Types of Sources in Buddhist Studies Research: A Viable Categorization

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බෞද්ධ අධ්‍යයන හා සම්බන්ධ පර්යේෂණ කිරීමේ දී මූලාශ්‍රය වර්ගීකරණය සම්බන්ධයෙන් යම් අවිනිශ්චිතතාවක් පවතින බව හඳුනා ගත හැකියි. පර්යේෂණ ලිපි, පර්යේෂණ නිබන්ධ හා ස්වතන්ත්‍ර ශාස්ත්‍රීය කෘති සම්පාදනයේ දී මූලාශ්‍රය වර්ගීකරණය සම්බන්ධයෙන් විෂමතා පවතින බව හඳුනා ගැනේ. මෙය ආධුනික පර්යේෂකයන් සම්බන්ධයෙන් මෙන් ම ප්‍රවීණ ශාස්ත්‍රධරයන් සම්බන්ධයෙන් ද පොදු කරුණකි. මෙහිදී අපගේ අවධානයට යොමු කෙරෙන ප්‍රධාන කාරණා දෙකක් ඇත. පළමුවැන්න සෑම පර්යේෂණයට ම පොදු මූලාශ්‍රය වර්ගීකරණයක් පෙන්වා දීම අපහසුය යන්නයි. ඒ අනුව, පර්යේෂණයේ ස්වභාවය අනුව මූලාශ්‍රය වර්ගීකරණය වෙනස් විය යුතු ය යන්න පිළිගත යුත්තකි. දෙවැන්න, ඕනෑ ම පර්යේෂණයක් උදෙසා පොදුවේ පිළිගත හැකි සුනිශ්චිත මූලාශ්‍රය වර්ගීකරණයක් ද පෙන්වා දිය හැකි ය යන්නයි. මෙම දෙවැනි කරුණට අදාළව මූලාශ්‍රය වර්ගීකරණය සම්බන්ධයෙන් යම් සෛද්ධාන්තික රාමුවක් පිළියෙළ කර ගැනීම කෙරෙහි විශේෂ අවධානය යොමු කෙරේ. ඒ අනුව, පර්යේෂණයෙන් පර්යේෂණයට මූලාශ්‍රය වර්ගීකරණය වෙනස් විය හැකි අයුරු පැහැදිලි කෙරෙන

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අතර සෑම පර්යේෂණයකට ම පොදු යයි පිළිගත හැකි මූලාශ්‍රය වර්ගීකරණයක් සඳහා භාවිත කළ හැකි සෛද්ධාන්තික පදනමක් ද ඉදිරිපත් කෙරේ.

පර්යේෂණ වර්ගීකරණය ප්‍රාථමික, ද්විතීයික හා තෘතීයික වශයෙන් කාණ්ඩ තුනක් යටතේ වෙන් කොට දැක්වෙයි. මුල් වර්ගීකරණ බෞද්ධ අධ්‍යයන උගතුන් අතර බෙහෙවින් ප්‍රචලිත වුව ද තුන්වැනි කාණ්ඩය ප්‍රස්තුත අධ්‍යයන ක්ෂේත්‍රය තුළ බොහෝ සෙයින් අභාවිතයි. කෙසේ නමුත්, මෙම තෘතීයික මූලාශ්‍රය වර්ගීකරණයක් ද බෞද්ධ අධ්‍යයන පර්යේෂණ කාර්යයේ දී භාවිත කිරීමේ උචිත බව පෙන්වා දෙනු ලැබේ. පොදු මූලාශ්‍රය වර්ගීකරණය උදෙසා සෛද්ධාන්තික පදනමක් යෝජනා කිරීමේ දී ප්‍රවීණ ශාස්ත්‍රධරයන් විසින් මූලාශ්‍රය වර්ගීකරණය කළ අයුරු ත් පර්යේෂණ ක්‍රමවේදය කෘතිවල ඇති උපදෙස් හා පර්යේෂකයාගේ ස්වාධීන නිගමන ද උපයෝගී කර ගැනේ.

