

Socialization of Religion: Mission followed by the Buddha and Its Importance for Religious Harmony

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Buddhism, which originated as a monastic movement within the Brahman tradition in India in the sixth century BC quickly expanded in a distinctive direction. Lord Buddha rejected certain ritualistic aspects of other religions, denied the validity of the Vedic scriptures, and logically rejected the sacrificial cults based on them. Despite the Buddha's attempts to reject such beliefs, there is literary evidence which reveals how peacefully he disseminated his teachings, without causing strife between other religious parties. This paper examines how the Buddha dealt in the dissemination of his teachings within the society. Methodology of the study is based on the suttas such as *Upali*, *Sonadanda*, *Udumbarika* where discussions can be found between the Buddha and different individuals, ascetics, sophists and philosophers. This study has observed how in ancient times Dhamma was not preached and practiced as a means of converting persons from one religion to another or to find more disciples, but rather how such persons of different faiths were encouraged to follow their own religious practices while abandoning all unwholesome things associated with birth, decay and death. It is for the abandonment of these things that the Buddha taught the Dhamma. These aspects taught by the Buddha with a philosophical approach have become a vital for the socialization of religion in present times and a deeper understanding of the Dhamma may help to preserve the harmony among different religious believers.

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