Exploring a Buddhist Peace Theory

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Through its history, Buddhism has deepened its analysis of the psychological dynamics of suffering including conflict and its resolution. This paper explores how this analysis of human mind elaborates inner peace. It is proposed as a nondualistic peace based on contemplative practice, a cognition of reality as interdependent and interpenetrating and exercise of compassionate mind in a synergistic way. It is an awareness of an ultimate inseparability between our well-being and happiness and that of others' and an effort to gratify basic needs of all, promote freedom, and justice for all equally.

Keywords: Buddhism, the conditioned mind, mindfulness, dialogue, nondualistic peace

Introduction

Peace is a broad and elusive concept. It is a subjective or intersubjective concept as different individuals or groups define it in distinctive ways (Richmond, 2008). It is a contested concept that has no fixed attribute (Richmond, 2008). However, contemporary peace theory has underdeveloped the dimension of inner peace (Brantmeier, 2007). Vaughan argues that study of human mind as a social science is “still in its infancy” (2000, p. 151) and her critique applies to peace research: despite its diversity and progress, contemporary peace theory is still mainly structurally or institutionally oriented¹ and a study of internal dynamics of peace needs further development. Buddhism, since its beginning, has deepened the psychological analysis of conflict or violence and its resolution (Burton, 2002). This paper explores how this analysis of human mind elaborates inner peace and relevance to peace studies.

The first section introduces basic ideas of Buddhism, especially, the Four Noble Truth doctrine—the core of Buddhism. Second section examines a Buddhist view of conflict dynamics. The upshot is the proposition of the concept of “the conditioned mind”—mind shaped by frame of reference that is accepted as valid and effective in the practical matters of social or cultural life—and analysis of how it turns into a root cause of conflict. The third section explores a Buddhist approach to conflict resolution and inner peace. And finally, an analysis of interdependent relationship between inner peace and outer peace will be made.

In contemporary peace research, social psychology has played a central role in examining psychological dynamics of peace and conflict². Collective dimension of human mind has been the main focus. What this paper seeks to offer is an expansion of the potential of individual mind. However, it neither denies nor

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¹ For instance, liberal peacebuilding characterized as the employment of democracy and market-based economy, and reform of a range of administrative institutions in line with modern state system (Richmond, 2008) is a good instance.

² For instance, Ronald J. Fisher (1990 and 1997), Herbert C. Kelman (1990 and 1997), and Daniel Bar-Tal (2011 and 2013) are good examples.

downplays social or collective nature of human mind or social influence on individual mind. Rather, it aims to expand our view of the psychological dynamics of peace and conflict. Especially, as will be examined in detail, when individuals develop capacities and skills to employ positive emotional states represented by compassion and philosophical wisdom that penetrates into a nature of reality including human being, they can contribute to transforming collective conflictual situation into peaceful and constructive one in which those with different or even opposing values and views can engage in dialogue. The paper does not ignore structural and institutional dimensions of peace and conflict, either, which is to be demonstrated in the final section. Rather, by providing contemporary peace research that tends to be socially and structurally oriented with Buddhist perspectives of individual human mind, it seeks to expand the purview of how we analyze peace and conflict dynamics itself.

Methodological Considerations

Broadly, Buddhism is categorized into three major schools—Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana. Each of these schools further has sub-schools that have respectively developed distinct teachings and traditions along with the shared objective, that is, eradicating suffering. It is beyond the scope of this paper to examine all of those schools in detail and analyze their contributions to the development of peace.

Therefore, the paper employs the following texts and teachings to develop the research: Dhamapada³, Surangama-Sutra⁴, Nagarjuna⁵'s Seventy Stanzas on Emptiness, Catustava or Four Hymns to Absolute Reality. However, it must be emphatically noticed that although it embraces those texts and teachings to unfold the argument on inner peace, the inner peace explicated here is merely one of the possible ideas of what it means to be inner peace in Buddhism as other texts and teachings would lead us to develop inner peace(s) distinct from the one explored in this paper.

Foundational Aim of Buddhism

Buddhism is a religion and philosophy founded by Gautama, the Buddha and developed by the subsequent masters throughout its history. The main focus of Buddhism is human mind, which is stated in the Dhamapada: "All experience is preceded by mind, led by mind, made by mind." (Fronsdall, 2005, p. 1). Further, the Surangama Sutra states, "The Tathagata has always said that all phenomena are manifestations of mind and that all causes and effects including (all things from) the world to its dust, take shape because of the mind" (Luk, 2001, p. 16). These statements do not deny the existence of objects outside our minds. Rather, they signify that "the qualities of the things come into existence after the mind, are dependent upon mind and are made up of mind" (Lai, 1977, p. 66). The state of the world around us is a reflection of the condition of our mind (Ramanan, 1978).

