

Non-violence in Buddha's teaching and Deviation in Practice

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Abstract

Buddhism consistently advocates for love and respect for all living beings and stands as an animal-friendly religion. Buddha's Pañcaśīla and other teachings focus on love and compassion for nature, including animals and plants. Maitri, Karuṇā, muditā, and upekṣā are among the main essences of Buddhism, emphasizing love, sympathy, empathy, and respect for all living beings. However, some Buddhist practices involve animal sacrifice in the name of 'Bali' for religious purposes, and some Buddhists consume animal meat, which is unsympathetic and merciless and contradicts Buddhist and environmental ethics. This paper highlights how these practices deviate from the Buddha's core teachings on non-violence and their significant impact on the environment and human health. The study is carried out using qualitative research methodology, with discussion and analysis conducted through the inductive method.

Keywords: Bali, Compassion, Love, Non-violence, Pañcaśīla

Background

Buddha is known as a forerunner and symbol of peace and nonviolence. One of his basic teachings is Pañcaśīla (the five precepts). The first precept is to refrain from killing. Buddha instructs us to love all living beings and the environment as a whole. There are many *sūtra*-s, *vinaya*-s, *jātaka*-s, *mantra*-s, etc., in Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana scriptures where Buddha addresses nonviolence, love, and compassion for animals. Thus, Buddhism is also called an eco-friendly and animal-friendly religion. However, despite all of Buddha's principles, people are killing animals directly or indirectly in the name of religious sacrifice (*Bali*), for their meat, for sport, for their organs, and for other purposes. Even Buddhists are involved in killing animals in one way or another in the name of *Bali*. Animals and birds are sacrificed in Buddhist rituals. Meat and alcohol are often offered in rituals in Newar Vajrayana Buddhism. Monks, priests, and Lama guru-s do not hesitate to eat meat when it is offered. The dhamma leaders who disseminate Buddha's teachings consume meat themselves, and their hundreds of thousands of followers also follow the same practice. They are unaware of the fact that meat consumption contributes to adverse impacts on the environment, such as climate change, greenhouse gas emissions, global warming, deforestation, and pollution. Consequently, Buddhist practices are violating both Buddhist ethics and environmental principles.

Though Buddhism advocates non-violence (*ahimsā*) and prescribes at least five precepts (*Pañcaśīla*), including abstinence from killing, the killing of animals in the name of *Bali* and meat consumption are prevalent practices. Even Buddhist priests perform rituals by sacrificing animals such as goats, buffalo, chickens, ducks, and pigs, followed by a meat meal of the sacrificed animals with family members, *saṅgha* fellows, and friends. Meat consumption among Buddhist followers, laypersons, and devotees is escalating despite the Buddha's teachings on non-violence, love, and compassion for animals. This increase in meat consumption demands mass production, promoting the meat industry rapidly. The meat industry is causing carbon emissions, global warming, and climate change, which ultimately lead to environmental crises and human suffering. These problems raise three questions: What are the textual sources and relevant contextual interpretations from Buddhist literature concerning killing, violence, and meat consumption? How does animal killing and meat consumption violate Buddhist ethics? What measures can be applied to protect Buddhist ethics? Therefore, this study focuses on the tendency to kill animals, meat consumption, and the violation of Buddhist ethics.

Methodology

The study has been carried out using qualitative research methodology by consulting published and unpublished articles, research papers, books, Buddhist scholars, and websites. Discussion and analysis are conducted through the inductive method. Content is collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include Buddhist original texts and interviews. Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were conducted with prominent scholars. The interviews were unstructured, allowing for free discussion. Secondary sources consist of published and unpublished articles, research papers, and books. Websites have been used to read about relevant issues.

Discussion and Analysis

Practices involving Animal sacrifice and meat consumption

In Mahayana and Vajrayana rituals, meat and alcohol are offered in some *pūjā*-s. A renowned Bajracharya priest of Lalitpur, Deepak Bajracharya, states, “The reason for offering meat and alcohol is to pacify or please the ferocious deities like Bhairav, Mahākāla, and asura-s such as *ḍāka-ḍākinī*-s and *yakṣa-yakṣanī*-s, who are very fond of meat and alcohol, who roam around us, and who can do any kind of harm if they become angry with us” (Bajracharya, 2022).

