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Reconciliation and Postbellum Restoration: The Buddhist Perspective

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It is my belief that whereas the twentieth century has been a century of war and untold suffering, the twenty-first century should be one of peace and dialogue. As the continued advances in information technology make our world a truly global village, I believe there will come a time when war and armed conflict will be considered an outdated and obsolete method of settling differences among nations and communities.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, 2002

Since the dawn of time, the human experience has involved conflict and violence. Our existence has been marked by wars and conflicts. Christian theologians, beginning with Augustine of Hippo, have worked over the centuries to define that paradox which is war: that violence and killing may be necessary to save lives, preserve the peace and allow for further development of non-violence. Some may consider

this paradox a contradiction in terms: how can there be "Just War"?

Buddhism is generally seen as a religion and philosophy of pacifism and non-violence. In early work, this researcher reached the conclusion that the seeds of a Buddhist Just War Doctrine exists and is available for philosophical and academic elaboration and enunciation. However, a "Just War" theory must address justice and violence in three stages: a*d bellum, in bello,* and *post bellum.* The final phase of Just War Doctrine is *jus post bellum*. It is perhaps the most difficult phase for the employment of this instrument of national power and the focus of this exploration.

Towards a Buddhist View of Just War

The possibility of a Just War being waged has been acknowledged by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. In November of 2005, His Holiness was at Stanford University. While in a dialogue with the Dean for Religious Life at the University, the Dalai Lama acknowledged that nonviolence permits violence if the proper motivation is present. "The demarcation between violence and non-violence cannot be made on the basis of appearance. The real demarcation between violence and nonviolence is motivation. I think violence and nonviolence is actually -- any action that is motivated by a sense of concern, compassion, and that's essentially nonviolence… The violent method is just a method. To achieve a genuine, justified goal, something beneficial to a large number of people and the motivation is compassion and concern, and then limited violence is permissible. There could be a just war." (Tenzin Gyatso, as quoted at Slate, 2005) He later was to confirm that position in our interview. [1] (D.L.: 107 - 114) He has stated this in other

1. This paper, in some substantial part, draws upon interviews conducted by the author with Samdhong Rinpoche and His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama. When referenced in the paper, the interviews are identified as S.R. or D.L., respectively, followed by the relevant line number. (i.e. S.R.: 23) The interview with Samdhong Rinpoche occurred on 28 January 2008 in Dharamsala, India, at the offices of the Kalon Tripa. The interview was conducted privately with only the Kalon Tripa and John Scorsine and lasted approximately. The interview with His Holiness the Dalai Lama occurred on 27 March 2008 in New Delhi, India. It was conducted in His Holiness' 7th Floor Suite at the Ashok Hotel and lasted approximately one hour. Present were Tenzin Gyatso (His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama), John M. Scorsine, His Holiness' Aide and His Holiness' interpreter.

forums as well.[2]

However, it is clear that when His Holiness takes the position of a war being viewed as justified under Buddhist thought, it is not to say that it is a favored methodology for Buddhist action. "Today's reality… the whole world has now become like one family, almost one body. So some destruction of some other part of the world is actually destruction of yourself. So therefore, according to this new reality, this awful destructive violence which we call war I think is outdated… very difficult to justify." (Tenzin Gyatso, as quoted at Slate, 2005)

When an examination of just war is begun against a Buddhist philosophical backdrop, the first reference which seems to surface is that of a quotation from a compilation of works known as *The Gospel of Buddha*.

The *Tathagara* having given his consent, *Simha* continued: "I am a soldier, O Blessed One, and an appointed by the king to enforce his laws and to wage his wars. Does the *Tathagata,* who teaches kindness without end and compassion with all sufferers, permit the punishment of the criminal? and further, does the *Tathagata* declare that it is wrong to go to war for the protection of our homes, our wives, our children and our property? Does the *Tathagata* teach the doctrine of complete self surrender, so that I should suffer the evil-doer to do what he pleases and yield submissively to him who threatens to take by violence what is my own? Does the *Tathagata* maintain that all strife including such warfare as is waged for a righteous cause, should be forbidden…

> The Blessed One continued: "The *Tathagata* teaches that all warfare in which man tries to slay his brother is lamentable, but he does not teach that those who go to war in a righteous cause after having exhausted all means to preserve the peace are blameworthy. He must be blamed who is the cause of war.

