



---

---

## A STUDY ON SALIENT FEATURES OF HUMAN CHARACTER (CARITA) IN ABHIDHAMMA PERSPECTIVE

**Ashin Vimala**

**Ph.D. Research Scholar, Center for Mahayana Buddhist Studies,  
Acharya Nagarjuna University, Guntur, Andhra Pradesh, India.**

### ABSTRACT

*Thought and deed are deeply notable things for everyone. One's thought and deed are being related to each other. Only when good thought begets good deed. Apart from that good begets good, evil begets evil.*

*In our daily activities the following are becoming to notes:*

*we should recognize the thought, why, because they become words.*

*we should recognize the words why, because, they become conducts.*

*we should recognize the conducts why, because, they become habits.*

*we should recognize the habits why, because, they become characters or temperaments.*

*we should recognize the characters or temperaments why, because they become deeds.*

**KEYWORDS:** Human, Chanter, Carita, Greedy, Angry, Delusion, Confidence, Intelligence, Thought.

### INTRODUCTION

In this world, most of the people denotes that is into a decline whose are lack of money and specifies also them who are inferior born of tribe. In this context, money and tribe are not real human value. Actually, human value or dignity is only the intelligence. If we analyze the human value, we see that knowledge is the most excellence.<sup>1</sup>

What are being infections each other we should note about that. If we live together with greedy person, become a greedy one. Likewise, live together with big angry person, he also become a big angry one. And live with an arrogant person, become an arrogant one. Apart from that, whose are living with stable person, become a peaceful one gradually. Someone's attitude usually infects to other one. Everything in touch of seeing and hearing surrounding us is the things that infected in both good and bad. Thus, we can choice something.<sup>2</sup>

### The Nature of Human

- Men are more value, more silence in any manner; Lesser value, noisier;
- More superior, more stability; More inferior, more nonsense;
- More virtuous person, lesser in speech; More mis-virtuous, talk much speech;
- More doing mistake, keeping things secret; Lesser doing mistake, become more serene;
- Much desire, get more enemy; Lesser desire, get many friends;

---

<sup>1</sup> Saying, SayadawNandamalabhivamsa, Rector

<sup>2</sup> Saying Nawtika U, Mahamyaing Forest.

Stronger in selfishness, become uncivilized one; Lesser selfishness, get sweeten face.<sup>3</sup>

Human is a kind of being who animate in the human world listed in the thirty-one kinds of realm. There are different varieties of beings that were born on ground, on the trees, in the water, even in the dusty drain like a mosquito, fly, earth-worm and so on.

There are four types of beings who were born on their own.

They are as follow:

1. A being who was born from its mother' womb (it is meant human and some animals that are called *Gabbhaseyyaka* in Pali).
2. A being that was born just appearance like sixteen ages of young man directly without needing born of any other mother's womb. (It is meant a deity that is called *Opapatika*).
3. A being that was born from egg. (it is meant such as bird, hen, duck and so on called *Andhaja*).
4. A being that was born in drain like fly and many insects etc.; (it is called being of *Jalabuja* in Pali).<sup>4</sup>

So, there are four types of being come down from the standing point of Buddhism. But among them, I would like to explain about human being and its character. Human is the most interesting and intelligent being. But it is not so-called human being just because they were born from their parents and just only have two hands, two legs, one head between two shoulders. Actually, it is called as a human being who has just only knowledge or wisdom that is able to penetrated reality nature of mind and body.

### The Characters of Human

According to Philosophical point of view, different men have different kinds of philosophy. According to Myanmar saying, many men have many kinds of characters "*Lu chinnatūtū-athetshūchinn kwai tay*" (proverb). So, someone can know and see those people in daily life how they act, speak, and think and whatever they perform on the way, in the workshop, and anywhere we met them. According to kammical view in *Theravāda* Buddhism, as human beings, since they were born, they have brought their characters or temperaments (*carita*) together with them.