As the condition of our mind frames the state of the reality, the root cause of problem we face is also attributed to our mind as stated in the Dhamapada: "Speak or act with a corrupted mind, and suffering follows as the wagon wheel follows the hoof of the ox" (Fronsdall, 2005, p. 1). However, when we overcome the cause of suffering, we can achieve inner serenity and well-being: "Speak or act with a peaceful mind, and happiness

³ Dhamapada is a collection of sayings of the Buddha.

⁴ Surangama Sutra is a sutra in Mahayana Buddhism. Especially it has been influential in Chinese Chan Buddhist school.

⁵ Nagarjuna is one of the most important Buddhist philosophers, who lived between the second and third century. Chang (1971) states Nagarjuna is a founder and exponent of Madhyamaka philosophy that centers on sunyata (emptiness) doctrine to achieve liberation from suffering. Regarding the details of Nagarjuna's works and Madhyamaka philosophy, Murti's *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism: A Study of Madhyamika System* would be helpful.

follows like a never-departing shadow” (Fronsall, 2005, p. 1). Thus, it becomes crucial to make a critical analysis of how mind turns into the root cause of conflict or violence and how it can be overcome to deepen our understanding of an internal dynamics of conflict and its resolution. The Four Noble Truths doctrine plays the central role in understanding and addressing human suffering in line with dynamics of human mind.

Analyzing the Four Noble Truths Doctrine

The Four Noble Truths doctrine is the Buddha’s foundational teaching (Geshe Tashi, 2005) and the doctrinal framework of every school of Buddhism (Yun, 2002). According to Pereira and Tiso, the Four Noble Truths are “truths of pain, origin of pain, suppression of pain and the way to suppress pain” (1988, p. 172).

The first noble truth states that from a Buddhist perspective, our life is basically filled with suffering and trouble (Rahula, 1974). However, it does not show a pessimistic or a nihilistic view of reality. Rather, the acknowledgement of our reality being full of suffering leads us to a deeper and more profound question of “What is the root cause of suffering?” and this is the core of the second noble truth.

The second truth examines the cause of suffering (Rubin, 2003). It derives from craving, that is, a mental state of attachment to specific objects or views (Burton, 2002). Besides craving, ignorance is explained as a fundamental cause of suffering (Cho, 2002). It is understood as our basic misapprehension of the nature of reality (Geshe Tashi, 2005) or lack of correct knowledge of reality (Cho, 2002). The basic feature of ignorance is that we tend to see things including human beings as having a fixed nature and cling to anything that reinforces our concept of permanence, pushing away those views that deny it (Geshe Tashi, 2005). Further, craving and ignorance give rise to three mental defilements: greed, anger, and delusion (Olendzki, 2003). Thus, suffering is mainly of psychological and subjective nature. Stated otherwise, human mind itself is the locus wherein the gap between reality and the human hermeneutical reality shaped by conceptual or linguistic rendering along with desire takes place, which results in suffering (Park, 2008).

The third truth argues knowing the cause of suffering will empower human beings to overcome it (Yun, 2002). Suffering is neither everlasting nor beyond human reach: rather, since our own craving and ignorance cause us suffering, we can resolve the suffering when we properly address those causes (Yun, 2002). As both the causes of suffering and liberation from it are created by our minds (Park, 2008), we can overcome suffering through our own efforts.

The fourth truth shows the way to address suffering and achieve mental well-being, which is generally called the noble eightfold path (Rubin, 2003). It is: right view⁶, right thought⁷, right speech⁸, right action⁹, right livelihood¹⁰, right effort¹¹, right mindfulness¹², and right concentration¹³ (Rahula, 1974). The gist of the fourth truth is that when three angles—ethical conduct, mental discipline and wisdom—are practiced in an integrative

⁶ Yun characterizes it as a correct view of reality, that is, mutual interdependence and ultimate empty nature (2002).

⁷ It refers to a correct perception that our bodies will eventually decay and disappear and that our emotions and thoughts are temporal and impermanent (Yun, 2002).

