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MAHĀRĀHULOVĀDA-SUTTA: CURRICULUM OF BUDDHISM FOR COMMON PEOPLE

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Abstract

The objective of the academic article was to demonstrate a series of seven suttas the Buddha taught Venerable Rāhula as the curriculum of Buddhism, suitable for general people. As known, Venerable Rāhula was the first novice in Buddhism, represented the first student of the curriculum of Buddhism, and spent fourteen years to graduate the curriculum and to attain Arahantship. Apart from the first Cūlarāhulovāda-sutta, the majority of children could be trained in morality and ethics at the age of seven years, the abstention from false speech was appropriate to be the first virtue to be improved for seven-year-old students, and the meditation of mindfulness of in-and-out breathing (Ānāpānasati) was capable to be trained by the children at the age of seven years. According to the second Mahārāhulovāda-sutta, a youngster should be taught to realize the body in reality in order to reduce the craving for four requisites and to alleviate an exciting desire (Chanda-rāga) in five sensual pleasures (Kāmaguṇa), loving-kindness (Mettā) should be developed to destroy ill-will (Byāpāda), compassion (Karuṇā) should be developed to abolish non-violence (Avihiṅsā), sympathetic joy (Muditā) should be developed to eliminate envy or jealousy (Issā), equanimity (Upekkhā) should be developed to remove repulsion or irritation (Paṭigha), perception of foulness (Asubha-saññā) should be developed to get rid of sensual lust (Rāga), perception of impermanence or transiency (Anicca-saññā) should be developed to drive away conceit or pride (Asmimāna). According to a series of four Rāhula suttas, an adolescent should be trained, without selfishness, egotism, arrogance or self-importance (Ahaṅkāra), conceit of mine (Mamaṅkāra), and the latent tendency of conceit (Nāmānusaya), in consideration of five aggregates or five groups of existence (Pañca-khandha): form or corporeality (Rūpa), feeling or sensation (Vedanā), perception (Saññā), mental formation (Saṅkhāra), and consciousness (Viññāṇa), as it was actually with right discernment as: 'This was not mine. This was not my self. This was not what I am.' For Buddhist monks, abandoning five sensual pleasures and ordaining with faith, the Buddha taught them not to underestimate the pundits because of association and closeness, to make the end of suffering, to associate with good friends, to consume a quiet place without any noise, to know moderation in food, not to crave for four requisites: clothes, food, dwelling and medicine causing the craving, not to come to the world, to be restraint by the code of 227 precepts for the monks, to be restraint by mindfulness, to be mindful in the body, to be full of boredom, to refrain from beautiful signs leading to

sensual lust, to develop a single mind well-placed in unpleasant things, and to develop insight meditation to release from the latent tendency of conceit.

Introduction

In Buddhism, there were several teachings taught by the Buddha, and most of them were particularly designed for either a certain learner or a certain group of learners who successfully realized what the Buddha said and attained the utmost target of Buddhism, Arahantship, after his teachings. What the Buddha taught to his disciples was mostly accounted for a specific course or a short course of Buddhism. Anupubbi-kathā or a gradual instruction (T.W. Rhys Davids and William Stede, 2009: 47) plus Ariyasacca or a standard truth (T.W. Rhys Davids and William Stede, 2009: 90), regarded as an ordinary course of Buddhism for general people, was often proclaimed. It was empirically seen that those simultaneously studying this course at a second time, like Venerable Yasa and his fifty-four friends, including Venerable Mahā Kappina and his 500 subordinates, enlightened the enlightenment. However, what the Buddha taught was considered suitable for adults with some experiences of life. Even though there were several seven-year-old children listening his teachings and attaining the release of suffering, most of them were special persons with abundance of accumulated meritorious virtues in their previous existence.

In terms of education, a person, obviously praised by the Buddha as eager for learning, was Venerable Rāhula, who was the only son of Prince Siddhattha and Princess Yasodharā. He was known as the first novice in Buddhism when he was seven years old. In Theravāda texts, he was born on the date Prince Siddhattha at his twenty-nine years of age renounced the throne by leaving the palace, so-called the Great Renunciation. One year later, the Buddha with his enormous group of noble disciples came back to his hometown, Kapilavatthu, to visit his father, King Suddhodana. Princess Yasodharā had Rāhula ask the Buddha for the throne of the Sākya (Sakka in Pali) clan. Instead, the Buddha responded by having Rāhula ordained as the first novice in Buddhism. (Department of Religion, 1982 a: 135).