Character, *Carita in pali*, signifies the intrinsic nature of a person which is revealed when one is in normal state without being preoccupied with anything. The temperaments of people differ owing to the diversity of their actions or *kamma*.<sup>5</sup> Habitual actions tend to form particular temperaments. According to Philosophical point of view, different men have different kinds of philosophy. According to Myanmar saying, many men have many kinds of characters "*Lu chinnatūtū-athetshūchinn kwai tay*" (proverb). So, someone can know and see those people in daily life how they act, speak, and think and whatever they perform on the way, in the workshop, and anywhere we met them. According to kammical view in *Theravāda* Buddhism, as human beings, since they were born, they have brought their characters or temperaments (*carita*) together with them. Human beings had characters since they were born from their mother's womb while the other beings had their respective characters.

Human characters are six kinds mentioned in Buddhism. We may know the human character by seeing them which are doing, speaking and thinking about their respective activities in the daily life.

Let's see the six kinds of human's character. They are as follow:

1. Lustful temperament (*Raga-caritata*)
2. Hateful temperament (*Dosa-carita*)
3. Ignorance temperament (*Moha-carita*)
4. Devout temperament (*Saddha-carita*)
5. Intellectual temperament (*Buddhi-carita*) and
6. Discursive temperament (*Vitakka-carita*).<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup>Trs

<sup>4</sup>ABDL .P.148-8.

<sup>5</sup><http://buddhistpage.com/six-kinds-temperaments-carita> accepted on 03/03/2016

<sup>6</sup>Abhidhammattha-Sangaha. P. 146.

### First human character (Rāgacarita)

In our daily life, we can say that he is the one who is too much in lustful temperament or character (*Rāgacarita*).

The word '**Rāga**' has various names as, colour hue, dye, lust, attachment, human passion, evil desire, greed, etc; It was defined as "*Ranjanavasēnarāgo - Ranjantīetenātīrāgo*" in Pali.<sup>7</sup>

There are some examples of *rāga*:

*Rāga* is called *kaṭṭhaka*, because it is like the obstacle or spike in the continuum of beings by means of penetrate, by being misery.<sup>8</sup> It is like a wilderness (*kantāra*), means lack of drinking water and great forest without human being to live there because it causes non-benefit and difficult to overcome. It is called *Kilesā* because of infatuated or obsess, shaking and worry. It is called *rāgaggī* because of like a fire by means of burning and *palighaby* means of prohibition to enter the city of *Nibbāna*.

Then *Rāga* was called as *vīsa* (poison) because of existing in the mind process of beings, *visama* because of not to stability and peaceful, *andhakāra* because of making in order to be blind the eye of wisdom by beings, *nīvaraṇa* because of prohibition not to get *jhāna*, *magga* and *phala* for beings so it can be called disturbing or prohibition to reach *Brahma* world and *Nibbāna*.<sup>9</sup>

### Otherwise, there are three kinds of Rāga:

1. *Kāmarāga*- pleasure for sensual world.
2. *Rūparāga*- pleasure for fine material world.
3. *Arūparāga*- pleasure for fine immaterial world.<sup>10</sup>

Here it can be a question that how to remove the following *rāga*.

- 1) One who practices spiritual exercise has to eradicate sensual lust (*kāma-rāga*) leading to *apāya* (woeful state) by *sotāpatti-magga*.
- 2) One who practices spiritual exercise has to eradicate rough sensual lust (*kakkhaṅka-kāma-rāga*) not leading to *apāya* (woeful state) by *sakarāgāmi-magga*.
- 3) One who practices spiritual exercise has to eradicate subtle sensual lust (*sukhumakāma-rāga*) not leading to *apāya* (woeful state) by *anāgāmi-magga*.
- 4) One who practices spiritual exercise has to eradicate fine material lust and fine immaterial lust (*rūparāga* and *arūparāga*).<sup>11</sup>

*Rāga*'s synonymous words are *lobhataṅhā*, *rati* – greed, attachment, sensuous desire etc; it is one of the fourteen *akusalacetāsikas*. *Rāga* or *lobha* is a strong desire for sensuous objects or *jhāna* happiness. Its nature is only taking, but it will never give up this intrinsic nature of desiring however much one may process.

So *carīyabuddhosa* said that the ten impurities and mindfulness regarding the body are suitable for lustful temperament.