⁸ According to Rubin, it means speaking trustfully, sincerely, and compassionately (2003).

⁹ It refers to refraining from needless killing, stealing, and sexual misconduct (Rubin, 2003).

¹⁰ It means living a reasonable economic life, an altruistic life, and a harmonious communal life (Yun, 2002).

¹¹ It means correct diligence in developing wholesomeness that not yet arisen, increasing wholesomeness that has already arisen, and preventing unwholesomeness from arising (Yun, 2002).

¹² It signifies constant awareness of phenomena that are happening at present and careful recollection of phenomena that occurred in the past (Rubin, 2003).

¹³ It refers to spiritual concentration and mental tranquility achieved through the act of meditation to recall the actions and thoughts in the past, perceive the dynamics of mind at present and cultivate goodwill and compassion (Rubin, 2003).

manner, we can overcome suffering. When wisdom—an insight into reality, that is, impermanence and interdependence, mental discipline—the observing internal dynamics of our own mind, and ethical conduct—a moral life with honesty, altruism, and compassion that takes into account others’ feelings, perspectives, rights and well-beings and ours equally—are well integrated (Geshe Tashi, 2005), we can break suffering and construct a positive and harmonious relationship.

A Buddhist Analysis of Conflict Dynamics

This section examines a Buddhist view of conflict dynamics based upon the idea that conflict and violence of any kind begin with our thinking (Park, 2008). At first, to analyze how our thought becomes a root cause of conflict, “the conditioned mind” is proposed. It is characterized as mind shaped by frame of reference that is conventionally accepted as valid and practical in our social life. From time immemorial, human beings have developed conceptual thought or linguistic knowledge as the main tool to make sense of the world of experiences in abstraction and to communicate them with fellow human beings (Ichimura, 1997). As collective entities, our minds are framed by socially embedded assumptions and habitual ways of interpretation to respond to a given circumstance (Gunnlaugson, 2007).

We inhabit socially constructed and historically evolved life-worlds that form certain cultural patterns—beliefs, worldviews, values and norms—as scaffolding for meaningful experience (Reysen & Katzarska-Miller, 2013). We build and accept certain pattern of cultural values, political ideologies, religious doctrines and moral-ethical norms to lead a meaningful life (Mezirow, 2003). Culture or society of any form molds our minds to conform to certain norms and determines the appropriateness or acceptability of a given state of awareness or communication in the collective situation (Goleman, 1993).

Further, getting conditioned with certain frame of reference is connected to an expression of our eagerness for psychological security in the face of the uncertainty of practical life (Gordon, 2006). According to Loy, security refers to “the conditions where we can live without care, where our life is not preoccupied without worrying about our life” (2002, p. 8) and that involves stabilizing ourselves by controlling and fixing the real with certain attributes. Having a particular frame of reference gives us a sense of security as it enables us to understand reality in a stable and predictable manner.

However, while social conditioned state is essential to us, the potential danger lurks within the establishment of socially patterned frame of reference. The fundamental problem is our propensity to absolutize frame of reference socially conditioning us as universal (Gomez, 1976). Once we establish a particular frame of reference and cling to it as complete, it causes us to fix the real—objects, persons, group of people and events—with various supposedly unchanging attributes (Chang, 1971). Forming the sedimented and habitual ways of seeing the real with fixed perspectives on reality restricts patterns of awareness and limits our intentional range and capacity for meaning-making commitments (Hershock, 2006).

When we build some particular frame of reference and claim completeness for the constructed perspective, which causes us to be dogmatic, exclusive of other frames of reference (Ramanan, 1978). The extreme attachment to our own views leads to the negation of other views, values, and ultimately of people who are different from us (Der-lan, 2006). Once the frame of reference is seen as complete, we are prone to feel threat, anger, or hatred to others with different frames of reference and create self-serving justification for discrimination or injustice against them and impede communication with those holding different or opposing views and goals (Der-lan, 2006).

Further, the basic mode of thinking in social conditioned state needs to be critiqued. As Wade insightfully claims, social conditioned state is fundamentally of a dualistic nature of thought (right/wrong, good/bad, and black/white) and divides the world into “in-group” and “out-group” (1996). Those people who exhibit dualistic thought are informed by the principle of the excluded middle (Nicolescu, 2006) or “either-or” stance (Nagatomo, 2000). This “either-or” logical stance in nature prioritizes one over the other by sharpening the dichotomous relationship between in-group and out-group, whereby an imbalanced attitude invested by extreme in-group self-interest and desire is favored and promoted (Nagatomo, 2000). Consequently, we become the generative factor for creating and cementing the discriminatory and oppositional relationship (Nagatomo, 2000).

