



An Investigative Study of the Modern Utility of the Practice of Empathy Practiced by the Ancients for Contemporary Social Progress

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Abstract

The practice of empathy in the past was very important for the social progress of that time. The purpose of this research is to identify how the practice of empathy practiced by the ancients can be used in modern society. The problem of this research is how modern society can use the practice of empathy practiced by the ancients during the Rajarata civilization. The research method used here is the historical research method. The research methodology here is to conclude by studying the data obtained comparatively and analytically from many sources such as the literature and archaeological sources of the Rajarata civilization period. Empathy is feeling the needs and feelings of another person as one's own. The ancient society worked with each other in mutual relation and compassion. During the time of King Mahachulika Maha Tissa (77-63 BC), this king can be considered a ruler who had a good understanding of the life of the common people. The inscription belonging to King Kutakannatissa in the Dambulla Vihara shows that the king should act as a servant to the people of the country. The rulers worked with them in mutual relations. As such, the royals were tempted to give them grants even in villages. King Vijayabahu 1st granted village wards to Budalnavas through the Panakaduwa Thaba Sannasa as an appreciation for the work done by him. But today's society has failed to protect the virtues inherited from the past, no matter how advanced it is in many areas including technology, knowledge, and education. The ruler had to respect the people and the order. The kings of the past acted with compassion towards it. Therefore, people were even tempted to treat them as deities. The Ambagamuwa Inscription mentions hitting children, showing respect to monks, bowing to justice, patronizing intellectuals, entertaining close friends, and showing mercy to all creatures. The lack of humanity, lack of understanding, and respect among people have greatly affected the social decline of Sri Lanka as a country. Therefore, it can be concluded that the concept of empathy practiced by the ancients was a strong influence on contemporary social progress and sustainable development in the ancient kingdom, for finding solutions to current problems and challenges, as well as for bequeathing human and physical resources to the next generation by enjoying them properly.

Keywords: Ancient, Empathy, Modern, Practice, Social progress