### Second human character (Dosa Carita)

In our daily life, we can say that he is the one who is too much in hateful temperament (*dosacarita*). *Dosa* is a *pālī* term in Buddhist literature. It has various meaning in its term as anger, hatred, wrathful, dislike, destroying, demolish, resentment, irritation, wipe out and tyranny etc.; otherwise, it was called as *kodha* (anger) or *Paṭigha* (aversion), and *vyāpāda* or ill-will or malevolence.<sup>12</sup> *Dosa* is a one of the fourteen *akusalacetāsikas* in *Abhidhamma*. Not knowing cause and effect, not understanding the real nature is its character.

The ancient people said that:

With pleasant words, a person has many friends,

<sup>7</sup> DN i.A. P. 395.

<sup>8</sup> SN ii.A. P. 157.

<sup>9</sup> Sarattha-Tika. P. 288

<sup>10</sup> MnA. P. 207.

<sup>11</sup> Vis ii. P. 325.

<sup>12</sup> SnA. li. P. 224.

With harsh words a person has a few friends,

Similarly, the cool moon has many stars surrounding it while the hot sun is all alone.

So, the ancient virtuous person said that to avoid a horned animal from a distant of fifty cubits, avoid a horse from a distant of a hundred cubits, avoid a tusker from a thousand, avoid a stupid person where he lives.<sup>13</sup>

Here, how we have to know the stupid person? We should know about stupid person. There are three characteristics of silly person:

1. Thinking about evil thought, (*dussintitacintī*).
2. Thinking about evil speech and (*dubbhāsita bhāsī*).
3. Thinking about evil deed (*dukkatakammakārī*).<sup>14</sup>

Otherwise, there are three kinds to know about the silly person:

1. The one who practices the dreadful action by body (*Kāya-dussarita*).
2. The one how practice the dreadful by verbal (*Vacī-dussarita*) and
3. The one who practices the dreadful action by mental (*Mano-dussarita*).<sup>15</sup>

Actually, the stupid person was defined as the one, who has poor knowledge, has no profession by own knowledge, commit ten kinds of unwholesome action (*Dasaakusala-kammapatha*)

Anyone based on hatred can do whatever bad deed (*unwholesome-kamma*) by his wicked bodily, verbal and mental action. So, the one who is furious can be called as the silly person and noted him as wicked one. That foolish person, having done evil action by body, evil action by verbal, evil action by mental, after death, is born into woeful state.

We need to know how to remove the hatred in one's mind or burning in body to be free from the woeful state.<sup>16</sup>

We have to practice the six ways to remove hatred:

1. Taking the object of the image of the loving kindness,
2. Practicing the development of the loving kindness again and again,
3. Considering only *kamma* as one's own property,
4. Be large number of reflections by wisdom,
5. Being one who has good hearted-mind and
6. Speaking the proper speech.<sup>17</sup>

So, we have to know the cause and effect whatever we do. *Dosa* is one of the defilements. So, it is to be born in the woeful state. This is a thing to abstain from doing this in our daily lives and to keep it not to come out from our mind.

### Third human character (*Moha-Carita*)

In our daily life, we can say that he is the one who is too much in ignorant temperament (*mohacarita*).

The word '*moha*' means wavering, unperceiving, impudent or darkness and also as a delusion mental factor. *Moha*'s actual meaning is ignorance or lack of wisdom. Its characteristic is making in order to blind the eye of wisdom (*aññāvalakkhano*). Its specific sign is covering the real nature not to perceive as they truly are, as well as oppose to wisdom (*aññāvalakkhanovā*). Although the intelligence perceives the reality as they truly are but the ignorant does not perceive it truly. Its function is not able to analyze well because of covering the nature of object (*asaññāpaivedharasso, āraññāsaññāvacchādanarasovā*).<sup>18</sup>

One Led by *Moha* can practice improper manner. Its proximate cause is the intention by improper cause (*anupāya*) and an unreal way (*uppatha*). It was the origin of all unwholesome. *Moha* can

<sup>13</sup> LOKA-NITI. P. 78-84.

