the rulers and kings observe the ten dhammic rules for kings, and do so without ever ceasing." 84

All these qualities of a great king refer to Phya Lithai himself:

Thus, he [Phya Lithai] took the title of Mahā-dhammarāja (Great dhamma King), and later in his reign he carried the Thai tradition of sacral kingship still further by associating himself very directly with the Bodhisatta ideal (the Bodhisatta is a future Buddha who has committed himself to the perfection of the great Buddhist virtues and to the task of leading his fellow beings toward salvation) and even with the figure of the fully realized Buddha. In a famous inscription he proclaims his own Bodhisatta vow to work for the salvation of all beings.

The idea of a Buddhist king's being a bodhisatta, Great elect, and cakkavatti find support in the Buddhist scriptures and commentaries. In the Aggañña-sutta, the Buddha told Vaseṭṭha, who was born a brahman but wanted to be ordained by the Buddha, that the first king of human beings was the Great Elect:

Chosen by the whole people, Vaseṭṭha, is what is meant by Mahā Sammata; so Mahā Sammata (the Great Elect) was the first standing phrase to arise (for such a one). Lord of the Fields is what is meant by Khattiya; so Khattiya (Noble) was the next expression to arise. He charms the others by the Norm—by what ought (to charm)—is what is meant by Rāja; so this was the third standing phrase to arise.

Thus the Norm, Vaseṭṭha, was the origin of this social circle of the Nobles, according to the ancient primordial phrases (by which they were known). Their origin was from among those very beings, and no others; like unto themselves, not unlike; and it took place according to the Norm (according to what ought to be, justify), not unfittingly.
Buddhaghosa added that the Great Elect was also the bodhisatta when he interpreted this passage of the Aggañña-sutta:

When beings had come to an agreement in this way in this aeon, firstly this Blessed One himself, who was then the Bodhisatta (Being Due to be Enlightened), was the handsomest, the most comely, the most honourable, and was clever and capable of exercising the effort of restrain. They approached him, asked him, and elected him. Since he was recognized (sammata) by the majority (mahā-jana) he was called Mahasammata. Since he was lord of the fields (khetta) he was called Khattiya (warrior noble). Since he promoted others' good (rañjeti) righteously and equitably he was a king (rāja). This is how he came to be known by these names. For the Bodhisatta himself is the first man concerned in any wonderful innovation in the world. So after the Khattiya circle had been established by making the Bodhisatta the first in this way, the Brahmans and the other castes were founded in due succession.

Portraying the king as the Great Elect, the Tipitaka also calls him cakkavatti. In the Cakkavatti-Sihanāda Suttanta, the Buddha recounted the story of a king who told his son about the noble duty of a wheel-turning monarch (cakkavatti):

This, dear son, that thou, leaning on the Norm (the Law of truth and righteousness) honouring, respecting and revering it, doing homage to it, hallowing it, being thyself a Norm-banner, a Norm-signal, having the Norm as thy master, shouldst provide the right watch, ward, and protection for thine own folk, for the army, for the nobles, for vassals, for brahmins, and householders, for town and country dwellers, for the religious world, and for beasts and birds. Throughout thy kingdom let no wrongdoing prevail. And whosoever in thy kingdom is poor, to him let wealth be given.

The duty of the cakkavatti described here is the
moral quality or dhamma of a great good king. In the Jātaka, one can find the detailed description of the dhammika-rāja's ten moral qualities. In the Mahāhamsa-jātaka, King Samyama of Benares once trapped the Bodhisatta Dhatarattha, who had been born as a Golden Goose, for his queen. After being taken to the king's palace, the bodhisatta was released and conversed with the king who declared his dasa-rājadhamma:

I mark the span of life, O bird, how quickly it is sped. And, standing fast in virtues ten, the next world never dread. Almsgiving, justice, penitence, meek spirit, temper mild, peace, mercy, patience, charity, with morals undefiled. These graces firmly planted in my soul are clear to see, whence springs rich harvest of great joy and happiness for me.

In Thai Buddhism, these ten moral duties have characterized the attributes of the dhammic king since the Sukhodayan period (ca. Thirteenth Century). S. J. Tambiah states that the Buddhist concept of kingship from the Sukhodayan and Ayutthayan periods to the Nineteenth Century allows equating the cakkavatti and the bodhisatta, and the ten duties of the dhammic king. According to Tambiah, the Thai king has always identified himself with the bodhisatta in order to assert his dhammic achievements and has been identified by others in the same way.

Vajirañāṇa accepted and emphasized this view which identified the king with the Great Elect, the bodhisatta, and the cakkavatti. He asserted that the king was the head and the leader of all human beings:
The King arises from the majority's election in order to regulate human community—The King is the head of the majority. He leads all the administrations as the head is the leader of the whole body: the body can function well because its activities follow the command issued from the head. Without the head, the whole body collapses. Similarly, human society needs the King. Without the King, all administrative departments cannot work with each other. The King is the center of the administrative system; his power connects all administrative functions together and encourages them to do their duties. We can unite into this kingdom because we have the king as our ruler; and each of us does his/her duty under the king as all different organs do their duties under the command of the head.

Vajirañāṇa argues further that the legitimate power and glory of the king as the head of human community were the outcome of his previous meritorious deeds. He emphasized that those who conducted themselves according to the dhamma would be protected and supported by the dhamma. Vajirañāṇa interpreted dhamma especially to highlight the virtue and moral qualities of the king:

Though the term dhamma conveys several meanings, I, however, choose to present it in two meanings: purabakāra-dhamma (dhamma practiced for others in the first place), and paṭikāra-dhamma (dhamma practiced in response to others' moral deeds). Purabakāra-dhamma is the duty of the superior to the inferior. Paṭikāra-dhamma is the duty of the inferior to the superior. The purabakāra-dhamma and paṭikāra-dhamma form a good relationship between parents and children, teacher and student, king and his people, and religious founder and his followers. Here, I want to illustrate the dhamma of the king and his people. The king who loves his people and practices the dasarājadhhamma is the dhammikarāja and the beloved of his people, like a good father who is the beloved of his children. The people should be grateful and loyal to their king. They should do their duty, have a good livelihood, and offer a part of their income to the king through a faithful tax-payment.
Vajirañāṇa's strong support of the Thai monarchical system led him to emphasize attributes of dhamma associated with traditional Buddhist kingship as found in the Sutta literature and the classical Thai literature. His interpretations of dhamma referred frequently to the moral qualities and practices of Kings Rama V and VI as the center of the nation, functioning as protectors of dhamma because they embody the dasarājadhāmma. Thus, Vajirañāṇa describes Rama V's virtue in terms of these ten classical moral qualities. The king always contributed to public welfare and took care of his subjects by such activity as giving everyone rice, water, and clothing and establishing alms-houses for poor people. These activities were the first virtue of the king, dāna, as described in the dasarājadhāmma. Rama V's second virtue, sīla, can be seen in his strict observation of the Five Precepts: abstinence from killing, from stealing, from committing adultery, from false speech, and from being intoxicated. His third virtue, pariccāgaṇī, is his universal generosity. His fourth virtue, ājīvānaṇ, is his sincerity and trustworthiness. He never expressed ill-will towards his friends and relatives. His fifth virtue, maddavaṇ, is his modesty and humility. Whenever he was reasonably opposed by anyone, he reconsidered his own ideas and was ready to improve his way of thinking. Furthermore, he always behaved respectfully towards monks.
His sixth virtue, tapo, is his attempt to provide peace and happiness to all of his subjects in his kingdom. His seventh virtue, akkodho, is his restraint of anger towards anyone in his kingdom. His eighth virtue, avihimsā, is his moderation in punishment and in taxation for fear of troubling his people. His ninth virtue, khanti, is his tolerance of criticism, destructive comments, personal suffering, and his relatives' misconduct. The last virtue of the dasarājadhama Rama V possesed, avirodhanā, was his calmness and indifference to all pleasure and pain caused by others. Because of his perfection of the dasarājadhama, Vajiraṇāṇa argues, Rama V was worthy of being respected by his grateful people.95

Rama VI, the successor of Rama V also possessed the dasarājadhama. According to Vajiraṇāṇa, he improved the country and supported the welfare of his people through his virtue and righteousness. He developed national agriculture by having many canals excavated for water traffic and improved water resources for the whole country. He also had waste-land developed into productive agricultural areas.96 In order to justify revering the king, Vajiraṇāṇa referred to the Buddha's words in the Dīgha-nikāya praising four groups of noble people as worthy of a monument: the Buddha (the Fully Enlightened One who preached to humankind), the pacceka-buddha (the individually Enlightened One who did not preach to human-
kind), the arahat (the enlightened disciple of the Buddha), and the cakkavatti (the righteous universal monarch). In the Dasarājādhamma-cariyādikathā, which was presented at the coronation of Rama VI, Vajiraṇāṇa observed that there were two kinds of people born in this world to give happiness and support to all beings, both deities and human beings—the Buddha and the cakkavatti. In response to the king's beneficent leadership, Thai citizens must serve and be loyal to the king. Their duty will vary according to their position and capacity to be sure. For example, civil servants should be faithful in working, be industrious, and avoid corruption; common people should obey the law, be industrious, pay their taxes regularly, follow the ruler's policy, and willingly serve all state affairs. Since Vajiranana identified the king with the state as he was the center, the pillar, and the owner of the state in the monarchic system, being loyal to the king was also being loyal to the state. This obligation of loyalty to the king and the state is at the heart of Vajiraṇāṇa's application of dhamma to modern Thai nationalism.

Vajiraṇāṇa's Concept of Dhamma and Thai Nationalism

A sense of Thai national identity and nationalism was cultivated by Rama VI (King Vajiravudh) as described...
in the previous chapter. By Thai national identity, Rama VI meant all who were born Thai in the community which called itself "Thai," and regarding nationalism, the king demanded loyalty to the Thai nation, to the religion (here, Buddhism), and to the king, which included fighting to protect these three institutions from all enemies.

Rama VI's political ideology based on the unity of the Thai nation and the concept of the holy war, "to fight for the right," had a remarkable influence on Vajirañāṇa's exposition of dhamma.

While Vajirañāṇa was working with Rama V and Rama VI, he emphasized the meaning of dhamma as social and political unity. Stephen J. Zack notes that unity or harmony (sāmaggī) was a major element in Vajirañāṇa's social ideal. The meaning of dhamma as unity (the sāmaggī-dhamma), was first preached by Vajirañāṇa during the reign of Rama V (King Chulalongkorn), probably in order to eliminate dissension among Thai officers during the period of Thai modernization. Vajirañāṇa argued that human beings and animals can survive only when the four elements, earth, water, air and fire, united with each other and worked for everyone's mutual benefit. Whenever the four elements were in conflict, all sentient beings would die. In like manner only when people unite with one another can happiness and prosperity be attained.

During the reign of Rama V, Vajirañāṇa's interpreta-
tion of dhamma emphasized the positive meaning of unity. Dhamma was depicted as the basis of Thai solidarity in order to develop the country for the sake of all, but not as the means to fight the enemies of the country. During the reign of Rama VI, sāmaggidhamma was interpreted to mean the unity of the Thai force against the enemies of the Thai nation and as a means to discriminate non-Thais from Thais. Vajirañāṇa used sāmaggidhamma in this sense as a means to encourage the people to have pride in their nation and national identity through his interpretation of Thai history and in his application of the term to Thai social, political and religious contexts. For example, in Right is Right, Vajirañāṇa praises the country of Siam and its glory in history:

Later on, India became an unsuitable place for the Buddhist religion. Because the Buddhists became weak and were unable to withstand other religions, it became necessary for them (the Buddhists) to move to other countries, including our own, where they have been able to maintain their position to this day. Siam is a suitable place for the freedom of the Thai Nation which has been maintained throughout several generations, and though we have at times suffered from invasion by other nations we have always succeeded in re-establishing our independance; also, even when neighbouring countries which used to be our antagonists in war [Burma and Cambodia] have fallen under the domination of other nations, yet have we been able to maintain our own independence. Because Siam is a suitable place for us, coupled with the love we have for our country and the courage and determination with which we have defended her, she is also a suitable place for the Buddhist church which exists side by side with the Royal Dominion with the King as Defender of the Faith.

Vajirañāṇa further elaborates that living in a
"suitable place" is not enough to ensure wealth and success for oneself or others; one also needs to be a patirūpa-kārī (one who acts in a manner suitable to circumstances). In Vajiraṇāṇa's hands the Buddha becomes an example of a patirūpa-kārī:

The Lord always acted in a manner suitable to circumstances, considering the good of the Faith before all else, and when the proper time came, permitted the "Saṅgha" to become paramount in the management of religious affairs. In instituting the "Vinaya" (Ecclesiastical Code of laws for governing the clergy), the Lord established each article according to some cause to start with, and subsequently made modifications to suit both time and place, and finally, just before His demise, the Lord gave permission to the Sangha to abrogate such minor clauses as may be found necessary to "be eliminated."

Vajiraṇāṇa introduced the concept of the patirūpa-kārī and referred to the Buddha as one who adapts a "suitable practice," in order to justify his own adaptation of dhamma to the cause of Thai nationalism. During the reign of Rama V, Vajiraṇāṇa's interpretation of the Buddha's dhamma was consistent with that reign's emphasis on religious knowledge and moral discipline. During Rama VI's time, however, Vajiraṇāṇa emphasized rather the political and nationalistic sense of dhamma, i.e., sāmaggidhamma. This shift in Vajiraṇāṇa's position is obvious in his exposition of the Buddhist First Precept. During the time of Chulalongkorn, Vajiraṇāṇa interpreted the First Precept's prohibition against taking life as the preservation of both humans and animals in all situa-
All beings, both human beings or animals, normally love their life. They are afraid of being hurt or killed. The Buddha thus prescribed the First Precept in order to prohibit the killing of human beings and animals whether done by a person him/herself or by persuading others to do it.

Religious teachings must aim at public utility. They should not be applied only to a certain group, but should aim at the happiness of all. If two countries such as Thailand and Burma hold to the same religion, such religion should teach both parties to be peaceful and avoid killing each other. It must not encourage either party to enter warfare. If a religion adopts this role, it will be useful to its followers.

This exposition of the First Precept prohibits killing in all situations, including killing enemies during a war. During the reign of Vajiravudh, on the other hand, Vajirañāṇa's exposition of the First Precept took a more nationalistic tone. In *Right is Right*, Vajirañāṇa emphasizes the crucial role of "Right [Dhamma]" in moral acts:

All wise men who have been religious teachers have therefore always taught men to do right. Rulers uphold Right and repress Wrong. Those who do wrong, who do injury unto others, who rob others of their lawful possessions who commit adultery, or who practise deceptions, are punished, which is like extracting a thorn with another thorn. The infliction of punishment may not (in a philosophical sense) be considered a true Right; but to inflict punishment in accordance with some previously enacted law in order to repress wrong doing is called Yukti-Dharma ("Right by Usage," in other words, "Justice"), that is to say Right by enactment, forming part of the Policy of Governance, which is the duty of a ruler to uphold. Great Monarchs naturally hold Right in great reverence and had Right as the standard leading them in their kingly ways. The Self-Enlightened Buddhas of all the three times (Past, Present, and Future) also revered Right.

Here, Vajirañāṇa argues that "right (dhamma)" is the
highest moral discipline and should be most highly revered. Any method, war or peace, can be used in order to achieve "right (dhamma)." On the grounds of this principle Vajirāṇañña proceeds to justify Rama VI's declaration of war in order to preserve "right":

Your Majesty has broken off friendly relations with and declared war on the Empires of Germany and Austria-Hungary in the name of the Kingdom of Siam, and has put an end to peace, because you desire to uphold International Rights. When one considers the holy saying, "When Right is in question, Wealth, Limbs, and even Life itself, all must be sacrificed should the occasion so demand it," any other policy is thereby practically forbidden.

In this situation, Vajirāṇañña considered warfare legitimate and morally appropriate in accordance with the Buddha's teaching. Unlike his earlier exposition of the First Precept, here, Vajirāṇañña does not call for peace, love, and mercy towards other beings. Rather, he praises Rama VI's policy to preserve "right" even though it be accomplished through the loss of one's life and/or others'.

That Vajirāṇañña's exposition of the First Precept became more relaxed was probably due to Rama VI's attitude. In an address to the Wild Tiger Corps, the king tried to rationalize his participation in World War I:

But there are some individuals or classes of individuals in Siam who, even though they fully understand that it is a political necessity for Siam to join the war this time, yet still feel somewhat troubled in their conscience, or in other words they have some religious scruples because they consider that we are a Buddhist nation; when it is so clear that the first of the five "silas" expressly forbids slaughter, would it not be against the Buddhist religion to go to war
which, in the beginning, the middle, and the end, all consists of killing fellow men? Many speak like this on account of their imperfect knowledge of the broad­ness of the Buddhist religion, while others really know but pretend not to know for some personal reasons which we will not go into here. In order to ease our own conscience, let everyone of us who are Buddhists tell ourselves that going to war this time is, to adopt an old woman's phraseology, "No Sin." And why is it "no sin?" Because we go to war in defence of Right [Dham­ma]. If there was no Right there would be no Reli­gion. If there was no Right we could not exist as nations, as communities, or even as households. This principle is so important that we have to fight for it.

That Vajirañāṇa's interpretation of dhamma in its socio-political dimension reflects the view of Rama VI illustrates the fact that Thai Sangha, which Vajirañāṇa headed as its Supreme Patriarch, was subject to and worked under the policy of the state headed by the king. The Sangha supported the state in legitimating public policy, in this case a declaration of war on grounds considered to be consistent with the Buddhadhamma. Neither King nor Patriarch seriously address the question of whether their position in this case conflicts with the moral teachings of the Buddha the First Precept. Their position seems to deny the Buddhist truth that all beings love life, and are not to be hurt or killed by others; and that consequently, one should be merciful and helpful to others. Nor do they ad­dress the inconsistency of their view of dhamma in this instance with the basic law of dhammic morality that to do good is to think, speak, and act with good intention, good method, and good result. Dhamma in the sense of the
Buddha's moral teachings takes the means of an action as seriously as its result: whenever an intention of killing arises, the action is considered demeritorious. Thus, Vajiraṇāṇa's exposition of dhamma in the nationalistic ethos of Rama VI is an innovation in Buddhist morality under the guidance of state policy.
Vajirañāṇa's Interpretation of Dhamma
And Popular Thai Buddhism

Though Vajirañāṇa's position concerning the Buddha's dhamma is normative, he did not object to popular beliefs and practices regarding the supernatural powers of deities, spirits, and their influence on human life. He even led and participated in the Brahman and Buddhist ceremonies of the royal court in order to glorify the monarchic status and power and allowed Thai Buddhists to practice their popular religion at their convenience. Here, I will discuss Vajirañāṇa's works in two areas: his religious activities concerning Buddhist rituals and ceremonies, and his expositions of dhamma which support popular Thai Buddhism.

Vajirañāṇa's Attitude toward Buddhist Rituals and Ceremonies

Vajirañāṇa's attitude toward Buddhist rituals and ceremonies is based on several assumptions: that spirits and deities literally exist, that spirits and deities have a supernatural protective power over good people and destructive power over bad ones, that the king possesses a
sacred power derived from his former meritorious deeds which make him superior to all other human beings, and that the universe exists and develops as defined by the Buddhist cosmology. For Vajirañāṇa, hell is located in the center of the earth; human beings, animals, and certain kinds of inferior deities and spirits live on earth ruled by the king; superior deities live in heaven located somewhere in the sky, and life proceeds in cycles between birth and death within the three realms—hell, the human realm, and heaven—until nibbāna is realized.