Once we see the other as disconnected from us due to the dualistic thought, it tends to become easier to propagate violence of any kind upon the other outside the boundary (Hart et al., 2000). In dualistic logical and epistemological structures, we tend to project negative qualities upon the outside without being aware of our projection (Wilber, 1993), which promotes a self-righteousness to make a discriminatory attitude for them. Further, in dualistic mode, values, ideas or norms of our own group are not viewed as one of many alternatives, but the only right one and consequently other possibilities are dimly conceived or denied as wrong or inferior (Wade, 1996).

Social conditionedness combined with its dualistic or dichotomous nature, can exaggerate differences between people, creating supposedly firm boundaries between in-group and out-group (Waldron, 2003). Once those boundaries are built, we reify them into fixed entities segregating from one another as intrinsic and insurmountable (Waldron, 2003). Consequently, positive interaction to understand each other and build a harmonious and constructive relationship is blocked. Whereas socially built distinction made by a frame of reference is a natural phenomenon, it also becomes the crux of the problem by its very nature (Wilber, 1993).

Examining a Buddhist Conflict Resolution and Inner Peace Mindfulness

As analyzed, once we become conditioned by certain frame of reference, we tend to remain identified with and imprisoned in the conditioned state (Welwood, 2000). The imprisonment constricts the purview of our thought and impedes positive interaction with others holding different thoughts. Therefore, the first step for conflict resolution is to disidentify ourselves from the conditionedness and mindfulness is proposed as a practical method.

Mindfulness refers to disciplining our minds by focusing on a certain object of thought and be letting go of all thoughts and emotions, and observing whatever arises in consciousness (Kabat-Zinn, 1994). For example, Mahasatipatthana Sutta shows,

A monk abides contemplating body as body, ardent, clearly aware and mindful, having put aside hankering and fretting for the world; he abides contemplating feelings as feelings; he abides contemplating mind as mind; he abides contemplating mind-objects as mind-objects, ardent, clearly aware and mindful, having put aside hankering and fretting for the world. (Walshe, 2012, p. 335)

Mindfulness hones the abilities for moment-to-moment awareness of internal states such as feelings, emotions, thoughts and attitudes (Brantmeier, 2007). Instead of being controlled by our habitual behavioral patterns, emotions, and thoughts, we can turn our internal dynamics into object for reflection and analysis (Hart, 2001).

Observing and reflecting upon our internal dynamics help us temporarily mute external factors and discover the role of our mental and emotional habits in framing our perceptions of reality (Chappell, 1999). We come to realize the contents of reality depend not so much on what happens to us, but on what attitudes, understanding, feelings and reactions we give to those events (Chappell, 1999). Understanding the internal role in shaping our social and cultural reality frees us from social conditioned state and enlarges awareness and attentiveness to broader dimensions of how mind can work beyond socially built presuppositions and sedimented habits of thinking and knowing.

As we are empowered to monitor how our internal dynamics works to frame reality, we can reach a deeper and more profound intellectual insight into the nature of reality to address absolutized conditioned state that causes negative feelings and dogmatism (Daneth, 2006). The reason for transforming our view of conceptual thought that socially conditions us is that, since conceptual thought construction is a sort of lens to organize our world and build our lived experience, it becomes imperative to correct our misunderstanding of it when it causes us conflict and violence (Orr, 2014). Stated different, though exchanging information and opinions between those in conflict is important, equally crucial is to change the foundational cognitive structure that affects how those information and viewpoints are understood and given meaning (Zajonc, 2006) so that more positive and constructive values and perspectives beyond conflictual ones can be explored. Through contemplative practice that detaches ourselves from frame of reference that socially conditions us and creates “in-group” and “out-group” boundaries, we are awakened to the interdependent and interpenetrating nature of reality or conceptual thoughts that form our reality (Apffel-Marglin & Bush, 2005).

