

Abstract

The objectives of this thesis are mainly the analysis of the concept of Cetanā in Theravāda Buddhist ethics in order to illuminate the meaning and significance of “Cetanā” as appeared in the Pāli tipitaka and the Commentary (Atthakathā), used as the criteria of the Buddhist ethical judgment.

The word “Cetanā” means “will” or “intention” to choose one’s actions. Cetanā is the cause of all volitional acts of all human beings in their karmic cycles. It compounds thought in beginning to do anything creative and destructive. In addition, the meaning of “Cetanā” covers all factors of mental conditions which can be described as good, bad, or neutral.

As to the Vinayapitaka, the roles of Cetanā are related to the monastic punishment for monks who transgress the Vinaya. In the Sutta, Cetanā is explained as the mental formations (Sankhāra). Besides, Cetanā also means the volitional Buddhism, Cetanā takes an important role in all human actions, i.e., act (karma). Actions of giving, moral discipline, and practice of meditation in order to attain the end of sufferings. In other words, good will is the source of good deeds, and vice versa. In the Abhidhammapitaka, Cetanā is the mental concomitant (Cetasika). In a modern society, Cetanā is an important factor, ethically determining an outcome of all actions, e.g., cases of a mercy killing, cloning, and abortion.

This thesis is intended to discuss all moral acts and their criteria in order to fulfill the research in the field of Buddhist Studies in the concept of Cetanā.