ප්‍රමුඛපද: වර්ගීකරණය, ක්‍රමවේදය, පර්යේෂණ, මූලාශ්‍රය, බෞද්ධ අධ්‍යයන

Introduction

Modern-day research is always expected to be convenient to a legitimate methodology. Each subject applies methodologies that can be shared with other disciplines and those unique to that particular discipline per se. Buddhist Studies[2] demands a separate methodology as it consists of unique characteristics. Considering the backdrop of two intimate subjects of Buddhist Studies – Religious Studies and Theological Studies, Buddhist Studies methodologically differs from Religious Studies in such a way that the scholars in the former field of study work on phenomena, such as doctrinal concepts that cannot be objectively studied. It

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2   In this paper I consider 'Buddhist studies' in a broader sense to include all other related subjects- Pali, Buddhist Philosophy, Buddhist Civilization etc.

differs from the Theology that Buddhologists from the beginning have taken an unbiased, scientific approach which may be called the 'logical positivistic approach', an offshoot of European empiricism (Sri Nivas, 2011: 07, 10, 60). As confirmability and verifiability underlie this approach, the studies were scientifically oriented based on textual materials. While modern students in Buddhist Studies justifiably use the methodologies applied by other disciplines in the Humanities and social sciences, there are methodological dimensions in Buddhist Studies that the methodologies of other subjects cannot facilitate. I have considered in this paper a fraction of methodology of that nature – the identification of sources of data which has been so far a puzzling point.

For a beginner, correct identification of sources of data is an important aspect of doing research. If a research student is not precise about the classification of sources, he indeed finds it difficult to present a proper Methodology which undoubtedly can affect the quality of the research. The methodology is the theoretical and philosophical assumption about research methods (Uyangoda, 2010: 85) used in a research project. Again, the Literature Review is also an important component as it acknowledges the research gap and thereby assures the researcher's credibility (O'Leary, 2004: 66). The lack of consistency in the identification of sources can also make the literature review unsystematic. Lastly, the fallibility of grouping the sources can affect the Bibliography because incorrect identification can make it clumsy.

Essentially, determining the sources can vary not only from subject to subject but also from research to research. Due to this variable and fluid nature, it is necessarily difficult for Methodologists to provide a system that can cater to

all disciplines. There are no Methodology textbooks so far written for Buddhist Studies, therefore, there is no theoretical approach to systematically categorize the types of sources utilized in that discipline. I have seen that the recognition of the sources of data by novice researchers of Buddhist Studies has never been consistent as far as their research theses are concerned. The textbooks on Research Methodology, certainly, have provided basic guidelines to split sources into Primary, Secondary etc. The provided guidelines, however, are not adequate to consider literary sources which are extensively of a wider range.

Methodology

For the last ten years, I have been confronting difficulties in explaining to the research students the logical basis of categorizing the source of data. I have observed the inadequacy of the theories in the methodology textbooks to guide students in Buddhist Studies. In this study, I am using students' theses as primary sources to realize the issue without citing them to maintain confidentiality and privacy in research ethics (For Research Ethics, see *A Guide for Beginners in Research*: 10, 11 & Doing Postgraduate Research: 156). The Bibliographies of a few selected works on Buddhist Studies have been referred to as primary sources to learn the practice of the predecessors of the subject. The methodology textbooks are used not only to learn from them to formulate a new framework but also to show their inadequacy for our subject in question. The originality of this study remains in setting a theoretical frame for selecting as sources the written and other materials in Buddhist studies research. Methodologically Buddhist Studies research can be identified with Qualitative Research

by the data analyzed and with Theoretical Research (in most cases) by purpose. The Buddhist Studies scholars at present do not entirely show compatibility with Qualitative Research methodologies on the point. I have therefore expanded and slightly altered where necessary the predecessors' position relying on the methodology textbooks' guidance to include modern sources applicable in Buddhist Studies in such a way that my classification would not seem to be vain.

Aim

I have seen the research students struggling to figure out a system for classifying sources. The help of modern methodology textbooks has been minimal to them in this regard. This research paper is intended to provide a theoretical framework to identify miscellaneous sources of Buddhist Studies mainly to facilitate research students in Buddhist Studies, especially those who freshly shifted to the field.

Research Question

I am trying to come up with a viable system to avoid the researchers' embarrassment in classifying data sources in Buddhist Studies. The question 'What could be the comprehensive framework supportive to categorize the sources of data in Buddhist Studies?' underlies this paper.

Discussion

Identification of the sources: Primary, Secondary and Tertiary

Research simply means 'to search again' (Mustafa, 2015: 1). This is done by referring to data collected by the researcher. Unlike a philosopher, novelist, poet or general writer, a researcher cannot express his ideas without proven data. Data

comes from different sources and modern methodologists identify mainly two types of sources – Original/ Primary Sources and previous studies based on primary sources that is secondary Sources. Some early scholars of Buddhist Studies also have classified sources into these two main groups as I have shown below. The classification of the sources that way seems to be not only less complicated but also more intelligible to modern-day students, in so far as a theoretical framework underlies it.