<sup>14</sup> MN iii. P. 201.

<sup>15</sup> AN. P. 100.

<sup>16</sup> MN A. iii. P. 151-2.

<sup>17</sup> DN A. ii. P. 369.

<sup>18</sup> DN A. i. P. 291.

mate to be born in animal world which is always ignored. It is taking unreality as its object that is true but not taking the truly object till it is the reality. So, the Buddha said to the monks in *Itivattaka, khuddaka-nikāya*, oh, monks discard a phenomenon which is called *Moha*. I insure you all to be a non-returner (*anāgāmi*) (*mohaṃ bhiddkaveekadhammaṃ bajahatha, ahaṃ vopāṃ ibhogoanāgāmitāya*).<sup>19</sup>

*Moha* is leading to *kamma*. If someone spawned the ignorant into his mind, he does commit various kinks of demeritorious actions. Even it is big blame or misdeed but it disappears slowly. Here that becomes to ask a question how to remove it. The Buddha gave the way to remove it by practicing three trainings (*sīla, samādhī and paññā*). Without discard the ignorant leading to the woeful state does not gain the path of stream-attainment (*sotāpatti-magga*) as well as without removing the ignorant, any mediator can gain the path of Arahantship (*Arahatta-magga*),<sup>20</sup> and to discard the ignorant has to develop the wisdom (*paññā*) because it is not only the internal enemy (*ajjhata-verī*) but also the impurity in our body.

In some place, the ignorant was often used as wrong wisdom, or the worrier the goblin or demon (*pāpa-deva*). *Moha* was removed by none of delusion. One who is delusion by *moha* does not know truly one's benefited and doesn't know other's benefit also. That is why it was said that has no network similar to *moha* (*Natthimohasamaṃ jālaṃ*).<sup>21</sup>

In a nutshell, for one who was based on *moha* can be two min conditions:

First, wisdom that has unrisen will not come.

Second, wisdom that has arisen further will reduce. Those are because of *moha*.

### Forth human character (*Saddhā-carita*)

In our daily life, we can say that he is the one who is too much in devout temperament (*saddhācarita*).

The word '*saddhā*' means faith, devotion to the Triple-Gems piously (*Buddha, dhamma and samghaas* well as *kamma and kamma-phala*). It has two characteristics 'tranquilization and aspiration.'<sup>22</sup>

For example;

The monarch, when put his ruby in the water, makes to tranquilize those of mud, moss or slime, water-plant and mire in water, make clear to the water, to be pure, to be serene.

Likewise, even when *saddhā* arises in the continuum of beings,

- Discards the five hindrances, (*kamachanda, vyāpāda, thina-middha, uddhacca-kukkucca and avijjānīvaraṃ*),
- Make to tranquilize the defilements,
- Make clear the mind,
- Perform not to defile.

By clear mind, the mediator, a good man,

- Give generosity,
- Take morality well,
- Perform the observance of *Uposatha*,
- Attempt the development (*Bhāvanā*). This is the specific signature of *saddhā*.<sup>23</sup>

Thus, that *saddhā* has been known as the characteristic of tranquilization. That is why the Venerable *Nāgasena* said:

### Example (1)

As when the monarch, the great king together with four kinds of ranks, go to long journey, would overcome a few waters. Those of a few waters was stirred by elephants, horses, carriages, and

<sup>19</sup>Iti. P. 196.

<sup>20</sup>Iti A. P. 55.

<sup>21</sup>Dhap A. ii. P. 231.

<sup>22</sup>DN A. i. P. 162.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*

ground soldiers and it might be dirty, shaking, and making as mud. The monarch, who was already overcome, said thus and commands the people, carry the water for me, I will drink it.

The monarch also might have the ruby which makes to clear the water. People, having taken the order by Monarch, have to put the ruby into the water. When the ruby was put into the water, those of mud, moss or slime, water-plant and mire in water get away. Then they give the drinking water to the monarch and they would say, the great king drinks it.

