



Blending Traditional and Modern Political Thought: A Comparative Analysis of Buddhist Ethics and Thai Political Thought

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Abstract: This paper explores the intersection of Buddhist ethics and Thai political thought, examining how traditional Buddhist principles are integrated into modern governance. By analyzing key Buddhist teachings, such as compassion, non-violence, and mindfulness, the paper highlights their influence on the political landscape in Thailand. It delves into the historical foundations of Buddhist ethics and their role in shaping Thai political systems, including governance, leadership, and societal duties. The paper also compares Buddhist ethical frameworks with Western political thought, emphasizing differences in community-oriented values versus individual rights. Through case studies and an exploration of social movements, it demonstrates how Buddhist teachings continue to impact modern political actions, fostering social justice, environmental sustainability, and community cohesion. The study concludes by examining the potential for resolving political conflicts through the application of Buddhist ethics, offering a unique approach to governance in the context of globalization and contemporary political challenges.

Keywords: Buddhist Ethics, Thai Political Thought, Compassion, Governance, Globalization

1. Introduction

The mix of old and new political ideas creates an interesting area for study, especially regarding Buddhist ethics and Thai political ideas. This essay will look at how these two ideas work together and shape current political actions in Thailand. By reviewing the main ideas of Buddhist ethics—like kindness, avoiding violence, and seeking the common good—this analysis will show what they mean for government and community duties. Also, the development of Thai political ideas, influenced by historical events and cultural factors, offers a detailed background to assess these ethical ideas. As Thailand deals with the challenges of modern government, which is affected by global forces and internal political issues, understanding how these traditional beliefs mix with modern political thoughts is crucial for understanding the country's special political character. This analysis will clarify these interactions and their wider meanings for political theory.

Political thought includes the ideas and beliefs that influence how we view government, power, and society. It acts as a tool for people to think about the moral and ethical aspects of political systems. In Thailand, political thought uniquely combines Buddhist ethics

with both old and new values. This cultural view shows how Thai people deal with their identities and civic duties in the political environment, especially through practices like Wai Phra Kao Wat, which highlight the connection between religion and the state. This pilgrimage shows the ritual aspects of Thai culture, allowing people to interact with their government in ways that align with their religious views. The mix of Eastern and Western ideas adds depth to discussions about political thought, reflecting how Thai identity changes with global influences (Alasuutari P et al., 2014) (KAIMOOK et al., 2018).

Buddhist ethics comes from the teachings of the Buddha and includes many different principles that promote compassion, non-harm, and mindfulness for individuals and society. These ethical ideas focus on intention and building virtues, guiding people toward enlightenment while also caring for the well-being of all living beings. In today's world, especially in Buddhist-majority countries like Thailand, the challenge lies in combining these ethical teachings with modern political ideas. Events like the protests by monks in Myanmar show the complicated relationship between human rights and Buddhist teachings, highlighting the conflict between traditional values and current political situations (N/A, 2008). Additionally, globalization and advancements in communication technology present both chances and challenges in sharing a worldwide understanding of ethical standards without falling into cultural domination or extreme relativism (Ess et al., 2008). This complex relationship requires a careful examination of Buddhist ethics in today's political discussions.

The background of Thai political thinking is closely linked with the country's Buddhist traditions, which have largely influenced its systems of governance and political ideas. In Thailand, the connection between Theravada Buddhism and the government appears not just in the ideas about ruling but also in cultural practices. One example of this connection is the Wai Phra Kao Wat pilgrimage, where the government supports Buddhist ceremonies to strengthen national identity and support the legitimacy of the regime. This effort shows how today's Thai people deal with the complicated mix of political and religious identities, representing a balance of meanings in governance (KAIMOOK et al., 2018). Also, research on state-society relations shows that the historical blend of Buddhist values into political talks has created a way to understand current political situations in a quickly evolving Southeast Asian context (N/A, 2016). These insights highlight the importance of historical background in understanding modern Thai political thought.

In a world that is more connected, combining old and new ideas is very important for political thinking, especially where cultural history meets modern government. The mix of Buddhist values into Thai political ideas shows how old moral beliefs can guide today's politics, leading to a better way of governing. This mix shows up in many ways, like the Wai Phra Kao Wat pilgrimage, which is not just a religious event but also a way for people to connect with the government and strengthen their civic identity (KAIMOOK et al., 2018). Also, recognizing the different thinking styles between Eastern and Western cultures highlights the importance of including various viewpoints in political conversations. Understanding these different influences can improve both political theory and practice, leading to a deeper understanding of management and governance that blends the best of both traditions (Alasuutari P et al., 2014).