Original data or primary data generated from primary sources determines the direction of the thesis and the contribution of the researcher to the field of study because primary sources provide the researcher with unfiltered access to information which the researcher himself has to analyze or interpret. The primary data will produce something original if analyzed or processed to create "a new theory or verification or extension of an existing one (Cryer, 1999: 147). The secondary data on the other hand are the data to come from other research studies. They determine the level that a body of knowledge of a particular field of study has reached. There is also another category called Tertiary Sources which has not been familiar in Buddhist Studies but has been proposed as I have seen the effectiveness of having another category.

The primary sources produce first-hand or the most intimate data of the subject studied. The secondary sources provide second-hand data derived by analyzing primary data. Tertiary sources represent the third level of information, the summary forms of the contents of secondary sources (https://guides.library.cornell.edu/sources/tertiary Retrieved on 11/12/2023) and other written materials complementary

in research. The content of these written materials in this category may or may not be directly related to the research but are supplementary. Accordingly, primary and secondary data are of major importance and Tertiary data are of marginal utility. The foregoing discussion is summarized in the table below.

Major Sources	Minor Sources
<u>Primary sources</u> First-hand information Original data/ Unfiltered data Literary or non-literary sources used to answer a particular research question	<u>Tertiary sources</u> Summaries of secondary data Written materials Complementary literature
<u>Secondary sources</u> Second-hand information Filtered data Always scholarly/ academic works that answer a particular research question or deal with a specific area of study	

The following is a summary of how eminent Buddhist scholars identified sources. The table shows how they were divergent in classifying sources to prepare the Bibliographies for their corresponding scholarly works. Some had been less systematic whereas others were more concerned with consistency.

Year	Author	Publication Name	Manner of Sources' Classification	Specific Observations

1963	K.N. Jayatilleke	Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge	Original Sources
			  Pali Texts and Translations
			  Prakrit Texts and Translations
			  Sanskrit Texts and Translations
			Secondary Sources
			  Reference Books
			  Monographs
			  Articles
				Pali Texts include canonical, pre-commentarial and commentarial literature.
				
				Reference Works include encyclopedias, dictionaries and an index.

1975	Hajime Nakamura	Buddhism in Comparative Light	No Bibliography No classifications	Not consistent.
1978	Walpola Rahula	What the Buddha Taught	Selected Bibliography for the English Reader (Only Books are mentioned)	Not consistent.
1982	Nathan Katz	Buddhist Images of Human Perfection	Primary Texts: Sūtra-Type Literature Primary Tests: Śāstra-Type Literature Secondary Sources: Books	Not consistent.

1986	David J. Kalupahana	Causality: The Central Philosophy of Buddhism	Original Sources
			   Pali Texts and Translations
			   Sanskrit and Prakrit Texts and Translations
			Secondary Sources
			   Reference Works
			   Monographs and Articles
				Reference Works include encyclopedias, dictionaries and an index.

1995	Mathieu Boisvert	The Five Aggregates: Understanding Theravāda Psychology and Soteriology	Primary Sources (Pāli and Sanskrit Texts) Secondary Sources	Primary Sources include Translations Secondary Sources are both books and journal articles

1997	Toshichi Endo	*Buddha in Theravada Buddhism: A Study of the Concept of Buddha in the Pali Commentaries*	Original Sources and Translations
			Secondary Sources
			   Monographs and Articles
			   Reference Works
				Reference Works that include Dictionaries and encyclopedias

2002	Padmasiri de Silva	Buddhism, Ethics and Society	Under 'Selected readings for Buddhist ethics and discourses of the Buddha' Scholarly works without a category name; under the same title New translations of the Discourses of the Buddha, Pali texts and translations, Other sources	Other Sources include monographs and journal articles.

			Primary Sources	

2009	Richard Gombrich	What the Buddha Thought	Primary Sources
			    Buddhist sources together with
			      translations, Brahmanical
			     sources and Jaina sources
			Secondary Sources
			     Books and Articles	

2015	Y Karunadasa	Early Buddhist Teachings: The Middle Position in Theory and Practice	Primary Sources
			    Primary Sources Translated into
			      Modern Languages
			Secondary Sources
				Primary Sources include canonical, pre-commentarial and commentarial literature.
				
				Secondary Sources include both books and research articles.

2018	Kuala Lumpur Dhammajoti	Abhidharma Doctrines and Controversies on Perception	Primary Sources Secondary Sources	Secondary Sources include both Books and Research Journals.