As the monarch has to note the water as the mind, people as mediators, those of mud, moss or slime, water-plant and mire in water as defilements, the ruby as *Saddhā* and as when the ruby put into the water, get away the mud, moss or slime, water-plant and mire etc.; likewise, the great king, when arise *saddhā*, discards the hindrances (*Nīvaraṇas*), the mind free from hindrances, become clear, pure, innocence. This is first *saddhā*'s example and characteristic etc.<sup>24</sup>

### Fifth human character (Buddhi carita)

In our daily life, we can say that he is the one who is too much in intellectual temperament (*Buddhi carita*).

The word '**Buddhi**' means wisdom, knowing, intelligence, development, increase, and grow etc.<sup>25</sup> Otherwise, *Buddhi* means that endow with the highest wisdom. *Buddhi* is the name of *Paññindriya*, a mental factor. *Paññā* is wisdom or insight, and *indriya* is the controlling faculty. *Paññindriya* has the control of over the understanding of things as they truly are, i.e., in the light of *anicca* (impermanence), *dukkha* (suffering) and *anatta* (not-self).

*Buddhi* is the opposing to *moha* (*avijjā*). *Moha* in *paticca-samuppāda* represented *avijjā*, one of the two of origins to be a life. It is the first of mass suffering as well as mental pain and physical pain, the creator of lives. *Moha*, *avijjā* associated with all unwholesome. It was named as '*sabbākusalasādhāraṇa-cetasika* in *Abhidhammattha-sangaha*. So we may see the word of *Buddhi*, *amoha*, *avijjā* as the mane of *Paññindriya-cetasika* in *Abhidhammattha-dangaha* written by *Anuruddhā Thera*.

*Buddhi* included as one of the moral roots (*amoha-hetu*) and one of the seven properties by the virtuous person, as removing the hindrance of ignorance (*avijjā*), as cutting off the *avijjā-nusaya* (ignorance latent) and *avijjā-samyojana* (ignorance fetter).

### Otherwise, it owns five kinds of name:

- 1) *Paññindriya* (faculty)
- 2) *Paññābala* (power)
- 3) *Dhammavicaya-sambojjhinga* (path to enlightenment)
- 4) *Sammāditthi* (path) and
- 5) *Sammāsankappa* (also path).

### Sixth human character (Vitakkacarita)

Some are many thinking about on their respective objects. We can see that discursive temperament is divided into two groups.

#### Group 1: (wrong thought)

1. Discursive on sensuality.
2. Discursive on killing to other living beings.
3. Discursive on torture or ill-treat.<sup>26</sup>

#### Group 2: (right thought)

1. Discursive on renounce of sensuality.
2. Discursive on non-killing to other living beings.

<sup>24</sup> Mil. P. 2-10.

<sup>25</sup> TPKD. i. P. 321.

<sup>26</sup> Khu. P. 216.

### 3. Discursive on non-torture to other creations.<sup>27</sup>

Character is the activities of mind, appeared from mind. Everybody is passing the whole day with three actions, bodily action, verbal action and mental action consisted of the merit and demerit.

#### Five ways of knowing to one' character

There are five types of knowing to human's characters. We may know a person's character (1) by seeing postures the resting on one side; sitting, standing, going etc; (2) by some activities like sweeping on the floor; (3) by having sweet foods; (4) by seeing visible object, audible object, olfactory sense; flavor object and tangible object etc; and (5) by artifice, circulation etc;

## CONCLUSION

### How to live the advantage of life

Only both of advantage and disadvantage can be penetrated, he is called a human. But not knowing them is not a human. Only sin and sinless can be known separately, he is called a human but is not a human. Only deed and misdeed can be thought, spoken and done such as flag rising to up, if so, such kind of person can be specified a higher person.

At the human life that we had got difficultly, there are two importance things, knowledge and practice. We need to obey to them in balance. To get the advantage of life for everyone is needed to abide with four *Brahma-viharas* in daily. The *brahmavihāras* "abodes of *brahma*" are a series of four Buddhist virtues and the meditation practices made to cultivate them. They are also known as the four immeasurable.

According to the *Metta Sutta*, cultivation of the four immeasurable has the power to cause the practitioner to be reborn into a "*Brahmā*realm".