The mix of Buddhist ethics into Thai political thinking gives a detailed view of modern governance and social values, forming a strong main argument for this comparison. By looking at how old Buddhist ideas influence today's political systems, one can see how these teachings might help solve present social and political issues. The history of Buddhist monks' involvement in countries like Myanmar and Sri Lanka shows the conflict between religious beliefs and human rights, raising important questions about how ethics and governance

interact in mainly Buddhist nations (N/A, 2008). Additionally, the impact of globalization, shown by the quick growth of communication technologies, challenges local political stories, which could lead to better cross-cultural discussions or increase conflicts based on ethnocentrism (Ess et al., 2008). Therefore, this analysis aims to find ways to connect Buddhist ethics with modern political ideas, enhancing both areas in the face of global issues.

2. Historical Foundations of Buddhist Ethics

The history of Buddhist ethics is closely connected with the ideas promoted by the Buddha, which focus on doing what is right, being aware, and growing compassion. This system of ethics began with the early teachings of Buddhism and highlights the role of intention in moral deeds, affecting both individual actions and group societal standards. As Buddhist groups grew, different views on these ethical ideas came about, impacting political ideas in places like Thailand. The complex link between Buddhism and politics in Thailand can be seen in historical stories that show how spiritual values have shaped social and political movements. For example, the alternative education movement in Thailand serves as a case study of this relationship, as it represents a long-standing spiritual tradition pushing back against state reforms, showcasing a mix of local Buddhist practices and current political systems (Jones et al., 2008). Additionally, understanding these historical factors is vital when looking at modern Thai political views through the lens of Buddhist ethics (Jared et al., 2015).

Buddhist ethics are based on ideas like compassion, mindfulness, and interdependence, which help guide behavior and choices in personal and social situations. A central idea in these teachings is ahimsa, or non-harm, which tells people not to do things that hurt others, promoting a peaceful community. This ethical system also highlights the need for good intentions, as actions stemming from kindness are key to good behavior. In today's Thailand, thinkers like Phra Buddhadasa Bhikkhu have worked to adapt these ethical ideas to tackle current social and political challenges ((Jackson et al., 1986)). Also, as globalization encourages mixing cultures, the challenge is to find a way to connect these old ethical ideas with modern values, making sure that Buddhist principles stay important for dealing with today's complex issues (Ess et al., 2008).

The Four Noble Truths are key to Buddhist philosophy and have a big impact on political ideas by giving a way to think about suffering and how to govern ethically. These truths explain suffering, where it comes from, how to stop it, and the way to do this. This idea is useful for personal health as well as for society. By stressing the connections between people and the importance of kindness, Buddhist ethics offers a different way of thinking compared to usual political views that focus on self-interest and consumerism. (Masinter et al., 2018) shows this by looking at how the teachings of Buddhadhamma help people be aware of social suffering and promote active participation in community issues. Additionally, (Swearer et al., 2001) points out how Buddhist views on ecology can shape decisions in environmental policies, merging old ideas with current political issues. In the end, the Four Noble Truths act as a guide for political actions aiming for fairness and sustainability within Thai political ideas.

The bringing together of kindness and non-violence in government shows a deep commitment to ethics found in Buddhist ideas, focusing on moral principles instead of forceful control. These ideas are important in shaping political conversations in Thailand, where the mix of traditional Buddhist morals and current political systems makes a special way of governing. Kind leadership creates an atmosphere of understanding and peace, which is vital for handling social and political issues that can come up in diverse societies. This is more important now with changing relationships between the state and society and multicultural

policies discussed in the book series about Southeast Asia, which highlights the need for governance methods that consider diversity and social efforts (N/A, 2016). Furthermore, studies on alternative education in Thailand show how these spiritual beliefs support social change through peaceful methods, demonstrating historical governance patterns that see compassion as key (Jones et al., 2008).

Historical figures in Buddhist political thought are important in shaping how religious ideas and government overlap, especially in Thailand. Figures like King Rama IX have emphasized combining Buddhist ethics with political administration, showing that moral authority is needed for valid governance. The current practice of Wai Phra Kao Wat shows that Buddhist rituals can be both ways of showing devotion and tools of government legitimacy, helping to strengthen a shared Thai identity and national unity (KAIMOOK et al., 2018). Nonetheless, past conflicts between Buddhism and human rights, highlighted by recent monk-led protests in areas like Tibet and Myanmar, show possible conflicts between traditional Buddhist beliefs and modern political situations (N/A, 2008). Therefore, studying these historical figures reveals a complicated story where Buddhist ethical ideas both shape and challenge current political thinking in Thailand.