In the case of both interviews, audio records and verbatim transcripts were made and have been preserved electronically.

2. See interview of Tenzin Gyatso, "The CIA in Tibet" available at http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=tOhDBo6x2ZY at approximately 4:50.

> The *Tathagata* teaches a complete surrender of self, but he does not teach a surrender of anything to those powers that are evil, be they men or gods or the elements of nature. Struggle must be, for all life is a struggle of some kind. But he that struggles should look to it lest he struggle in the interest of self against truth and righteousness.

(Carus, 1917:147) Dr. Paul Carus was an early western student of Buddhism. The Gospel, originally published in 1894, is according to Carus, a compilation of learned translations. The compilation, however, is somewhat problematic and has not withstood the rigors of academic review.3

That said, the passage as a statement of Buddhist sentiment cannot be entirely disregarded. Samdhong Rinpoche believes that it derives from Pali Canons and may express the general tenor of an exchange about war within them -- but that it certainly did not derive from Mahayana Sutras (S.R.:253-284) His Holiness also was asked to comment and indicated that it likely was a restatement of common

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3. The difficulty with scholarly reliance upon this passage is that it would seem to be an "explanatory addition". In the Forward to the 1917 edition of the *Gospel*, Carus states that, "…many passages, and indeed the most important ones, are literally copied in translations from the original texts…there are only a few purely original additions, which, however, are neither mere literary embellishments nor deviations from Buddhist doctrine…Additions and modifications contain nothing but ideas for which prototypes can be found somewhere among the traditions of Buddhism, and have been introduced as elucidations of its main principles." (Carus, 1917: v) When one uses Dr. Carus' own Table of Reference found at the end of the 1917 Edition, these passages are attributed to an "Explanatory Addition" to which the reader is urged to contrast with *Questions for King Milanda*, at pages 254 to 257.

. When one turns to examine that dialogue, it does not seem to have a strong basis for being the base text upon which Carus has merely expounded or derived the particular "*Gospel*" passage. Rather, it would appear that this particular passage is of Carus' own authorship. Hence, the reason that Carus as a translator and scholar has fallen into modern day disrepute. Representative of that disrepute would be the commentary of Ven. Ajahn Punnadhammo, the current abbot of the Arrow River Forest Hermitage in Canada. None the less, the quotation has been referenced in works by various authors and scholars. Ven. K. Sri Dhammananda cites this quotation in his article, 'Can a Buddhist Join the Army?", and it appears in his book, "*What Buddhists Believe*".

sense. "Yes, that's commonsense," was His Holiness' comment, though he was quick to add, "But we should not ever use these words as a justification for violence." (D.L.: 303 - 361) However, there is a recent translation of an early Mahayana sutra which may lend some new credence to Dr. Carus' earlier work. That sutra is the *Ārya-satyaka-parivarta* and it will be discussed further within this paper. The Sutra was referenced by Samdhong Rinpoche during and after the conclusion of our January 2008 interview. (S.R.:50 - 63)

The sutra has recently been translated by Lozang Jamspal who began his study of the *Ārya-satyaka-parivarta* as part of his doctoral studies at Columbia University. He published his dissertation on the sutra in 1991, but only recently translated the sutra in its entirety for publication. The sutra is identified by Jamspal as an early, medium-length Mahayana sutra. He believes it to have been compiled from the original Sanskrit in the second century B.C., though that original text has long since been lost to the sands of time. The Tibetan translation is dated to the 9th Century of the Common Era. The title would translate in English to *"A Noble Great Vehicle Discourse, the Revelation of the Transformational Activities through Skillful Means in the Range of the Bodhisattva"*. (Jamspal, 1991:1-3)

The *Ārya-satyaka-parivarta* appears to be the clearest and most focused discussion of ethical warfare in Buddhist thought, though it is remarkably brief. However, there are other sources from which a Buddhist Just War doctrine can be derived.