Generally, Vajirañāṇa did not interpret words like "deity," "spirit," "heaven," and "hell," symbolically. He took all these terms literally, following the interpretation laid down by Buddhaghosa. Vajirañāṇa's understanding of deities and spirits as specific beings different from humans and animals can be seen in his explanation of the four types of birth:

1. Womb-born creatures (jalābuja) such as human beings, dogs, and cats are born with a full body and live on their mother's milk during their earliest days

2. Egg-born creatures (antaja) such as chickens, ducks, and birds are born covered in a shell

3. Moisture-born creatures (samsedaja) such as worms are born in slime and fermented substances

4. Apparition-born creatures (opapātika) such as spirits and deities are born spontaneously from their kam-
mic power

This explanation is based on Dīgha-nikāya.i.230, and Majjhima-nikāya.i.73, which stipulate these four kinds of birth.

Since deities and spirits do not have physical bodies like human beings, Vajirāṇa believed that their spiritual power is superior to that of ordinary human beings. Since he led and performed the court ceremonies which upheld the protective power of deities and all spiritual beings, he expressed an attitude that seems to agree with popular beliefs and practices:

Behold all deities, giants, divine musicians, great serpents and the four divine protectors of the world: Dhataraṭṭha, Virulhaka, Virūpakkha, and Kuvera; the powerful god Indra who possesses divine ears and divine eyes, and was born in a divine golden castle; all deities who stay on earth, in the trees, and in the air; all deities in the six heavens of sensual pleasures and in the sixteen planes; the Gods Siva and Vishnu; the gods of the Nine Planets, of the Twelve Zodiacs, and of the Seven Days of the week; all gods who protect the city, the Royal Palace, and the Throne. May all you assemble in this Hall, listen to the sermon which is the Buddha's teaching of truth, observe the Five Precepts, and receive the two royal offerings: āmisa-bali such as incense sticks, candles, perfume, flowers, and delicious food which the king has prepared for this offering, and dhamma-bali; that is, all the meritorious deeds the king performs in this Coronation Ceremony such as the homage to the Triple Gem; the offering of robes, food, and necessary utensils for monks; and the offering of dhamma to all deities.

In this instance Vajiraṇa calls on all the powerful deities to witness the ceremony and to receive the royal offerings so that they will protect the king and the city in return. The belief in divine power that can interfere
with human life is prevalent in popular Thai Buddhism and is an even more potent belief than the doctrine of \textit{kamma} which emphasizes the inexorable consequences of meritorious and demeritorious deeds. The role of deities and spirits interfering with human life qualifies the meaning of the law of \textit{kamma} because intentionality is deemphasized, and good deeds are considered less important than the attempt to please spirits and deities in order to gain their favour and assistance.

Vajirañāṇa's acceptance of the superhuman and sacred power of supernatural beings is consistent with his respect for the king's power. This belief can be found in his teachings on the \textit{dhammika-rāja}, the \textit{cakkavatti}, the Great Elect, and the \textit{bodhisatta}, as discussed earlier. Furthermore, he referred frequently to the king's power as "\textit{pārami}," stages of the \textit{bodhisatta}'s moral perfection in his path towards the Buddhahood. Vajirañāṇa preached that the king was the head of human society and the ruler of the human realm according to the Buddhist cosmology. Because of his distinctive merit in his previous lives, he was superior to all human beings, although he was inferior to deities and Buddhist saints from whom he asked for protective power and blessings. Vajirañāṇa believed, nonetheless, that the king, the queen, and the prince held the status of \textit{sammati-deva} (god by convention). Thus, they should be treated with the high respect accorded
sacred beings.

For Vajiranāṇa, all beings are subject to the law of kamma that leads them to rebirth in heaven, hell, or the human world according to their deeds. The cycle of life, within the three realms, according to one's kamma ceased when one attained nibbāna. Vajiranāṇa portrayed the realm of heaven as a luxurious place full of pleasure and all kinds of entertainment. The realm of hell, by contrast, is a horrible and fearful place where its denizens are tortured and punished according to their previous evil kamma. Vajiranāṇa's concepts of heaven and hell are supported by some parts of the Tipitaka, especially the Aṅguttara-nikāya which explicates the relationship between good kamma and a splendid life in heaven. As B. C. Law observes,

The Aṅguttara-nikāya furnishes a good deal of information about the meritorious deeds qualifying men to be translated to the various regions of heaven. The Enlightened One tells Sāriputta on one occasion: "He who practises charity without freeing himself from the taint of selfishness, being attached to the object of charity, hoping for wealth and enjoyment in after-life, in consequence of such charity, after death will be reborn in the heaven of the Catummahārajika gods. Those among the Catummahārajikas, the Tusitas, Yāmas, Tāvatiṁsas, the Nimmānaratīs and the Paranīmitavasa-vattins who have acquired strong faith in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha, may be said to have acquired the state of Sotāpanna. They are not liable to fall into hell and are destined to attain sambodhi (Aṅguttara Nikāya, Vol.III, pp. 332-333)."

Though the Tipitaka states that one should perform a good deed without desire for its good result, passages
like the one above tended to promote a tendency to act with the expectation of a kammic reward. Also, the Buddhist commentaries and later texts encourage people to do good in order to gain a good material result:

The Dhammapada Commentary relates some stories about the heavens like those narrated in the Peta-vatthu Commentary. There is a reference to Mahākassapa absorbed in nirodha-samāpatti. On the seventh day he got up from the samāpatti and went out for alms. A woman guarding a paddy field, offered to Mahākassapa the fried rice which she was taking for her husband. Owing to this meritorious deed, she was reborn in the Tavatimsa heaven in a golden mansion extending over 30 yojanas (Vol. III, pp. 6-7).

The Tipiṭaka and its commentaries contrast the picture of heaven (sagga) with that of hell (niraya) in order to encourage people to do good which brings about heaven as their reward, and to avoid evil, which leads one to hell as one's punishment. In the Aṅguttara-nikāya, the Buddha gives a horrifying picture of hell as a warning against evil deeds:

Thereupon, monks, the warders of Purgatory torture him with the fivefold pinion. They drive a hot iron pin through each hand and foot and a fifth through the middle of his breast. Thereat he suffers grievous, violent, sharp and bitter agonies, but he makes not an end until that evil deed of his has been worked out. Then the warders of Purgatory lay him down and plane him down with adzes. Thereat he suffers grievous, violent, sharp and bitter agonies, but he makes out not an end until that evil deed of his has been worked out.

The Buddhist commentaries also portrayed the horror and suffering of life in hell:

According to Buddhaghosa, a sinner is made to lie down on his back and his body becomes three leagues
(long) in hell. Iron spears are then passed through his right hand palm, his left hand palm, right and left legs and the chest. He is struck with a big axe, profuse blood flows from the wounds which are moreover burnt by fire issuing out of the iron floor. The sinner is cut into six or eight pieces (Manorathapurāṇi, Sinhalese edition, p. 207). The nirayapālas referred to above are officers of hell who carry out the orders of Yama (Manorathapurāṇi, p. 405).

The concepts of pleasure in heaven and suffering in hell figure prominently in Vajirañāṇa's interpretation of the funeral ceremony and merit-making for the dead. In ceremonies for the dead, Vajirañāṇa taught that family and relatives should make merit, especially by offering food and gifts to monks, and dedicate it to the dead so that the power of merit would send the dead to a better realm such as heaven or rescue him/her from the suffering in hell.¹²¹ Vajirañāṇa's seemingly literal interpretations of heaven and hell, kammic retribution, and the funeral ceremony as a means to achieve a specific religious goal through the transference of merit to the dead, rebirth in heaven, and monks as the best medium for merit transference,¹²² fit well with popular Buddhist beliefs and practices in Thailand today. Thai Buddhists like to make merit on holy days and other special occasions in order to accumulate merit for themselves or transfer it to their deceased relatives. They believe that their merit will yield them material prosperity such as wealth, fame, and life in heaven, that their transferred merit will rescue their deceased relatives from suffering in the world be-
yond, and that their merit-making will yield the most ef-
flective result if it is done through monks. Vajirañāṇa's
support of these popular ceremonies and practices is also
reflected in his expositions of dhamma.

Vajirañāṇa's Dhamma
And Its Relation to Popular Thai Buddhism

For Vajirañāṇa, the dhamma means the Buddha's
teaching, in the sense of sacred words which represent the
absolute truth preached by the Buddha and transmitted to
others by monks who are his dhammic heirs. At the con-
clusion of his "Public Administrative Policy," presented
on the Fortieth Anniversary of Rama V's Coronation, Vaji-
rañāṇa took the position that the Triple Gem (the Buddha,
the Dhamma, and the Saṅgha) had a sacred miraculous pro-
tective power which could save the king and the nation
from all harm. Vajirañāṇa viewed the Buddha, the
Dhamma, and the Saṅgha as having an equivalent sacredness.
The Buddha was a super-human being who had accumulated
various moral virtues in his previous lives. He was per-
fected in dāna (charity), sila (morality), nekkhamma
(renunciation), paññā (wisdom), viriya (effort),
khanti (tolerance), sacca (truthfulness), adhitthāna
(resolution), mettā (loving-kindness), and upekkhā
(equanimity). Before he was born as Prince Siddhattha,
he had been born a deity in the Tusita Heaven. Stories of the Buddha's previous lives, furthermore, enhance the supernatural qualities of the Buddha. Vajirañāṇa's assertion of the sacred nature of the Buddha fits well with the popular worship and belief in the power and sacredness of the Buddha's image, Buddha relics, and Buddha footprints, prevailing among Thai Buddhists today.

According to Vajirañāṇa, the Dhamma the Buddha preached was equally sacred and was the only Truth. Thus, whenever Vajirañāṇa spoke of dhamma, he meant exclusively the dhamma of the Buddha, not of other religious founders:

Those who are well cultivated are called dhamma-cāri or the followers of the dhamma. They will not turn to adhamma. They will hold fast to Buddhism. They must not devote themselves to other religions, for example, they must not profess Christianity (khao reet).

Vajirañāṇa's usage of dhamma in such a specific sense, i.e., the dhamma of the Buddha only, points to the Buddha's dhamma as the only way to salvation. This usage denies the universality of dhamma. It makes the Buddha's dhamma sacred and superior to all other natural things and beings. Vajirañāṇa praised the sacredness of dhamma by referring to its power which made its holiness known to all levels of heaven, and to its proclamation by the Buddha which illuminated the ten thousand worlds. Vajirañāṇa's emphasis on the sacredness and exclusive salvi-
fic power of the Buddha's dhamma supported popular belief in the sacred power of dhamma as uttered by monks and the power of mantras and gāthās to protect one from danger, to cure disease, to obtain blessing, and to bring luck.

For Vajirañāṇa, monks, as members of the Sangha, were sacred and holy because they were the dhammic heirs of the Buddha. Moreover, monks possessed several distinguished moral qualities and qualifications. For example, monks were of good conduct (supaṭṭipanno), were worthy of offerings (dakkhineyyo), and were an incomparable field of merit (anuttaram puññakkhettam lokassa). Vajirañāṇa likened monks to good soil in which people sowed their seed and which would yield good fruit in return; monks, in other words, were holy people to whom offerings would bring about a great meritorious result. The sacredness and holiness of monks are well accepted in popular Thai Buddhism. Thai people generally believe that monks possess the sacred power of healing, blessing, and predicting the future. To them the Triple Gem is not primarily a symbolic threefold refuge which reminds Buddhists to do good and avoid evil. On the contrary, it has a sacred power which can protect those who venerate it and make their wishes come true.

In summary, Vajirañāṇa's concept of dhamma reflects particularly the Buddha's teachings. Though he emphasizes dhamma as the Buddha's teachings, his exposition of
dhamma in this meaning possesses some special characteristics which can be seen in his own dhammic teachings and his reference to the Thai contexts.

First, Vajirañāṇa's teaching about dhamma did not challenge popular Thai Buddhism because of what we have characterized as his literal, external, and exclusive interpretation of the term. The dhamma in the literal sense means the words of the Buddha as handed down in the Pali canon, and Buddhaghosa's commentaries. Particular terms have a literal signification. For example, words like "heaven," "hell," and "deity," (devatā) refer to actual places or supernatural beings. Furthermore, his explanation of the Buddha's teachings (dhamma) adheres faithfully to the scriptures and the commentaries. The dhamma of kàṭaṁñūkatavedī (gratitude and reciprocation), for instance, is to be practiced by Buddhists by being good providers to monks such as offering them food or other necessities, donating money to repair the temple, conducting themselves according to the dhamma (the Buddha's teachings recorded in the Tipiṭaka), introducing dhamma to others, etc. Vajirañāṇa did not examine the type of monk whom one should support. He simply accepted the concept of the monk as presented in the Buddhist scriptures and commentaries as descriptive of monks during his time. Vajirañāṇa's presentation of the monk in these literal terms strengthened the popular Buddhist view that monks
were ideal and holy people who were superior to the laity. In popular Buddhism, monks' words and ritual performance are held to be sacred and effective regardless of their character.

Secondly, Vajirabhadra's literalness in his understanding of dhamma tended toward an external/physical interpretation of terms. For example, the four lower worlds (apāya), hell, the realm of beasts, realm of hungry ghosts, and the realm of demons, were four physical worlds of suffering existing somewhere outside the human world, and the peta was the wandering being who physically had a deformed body, was severely hungry, and so on. Similarly, his interpretation of the patīcchasamuppāda presented only the external meanings of the terms "jāti (birth)," "jarā (old-age)," and "marana (death)." Accordingly patīcchasamuppāda meant particularly the dependent co-arising which occurred through several physical life-spans. If Vajirabhadra had interpreted its meaning spiritually, or symbolically, patīcchasamuppāda might be seen as an interpretation of ones existence in a more profound ontological and moral sense. Jāti then becomes a spiritual birth which includes the birth of anger, love, and all kinds of human mental activities and feelings; old age a spiritual and mental development which included the growth of love, and hatred; and death as the end or the cessation of all these mental activities and feelings.
Because *patīcchasamuppāda* was presented as an external/physical process, its cyclical nature was emphasized, the rolling from the human world to other realms such as heaven and hell, a view compatible with popular beliefs and practices. And with this external/physical interpretation of the term, *nibbāna*, which is beyond even the realm of gods, seems to be so far away that it is overshadowed by the luxurious reward of rebirth in the realm of gods.

Vajirañāṇa also tended to give an external explanation to many Buddhist proverbs. For example, "*arogyā paramā lābhā* (freedom from sickness is the best gain)," for Vajirañāṇa, meant physical sickness. He explained in detail how a person could take care of him/herself, for example, one should be moderate in eating, sleeping, exercising, in order to be physically fit. He did not mention mental or spiritual sickness or how one could avoid or cure it. His emphasis on an external meaning of the Buddha's teachings neither encouraged Buddhists to examine spiritual and mental aspects of their lives, nor helped them understand their religious activities in a profound manner.

Thirdly, Vajirañāṇa did not emphasize the meaning of *dhamma* as a shared nature or the nature of all things, and, thus, his view seems to promote a differentiated and hierarchic universe. Had he emphasized *dhamma* in the ontological sense as nature, he would not consider the fundamentally dynamic and interdependent nature of everything.
Religious concepts such as "deity," "heaven," "kamma," "hell," "nibbāna," would not be seen as "things" or "objects" or "places" outside human experience and the phenomenal world. If there were nothing outside human experience, there would be no supernatural and transcendental beings such as "deities" who lived in a heaven beyond the human world. If dhamma were seen in its most fundamental, ontological sense, there would be nothing mysterious or unexplainable, and, thus, magical cults and ceremonies would not be crucial elements in human life.

The Legacy of Vajiraṉāṇa's Dhamma
In Thai Buddhism Today

Vajiraṉāṇa's interpretation of dhamma is fundamental for Thai Buddhism today. The principal meaning of Vajiraṉāṇa's notion of dhamma is the Buddha's moral teaching transmitted by monks, his dhammic heirs to the people. He transmitted this notion to the Thai people through his discourses and books written during the reigns of Rama V and VI, and through monastic institutions of higher learning, the Mahāmakuṭa Royal Academy and Mahā-chulalongkorn Royal Academy, which trained monks to be knowledgeable in dhamma and to preach it to Thai Buddhists.

Vajiraṉāṇa referred most frequently to dhamma in a moral context: "dhammo hve rakkhati dhammacariṁ"
(dhamma protects the dhammic follower)," "dhammo sucinno sukkhamavahāti (dhamma which is well practised brings about happiness)," vesānisamso dhamme sucinne (This gain of happiness is caused by a good practice of dhamma)," and "na dukkhatim gacchati dhammacari (the dhammic follower does not go to the woeful state)."  

Thai Buddhists today generally understand dhamma as moral values, moral standard, and moral conduct according to the Buddha's teachings. Furthermore, Vajirañāṇa's promotion of the sacred power of the Triple Gem turned the Buddha, the dhamma, and the monks into objects of a supernatural character. Monks as dhammic heirs, became holy people and, as a result, a merit-field for lay Buddhists. Their preaching and chants became sacred utterance (dhamma) which provided protective power and material blessings to lay audiences. 

Since, according to Vajirañāṇa, the monks' primary role is to present moral teachings to lay people, monks need to be equipped well with knowledge of the Buddhist scriptures and commentaries. The Buddhist Academies were established in order to fulfill this need. Monastic education, unfortunately, does not emphasize critical knowledge and analytical method. Monks are, thus, only the transmitters of dhamma in a literal sense rather than its intellectual expositors; they rarely challenge the laity's orientation to magical beliefs and practices.
Vajirañāṇa's method of exposing *dhamma* does not encourage Thai Buddhists to examine and analyze the deeper meanings of *dhamma*. In his sermons and articles, Vajirañāṇa always begins with the Pāli version of the Buddha's teaching, and then exposit the Pāli words, limiting himself to the text and hardly ever relating his teaching to the current social, political situations of his time.¹³³

This characteristic of his expository method served to support the popular beliefs and practices of Thai Buddhism rather than to challenge them with a more critical approach and profound understanding of *dhamma*. 

¹³³
NOTES


10 Vajiranana-varorasa, "Lamdap Patibat [Steps of practice]," Dhamma-gatī, p. 220. These steps of Practice are called Tisikkha (The Threefold Training) and are mentioned in Dīgha-nikāya.III.220, and Anguttara-nikāya.I.229.

11 Ibid., p. 223.
12. Vajirāṇa-vaṇorasa, "Hua Chai Traisikkhā [The essence of the tisikkhā]," Dhamma-gati, pp. 165-166.

13. Ibid., p. 173.


24. Ibid., p. 254.

25. Ibid.


27. Ibid., p. 186.


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30 Digha-nikāya.iii.239, ibid., p. 228.
31 Vajirāṇaṭa-varorasa, Navakovāda, p. 18.
33 Ibid., pp. 75-77.
38 Vajirāṇaṭa-varorasa, Navakovāda, p. 1.
40 Vajirāṇaṭa-varorasa, Navakovāda, p. 7.
42 Vajirāṇaṭa-varorasa, Navakovāda, p. 7.
43 Vajirāṇaṭa-varorasa, "Pra Ratha Prasāsananai [The royal policy of public administration]," Phra Dhamma-desanā, pp. 488-492.
45 Vajirāṇaṭa-varorasa, Navakovāda, p. 16.
47 Anguttara-nikāya.iv.283, ibid., p. 190.
48 Ibid.
49 Ibid.
50 Ibid.

