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Towards a Kingdom of Dhamma;
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Anushka Kahandagamage

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Towards a Kingdom of *Dhamma:*
Sinhala-Buddhist Extremist Groups in Post War Sri Lanka

Anushka Kahandagamage
B.A(sp), M.A
anuappril@yahoo.com

Introduction

After thirty years of war Sri Lanka is undergoing rapid structural and ideological changes. The minds and behaviours of people which were adapted to war for three decades are now opening up to new thinking paths. The victorious consciousness of Sinhala Buddhists after the war is in the process of creating new spaces to celebrate the war victory. These celebrating grounds are built upon the freedom realms of other minority religious and ethnic groups. This paper will mainly consider the emergence and activities of Sinhala-Buddhist extremist groups after thirty years of war. These groups are led by Buddhist monks. The role of Buddhist monk has been changed and reshaped across the Sri Lankan history.

Politicization of Buddhism

Politicizing of Buddhism could be found in many countries. In this section it is expected to elaborate how Buddhism has been politicized in different contexts. Examples could be drawn from modern era as well as from historical periods. Politicizing 'Buddhism' is not confined solely to present Sri Lankan context. It has been a practice beyond the boundaries of time and space.

According to Mahavamsa, During the time period of king Devanapiyatisse, Buddhism was introduced to Sri Lanka by MahindaThero who came from India as a result of the missionary service of King Dharmashoke. The introduction of Buddhism to Sri Lanka was done by a King from India to theKing of Sri Lanka (The Mahavamsa: The great chronicles of Ceylon). The first impression of Buddhism in Sri Lanka was intrinsically bound up with politics. The story of introducing the Buddhism to the country is as follows. Buddhism was introduced to Sri Lanka by ArhatMahindaThera who is the son of King Dhammasoka (268-231. B.C) of India. He came to Sri Lanka in order to convert Sri Lanka into a Buddhist country. ArhathMahindaThero was accompanied by, Ittiya, Uttiya, Sambala and Bhaddasala, Neophyte (Samanera) Sumana and layman Bhanduka. ArahatMahindaThera was Emperor Dharmasoka's own son. For Sri Lankans he is an 'AnuBudu' or secondary Buddha. ArahatSangamitta who came later with a sapling of Sri Maha Bodhi and accompanied by eleven bhikkunis, was the sister of ArahatMahindaThera and the daughter of Emperor Dharmasoka. SumanaSamanera who possessed "Shadabhigna" (six-fold knowledge) was ArahatSangamitta's son. The only layman, Bhanduka, was a nephew of ArahatMahinda (The Mahavamsa: The great chronicles of Ceylon).The mission was mostly consisted of the members of the Indian Royal family. The Buddhism was introduced to Sri Lanka with a royal touch.Other than that, it is important to remember the fact that, King Dharmasoka was a warrior King who captured the lands and extended the territory which belongs to him. In other words, he was possessed with hunger for power. According to Buddhist history,after seeing the damage he has done he realized the futility of war and converted to Buddhism. After converting to Buddhism he tried to spread Buddhism throughout the area through missionary services. Although the missionary service is nota physical invasion it is an ideological invasion. In Sri Lanka particularly, all the arts and crafts were bestowed with Buddhism. The 'culture' was a part of this Buddhism. This is not that much different from 'westernization' happens in the label of 'globalization'. The conversions were took place in a subtle political context.

In recent Indian history, Ambedkar used Buddhism as a tool for demolish the cast discrimination in India. Dalits(untouchables) have been marginalized in India.Ambedkar himself converted into Buddhism and paved the way to 'Dalits' to convert in to 'Buddhists' (Beltz 2004). The whole process of conversion in this context is not an innocent space. There are several organizations including a political party, RPI (Republican Party of India), active in India. The Republican Party of India could not be identified as a Buddhist organization (Beltz 2004; 248). This party consider Ambedkar as its political hero and most of the members of this party are Buddhists from Maharshtra (Beltz 2004; 248). Dalits who have been converted to Buddhism, consider Ambedkar as there mentor.