Samdhong Rinpoche has explored some of those sources. He explored the various aspects of social and political thought in 1977 when writing for the Tibet Journal. (Rinpoche: 1999). His exploration centered an analysis of the *Dasa-cakra-ksti-garbhanama-Mahayana Sutra*.[4]

The Sutra is said to include ten "wheels". The fifth and sixth wheels

4. This sutra is remarkably similar to that which is analyzed by Jamspal, which leads one to believe they are one in the same. However, the name given the scripture by Rinpoche does not compare to any of the three names which Jamspal attributes to the *Ārya-satyaka-parivarta.* See, Jamspal,1991:3. Regardless of whether these are distinct scriptures or different versions of the same, the commentary of Rinpoche remains significant.

appear to endorse the view of a social contract existing between the sovereign and his subjects.

> In the fifth and sixth wheels the Buddha mentions that the state should protect the cities, towns, and villages by strong pallisades, watched by strong forces not excluding even the animal watchers who may be employed for the purpose. The methods of defence employed to keep out the enemies of the state speak of wisdom and political sagacity. The difference of the fifth and sixth wheels is that the fifth wheel stresses the measures of protecting the property of the countrymen and visitors, while the sixth speaks for the defence of the entire country.

(Rinpoche, 1999: 278) The seventh wheel is focused on the role of the state in defense. It urges vigilance in maintaining observation of the territory of the state to ensure its borders and infrastructure. It further goes on to discuss the duties of the state in the event of disaster or invasion. The Sutra includes discussions of remedial measures and the use of another instrument of national power -- intelligence. (Rinpoche, 1999: 278)

Interestingly enough, the Buddhist writings which address war-making, also develop the subject by exploring three periods. (*Satyaka* 6:71; Rinpoche, 1999:277). These correspond to the periods of Just War Doctrine -- *ad bellum, in bello, and post bellum*.

Buddhism And Jus Post Bellum

Beginning with the *Ārya-satyaka-parivarta* there seems to be a proper Buddhist approach to peace-building and post-conflict recovery. Reconstruction of a defeated nation and its infrastructure, physically, economically, sociologically, and politically is the obligation of the victor. The concept of *jus post bellum* is likely the most difficult of the Just War Doctrine and the least developed. It is as former Secretary of State Colin Powell has called it, "The Pottery Barn Rule: You break it, you own it".[5] It could be more distinctly called "just peace". It has

5. Pottery Barn is an American retail home décor business with nationwide locations. Its shelves are loaded with fragile items.

been identified as "perhaps the most difficult problem posed by contemporary warfare". (Johnson, 1999:191)

The *Ārya-satyaka-parivarta* gives scant guidance as to how to end hostilities. It does tell the righteous ruler to view his enemies as having been created by their causes. Specifically, it recommends that "Viewing his enemies as having been created by their causes, a ruler should dispel the causes of enmity and should make friends even with his enemies…". (*Satyaka 6* at 73) The goals and purposes of the U.N. Peacebuilding Commission would seem to dovetail into this sutra's mandate to the righteous ruler.

This lack of attention to the aftermath of war is endemic in the discussion of just war. There has always been inadequate attention paid to the *post bellum* aspect of Just War doctrine. Once the war is over and the armistice has been signed, the justifications of military necessity are no longer present… without war there can be no military necessity. It is postulated that the overarching concepts of justice in the post hostility period should be fashioned after a restoration of human rights. (Williams, 2006: 309)

His Holiness would concur.

> Then after the violence has come to an end, as you mentioned, the defeated nation is hurt and in ruins. It is now that the victor has the moral responsibility to provide assistance and to restore the defeated's quality of life. After the Second World War, the Marshall Plan did just that. The Allies, Europe and the United States, rebuilt Germany. As a result, today, generally I don't find any hatred or anger towards the United States in their collective mind. Similarly, is the case with Japan. I have actually asked some of my friends in Japan, "Are there substantial Japanese who still have negative feeling toward United States because of nuclear weapon that was used on them?" No one has indicated that they harbor ill-will or negative feeling. In both these cases, although there was war and great destruction, after the hostilities ended there was no discrimination, no hatred, only consideration for our human brother/sisters and a desire to come to help them build a nation. Now, today, Germany, specifically what was

> previously West Germany, economy, education, everything, much better. Eastern Germany, which did not receive the same attention, remains backward. North Korea – tremendous suffering, tremendous destruction, and it continues to this day. But South Korea, not only safe, but much more developed…. And Japan, I think with the new constitution. America helped there Japanese, German brothers after the war. So I think after the victory, I think the moral responsibility of the victor is to help the defeated. That help is also very important to eliminate their grievance.