Vajirāṇaṇa-varorasa, Navakovāda, p. 47.


55 Vajirāṇaṇa-varorasa, Navakovāda. p. 16.


57 Vajirāṇaṇa-varorasa, Navakovāda, p. 21.


59 Vajirāṇaṇa-varorasa, Navakovāda, p. 25.


61 Vajirāṇaṇa-varorasa, Navakovāda, pp. 36-37.


63 Āṅguttara-nikāya.v.131-132, ibid., pp. 89-91.

64 Vajirāṇaṇa-varorasa, Navakovāda, pp. 35-36.


Vajirāṇāṇa-varorasa, "Paticcasamuppāda-pañhā," 
Vānṇāṇa-phra-sūtra, pp. 212-213.

Ibid., p. 221.

Ibid.

Vajirāṇāṇa-varorasa, Navakovāda, p. 29.

Vajirāṇāṇa-varorasa, Sraddhā-vṛta-desanā, p. 303.


Ibid., p. 187.

Vajirāṇāṇa-varorasa, Sraddhā-vṛta-desanā, p. 179.


Ibid., p. 10.

Ibid., pp. 324-325.

Ibid., pp. 135-136.

Ibid., pp. 147-148.

Ibid., p. 9.


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91 Ibid., p. 97.

92 Vajirāṇa-varorasa, "Phra Rājā Pen Huana Khong Mū Manut [The king is the head of human community]," Dhamma-gati, pp. 294-299.


95 Vajirāṇa-varorasa, Phra Dhamma-desanā, pp. 32-46.

96 Ibid., pp. 109-118.


99 Vajirāṇa-varorasa, Dhamma-gati, p. 223.

100 Vajirāṇa-varorasa, Sraddhā-vṛta-desanā, p. 196.


102 Ibid., p. 3.

103 Ibid., pp. 57-61.

Vajirānāṇa-varorasa, "Samakkhi Khū Khwām Phrom Phriang [Samaggi is unity]," Dhamma-gati, pp. 267-269.

Vajirānāṇa-varorasa, Right is Right, trans. Vajiravudh, King of Thailand (Bangkok: Daily Mail, 1918), pp. 11-12.

Ibid., p. 19.


Vajirānāṇa-varorasa, Right is Right, pp. 20-21.

Ibid., p. 24.

Vajiravudh, King of Thailand, "An Address to the Wild Tiger Corps," in ibid., pp. 36-37.


Vajirānāṇa-varorasa, "Kham Prakāth Thewadā Nai Ngān Phra Rāja Pithī Borom Rājāphisek Nai Rajakarn Tī Hok [The announcement to deities during the coronation ceremony of Rama VI]," Phra Niphon Tāṅg Ruang, pp. 303-304.


Ibid., pp. 78-81.


Ibid., p. 23.

Bimala Charan Law, Heaven and Hell in Buddhist Perspective, p. 121.

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Perspective, p. 99.

121 Vajiranana-varorasa, Sṛddhā-vṛta-desaṇā, pp. 326-328.

122 Vajiranana-varorasa, Dhamma-gati, pp. 334-335.


125 Vajiranana-varorasa, Dhamma-gati, p. 39.


128 Ibid., p. 102.

129 Vajiranana-varorasa, Dhamma-gati, pp. 88-89.


131 Ibid., pp. 119-124.


133 Vajiranana-varorasa, Phra Dhamma-desanā, p. 403.
CHAPTER IV

BUDDHADĀSA'S INTERPRETATION OF DHAMMA

Introduction

Buddhadāsa has gained a national and international reputation through his unique interpretation of dhamma. He is held by many Buddhist scholars today to be the greatest reformer and expositor of Thai Buddhism. Like Vajirañāṇa, Buddhadāsa has propagated the dhamma to both monk and layperson. Unlike Vajirañāṇa, however, he has not gained support and encouragement from the state. Furthermore, Buddhadāsa is known as an innovator, while Vajirañāṇa is famed as the standardizer of modern Thai Buddhist teaching and practice. Certain aspects of Buddhadāsa's thought and practice contrast markedly with Vajirañāṇa's; some of these differences may be noted here:

1. Buddhadāsa does not see Buddhist rituals and ceremonies as essential to Buddhist life. Vajirañāṇa, on the other hand, restored and encouraged the practice of rituals and ceremonies.

2. Buddhadāsa rejects a scholarly knowledge of the
Tipiṭaka as providing a true understanding of the Buddha's teaching or as a means to achieve the goal of Buddhism. He rather simplifies the Buddha's teaching as found in the Tipiṭaka in order to make it accessible for Buddhists in their daily lives. Vajirañāṇa considered knowledge of the Tipiṭaka and of its language crucial for proceeding towards the fulfilment of the Buddha's dhamma.

3. Buddhadāsa neither takes the words of the Tipiṭaka literally nor holds them sacred and unchangeable. Moreover, he "demythologizes" the Tipiṭaka and other Buddhist texts. Vajirañāṇa, on the contrary, tended to preserve the literal meaning of the Tipiṭaka as the sacred word of the Buddha.

4. Buddhadāsa does not follow the commentaries of Buddhaghosa, the normative doctrinal interpreter in the Theravāda tradition. His exposition is consonant with Nāgārjuna's Mādhyamika doctrine and with Zen Buddhism, especially the expositions of two great Zen masters: Hui Nêng (638-713) and Huang Po (d.850). For Vajirañāṇa, Buddhaghosa's commentaries are the most reliable standard for understanding the Buddha's teachings.

5. Buddhadāsa rejects hierarchical structures both in the Sangha and Thai society, emphasizing in his teaching of the Buddha-nature, that all beings are originally equal. Vajirañāṇa differentiated all beings according to their kamma and placed them in a hierarchic
structure according to the Thai cosmology portrayed in the *Trai Phûm Phra Ruang*.

6. Through his concept of *dhamma*, Buddhadasa sees a unity of all religions, while Vajirañāṇa distinguished Buddhism as superior to other religions.

7. Buddhadasa utilizes the Sutta and the Vinaya material but not the Abhidhamma. Vajirañāṇa, on the contrary, considered the Abhidhamma as the higher and more profound teaching of the Buddha.

8. Buddhadasa's most important teaching focuses on the concept of nature (*dhammaiāti*). Vajirañāṇa, however, emphasized the concept of righteous duty within the social hierarchy.

9. Buddhadasa's teaching is neither "normative" nor popular. It is not normative because it does not follow the Thai Saṅgha's exposition of Buddhism rooted in Buddhaghosa's commentaries; it is not popular because it criticizes and opposes popular beliefs and practices which welcome supernaturalism and animism. Vajirañāṇa's teaching, on the other hand, is normative because it was based on Buddhaghosa's commentaries followed and promoted by the Thai Saṅgha as the standard form of Thai Buddhism.

These characteristics of Buddhadasa's teaching will be examined through his interpretations of *dhamma*. 
For Buddhadasa, dhamma is the Buddha's teaching which reflects the whole world as an integrated whole: things do not exist independently, but rather are relative to each other. Thus, if we really understand the essence of the Buddha's teaching, we will understand the meaning of dhamma and the true nature of things, the way things are dhammically. Buddhadasa believes that this meaning is contained in the original Pali meaning of the term, rather than as transformed in the Thai cultural context. He argues that dhamma, in its fundamental Pāli sense, means "Nature" (Thai: dhammajāti = born of dhamma). Dhamma, in Buddhadasa's interpretation, includes four aspects:

1. Nature itself
2. The law of nature
3. The "way" which are to be properly followed according to the law of nature
4. The result which is the outcome of proper action according to the law of nature

These four aspects of dhamma (Nature) are essentially interrelated. They form the core of Buddhāsa's teaching, and he takes them as an abstract of the Buddha's teaching.
Nature itself, for most Buddhists, is primarily all external things which are not created by human beings. For Buddhadasa, it refers to all phenomena, both physical and mental, which exist relative to each other under the law of nature, and to nibbāna which is realized when one is able to see nature as it is and free oneself from its influences. Physical phenomena (rūpa-dhamma) are external objects such as trees, mountains, animals, and human beings, which exist and function according to the law of nature. Mental phenomena (nāma-dhamma) such as thoughts, feelings, and mental formations, exist or arise through the contact of sense organs with external phenomena. These phenomena exist in different forms: small, large, tangible, intangible, living, or lifeless. Buddhadasa calls these phenomena sabhāvadhamma, or things which exist as such. Sabhāvadhamma are divided into saṅkhata-dhamma (compounded things) and asaṅkhata-dhamma (non-compounded things). Saṅkhata-dhamma arise from a causal matrix: they are causally conditioned or dependently originated: a cause produces an effect which becomes another cause of another effect. For example, when eyes perceive a physical object, the sensation of that perception or feeling (vedanā) arises. Then vedanā arouses desire (taṇhā); taṇhā arouses attachment (upādāna); upādāna yields existence
(bhava), and from bhava, arises birth (jāti), and so on, until that becomes the cause of sensations again.⁴ This process of causality is under the law of Dependent Origination (paticcasamuppāda) which is a form of the law of nature.

All phenomena subject to the law of paticcasamuppāda have Three Characteristics (Ti-lakkhana): aniccatā (impermanence), dukkhatā (suffering), and anattā (non-selfhood).⁵ Under the law of paticcasamuppāda, all phenomena depend on, relate to, and change according to a cause. Since all phenomena are subject to change, they are unreliable and may bring us suffering if we crave for worldly happiness and attach ourselves to it without knowing that it is impermanent. Only if we understand the Three Characteristics of all things and the law of paticcasamuppāda can we be free from suffering. Buddhadasa asserts that paticcasamuppāda is the most important dhamma in Buddhism. In support of this position, he refers to the Buddha's saying in the Tipiṭaka: "He who sees the dhamma sees the paticcasamuppāda; he who sees the paticcasamuppāda sees the dhamma."⁶ In other words, whoever understands the nature of compounded things or nature as causally conditioned reality perceives the dhamma.

The other form of the sabhāvadhamma is asaṅkhata-dhamma (a non-compounded "thing") which, according to Buddhadasa, is relative to saṅkhata-dhamma. Buddhadasa
explains that a asaṅkhata-dhamma such as nibbāna exists in opposition to the law of nature in order to remain what it is. To oppose and resist something is to reject its qualities in order to retain one's own identity; for example, water can retain qualities as water because it rejects the qualities of fire, earth, and air. Similarly, nibbāna exists because saṁsāra or the phenomenal world of compounded things exists. Buddhadasa concludes that nibbāna, which most people believe exists beyond saṁsāra, exists only relatively to our worldly experiences, and that it is a state achieved through the eradication of desire and attachment. Nibbāna, then, is a condition within but in tension with the conditional realm of nature. Buddhadasa's analogy of nibbāna and saṁsāra is rather difficult to follow since nibbāna is not an element like water and its relation to saṁsāra is thus different from that between water and other elements—fire, earth, and air. Nevertheless, it should be noted that Buddhadasa's aims primarily to show that nibbāna exists only relatively to saṁsāra and cannot be understood as "something" totally different from and beyond saṁsāra.

Buddhadasa's interpretations of nibbāna and saṁsāra are comparable to Nāgārjuna's theory of relativity between nirvāṇa (nibbāna) and saṁsāra (phenomenal world). According to Nāgārjuna (ca. Second Century), nirvāṇa and saṁsāra are the same:
There is no difference at all
Between Nirvāṇa and Samsāra
There is no difference at all
What makes the limit of Nirvāṇa
Is also then the limit of Samsāra
Between the two we cannot find
The slightest shade of difference. 9

According to Buddhadasa, all things are only the appearance of dhamma. Moreover, Buddhadasa believes that both nibbāna and samsāra exist in the human mind over against one another. Whenever the human mind is disturbed by defilements and self-attachment, samsāra appears, but whenever the human mind is free from all defilements, nibbāna appears. In other words, the extinction of samsāra is the birth of nibbāna; the extinction of nibbāna is the birth of samsāra.10

Nature itself, for Buddhadasa, does not belong to anyone since it has its own way of changing, evolving, or remaining as it is; thus, it can be called tathatā (thus-ness, the state of being thus). Buddhadasa indicates that tathatā is the true state of everything in nature:

As a matter of fact, tathāgata means all creatures, including animals, because they are thus-come and thus-gone. "Tathāgato (the Thus-Gone)," which is a name of the Buddha is the tathatā (thus-ness) in all creatures who thus come and thus go. Thus, the term "tathāgata" can refer to all creatures as well as the Buddha.

The Buddha as tathāgata, therefore, serves to illustrate the close connection Buddhadasa sees between the sacred and profane, conditioned and unconditioned. All creatures, whether the Buddha or ordinary person share
a given nature (tathatā = thus-ness). Tathatā, then, as well as nibbāna exist only in relationship to the mundane, or more aptly put, as part of nature (dhammaṭāti).

According to Buddhadasa, tathatā, and paticca-samuppāda, point to the truth of idappaccayatā (the state of having a cause), a teaching so pervasive that all 84,000 topics of the Tipiṭaka deal with it. Idappaccayatā affirms that everything exists as part of a web of cause and effect interaction. Because all things keep changing according to the principle of cause and effect, everything is non-substantial and impermanent, and, hence, empty.

The concept of emptiness (suññatā) is another of Buddhadasa's central teachings relating to sabhāvadhamma. Emptiness, here, is not the absolute void or vacuum, the absence of the whole content. It means only the state without self and sense of belonging:

The word "empty" applied to physical things naturally means absence of any content, but in the metaphysical or Dhammic context it means that though every sort of thing may be present, there is utter absence of "I-ness" and "my-ness." In the physical world, the mental world, or anywhere at all there is no such thing as "me" or "mine." The conditions of "I-ness" and "my-ness" just are not present. Hence the world is described as empty. Everything is there, and it can be made use of with discernment.

Because things are empty, i.e., are not substantial or self-existent they cannot be taken as "mine" or "ours."
Those who are wise can make use of all things without clinging to them. For example, they can work at their best without identifying themselves with their work and without worrying about the results. This attitude will lead to contentment. But those who do not know the truth of emptiness will be shaken by the vicissitudes of their lives and will not be able to do anything at their best.15

Buddhadasa argues for the centrality of the doctrine of emptiness (suññatā). He differentiates Buddhist doctrine into two levels: that preached by the Buddha himself and that preached or added by his disciples. For Buddhadasa, suññatā was taught by the Buddha himself.16 In his view, suññatā signifies the goal of Buddhism, nibbāna, a state attainable in this life.17

This interpretation of nibbāna is confirmed in the Tipiṭaka. For instance,

Seeing the risk of clinging to this world, Knowing it for the cause of birth and death, By ending birth and death, freed utterly, They have won calm, those happy ones, Have won Nibbāna in this very life: They have passed over all the guilty dread, All ill transcended.18

Nevertheless, Buddhadasa's view that nibbāna can be attained here and now in this life differs from the majority of Thai monks. Even more radical is his contention that suññatā is a fundamental tenet of the Buddha, that the essence of human mind is the Buddha Nature which is suññatā, and that all human beings are Buddhist-
to-be. For Buddhadasa, the emptiness of selfhood, substance, and defilements in a person's mind (suññatā) leads to the attainment of nibbāna in this life.¹⁹

Buddhadasa rejects the view of some Theravāda interpreters who teach that emptiness is nothingness and void of all consciousness and mental function.²⁰ He argues that in the state of emptiness or nibbāna, one loses all defilements and self-attachment, but still possesses wisdom and consciousness. He points out that because some Thai teachers interpret nibbāna incorrectly, present-day Thai Buddhists do not understand its true meaning;

Today, nobody is interested in nibbāna. Even though the doctrine of nibbāna is the essence of Buddhism, Thai Buddhists nowadays do not know the meaning of nibbāna. I declare that whoever does not know the meaning of nibbāna should not call him/herself a Buddhist.²¹

For Buddhadasa, whenever the human mind, purified from all defilements and self-attachment, attains nibbāna, it returns to its original state called pabhassara-citta (luminous mind) in the Tipiṭaka.²² This is the same as the essence of mind or self-nature in Zen Buddhism.²³

Buddhadasa contends, furthermore, that the essence of mind, emptiness, and wisdom are one and the same,²⁴ a position reflected in Zen as well:

The purity of people's nature is comparable to the clear sky, their wisdom comparable to the sun, and sagacity comparable to the moon. Their sagacity and wisdom are always shining. It is only because externally people are attached to spheres of objects that erroneous thoughts, like floating clouds, cover the
self-nature so that it is not clear.  

According to Buddhadasa, wisdom associated with the pure state or emptiness of mind is called bodhi (the element of knowing or the awakening element). At the level of knowing, bodhi includes all mental objects. For example, in the Jātaka the bodhisatta's rebirth as an animal, human being, and a deity symbolizes the development of bodhi from the lowest level to higher levels. Buddhadasa interprets bodhi as the awakening element in the human mind which entitles one to become a Buddha:

The word Buddha in Buddhabhāva (Buddha Nature) implies voidness (meaning absence of a self) of the person called "Buddha." The Buddha Nature is a reality characterized as different stages of development of knowledge (understanding of voidness of "I" or "self" at different levels [bodhi]).

Buddhadasa has been particularly influenced by Zen doctrine of mind and emptiness. His translations of two Zen texts, the Sutra of Wei Lang (Hui Nêng) and Zen Teaching of Huang Po, from an English version into Thai indicate the degree to which he has been influenced by Zen ideas. In the Zen Teaching of Huang Po, he translates bodhi as chit dêrm tae (Pure Mind)--the indivisible source of everything in the universe. His preaching that the essence of mind, the Buddha Nature, and wisdom are inside all of us can be found as well in the Sutra of Wei Lang (Hui Nêng):

Learned Audience, the Wisdom of Enlightenment is inherent in every one of us. It is because of the de-
illusion under which our mind works that we fail to realise it ourselves, and that we have to seek the advice and the guidance of enlightened ones before we can know our own Essence of Mind. You should know that so far as Buddha-nature is concerned, there is no difference between an enlightened man and an ignorant one. What makes the difference is that one realises it, which the other is ignorant of it.

Donald K. Swearer agrees that Buddhadasa's use of Zen doctrine and Nagarjuna's philosophy differentiates him from other Theravāda expositors:

The synthetic nature of Buddhadasa's approach allows him to go beyond the confines of Theravāda doctrine. For instance, in recent years the concept of "emptiness" or "the void" (suññata) has been one of the focal categories of his thought. Suññata is part of the Theravāda tradition, although a relatively minor part. The term is most important in the Prajñāparamitā literature of the Mahayana tradition and in the thought of Nagarjuna, the founder of the Mādhyamika philosophy-school which has had a profound influence on the Zen (Ch'an) tradition.