In Himalayan Buddhism, animal or blood sacrifice is one method used to calm or tame supernatural beings that inhabit the environment and are said to strongly influence the welfare, failure, and misfortune of sentient beings. In Southern Tibet and Sikkim, animal sacrifice is primarily practiced as a form of worship of mountain deities (Denjongpa, 2002). In the 1960s, villagers from the North Sikkim place Tingchim asked the 16th Karmapa for help, as many people were dying from an epidemic. He discovered that people were still sacrificing animals, and he replaced this practice with a more peaceful one. Up to 60 oxen were sacrificed each year before the 16th Karmapa tried to restrict this practice. Due to the influence of the Karmapa, the people of Tingchim abandoned animal sacrifice for about a

decade, although they eventually resumed the practice secretly. Since then, only goats and chickens have been sacrificed during rituals, for example, to heal severely ill people (Denjongpa, 2002). Additionally, among the Lepcha community, animal sacrifice was—and partially still is—a part of their rituals, especially to avert diseases (Siiger, 1967).

In imperial Tibet, killing animals was important for many rituals that were performed to take an oath. Buddhist monk-ministers had to swear by smearing the blood of animals on their lips (Stein, 1972, and Vitali, 2004).

According to *Guhyasamāj Tantra*, meat and alcohol are offered in the ritual to different deities consecrated during *pūjā* such as *Gaṇeśa*, *Vajravira Mahākāla*, *Aṣṭabhairava*, *Acala Guhyeśvarī*, *Saptamāṭṛkā*, *Aṣṭamāṭṛkā*, *dāka-dākinī*, *Yakṣa-yakṣinī*, *Ajimā*, *Chvāsa Ajimā*, *Fukkasi*, *Vetāli*, *Bhūta*, *Preta*, *Piśāca* (Bajracharya, 2020).

As mentioned in the *Guhyasamāja Tantra*, *Samvarodaya tantra*, and *Jnānasiddhi Tantra* (Bajracharya, 2020, Bajracharya, 2021), five types of meat—cow, dog, horse, elephant, and human—though represented by milk, curd, ghee, honey, and sugar, are used in *pūjā* for different purposes under the titles *Mahāsaya*, *Pañcapradīpa*, etc. It further mentions that human meat provides the mystic power of *vidhyādharatva siddhilābha* (flying in the sky), elephant meat provides the mystic power of *pancābhignāsiddhilāva*, horse meat grants *antardhyāna siddhilābha* power, dog meat gives *sarvasiddhilābha*, and cow meat bestows *vajrākarśana* (the ability to control kings) *siddhilābha*.

According to *Guhyasamāja Tantra*, *pañcāmṛta* (5 nectars) offered in Buddhist ritual, are said to consist of excrement, urine, cough, blood and semen, though intended meaning is: milk, curd, ghee, honey and sugar. (Gellner, 1993)

Sarbodaya Tantra: madya māṃsa vinā puḥyam homancaiva vinā ghrītam! Sadgurunca vinā dharmam vinā dharmena muktidam!!(26) (Bajracharya, 2009) Meaning: No *homa* without ghee, no *pūjā* without meat and alcohol, no *dharma* without master and no emancipation without *dharma*.

The basis of the cult of Tantric deities is the use of songs, dance, alcohol, and meat to worship them in their mandalas; that is, worshipping at the same time the Eight Mother Goddesses, the Bhairav-s, and other deities. Some of the *pūjā*-s/rituals where meat is offered along with alcohol, Tantric song, and dance are listed here (Gellner, 1993).

i. *Kolāsyā pūjā*, ii. *Tahāsinha pūjā*, iii. *Kumārī pūjā*, iv. *Mahāsamvara chattisamat pūjā*, v. *kuśa pūjā* vi. *Sinhā pūjā* vii. *Māṃsāhuti pūjā*, viii. *Śirāhuti pūjā*, ix. *Acala-dīkṣā pūjā*, x. *Trayodaśa-samvata pūjā*, xi. *Herukasamvara-dīkṣā-pūjā*, xii. *Hevajra-dīkṣā-pūjā*, xiii. *Ahorātrī pūjā*.

In *kṣamā pūjā*, a live goat is killed and offered to the god Bhairava. The cut goat's head is displayed at the *pūjā* place. The use of a skull bowl and sword in Buddhist tantric rites is another typical characteristic of Vajrayana Buddhism.

