



"THEREVADA BUDDHISM IN VIETNAM AND THAILAND: THE REGIONAL CULTURAL DIALOGUE"

I. PURPOSE

Cultural dialogue is a process that comprises an open and respectful exchange or interaction between individuals, groups and community with different cultural backgrounds or world views. This process is essential and important not only for developing a deeper understanding of diverse perspectives and practices but also to enhance the self-perception of every nation about its distinction and national character. Cultural dialogue leads to the united and *'tolerance of the other'* and creates the chance to communicate and cooperate between different ethnic groups or countries.

Historically, Vietnam and Thailand are two countries listed in the South East Asian region – a multicultural space with the presence of many state-nations. The typical cultural feature of Southeast Asian countries is the heritage and mixture of the native culture with the adaption of new values and practices from east to west. Almost countries in the region were influenced by the great ancient civilizations of China and India. India is being known as the home of Buddhism which holds greatly impacts to the mental life of majority of Thai people, Vietnamese and other community in South East Asian region.

Buddhism originated in Ancient India sometime between the 6th and 4th centuries BCE, from where it spread through much of Asia including Myanmar, Lao, Thailand and Vietnam. Buddhism philosophy indicates the nature of soreness and the path to liberation. Buddhist schools vary due to the influences of respective practices of different group of people having diversified history and geography background. Among a number of schools, Theravada (Pali: "The School of the Elders") is considered as the closest to the original Buddhism which widespread in South East Asian. In Thailand now, Theravada Buddhism is the national religion with over 95% population practicing. In Vietnam, Theravada Buddhism was worshiped in Khmer community and Kinh people in the Southern area.

On the process of development, Theravada Buddhism in Thailand and Vietnam have exchanged and absorbed the values and practices from other countries. Theravada Buddhism in Vietnam and Thailand thus share the similarities with other in region but showing their own differentiation as well.

In the era of globalization and regional connection, Buddhism generally and Theravada Buddhism particularly has raising its effects to the human life. Beyond showing the way escaping what is seen as a cycle of suffering and rebirth, Theravada

Buddhism has contributed value theories to economic development, cultural exchanges and social improvement. In such context, it is vitally necessary to conduct international workshop to define the core values, the meaning and the contribution of Theravada Buddhism to the development of each country; especially focusing on the crucial and temporary issue as Buddhism in economic, gender equality and sustainable development in the region.

To enhance understanding about all above-mentioned themes, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University – Ho Chi Minh City in cooperation with Southern Institute of Social Sciences, Vietnam, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya – Thailand and National Chinan University from Taiwan to hold an International workshop “*Therevada Buddhism in Vietnam and Thailand: The regional cultural Dialogue*” to gather international scholars , monks, official managers, lecturers, students to cultivate the knowledge about the Theravada Buddhism and to share their experience in applying the Buddhism philosophy in daily working and living. The outcomes of the workshop will be published in a book to become a reliable conference source to related studies and researches. Taking this occasion, Asian universities and centers are able to exchange the information in research programs and develop the international cooperation network.

II. TIME: 14th , September 2018

III. VENUE

University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City. 10-12 Dinh Tien Hoang Street, District 1, HCMC, Vietnam

IV. SPOKEN LANGUAGE: English –Thailand – Vietnam (Cabin interpretation)

V. ORGANIZER:

1. University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam (USSH, VNU-HCM)
2. Southern Institute of Social Sciences, Vietnam (SISS)
3. ASEAN Studies Centre, Mahahchulalongkornrajavidyalaya, Thailand (MCU)
4. Center for South East Asian Studies, National Chinan University, Taiwan (NCNU)

VI. MAIN THEME

1. The core values of Theravada Buddhism in Vietnam, Thailand and other Asian countries
2. Buddhism Economic and Sustainable Development
3. Gender Equality in Theravada Buddhism
4. Religious transformation and conversion

VII. TENTATIVE PLAN

Step 1 (January to May 2018): Discussion, prepare Plan and Apply for Organizing Permission

Step 2(June 2018): Call for papers, abstract submission

Step 3 (from 15th August): collecting full paper

Step 4: (16th August to September): Edit and publish the proceeding.

Step 5: (On 14th September): Workshop's organization

VIII. PARTICIPATION : over 200 people

1. From Vietnam: Theravada Buddhism Abbots in Vietnam:

1. Thich Thien Tam, Abbot of Temple Pho Minh
2. Thich Nhat Tu, Abbot of Temple Giac Ngo
3. Doanh Lung, Abbot of Temple Candarasī
4. Thich Thien Minh, Abbot of Temple Buu Long

Researchers, lecturers, students from University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Ho Chi Minh, Southern Institute of Social Sciences.

From Thailand: Delegation of 20 people including monks, researchers, lecturers and student form MCU Thailand

From Taiwan: Researchers, lecturers, students form Centre for Asian Studies, National Chinan University.

Invited guests:

The Buddhist Sangha of Vietnam, Vietnam Institute of Social Sciences, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University – Hanoi, Vietnam; Policy makers, official manager from Vietnam's Government, Ho Chi Minh City, Southern Provinces.

IX. CONTACT

For any further information, please send the Conference an email at

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