Buddhadasa's unique interpretations contrast sharply with Vajirāṇāṇa's. For example, nibbāna, according to Buddhadasa, can be attained by both monks and lay people here and now. Vajirāṇāṇa, however, preaches that the search for nibbāna is exclusively for monks. Thus, he divides his teaching into two parts: one for monks who aim to be dhammic propagators and who may attain nibbāna, and the other one for lay people whose goal is not the attainment of nibbāna but being good householders and good citizens.

Buddhadasa's interpretation of dhamma as nature itself has many unique features which distinguish it from...
the normative view associated with Vajirañāṇa as well as from popular beliefs, many of which seem diametrically opposed to Buddhadāsa's position. Dhamma as dhammajāti is explained by Buddhadāsa with such terms as causality, emptiness, nibbāna, Thusness and Buddha Nature, concepts taken from both Theravāda and Mahāyāna Buddhism. In particular, Buddhadāsa "democratizes" the ideal form of dhamma or nibbāna as a state to be achieved by all Buddhists, monk and laity alike. This position represents a critique of Vajirañāṇa's rather strict adherence to traditional Buddhaghosan categories and hierarchical moral views, and also of the somewhat materialistic orientation of popular Buddhism. Thus, Buddhadāsa's position might be most aptly characterized as "critical" or "reformist."

The Law of Nature (saccadhamma)

Buddhadāsa interprets dhamma as the law of nature in three ways: the law of Dependent Origination (paticcasamuppāda), the law of kamma, and the Christian God. For Buddhadāsa, each of these three formulations of dhamma points to the cause and effect interrelationship of all phenomena, i.e., everything is the outcome of its own cause; nothing occurs at random or accidentally.

For Buddhadāsa, the most important teaching of the Buddha is the doctrine of paticcasamuppāda. Perhaps
erroneously, he sees a correlation between the view of Descartes (1596-1650), the great French philosopher, and the Buddhist idea of upādāna:

Sometimes we think that our self belongs to us. Sometimes, we are satisfied with our feelings, we then take those feelings as belonging to us and begin to have a sense of belonging and self-attachment. This also appears in a Western philosophy such as that of Descartes: "I think therefore I am."²

Buddhadāsa explains that our self-consciousness--"I" want this, "I" hate that, and so on--arises through our mental activities and our attachment to them. The mental image of "I" promotes a sense of belonging and self-attachment which later becomes the cause of suffering. From the attachment to self arises existence or becoming (bhava) as an animal, a human being, a deity, or another kind of being within the Buddhist cosmology. Bhava causes birth (jāti) which is the transformation of "self" into various forms as a consequence of one's actions and intentions. Buddhadāsa interprets the birth of self in whatever condition as a mental process:

Nature manages human mental activities such as desire and feelings. Then a person begins to realize that it is "I" who have, who want, who desire, and so on. This is the birth of "self" or "my-self."³

Jāti is, in fact, the origination of decay and death (jarā and maraṇa). Everything that comes into being inevitably dies. Jarā and maraṇa from the perspective of rebirth (samsāra) then anticipate the re-arising of ignorance and the inevitable round of the cycle of

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Paṭiccasamuppāda is closely related to the law of kamma. According to Buddhadasa, if we understand the exact meaning of paṭiccasamuppāda, we can understand the meaning and process of kamma. Most Thai Buddhists understand kamma literally and mechanistically, believing that good kamma (meritorious deeds) yields happiness and bad kamma yields suffering. They understand kamma as concrete, physical acts and their specific consequences rather than as a principle or law. For example, murder which is bad kamma (a demeritorious deed) makes the murderer die young or turns him/her into a victim of a murder in the future. Customarily, Thai Buddhists use rituals as a means to promote good kamma, for example, listening to a sermon in the monastery, offering food and gifts to monks.

When Thai Buddhists think of kamma in relationship to dhamma, they again think in specific terms rather than at the level of principle. Thus, good kamma becomes an action in accord with a particular dhammic guideline of a particular text. Conversely, bad kamma would not be in accord with that particular rule or guideline. Buddhāsa also criticizes this understanding
of *kamma* as it relates to *dhamma*. Good *kamma* does not result from blindly following a Buddhist text or a particular textual guideline. It is an outcome of knowledge and not of ignorance. One of the major significations of the doctrine of *paticcasamuppāda* is that ignorance is the cause of bad *kamma* and suffering in human life. Buddha-dāsa illustrates this point with a story of a man who becomes a thief. According to this story, a man, out of his ignorance, becomes obsessed by a particular type of delicious food. He cannot afford the dish, but whenever he tastes it, he is overwhelmed with pleasure. Ignorance turns him into a slave to his desire for this particular dish. He will do anything to get it; so he becomes a thief. He will steal or even kill in order to get what he wants.\(^\text{34}\) If he does not succeed in his efforts to satisfy his desire, he suffers both physically and mentally. If he gets caught, he will be punished. Even if no one discovers his misconduct, however, he still lacks peace of mind and has to struggle with his desire forever until he can free himself from his ignorance, which binds him to the cycle of *paticcasamuppāda*.

Buddhadāsa's explanation of the *paticcasamuppāda* is different from Vajiranana's and most Thai Buddhists' belief. Following Buddhaghosa, Vajiranana interprets *paticcasamuppāda* primarily in terms of rebirth. Hence, the emphasis tends to be on the past or the future rather than the
present. Similarly, most Thai Buddhists see kamma and pāṭiccasamuppāda in terms of life after death and endless rebirths until nibbāna is attained. Buddhadāsa, on the other hand, stresses the present nature of pāṭiccasamuppāda, that it operates within this very life span. He interprets birth and death as an arising and an end of human mental process. For example, when a man sees a beautiful woman, his sense of attachment arises; then his feeling will move to another state which may be increased or decreased in degree, and then it will somehow die out finally. All these can occur in one life span. Buddhadāsa criticizes Buddhaghosa for misreading the Tipiṭaka's understanding of pāṭiccasamuppāda. He criticizes the Visuddhimagga as a collection of tales, on the one hand, and an analysis of vocabulary, on the other hand, which have very little to do with the Tipiṭaka. Taking the Kalāma Sutta's admonition not to accept as true anything that cannot be verified by experience, Buddhadāsa, in effect, finds Buddhaghosa's teachings fundamentally misleading, especially in regard to pāṭiccasamuppāda.

For Buddhadāsa, the doctrine of pāṭiccasamuppāda not only emphasizes the centrality of ignorance but more generally the truth of the Three Characteristics (ti-lakkhana) of all phenomena. Pāṭiccasamuppāda demonstrates that all things in the universe are impermanent, full of suffering, and non-substantial. All things
keep changing according to a particular causal pattern. Thus, they are impermanent and unreliable. If a person clings to anything in this world and expects that it will last and belong to him/her forever, s/he will certainly be disappointed.

Buddhadasa makes an interesting interpretative move at this point. He argues that since paticcasamuppāda creates, rules, and brings an end to all things in the universe, it shares the fundamental characteristics of the Biblical concept of "God." Dhamma, Nature, and God have the same essential meaning:

The law of nature, about which man knows still too little, is itself God viewed in a personal way. But if we view it from the absolute point of view, we call it Dhamma. If we speak in scientific language, it is the law of science. Therefore no matter whether people believe in a religion which has a God, or in a religion which has no God, or believe in no religion but believe in science--this means they all really believe in the same principle.

Buddhadasa believes that all things function under certain universal laws and that religions simply have different names for them. Buddhadasa argues, therefore, that Buddhists should not reject the term "God" or take it as an alien notion. He even suggests that if a Christian follows Jesus' teaching seriously, s/he is also fulfilling the Buddha's teaching; similarly, if Buddhists really conduct themselves according to the Buddha's teaching, they do the Will of God as well:

The Christian teaching of forbearance, forgiveness,
helping others, loving others as oneself or more than oneself is quite in keeping with the Buddhist teaching based on practice and not on faith alone. Whether a person understands God or not, does not matter, for, if one practises these virtues the result will be the same in accordance with the law of Kamma which is, as Buddhists know so well, God personified.

In reading Buddhadasa, then, we conclude that for him, the essence of all religious teachings is the same. All religions attempt to convey the true meaning of the nature of things which, for Buddhadasa, has the four aspects we have previously mentioned, i.e., nature, the Law of Nature, duty, and fulfillment or result of doing one's duty in terms of the Law of Nature. Thus, to equate a Buddhist idea of nature (dhamma-āti) with the Biblical concept of God, Buddhadasa rejects the concept of a personal an anthropomorphic god—a god who is Father or Judge who rewards and punishes humanity. God, according to Buddhadasa, has the same four aspects as the Buddhist dhamma: God as nature, God as the Law of Nature, God as duty, and God as the fulfilment of duty. In his view, God as nature simply means everything that exists in the phenomenal world including Satan and all unpleasant qualities.

If things of nature such as earth, water, fire, air, etc., were not already in God from where would God get these things to create this so-called universe? If there were anything else apart from God then God would not be perfect. Therefore, nature itself is included in the word God and there is also to be found Satan or the Devil, call it what you may. So we can see that the so-called God is what in Buddhism we call, "Dhamma."
Clearly, many Christians could not accept Buddhadasa's interpretation of God. First, he rejects the normative Christian teaching of creation *ex nihilo*. Secondly, he tends to make all personal references to God merely symbolic. His description of dhamma as the nature of things or manifestations of the Body of God seems to be very different from the standard Christian belief, in particular. This issue will be further discussed in the third part of this chapter which deals particularly with Buddhadasa's expository method.
For Buddhadasa, the "way" according to the law of nature (patipattidhamma) is the dhamma of obligation prescribed for all beings, sentient and non-sentient, in order that they can survive and function properly in this world. It is applied to both material and mental phenomena. When it is applied to human beings, it becomes a moral obligation which is necessary for human survival and happiness in this world. Buddhadasa divides the patipattidhamma into five categories:

1. Morality (siladhamma)
2. Tradition and culture (vaddhanadhamma)
3. Political systems
4. Authoritative power
5. The quality of a devoted person

Morality (siladhamma)

According to Buddhadasa, morality (siladhamma) is the quality which defines normal conditions. Morality is applied not only to human beings but also to material objects. Buddhadasa explains that morality can take four forms:
morality of material things; morality of the external body; morality of mind; and morality of consciousness (sati).

The morality of material things helps all material objects to exist as they are, and not as anything else. This kind of morality mandates that all material things arise, exist, and perish at a certain time, and that they are subject to the Three Characteristics: impermanence, suffering, and non-substantiality. The morality of material things controls the process of the development of all material objects from their birth to their destruction. It works within material objects in the form of a natural element (dhātu). Dhātu is a quality within a material object which sustains it and keeps it as it is against external conditions. For example, the element (dhātu) which provides solidity in an object is earth; the element which provides fluidity in an object is water; the element which provides heat in an object is fire; the element which provides flexibility and mobility is air. Buddha-dāsa states that all material things are composed of the four elements: earth, water, fire, and/or air. A rock appears as a rock because of the earth element which provides solidity and projects its quality according to the law of nature through a material object.

The second kind of morality, morality of the external body, is the morality which helps the physical body of all living beings work properly. For example, this morality
helps the human body to function normally in digesting, breathing, discharging, and so on. Buddhadasa describes the morality of a tree, which is a living object, as that which allows the trees to adapt itself to its environment, e.g., it usually turns its leaves to the sunlight so that it can survive. All living beings have a "way" according to the law of nature to survive and live properly.

The third kind of morality is the morality of mind which regulates one's mental life and keeps it in a normal condition so that a person can live happily and peacefully. For Buddhadasa, the nature of mind is luminous; it is pure, bright, and calm. Nevertheless, whenever defilements arise in the mind, the mind becomes impure, unclear, and disturbed. The morality of mind which regulates and brings the mind to its normal condition is wisdom (pañña). Wisdom detects the cause of the troubled mind in mental formations (saṅkhāra). Wisdom reveals the danger of mental formations to the mind, frees it, and brings the mind to its normal condition.

The fourth kind of morality, morality of consciousness (sati), controls human action and thought. Buddhadasa suggests that we should first understand the law of nature and then use the morality of consciousness (sati) in order to guide us to act according to the law of nature. The law of nature here is pāṭiccasamuppāda or idappaccayatā. Sati is the means to detect the arising
helps the human body to function normally in digesting, breathing, discharging, and so on. Buddhadasāsa describes the morality of a tree, which is a living object, as that which allows the trees to adapt itself to its environment, e.g., it usually turns its leaves to the sunlight so that it can survive. All living beings have a "way" according to the law of nature to survive and live properly.

The third kind of morality is the morality of mind which regulates one's mental life and keeps it in a normal condition so that a person can live happily and peacefully. For Buddhadasāsa, the nature of mind is luminous; it is pure, bright, and calm. Nevertheless, whenever emotions arise in the mind, the mind becomes disturbed. The morality of the mind to its normal condition is called sati according to the law of nature and then use the law of nature and then use the law of nature and then use the law of nature and then use the law of nature. The law of nature is called idappaccayatā. Sati is the morality of mind.

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of each cause and effect in the process of *paticcasamuppāda*. For example, whenever the feeling of anger arises, *sati* will inform the mind the moment anger arises. The mind is conscious of the arising of anger, and thus can cope with it in time. Therefore, it is important to cultivate *sati* in one's mind because by being mindful one protects oneself from the suffering (*dukkha*) inherent in the Wheel of Becoming, i.e., *paticcasamuppāda*. *Sati*, then, is the morality of consciousness which helps a person realize the cause of all phenomena so that s/he can eliminate the cause of suffering and its effect. *Sati* is a function according to the Law of Nature in the sense that it keeps a person attentive to the process of the law of nature so that s/he can act properly according to it.

**Tradition and Culture (vaddhanadhamma)**

According to Buddhadāsa, tradition is the pattern of conduct which has been followed for a long time until it becomes a typical way of life; and culture is a form of practice which has been carried on through generations until it becomes a part of both individual and collective characteristics. This kind of *dhamma* also signifies progress and acceptance. The term "culture" is *wattanatham* in Thai (Pāli - *vaddhanadhamma*) which conveys
the notion of dhamma's being progressively accumulated. "Tradition" in Thai is tham-niam (Pāli: dhamma-niyama) and connotes "common acceptance" or "what is preferable." Tradition and culture are, in Buddhadāsa's view, forms of religion, because they represent a pattern of practice commonly accepted over time, until they have become the foundation of a spiritual process. In Thailand, tradition and culture based on the Buddhist teachings are crucial for the survival of the nation. Since tradition and culture are based on Buddha-dhamma of which the essence is the doctrine of nature (dhamma-jāti), they can be considered as methods of practice or ways according to the Law of Nature. For Buddhadāsa, this means that if a person understands the true meaning of tradition and culture, s/he will live according to nature; and this means living a balanced life of moderation between excessive luxury and ascetic denial.

Political Systems

A political system is also a kind of patipattidhamma (a practice or "way" according to the law of nature), and includes economic and social systems as well. Buddhadāsa argues that ideally the political system is fundamentally ethical, although present political systems have fallen from that ideal. Most politicians seek their own selfish
benefit, but the political system should be seen as fundamentally dhammic, that is, a way of life according to the Law of Nature ( = dhamma). In this regard it should be noted that the Thai term for politics means simply the activities which take place in the town (karn-mu'ang). A dhammic political system includes everyone and promotes the well-being of the whole. This means, for example, that monks, as a part of the whole, are involved in politics as is everyone else. Unfortunately, according to Buddhadaśa, today's political systems have lost their grounding in dhamma, and, hence, serve the selfish interests of one party or one person instead of the public good. This means that a monk's participation in politics would be adhammic, transgressing the Vinaya rules.

For Buddhadaśa, the political system which represents a "way" according to the law of nature is thammika-sangkom-niyom (Pāli - dhammika-saṅgama-niyama) or socialism according to dhamma. This political system has the following principles:

1. The principle of thought that all human beings are companions in the common process of birth, old-age, sickness, and death

2. The principle of practice which aims at others' benefit or social well-being

For Buddhadaśa, these principles help human beings understand each other, develop loving-kindness towards
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one another, and to eliminate selfishness and so devote themselves to the service of others. Dhammic socialism is, then, a patipattidhamma because it follows the Law of Nature.

Authoritative Power

Authoritative power is the dhamma which is commonly held sacred by the people. Most Buddhists usually regard dhamma as the sacred words of the Buddha as one who possesses supernatural power. Buddhadasa does not reject this popular understanding of dhamma as a sacred power; however, he reinterprets the meaning of "sacredness." Sacredness, for Buddhadasa, is sakti (power) and siddhi (achievement). It means "the achievement which is the outcome of power," or "the power for achievement." In other words, dhamma is a means to success, an authoritative power which leads people to a successful life. Buddhadasa explains that dhamma is sacred, as an authoritative power, because it is the eternal law of truth; and if one follows dhamma properly, one will always achieve everything one wants.

The Quality of a Devoted Person

The quality of a devoted person is the personal
ethical values which encourage a person to devote him/herself to the welfare of others. This quality is the dhamma or the virtue of the bodhisatta (one who vows self-sacrifice for others). The bodhisatta who sacrifices his/her own satisfaction and happiness for the sake of others is the one who acts according to the law of nature. Buddhadāsa explains that the bodhisatta does not follow his/her own desire, but follows the Law of dhamma. Thus, s/he will bring happiness and prosperity to the whole world.

The Result of the Function
According to the Law of Nature

(Pativeddha-dhamma)

Pativeddha-dhamma is the result of the fulfilment of the function or obligation according to the law of nature. Buddhadāsa explains that the result of the fulfilment of obligation always follows dhamma: if we do good, we will have good in return, and vice versa. In Buddhism, the pativeddha-dhamma means the achievement of the path (magga), the result or fruition (phala), and nibbāna. These are the supramundane states (lokuttara-dhamma).

According to Buddhadāsa, the pativeddha-dhamma is, in fact, the self-detachment which is the penetration of...
the truth of nature that all things are non-substantial and, thus, are not worth clinging to. Magga is the path, especially the middle path. It is described as right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration, and can be summarized as moderation in thinking, speaking, and acting. In order to think, speak, and act moderately, one needs wisdom (pañña). For Buddhadasa, one can be moderate if one detaches oneself from everything and lets wisdom be one's guiding light.

The achievement of magga is divided into 4 stages: sotāpatti-magga (the path of stream-entry), sakadāgāmi-magga (the path of once-returning), anāgāmi-magga (the path of non-returning), and arahatta-magga (the path of the arahant or the Perfect One). Buddhadasa interprets that the path of stream-entry is the stage of those who begin to follow the middle path. The path of once-returning is for those who have already followed the middle path up to the second stage, but still want to return to their worldly happiness. The path of non-returning is for those who do not want to return to this world of desire and defilements again. The path of the arahant is the stage of the fulfilment of the middle path by those who can completely eradicate their sense of self-attachment and attain the perfect emptiness of mind. Nevertheless, it should be noted that Buddhadasa's interpretations and explanation of
the four stages of magga differ from traditional understanding of magga. For most Thai Buddhists, re-turning or non-returning to the "world" means that to the physical world or the planet earth. It concerns the issues of rebirth or reincarnation. For Buddhadasa, the "world" means the realm of human mind prevailing with desire and defilements. Thus, according to Buddhadasa, the "once-returning" are those who return to think, feel, and act with desire and defilements for only one lifetime before they can purify their mind from those things; the non-returning are those who will not return to feel, think, and act according to the defilements in their mind.