After ordination, Venerable Rāhula spent his fourteen years to study what the Buddha taught to him, Rāhulovāda-sutta. It was described by the author as the curriculum of Buddhism, which comprised of seven subjects (Suttas): 1) Cūḷarāhulovāda-sutta (Department of Religion, 1982 b: 104 – 110), 2) Mahārāhulovāda-sutta (Department of Religion, 1982 b: 111 – 116), 3) Rāhula-sutta (Department of Religion, 1982 d: 135), 4) Rāhula-sutta (Department of Religion, 1982 d: 135), 5) Rāhula-sutta (Department of Religion, 1982 f: 354 – 355), 6) Rāhula-sutta (Department of Religion, 1982 e: 116 – 120), and 7) Cūḷarāhulovāda-sutta (Department of Religion, 1982 c: 423-437). As a result of formal education, Venerable Rāhula gradually studied and developed himself with seven suttas at his appropriate age.

From the above, the objective of the academic article was to demonstrate Rāhulovāda-sutta as the curriculum of Buddhism for general people at the

educational age. Because the lesson learned from Rāhulovāda-sutta could be taken to analyze, synthesize and design an appropriate curriculum of Buddhism for Buddhists in Thailand and over the world. To describe it in detail, there were several topics to be demonstrated in the following order.

Curriculum of Buddhism

1. Meaning

The term ‘curriculum’ in a singular form and ‘curricula’ in a plural form, initiated in the 17th century, prevailed in the 20th century. In 1918, John Franklin Bobbitt explained the curriculum in his first textbook as actions and experiences of whoever were transforming from childhood to adolescence to be a successful adult in the society in the future (John Franklin Bobbitt, 1918)

The word ‘curriculum’ was referred to the course syllabus with activities in the educational institutions, assigned for certain educational objectives (Royal Institute, 2003: 1272), the learner’s perceived experience from instructional programs, based on theories and researches in the past (Glen Hass, 1980), the plans designed and created for objectives of instructional activities and experiences in each educational program in order to have the learners get experiences in accordance with the program’s purposes. (Thamrong Buasri, 1999: 7).

According to Priyaporn Wong-anuttrarot (2000: 23), there were three meanings of the curriculum; 1) the curriculum was a science with theories, principles and learning implementation as expected, 2) the curriculum was a system of educational management, comprising of an input of teachers, students, equipment and supplies, and premises, a process, and an output of learning achievement, educational success, etc., and 3) the curriculum was a lesson plan with its purpose to train the learners as desired.

The curriculum meant an entire educational experience, provided for the learners under the control and suggestions of the institutions, and utilized as a tool to achieve the educational objectives or expectations (Theera Runcharoen, 2007: 280), instruction media provided by the school to offer the students an opportunity to receive learning experiences to get the expected targets or objectives (Chumsak Intrarak, 2008: 47), a lesson plan that offered the learners an opportunity (Sayler, Alexander and Lewis, 1981: 8).

James A. Beane et al. (1986: 34 – 35) described 1) the curriculum as a product arisen from the process of educational management, 2) the curriculum as a program or a plan for educational management, 3) the curriculum as an intended learning, and 4) the curriculum as an experience of the learner.

Peter F. Oliva (2012: 8 – 9) addresses that the curriculum was a program or a project that provided the learners with all educational experiences, and the programs were specified in writing to be a guidance for organizing desired experiences; therefore, the curriculum might be a unit, a course, or a sequence of

courses. In addition, the educational program might be established inside and outside the classroom under the school's administration.

Evelyn J. Sowell (1996: 5) made a conclusion that the curriculum was something to be taught to the learners that covered a wide range of things from information, data, skills, and attitudes. All might be either specified or not specified for the learners in the educational institutions.

Ruchi Phusara (2002: 1) described that the curriculum meant a lesson plan consisting of purposes and specific objectives for content presentation and management, including learning formations oriented to the objectives, and learning evaluation at the end.

2. Importance

Thamrong Buasri (1989: 6 – 7) explained the importance of the curriculum was referred to the learning standard to ensure the learners get qualitative education in the following topics: what to know, how much content to be known, which skills to be trained, and how the learners' body, mind, society and intellectual to be developed.

Wilailak Charernsab (2012) described that the curriculum looked like the guidance of instruction, which was very important for achievement of the country's educational purposes. On the other hand, the curriculum was a significant indicator of each country's educational standard because the quality of each country's education depended upon the curriculum and the implementation of curricula. In fact, the curriculum was very important for learning in the class. It was said that the teachers should utilize the curriculum as a model for a wide range of learning activities to operate learning and teaching in the right way and to attain the educational objectives. In terms of the curriculum importance towards the learners or students, if the curriculum was good, it would improve the learners with sixteen skills of lifelong education (LE), including respect for human rights and acceptance of the human diversity.