Some of the deities that do not accept blood sacrifice but accept meat are: *Vajrasattva*, *Cakrasamvara*, *Guheśvorī*, *vajrayoginī*, *Vijeśvorī*, *Hāratī*, *Sankaṭā*, *Gaṇeśa*, *Kumāra* and other Tantric deities. Some of the deities that accept blood sacrifice are: *Bhagavatī*, *Bhadrakālī*, *Manakāmanā*, *Mahālxmī*, *Bhairava* etc. In *Palānchowka Bhagavatī* and *Śobhā Bhagavatī*, priests (*Pūjārī*) are Vajrācārya. In the Manakamana

temple, Vajrācārya priests also take turns serving as *pūjāri*-s alongside Magar priests. All these deities accept blood sacrifice. Newar Buddhists perform animal sacrifice during their *devālī* (*digu pūjā*) every year (the author, who was born into a Buddhist family in the Newar community, has been witnessing these activities since childhood). However, some of them are now realizing that it is a wrong tradition and are replacing animal sacrifice with vegetable or fruit offerings, fulfilling their meat requirements by purchasing from butcher shops.

In the Rāto Macchindranātha chariot festival, *Bhoṭo Jātrā*, goats are sacrificed to the four wheels, which are identified with the four Bhairava-s, during *pūjā* to pray for the safety of the chariot pullers and the devotees. Rāto Macchhindranāth, also known as Padmapāni Lokeśvara or Karuṇāmaya, is regarded by Buddhists as the deity of compassion, a Bodhisattva who shows love and compassion for every being. How can he accept animal sacrifice? This is a point to be noted.

According to one version, it was Sthiti Malla who introduced the Newars to the use of buffalo meat by sacrificing a buffalo to Taleju and falsely persuading Buddhists that no ritual is complete without buffalo meat as the goddess's most blessed meat (*prasāda*) (Gellner, 1993).

The vast majority of Theravada monks also consume meat in Nepal, Burma, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. They justify this by claiming that the Buddha did not restrict eating meat and stated in the *Trikoṭī paṇisuddha sutta* (*Jivaka sutta*, *Majjhima Nikāya*) that monks can eat meat if they have not seen (*adittham*), heard (*asutam*), or suspected (*apariśankitam*) that the animal was killed for them. Therefore, they eat meat when offered in their alms bowl or during *bhojana*. However, the Buddha delivered this sutta in the context of his time, when there were few alternatives and not many shops to easily obtain food. Today, there is a grocery shop on nearly every corner, where all kinds of seasonal and non-seasonal food items are available. Thus, there is no reason for lay followers not to offer vegetarian meals to monks, and monks do not need to worry about starving. Therefore, it makes no sense for monks to eat meat. They should be aware that they are supporting violence (*hiṃsā*) or animal killing, as some animals must be killed by someone for their meals. In the case of Himalayan monks living in remote areas where there is insufficient vegetation, it may be reasonable for them to consume meat for survival. Likewise, for those living on islands with limited vegetation who must rely on seafood, this may also be justifiable.

In the Buddha's time, there was an instance when the Buddha and his disciples were walking through a dense forest and, feeling very hungry with nothing to eat, came across a dead elephant. The Buddha gave them permission to eat the elephant meat. However, on their way back from the village, in the same forest and under similar circumstances, the Buddha did not give permission to eat the meat, as this time the desire for the taste of meat was dominating their hunger. Here, the intention behind eating meat the second time had changed from the earlier one. Thus, intention is an important factor in determining what is wrong and what is right (Manandhar, 1989).

Buddhists focus on intention. Traditionally, the sponsor of an animal sacrifice, or *bali*, attempts to avoid the sin involved by not cutting the animal's neck himself. The butcher also

tries to avoid the sin by waiting until the sponsor gives the word. Most Newar Buddhists eat meat believing that the sin is wholly the butchers at whose shop they buy it (Gellner, 1993).

Cruelty in slaughtering:

So far, discussion was made on the animal sacrifice and meat consumption only. But how they are killed, is never bothered. Animals are killed so brutally and mercilessly that it crosses every border of cruelty. Buffaloes are tied up by rope in their feet and neck and people are holding ropes so tightly that the buffalo cannot move. A strong person chops down his head by sharp sword or *khukurī*. Or he is laid down forcefully and cut his throat by a big knife. Or alternately his head is stunned by a heavy blunt hammer or a captive bolt pistol making him unconscious, and a cut is made in his throat and let all blood drain out till his death. Likewise, the goats, pigs, hen and ducks are also killed cruelly and painfully. Almost all Newar Buddhists eat meat. The killing of fish is another act of extreme cruelty and torturing. The fishmonger separates the head and the body of a live fish. The fish's head and mouth are still moving. Its two eyes are wide open and staring.