> " Even in comparison to Buddha, Ambedkar is the greater guide. ..In other words, being a Buddhist in Maharashtra means above all to be a follower of Ambedkar. Without any hesitation people will call him 'Savior of the untouchables or just 'Babasaheb' (Hounarable father). In the eyes of the Buddhist folk, he is often seen as the ideal leader or a Bodhisattva. He uplifted the downtrodden and liberated them from slavery. He introduced the notion of liberty, equality and fraternity to the Indian Constitution and pressed the Indian government to accept reservation for the scheduled castes in the public sector."

It is clear that, Buddhism has politicized in many societies throughout the history in different time and space continuums.

Evolution of the role of Buddhist monk in Sri Lankan context

According to the Sanskrit and Prakrit texts in 800 – 400 B C E, there was a new ideology of renunciation emerged in Indian subcontinent (Flood 1996; 81). This tradition is called 'Sramana tradition' (Flood 1996; 81). Buddhism and Jainism belonged to this tradition. Although these religions are differed from each other, some common philosophies could be found in both Buddhism and Jainism.

> 'While the renouncers of Sramana tradition differ on points of doctrine and method, they generally agree that life is characterized by suffering (duhkha) and adhere to a teaching in which liberation (moksa, nirvana) from suffering is a form of spiritual knowledge or gnosis (jnana, vidya)' (Flood 1996; 81-82).

This Sramana tradition consisted of the ideology that, 'knowledge (jnana) is given precedence over action (karma), and detachment from the material and social world is cultivated through ascetic practices (tapas), celibacy, poverty and methods of mental training (Flood 1996; 81). Starting point of the Buddhism could be identified in this Sramana tradition.

The tradition of Buddhist monks derived from the 'Sramana' tradition started in India. However, after introducing Buddhism to Sri Lanka by Indian king Dharmashoka, the tradition of Buddhist monks evolved according to the social, economic and political changes of the country. The turning point of evolution of the role of Buddhist monks in Sri Lanka goes back to the era of colonization. Before the introduction of the concept of Buddhism as a religion, there was a concept called *"Sasana"* which referred to 'Buddhism'.

> "The term Sasana connote instruction, order. It refers to the dogmatical teachings of the

Buddha as well as to the disciplinary orders given by the Buddha. In later Paliworks and as a loan-word in Sinhalese, Burmese and Thai, 'Sasana' means the totality of the Buddhist institutions in a lawful unbroken succession from the time of the Buddha onwards" (Phadnis 1976: 9).

However, introduction of Christianity to the island marked a huge transformation within the social structure of Sri Lanka. To compete with the newly introduced religion, 'Christianity', Buddhism needed to have a proper institutional background. The independence of Sri Lanka from the British colonial rulers was strengthened by the Sinhalese national identity combined with 'Buddhism'. The father of modern Buddhism, AnagarikaDharmapala has defined the monk as "a caretaker of the flock and a social worker" (Seneviratne 1999: 27). He divides duties of monks into two aspects, i) economic and pragmatic ii) Ideological and Political (Tilakaratne 2006: 211). Father of Modern Buddhism has assigned a political role to the Buddhist monk. They have played a prominent role in political turmoils throughout the history of Sri Lanka. According to Tilakaratne, these aspects were followed by a group of monks belonged to VidyodayaPirivena which was established by Hikkaduwe Sri SumangalaThero in 1873 and group of monks belonged to VidyalankaraPiriwena which was established by Ratmalane Sri Dharmaloka in 1875 (Tilakaratne 2006:211). According to him, the turning point of Vidyalankara ideology is WalpolaRahula'sbook on 'Heritage of a Bikkhu' (Bikshuwage Urumaya) (Tilakaratne 2006: 211). This book has influenced Buddhist Monkhood in Sri Lanka more than any other book (Seneviratne 1999:135). According to Tilakaratne, 'The key characteristics of the project proposed by *The Heritage* are: advocating secular education for the monks; discouraging monks from participating in their traditional religious (ritualistic) functions; advocating social service, meaning thereby basically the involvement in politics, as the proper vocation for monks' (2006: 212). As this book suggests, monks should be involved in social services through politics.