Sumitr Kunanukorn (1993: 199 – 200) addressed that the curriculum was an indicator, the state provision on educational management, which the involved persons could take for implementation. It was also a standard criterion for superintendence of the school's learning management.

Padol Nantawong and Pairot Duangwiset (2000: 9) defined that the curriculum was very important because it was the document on the school's learning and teaching administration, which the involved persons with education management had to utilize to develop desirable proficient personnel for the society and the country

3. Factors of Curriculum

In the curriculum development, the factors of the curriculum should be initially considered. John Fairhurst Kerr (1968: 16-17) offered four parts of curriculum factors: 1) objectives 2) content 3) learning experiences, and 4) assessment. Hilda Taba (1962: 10) also demonstrated four significant factors of the

curriculum: 1) objectives, 2) content, 3) activities and instructional formations, and 4) assessment.

Apart from the study of curriculum factors described by several educators and scholars, it was summarized that curriculum factors from different scholars were identical and consisted of four main parts: 1) objectives, 2) the content, 3) learning processes, and 4) the evaluation.

In terms of the Buddhism curriculum, *Mahārāhulovāda-sutta*, it was also comprised of four main parts like other curricula. After the graduation, the first student of Buddhism curriculum, Venerable Rāhula, graduated three main subjects as an Arahant in Buddhism.

Mahārāhulovāda-sutta:

In this article, *Mahārāhulovāda-sutta*, regarded as the curriculum of Buddhism for learning-interested people in general, comprised of seven important suttas or subjects: 1) *Cūḷarāhulovāda-sutta*, 2) *Mahārāhulovāda-sutta*, 3) the first *Rāhula-sutta*, 4) the second *Rāhula-sutta*, 5) *Rāhula-sutta*, 6) *Rāhula-sutta*, and 7) *Cūḷarāhulovāda-sutta*.

1. Cūḷarāhulovāda-sutta

In *Tipitaka Volume 13, Suttanta Pitaka Volume 5, Majjhima Nikāya, Majjhima-paññāsaka* (Department of Religion, 1982 b: 135), the sutta was the first subject the Buddha taught Venerable Rāhula when he was fully seven years old after the Buddha had Venerable Sārīputta ordain Prince Rāhula as the first novice in Buddhism. The content of the first *Cūḷarāhulovāda-sutta* was involved with false speech, including the worldly talk, because the Buddha knew that a young person might speak both suitable and unsuitable words, he told a lie with sweet words, he informed 'I saw it' despite he did not see it, and he uttered 'I did not see it' despite he saw it. The Buddha taught Venerable Rāhula to refrain from false speech (*Musāvāda*) by comparing *Samāṇa-dhamma* (Virtues for monkhood) to water in a vessel. It was described that any person without moral shame (*Hiri*) was able to do everything, even evil or wicked things. Therefore, the virtues for monkhood did not inevitably appear for anyone telling a lie. Besides, the Buddha also compared a liar as a war elephant that tries its best to keep its life in the battlefield. It was like a liar who could do everything, even either telling more lies or abandoning the virtues for monkhood, to survive. In brief, the virtues for monkhood were gradually depleted as long as a person remained telling a lie.

After listening to the first *Cūḷarāhulovāda-sutta*, Venerable Rāhula was not reported to attain any noble virtue, but he got up earlier morning and made his desire to study as much more teachings as a handful of sand from the Buddha, his teachers and other monks every day. According to his learning desire, Venerable Rāhula was praised by the Buddha as an eager one for education.

2. Mahārāhulovāda-sutta

In Tipitaka Volume 13, Suttanta Pitaka Volume 5, Majjhima Nikāya, Majjhima-paññāsaka (Department of Religion, 1982 b: 135), this sutta was the second subject the Buddha taught him when he was eighteen years old to abandon the craving for four requisites and to leave an exciting desire (Chanda-rāga) in five sensual pleasures (Kāmaguṇa). The content of Mahārāhulovāda-sutta was described below thoroughly.

“Thus had I heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was dwelling at Sāvattī, in Jeta’s Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika’s Monastery. Then the Blessed One, early in the morning, put on his robes and, carrying his bowl and outer robe, went into Sāvattī for alms. And Venerable Rāhula, early in the morning, put on his robes and, carrying his bowl and outer robe, went into Sāvattī for alms following right behind the Blessed One. Then the Blessed One, looking back at Rāhula, addressed him: "Rāhula, any form whatsoever that was past, future, or present; internal or external; blatant or subtle; common or sublime; far or near: every form was to be seen as it was actually present with right discernment as: 'This was not mine. This was not my self. This was not what I am.'"