Phala is the result of the achievement of the four stages of the path (magga). Those who achieve the sotā-patti-magga have an ability to eliminate sakkaya-ditthi (selfishness), vicikicchā (hesitation in making a right choice of living), and sīlabbataparāmāsa (a blind faith or an ungrounded belief in ceremonies and rituals).74

Sakkāya-dīthi literally means a false view of self. Buddhadasa interprets this term as a selfishness caused by self-attachment or clinging to one's self. Those who have sakkāya-dīthi hold that their body and mind are eternal, unchangeable, and belong to them. They try to accumulate power or property for themselves or their family regardless of others' misery because they think that they can enjoy them forever.75
Vicikicchā, according to Buddhadasa, is the hesitation in making moral choices: whether one should follow one's own desire or one's sense of righteousness. This hesitation is caused by one's tendency towards and familiarity with an indulgent life full of desire and defilements. If one trains oneself to live a disciplined life, one will choose to follow dhamma (righteousness) instead of one's desire.

Silabbataparamāsa is blind faith and blind adherence to rituals and ceremonies. Buddhadasa explains that this blind faith is caused by avarice, fear, and lack of wisdom. Those who possess silabbataparamāsa participate in rituals and ceremonies in order to gain some supernatural protection and/or power. For example, they pay homage to the Buddha image because they believe that the image possesses a protective power that can help them achieve what they want; they do not see the image as a symbol of the purity, luminosity, and calmness of the Buddha.

According to Buddhadasa, the sotāpanna (the person who obtains the fruition of the sotāpatti-magga) eliminates these three mental fetters, and, thus, is free from self-attachment, and is able to adhere to the dhamma.

The sakadāgāmi (the one who obtains the fruition of the sakadāgāmi-magga), like the sotāpanna, eliminates sakkāya-ditthi, vicikicchā, and silabbataparamāsa. But unlike the sotāpanna, the sakadāgāmi returns to
mundane life only once more, and has less defilement than the sotāpanna.\textsuperscript{79}

The anāgāmi (the one who obtains the fruition of the anāgāmi-magga) does not return to worldly life after death. S/he eliminates sakkāya-dīṭṭhi, vicikicchā, and sīlabbataparāmāsa. Moreover, s/he eliminates sexual desirement (kāma-rāga) and aversion (patīga) which still exist in the mind of the sotāpanna and the sakadāgāmi.\textsuperscript{80}

The arahant (the one who obtains the fruition of the arahatta-magga) eradicates sakkāya-dīṭṭhi, vicikicchā, sīlabbataparāmāsa, kāma-rāga, patīga, rūpa-rāga (pleasure in form), arūpa-rāga (pleasure in non-form), māna (pride), uddhaccā (distraction), and avijjā (ignorance).\textsuperscript{81} The arahant's mind is not disturbed by pleasure in things with form, such as a picture or a woman, or without form such as fame and status. The arahant considers everything as non-substantial and non-self, therefore, s/he does not attach him/herself to it. S/he has no pride because s/he can eliminate his/her self-attachment. His/her mind is not distracted by anything because it is empty of self and defilements. Nothing can make him/her love, in the mundane sense, hate, or be aroused to anger. Since his/her mind is empty, s/he is free from all suffering and attains nibbāna.
Nibbāna, which is the last division of the pāṭi-veddha-dhamma, is the state completely free from suffering. Buddhadasa defines nibbāna as "cooling down of hot or evil effects." He argues that the term nibbāna is not sacred, nor should it be used exclusively in regard to the Buddha or holy saints, as it is by most Thai Buddhists. It can be used with all natural things. For example, the nibbāna of an animal signifies the tamed animal, the nibbāna of food signifies the food which is cooled down of heat, the nibbāna of a person signifies a person whose defilements and evil passions have been eradicated completely. Since nibbāna means being cooled down from evil heat, it can be attained here and now in this life when all defilements and desires have been eradicated from the human mind.

In addition to being nature itself, the law of nature, the "way" according to the law of nature, and the result of the "way" according to the law of nature, dhamma also means the Buddha's teaching. According to Buddhadasa, dhamma as the Buddha's teaching is not merely the Buddha's words literally recorded in the Tipiṭaka; it is particularly the teaching of the four aspects of dhamma. The Buddha's teaching that sets forth and elucidates the four aspects of dhamma is a universal teaching, the truth of which extends beyond the limit of the Buddhist religion.
It can be identified with the truth of other religions, such as Christianity. Buddhadasa considers dhamma as the universal truth which transcends the limit of any one faith. As the universal truth, dhamma which is the Buddha's teaching, and the Christian teaching, are the same. Buddhadasa clarifies this point by comparing the meaning of dhamma to God:

Dhamma is the same as that which is called God.
We can elucidate the facts about this point as follows:
(a) Nature itself or all natural phenomena are the physical body of God.
(b) The great and absolute law of nature is the spiritual body of God.
(c) Performing duties properly according to the law of nature is the demand of God.
(d) The fruit which man obtains by performing his duty is the supply of God.

Buddhadasa's explanation will be rejected by many Christians: nature itself is not the physical body of God according to Christian belief, but the creation or work of God. The Law of Nature, however, might be compared to the spiritual body of God if we interpret this concept as God's governing power of the Law. The function according to the Law of Nature may be interpreted as the demand of God in the sense of moral obligation for all good people who want to attain their religious goal. Furthermore, the fruit of the fulfilment of obligation may be seen as supplied by God in the sense that it is the highest reward of God: salvation in Christianity or nibbana in Buddhism. Buddhadasa clearly believes that if Buddhists see the
Buddha's teaching in the universal sense of dhamma or nature, they will not only be broad-minded, but will be able to understand the essential meaning of other religions.

The Relationship Between Dhamma and Abhidhamma

Buddhist scholars still argue with one another about the meaning and relationship of dhamma and abhidhamma. Some scholars such as Wilhelm and Magdalene Geiger and Buddhadasa believe that dhamma is the essence and the whole teaching of the Buddha, and that abhidhamma is only an elaborated version of dhamma. Others such as Vajirañāṇa contend that dhamma is only the elementary teaching of the Buddha and that abhidhamma is the Buddha's superior and higher teaching which can lead human beings to nibbāna. Mrs. C. A. F. Rhys Davids believes that one can hardly understand the essence of the Buddha's dhamma without consulting the Abhidhamma, though she agrees that the Abhidhamma is only an addition to the Sutta and the Vinaya. For Bimala Churn Law, abhidhamma is merely a scholastic version of dhamma or the Buddha's teaching in the Sutta:

It [the Abhidhamma] treats the same subject as the Sutta Pitaka and differs from that collection only in being more scholastic. It is composed chiefly in the forms of questions and answers like a catechism. The starting point of this collection appears to have
der. This teaching is originally recorded in the 
Ar̄guttara Nikāya:

Restraint [evil], leaving [evil], making-become [virtue], preserving [virtue] -
These are the four exertions taught by him, The Kinsman of the Sun. Herein a monk,
Ardently striving makes an end of Ill.

The four roads to saintship (iddhipāda) mentioned in the Abhidhamma (Vibhaṅga.216, 249) are also taken from the Sutta. According to the Dīgha-nikāya, Sāriputta told the congregation of monks to recite the Buddha's dhamma in order to preserve it as a guide for virtuous life for all gods and humankind. The iddhipāda was thus recited:

Four stages to efficiency (iddhi). Herein, friends, a brother develops the stage which is characterized by (1) the mental co-efficient of an effort of purposive concentration; (2) by the mental co-efficient of an effort of intellectual concentration; (3) by the mental co-efficient of an effort of energized concentration; (4) by the mental co-efficient of an effort of investigating concentration.

The five moral powers (bala) and the five organs of spiritual sense (indriya) are the same set of dhamma. They appear first in the Sutta and later in the Abhidhamma (Vibhaṅga.342). In the Sutta, the bala or the indriya are recited by the congregation of monks led by Sāriputta, as faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and insight. These are the dhamma which strengthen the mind to work for the absolute emancipation from suffering.

The seven kinds of wisdom (bojjhaṅga) was presented first in the Sutta and later in the Abhidhamma.

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According to the Sutta, Sāriputta leads the congregation of monks to recite this teaching of the Buddha. These dhamma are recited as mindfulness, the study of doctrines, energy, zest, serenity, concentration, and equanimity. They are considered as constitutive means of enlightenment.\(^93\)

The Āryan eightfold path (magga) also appears first in the Sutta and later in the Abhidhamma (Vibhaṅga.235).\(^94\) The Buddha taught the congregation of monks in the Kuru country that the Aryan eightfold path was the dhamma leading to the cessation of suffering and that it was described as right view, right aspiration, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration.\(^95\) Consequently, one observes that the bodhipakkhiya-dhamma which is one of the foundation stones of the Abhidhamma is originally in the Sutta.

These few illustrations, which could be multiplied many-fold, support the argument that the teaching which prevails in the Abhidhamma is largely a repetition and/or an elaboration of the dhamma established in the Sutta.

In Thailand today, Buddhadasa has chosen to take issue with the standard Thai Buddhist view regarding the significance of the abhidhamma and its relationship to dhamma. The latter, following Buddhaghosa's acceptance of the authority of the Abhidhamma, generally regard the
Abhidhamma as the collection of higher and superior teaching of the Buddha. Buddhadāsa, on the other hand, considers the whole teaching of the Buddha as the dhamma recorded in the Sutta and the Vinaya, and the abhidhamma as a repetition of dhamma added in the last part of the Tipiṭaka, the Abhidhamma.

According to Buddhadāsa, dhamma in the most profound sense is not beyond human knowledge, but does necessitate transcending conventional levels of understanding. The difficulty arises when people do not know the real meaning of words and understand them only in terms of everyday language (Thai: phāsā khon) instead of the level of dhamma or truth. In this regard, Buddhadasa criticizes the customary Thai distinction between dhamma and abhidhamma.

Generally, Thai Buddhists identify the Buddha's teaching concerning enlightenment and nibbāna as the higher truth or abhidhamma, and the Buddha's teaching of general ethical precepts as the dhamma. Buddhadāsa objects to this conventional Theravāda distinction between abhidhamma and dhamma. In fact, claims Buddhadāsa, the Buddha neither preached the abhidhamma nor differentiated the dhamma from the abhidhamma. The differentiation of these terms occurred after the parinibbāna of the Buddha at the First Council led by Mahākassapa. Since then, the knowledge and practice of nibbāna as mentioned
in the Abhidhamma involved an excessively complicated use of language, heavily dependent on logic, and deals especially with theories (pariyatti) which encourage mere intellectuality.

As a body of texts, the abhidhamma exists as an analytic presentation of the doctrine of the Buddhist Canon,\(^96\) found in the Sutta Pitaka and the Vinaya Piṭaka. After the parinibbāna of the Buddha, seven collections of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka were formulated containing nearly 10,000 pages. Later, Anuruddha, a Lanka monk, summarized it into a text of about ten pages long called the Abhidhammatthasanga. Finally, it was elaborated into several minor texts of hundreds of pages used in Burma and Thailand.\(^97\) Because the term denotes a "higher" (abhi) teaching, Thai Buddhists regard the abhidhamma as the most sacred of the Buddha's teachings rather than as a particular collection of texts. Buddhāsā asserts that the essential teachings of the Buddha are dhamma and vinaya. Dhamma in this usage means the Buddha's teachings which are necessary for extinguishing all suffering.\(^98\) In Buddhāsā's view, this is signified best by the term suññatā (emptiness). Even vinaya is dhamma in this sense for it refers to the monastic discipline and rules of practice that eliminate dukkha or suffering.

In short, for Buddhāsā, abhidhamma and dhamma are not different from each other. Abhidhamma should be
seen simply as an elaboration of dhamma concerning the path toward nibbāna. In conventional understanding, however, dhamma, as the dialogues (sutta) of the Buddha, is considered inferior to abhidhamma or ultimate teaching of the Buddha. Buddhadāsa points out that if we differentiate abhidhamma from dhamma, abhidhamma, in effect, should be seen as an excessive and, hence, unnecessary teaching of the Buddha, since its content has already been presented in the dhamma. By turning the usual distinction between dhamma and abhidhamma on its head, Buddhadāsa is criticizing those who, in his view, would turn the teachings of the Buddha into an arid philosophy rather than a spiritual practice.

All that Buddhists need to know for their enlightenment, Buddhadāsa argues, are the Four Noble Truths and the nature of suññatā. He asserts that dhamma is simple and it needs only a proper practice rather than profound understanding of Buddhist theory and argument. Ordinary folk as well as scholars can understand it. Dhamma exists in those texts in which the Buddha's teachings concerning the practice of the awareness of the impermanence, suffering, and emptiness (suññatā) of life is foremost such as the Sutta. One can become a holy person without the knowledge of abhidhamma. Buddhadāsa illustrates this claim with a metaphor of different types of horses. There are three kinds of horses: small, foreign-bred, and pedi-
greed. The pedigree horse is the most excellent of the three. It is compared to the *arahant* (the final stage of holiness or perfection). The foreign bred horse is less capable than the pedigree horse, and is compared to the *anāgami* (the second stage of holiness). The small horse is the least capable, and is compared to the *sotāpanna* (the first stage of holiness). Buddhadasa differentiates each type into three groups according to their speed, color, and shape. Similarly, each type of holy person can be differentiated into groups according to their knowledge of the Four Noble Truths, their ability to discuss the *dhamma*, and their fame and honor.

According to this metaphor, horses are differentiated by their external beauty, their capacity to reach the goal, and their speed. For a racing horse, speed is its most important quality, since it determines which horse will win the race. Like the quality of the horse, the quality of the *arahant* can be variously determined. The most important quality, however, which makes one an *arahant*, is the capacity to reach *nibbāna*, the true knowledge of the Four Noble Truths, not his capacity of preaching or discussing the *dhamma*. If a monk really knows the Four Noble Truths, though he cannot intellectually elaborate and explain them, he becomes an *arahant*. Thus, people can reach the final stage of holiness without being able to expound on the *abhidhamma*.

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In summary, Buddhadasa strives to recapture the essential meaning of the term, dhamma, as represented by the original teachings of the Buddha, i.e., the earliest teachings of the Buddhist tradition. For this reason, he is critical of accretions which obscure the power and significance of dhamma, whether they come from the scholastic renderings of the abhidhamma authors or the traditional commentators such as Buddhaghosa. His position contrasts with the standard Thai Theravāda position which makes a textual distinction between the Sutta—the more informal dialogues of the Tipiṭaka—and the Abhidhamma—the more highly systematized or scholastic texts. It should be noted that Buddhadasa criticizes the traditional Theravāda position from an epistemological stand close to the Mahāyāna and that he holds this position on the basis of his understanding of the truth of the Buddha, the dhamma, which, in his view, is universal. As mentioned earlier, like the Mahāyānist Nāgārjuna, Buddhadasa holds that nibbāna and saṃsāra, or lokuttara dhamma and lokiya dhamma, have no ontological distinction. They are distinguished only at the epistemological level when he needs to emphasize the ultimate truth (paramatthasacca) of dhamma by showing that the Tipitaka uses two kinds of language: the dhamma language and the ordinary or everyday language and that one should try to understand the dhamma language of the Buddha in order to grasp the
real meaning of his teachings.
Buddhadaśa's Methods of Dhammic Exposition

Buddhadaśa's success in spreading his dhamma depends in part on his unique methods, in particular, his ability to address particular issues or speak to particular contexts rather than the traditional commentarial exposition of Buddhaghosa. One might say that Buddhadaśa's concern is to establish a system of dhamma, defined by the categories of the Tipiṭaka, rather than to "interpret" the dhamma in terms of contextually derived issues, problems or concerns in Thai daily life. Although Vajiraṇāṇa used the Buddha-dhamma to promote Thai nationalism and support the monarchy, his expository methods followed the normative Buddhaghosan tradition. He generally limited his definition of such terms as nibbāna, dhamma, kamma, to a rather standard interpretation. For example, nibbāna, for Vajiraṇāṇa, is the state of purification from all suffering and defilements, the state of the Buddha and Buddhist saints. It is usually the exclusive goal pursued by monks rather than by lay people; and the meaning of nibbāna after death is particularly emphasized.

Buddhadaśa, on the other hand, believes that the essence of the Buddha's teaching is universal in the sense that it is not limited to the form one finds in the texts, especially in any literal sense. Thus, to confine one's
interpretation of dhamma to a line by line exposition is to deny the universal significance of the dhamma. Like Buddhaghosa, Buddhadāsa aims to recover and preserve the original teaching of the Buddha, and he certainly focuses on particular Pali terms such as anattā; however, the term functions more as a symbol, pointing beyond itself to a meaning with the power to transform a person's life. We might say, therefore, that unlike the "prescriptive" definitions and expositions of Buddhaghosa and of Vajiranana, Buddhadāsa attempts to move his listeners beyond the prescriptions and definitions to an "experience of the truth." To the extent that Buddhaghosa "demythologizes" the text, he is not intending to deny the truth of the text but rather to reveal its true meaning. In the following section, I will explore Buddhadāsa's methods of dhammic exposition by considering the use of language and symbol in his work.

Buddhadāsa's Methods of Teaching

Buddhadāsa conveys his dhamma to others through his special use of language and visual symbols. His use of language can be differentiated into the critical and the symbolic. The critical use of language is his attempt to stimulate the Buddhists to examine their casual ways of thought and practice and to stimulate their self-criticism.
through their wisdom. Buddhadasa's critical use of language may offend those who take the Buddha's dhamma casually and superficially, for example, those who prefer heavenly life to nibbāna. Nevertheless, such method Buddhadasa uses to attack some contemporary Buddhist beliefs and practices is in fact a first step toward preparing them for a deeper level of dhammic understanding. Apart from the use of language, Buddhadasa also uses visual symbols such as art and architecture at Suan Mokkha, and symbolic illustrations, in order to present the meaning of dhamma. In order to show how Buddhadasa's use of language and visual symbols can effect the Buddhist understanding of dhamma, I will refer to his emphasis on the use of dhamma language and his criticism of everyday language.

Like Zen masters, Buddhadasa believes that conventional ways of thinking and using language prevents humans from penetrating the true meaning of the Buddha's teaching. Zen Buddhism as well as Buddhadasa teaches that conventional thinking enslaves the human mind.101 Buddhadasa encourages human beings to free themselves from the conventional usage of language concerning the topics of dhamma.

In order to demonstrate the basic flaw of the conventional usage of language, Buddhadasa classifies language into two levels: everyday language and dhamma language.
He calls the popular usage of Buddhist teaching, everyday language, and his own exposition, dhamma language. Everyday language is worldly or mundane language based on ordinary sense experiences and mundane expectations. It inevitably deals with all matters superficially and crudely. Scriptural or doctrinal language tends to be understood literally and traditionally. Such interpretation does not penetrate to a deeper intellectual or spiritual level of meaning. It depends merely on the external forms of objects and ideas.

