

## SUMMARY

# BUDDHIST INFLUENCE IN THAI ADMINISTRATIVE BEHAVIOR

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Buddhism has for centuries moulded the Thai national character and culture. In this article, the writer attempts to show how the administrative behavior of the Thai are influenced by Buddhism. In this context, certain Buddhist concepts and principles have been described and evaluated for the purpose of revealing the extent to which an individual's performance of public affairs is affected, or likely to be affected, by them. Some of these important Buddhist philosophies are briefly described hereunder.

1. Buddhism is based on reason and fact. The *Dhamma*, or Buddhist teaching are concerned mainly with truths and rationality. According to Buddhism, a man should not believe what he is told unless he agrees with the reasons or facts given. Basically, this teaching corresponds well with the important Western notion that, in maintaining justice, a man must not be sentenced until after proven guilty.

2. Buddhism allows freedom of worship. It is a religion of faith and of non-coercion. Buddhism advocates free conviction and voluntary action and, hence, invites people to test its contents before deciding to accept them.

3. The power of assimilation is a great asset of Buddhism, as it can be harmoniously fit in with all environments and circumstances. Buddhism advocates no obstinate ideas without rationality and does not discriminate any alien religions. In effect, Buddhism holds as its principle the pursuit of life and happiness along the "middle path," avoiding extreme positions.

4. Buddhism is a democratic religion, for it is based on the concept of equality. In the Buddhist realm, a free flow of opinions and ideas among priests and novices is accepted and encouraged, and the methods of settling disputes in a democratic way were adopted more than 2500 years ago and is still in practice today. An autocratic method of decision-making, as well as authoritarian administrative behavior both in the Buddhist and secular worlds, as is sometimes conspicuous is significantly attributable to the influence of Hinduism and Brahminism that has for centuries been important in Thailand.

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5. Another distinguished principle of Buddhism is the law of *Karm*, or action, which teaches an obvious fact: to do good begets good, to do evil begets evil; and that a man must try to do good deeds and avoid doing bad deeds in order to better his life. Simply put, only good deeds or actions, and nothing else, can yield results that are beneficial to a person in the long-run.

6. According to Buddhism, a man must base his belief on principles and ideologies rather than on individuals. In the teaching of Buddha, it is unwise to believe in anything unverifiable. The practice of worshipping individuals rather than institutions and ideologies in considerable evidence today, is a result of the centuries-long development and elaboration of the influence of a mixture of cultures other than that of Buddhism itself.

7. Tolerance is another watchword of the character of Thai people. It stems directly from the influence of Buddhism. It makes the Thai people quiet, calm, and kind, and enables them to accept unfavorable circumstances. In sum, it is the essence of the spirit that they could be friendly and gentle to their neighbors, both natives and aliens, disregarding their religious affiliations.

In addition, the writers also describe certain important Buddhist teachings, which exercise significant influence on the general, as well as administrative, behavior of the Thai. For instance, there are the Four Sublime States of Consciousness (*Bhrama Vihar*): Loving kindness (*Metta*); Compassion (*Karuna*); Sympathetic joy (*Mudhita*); and Equanimity (*Upekha*) which help mold their behavior into a kind, sympathetic, and tolerant people.

In conclusion, Buddhism influences Thai administrative behavior and administrative structures, for it affects social attitudes, emotions, and the outlook of the people.

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“Clever talk and a dominating manner have little to do with being man-at-his-best”

*Confucius*

“คำพูดหลักแหลม และท่าทางใหญ่โต มิได้มีส่วนสัมพันธ์กับความดีของบุคคลนั้น”

ขงจื๊อ