"Just form, O Blessed One? Just form, O One Well-gone?"

"Form, Rāhula, and feeling and perception and fabrications and consciousness."

Then the thought occurred to Venerable Rāhula, "Who, having been exhorted face-to-face by the Blessed One, would go into the town for alms today?" So, he turned back and sat down at the foot of a tree, folding his legs crosswise, holding his body erect, and setting mindfulness to the fore.

Venerable Sāriputta saw Venerable Rāhula sitting at the foot of a tree, his legs folded crosswise, his body held erect, and with mindfulness set to the fore. On seeing him, he said to him, "Rāhula, develop the meditation of mindfulness of in-and-out breathing (Ānāpānasati). The meditation of mindfulness of in-and-out breathing, when developed and pursued, was of great fruit, of great benefit."

Then Venerable Rāhula, emerging from his seclusion in the late afternoon, went to the Blessed One and, having bowed down, sat to one side. As he was sitting there, he said to him, "How, lord, was mindfulness of in-and-out breathing to be developed and pursued so as to be of great fruit, of great benefit?"

"Rāhula, any form whatsoever that was past, future, or present; internal or external; blatant or subtle; common or sublime; far or near: every form was to be seen as it was actually with right discernment as: 'This was not mine. This was not my self. This was not what I was.'

There were these five properties, Rāhula. Which five? The earth property, the water property, the fire property, the wind property, and the space property.

And what was the earth property? The earth property could be either internal or external. What was the internal earth property? Anything internal, within oneself, that's hard, solid, and sustained by craving: head hairs, body hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, tendons, bones, bone marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, membranes, spleen, lungs, large intestines, small intestines, contents of the stomach, feces, or anything else internal, within oneself, that's hard, solid, and sustained: This was called the internal earth property. Now both the internal earth property and the external earth property were simply earth property. And that should be seen as it actually was present with right discernment: 'This was not mine, this was not me, this was not my self.' When one saw it thus as it was actually present with right discernment, one became disenchanted with the earth property and made the earth property fade from the mind.

And what was the water property? The water property might be either internal or external. What was the internal water property? Anything internal, belonging to oneself, that's water, watery, and sustained: bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, oil, saliva, mucus, oil-of-the-joints, urine, or anything else internal, within oneself, that's water, watery, and sustained: This was called the internal water property. Now both the internal water property and the external water property were simply water property. And that should be seen as it actually was present with right discernment: 'This was not mine, this was not me, this was not my self.' When one saw it thus as it was actually present with right discernment, one became disenchanted with the water property and made the water property fade from the mind.

And what was the fire property? The fire property may be either internal or external. What was the internal fire property? Anything internal, belonging to oneself, that's fire, fiery, and sustained: that by which [the body] was warmed, aged, and consumed with fever; and that by which what was eaten, drunk, chewed, and savored gets properly digested; or anything else internal, within oneself, that's fire, fiery, and sustained: This was called the internal fire property. Now both the internal fire property and the external fire property were simply fire property. And that should be seen as it actually was present with right discernment: 'This was not mine, this was not me, this was not my self.' When one saw it thus as it was actually present with right

discernment, one became disenchanted with the fire property and made the fire property fade from the mind.

And what was the wind property? The wind property may be either internal or external. What was the internal wind property? Anything internal, belonging to oneself, that's wind, windy, and sustained: up-going winds, down-going winds, winds in the stomach, winds in the intestines, winds that course through the body, in-and-out breathing, or anything else internal, within oneself, that's wind, windy, and sustained: This was called the internal wind property. At that time both the internal wind property and the external wind property were simply wind property. And that should be seen as it was actually present with right discernment: 'This was not mine, this was not me, this was not my self.' When one saw it thus as it was actually present with right discernment, one became disenchanted with the wind property and made the wind property fade from the mind.

And what was the space property? The space property may be either internal or external. What was the internal space property? Anything internal, belonging to oneself, that's space, spatial, and sustained: the holes of the ears, the nostrils, the mouth, the passage whereby what was eaten, drunk, consumed, and tasted gets swallowed, and where it collects, and whereby it was excreted from below, or anything else internal, within oneself, that's space, spatial, and sustained: This was called the internal space property. Now both the internal space property and the external space property were simply space property. And that should be seen as it actually was present with right discernment: 'This was not mine, this was not me, this was not my self.' When one saw it thus as it was actually present with right discernment, one became disenchanted with the space property and made the space property fade from the mind.