(DL: 383-407) Throughout this discussion, His Holiness emphasized the need to eliminate the causes that created the conflict in the first instance.

This need to eliminate the ill-will and enmity inherent in the world is a focus of the Dalai Lama's thought.

> *The Dalai Lama:*. I feel instead of us using force, there should (be) closer contact and assistance – some part of the military budget should be spent in fostering education and to build schools and hospitals and restore an economy. Educate the Iraqi people with more modern education. I think the result will be much better. That also is a long-term solution for the elimination of terrorism. That's my feeling.
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> So to go to the causes of terrorism.
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> *The Dalai Lama:.* Yes. Terrorism comes from hatred. The only way to eliminate hatred is through compassionate acts. Help them. Give them education. Give them an economy. And reach out occasionally for some criticism, well, construction criticism. That is the way to reduce hatred. And so that's the only true way to eliminate terrorism. Or, of course, you can use force. Kill a few individual terrorists in the market among his other friends and their community will respond against you.
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> It creates a cycle.

> *The Dalai Lama:.* So I often express today with bin Laden. If he is handled the wrong way, next time, ten bin Laden. Then hundred bin Laden.

(D.L.:124-140) Hence, it would appear that if a return to armed conflict is to be avoided, success in the reconstruction of the former enemy is paramount. This would seem to be the lesson of the First and Second World Wars.

After the First World War, Germany was subjugated by the victors. It was forced into poverty. Basically, the Treaty of Versailles with its onerous reparation requirements and territorial forfeitures had sown the seeds for the raise of the Nazis party, the fervor of Nationalism, and ultimately was the cause of World War II. It can clearly be argued that the lack of *jus post bellum* was the causative factor for World War II.

Evolution of the Principles of Just Peace

As an intergovernmental body that supports peace efforts in countries emerging from conflict, the Peace Commission is charged with the elimination of the root causes of a conflict; so that the cycle of war, victory and war can be broken. Their role in the establishment of peace and the institution of dialogue and bring resources to bear are completely in accord with the Sutra's charge of dispelling the causes of enmity.

What happens following a war, is just as important – perhaps more important – than the intentions and motivations that are possessed by governments contemplating the use of war as an instrument of national power and policy. Most scholars that study the concept of Just War, view an armed conflict through two prisms – why was the war fought and how was it waged. *Post bellum* activities should be guided by both legal and moral percepts. The legal precepts stem from the Fourth Geneva Convention and the Hague Convention IV of 1907.

As Buddhists, it is clear that we should be devoting energy and

study to what constitutes a just peace. It is an area of inquiry that has been devoid of appropriate emphasis by the historic as well as the modern expositors of just war theory.

The principles of a just peace must, necessarily, start with how a war is waged. Within the context of the *Ārya-satyaka-parivarta*, these concepts are omnipresent.

> **Candapradyota**: O Brahmin, how should a righteous ruler protect sentient beings and their surroundings?
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> **Satyavadin:** Your Majesty, a ruler should protect sentient beings without burning their surroundings or ruining them, etc. A ruler should not vent his anger through cities or villages, ruining reservoirs, wrecking dwelling places, cutting down fruit trees, or destroying harvests, etc. In short, it is not right to destroy any well-prepared, well-constructed, and well-extended regions. How is this? These are sources of life commonly used by many sentient beings who have not produced any faults.

(Jamspal, 1991:69) Waging war in this manner allows for greater success in the reconstruction of the battlespace.

If a war is waged unjustly, the defeated will be distrustful of the victor. Tools that we currently use in the post-bellum period – truth commissions, reconciliation panels, war crime tribunals, etc. – will be viewed with distrust and styled as "victor's justice", which is by definition anything but just. A just peace, perhaps, is one which reaffirms and revalidates the human rights of the defeated.

Re-establishing society among a defeated populous must be progressive. There must be considerations made for cultural and traditional forms of society among the indigenous population. A victor may not simply impose upon the defeated a new and foreign social fabric. For example, a republican form of democracy that may work in the United States, may not be the right fit for a formerly sovereign nation that was comprised of nomadic tribes.