There are many other brutal way of killing also in practice. Swords are sharpened in front of these victims before killing them. They are killed in front of their fellow animals watching as a dumb spectator. Men do not care how sensitive these animal are too. A kind of hormone flows in their blood due to fear and agony which make their flesh and blood toxic. And men eat these blood and flesh with high delicacy. At that moment they forget that they are Buddhists and avoid violence. They forget that they may have to be born as animal in their next births due to consequence of bad karma (*karma vipāka*).

Violation of Animal rights

Animals are raised unkindly. They are given a very little space to move. Chickens' beaks are cut short. Chicken are kept in the space of 6" each not enough even to stretch their wings which need 26" (Zhang Len: 86). Pigs are kept in 2'x 6' cage each with no space to even turn around. Cows and buffaloes are also kept in the same way in the congested cage with no space to turn around. They are hung upside down by tying their legs by belts before killing and are killed mercilessly. Likewise, other animals are also killed cruelly. Dehydration, injuries, stress, and disease are common during pre-slaughter transport, and in farmhouse.

Animals are born with an equal claim to life and the same rights to existence. All animals are entitled to respectful treatment. They have the right to attention, care, and protection from humanity. No animal should be ill-treated or subjected to cruel acts. All animals have the right to liberty in their natural environment. No animal should be exploited for the amusement of humanity. It is humanity's duty to use its knowledge for the welfare of animals.

Any act involving the wanton killing of animals is biocide, i.e., a crime against life. Any act involving the mass killing of animals is genocide, i.e., a crime against the species (Singh, 2006).

Buddha's teachings on nonviolence

The philosophy of Buddhism emphasizes love and compassion for all sentient beings and the environment. The first precept of Buddha's five precepts, known as "Pañcaśīla," is to refrain from killing animals. Buddha's other important teaching is the Eightfold Noble Path, *Ārya-aṣṭāṅgika mārga*, where the fifth point is Right Livelihood, *Samyakājivikā*. This means to live a simple, clean, and honest life, avoiding trade in meat, animals for their meat and organs, poison, intoxicants, weapons, etc. Buddha's Law of Interdependence, *Pratyutpadasamutpāda*, depicts that "all entities—living and non-living, plants and animals, and all phenomena—are interconnected, interrelated, and interdependent. There is mutual coexistence; one cannot live without the others. The loss of one entity causes the loss of another entity as well." Buddha clearly states in the *Dandavagga* not to kill and to let others also refrain from killing any living being. He warns that if a person destroys life, if a hunter besmears his hands with blood, engages in killing and wounding, and is not merciful towards living beings, he will, as a result of his actions, be short-lived when born among mankind. Conversely, if a person avoids killing, sets aside cudgel and weapon, and is merciful and compassionate towards all living beings, he will, as a result of his non-killing, be long-lived when born among mankind. Thus, the killing of sentient beings, including the slaughtering of animals for food, is counted among the heaviest transgressions in Buddhism. It teaches that all sentient beings have Buddha nature (*Tathāgatagarbha*), meaning that all human and non-human animals are equal in that sense. To destroy any life is to destroy a part of oneself. Therefore, Buddhism may serve as the most effective tool to minimize the ecological crisis caused by the meat industry.

Bodhisattva-s vow: "May I attain Buddhahood for the good of all sentient beings." They take birth again and again until all sentient beings are freed from suffering. There are many examples in Buddhist literature, both in Theravada and Mahayana-Vajrayana, where the Buddha has addressed, with concern, the good of living beings, which can be found in the Sūtras, *vinaya*-s, *jātaka*-s, *aṭhakathā*-s, and more. The *Kutadanta Sūtra* (*Śīlaskandhavagga* 5, *Dīghanikāya*) describes how the Buddha transformed a potential bloody sacrifice into a bloodless one by stopping the sacrifice of seven hundred bulls, bullocks, heifers, goats, and rams that the Brahmin Kutadanta intended to perform to please the gods. He did this by sharing a meaningful story about a king. In the *Cakravati Sīmhanāda Sūtra* (*Dīghanikāya*), the Buddha emphasizes that a Cakravarti king should protect forests and animals. A king who does not kill animals, cut trees, or even graze grass will enjoy progress and prosperity in his realm. The Buddha established several rules (*vinaya*) for monks and nuns to discourage the killing of animals and to promote their protection. According to the *Ratana Vagga Pācittiya Khaṇḍa* of the *Vinaya Pitaka*, monks are not allowed to use items made from the bones, teeth, and horns of animals. The *Brahmajāla Sūtra* (*Dīghanikāya*) states that individuals who commit violence and harm others will be reborn in the hell (*naraka*) realm. Similarly, the *Petavatthu* (*Khuddaka Nikāya*) asserts that those who perpetrate violence will be reborn in the *preta* realm. The *Āryalankāvatāra Sūtra*, specifically the *Māṃsabhakṣaṇa Parivarta* (Bajracharya, 2020), conveys the message: "*Ahārajjāyate darpa, sankalpo darpa saṃbhava! Sankalpa janito*