It is important to theorize 'masculinity' in order to understand the changes happened in the next phase of the Sri Lankan history in relation to the role of Buddhist monk. In theorizing masculinities, development could be identified in three waves. In the first wave, masculine theories based on sex role theories in 1970's. According to the sex role theory which is based upon the concept of socialization, different gender roles are embodied to the men and women by the society through socialization. According to this theory women and men have to play different gender roles which are given to them by the society. If they achieve the accepted level, they considered as successful women or men. According to the Pleck, boys experience contradictions between the level of gender role expected by the society and the real experiences they face (Heywood and Mac and Ghaill 2000: 37). Second wave of masculinity, emphasized 'power' and criticized the first wave masculinity theories for lack of attention to plural masculinities and giving the priority to single western and white masculinity (Edwards 2006:2). Instead of single masculinity, this wave tried to focus on multiple masculinities and their power relations (Edwards 2006:2). "The third wave of studies of masculinity, rather like the potential third wave of studies of femininity, is clearly influenced by the advent of post-structural theory, particularly as it relates in gender in terms of questions of normativity, performativity and sexuality (Edwards 2006:2). "A common theme, however, is the importance of representation and its connection with wider questions of change and continuity in contemporary, and in some more historical, masculinities and identities" (Edwards 2006:2).

During the period of war, Buddhist monks supported the ideology of glorified, good-humanitarian militarized masculinities. As Sri Lanka has undergone a thirty years of war, the figure of soldier has become a prominent masculinity type in the Sri Lankan society. This masculinity type is glorified by different social institutions in the country including "Buddhist' religious institution. Buddhist monks used this as a survival mechanism. The physical strength of militarized masculinity was supported and nurtured by the mental strength which is given by the Buddhist monks to soldiers. After the war, Buddhist monks performed militarized masculinity by themselves. They have established extremist ethno-religious groups to invade and intrude the spaces of minorities. As "militarized masculinity" rose up in the hierarchy after the war, Buddhist monks adapted attributes from "militarized masculinity"; they are aggressive, forceful and violent. On one hand Buddhist monks carry the symbol of living lord Buddha, who is the "lord of the mind"; top masculinity of mind for the Buddhist people of the country. On the other hand, Buddhist monks have adapted the behavioral patterns of leading physical masculinity; the military.

Apart from adapting to the militarized masculine behavioral pattern, Buddhist monks have been elected to the parliament larking a historical change in the role they have played in the country.

"In the Sri Lankan parliamentary elections in 2004, a party nearly totally comprised of monks, the JHU (JathikaHelaUrumaya, 'National Heritage') won nine seats in parliament and subsequently became a considerable irritant for the government. It was only the latest manifestation of a long standing claim by the *sangha* that they would not only influence, they would also be active in, politics," (Helbardt, Rajanayagam & Korff 2013: 41).

The epitome was marked by the announcement of one of the prominent Buddhist monk saying, that he is going to stand for the next presidential election if there is no important candidate to stand for it. This is a turning point of Sri Lankan history. At present, as country is getting ready for a presidential election in early 2015, one prominent Buddhist monk who stands for reconciliation among different ethnic and religious group and who voice against extremist Buddhist monks and extremism as a whole says that, if there are no any strong candidates he will stand as a presidential candidate. According to the newspaper Sunday Thirukkaral, ''Yes I am ready to stand as a Single-Issue (SI) presidential candidate, but if a former Chief Justice or a former President is interested, no problem, I am happy to step aside. I will serve for six months only within which time I will abolish the Executive Presidency and institute a parliamentary system by constitutional methods. The roots of bribery, corruption, nepotism and bad governance lie in Executive Presidency," (Colombo Telegraph 2014).

The Extremist Buddhist monks in social arenas

Social dramas can be acted out to direct the society into the 'correct path', which is assumed by the actors of social dramas. The concept of 'social dramas' were introduced by the prominent Anthropologist, Victor Turner. Instead of using the concepts from natural sciences to analyze the society, Turner turns into the form of human aesthetics which is a product of culture, not of nature (Turner 1974: 32). Turner uses the concept of 'social dramas' to analyze the society. According to Turner, 'conflict was the rife in the groups of two dozen or so kinsfolk who made up a village community. It manifested itself in public episodes of tensional irruption which I called 'social dramas" (Turner

1974: 33). He identifies four phases of public action in a social drama. Breech, crisis, regressive action and reintegration (Turner 1974: 37-40).The concept of 'social drama' elaborates the idea that, when a member of the society breaches the rules, society reacts to the breach by opposing or supporting the breach. After that, society becomes normal again in the stage of reintegration.

