

論文の英文要旨

論文題目

The Thoughts and Deeds of Cambodian Buddhist Monk
Chuon Nat: The Trace of His Spirit Contributing to the benefit
of the People and Society

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Chuon Nat (1883–1969) is well known as the editor of *Khmer Dictionary*, but he may be more appreciated for leading the rise of Cambodian Buddhism. This study examines the significance of his thoughts and deeds, which are based on the spirit of benefit of the people and society, from four perspectives.

The first is the perspective of positioning his thoughts and main deeds in the modern history of Buddhism. The revitalization of Cambodian Buddhism gained momentum with the establishment of the School of Pali in 1909. Some researchers argue that this school was established by French Protectorate authorities' political intention, but it can be said that the enthusiasm for revitalization of Buddhism by Ven. Nil Diang (1824–1913) and Ven. Roat Thaong (1862–1927) promoted the establishment of the school.

The strong will of those high priests was transmitted to Chuon Nat. Theravada Buddhism, including Cambodian Buddhism, is generally referred to as a dual-structured religion by monks who seek to liberate themselves, and laypeople who seek their merit in this world and the afterlife. In 1912, Chuon Nat decided to preach the teachings in Pali Canon, which had not yet been laicized at that time, to the masses to enable them to escape from suffering on their own. Around 1914, the reformist monks of the Mahanikay order, including Chuon Nat, began to change the mindset of young monks at Unnalom to adhere to the precepts based on the Vinaya. He also educated highly knowledgeable monks at the School of Pali.

The reformist monks then focused on evangelizing needy people. Their idea resonated with a French Orientalist Suzanne Karpelès (1890-1968), who was the first female scholar of *École française d'Extrême-Orient*. The Royal Library and Buddhist Institute, which she created in 1925 and 1930, boosted the mission of the reformist monks. Chuon Nat was influenced by her thoughts of making Buddhism "a powerful moral force for the maintenance of society."

Chuon Nat's group tried to break the dual-structure of Theravada Buddhism. They emphasized that it was important to understand the essence of the Pali sutra in Khmer and taught them not to chant it in Pali without an accurate understanding. Their evangelization promoted the qualitative transformation of traditional Cambodian Buddhism. Regarding the revitalization of Cambodian Buddhism, there is a discussion that emphasizes the support of French Protectorate authorities, but it is unreasonable to ignore the beliefs of the reformist monks and their collaboration with Karpelès.

In 1941, King Sihanouk (1922-2012) asked Chuon Nat to write the lyrics of the national anthem of the kingdom. Chuon Nat came to think of the role of Buddhism in the framework of the state, and progressed sangha to have social consciousness. He strove to stipulate Buddhism as the state religion in the first Constitution promulgated in 1947. He subsequently endeavored to realize the prosperity of Buddhism. He passed away in 1969, hoping for the mercy and unity of the people in the complicated situation of the state.

After the collapse of the Pol Pot regime, what Cambodians most wanted was Buddhism to memorialize the dead and heal their exhausted hearts. It was Chuon Nat who continued to sow the seeds of faith in Buddhism to save people from suffering. Thus, it can be said that his contribution to the revitalization, prosperity, and revival of modern Cambodian Buddhism is diachronically remarkable.

The second perspective is to discuss the linguistic and cultural significance of his thoughts and deeds, especially focusing on compiling the dictionary, a project that started with the official purpose of unifying the Khmer orthography. However, he finally compiled the dictionary as the culmination of his thoughts. It was his spirit of benefiting the people and society that underpinned his passion for accomplishing this big secular project. Although *Khmer Dictionary* is naturally a modern dictionary that defines the meaning of Khmer vocabularies, it is also a collection of poems and analects as the crystals of the thoughts of Chuon Nat. It can be said that this dictionary is a remarkable literature, based on Buddhism, unique to Cambodia.

The third is the perspective on the modernization of Cambodian Buddhism. Chuon Nat's group broke the tradition of a dual-structure of monks and laypeople, and promoted the religious awakening of Cambodians by laicizing the translated Buddhist scriptures, and preaching the doctrines in Khmer. This qualitative transformation is characteristic of Cambodian Buddhist modernization.

The qualitative transformation also occurred in other Theravada Buddhist countries in the same era. Starting from the opposition to Christianity, these promoted the laicizing of the doctrine of Buddhism, and especially the practice of meditation by laypeople. This form of Buddhism subsequently created monks in the world. On the other hand, the qualitative

transformation of Cambodian Buddhism was not a counter to Christianity, but a compassion to the needy. Chuon Nat did not emphasize on the meditation, but on self-effort through teachings, including the Noble Eightfold Path. While the transformation movements were led by the charisma monks or layperson, that of Cambodian Buddhism was organically developed by some monks, including Chuon Nat and the French female scholar, through the School of Pali, the Royal Library, and the Buddhist Institute.

The fourth perspective is Chuon Nat's spirit of benefit as the Buddhist ideology. His fundamental thought was the idea and retribution of karma. He taught laypeople to escape from present suffering through self-effort rather than aiming for nirvana. The spirit of benefit he demonstrated was altruism. Although altruism was not an important virtue in Theravada Buddhism, his spirit led to Mahayana perfections, and he tried to practice the rules of moral conduct of Bodhisattva.

Though Chuon Nat was a Theravada monk, he took in the altruistic doctrine of Mahayana Bodhisattva, and practiced it as his own virtue. Theravada has tended to be traditionally categorized as Buddhism of self-interest, and Mahayana as that of altruism; therefore, such a uniform and one-side view does not hold true today in Chuon Nat's case.

To conclude, Chuon Nat has left great marks on the history of Cambodian Buddhism. The spirit of benefit that he preserved was altruistic, and the practical idea behind Mahayana Buddhism. Spreading that thought brought about the qualitative transformation to the dual-structure of Theravada Buddhism. At the same time, this transformation imbued Cambodian Buddhism with the altruistic idea. In that sense, Chuon Nat is not only a meritorious, cultural person and Buddhist reformer but also an innovator who promoted the essential transformation in traditional Cambodian Buddhism. His spirit even led to the revival of Cambodian Buddhism after the collapse of the Pol Pot regime. The value of his thoughts has not diminished today, neither have the significance of his deeds been lost.