From around the 1960s onwards, dividing sources systematically into the two categories of primary and secondary has been a practice in Buddhist Studies scholarship probably due to the Methodological influence of other disciplines. In the works in which we see the division of sources as primary, secondary etc., the canonical texts in Pali, Sanskrit, Prakrit and Tibetan and their related literature such as exegeses and Commentaries were considered primary. The primary sources are the texts only with Buddhist content. The secondary sources are always academic or research studies based on the said primary texts. In the like manner, within the divergence, there is some unanimity among some scholars

on the source of data as reflected in modern Buddhist Studies literature.

In Buddhist Studies, the quantitative research is minimal and most of the research conducted is either entirely qualitative or in a mixed-method approach. Therefore, the data used mostly is not quantitative, verifiable, objective data but qualitative nonquantifiable data (see (Uyangoda, 2010: 80) collected mostly from library surveys. Primary sources of pioneer Buddhist Studies scholars were none other than original literary sources which contain the content of Buddhist thought. This is because research in Buddhist Studies is abundantly based on texts. However, a methodological exposition as to why such and such texts are considered primary, secondary etc. is wanting.

There is also a large number of other sources not essentially Buddhist in content that need to be identified correctly and categorized. These include the texts of historical and artistic value, the texts of ancient thought systems, classical literature and manuals of arts and crafts. As Buddhist Studies is now an extensively wide field of study, new research in Buddhist culture, history, art, psychology etc., is emerging. So, not only written sources but also a wide variety of non-literary tangible or intangible phenomena also have to be included in classifications. The category of secondary sources needs to be slightly broadened to include such written materials as Forwards, Conference Abstracts, Conference Full-papers etc. So, the need for a broader systematic classification is evident.

As was mentioned above, it is very important to note that the convention of sources of data in the field of Buddhist Studies, according to how the early scholars understood them,

is significantly different from those of sciences, including Social Science. We can understand this difference in a comparative inquiry of modern methodology standpoints and conventions in the field of Buddhist Studies. The following is a methodological observation of data sources and we can compare the position of Buddhist studies in relation to that.

What are the sources of data? Sources of data are places where you will obtain the information you need to answer your problem. There are two types of sources for data collection: primary and secondary sources. A primary source of data provides data called *Primary Data*. Primary Data are raw materials that are not used anywhere else. These are data that you collect for the first time from the source, e.g., interviews, meeting minutes, etc., and use them in your research for the first time.

A secondary source of data provides data called Secondary Data. Secondary Data are raw materials that you use for the second, third or more times. These are data that were collected and used by someone else, and you decide to use them again in your research. For example, data from books, journal articles, newspapers, conference papers, and magazines (Milgo, 2016: 93).

The basic standpoint reflected in this description is that the written or other sources that a researcher uses for the first time are the primary sources whereas all types of written sources from which one gathers data reusable are the secondary sources. The basic criterion that differentiates between the two types of sources is whether the source provides original unanalysed data or not. If yes, it is the primary source and vice versa. This theory without any issues

applies to sources used in Buddhist Studies except written sources. As far as the written sources are concerned, the theory needs to be re-modulated.

As we see the practice in Buddhist Studies, the primary sources, especially the texts, cannot be expected always to provide original data unused previously. Most of the time, as we have shown below, a primary source is a scholarly work on a particular subject which may or may not have been used before. The *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha* is a good example of such a work. The text, which is a condensed summary of the Abhidhamma was written by one Venerable Anuruddha between the 7th century and 12th century. The text was widely used by monastic and lay Buddhists as the Abhidhamma text par excellence for centuries and as a result, many commentaries and exegeses were written on that. The text was extensively studied by many scholars in many scholarly works. So, in a modern methodological sense, the text does not contain any new data that was not studied previously. However, this text is regarded as a primary source in Buddhist Studies.

In the case of secondary sources, as Milgo has pointed out above, the secondary data are raw materials used in other studies that the present researcher can use. Cohen et al also say that secondary data "can be regarded as second-hand data, having already been used previously" (Cohen et al, 2018: 586). Again, in the case of the social sciences, it is said that the secondary data "may have been gathered originally for another research study or for administrative purposes." (*The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*: 803). This theory is not compatible with Buddhist Studies. Scholars of Buddhist Studies may use such raw data in research but there is no tradition that such raw materials are called

secondary sources. Previous scholars considered only books and scholarly articles as secondary sources. Thus, a secondary source in Buddhist Studies is a written material complete in itself. According to the current practice in Buddhist Studies, the materials shown by Milgo cannot find another category other than tertiary.