The extremist Buddhist monks use the strategy of Social dramas to get the attention of masses as well as media. These extremist Buddhist monks do not oppose or support to a 'breach', but define social incidents as a 'breach' and, often act against those situations. By acting against these situations, they try to create a social drama and they gather people around their ideology by using the lable of 'Buddhism'. In this paper it is expected to bring out several extremist Sinhala-Buddhist nationalist groups such as Bodu Bala Sena (Buddhist Force Army), Sinhala Rawaya, and Rawana Balaya (Force of Rawana).

These groups are lead by Buddhist monks. They act against Muslims as well as Christian evangelical groups. According to these groups, Christian conversions and increase of Muslim population pose a threat to the Sinhala Buddhist nation. Conversions are not illegal in the island. However, these extremist groups act against these conversions in a dramatic but informal way. As these Buddhist groups are located in a strong position in the country, government does not have any power to stop them. In a way, government supports these extremist Buddhist groups to be active in the social arenas.

During the period of war, these groups were not prominent and visible. After the end of the war nation has to be built upon an ideology. As Sri Lanka had a war for thirty years the vacuum of violence is visible. People expected 'social dramas' as they were missing 'social dramas' attached to war such as sudden bomb attacks, killings and violence. The ideological base was needed to build the nation after thirty years of destructive war. The nation needed a guide to escape from the ambiguity it has to deal with the gained peace. Vacuum of ideological base was invaded by these extremist Sinhala nationalist Buddhist groups using the hegemonic power they had.

Rajapakse regime defeated LTTE in year 2009. In a symbolical sense, Tamil minority was defeated and they were subordinated. The most prominent minority left, which is to be defeated is Muslims. The most strong and powerful extremist group, BoduBalaSena emerged against the Halal certificate issued by Muslim religious group called 'Ualama'. Extremist nationalist-Buddhist groups said that, the organization of 'Ulama' does not have any authority to issue a certificate over food products of the country. Thus, these extremist Sinhala- Buddhist groups convinced and forced the government to ban the 'Halal' certificate. Most fascinatingly, government acted according to the wish of these extremist nationalist Buddhist groups (Z news, March 2013).

There are many examples that could be drawn. In 04th of October 2012, Bodu Bala Sena attacked Bangladesh embassy in Colombo. This attack took place, as a response to the attacks against Buddhists in Bangladesh (Colombo Page, Online).

'Bangladesh High Commissioner to Sri Lanka, Sulfur Rahman, said about 900 protesters, mostly Buddhists monks, threw water bottles and brickbats at the high commission, causing damage to the windows and property.
Buddhist monk GakagodaGnenesaara said in the statement that,"We were tolerant, but day by day we notice great injustice caused to Buddhists by Islamic extremists, we can no longer be patient" (Tamil Guardian; 2012 online).

On 14th October 2012, BoduBalaSenarushed into a house in Piliyandala and alleged the pastor for converting Buddhist people into Evangelicalism (Fernando 2012). The fact that Buddhist monks are forgetting here is, Sinhala Buddhists are also a converted community. There should be a freedom for people to believe and worship whatever they like.

In another situation, BoduBalaSena protested in front of the archeological department urging them to protect Buddhist heritage in Eastern province. National Heritage Minister Mahinda Balasuriya and Archeology Department Director General Senerath Dissanayake assured the Buddhist monks that they would do everything possible to secure the sites (Daily Mirror 2012). When considering the population composition in Sri Lanka Muslims are located in this area. 'The Muslims, who descended from Arab traders settled in Sri Lanka, form the third largest ethnic group at 9.2% of the population. They are mostly concentrated in urban areas in the southern parts of the island with substantial populations in the Eastern, Southern and Central provinces' (Aponso 2013). It is clear that, the Muslim community too have a heritage in the eastern part of Sri Lanka, other than Sinhala Buddhists.

On 7th January 2013, BBS stormed into Sri Lanka law college saying that, law college has distorted the result of law entrance on favour of 'Muslims'. 'On a January morning a crowd of Buddhist monks storm a law college, yelling, chanting and even hitting one or two seemingly random people and pushing back the police. Furiously they shout that the exam results have been distorted infavourofMuslims' (BBC 2013).