#### The four *Brahma-viharas* are:

1. Loving-kindness is active good will towards all.
2. Compassion results from *metta*, it is identifying the suffering of others as one's own;
3. Empathetic joy is the feeling of joy because others are happy, even if one did not contribute to it, it is a form of sympathetic joy;
4. Equanimity is even-mindedness and serenity, treating everyone impartially.

As a conclusion, if someone is a human, it needs to live humanistic life. If so, he will avoid the bad characters and follow and practice the good characters. One only has a purification of Conduct (*sīla-visuddhi*), purification of Mind (*citta-visuddhi*) purification of View (*ditthi-visuddhi*), can live with Loving kindness, Compassion, Empathetic joy, Equanimity. After that everybody will own the humanistic life.

## REFERENCE BOOKS

- Anuruddhā Thera, *Abhidhammattha-sangaha*Pāli, Yangon, Department of Religious Affairs, 1980, P,146.
- TPKDictionary, vol: 15, P. 312.
- *Visuddhimagga*, VolI, Buddhagosa Thera, Yangon, Department of Religious Affairs press, 1957, P, 110.
- Saying by Dr. Nandamalabhivamsa, Rector Sayadaw
- Saying by U Zawtika, Sayadaw, Mahamyaingforest.
- Saying by U Zawtika, Mahamyaingforest.
- Maha-BodhimyaingSayadaw
- *Dhammasaṅgani*Aṅṅhakathā, Buddhagosa Thera, Yangon, Department of Religious Affairs press, 1963, P, 395.
- *Nidānavagga-Khaṅṅdhavagga*Aṅṅhakathā, vol, II, Buddhagosa Thera, Yangon, Department of Religious Affairs press, 1978. P, 157.

<sup>27</sup>Pathi. P. 180.

- SāratthadīpanīTīkā, vol II, Sāriputta Thera, Yangon, Department of Religious Affairs press, 1968, P, 288.
- MahāniddeśaAṅṅhakathā, Upasena Thera, Yangon, Department of Religious Affairs press, 1959, P, 207.
- Visuddhimagga, Vol II, Buddhagosa Thera, Yangon, Department of Religious Affairs press, 1957, P, 325.
- SuttanipātaAṅṅhakathā, Vol I, Buddhagosa Thera, Yangon, Department of Religious Affairs press, P, 1958.
- LOKA NṅṅTI, (words and stories by ancient people), verses, 78-84, Minister Thīrimahācaturīgabala, press, Yangon, Team of Compilers Ministry of Information, 15-9-2000.
- AnguttaranikāyaPāli, Tika-nipāta, Yangon, Department of Religious Affairs press, 1960. P, 100.
- UparipaṅṅāsaAṅṅhakathā, Buddhagosa Thera, Yangon, Department of Religious Affairs press, 1957. P, 151-2.
- MahāvaggaAṅṅhakathā (DA, ii) Buddhagosa Thera, Yangon, Department of Religious Affairs press, 1962, P, 369.
- AṅṅhasālinīAṅṅhakathā, Buddhagosa Thera, Yangon, Department of Religious Affairs press, 1963, P, 291.
- ItivuttakaPāli, Moha Sutta, Yangon, Department of Religious Affairs press, 1961, P, 196.
- Dhammapada Aṅṅhakathā, Vol II, Buddhagosa Thera, Yangon, Department of Religious Affairs press, 1958, P, 231.
- AṅṅhasālinīAṅṅhakathā, Buddhagosa Thera, Yangon, Department of Religious Affairs press, 1963, P,162.
- AṅṅhasālinīAṅṅhakathā, Buddhagosa Thera, Yangon, Department of Religious Affairs press, 1963, P, 162.
- MilindapahñāPāli, Yangon, Department of Religious Affairs press, 1956, P, 2-10.  
[http:// buddhistpage.com](http://buddhistpage.com) six-kinds-temperaments – carita accepted on 30/03/2



**Ashin Vimala**

**Ph.D. Research Scholar, Center for Mahayana Buddhist Studies,  
Acharya Nagarjuna University, Guntur, Andhra Pradesh, India.**