To observe more views regarding the two major types of sources, Paramananda Himi says "True and latest results of research reported by researchers are primary sources. Primary sources are uninvestigated sources of data. They play an important role in the research literature. The primary sources provide the researcher with access to observe first hand data unmixed with other ideas…The secondary sources are the documents that explain or summarize others works"[3] (2014: 67). What Paramananda Himi identifies as primary sources can be included well in the secondary sources for Buddhist Studies for the reason that they present the standpoint of a researcher. The secondary sources he recognizes must be under tertiary sources (I have described below) as they represent a third level of information. Dhammapala Himi points out that "The primary sources are those that a researcher uses as materials existing in original form unanalyzed or uninterpreted such as publications, diaries and official documents. All books that consist of selections, editions and interpretations on the preliminary activity as such are secondary sources"[4] (1984: 32). Dhammapala Himi's idea is compatible with the sources of Buddhist Studies, nevertheless it must be expanded to include texts typically considered as primary sources.

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3   Author's translation

4   -ibid-

I have given below the secondary data accepted in Education by Cohen et al (2018: 586).

- official statistics
- national surveys (census and survey data from governments or organizations), for example, the General Household Survey.
- universities' and other institutions' records and administrative data.
- International surveys and assessments, for example, Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMMS), the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS).
- ongoing databases (e.g. the National Pupil Database).
- longitudinal, regular and cohort studies (e.g. the British Household Panel Survey, the British Cohort Study, national birth cohort studies such as the Millennium Cohort Study, the National Child Development Study, the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England, the German National Educational Panel Study).
- data archives (e.g. the Consortium for European).
- Social Science Data Archives; the European Social Survey).
- large-scale, specific surveys (e.g. the Youth Cohort).
- Study, the Young People's Social Attitudes Survey).
- learning analytics.
- Library records.
- accounts.

- administrative records (e.g. from governments and professions, such as the Department for Education).

From the above list only books and articles were considered as secondary sources by Buddhist Studies scholars. The convention to consider only scholarly materials as secondary sources is less complicated in case of Buddhist Studies. According to what is proposed below, Cohen's sources, except Scholarly Journals and books, can be used and interpreted originally by a Buddhist Studies researcher in a given research project as primary sources. The notion that a primary source must be material used for the first time in research is not a thesis warranted in Buddhism. So, they may be well-called primary.

In the selected scholars' books, the literature of minor importance was called Reference Works and they were included in the category of secondary sources (see 5.1.) by some scholars. The inclusion of these Reference Works under secondary sources is not only less technical but also makes that category ambiguous. In the proposal of this paper, the Reference Works together with manifold other sources were grouped in a category called Tertiary sources. The category is identified with such literature that summarizes the contents of secondary sources already published (https://ohiostate.pressbooks.pub/choosingsources/chapter/primary-secondary-tertiary-sources/ retrieved on 10/24/2023) and other written materials which are supportive in research in varieties of ways.

Finally, I am considering primary and secondary sources prescribed for the qualitative research. Following is the list presented Marshall University Libraries website:

Primary sources: artifacts, audio recordings, diaries, internet communication, interview, letters, peer-reviewed journal articles, original documents, patents, photos, proceedings, records of organizations, speeches, videos, survey results, works of art, web sites. Secondary sources: bibliographies, biographies, criticisms, commentaries, dictionaries, encyclopedias, histories, journal articles, monographs (except fiction and autobiographies), textbooks, and websites.

All types of scholarly articles including peer-reviewed journal articles are considered secondary sources in Buddhist Studies works. So, peer-reviewed journals are omitted from the primary source list in my classifications. Dictionaries and websites among secondary sources are considered to be summaries of secondary sources and consequently, they are categorized under Tertiary Sources.

By my conviction based on the ongoing conventions of data sources in the field of Buddhist Studies, a general definition of the three types of sources can be given as follows:

- Primary sources – A document or any other tangible or intangible phenomenon providing original first-hand information that needs interpretation to be used in a study.

- Secondary sources – Any systematically compiled document of an academic nature or scholarly nature providing a study with interpretative second-hand information.

- Tertiary sources – The literature that procures in a summary form the data that the secondary sources have already revealed and other written materials supplementary in a study.

Categories of sources

Primary Sources

In my experience, primary sources are the most difficult category to demarcate. It is of common knowledge that primary sources provide a window into the past—unfiltered access to philosophical, artistic, social, scientific political, religious, natural, or creative phenomena. The primary source or the content of the primary source (in the case the source is a book) needs to be subjected to interpretation. The fact that the primary sources etc., can vary from subject to subject and study to study makes it difficult to set a fixed set of sources as such. This most probably is the reason why there is no standard classification of these sources. However, anyone who undertakes writing a scholarly paper/ book has always to brainstorm in categorizing the sources used in the research. The following is a possible categorization of primary sources under the three types of headings mentioned above.