rāgastasmādapi nabhaksayet!" This translates to: "Such food (meat, alcohol, onion, garlic) breeds conceit, pride, and self-exaltation, which lead to ill thoughts and misguided reasoning. Therefore, it is better not to eat meat." Furthermore, the *Āryalankāvatāra Sūtra*, in the *Māṃsabhakṣaṇa Parivarta* (Bajracharya, 2016, Bajracharya, 2009), elaborates on this teaching.

1. All beings have been born as mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, sons, daughters, etc., over past births after births. Additionally, every being has to take birth in different realms: *manuṣya yonī*, *paśu yonī*, *preta yonī*, *devaloka*, *narakaloka*, etc., according to their actions (*karma*). The animals we are killing or eating might have been our blood relatives in some realm during our previous births at some time. Therefore, we should not kill any animals or eat their meat, thinking they are our family members.
2. Animals and humans are made of the same elements, which can be proven by the similar smell of both when they are burned. Therefore, they are the same. Hence, humans should not eat meat.
3. Human beings are very sensitive and compassionate. So how can a compassionate being kill others and eat meat?
4. A meat addict who can't live without meat may even kill a person for the satisfaction of his palate. There are many such examples in Buddhist illustrations, such as the story of King Singhasaudasa from the *Lankāvatāra Sūtra*. Therefore, humans should avoid eating meat.
5. Meat is the food of non-aryans. Meat eaters have aggressive and cruel characters, like giants. If even the demons who follow Buddhism have transformed from their demonic nature to become calm and peaceful, why should humans eat meat that changes them into a demonic nature?
6. Voracious meat eaters will be reborn in *paśuyonī* or *asuryonī* as tigers, lions, jackals, bears, eagles, hawks, giants, etc.—carnivorous animals. Humans are the best living beings, for only they can attain enlightenment. So, why should humans head toward a lower realm from this *manuṣyaloka* by eating meat?
7. Eating meat gives rise to 'rāga,' which leads to 'moha,' which leads to clinging, which results in suffering, ultimately making it impossible to achieve emancipation.
8. Meat comes from a living being. To eat meat, a living being must be killed. Killing a living being is a heinous act that leads humans to hell (*naraka*). If they don't eat meat, there won't be any killing of innocent animals.
9. Both the animal killer and the buyer of the meat will go to Raurab hell and suffer horribly.

Samādhirāja Sūtra (Bajracharya, 2021): *Te bhojanam svādurasam pranitam labdhwā ca bhunjanti ayuktayogā! Teśam sa āhāru badhāya bhoti yatha hastipotāna bisā adhautakā!!* (59) Meaning: Ignorant people always crave food and enjoy impure and indecent meals by killing and eating innocent animals, which is as unholy as the excrement of an elephant's baby.

Saddharmapundarika Sūtra (Bajracharya, 2021) says: *ye cāpi bibidhān prānin himseyurbhogakāranāta! Māṃsa sunāya bikrenti sanstawan tairwiwarjayet!!* (10).

Meaning: Don't associate with or talk to those who kill animals for meat and trade in meat.

Sūtra (Bajracharya, 2021) says: *pānārtha bhojanārtha ca bastrārtha stripsu hetunā ! bibidha kleśa santāpai yartu pāpam kritam mayā!!* (27). Meaning: I have also suffered in my previous life due to my unwholesome acts, such as drinking liquor, eating meat, misbehaving with women, and spending money on expensive clothing.

Gunakārandabyuha Sūtra (Bajracharya, 2021): *bhogyam nirāmiśam muktā kuruta bratapālanam! Yebam nitya samādhāya kṛtvā bratamidam sadā!!*(11). Meaning: While performing Buddha *pūjā* or any *vrata* (fasting), if one performs with full faith (*śraddhā*) and single-mindedness by offering pure *bhojana*, i.e., *nirāmiśa bhojana* (fruits, sweets, and *Pañcāmṛta*), instead of *āmiśa bhojana* (meat, alcohol, fish, eggs, etc.), and eats by oneself, one will benefit from merit-loaded dhamma knowledge.