Interference of Buddhist extremist monks into administration of the country challenged the idea of 'governmentality' introduced by Michel Foucault. According to Foucault, 'governmetnality' means 'a neologism referring to the ways in which in modern societies various authorities administer populations, to the ways in which individuals shape their own selves, and to the ways in which these processes get aligned' (Lukes2005:91).

'regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth; that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true, the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true' (Foucault 1980: 38).

The truth is created by the people who have 'power' to create truth. By the word 'governmentality', Foucault recognized the government within the political domain (Gordan 1991: 03). According to Foucault, techniques and practices could be used to govern the people of a whole society at the level of political sovereignty (Gordan 1991: 04). The concept of 'governmentality' could not be understood solely through the lectures of 'governmentality' presented by Michel Foucault. But, the concept should be understood in relation to his other writings as well. In the book 'Discipline and Punish' he explains the concept of 'panopticism'. This prison was designed by Jeremy Bentham which allows one guard to watch all the prison cells built around the watch tower. Guard can see all the prisoner cells, while prisoners could not see that, they are being watched or not. Thus, although the guard is

not in duty, prisoners think that they are watched by the guard and behave themselves (Foucault 1977). Thus the controlling of the body is active. Docile bodies have been created through the techniques of the space of prison. In his concept of 'bio power' Foucault explains how the state impose its power over human body. According to Foucault, 'the threshold of the modern era, natural life begins to be included in the mechanisms and calculations of state power, and politics turns into *biopolitics* (Agamben 1998: 10). Thus, governmentality is power over human body. Althusser identifies some institutions as ideological state apparatuses; namely religious, education, family, legal, political, trade union, communication and the cultural (Althusser 1971: 143). Althusser has identified 'religion' as one of the state apparatus. However, it is important to note that instead of using religion by the state, in Sri Lanka Buddhist religious organizations uses the state to control the people. On 07th June 2013, a storm hit the southern and western coasts by talking the lives of fishermen causing severe damages to their boats (Lanka C news 2013). General Secretary of the 'Ravanabalaya' Ven.IththekandeSaddhatissathera and his group had gone to the meteorological department to hand over a letter in this regard (Lanka C news 2013). 'They forcibly entered as a mob into the Met Department to question the officials regarding failure to forecast' (W3 Lanka English, 2013 June. Online). These monks were not stopped by the police.

In another situation, on 3rd of April 2013, RavanaBalaya protested in-front of the Sri Lanka cricket head quarters demanding that, Sri Lankan cricketers take part in Indian Premier League should be recalled due to the hostility between India and Sri Lanka (Ceylon Today 2013). Convener of the organization, IthakandeSadhatissaThera warned that, direct and necessary action would be taken by the RavanaBalaya against Sri Lankan cricketers who participated in the tournament when they return to the island (Ceylon Today 2013). After this incident, SanathJayasuriya who is the chief selector of the Sri Lanka Cricket, stated to Daily Mirror that selectors have requested to the Sri Lanka Cricket Board to recall the Sri Lankan cricketers who have been to IPL due to the lower performance (Daily Mirror May 2013). He further mentioned that, he is aware of the fact that, Sri Lankan Cricket Board has taken the action to recall the players (Daily Mirror May 2013). The demand made by the 'RavanaBalaya', group which is an extremist group led by Buddhist monks came to an accomplishment with this incident. If people have any issue or problem about any matter in the society, procedures of law should be followed in order to solve the problem. Yet, extremist Buddhist monks act beyond these boundaries of law. The concept of governmentality has been challenged.