Sacred Texts

The religious literature that consists of divine Commands, messages, prescriptions, or a system of ethics of divine origin.

- The *Ṛg Veda* (Vedic Religion)
- The *Yajurveda* (Vedic Religion)
- The *Avestā* (Zoroastrisme)
- The *Rāmāyana* (Hinduism)
- The *Bhagavdgītā* (Hinduism)
- *Luke* (Christianity)

- *The Al Quran* (Islam)

- *The Guru Granth Sahib* (The scriptures of Sikhism)[5]

- The *Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇa* (Mythological texts of Hinduism)

- The *Manusmṛti* (Hinduism)

Canonical Religious Texts together with exegetical literature

- The *Dīghanikāya/ The Long Discourses of the Buddha*[6] (Early Buddhism)

- *The Acts of the Apostles* (The literature of the disciples of Jesus)

- *Tao Te Ching/ Dao De Jing* (Written by Lao Tzu in the common era as the text of the Tao religion).

- *The Book of Rites* (Confucianism).

- The *Samantapāsādikā* (Theravada School of Buddhism).

- The *Vibhāṣā* (Sarvāstivāda School of Buddhist Thought).

Texts of a School of Philosophy or any other discipline

The texts written by eminent, ancient and modern scholars belonging to a particular school of philosophy, psychology, education etc., are considered in this category.

- *The Symposium* (Written by Plato representing Greek Philosophy)

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5   They are of a form divine origin as the scriptures are regarded to have originated from an eternal living guru.

6   An English Translation of the *Dīghanikāya*.

- *The Republic* (Written by Plato representing Greek Philosophy)

- The *Visuddhimagga* (Written by Buddhaghosa representing Theravada School of Buddhism).

- *Mūlamadhyamikakārikā* (Written by Nāgārjuana representing Mādhyamika School of Buddhism)

- *Vijñapti-mātratā-siddhivāda* (Written by Vasubandhu representing Yogācāra idealistic School of Buddhism)

- *The Critique of Pure Reason* (Written by Emmanuel Kant representing the Modern Philosophical School of Western Philosophy)

- *The Das Kapital* (Written by Carl Marx representing the Marxist School of Philosophy)

- *A Theory of Human Motivation* (Written by Abraham Maslow representing the Humanistic School of Psychology)

Such texts as *Mūlamadhyamikakārikā* and *Vijñapti-mātratā-siddhivāda* mentioned in this category are included in the canonical texts in Chinese and Tibetan traditional classifications of Buddhist texts. In modern Buddhist Studies, they are considered to represent scholastic Buddhist literature. One who follows traditional classifications can categorize them as convenient to the traditional conventions.

Texts of Classical Literature written by historical veteran Literary artists

The ancient Classical Literature and the works of a particular literary tradition or historical period such as the Greek Period, Gupta Period (India), Polonnaruva Period, Kandy Period etc.

- The *Amāvatura* (A Sinhalese Prose written by Guruḷugomi representing the Polonnaru Period of Sri Lanka).

- *The Odyssey* (A poem written by Homer representing the Greek Period).

- The *Mahāvaṃsa* (Chronicle in Pali written by Venerable Mahāsena representing the Anuradhapura Period of Sri Lanka).

- The *Raghuvaṃsa* (Written by Kālidāsa during the Period of Classical Sanskrit Literature).

- *The Phoenix and the Turtle* (Written by William Shakespeare representing the Victorian Period of England).

Technical Manuals on a particular Art or Craft and texts of technical subjects

The texts consisting of instructions for artworks and crafts and other sciences are called technical manuals.

- The *Arthaśāstra* (A law text written by Kauṭilya mainly on statecraft).

- The *Kāvyādarśa* (Written by Daṇḍin on poetry).

- The *Sāriputraya* (Of unknown authorship on iconography).

- The *Suśṛtasaṃhitā* (Written by Suśṛta on Āyurveda).