Rāhula, develop the meditation in tune with earth. For when you were developing the meditation in tune with earth, agreeable and disagreeable sensory impressions that have arisen would not stay in charge of your mind. Just as when people throw what was clean or unclean on the earth — feces, urine, saliva, pus, or blood — the earth was not horrified, humiliated, or disgusted by it; in the same way, when you were developing the meditation in tune with earth, agreeable and disagreeable sensory impressions that have arisen would not stay in charge of your mind.

Develop the meditation in tune with water. For when you were developing the meditation in tune with water, agreeable and disagreeable sensory impressions that have arisen would not stay in charge of your mind. Just as when people wash what was clean or

unclean in water — feces, urine, saliva, pus, or blood — the water was not horrified, humiliated, or disgusted by it; in the same way, when you were developing the meditation in tune with water, agreeable and disagreeable sensory impressions that have arisen would not stay in charge of your mind.

Develop the meditation in tune with fire. For when you were developing the meditation in tune with fire, agreeable and disagreeable sensory impressions that have arisen would not stay in charge of your mind. Just as when fire burns what was clean or unclean — feces, urine, saliva, pus, or blood — it was not horrified, humiliated, or disgusted by it; in the same way, when you were developing the meditation in tune with fire, agreeable and disagreeable sensory impressions that have arisen would not stay in charge of your mind.

Develop the meditation in tune with wind. For when you were developing the meditation in tune with wind, agreeable and disagreeable sensory impressions that have arisen would not stay in charge of your mind. Just as when wind blows what was clean or unclean — feces, urine, saliva, pus, or blood — it was not horrified, humiliated, or disgusted by it; in the same way, when you were developing the meditation in tune with wind, agreeable and disagreeable sensory impressions that have arisen would not stay in charge of your mind.

Develop the meditation in tune with space. For when you were developing the meditation in tune with space, agreeable and disagreeable sensory impressions that had arisen would not stay in charge of your mind. Just as space was not established anywhere, in the same way, when you were developing the meditation in tune with space, agreeable and disagreeable sensory impressions that had arisen would not stay in charge of your mind.

Develop the meditation of good will. For when you were developing the meditation of good will, ill-will would be abandoned.

Develop the meditation of compassion. For when you were developing the meditation of compassion, cruelty would be abandoned.

Develop the meditation of appreciation. For when you were developing the meditation of appreciation, resentment would be abandoned.

Develop the meditation of equanimity. For when you were developing the meditation of equanimity, irritation would be abandoned.

Develop the meditation of the unattractive. For when you were developing the meditation of the unattractive, passion would be abandoned.

Develop the meditation of the perception of inconstancy. For when you were developing the meditation of the perception of inconstancy, the conceit 'I am' would be abandoned.

Develop the meditation of mindfulness of in-and-out breathing. Mindfulness of in-and-out breathing, when developed and pursued, was of great fruit, of great benefit.

And Rāhula, how was mindfulness of in-and-out breathing developed and pursued so as to be of great fruit, of great benefit?

There was the case where a monk, having gone to the wilderness, to the shade of a tree, or to an empty building, sits down folding his legs crosswise, holding his body erect, and setting mindfulness to the fore. Always mindful, he breathes in; mindful he breathes out.

Breathing in long, he discerned, 'I was breathing in long'; or breathing out long, he discerned, 'I was breathing out long.' Or breathing in short, he discerned, 'I was breathing in short'; or breathing out short, he discerned, 'I was breathing out short.' He trained himself, 'I would breathe in sensitive to the entire body.' He trained himself, 'I would breathe out sensitive to the entire body.' He trained himself, 'I would breathe in calming bodily fabrication.' He trained himself, 'I would breathe out calming bodily fabrication.'

He trained himself, 'I would breathe in sensitive to rapture.' He trained himself, 'I would breathe out sensitive to rapture.' He trained himself, 'I would breathe in sensitive to pleasure.' He trained himself, 'I would breathe out sensitive to pleasure.' He trained himself, 'I would breathe in sensitive to mental fabrication.' He trained himself, 'I would breathe out sensitive to mental fabrication.' He trained himself, 'I would breathe in calming mental fabrication.' He trained himself, 'I would breathe out calming mental fabrication.'