For instance, interdependent and interpenetrating nature of conceptual thought establishing our reality is expounded by Nagarjuna: “Without one there cannot be many and without many it is not possible to refer to one. Therefore, one and many arise dependently and such phenomena do not have sign of inherent existence” (Komito, 1987, p. 80). He also states that “If there is existence, then is non-existence; if there is something long, similarly (there is) something short; and if there is non-existence, (there is) existence; therefore, both (existence and non-existence) are not existent” (Tola & Dragonetti, 1995, p. 128). He further states, “Unity and multiplicity and past and future, etc., defilement and purification, correct and false—how can they exist per se?” (Tola & Dragonetti, 1995, p. 128).

Realizing the dependent-originated nature of conceptual or linguistic framework leads us to understand that any form of symbolic knowledge shaping dichotomous human relations cannot exist outside of the purview of interdependency. This does not mean total erasure of difference or demise of all distinctions into an all-frozen sameness, but advocates a reformulation of dualistic thinking. What needs to be known here is that dualistic either-or thinking, though important in some circumstance, is “only one product of the total functioning of the mind” (Tart, 2000, p. 28). Being awakened to the interdependent and interpenetrating nature of symbolic or linguistic knowledge forming dichotomous relations, we can reach non-dualistic stance (Nagatomo, 2000), wherein *prima facie* opposing views are not seen as fixed pair of opposites, but as inter-relational constructs. When we transcend dualistic thinking, we become empowered to hold multiplex, complementary both/and dialectical thinking and to appreciate the opposite of a deep truth is another deep truth (Braud & Anderson, 1998).

Intimate Relation Between Mindfulness and Dialogue

Dialogue is one of the core methods for conflict resolution, especially for transforming a violent and

antagonistic relationship into harmonious one (Der-lan, 2006). Its main objective is not just to exchange and share information but to uncover processes shaping us and the struggle we are having so that mutual respect and a sense of solidarity are to be aroused (Der-lan, 2006).

How can mindfulness contribute to dialogue? As it mainly focuses on empowering individuals to monitor and control their mind-states and change perspectives, the practice of mindfulness transformation assumes a crucial role in creating mind-state to engage in a constructive dialogue with others. What must be addressed before and during dialogue is a reactive and impulsive interaction between those with distinct values, perspectives or goals.

Mindful observation of our internal dynamics suspends impulsive and automatic reaction in encountering different ideas, values or identities. Mindful suspension of habitual reaction liberates us from embeddedness with our thoughts and feelings to appreciate more complex and multi-faceted form of consciousness and different views and ideas (Gunnlaugson, 2007). The practice of internal observation exposes and deconstructs socially conditioned positions of belief, value and thought and frees our minds to notice and appreciate multiple perspectives and unexpected insights (Hart, 2004).

Dialogue requires us to be challenged and transformed by encountering others' viewpoints and values as well as the willingness and ability to engage in active listening and understanding of them (Ferrer, 2002). Dialogue demands the change of our viewpoint, attitude and values and it requires internal and reflective awareness of our own mind-state to free us from any fixed frame of reference (Hadot, 1995). The enhancement of reflective self-awareness serves to loosen the power of habits of thought and make our minds a more hospitable place for openness to differences, diversity and creativity (Claxton, 2006).

The integrative expansion of experiential range as a result of the practice of mindfulness and perspectival change promotes more extensive and inclusive interpersonal and intergroup interaction (Firman & Gila, 2002). Recognizing an interdependent and interconnected nature of human relations leads us to approaching the phenomenon of conflict from a perspective distinct from conventional dualistic or dichotomous logic. Normally, in conflict characterized as pursuit of incompatible or contradictory goals or clash of values, ideologies (Ramsbotham et al., 2011), a dualistic or divisive cognition and perception predominate in the conflict dynamics. However, with detachment from a fixed standpoint through mindfulness and perspectival change, the structure of conflict comes to be grasped in the form of mutual interdependence and interpenetration (Park, 2008).

Consequently, it becomes impossible to draw a complete line that judges which party in the conflict is absolutely right or wrong; rather, those in conflict are interconnected to each other (Park, 2008). They are closely interwoven on a fundamental level despite their conflictual and dichotomous relationship and clash of values or incompatible or contradictory goals (Park, 2008). With a dualistic view of conflict transcended, violence against others comes to be understood as an act of violence against ourselves and as an undesirable and unrealistic option or course of action in the transformation of a conflictual situation. It becomes imperative to go beyond the pursuit of incompatible objectives to explore new goals that take both parties' needs into consideration (Braud & Anderson, 1998).