Ownership of the space plays a vital part in any struggle which needs to prove the power over the 'other'. For an example, struggle to declare the ownership over Ayodya in India is important to understand the situation in Sri Lanka as it has similar characteristics. In Ayodya, on 06th of December 1992, Hindu devotees destroyed the Barbi Mosque, because Hindus consider this place as Ram's Birth Place (Platvoet 1995:187). This Barbi Mosque was built by Babur Shah in 1528, who is the founder of the Muslim Moghul empire (Platvoet 1995: 187). Babur Shah has destroyed the Ram temple situated in Ayodya at the request of two Muslim Fakir's, in order to get their political support (Platvoet 1995: 194-195). When the Moghul Empire stated to decline from the eighteenth century, cult of Rama spread and attracted many pilgrimages of Ayodya (Platvoet 1995: 195). According to Plavoet, Ayodya is significant to Hindus of the high casts (1995:188). "This place of pilgrimage is however, of special significant to Hindus of the high, or 'twice born' (dvija), castes who supports 'cultural' movements like the RRS and political parties like the BJP. Both belong to the SanghParivar, the 'family' of RSS affiliated organizations which oppose the secular constitution of India and strive forHinduisation of

Indian society' (Plavoet 1995: 189).

Ayodya is significant not only to Hindus and Muslims, but also to Buddhists and Jains. The change of the power in the area has affected the possession of Ayodya and it has been a problem till now. When Muslim and Hindu tension arise in India, Ayodya becomes a critical place and political parties lead campaigns based on the place (Platvoet 1995). According to Platvoet, Ayodya plays a critical point in Indian politics in relation to the Hindu and Muslim 'communal' conflicts (Platvoet 1995: 187).

At present Sri Lankan context, many phenomenas related to of politicization of the space could be identified. The most prominent in recent Sri Lankan context is 'Kuragala'. While Muslims say that Kuragala is the place where QutubMuhiyuddin Abdul QadirJailani, also known as Ghouse-e Azam is one of the greatest scholars in Islamic history held in very high esteem by Muslims throughout the Middle East ,Pakistan, India, Bangladesh,Sri Lanka, Malaysia and even as far as Indonesia. He has meditated in Kuragala which is known as Dafter Jailani for 13 years (Farook 2013). According to Buddhists this site belongs to them.

> 'Explaining the historical relevance the site holds for the Buddhists, the Chief Incumbent of the temple Venerable Asgiri Maha Viharaye Karmacharya Poojya Panditha Dilthota Dhammajothi Thero told The Sunday Leader that Kuragala dates back to the King Ravana's reign."Artefacts discovered from the site have further fortified our claims that these objects are over a thousand years old.Most significant are the channels engraved beneath the drip ledges to flow water from the top ('Katarama'; in Sinhalese) dating back over a thousand years.Here you can find ample evidence to prove that this temple has been blessed by the saintly monks who spent their time in meditation. Archaeology Department is excavating near the caves and its surroundings. Buddhist history of Kuragala dates back to 2300 BP, (2nd century BC) according to the rock inscriptions over the Kuragala caves' (Natheniel 2014).

Against this background extremist Buddhist monks have demanded from the government to demolish the mosque from the site. The national organizer of *BoduBalaSena*, Ven. *Galagodaaththe Gnanasara*Thera with other Buddhist monks gathered and vowed to remove the Mosque established in Kuragala which is considered as a Buddhist historical place (Colombo Page 2013). BoduBalaSena threatened the archeological officials, saying that all the unauthorized structures in the area should be eliminated before 18th of March 2013 (Lanka C News 2013). After this incident, Defense Secretary visited the area and directed the Director General of Archeological Department to appoint a committee comprising of officials of the department, the trustees of the mosque and the MahaSangha to reach a consensus of removal of the building (Natheniel 2014). Defense secretary has assured that, the Mosque built in 1922 will not be removed (Natheniel 2014). However, the unauthorized buildings were demolished by the Director Generalof Archeology Department using fifty youth who belongs to Civil Defense Force without prior notice to the trustees of the mosque (Natheniel 2014). Peculiarity of this incident is, how the Defense Secretary got involved in this matter and why the Director General of Archeology Department actedagainst the orders given

by Defense Secretary who is the brother of President MahindaRajapakse. Further, the youth used to remove the mosque comes under the Ministry of Defense Sri Lanka.

