

The Conceptual Relationship between Buddhism and Idealism on the Notion of ‘Peace’

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‘Peace’ is a common word that appears in most academic disciplines, although it is interpreted subjectively as well as objectively. The two major schools of thought in the field of International Relations have looked at the notion of Peace in two different extremist lenses. Whereas ‘Realists’ think that the achievement of Peace is somewhat impossible, the ‘Idealists’ present a counter argument, optimistically foregrounding Peace as an achievable goal. Buddhism, one of the major religions in the world, has an optimistic attitude on the notion of Peace, as it foregrounds man becomes greater not by his birth but by his actions, therefore consciously controlling human actions has an effect on progress of a person. Specifically, Idealists utilize top to bottom approach to gain Peace and Buddhism expounds bottom to top or inward approach to gain peace sustainably. Hence this paper attempts to analyze in depth the ‘Optimism’ discussed in the Idealism school of thought and in Buddhism in terms of achieving Peace. This paper argues even though the optimistic dimension that the Idealist and Buddhist lines of thought look at Peace is similar, the approach is different. This research paper is mainly based on secondary resources which are written related to Buddhism and Idealism. This research paper is an initial multi-disciplinary attempt to initiate a discourse between Buddhism and Idealism.

Keywords: Idealism, Buddhism, Peace, International Relations, Optimism