Findings

Despite the Buddha's restrictions on killing and meat consumption, killing in the name of religious sacrifice (*Bali*) to God and for meat is still terrifically practiced in the Buddhist world. This violates the first precept of the Buddha's five precepts. '*Pañcaśīla*' is: '*pānātipātā veramani sikkhā padam samādiyāmi*'. Meaning: I refrain from killing animals. Buddha's *Dandavagga* 129, 130 of *Dhammapada* says: '*sabbe tasanti dandassa, sabbe bhayanti maccuno, sabbesam jibitapiyam, attānam upamam katwānahaneyya naghāteya*' (Mahānāmakobid, 1992). Meaning: 'Every being fears being tortured, every being fears being murdered, every being loves to live. So, putting oneself in the place of others, let no one kill nor cause others to kill'. Buddha says to follow *caturbrahmāvihāra*: *maitri* (loving kindness), *Karuṇā* (compassion), *muditā* (altruistic joy) and *upekkhā* (equanimity) (*Caturbrahmavihāra, Sutta pitaka-Sanyukta nikāya-mahāvagga-atthakathā, ānāpāna samyukta; Vinaya pitaka(tikā)-pācittiyādiyo janāpāli*). He says to love all living beings and the environment as a whole. However, most Buddhists are fond of meat, and nobody eats dead animals. Then, how and where does the meat come from? Either they have to kill the animals themselves, or someone else must kill them. Thus, this act completely contradicts the Buddha's principle of non-violence and love and compassion for other beings. Buddhist practices, traditions, cultures, and rituals do not seem to uphold Buddhist morals and values. Unintended killing and rampant meat consumption in rituals and individual practices supposedly stem from non-Buddhist sources and have been mixed with Buddhist practices. In that case, these practices need to be sorted out and eliminated to preserve the purity of Buddhist values such as loving-kindness and compassion.

Conclusion

Non-violence and compassion are two highly focused concepts that are dealt with and praised in Buddhism. The above study shows that the Buddha has addressed nonviolence, love, and compassion for living beings in many places. He is always against killing living beings, whether higher animals or small creatures, as reflected in his *sutta*-s, *vinaya*-s, *jātaka*-s, and *aṭṭhakathā*-s. "To live and let live" is the cardinal principle of Buddhism. Not to hurt others, not to hate others, and not to kill others, but to love others,

respect others, and live harmoniously with others are the Buddhist ethics. According to Buddhism, all components of nature, including living and non-living beings, are interdependent, interconnected, and interrelated, and cannot exist without each other. Buddhists are encouraged to love all living beings, fostering a sense of compassion and empathy that extends beyond humanity. This is exemplified in the practice of *mettā* (loving-kindness) meditation, where practitioners cultivate feelings of love and compassion towards all beings.

The above study shows that despite the Buddha's teachings in favor of non-violence and meatless food, Buddhists are found practicing animal sacrifice and meat consumption, violating Buddhist ethics. Even Buddhist priests are found practicing animal sacrifice, 'Bali,' offering meat and alcohol to Buddhist deities, and consuming meat themselves. Monks and nuns (not all) are not exceptions when it comes to eating meat. Buddhism should not be just for lip service. Offering animals, meat, and alcohol to deities is merely an excuse to indulge their craving (*trīṣṇā*) for the taste of meat and alcohol. This practice is actually impugning Buddhism and violating Buddhist ethics.

So, the only way to keep Buddhist values in pristine form is to follow the Buddha's teachings through honest actions, not just lip service. Buddhists should learn not to kill animals, not to trade animals for meat and their organs, to love animals, and to recognize their feelings and their right to live. According to the Buddha's theory of karma and rebirth, they should understand that the animals they kill, allow to be killed, or eat might have been their relatives in previous births. They should realize that, due to the *karmavipāka* of killing, torturing, or eating animals, they may be reborn as animals in future lives, while those animals may be reborn as humans and seek revenge. Keeping in mind all these teachings of the Buddha, if people follow them honestly and do not violate Buddhist ethics, they will create a wonderful world, and peace will prevail everywhere. By following these ethics, individuals can cultivate a sense of inner peace and contribute to a more harmonious society. Unless practitioners translate the Buddhist values of nonviolence into their practices, including rituals, and actively demonstrate them in their behaviours, nonviolence will remain limited to slogans, only confusing learners. Therefore, stakeholders should understand the Buddhist values of nonviolence and exhibit them in their practices as well.

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