Everyday language is the language of those who do not know dhamma in a deeper sense.102 Buddhadasa asserts that the essence of Buddhism expresses itself in dhamma language, the true meaning of the language used by the Buddha in his preaching.103 For example, the Buddhist concepts, kamma, when used without any modifier, connotes a negative meaning in everyday language such as bad luck; in dhamma language, however, kamma can be bad kamma or good kamma usually referring to action.104 Thus, if one takes kamma in everyday-language sense, one certainly cannot understand and practice the true meaning of the Buddha's teaching. Buddhadasa's use of dhamma language in order to explain the concept of the Triple Gem—the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Saṅgha—is very similar to the Zen explanation of the Threefold Body of the Buddha (trīkāya): the Law-body or Spiritual Body (dharmakāya),
the Reward-body or Enjoyment-body (sambhogakāya), and
the Transformation-body or Body of Incarnation (nirmāṇa-
kāya). Wing-Tsit Chan gives a general definition of
the trikāya as follows:

The Law-body is the Buddha-body in its self-
nature, the body of the Dharma or truth, the body of
reality, the body of the principle. The "body" has no
bodily existence. It is identical with truth. In
various schools it is identical with the Realm of
Dharma (Dharma-dhātu), Buddha-nature, or the Store-
house of the "Thus-come" (Tathāgataagarbha). The
Reward-body is the person embodied with real insight,
enjoying his own enlightenment or that of others. The
Transformation-body is the body variously appearing
to save people. The three bodies are three in one,
are possessed of all Buddhas, and are potential to all
men.

Hui Nêng, a Zen master, treats the meaning of the
trikāya in dhamma language. He argues that the trikāya
is not the body of the Buddha which exists apart from or-
dinary human beings; it is, in fact, within each of us.
Our self-nature is dharmakāya which is pure and bright
with the knowledge of truth or wisdom. Nirmānakāya, ac-
cording to Hui Nêng, is the transformation of mind oc-
curring variously in different people. For example, when
one thinks evil, the mind is transformed into hell; when
one thinks of good dhamma, it becomes paradise; the poi-
sonous mind is the transformation of mind into a beast, the
compassionate mind is the transformation of mind into a
bodhisatta. Similarly, Hui Nêng explains further that
sambhogakāya is the perfect or ideal body of the Buddha
which is always good; this body exists in human beings as
a perfect state of mind. For Hui Nêng, to take refuge in the Buddha means to take refuge in these three bodies of the Buddha within us, i.e., to return to our self-nature which is pure and perfect. He indicates that if we understand the true meaning of the trikāya, we will see that the three bodies of the Buddha are only various transformations of the mind which is naturally and originally one and the same.106

Buddhadāsa interprets the Triple Gem in a like manner—as essentially one and the same. The Buddha, in everyday language, signifies the historical Gotama Buddha who was enlightened and preached his doctrine two thousand years ago. The Buddha in dhamma language, on the other hand, means the dhamma or the underlying quality, character or mode of being which makes Prince Siddhattha the Buddha. This was referred to by the Buddha himself: "He who sees the Dhamma sees the Thus-Gone; he who sees the Thus-Gone sees the Dhamma."107

Dhamma in everyday language refers to the Buddha's teaching as contained in Buddhist texts. Thus, a group of people gathering in a temple for a sermon is considered to be seeking the dhamma. Also, if a person can remember well the Buddha's words in the texts, s/he is usually taken as one who knows the dhamma. But dhamma in dhamma language refers to the true, profound or subtle, meaning, and not the literal meaning, of the Buddha's teaching.
The Sangha, in everyday language, for example, means the monastic Order or the congregation of monks. In dhamma language, according to Buddhadasa, the Sangha is the quality of the human mind or the principle of practice which leads to the end of suffering. Thus, even lay people, who possess this quality or principle, can be called members of the Sangha. Consequently, in dhamma language, the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha, or the composition of the Triple Gem, mean the same thing: the virtuous quality, within a human being, which leads one to the end of suffering. To take refuge in the Triple Gem thus means to follow one's own virtuous nature of mind in order to attain nibbāna.

Though everyday language seems to be much more concrete and tangible than dhamma language, it handicaps human beings in their ability to penetrate the truth. First, it conceals and distorts the real meaning of Buddhist concepts. Second, everyday language differentiates the nature of the truth among different religions. For example, "God" in everyday language means the Divine Being who possesses the power of creation and predestination. In dhamma language, however, there is no difference between the "god" of theistic religion and the "god" of atheistic religion: "God" means the law of nature which originates and regulates all phenomena. Third, everyday language which deals with religious concepts promotes
an excessive supernaturalism which leads to illusion. For instance, the Thai word "thewadā" (Pāli: devatā) or "gods" found in Buddhist teachings are taken literally by most Buddhists as celestial beings who possess supernatural power. Buddhadasa points out that the real or dhamma meaning of "thewadā" is a person who lives happily and comfortably in this world.\(^{110}\) Since everyday language is too defective to be an adequate tool for sufficient knowledge of the truth, Buddhadasa argues for the crucial significance of dhamma language for the understanding and practice of Buddhism.

Buddhadāsa's Use of Symbol

Even though Buddhadasa promotes the use of dhamma language, he still believes that language is not the best tool for penetrating the ultimate truth. His attitude toward the inadequacy of language resembles the Zen teaching, especially of Bodhidharma (d. 528 C.E.), which stresses the inadequacy of scriptural knowledge and advocates the return to one's self-nature.\(^{111}\) Buddhadasa agrees with Zen's rejection of scriptures and its attempt to go beyond the barriers of language in order to grasp the true meaning of the Buddha's teaching:

Zen Buddhism has neither texts nor dependence on texts. It destroys all texts and scriptures because they are the curtain of ignorance which obstructs
human beings from perceiving emptiness. Texts and scriptures are only a record of words. The real dhamma, however, cannot be expressed through words. It can be attained only through the penetration into nature itself which is emptiness.  

Buddhadāsa argues that human intellect cannot attain the deeper meaning of dhamma because it is trained im-properly. Speaking to the Thai context, in particular, Buddhadāsa contends that Thai children are trained in school to be clever and selfish. They learn to compete intellectually with each other in order to gain more fame and/or money, to be shrewd rather than virtuous. He argues that a person can be morally good without higher education or a formal academic training. The proof can be seen among Thai people in former times who were illiterate or poorly educated but morally good. Buddhadāsa asserts that human beings can be virtuous only by returning to their true self-nature which involves a rejection of the logical reason and intellect, which tends to distort reality.

Formerly, according to Buddhadāsa, people transmitted moral knowledge and practice to later generations through actions, character, and visual symbols rather than by rational explanation. Visual symbols such as illustrations or pictures can also provoke the human mind to realize its own pure nature. In Buddhadāsa's opinion, this method has been used in Thailand since the beginning of the Thai kingdom:
The use of pictures as a method to explain the Dhamma (Buddhist Teachings) has been popular in Siam [Thailand] since the Sukhothai or early Ayuthia period. The manner of representation has undergone, of course, various changes through the years so that the pictures illustrate period art as well as Dhamma.

In Teaching Dhamma by Pictures, Buddhadasa explains the dhammic meaning of 47 Thai paintings recorded in three traditional Thai manuscripts found in Chaiya, Buddhadasa's home town. For example, in the illustration no.1 which is called "Wisdom Sprung Out of the 'Mud'," Buddhadasa interprets its use of symbols as follows:

This picture is another symbol of mind and body, or nāma and rūpa. The body here, is represented as mud beneath the waters while the mind is the lotus that springs from the mud. Unlike the loathsomeness of the body, the lotus is fragrant and pure. The turbulence of the waters and the fish therein are all the worldly desires which agitate the mind. The man emerging from the lotus is holding a disc and a sword which symbolize the wisdom that cuts off and removes all defilements (kilesa). Defilement here, is represented by the boy approaching the enlightened man who, triumphant, pays no attention. The man in the right-hand corner holding the lotus-fruit has practised meditation and has found the way out of the darkness, having seen for himself the Fruit of Dhamma.

The symbolism in this picture also illustrates Buddhadasa's teachings about the essence of mind which is pure and pleasant, the defilements and desires which obscure the mind, meditation which leads to the original state of mind free from the darkness of desires and defilements and nibbāna (the Fruit of Dharma).

In illustration no.2 called "Wrong Practice of Buddha-dhamma," the Buddha is attacked by four armed-men:
three monks and a layman. Buddhadasa interprets the meaning of the picture as follows:

The Buddha, here representing the true teachings, is being attacked by three monks and one layman. The fact that there is only one layman attacking the teachings indicates that many monks, once having been ordained in the Order, continue to follow false paths and are attached to ceremony. They are indifferent to the true teachings and prefer the Wheel of Wandering-on to Nibbāna.

(Monks, as they are more conspicuous than laymen and because they are supposed to be devoting their lives to the Three Gems, and because it is known that they have many precepts to keep pure, can attack the Dharma by misconduct in a more violent way than is possible for laypeople).

This illustration also demonstrates Buddhadasa's teaching concerning the true meaning of the Buddha, and the Dhamma, which is misinterpreted and mistakenly followed by both monks and lay people. Buddhadasa criticizes monks in Thailand today for practicing magic by making amulets and consecrating Buddha images, for becoming fortune-tellers and practitioners of mere ceremony, and for preferring a worldly life of luxury to a simple, ascetic life aimed at ultimate emancipation. Such conduct undermines the Buddha's teaching and discourage people's faith in Buddhism. According to the illustration in which three monks but only one layman try to harm the Buddha, monks are presented as more dangerous to Buddhism than lay people since they are supposed to be the heirs of dhamma and the preachers of dhamma to lay people. Buddhadasa believes that many monks in contemporary
Thailand are not a good model for Buddhists and, hence, do not promote the right understanding of Buddha-dhamma.

Illustration no.3, "the Acceptance of the Dhamma," indicates that there are three stages for the attainment of dhamma: pariyatti, patipatti, and pativeddha. Buddhadasa interprets the symbols in this picture as follows:

The monk carrying a fan in this picture, shows acceptance of Dhamma for both thorough study (pariyatti) and practice (patipatti). Study without practice produces the dry scholar for whom all wisdom is found in books. Practice without study though often accompanied by intense but blind faith, easily leads to taking a wrong path. These two are complementary aspects and if one or the other is lacking, it is not likely that one will be able to gain realization of Dhamma or penetration (pativeddha)."118

Buddhadāsa always emphasizes in his teachings that scholarly knowledge of the scriptures by itself cannot lead anyone to nibbāna (pativeddha-dhamma) and that knowledge of the scriptures (pariyatti) should be always accompanied by a proper practice (patipatti) in order to attain the fruition of dhamma (pativeddha). Nevertheless, Buddhadasa, generally seems to value patipatti more than pariyatti. In What is Abhidhamma?, he argues that the most important quality of arahatship or the capacity to reach nibbāna is the true knowledge of the Four Noble Truths, not an intellectual capacity to preach or discuss the dhamma. In other words, if one's mind is pure and free from defilements, it will be luminous with wisdom.
which can penetrate the truth of dhamma.

Buddhadāsa's use of symbol is not limited only to a scriptural interpretation. At Suan Mokkha (Garden of Liberation), Buddhadasa had a spiritual theatre constructed in order to present dhamma through paintings, films, bas-reliefs, and occasional lectures. In the spiritual theatre, one finds a large white circle dominating the hall and symbolizing emptiness (suññatā). The use of this symbol is very close to Zen symbolism. According to D. T. Suzuki, a renowned Zen scholar, the circle in Zen teaching symbolizes the Self, self-nature, or emptiness:

The Self is comparable to a circle which has no circumference, it is thus gūnyatā [Pāli: suññatā], emptiness. But it is also the center of such a circle, which is found everywhere and anywhere in the circle. The Self is the point of absolute subjectivity which may convey the sense of immobility or tranquility. But as this point can be moved anywhere we like, to infinitely varied spots, it is really no point. The point is the circle and the circle is the point.\[119\]

Apart from the use of the circle to symbolize emptiness, Buddhadasa uses other kinds of symbolism to convey his dhammic teaching to Thai Buddhists. In the meditation and preaching hall at Suan Mokkha, Buddhadasa hangs three human skeletons, a male adult, a female adult, and a child in order to remind the Buddhists of the impermanence, suffering, and non-substantiality of human life, and of the worthlessness of human body.

Considering Buddhadasa's teachings on self-nature and
the capacity of human wisdom, it can be noted that sym-
bols with verbal interpretation are necessary only for those
whose minds are obscured and tainted by defilements and ig-
norance. Buddhadasa often uses symbols to provoke a
spontaneous response that arises from the mind's pure
nature and its capacity for true wisdom. This stimulation
of mental capacity can be compared to the way Zen masters
use riddles and paradoxes to bring about a spontaneous re-
action of true wisdom on the part of their students.

Buddhadasa's use of dhamma language and visual
symbols in his teaching seems to parallel the Zen method of
"turning one's light inwardly" in order to find the essence
of nature. A Zen master's method aims to help his disciple
turn his/her light inwardly in order to see the truth
him/herself: "If you turn your light inwardly, you will
find what is esoteric within you."\textsuperscript{120}

Dih Ping Tsze, the patron and inspirer of the trans-
lation of The Sutra of Wei Lang, explains the meaning of
"turning the light inwardly" as follows:

The most important point in the teaching of the
Dhyana School [Zen] lies in "introspection" or
"introversion," which means the turning of one's own
"light" to reflect inwardly.

Now when we are engrossed with criticizing
others, as is our wont, we hardly turn our thoughts on
ourselves and hence scarcely know anything ourselves.
Contrary to this, the followers of the Dhyana School
turn their attention completely within and reflect ex-
cursively on their own "real nature," known in Chinese
as one's "original face."\textsuperscript{121}

Buddhadasa agrees with the Zen teaching that "turning
the light inwardly" can help one attain the true meaning of dhamma. He praises the value of "turning the light inwardly" as follows:

There are two ways of expounding the dhamma: dhammādhiṭṭhāna and puggalādhiṭṭhāna. Puggalādhiṭṭhāna is the exposition of dhamma by means of personification, e.g., referring to a person, an object, a material. Dhammādhiṭṭhāna is the exposition of dhamma in terms of ideas, e.g., referring to spiritual matters and mental factors instead of a person and corporeality. For instance, the description of Mara (Devil) as a giant with weapons riding on a horse or an elephant is puggalādhiṭṭhāna. Speaking of Mara as the most dangerous destroyer of human beings (defilements such as ignorance, avarice, anger, etc.) is dhammādhiṭṭhāna.

If one does not train oneself to "turn the light inwardly," one will not be able to know dhamma in terms of dhammādhiṭṭhāna; one will know dhamma only in terms of puggalādhiṭṭhāna. The more one is stupid, the more one is subject to the propagation of making merit in order to enter heaven or be free from Mara. If one know the dhamma in terms of dhammādhiṭṭhāna, one will be able to know the true meaning of dhamma and be free from all misleading expositions.

For Buddhadasa, if one turns the light inwardly, one can understand the dhamma in terms of dhammādhiṭṭhāna which is, in fact, dhamma language. Buddhadasa’s use of symbols in expounding the dhamma can also be seen as an attempt to help Buddhists turn their light inwardly in order to understand the true meaning of the Buddha’s dhamma.
Conclusion

Buddhadāsa's dhamma makes a special contribution to Thai Buddhism by challenging popular beliefs and practices and by insisting on the true meaning of the Buddha's teaching. For Buddhādāsa, present-day Buddhism loses its function as a moral guide and the spiritual refuge of Thai Buddhists because its doctrine (dhamma) is misinterpreted and misused by both monks and laymen.

That Buddhādāsa's dhamma stands against popular beliefs and practices can be seen particularly in his criticism of Thai Buddhist rituals and ceremonies. Buddhādāsa accuses Thai Buddhists today of transforming the Buddha's dhamma into magical words embodied in rituals and ceremonies, of interpreting the dhamma literally in order to facilitate their way of life, and of shifting the real goal of Buddhism, nibbāna, to the pleasures of heaven.

That most monks and lay people use the Buddha's dhamma as sacred words in rituals and ceremonies is seen in the use of the unāhissavijjaya-vicaya-kathā (the incantation which possesses a magical power like the sacred cloth of victory) which Thai Buddhists use in religious ceremonies to prolong life. According to Buddhādāsa, this incantation is believed to be the Buddha's teaching to a
god who is fearful of death. However, it does not exist in the Tipiṭaka or the Canonical commentaries, and was probably an invention of a later period to serve the purposes of Thai Buddhists who were afraid of death.123 Buddhadasa argues that the Buddha's dhamma is for the realization of the truth of birth, old-age, sickness, and death, so that one will attempt to work for the end of suffering. One should consider death as a normal phenomenon of human life that no one can escape. Instead of trying to conquer death by practicing the Buddha's teaching of the Noble Eightfold Path, Thai Buddhists try to prolong their life in order to enjoy more worldly happiness. Buddhadasa points out that the content of this incantation contains no magic words; it reveals only the fact that if one practices the dhamma, one will be free from all dangers and death. He translates this Pāli incantation into Thai as follows:

Atthi unahissavijjayo dhammo loke anuttaro sabbasattāhi atthāya taṁ tvam gānḥāhi devate - Behold god, you should hold to this dhamma called unahissavijjaya (the sacred cloth of victory) which is beneficial to all beings. Parivajje rājadande amanussehi pavake bayagghe nāge vise bhūte akāḷamarāṇena vā - (You will be) free from the royal punishment, trouble caused by non-human beings, fire, tiger, serpent, poison, spirits, and untimely death. Sabbasmā marāṇa mutto thapetvā kāḷamaritāṁ - (You will be) free from all kinds of death except timely death. Tasseva anubhāvena hotu devo sukhī sadā - With such power of dhamma, may you, god, be happy at all times. Suddhasila samadayā dhammasucaritam care - (You should) undertake the pure moral discipline and practice right conduct according to dhamma. Tasseva anubhāvena hotu devo sukhī sadā - With such power of dhamma, may you, god, be happy at all times. Likkhitam cintitāṁ pūjaṁ dhāranaṁ vacanāṁ garuṁ paresāṁ desanāṁ
sutvā tassa āyu pavuddhati-ti - By listening to, recording, thinking about, honoring, memorizing, preaching, and firmly revering the dhamma, his/her age is prolonged.

In Buddhadāsa's view, a magical interpretation of this incantation utterly misses its real significance as an admonition to practice and teach the dhamma in order to have a long life.