He trained himself, 'I would breathe in sensitive to the mind.' He trained himself, 'I would breathe out sensitive to the mind.' He trained himself, 'I would breathe in satisfying the mind.' He trained himself, 'I would breathe out satisfying the mind.' He trained himself, 'I would breathe in steadying the mind.' He trained himself, 'I would breathe out steadying the mind.' He trained himself, 'I would breathe in releasing the mind.' He trained himself, 'I would breathe out releasing the mind.'

He trained himself, 'I would breathe in focusing on inconstancy.' He trained himself, 'I would breathe out focusing on inconstancy.' He trained himself, 'I would breathe in focusing on dispassion.' He trained himself, 'I would breathe out focusing on dispassion.' He trained himself, 'I would breathe in focusing on cessation.' He trained himself, 'I would breathe out focusing on cessation.' He trained himself, 'I

would breathe in focusing on relinquishment.' He trained himself, 'I would breathe out focusing on relinquishment.'

Rāhula, this was how mindfulness of in-and-out breathing was developed and pursued so as to be of great fruit, of great benefit.

When mindfulness of in-and-out breathing was developed and pursued in this way, even one's final in-breaths and out-breaths were known as they ceased, not unknown.

That was what the Blessed One said. Gratified, Venerable Rāhula delighted in the Blessed One's words." (Thanissaro Bhikkhu, 2006)

Apart from Mahārāhulovāda-sutta, the conclusion was made that the five aggregates or the five groups of existence (Pañca-khandha in Pali) was natural under the principle of soullessness or not-self (Anattā in Pali). Venerable Rāhula studies the meditation of mindfulness of in-and-out breathing (Ānāpānasati) from his preceptor (Upajjhāya in Pali), Venerable Sārīputta. Later, he questioned the Buddha some topics on how to practice the meditation of mindfulness of in-and-out breathing for greater fruit and greater benefit. In addition, the Buddha taught him to develop his mind with loving-kindness (Mettā), compassion (Karuṇā), sympathetic joy (Muditā), equanimity (Upekkhā), perception of foulness (Asubha-sanna), and perception of impermanence or transiency (Anicca-sañña). The real reason that the Buddha taught Venerable Rāhula Mahārāhulovāda-sutta because Venerable Rāhula like other men became adolescent with eighteen years of age. The Buddha considered and found that Venerable Rāhula, growing up with his perfect body, began to enchant his complete body with the power of an exciting desire; therefore, the Buddha taught him to relieve his lust in the body by recommending him to consider the five aggregates in the body. Then, the Buddha taught him loving-kindness to destroy ill-will (Byāpāda), compassion to abolish non-violence (Avihiṅsā), sympathetic joy (Muditā) to eliminate envy or jealousy (Issā), equanimity (Upekkhā) to remove repulsion or irritation (Paṭigha), perception of foulness (Asubha-saññā) to get rid of sensual lust, and perception of impermanence or transiency (Anicca-saññā) to drive away conceit or pride (Asmimāna).

3. Rāhula-sutta

The first Rāhula-sutta appeared in Tipitaka Volume 17, Suttanta Pitaka Volume 9, Saṅyutta Nikāya, Khandhavāra Vagga (Department of Religion, 1982 d: 135). In this sutta, Venerable Rāhula questioned the Buddha how to know and see without Ahaṅkāra (selfishness, egotism, arrogance or self-importance), Mamaṅkāra (conceit of mine), Nāmānusaya (the latent tendency of conceit). The Buddha addressed that any form (feeling, perception, mental formation or fabrication, and consciousness) whatsoever that was past, future, or present; internal or external; blatant or subtle; common or sublime; far or near: every form (feeling, perception, mental formation or fabrication, and consciousness) was to be seen as it actually was

with right discernment as: 'This was not mine. This was not my self. This was not what I am.'

4. the second Rāhula-sutta,

The second Rāhula-sutta appeared in Tipitaka Volume 17, Suttanta Pitaka Volume 9, Saṅyutta Nikāya, Khandhavāra Vagga (Department of Religion, 1982 d: 135). The content of this sutta was the same as the first Rāhula-sutta because Venerable Rāhula questioned how to tranquilize Ahaṅkāra (selfishness, egotism, arrogance or self-importance), Mamaṅkāra (conceit of mine), Nāmānusaya (the latent tendency of conceit).