- *Sambandhacintā* on syntax

- *Abhidhānappadīpikā*, the lexicon

- *Kaccāyana* on Pali grammar

- *A Treatise on Painting* (Written by Leonardo da Vinci on painting)

Non-Buddhist materials, secondary sources and tertiary sources qualifying as primary sources

Some of the literary works such as novels, short stories, poems etc., which are without Buddhist content and unidentified as primary sources can qualify as primary sources if a given research relies on that kind of literature. For instance, if somebody studies the influence of Buddhism on 20th-century Sri Lankan Sinhalese literature, the short stories etc., written during that period become primary sources. Similarly, for a researcher studying Sri Lankan Buddhist Studies in the 20th century, the books including Secondary Sources on Buddhism written during the corresponding period become primary sources. Written materials such as Government Acts, all kinds of reports (Medical Reports, Newspaper Reports, Evaluation Reports, Committee Reports Technical Reports etc.) and Textbooks which can be included in the category of Tertiary Sources should be considered primary sources if they provide unfiltered access to study a particular phenomenon. Supposing there is research on modern Buddhism, even a newspaper advertisement of a Buddhist activity could be

regarded as a primary source. Accordingly, there is always a possibility for a secondary source or a tertiary source to be a primary source depending on the kind of research undertaken but this cannot happen other way around.

Non-literary Primary Sources

Primary sources are not always literary texts; instead they can also be the following providing the researcher with unfiltered information.

A. An object close in time and space to the phenomenon we study.

B. A person with first-hand experience who can provide reliable information in qualitative research (Oliver, 2004: 26).

C. A group of people, animals, plants or other objects selected or set in a testable way by the researcher seeking answers to his research question/s.

The following are some of the sources that can be regularly considered as non-literary primary.

• Interviewee

Someone with firsthand experience in the subject area concerned or of the phenomenon investigated.

• The Controlled/ uncontrolled Groups

There are occasions when students use controlled and uncontrolled groups, mostly applied in quantitative research in the Humanities as well. In a Study like 'The Threptic Value of Chanting: A Study of Fatal Cancer Patients' the researcher might use a controlled group and an uncontrolled group to be exposed to chanting and another group without such exposure.

- A sample.

    A small group is taken to represent the whole in both quantitative and qualitative research (Flick, 2011: 71, 75).

- Art and Architectural works (especially those of historical value related to the field research).

    The free-erected buildings, Rock-cut caves, plans, images, paintings, and sculptures. The related matter includes such minor aspects of art and architecture such as gestures, postures, bodily features, jewels, pedestals, attire, mouldings, pillars, doors, door-posts, gateways, balustrades.

- Works of Fine Arts and Performing Arts.

    Paintings, sculptures, Drama, Dance, Music, Singing, Films.

- Any animate or inanimate set/ group of objects observed (humans, animals, plants).

- Inscriptions (the original inscription or a reproduction such as a carbon copy of the original inscription).

- Coins (with historical value).

- The Interviewee (any interviewee having a first-hand experience of something).

- Social and religious Phenomena (conflicts, groups, wars, rituals etc.), institutions (marriage, clergy, rituals, academic circles etc.) and organizations (schools, hospitals, universities, NGOs etc.).

- Non-literary art (such as Folk tales, Folk Rhymes, Nursery-rhymes, paintings, and performing arts).

Non-literary arts like folk-tales may have varities of versions with slight or significant variations. However, each version of how it was heard within a particular area or community is regarded as a primary source).

Scholarly reproductions of primary sources

An Edition is a reproduction of a primary source which previously existed in manuscript form. A translation most of the time is a reproduction of an edited version of a manuscript. We saw above the pioneer students of Buddhist Studies categorizing both editions and translations under primary sources. In the case of editions and translations, the name of the original text can be slightly different from editor to editor and from translator to translator. However, we consider the name given by the editor or translator as the authentic name. For the *Dīghanikāya*, the Buddhist canonical text has been translated as *The Long Discourses of the Buddha* and this name given by the translator Bhikkhu Bodhi is accepted as the title. This rule applies to the edition as well.

The most important thing is the credibility. What Wickramasinghe (2001: 70, 71) says of the sources in History can be applied with adjustment here. According to him, there are a few things that the researcher needs to consider in using an edition or translation in a study. The scholarly reputation is one thing to regard. If the scholar is a well-known recognized scholar, such a publication is highly credible. The publisher is another thing to consider. Reputed international publishers, Pali Text Society, for example, publishes only the editions of top-level editors and translators. The introduction can give an idea about the standards applied in editing and translating. If the edition or translation is based on a University thesis,

that can be credible as such a work demands systematic engagement for a few years and it is examined by other fellow academics.