Apart from transforming the Buddha's teaching into magical words in rituals and ceremonies, Thai Buddhists also interpret the Buddha's teaching literally in order to facilitate a mundane way of life. Often, Buddhadāsa accuses Buddhists, both monks and laymen, of not understanding the true meaning of the Buddha's dhamma because they seek worldly enjoyment rather than the attainment of nibbāna. According to Buddhadāsa, the socio-political situation in Thailand today deprives the Saṅgha of its responsibility to propagate the dhamma. Monks are occupied with monastic law-suits (adhikarana), and spend a significant amount of time encouraging lay people to build temples, to make religious offerings to them, and to participate in religious ceremonies in order to gain merit. Moreover, Buddhadāsa contends that monks do not really know the true meaning of dhamma; therefore, they can preach the dhamma only in everyday language or with a literal meaning. Because Thai Buddhists are trained to view dhamma literally, they mistakenly believe...
that religious contributions, such as building a temple or
offering gifts to monks, are more important than purifying
their own minds and trying to attain nibbāna. Buddhadasa's
criticism of Buddhist ceremonies is similar to the Zen
doctrine of Hui Nêng who instructs the Imperial Delegate
Wei that there is no merit in building temples, giving
alms, and making offerings:

Building temples, giving alms, and making
offerings are only cultivating blessings. Blessings
should not be considered as merit. Merit lies in the
law-body, not in the field of blessings. There is
merit in one's own dhamma-nature.
Always practice reverence. To cultivate one's
personal life is achievement, and to cultivate one's
own mind is virtue. Merit is the product of one's own
mind. Blessings are different from merit.126

The distinctive contribution of Buddhadasa's dhamma
to Thai Buddhism today is his insistence that dhamma, as
the ground of existence, affects all aspects of human life.
For Buddhadasa, dhamma is not only a religious matter,
but a political, social, and economic one, as well. He
preaches that political, social, and economic systems need
dhamma in order to serve human beings at their best.
This conviction informs Buddhadasa's concept of Buddhist
socialism, or dhammika-saṅgama-niyama. Buddhadasa,
furthermore, conveys his notion of dhamma as universal
not only through his preaching but also through his way of
life. His understanding of dhamma as nature is
examplified by his return to nature at Suan Mokkha. There,
he lives in a cottage surrounded by natural things and
beings. He and his fellow monks sleep on a hard floor with only small logs as their pillows. They wake up at 4.00 a.m. every morning and eat only one meal a day from the food they receive in their alms-bowls. Monks at Suan Mokkha see the value of work. They spend their time studying the dhamma, cleaning, sweeping, painting, carving, and so on. This lifestyle expresses Buddhadasa's dhamma that one should live a simple life according to nature in order to reduce one's defilements and desires until finally one can eradicate one's sense of self-attachment and attain nibbāna.
NOTES


4. Ibid., pp. 85-88.


12. Ibid., p. 40.

13. Ibid., p. 41.


17. Ibid., p. 173.


22. In the Aṅguttara-nikāya, the Buddha preached to the congregation of monks at Jeta Grove, in Anatha-pindika's Park: "This mind, monks, is luminous [pabhassara], but it is defiled by taints that come from without; that mind, monks, is luminous, but it is cleansed of taints that come from without."


Buddhadāsa refers to this passage as follows:
"Pabhassara midam bhikkave cittam âgantu kehi uppakilesehi uppakilitham."

See further in Buddhadasa-bhikkhu, Chit Praphassorn, Chit Derm Thae, Chit Wâng, Muan Kan Rû Yâng Rai [Are the luminous mind, the essence of mind, and the empty mind similar to each other?] (Bangkok: Bangkok Press, 1969), p. 5.

23. Suzuki explains that nibbâna resides in the self-nature of human mind:

The first declaration made by Hui Nêng regarding his Zen experience was that "From the first not a thing is," and there he went on to the "Seeing into one's self-nature," which self-nature, being "not a thing," is nothingness [emptiness]. Therefore, "seeing into one's
self-nature" is "seeing into nothingness [emptiness]."


26 Buddhadasa-bhikkhu, Tham Banyai Toh Hâng Sunak, p. 162.

27 Ibid., p. 168.


32 Buddhadasa-bhikkhu, Tham Banyai Toh Hâng Sunak, p. 294.

33 Ibid., p. 133.


35 Ibid., p. 84.

36 Ibid., pp. (24)-(26).


38 Buddhadasa-bhikkhu, Rop Kan Phlăng, Laek Tham Kan Phlăng, p. 28.

39 Buddhadasa-bhikkhu, Christianity and Buddhism, trans. the Venerable Punno of Wat Benchamabopit, p. 46.
The Thai-Pāli term patipatti (Thai: patipat) is very difficult to translate. The Pāli term patipatti carries various meanings such as way, method, conduct, practice, performance, and behavior. Buddhadasa's use of the term often conveys the meaning of practice, conduct and/or way.

Buddhadāsa-bhikkhu, Thamma Kap Karn-mu'ang, p. 22.

Ibid., p. 31.


Ibid., pp. 62-63.

Buddhadāsa-bhikkhu, Thamma Kap Karn-mu'ang, pp. 57-58.

Buddhadāsa-bhikkhu, Tham Banyai Toh Hāng Sunak, p. 266.

Ibid., p.269.

Ibid., pp. 272-273. "Normal" (pakati) for Buddhadāsa conveys the meaning of normative, i.e., the way things are in an ideal state or the way they should be. In general, this means for Buddhadāsa a state of harmony and balance, equinimity and peace.

Ibid., pp. 200-201.

Ibid., p. 215.


Buddhadāsa-bhikkhu, Tham ma Kap Karn-mu'ang, p. 34.

Ibid., pp. 444-446.

57 Ibid., p. 60.
59 Ibid., p. 99.
60 Ibid., p. 160.
61 Ibid., p. 168.
62 Ibid., p. 172.
63 Ibid., p. 44.
64 Ibid., pp. 44-45.
65 Ibid., p. 46.
66 Ibid., pp. 272-275.
67 Ibid., p. 23.
68 Ibid., p. 95.
70 Buddhāsā-bhikkhu, "Thāng Sai Klang (the middle path)," ibid., p. 92.
71 Ibid., p. 86.
73 Ibid., p. 113.
74 Ibid., pp. 113-114.
75 Ibid., pp. 114-116.
76 Ibid., pp. 116-118.
77 Ibid., p. 119.
78 Ibid., p. 120.
79 Ibid.
80 Ibid., p. 121.
81 Ibid., pp. 121-125.
83 Ibid.
84 Buddhadasa-bhikkhu, *Christianity and Buddhism*, p. 76.
92 *Digha-nikāya*.iii.239, ibid., p. 228.
93 *Digha-nikāya*.iii.251-252, ibid., p. 235.
97 Ibid., p. 43.
98 Ibid., p. 107.
To "de-mythologize" means to "recover the deeper meaning behind the mythological conceptions (p. 18)." This term is first used by Rudolf Bultmann in his analysis of Jesus' teachings and his interpretation of the New Testament (pp. 32-34). Bultmann asserts: "We can understand the problem best when we remember that de-mythologizing is an hermeneutic method, that is, a method of interpretation, of exegesis (p. 45)." For Bultmann, "de-mythologizing" is a very important means to penetrate the true meaning of the Scriptures. In the beginning of Jesus Christ and Mythology, he writes:

This method of interpretation of the New Testament which tries to recover the deeper meaning behind the mythological conceptions I call de-mythologizing—an unsatisfactory word, to be sure. Its aim is not to eliminate the mythological statements but to interpret them. It is a method of heumeneutics. The meaning of this method will be best understood when we make clear the meaning of mythology in general (p. 18).


Like Bultmann, Buddhadasa tries to de-mythologize the Tipitaka. He believes that Buddhists will understand the true meaning of the Buddha's teaching if they do not take the mythology of the Tipitaka literally, but consider it analytically and philosophically instead. For example, the story of gods mentioned in the Tipitaka should be taken as the symbol of a certain kind of human beings who live in luxury, happiness, and wealth, not as the story of extra-terrestrial beings outside human world.


Ibid., p. 79.

Ibid., p. 77.


109 Buddhadasa-bhikkhu, *Christianity and Buddhism*, p. 73.


113 Buddhadasa-bhikkhu, *Yaowachon Kap Sintham*, p. 52.

114 Ibid., pp. 54-55.


116 Ibid., p. 21.

117 Ibid., p. 47.

118 Ibid., p. 51.


121 Ibid.

122 Buddhadasa-bhikkhu, *Karn Mong Sing Thang Puang Thāng Dān Nai* [Seeing things by turning the light inwardly]

123 Buddhadasa-bhikkhu, Chum-num Loh Äyu, p. 5.

124 Ibid., pp. 6-7.

125 Ibid., pp. 145-151.

126 Hui Mêng, The Platform Scripture, p. 89.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

VAJIRAṆĀṆA AND BUDDHADĀSA:
CHARISMATIC REFORMERS OF THAI BUDDHISM

Max Weber's (1864-1920) theory of charismatic leaders may be helpful for examining and clarifying VajiraṆāṇa's and Buddhadāsa's dhammic achievements among Thai Buddhists. In this final Chapter, I intend to examine the biographies of VajiraṆāṇa and Buddhadāsa in the light of Weber's theory of charisma. First, I shall define the concept of charisma. Second, I shall look at the relationship between a charismatic leader and his community. And, finally, in the light of this analysis, we shall see how VajiraṆāṇa and Buddhadāsa, as charismatic reformers, were able to attract such large audiences and to succeed in spreading their views of dhamma.

The Meaning of Charisma

Charisma, for Weber, is

A certain quality of an individual personality
by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional qualities. These are such as are not accessible to the ordinary person, but are regarded as of divine origin or as exemplary, and on the basis of them the individual concerned is treated as a leader.

This quality (charisma) resides in a person or an object by natural endowment or by initiation. Weber explains that charisma by natural endowment is a gift of nature or a divine call. Any other types of charisma can be obtained through some extraordinary means such as through magical or ritual performance. The charisma which Weber interprets as a gift of nature or a divine call is exemplified in the New Testament. In Roman 12 and I Corinthians 12, the Greek word "charisma" is translated as "gift" or "gifts" and refers to that/those of wisdom, knowledge, healing, prophecy, ministry, and teaching who are endowed by the Holy Spirit.

Charisma can be differentiated into various types according to its role and manifestation in a social group: charisma of office, charisma of natural endowment or revelation, charisma of kinship, and hereditary charisma. Charisma of natural endowment comes from some unknown, "transcendental" source as a gift. It is a distinctive type of charisma that contrasts with other types of charisma and is particularly emphasized by Weber:

Charisma may be either of two types. Where this appellation is fully merited, charisma is a gift that inheres in an object or person simply by virtue of
natural endowment. Such primary charisma cannot be acquired by any means. But charisma of the other type may be produced artificially in an object or person through some extraordinary means. Even then, it is assumed that charismatic powers can be developed only in people or objects in which the germ already existed but would have remained dormant unless evoked by some ascetic or other regimen.

Charisma of kinship, charisma of office, and hereditary charisma are created or initiated later. Charisma of kinship is closely related to hereditary charisma in the sense that it is expressed and transmitted among kinsmen. Hereditary charisma, however, implies the direct transmission of charisma from parents to children or older to younger generations. According to Weber, both hereditary charisma and charisma of kinship are two forms of the routinization of charisma. Weber explains that charisma, in its pure form, is foreign to everyday routine structures or routinization. Nevertheless, in order to form a permanent relationship with a stable organization and community of followers, charisma has to be routinized and traditionalized. To be routinized is to adopt routine actions which are ruled mainly by "motives of personal attachment, by considerations of convenience and advantage, and by anxiety to avoid failure in conforming to the immediate expectations and demands of peers and superiors." And to be traditionalized, for Weber, is to accept the legitimacy of the powers of control and order handed down from the past and to obey the charismatic
chief who holds such traditional authority. Those who possess the charisma of kinship or hereditary charisma claim their right to rule and provide the benefits to their groups "on a purely personal basis or in such a way that in case of his death one or more other persons related to the holder of the right by birth (kinship), or by some other social relationship, may inherit the rights in question."\(^9\)

The charisma of kinship and hereditary charisma connect closely to the charisma of office in the case of kingship. According to Weber, the charisma of a king is a clan charisma and possesses a magical quality through its routinization:

The Hindu social order, to a larger extent than anywhere else in the world, is organized in terms of the principle of clan charisma. "Charisma" means that an extraordinary, at least not generally available, quality adheres to a person. Originally, charisma was thought of as a magical quality. "Clan charisma" means that this extraordinary quality adheres to [group] members per se and not, as originally, to a single person.

We are familiar with residues of this sociologically important phenomenon of clan charisma particularly in the hereditary "divine right of kings" of our dynasties. To a lesser degree the legend of the "blue blood" of a nobility, whatever its specific origin, belongs to the same sociological type. Clan charisma is one of the ways personal charisma may be "routinized" (i.e., made a part of everyday social experience).\(^10\)

The charisma of a king is transmitted to his heir and is considered as a magical quality through a ritual process. In this way, it becomes the charisma of office:
In this case, the belief in legitimacy is no longer directed to the individual, but to the acquired qualities and to the effectiveness of the ritual acts. The most important example is the transmission of priestly charisma by anointing, consecrating, or the laying on of hands; and of royal authority, by anointing and by coronation.

Since the charisma of office and the charisma of natural endowment are useful for the demonstration of Vajirañāṇa's and Buddhadasa's charisma, I will emphasize these two types, in particular.

For Weber, the charisma of natural endowment is the primary and distinctive type of charisma. It is the "gift of grace," by its literal meaning, and is best represented in the prophet. Weber takes the prophet to be the most distinctive type of charismatic person because s/he is the prototype of charismatic leadership which arises from a divine call, personal revelation, or natural endowment. Weber defines the prophet as "a purely individual bearer of charisma who by virtue of his mission proclaims a religious doctrine or divine commandment." It seems that what the prophet is actually successful in doing for his society is not as important as the mission or personal revelation he receives from a divine source. In other words, his office in the community does not justify his role. Rather, it is justified by his personal revelation. Weber explains further that there are two kinds of prophets: the ethical and the exemplary. The ethical prophet, who demands obedience as an ethical duty, is the
one who works and preaches as an instrument of divine proclamation. Zoroaster and Muhammad are prophets of this type in Weber's view. The exemplary prophet, on the other hand, is the prophet who conducts himself as an example of the one who follows the way towards religious salvation. His preaching does not take the form of divine judgment or a demand for moral obedience, but demonstrates the way to salvation. The Buddha is of this prophetic type. Neither the ethical nor the exemplary prophet, in Weber's understanding, is a member of a hereditary priestly group. Furthermore, these prophets oppose "magical" practices which tend to be promoted by priests whom Weber refers to as members of a caste or an office, for example, the Brahmins in India, a highpriest of an ancient religion, and the priest in a royal court who conducts and performs rituals and ceremonies. While Buddhist monks are not considered priests by Weber, his analyses of both the prophet and the priest are of great value for understanding the nature of religious leadership in modern Thai Buddhism.

In Weberian theory, the characteristics of the prophet and the priest are in sharp contrast. The prophet is a lay preacher who is free from tradition and office:

The prophet himself is normally a righteous lay preacher of sovereign independence whose aim is to supplant the traditional ritualistic religious grace of the ecclesiastical type by organizing life on the basis of ultimate ethical principles.

The priest, by contrast, works according to his
office under the tradition and norm of his society:

It may be thought that what is decisive for the concept of priesthood is that the functionaries, regardless of whether their office is hereditary or personal, be actively associated with some type of social organization, of which they are employees or organs operating in the interest of the organization's members, in contrast with magicians, who are self-employed.

Since the priest works under an office while the prophet is free from both the office and all traditional bonds, the charisma of the two depends on different conditions. The charisma of the prophet is based on a personal revelation or divine call while that of the priest depends on a hierarchical office which legitimizes him as a preacher of salvation. And owing to Weber's theory that the charisma of the priest is based on the status of his office and such routines as cultic ritual, the priest has to reconcile his role with the needs of the laity in order to maintain his relationship with them and to secure his office. In other words, the priest has to adapt his prophetic role to the traditionalism of the laity, their needs and expectations, while the prophet follows only the command of his personal revelation, not the needs of society. Secondly, the priest promotes beliefs and practices of magic while the prophet opposes all magical elements and affirms his revelation and relationship to the eternal. Weber points out that since the way of the prophet and his relationship to the laity
are different from those of the priest, tensions between prophet and priest, as well as between prophet and laypeople often arise and turn many prophetic figures into martyrs. Thirdly, the prophet sees religion as a means to relate humankind to a simple, unified and organically integrated world. He considers that human beings and the world are under a certain universal system or law according to which salvation can be attained:

To the prophet, both the life of man and the world, both social and cosmic events, have a certain systematic and coherent meaning. To this meaning the conduct of mankind must be oriented if it is to bring salvation, for only in relation to this meaning does life obtain a unified and significant pattern.

The priest, however, systematizes and rationalizes the content of prophecy and sacred tradition. That is, his message derives from his situation within a complex and hierarchical social and religious structure, rather than from the singularity of prophetic revelation or vision.

Though the prophet and the priest are two types of charismatic leaders, Weber emphasizes the role of the prophet, especially his will to "break through" social norms, tradition, and routine life:

Genuine charismatic domination therefore knows of no abstract legal codes and statutes and of no "formal" way of adjudication. Its "objective" law emanates concretely from the highly personal experience of heavenly grace and from the god-like strength of the hero. Charismatic domination means a rejection of all ties to any external order in favor of the exclusive glorification of the genuine men-
tality of the prophet and hero. Hence, its attitude is revolutionary and transvalues everything; it makes a sovereign break with all traditional or rational norms: "It is written, but I say unto you."25

Weber seems to use the distinctive characteristic of the prophet, the will to break the routine structure of society, as one of the most significant indications of a charismatic leader. Accordingly, a charismatic leader does not signify only the prophet in a religious sense but includes reformers, political leaders, military heroes, and sages "who by example and command indicate a way of life to their disciples."27

Edward Shils further amplifies that a charismatic leader, according to Weber's definition, follows a certain norm, but his/her norm is different from the traditional norm because it is "legitimated by a source remote in time or timeless, remote in space or spaceless."28

It is worth noting that the meaning and authority of charisma, according to Weber, does not lie in a charismatic leader, but in his/her relationship with his/her followers. S. N. Eisenstadt comments that "throughout his discussion of charisma, Weber emphasizes not so much the charismatic leader, but the charismatic group or band, be it the religious sect or the followers of a new political leader."29 The significance of the relationship between a charismatic leader and his/her group can be verified in the rise and fall of a charismatic leader. A charismatic
leader is unanimously accepted by his/her followers because s/he is considered to be a guide to the sacred and to the solution of all problems in "marginal situations":

Charisma does not supply its own authority. It is vested with authority by the actions of others. In the first instance, people must be motivated to look to a charismatic person for access to the sacred. Such motivation comes when people find themselves in "marginal situations," that is, when they are confronted with situations that entail considerable physical and/or emotional distress over which they feel they have no control.

Because the charisma does not supply its own authority, but depends on its supporters or the followers of a charismatic leader, the authority of a charismatic leader is quite unstable. The charismatic leader needs to prove him/herself all the time through his/her charismatic actions: "If he [the charismatic leader] wants to be a prophet, he must perform miracles; if he wants to be a war-lord, he must perform heroic deeds."³¹

Thus, if the charismatic leader fails to prove his charisma, his mission will not be recognized and his charismatic claim will break down.³² Since the charisma of a charismatic leader does not depend entirely on itself but rather on his/her community, s/he has to be in a marginal/liminal community, situation, or be a marginal/liminal person him/herself in order to be able to manifest his/her charisma. Victor Turner explains that the prophet is a marginal/liminal person:

Prophets and artists tend to be liminal and mar-
original people, "edgemen," who strive with a passionate sincerity to rid themselves of the cliches associated with status incumbency and role-playing and to enter into vital relations with other men in fact or imagination.