Thus, we can see an intimate connection between dialogue with others and that with ourselves. Dialogue has two dimensions—intersubjective dialogue and internal dialogue—and both need to be equally considered and practiced. Mindful and reflective encounter with ourselves sharpens our capacity for constructive and productive encounter with others who are conditioned with distinct frames of reference to make new

interpersonal and intergroup relationships possible (Hadot, 1995).

On a Buddhist Peace

Following the conflict dynamics and resolution, how can peace be characterized? It is to be proposed as a nondualistic peace based on the practice of multiple functions of mind—contemplative mind, a cognition that understands reality as interdependent and interpenetrating and compassionate mind—in a synergistic way.

As examined above, one of the most powerful transformative methods is contemplative practice to achieve a mind-state free from an attachment to any particular view that creates social boundaries (Bush, 2011). Through the contemplative practice, each individual develops the capacity to move between distinct worldviews and perspectives to create new ones with others in an interdependent and interpenetrating context (Zajonc, 2006). The dynamics of peace arises from the interior self-transformation, that is, transcending the fixed ego-self and freeing ourselves for others to practice interdependent relationship (Coleman, 2006).

Compassion characterized as an exercise of our courage to transcend dualistic view of human relation to interdependent and interconnected one (Park, 2008) is an acknowledgement of shared humanity across different groups of people (Pruitt & McCollum, 2010). It is a capacity to feel others' pain, sorrow, despair or suffering as our own based on interdependent origination of human relationship (Hoyt, 2014). Exercising compassionate mind develops a quality of loving kindness, a universal and unselfish love that extends to friends, family, and ultimately to all human beings including those we are in conflict with. It drives us to take action, care for, and serve others (Pruitt & McCollum, 2010).

Transcending the division between self and others to embrace ultimately undivided relationship beyond different groups does not to deny uniqueness or individuality of identity whether it be individual or collective. Rather, it is a qualitative transformation of how we view the nature of identity. Instead of seeing our identity as independent and fixed existence, it understands it as the interdependent web of life with no any fixed nature (Loy, 1993). As we realize identity as an open and dynamic living system within a larger interdependent and interpenetrating context, we will learn to know an ultimate nondualistic relationship between us and others. Consequently, we become aware that our well-being and others' are inseparable: without considering and acting to promote others' peace, our own peace would be impossible (Vaughan, 2002). It is a transition from self-centered and dichotomous tensions of in-group and out-group processes to an all-inclusive state of awareness of our fundamental interdependence and interpenetration. In this nondualistic relationship, we are inspired to make an effort to gratify basic needs, promote freedom and justice of both ourselves and others.

Furthermore, the awareness of interdependent and the ultimate nondualistic nature of human relationships paves the way for unity in diversity. Diversity does not merely mean that different individuals or groups exist separately. Rather, it means the rise of complex and coordination—enriching interdependence (Hershock, 2012), whereby we experience difference not as a source of threat or hatred but as an opportunity to explore something new to all participants. It does not reject or abandon distinct values, worldviews or norms shaping our social life. Rather, it is their meaningful revision and reorientation to add new understandings or views to them according to changing encounters. Unity in diversity means that those with different or even opposing frames of reference engage in an exploratory process that unfolds new values and meanings to exercise their interdependent and mutually transformative relational dynamics.

Truly, the synthetic practice of contemplative mind, cognitive transformation, and compassionate mind is not easy. However, since our mind-state affects how we act and how we speak, it is essential to us to monitor

and control our own minds to act and speak constructively and harmoniously (Kosan Sunim, 1999). Conflict of any form does not take a pre-determined course of action or direction beyond our control. Rather, as our intention, perspective, and reaction affect how conflict unfolds, promoting interaction based on reflective and contemplative practice with cognitive change and compassionate action can turn conflict into an opportunity for self-transformation and creating values and truth jointly with others. As we create subjective and intersubjective realities every day (Vaughan, 1979), every moment of our life can be an opportunity to embody the inner resources to construct peace (Zajonc, 2006).

An Interdependent Relationship Between Inner Peace and Outer Peace

Although internal dynamics of conflict resolution and peace has been explored, Buddhist inner peace examined here does not dismiss outer, external dimensions of peace. Rather, the critical problem with Buddhist inner peace would be that it leaves out the analysis of the macro economic and political structures that affect people's opportunity to satisfy their basic needs and pursue their envisioned life. Neither the practice of reflective and compassionate mind nor nondualistic inner peace could be appreciated by those without appropriate food, clothing, and shelter or those without political and economic opportunities and access to social services such as basic education and health care.