5. Rāhula-sutta

Rāhula-sutta appeared in Tipitaka Volume 25, Suttanta Pitaka Volume 17, Khuddaka Nikāya, Khuddaka-pāṭha-Dhammapada-Udāna-Itivuttaka-Sutta-nipāta (Department of Religion, 1982 f: 354 – 355). The Buddha informed Venerable Rāhula not to underestimate the pundits because of association. The Buddha recommended him, who abandoned five sensual pleasures, and ordained with faith, to make the end of suffering, to associate with good friends, to consume a quiet seat and a tranquil mattress without any noise, to know moderation in food, not to crave for clothes, food, dwelling and others causing the craving, not to come to the world, to be restraint by the code of 227 precepts for the Buddhist monks, to be restraint by mindfulness, to be mindful in the body, to be full of boredom, to refrain from beautiful signs leading to sensual lust, to develop a single mind well-placed in unpleasant things, and to develop insight meditation to release from the latent tendency of conceit.

6. Rāhula-sutta

Rāhula-sutta appeared in Tipitaka Volume 18, Suttanta Pitaka Volume 10, Saṅyutta Nikāya, Saḷāyatana Vagga (Department of Religion, 1982 e: 116 – 120). The content of this sutta was the same to the content in the seventh Cūḷarāhulovāda-sutta.

7. Cūḷarāhulovāda-sutta

In Tipitaka Volume 14, Suttanta Pitaka Volume 6, Majjhima Nikāya, Upari-panṇāsaka (Department of Religion, 1982 c: 432 – 437), this sutta was regarded as the final examination or the exit examination for Venerable Rāhula to graduate the curriculum of Buddhism. It looked like an oral test that the Buddha used to test his knowledge. The Buddha questioned Venerable Rāhula the topics of Three Characteristics: impermanence, suffering and not-self.

In the sutta, the Buddha asked Venerable Rāhula whether the eye (Cakkhu) was permanent or impermanent. When he answered 'impermanent', the Buddha continued asking him whether it was suffering or happiness if it was impermanent. When he answered 'suffering', the Buddha continued asking him whether, if it was impermanent, suffering and perishable, it was suitable to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self.'

When he answered ‘no’, the Buddha asked him whether sights or forms (Rūpa) were permanent or impermanent. When he answered ‘impermanent’, the Buddha continued asking him whether they were suffering or happiness if they were impermanent. When he answered ‘suffering’, the Buddha continued asking him whether, if they were impermanent, suffering and perishable, they were suitable to be regarded thus: ‘This is mine, this I am, this is my self.’

When he answered ‘no’, the Buddha asked him whether the eye consciousness (Cakkhuvīññāṇ) was permanent or impermanent. When he answered ‘impermanent’, the Buddha continued asking him whether it was suffering or happiness if it was impermanent. When he answered ‘suffering’, the Buddha continued asking him whether, if it was impermanent, suffering and perishable, it was suitable to be regarded thus: ‘This is mine, this I am, this is my self.’

When he answered ‘no’, the Buddha asked him whether the eye contact (Cakkhusamphassa) was permanent or impermanent. When he answered ‘impermanent’, the Buddha continued asking him whether it was suffering or happiness if it was impermanent. When he answered ‘suffering’, the Buddha continued asking him whether, if it was impermanent, suffering and perishable, it was suitable to be regarded thus: ‘This is mine, this I am, this is my self.’

When he answered ‘no’, the Buddha questioned him whether anything comprised within the feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness that arise with eye-contact as condition was permanent or impermanent. When he answered ‘impermanent,’ the Buddha continued asking him whether it was suffering or happiness if it was impermanent. When he answered ‘suffering,’ the Buddha continued asking him whether, if it was impermanent, suffering and perishable, it was suitable to be regarded thus: ‘This is mine, this I am, this is my self.’

After that, the Buddha asked him about the permanence or impermanence of the ear, the sound, the ear consciousness, and the ear contact, and his answer was the same.

After that, the Buddha asked him about the permanence or impermanence of the nose, the smell, the nose consciousness, and the nose contact, and his answer was the same.

After that, the Buddha asked him about the permanence or impermanence of the tongue, the taste, the tongue consciousness, and the tongue contact, and his answer was the same.

After that, the Buddha asked him about the permanence or impermanence of the body, the touch, the body consciousness, and the body contact, and his answer was the same.

After that, the Buddha asked him about the permanence or impermanence of the mind, the mental objects, the body consciousness, and the body contact, and his answer was the same.

The Buddha informed Venerable Rāhula that, seeing that, a well-taught noble disciple became disenchanted with the eye, disenchanted with forms, disenchanted

with eye-consciousness, disenchanted with eye-contact, and disenchanted with anything comprised within the feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness that arise with eye-contact as condition. In terms of the ear, the nose, the tongue, the body, and the mind, the Buddha also said the same. And the Buddha continued explaining that, being disenchanted, the noble disciple became dispassionate. Through dispassion his mind was liberated. When it was liberated there came the knowledge: 'It was liberated.' He understood: 'Birth was destroyed, the holy life had been lived, what had to be done had been done, there was no more coming to any state of being.'