To be a marginal/liminal person is to be temporarily out of the normal structure of society. Turner defines the attributes of liminal people as follows:

The attributes of liminality or of liminal personae ("threshold people") are necessarily ambiguous, since this condition and these persons elude or slip through the network of classifications that normally locate states and positions in cultural space. Liminal entities are neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial. The liminal people who are represented, for example, by the prophet arise and exist in a liminal situation which takes place during a ritual, ceremony, or a time of misery and depression. The charisma of a liminal person expresses itself best in a liminal community which is anti-structural. Victor Turner call this liminal community "communitas":

The first [the structure] is of society as a structured, differentiated, and often hierarchical system of politico-legal-economic positions with many types of evaluation, separating men in terms of "more" or "less." The second [communitas], which emerges recognizably in the liminal period, is of society as an unstructured or rudimentarily structured and relatively undifferentiated comitatus, community, or even communion of equal individuals who submit together to the general authority of the ritual elders.

The communitas, as well as a liminal person like the prophet, always breaks in through a structured society.
and traditional system and is held as sacred:

Communitas breaks in through the interstices of structure, in liminality; at the edge of structure, in marginality; and from beneath structure, in inferiority. It is almost everywhere held to be sacred or "holy," possibly because it transgresses or dissolves the norms that govern structured and institutionalized relationships, and is accompanied by experiences of unprecedented potency.

Turner comments that the Buddha can be considered as a liminal person who abandoned the structure and entered the communitas:

In the Buddha we have a classic case of a "structurally" well-endowed religious founder who underwent initiation into communitas through stripping and equalizing and putting on the behavior of weakness and poverty.

Weber's and Turner's ideas concerning the prophet, "liminality", and "communitas" are useful for understanding Buddhadāsa's charismatic personality, work, and achievement. On the other hand, their discussions on the attributes of the priest, structural system, and social group are useful for approaching Vajirañāna's charismatic personality and achievement. This will be seen in the part concerning Buddhadāsa's and Vajirañāna's biography.

Vajirañāna's and Buddhadāsa's Life and Work
As Charismatic Reformers of Thai Buddhism

Through Weber's theory of charismatic leaders,
we will examine Vajirānāṇa's and Buddhadasa's biographies in order to understand better their place in Thai Buddhism. Vajirānāṇa can be analysed from the perspective of Weber's charismatic priest typology. As mentioned previously, a charismatic leader is believed by his followers to have a supernatural power. For example, Father Divine, the charismatic religious leader of the Peace Mission Movement in the United States in the beginning of this century, is belived by his followers to have had a divine birth and has no known human birth record. He once spoke of his own birth as follows:

I have spoken of MY first record as having moved out upon the face of the waters when I was intangible, invisible and without form, and spoke into outer expression first the most greatest or biggest tangibilization of creation, which was the material earth, when I said, "Let dry land appear!"

Similarly, Vajirānāṇa's biography shows that he had a miraculous birth:

I heard from my elders that at the moment of my birth the clear sky clouded over and a heavy rain fell until the damned up and inundated the palace building's platform. My father [King Rama IV] took this as an omen, reminding him of the time the Buddha sat under the Rājāyatana Tree. While rain fell constantly for seven days Mucalinda Nāga, the serpent, wound his coils around the Buddha and puffed out his hood above the Buddha's head to keep off the rain. Once the rain had stopped, he unwound his coils, transformed himself into a mānōb or youth, and appeared before the Buddha. Thus the king named me Manuṣyanāgamānōb. Subsequently when I could read and understand Pali I came across a passage in the Mahavagga, the first book of the Vinaya, where the taming of the coiled-hair ascetic, Uruvela-kassapa, takes place. The term manussanāgo or manusyanāga refers to the Buddha and corresponds to ahināgo or ahināga which refers to Phraya Nāga in
his birth as a serpent. Thus, the term *manuśyanāga* is equivalent to bejewelled man or Great Being, used to designate anyone exalted in the human species such as the Buddha or a monarch.

The miraculous birth of Vajirañāṇa and his status as a son of the king helped to highlight his charismatic status. During the reign of Rama V, in 1893, he was appointed the first Head Deputy of the Dhammayutika section at the Bovornives monastery. At that time, he worked hard under the auspices of the king in order to develop Thai monasticism and lay moral education. First, he regulated monastic organization such as the registration of all monks, novices, temple boys, and other residents in the monastery. Second, he promoted monastic education such as the establishing of the Mahāmakūṭa College for Pāli education, for he believed that textual education and understanding would lead to the true knowledge of Buddhist teachings. Third, he directed the construction and repair of many monastic buildings and facilities. Fourth, he divided the monastic organization into four divisions: the North, the South, the Central, and the Dhammayutika sect. Each division was ruled by a monastic leader in hierarchical system. During the reign of Rama VI, he was assigned by the king to reorder the monastic ranks and positions, and to establish the dates of Buddhist rites and ceremonies according to the solar calendar.

Vajirañāṇa worked not only for the development of
Thai monasticism but also for the well-being of the lay community. For the laity, he formulated a system of education in the provinces by sending monks from Bangkok to reside permanently in provincial temples in order to educate people in the temple schools. He also wrote books on Buddhist ethics for lay education. While his contribution to monastic study focused on the Pali texts and commentaries, his books for lay education—the *Moral Practice of Lay Buddhists* and *Siam Chronicle*—aimed at moral education, knowledge of Buddhist rites and ceremonies, and Thai history.

Vajirāṇāṇa's charisma rested on his office, not on personal revelation. In general, Vajirāṇāṇa served royal policy and the institutional needs of state and religion, e.g., the need to modernize Thai society, to keep the country unified in the face of Western colonization. Vajirāṇāṇa, unlike Buddhadasa, did not try to fight against the popular beliefs and practices of magic and superstition in Thai Buddhism. Since the sacred tradition still pervaded the court, he had to adapt himself to traditional beliefs and practices in order to secure his office as well as the office and power of the king. In terms of Weberian theory, Vajirāṇāṇa functioned as a priest, i.e., defined by charisma of office rather than personal revelation. He compromised his role with popular traditions, promoted sacred rites and ceremonies to strengthen secular and
religious institutions, and spent his whole life fulfilling a role in a hierarchical religio-social system instead of isolating himself to search for the truth of Buddha-dhamma.

Buddhadāsa, on the other hand, represents the charismatic prophet. He founded Suan Mokkha in order to make it a place of study and practice according to the original teaching of the Buddha. He had neither governmental nor popular support to begin his work. Only his personal motivation or "calling" compelled him to launch this undertaking. At the age of twenty-six, he was inspired by the Buddha's teachings and began his revival of the original doctrine. He professed that he was willing to give his life and body to the Buddha, to be the Buddha's servant, and named himself "Buddhadāsa (the Servant of the Buddha)." Though this inspiration may not be technically defined as a divine call, it so "possessed" Buddhadāsa that he became the primary agent in one of the major reforming movements within contemporary Thai Buddhism.

Examining Buddhadāsa from the perspective of Weber's other prophetic characteristics, we would say, firstly, that he neither conducts himself nor regulates Suan Mokkha according to popular demand. While modern Thais prefer urban life with its conveniences, luxuries and numerous entertainments, Suan Mokkha offers none of these amenities. For example, Buddhadāsa, himself, does not use a mosquito
net, mattress, or pillow because in his view spiritual needs are more important than the physical ones. Secondly, Buddhadasa rejects popular religious beliefs, in particular the practice of magic. He preaches that these do not lead us to *nibbāna* and are against the Buddha's original teachings. We also see that Buddhadasa avoids participating in any folk rituals and ceremonies.

The use of Weberian theory to analyse Buddhadasa may be controversial here for several reasons. Buddhadasa is a Buddhist monk, not a layman which is an important characteristic of a prophet in Weber's view. Also, the practice of magic in Thailand is seen more as a secular activity rather than a religious one. Though some monks may be fortune-tellers, they hardly dare practice magic themselves for fear of becoming criticized by the laity and losing their respectability. Besides, some monastic groups, such as the Dhammayutika sect, strictly prohibit magical practices. Nevertheless, Buddhadasa's strict adherence to "pure" Buddhist teachings makes him much more critical of popular Buddhist practices than the Sangha as a whole. He appeals to an ideal as a standard of judgment, rather than to mere adherence to rules.

Fourth, the prophet preaches a simple message with the intent of revealing to humankind its essential being as a part of the natural order of things. Buddhadasa, similarly, emphasizes the significance of "nature"
(dhamma-jāti) and encourages Buddhists to conduct themselves according to "nature." "Nature," for Buddhadasa, has a distinctive meaning. It is not only the physical world but also the essence of everything, even of the human mind. Buddhadasa's Suan Mokkha was thus founded in order to provide himself and his followers a close relationship with nature in this sense. When Buddhadasa founded Suan Mokkha in 1932, it consisted only of one cottage covered with palm leaves and a small Buddhist temple covered with corrugated iron. He has stated that living in an isolated place surrounded by trees and other natural things will provide the realization of one's true self-nature; and that simplicity in material life will lead people to develop spiritual happiness and purity. Buddhadasa argues that if one has only the few possessions that one really needs for survival, one will have neither much anxiety nor concern for protecting and securing them. According to Buddhadasa, the more physical objects we possess, the less spiritual happiness and peace we have. At Suan Mokkha, Buddhadasa and his fellow monks normally eat one meal a day. Only those monks who do manual labour or who are sick, and young novices can eat two meals a day, the custom of all other monks in Thai tradition. Buddhadasa and the Suan Mokkha monks also avoid eating in lay people's houses because they want to spend most of their time in a simple, natural environment pursuing the prac-
As a charismatic prophet in Weber's sense, Buddha-dāsa's way of life may be distinctively seen as an exemplary prophet since he lives an ascetic life outside social hierarchic structure and conducts himself as an example for Thai Buddhists:

The otherworldly asceticism or mysticism of retreat from the world is best expressed by the exemplary prophets, who by their personal example demonstrate to others the way to religious salvation, as in the case of the Buddha. The prophet's preaching refers not to a divine mission, or an ethical duty of obedience, but rather directs itself to the self-interest of those who crave salvation. The exemplary leadership is oriented toward "a contemplative and apathetic—ecstatic life." 52

The teachings of Vajirañāṇa and Buddhadasa are influential and impressive, and their ways of life are much appreciated by Thai Buddhists because both of them can be regarded as "ideals" for Buddhists. According to the Buddhist tradition, the Buddha's leading disciples are arranged into the left-hand and the right-hand. S. J. Tambiah notes that the left-hand disciple represents the one who masters spiritual powers through meditation (vipassanādhura), and the right-hand disciple the one who masters the knowledge of the texts (ganthadhura):

Moggallana, the left-hand disciple, became famous for his intense immersion in meditation and for perfecting mystic powers (iddhi), which accrue from its practice. Pictures and murals of his feats using supranormal powers for defending the Buddhist faith are frequently found. Sariputta, the right-hand disciple, is celebrated for his wisdom and mastery of the abhidhamma commentaries. We noted that, though

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paired, the preferred valuation, represented by the right hand, is accorded to the man of knowledge. Nevertheless, it is perhaps even more significant that the right- and left-hand traditions stemming from the same Master and divided between those two famous disciples crystallize into two vocations open to monks in institutionalized Buddhism: the vocation of books (ganthadhura) and the vocation of meditation (vipassanādhura), the concentration on "learning" (pariyatti) and the concentration on "practice" (pratipatti, paṭipatti).

The ideal of the Buddha's left-hand and right-hand disciples which represent the leader of pariyatti and the leader of paṭipatti can be applied to Vajirāṇāṇa and Buddhadāsa. According to their biography, Vajirāṇāṇa's role can be compared to the right-hand disciple of the Buddha since he is distinguished in his knowledge and work on Buddhist texts or the pariyatti. Buddhadāsa might be compared to the left-hand disciple of the Buddha since his work is primarily concerned with the paṭipatti, the practice of meditation and the practice according to the dhamma. The ideal of pariyatti and paṭipatti, of ganthadhura and vipassanādhura, are normative in Theravāda Buddhism and serve as the framework in terms of which Thai Buddhists see Vajirāṇāṇa and Buddhadāsa as superior and extraordinary figures. Furthermore, Vajirāṇāṇa is regarded as a person with a noble and miraculous birth because of his superior kamma, while Buddhadāsa is said to be a sotāpanna or even an arahant by some Buddhists.

Apart from the ideal of charismatic leaders repre-
presented by Vajirañāṇa and Buddhādaśa, their lives and teachings also point to two different types of relationship between religion and society: as part of a structural social order and as a "communitas" in tension with that social order. Structural social order, in Victor Turner's sense, is the social system in which each individual element is placed within a hierarchical order. Turner here utilizes Levi-Strauss' concept of status or structural system. He defines a structural system as a state in which things are permanently placed as parts within a whole, i.e., each individual is considered a member of his community; each is heteronomous in that each is different from another; things function relative to one another within a definite structure; distinctions of rank and wealth pertain in which the superior is obeyed; differentiation is reflected in physical and technical differences, sexuality, and modes of communication.54

Buddhism, in Vajirañāṇa's view, is related to Thai society through a structural system. Vajirañāṇa's writings aim mainly at cultivating the Thai to become good citizens within a structured society, and at preparing Buddhist monks to cooperate within a hierarchical system. Monks are considered members of society and have social obligations as preachers, ritual leaders, religious advisors and administrators. In Vajirañāṇa's interpretation, these functions promote social harmony and legitimate so-
ciety. Religion promotes a traditional way of life and meets social needs rather than creating tension in society or playing a social-critical role.

In Buddhadāsa's work, Buddhism relates to society in another way. Here Turner's category of "communitas" will be helpful. The term "communitas," for Turner, means a unique "modality of social relationship." In communitas, an individual can experience a singular aspect of his or her potentiality where one is not necessarily a part of the whole, and where one is not limited by position or social definition. For Turner, communitas generates symbols and metaphors that point toward the sacred, which contrasts with the social system perceived as secular.

Communitas comes into existence through "liminal" experiences. The liminal person or group does not totally separate itself from society, but it is not subject to the status and hierarchical values of the normative social order. According to Turner, liminality is a transition, a process, not a state. It is an encompassing and equalizing experience in which there is an absence of property, status, rank, and wealth. In a liminal condition, one experiences sacredness and total obedience, and communicates with others in silence and by reference to mystical powers. A liminal condition may be either individual or group. The latter, in Turner's analysis,
has a special reference to a context of ritual activities. From this perspective, we might consider Buddhadāsa's center at Suan Mokkha a "communitas" engaged in activities promoting "liminality," a way of relating religion and society at odds with the position of Vajiraṇāṇa.

The gathering of Buddhists at Suan Mokkha can be considered a "communitas" in polar opposition to Thai society. Buddhadāsa functions as a "liminal" person who strives to free himself and his followers from a hierarchical and structural system in order that people enter into a new kind of relationship with one another. In the communitas of Suan Mokkha, Buddhists communicate through the silence of meditation and the shared meaning of Buddhadāsa's unique teachings. As the "Servant of the Buddha," Buddhadāsa symbolizes a mode of being all members seek to attain. Being the leader of the communitas, and strictly conducting himself according to the original doctrine, Buddhadāsa is regarded not only a preacher but also as a sacred figure and an ideal person. Because of the relatively disrupted economic, political and social situation in Thailand today, and the lack of creative response to it on the part of the Buddhist Sangha, Buddhadāsa has emerged as a prophet who "propose[s] a radically new religious system and associated value system." Like the Franciscan communitas in Turner's interpretation, the Suan Mokkha communitas lives in poverty and simplicity.
While St. Francis took Christ's poverty as the expressive symbol of communitas and an instrument for attaining it,\textsuperscript{61} Buddhadāsa takes the renunciation of the Buddha and his simple life in the wilderness as symbols and instruments for attaining life in communitas.

Our analysis leads to the conclusion that Vajira-nana's and Buddhadāsa's dhamma becomes influential for Thai Buddhists in modern and contemporary periods because of their charisma and their being "ideal" in Thai society. Their dhamma is interpreted and presented differently. Vajirañāṇa's interpretations closely follow Buddhaghosa's commentaries, i.e., dhamma is the Buddha's teaching concerned basically with moral qualities. He interpreted the term dhamma literally and used it to support royal policies of national development and modernization while he was the head of the Sangha, in his role as a charismatic priest. Buddhadāsa, on the other hand, does not follow Buddhaghosa's commentaries. He interprets dhamma as the Buddha's teaching referring primarily to nature (dhamma-jāti) and its essence, paticca-samuppāda and/or suññatā. His interpretation is parallel to the Zen doctrine of suññatā which advocates the co-existence of nibbāna and saṁsāra as discussed earlier. His teaching of dhamma-jāti (nature) and his personal life at Suan Mokkha justify his role as a charismatic prophet who works out of his/her revelation.
and spiritual call. Even though the concept of dhamma is profound and difficult, and its fundamental truth is antithetical too much in popular Thai belief and practice, Vajirañāṇa's and Buddhādāsa's dhamma, in the broadest sense, has been seminal in the development of Thai Buddhism.
NOTES


2 "Having gifts [charisma] that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching; he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality; he who gives aid, with zeal; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness." 

3 "Now there are varieties of gifts [charisma], but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are inspired by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individual as he wills." 
   I Corinthians 12:4-11, in ibid., p. 1389.


7 Max Weber, On Charisma and Institution Building, p. 54.


Ibid., p. 140.


Ibid., p. 57.


Ibid., p. 46.

Ibid., p. 55.

Ibid., p. 66.

Ibid., p. 78.

Ibid., p. 28.

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Ibid., p. 65.

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Ibid., p. 59.

Ibid., p. 69.


Ibid.


Charles F. Keyes, "Charisma: From Social Life to Sacred Biography," in Michael A. Williams, ed., *Charisma*


32 Ibid., p. 50.


34 Ibid., p. 95.

35 Ibid., p. 96.

36 Ibid., p. 128.

37 Ibid., p. 197.


41 Ibid., p. 13.

42 Ibid., p. 80.

43 Ibid., p. 84.

44 Ibid., pp. 92-93.


46 Ibid., p. 11.
47 Ibid., p. 89.
48 Ibid., p. 85.
49 Ibid., p. 56.
50 Ibid., p. 63.
51 Ibid., p. 81.
52 Stanley Jeyaraja Tambiah, _The Buddhist Saints of the Forest and the Cult of Amulets_, p. 324.
53 Ibid., pp. 15-16.
55 Ibid., p. 96.
56 Ibid., p. 127.
57 Ibid., p. 128.
58 Ibid., p. 106.
59 Ibid., p. 128.
ILLUSTRATION NO. 1
WISDOM SPRUNG OUT OF "THE MUD"
ILLUSTRATION NO. 4
WRONG PRACTICE OF BUDDHA – DHAMMA
ILLUSTRATION NO. 3

ACCEPTANCE OF THE DHAMMA
THAI TERRITORIAL LOSSES IN 1907 AND 1909
นางยิบศีรษ์
ภาชนะภัก
ตั้งที่ส่วน-
เศษคัญลาน
เฝ้าดื่มมา
นั่งกินข้าว
เน่าไปตาม
อีนี่เรื่อน
อย กรม
มุ่งหมาย
แกร่งแกร่ง
แนะนุเจริญ
มะรุม ทรง
ยึดแห่เวียน
ราคาน้า
ร่าง เรื่อง
เพราะเรื่อง
เพื่อเรื่อง

1. ๒๔๖๔

สมเด็จพระมหาสมณเจ้าฯ พระยาสิมหะธรรมมาธิบดี
รัชชินีพระชนมายุ ๖๒ พรรษา
ขึ้นบันทึกลำดับแห่งพระราชปัจฉิม

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