

## **An Inquiry into Hua-Yen Environmentalism and its Relevance for International Humanitarian Law**

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### **Introduction**

Hua-Yen is one of the Mahayana Buddhist schools originated in China during Tang Dynasty (618-907 CE). In particular, this profound Buddhist school was derived from the various patterns of traditional Chinese philosophies; Confucianism, Taoism and so on. Hua-Yen is Chinese term for Sanskrit term 'Avatamsaka', which means 'flower garland'. So, this tradition is based on the Avatamsaka Sutta. In fact, this is a metaphor for explaining the doctrine of Pañicasamuppāda. Hua-Yen was influenced by the Mādhyamaka philosophy of Nagarjuna, which is based on Emptiness. Hence, Hua-Yen philosophy is a Chinese intellectual tradition with great influence of Indian thought. The main purpose of this article is to inquire into the environmental views generated by Hua-Yen Buddhism and how we can consider about the environment when wars are happening, to reduce the damages not only for human beings, but also for other beings and environment as well.

### **Methodology**

Analytical and description method would be used. This is based on both primary and secondary sources, such as books, research papers, articles, web sites and so on.

### **Result and Discussion**

Hua-yen Buddhism deeply discusses the relationship between the universe and human being based on dependent- origination. In particular, the concepts of Emptiness, the jewel net of Indra, Dharmadhatu and Buddha nature are directly discussed regarding the relationship between world and man. According to the Hua-Yen world view 'whole is part, part is whole' (all is one, one is all), This paradoxical statement reveals the relation between 'self' and 'other'. Without 'I' there is no possibility to exist 'other', in contrast there is no possibility to exist so called 'I' without existing 'other'. Hua-Yen Buddhism provides a specific concept

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known as Jewel Net of God Indra. This illustrates the inter-dependence of the things; a vast net on which a spherical, crystal clear jewel is tied on each mesh, so that each jewel reflects the entire net (the whole) and each individual jewel (the part), which itself reflects the whole and the parts. This metaphor clearly captures the Hua-yen notion of emptiness (exemplified by the crystal clarity of the jewels), identity (exemplified by the sameness of the jewels) and interpenetration (exemplified by the infinite reflections in the jewel). If one jewel may slip from the net, where inter connection is completely disconnected. There is no longer any relations to each other. In particular, this metaphor indicates, identity of the things is depended on each other. When there does not imply an inter-dependence of the things, then we cannot see an identity at all. According to this explanation, both human beings and Universe (environment) are inter-connected.

Another key doctrine of Hua-yen is the mutual containment and interpenetration of all phenomena that is known as Dharmadhātu. This is associated with what the Hua-yen sees as its unique, the 'dharmadhātu pratītyasamutpāda'. This is described the idea that countless dharmas (all phenomena in the world) are representations of the wisdom of the Buddha without exception and that they exist in a state of mutual dependence, interfusion and balance without any contradiction or conflict. According to this theory, any phenomenon exists only as part of the total nexus of reality, its existence depends on the total network of all other things, which are all equally connected to each other and contained in each other.

The universal Buddhahood is come from this concept of Dharmadhātu. To Hua-yen, everyone has opportunity (seed) to become Buddhahood. In fact, this universal Buddha nature has spread all over the world. Even in a leaf of a tree, the Buddha nature has contained (the concept of Tathāgatha garbha). From this Buddha nature, Hua-yen favored the both teachings; sudden enlightenment and environmentalism. Because, the Buddha nature is already present in all sentient beings and also their theory of interpenetration entails that Buddhahood is already presented at the first stage of a Bodhisattva's path. Therefore, both universe and human being consists the Buddha nature that asserts the existence of world and man are not two things. It is one thing (One for all, all for one). For example, the Buddha 'vairochana' is considered as the universe (he is similar to the universe). If someone who destroys or damages the environment, then he indeed hurts the Buddha Vairochana. He shakes blood of Virochana Buddha's body. Hua-Yen provides a great and sacred place to the environment. We cannot see such environmental view in any other traditions.

In considering the relevancy of Hua-Yen environmentalism to international human law, in fact, the IHL contains the laws which are necessary considered not only the human beings, but also the other beings (non-human beings) and environment in armed conflicts. When wars are happening, other living beings also

can be harmed and the environment can be damaged. the trees, air, water, all the things are contaminated. the IHL tries to reduce these damages following the rules and laws which completely agree that the people who do not support to the wars, cannot be identified as an armed man. he is a civil man. Likewise, that agrees the environment; trees, air, water should not be contaminated in the battle sides, the reason those activities directly influence to the all living things. Hence, the Hua-Yen Buddhism supposes the most important environmental friendly teachings to maintain the environment as what IHL wants to do. The particular thing is that both man and environment are inter-connected (inter-dependent). There is no individual existence or identity any more. Therefore, both existences should be considered when happening the armed wars.

**Keywords:** IHL, Environment, Hua-yen, Human beings, Wars

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