It is imperative to Buddhism to recognize both the material needs for sustaining human living and inner power to create a sustainable peace. Exclusive reliance on the role of inner transformation and the widening circle of individual influence as approaches to peace in larger context would frustrate those who consider immediate effort is needed in working for humanitarian assistance, construction of infrastructure, social justice and conflict intervention (Der-lan, 2006). Specific areas of problems such as physical violence and social and structural inequalities need to be properly addressed.

Promoting human rights and equality of all in society in terms of the social, legal, political and economic opportunities is essential to uproot the potential causal factors of violence (Groff, 2008). For example, political and administrative reforms, establishment of democratic governance, economic development that satisfies the basic needs of the citizens, and creating and strengthening civil society would be important. Structural and institutional reformation to correspond to the needs of the population and secure the multiple voices of different groups in the society being heard and reflected on political, economic, and social policies will serve as a foundation for a durable peace.

However, Buddhism adds that conditions of outer world are dependent on internal conditions of human beings both individually and collectively. Although external verbal and physical wrongdoings as well as social injustices cause conflict and violence, these behavioral, structural, and institutional causes stem from the state of human mind as the violence and injustice are responses toward external stimuli produced by inner mind operation (Brantmeier, 2007). Both individual and collective outer dimension of peace somehow represents and is conditioned by our individual and collective internal dimension of peace. Failure to satisfy basic needs and asymmetric social structure and human relationship that hampers equal access to socio-political, socio-economic activity causes or worsens psychological division between different groups or individuals. However, asymmetric social structure and relationship itself is partly due to human thought, especially, dualistic or dichotomous thinking that prioritizes one's own group interests and needs over others. Therefore, though social and structural transformation is crucial, it also entails the transformation of human mind and thinking framing the social structure. Empowering individuals across different groups to become self-conscious,

reflective and contemplative social being with a holistic view of reality that appreciates interdependence and diversity would lead to transforming society into more equitable and peaceful one.

Peace lies at the nexus of significant interdependencies among diverse physiological, psychological, social, cultural, economic and political realities (Hershock, 2006). To live in peace should be understood as involving both personal fulfillment and social well-being, the psychological and spiritual quality of life and objective living conditions (Kosan Sunim, 1999). Durable and self-sustainable peace is to be understood as an integration of outer peace and inner peace. It means a holistic peace wherein physiological needs of all are secured, structural and institutional justices are addressed, and people develop and enact multiple functions of mind to have positive views of others and become creative in transforming non-violent dispute into an opportunity to promote an interdependent and interpenetrating relationship.

Conclusion and Research Implications

Peace is a multi-factor process involving many distinct substantive aspects and dimensions: it is multi-leveled and required to cope with multiple perspectives, from macro to micro levels in the external world and extending to inner world (Groff, 2008). Building social settings and conditions is essential to gratify basic human needs of each individual and guarantee equal access to political, economic, and social activities. Building those circumstances will empower each and every individual to nurture capacities to practice multiple functions of mind to move toward sustainable peace between those with different frames of reference and identities. When inner peace and methods to achieve it are seen and examined as part of a continuum of multiple and complex peace process, its practical viability will be heightened in the long run. A Buddhist inner peace explored here and socially-oriented Western peace research need further collaboration to complement each other to produce more concrete theories and methods in a holistic manner.

As Ramsbotham et al. (2011) argue, as a global agenda, peace research is required to boost interdisciplinary approaches to the analysis of peace and conflict. Various values and wisdom from around the globe should be equally appreciated and, if necessary, their complementary relationship needs to be explored to promote shared understanding of the virtue to address unjust social and global structure and transform violent and antagonistic human relationships into harmonious and constructive ones (Ramsbotham et al., 2011). As it is impossible to establish a single peace and conflict analysis approach, we need to be open to views different from our own and be creative to keep producing dialectically built understandings of peace and conflict dynamics while appreciating existing ones. As peace and conflict are a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon that demands creativity and flexibility of those engaged in it, it is certainly not the time to make a clear and fixed demarcation between Western and non-Western blocks, but more importantly, a time for each and every one of us to rid ourselves of the narrow self-imposed perspective or boundary and promote further dialogue within the larger context that includes both West and non-West.

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