Against these dramatic, aggressive and violent acts of extremist Buddhist monks it is important to keep in mind that, there are so many Buddhist monks, who do not participate in these kinds of activities and who actively engage in reconciliation and non-violence. Thus, the actions of these Buddhist monks are not that prominent in media as they are not dramatizing their activities. However, these extremist Buddhist monks act against the Buddhist monks who act towards reconciliation. For an example, there is a group called 'JathikaBalaSenawa' (National Force Army). They organized a media conference against extremist Buddhist groups. Buddhist monks of *BoduBalaSena* crashed into the place and created a tense situation. Extremist Buddhist monks tried to beat WatarekaVijithaThera, another Buddhist monk who standsagainst extremism (Hiru News 2014.04.09). Because of the intense situation Officer In Charge of Kompagnavidiya police station came to the place and tried to explain and remove the extremist Buddhist monks from the place. But he failed to do so (Hiru News 2014.04.09).

Because of these violent and aggressive acts BoduBalaSena has labeled as a teorrist group recently. The most prominent extremist Buddhist group led by Buddhist monks is BoduBalaSena Organization has named as a terrorist organization by *Terrorism* Research & Analysis Consortium (TRAC) (TRAC 2014 Online). The extremist group has reached the epitome.

Towards a kingdom of Dhamma

Instead of Buddhist religious institution becoming a tool of the state in order to shape the citizens according to the will of the state, Buddhist religious institution uses the government to control the 'people'. However it could not be said that government does not use the Buddhist religious institution. Sri Lankan regime supports the extremist Sinhala Buddhist nationalist ideology of these extremist groups by accepting the activities and funding these groups. For an example, Defense Secretary who is the younger brother of Sri Lankan president participated in the opening ceremony of '*MethSevana*', the Buddhist Leadership Academy of the BoduBalaSena (Gunasekara 2013). According to Sri Lanka Mirror, 'In his speech Mr. Rajapaksa said that he decided to attend the event "after realising its timely importance"; according to him, "these Buddhist clergy who are engaged in a nationally important task should not be feared or doubted by anyone" (Gunasekara 2013). Regime uses these extremist groups to control the 'other' in an informal and hegemonic way. 'Hegemony' is a concept introduced by Antonio Gramsci. It signifies the idea of consent authority and ignores violent authority. According to Gramsci, man is not solely ruled by force, but by ideologies (Forgacs 2000). Gramsci identifies two sections in a society, political and civil (Gramsci 1971: 64). According to him, political is repressive while civil society plays the ideological role to control the society by getting the consent of the people (Gramsci 1971). Although hegemony ignores violence, it is still connected with power and authority.However, government and part of the Buddhist religious institution use each other as tools.

After AnagarikaDharmapala's hint and WalpolaRahula's dissemination of the idea Buddhist monks emerged as an influential social group in Sri Lankan political context. During the period of war, Buddhist monks supported the ideology of glorified, good-humanitarian militarized masculinities. Buddhist monks used this as a survival mechanism. The physical strength of militarized masculinity was supported and nurtured by the mental strength which was given by the Buddhist monks to soldiers. After the war, Buddhist monks performed militarized masculinity by they themselves. They have established extremist ethno-religious groups to invade and intrude the spaces of minorities. As "militarized masculinity" rose up in the hierarchy after the war, Buddhist monks try to adapt attributes from "militarized masculinity"; they are aggressive, forceful and violent. On one hand Buddhist monks carry the symbol of living lord Buddha, who is the "lord of the mind"; top masculinity of mind for the Buddhist people of the country. On the other hand, Buddhist monks adapt the behavioral patterns of leading physical masculinity; the military.

The supportive role of Buddhist monks in war and militarized masculinities during the period of war could not be analysed as a mere survival mechanism. It is part of a long journey which transforms the country to a 'Kingdom of Dharma'[1]in which Sinhala Buddhist are pure and superior while other ethnic and religious groups are inferior. According to Kapfererthe nationalist conscious of Sri Lanka is submissive to the state (Kapferer 1988: 07). In Sri Lanka state should be capable of forming the hierarchy and all the other groups are subordinate to the power of Sinhala Buddhists (Kapferer1988 :07). The teaching of Buddha is placed in the domain of 'reason' while other ideologies were located in the realm of 'non-reason' which is 'demonic' (Kapferer 1988:11). The present extremist groups of extremism do not follow the teachings of Buddha but locate the minority groups in the realm of 'other' or 'demonic'. In this 'Kingdom of Dharma', kings are the people who knows Dharma; the Buddhist monks.

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