Additionally, the *post bellum* period may be the longest period

within the lifespan of the conflict. In reconstruction, as with training and fostering any new venture, there will be three progressive periods each marked by an increasing degree of autonomy. Those periods would be: guardianship, mentorship and then sovereignty

The period of guardianship would be evidenced by the imposition of interim civil institutions upon the indigenous population. Here Buddhist teaching would instruct that the occupation force must behave as a righteous ruler.

> *Candapradyota:* 0 Brahmin, please enumerate what views a righteous ruler should have while striving to protect the people.
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> *Satyavadin*; Your Majesty, a righteous ruler who strives for the protection of people should have these eight conceptions [He should);
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> 1. View his subjects as his children;
> 2. View wicked people as sick;
> 3. View suffering people *with* compassion;
> 4. View happy sentient beings with rejoicing;
> 5. View his enemies as having been created by their causes;
> 6. View his friends protectively;
> 7. View the use of one's possessions as medicine; and
> 8. View the self as selfless.

(*Satyaka* 6:72, Jamspal, 1991) In many ways, during this period the victor is the parent or guardian of the population that had been defeated.

Following the period of guardianship would be an intermediate state of partnership. This is really a period of mentorship in which the role of the guardian evolves to that of first teacher and then trusted advisor.

Of course, the final goal would be the establishment of the independent governmental institutions of the indigenous populace and the withdrawal of the conquering/occupying force entirely: a return of sovereignty.

Three principles of just peace seem to be readily apparent to this point that would be ongoing objectives within each phase of the normalization of the defeated society.

Principle 1: Restoration of Civil Order and Institutions

A just peace, perhaps, is one which reaffirms and revalidates the human rights of the defeated. Certainly the victorious party must restore order; during the period of active armed conflict, the social fabric of the society as most assuredly become a casualty. Courts no longer function; even the pre-existing body of law may have been called into question and is no longer a basis for reliance. When there is no Rule of Law within the society, the vacuum will be filled with alternatives. Most recently we see those voids filled with harshly administered "religious" law; often generated from within the defeated populous for motivations that are questionable.

His Holiness stressed that it is critical to foster education and to build schools and hospitals in the area that has been "pacified".

Principle 2: Economic Restoration

Then as was identified by the Dalai Lama the process of economic reconstruction must be initiated. Reference can be made to the dramatic differences in the treatment of the defeated populace's economy between World War I and World War II. In the First World War, Germany's economy was intentionally and systematically ruined and policy was implemented to ensure its long term demise – sowing the seeds for the rise of a charismatic leader and the unleashing of vast stores of evil. After the Second World War, the idea of reconstruction was introduced into both Germany and Japan – with a vastly different outcome and a peace that has remained for nearly 70 years.

Principle 3: Restoration of Sovereignty

Not addressed by His Holiness, but certainly of critical importance, is to move the conquered from be subjected to a force of occupation to the development of a government based upon the fundamental human rights of self-determination. The restoration of sovereignty

is critical if the defeated nation is ever again to rejoin the community of nations. At some point, control must be returned to the indigenous population; elected officials must replace interim occupational officials; and, societal norms re-established.

Conclusion

Conventional thought would find the waging of war to be the antithesis to Buddhist thought. But, Buddhism is not merely a Pollyannaish exercise in philosophy. It has its roots in the establishment of a moral code of conduct within a real world: a real world, which at the time of the Buddha, like today, involved a fight which continually pits evil against virtue. If the pacifist nature of much of Buddhist thought were to be the only course of conduct that a righteous ruler could pursue, the wicked would quickly eliminate the righteous. Buddhism does not require its adherents to willingly allow their own annihilation.

With proper motivation, a war can be just. The difficulty for those of us who are not highly enlightened beings is to pursue war with a proper motivation which is truly held and reflective of the objective realty. All too often, we delude ourselves as a result of the defilements of ignorance, excessive desire, hostility, self-centeredness and skeptical doubt, along with the five defilements of "wrong view". We interpret acts of self-defense by our enemy, as provocations and pre-cursors to war. We delude ourselves into thinking that our view is the only correct view. As beings locked into a *Samsãric* existence, we do not process the cognitive ability and skills to know the ultimate truth and reality.

But, perhaps more critical than the process which results in the initiation of hostilities is how war can be brought to a just and lasting peace. Buddhism provides the moral and practical framework for the development of a robust body of study into the development of Just Peace.

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