After the last sutta or the last subject, Venerable Rāhula became an Arahant because his mind was liberated from all the defilements.

Summary

The curriculum of Buddhism accounted for seven subjects of seven suttas. The first was Cūlarāhulovāda-sutta that the Buddha taught Venerable Rāhula at the age of seven years not to tell a lie with an instructional media for comprehension. The Buddha used water and a vessel as an instructional media in comparison to virtues for monkhood, which were reduced as long as a person was telling a lie. In addition, he was introduced to the meditation of mindfulness of in-and-out breathing (Ānāpānasati) by his preceptor, Venerable Sārīputta; he asked the Buddha for higher knowledge of meditation. The second was Mahārāhulovāda-sutta that the Buddha taught him when he was 18 years old. At that time, he became a handsome adolescent, infatuated with a strong figure; therefore, the Buddha taught him to realize the body in reality, to abandon the craving for four requisites and to leave an exciting desire (Chanda-rāga) in five sensual pleasures (Kāmaguṇa). The remaining group of Rāhula-suttas were involved with how to remove egoism, arrogance, self-importance or selfishness (Ahaṁkāra), conceit of mine (Mamaṁkāra), and the latent tendency of conceit (Nāmānusaya). He studies these subjects several times because they were latent tendencies. When he was ready, the Buddha allowed him to have the final examination to graduate the curriculum of Buddhism. Therefore, Cūlarāhulovāda-sutta was regarded as a part of the curriculum, and it was used to evaluate his knowledge of Buddhism. After the test, Venerable Rāhula collected, codified, analyzed, and revised what he studied thoroughly; his mind was fully released from defilements. At the end, he graduated the course due to his mind, released from all defilements, and became an Arahant at the age of twenty years in Buddhism after he spent about fourteen years to finish the study.

New Knowledge Base

1. All the suttas, the group of seven Rāhula suttas, were collected in the curriculum of Buddhism. Those suttas were ordered from simplicity to complexity.
2. The majority of children should be trained in morality and ethics at the age of seven years.

3. The first morality and ethics to be instilled in seven-years-old children was the abstention from false speech.

4. The meditation of mindfulness of in-and-out breathing (Ānāpānasati) was capable to be trained by the children at the age of seven years.

5. According to the Buddhist objective to attain the suffering cessation, an adolescent should be taught to realize the body in reality in order to abandon the craving for four requisites and to leave an exciting desire (Chanda-rāga) in five sensual pleasures (Kāmaguṇa).

6. An adolescent should be trained in development of loving-kindness (Mettā) to destroy ill-will (Byāpāda).

7. An adolescent should be trained in development of compassion (Karuṇā) to abolish non-violence (Avihiṅsā)

8. An adolescent should be trained in development of sympathetic joy (Muditā) to eliminate envy or jealousy (Issā).

9. An adolescent should be trained in development of equanimity (Upekkhā) to remove repulsion or irritation (Paṭigha).

10. An adolescent should be trained in development of perception of foulness (Asubha-saññā) to get rid of sensual lust.

11. An adolescent should be trained in development of perception of impermanence or transiency (Anicca-saññā) to drive away conceit or pride (Asmimāna).

12. An adolescent should be trained, without selfishness, egotism, arrogance or self-importance (Ahaṃkāra), conceit of mine (Mamaṃkāra), and the latent tendency of conceit (Nāmānusaya), in consideration of five aggregates or five groups of existence (Pañca-khandha): form or corporeality (Rūpa), feeling or sensation (Vedanā), perception (Saññā), mental formation (Saṅkhāra), and consciousness (Viññāṇa), as it was actually with right discernment as: 'This was not mine. This was not my self. This was not what I am.'

13. A Buddhist monk, abandoning five sensual pleasures and ordaining with faith, should be trained himself not to underestimate the pundits because of association and closeness, to make the end of suffering, to associate with good friends, to consume a quiet place without any noise, to know moderation in food, not to crave for four requisites: clothes, food, dwelling and medicine causing the craving, not to come to the world, to be restraint by the code of 227 precepts for the monks, to be restraint by mindfulness, to be mindful in the body, to be full of boredom, to refrain from beautiful signs leading to sensual lust, to develop a single mind well-placed in unpleasant things, and to develop insight meditation to release from the latent tendency of conceit.

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