A credible scholarly edition or a translation of a primary source with the editor's/ translator's introduction, forward, critical notes, cross-references, critical footnotes/ end Notes etc., shuold still be regarded as a primary source. Non-literary primary sources (such as inscriptions, and folk tales) are collected and published in print. In this case, the publication is not regarded as a primary source. According to the nature of such a publication, they can be included in the Secondary or Tertiary sources. *Epigraphia Zeylanica* contain primary sources, the ancient inscriptions found in Sri Lanka, but they are not primary source because they do not provide unfiltered access to the sources. Once an image of the carbon copy produced in copying the source is published in a book, that genuine copy alone can be regarded as primary but not the whole printed book. Reproductions from sources such as artworks can be regarded as genuine sources of they have been reproduced following acceptable scientific method. For instance, some of the replicas of such artworks like those of paintings produced using acceptable scientific methods like those preserved in the museums can be regarded as a primary source. The photos of any given phenomenon or incident under study are primary sources. If that kind of photo is found in reliable secondary source, that photo only considered primary.

Secondary Sources: a viable category

- Monographs (Literary works such as books and booklets on a particular subject)

Buddhist Analysis of Matter.

Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge.

- An Article from an Academic Journal (the journal can be either an Indexed Journal, Peer Reviewed Journal or any other Journal by a Recognized Academic Institution).

- A chapter of a Symposium of Articles published by a recognized publisher.

- A research study in a Recognized Magazine.

- An article of a Symposium or an Academic Conference.

    This should be a full paper written for an academic conference and not an abstract in Conference proceedings.

- Encyclopedia (of a particular subject/ subject area with scholarly articles).

    Encyclopaedia of Religion.

    Encyclopaedia of Buddhism.

- Dictionaries (of a particular subject/ subject area with scholarly articles)

    Buddhist Dictionary (written by venerable Nyanatiloka).

    Dictionary of Pali Proper Names (written by G.P. Malalasekera).

- Forward/ Preface of a book.

- Abstracts/ Full Papers of Scholarly Symposiums (these abstracts are collected in the names of the books such as Conference Proceedings, Abstracts).

Tertiary sources: a viable category

- Encyclopedias (general, not consisting of scholarly papers)

- Dictionaries (general, not consisting of scholarly papers)

  Oxford Dictionary of Psychology.

  Sanskrit-English Dictionary

- Factbooks

  A book/ booklet of General Science Questions and Answers.

  A book or booklet of a line of kings of a particular historical dynasty or period.

- Bibliographies

- Guidebooks (such as tour guidebooks).

- Handbooks (Such as a booklet on Cookery).

- Textbooks (used in any level of teaching and learning).

- Websites

Citation of sources

There are several reference methods, Chicago Reference Style, Harvard Reference Style, American Psychological Association (APA) Reference Style, and Standard British to mention a few, accepted in referencing by modern researchers. These reference methods have different technical means used in citing or referencing a source. It should be noted that these reference systems do not guide us to determine the unique primary sources in a given study. There is a particular technical

method to cite either a monograph or a column article. Whether the cited source is primary or secondary is to be determined solely by the researcher. So, it is the researcher's responsibility to correctly identify sources.

There are many situations in which we find it confusing to correctly identify and cite the source in Buddhist Studies by a given system. The *Visuddhimagga* from Pali literature is a good example of this nature. This is an independent work of a known author, Buddhaghosa in the 5th century. Unless a systematic explanation, there can always be doubt regarding which category the *Visuddhimagga* should be classified under. In this work, the *Visuddhimagga* should be categorized under Primary sources as it is a text representing a particular system of thought, the Theravāda school of thought. Similarly, we regard the *Republic and Symposium* as the primary sources for the reason that they represent a particular school of Western philosophy, the Greek Philosophical School.

Conclusion

Categorizing the sources of Buddhist Studies is the subject matter of this study. I have pointed out that the methodology textbooks of other disciplines do not adequately support determining the sources of data in Buddhist Studies. Based on the conventions of esteemed Buddhist Studies scholars as well as my own logical conviction, I have classified different sources used in Buddhist Studies into three – Original or Primary Sources which are literary or non-literary, Secondary Sources which are always scholarly works, and Tertiary which are again written and otherwise. I also have shown that there cannot be a fixed set of sources as Primary etc., as a secondary source or a tertiary can be a primary source

depending on the research. However, there is the possibility to identify a few sub categories of sources which might be invariable within the three broader categories. As research in Buddhist Studies at present is diverse, and and intra-subject many sources which are essentially not Buddhist in content are inserted into these categories for the researchers' convenience. The researcher has to inquire in to the credibility of the method followed in making a reproduction from the primary source when determining the former as a primary source.

The referencing systems does not help us to understand the nature of the source. They instruct us on technical means of systematically citing varieties of written or other materials. One can cite a source or mention it in the Bibliography in consistent with the reference style. However, whether cited source is a primary source etc. is to be determined by the researcher

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