The study of Buddhist ethics in Thai political thought shows a clear difference from Western ethical ideas, especially regarding how moral reasoning works and how the self is understood. Western ethics usually focus on individual rights and personal freedom, while Buddhist ethics emphasize community well-being and interconnectedness, with moral actions directed by compassion and the principle of non-harm. This difference is important because it influences how ethical problems are discussed in Thailand's political talks. The increasing role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) makes these differences even more pronounced, as cross-cultural exchanges expose the danger of forcing Western standards onto different cultures (Ess et al., 2008). Additionally, to grasp the Thai viewpoint on new topics like human-robot interactions and privacy issues, it is essential to think about what it means to live a good and virtuous life. This shows that local values can only be truly valued by recognizing these ethical perspectives (Nakada et al., 2012).

3. Evolution of Thai Political Thought

The growth of Thai political ideas shows a complicated relationship between old Buddhist beliefs and the challenges of running a modern state. In the past, Thai political systems were heavily shaped by Buddhist values, stressing moral leadership and the well-being of the people as key aspects of governance. But with Western influence and constitutionalism emerging in the 20th century, there was a need to rethink these old ideas, leading to a conversation between traditional morals and modern democratic thoughts. Experts say this mix has led to a unique “Buddhist-constitutional complex,” where ideas of law and human rights are viewed through a Buddhist perspective, encouraging social peace along with individual rights (2022). The need to face modern issues in a global setting also highlights the importance of wisdom in education, making it necessary to include teaching methods that develop this vital trait in future leaders (Zane M Diamond, 2021).

When looking at traditional Thai political systems and ideas, it is important to see how closely Buddhism and the government are connected. The monarchy is often seen as the foundation of Thai political identity and is traditionally regarded as a sacred institution with moral authority linked to Buddhist beliefs. Monks, who are part of the Sangha, play a significant role in shaping how the public views justice and governance, supporting the idea that moral leadership is vital for national stability and success (Larsson et al., 2019). This

connection shows the unique Thai experience of mixing religion and politics, placing Buddhism not just as a spiritual journey but as a way to unify society. As Thailand faces modern challenges, grasping this mixture of traditional beliefs and contemporary political ideas is important for tackling the complexities of policy development and social change in a fast-changing Southeast Asian landscape (2017).

Buddhism and governance in Thailand have a complicated connection that shows how old and new political ideas come together, affecting the country's social and political scene. The Thai monarchy has historically worked closely with Buddhist institutions, using Buddhist values like compassion and justice to support royal authority. This relationship is clear in today's Thai government, where policies often represent Buddhist ethics that aim to improve social harmony and welfare. Moreover, Buddhism's impact goes beyond the monarchy into society, creating a space for social justice projects inspired by Buddhist principles to tackle modern issues. Recent events, like the 14 Sakyadhita International Conference on Buddhist Women, demonstrate this relationship, promoting teamwork between feminist views and social justice efforts while stressing the importance of Buddhist ethics in today's governance, showing how traditional practices can merge with modern political ideas (Drollinger-Smith et al., 2014) (Tsomo et al., 2015).

As modernization keeps changing societies worldwide, its effect on political ideas is getting deeper, especially in places like Thailand, where old values mix with new modern ideas. The connection between Buddhism and political beliefs shows a special interaction, where new education movements push back against state changes often based on Western ideas. Studies show these movements might reflect an old spiritual tradition that opposes dominant reform, indicating that the roots of today's political actions in Thailand are closely linked to cultural and spiritual stories (Jones et al., 2008). Furthermore, the protests by monks in both the past and present show how Buddhist values can be used to support human rights, blending spiritual beliefs with political action (2008). This mix of old ethics and new ideas creates a complicated situation where globalization pressures change and influence political thinking.

In modern times, Thailand has gone through major political changes that show a mix of old and new political ideas, with Buddhist values frequently influencing social norms. The 1932 Siamese Revolution was an important change from absolute monarchy to a constitutional government, highlighting the impact of Western political thoughts while still keeping aspects of Thai culture linked to Buddhism. Later movements, especially in the 1970s, showed increasing frustration with military control and a push for democratic changes. Activists, motivated by Buddhist ideas of harmony and fairness, aimed to raise the voices of ordinary people, challenging the established elite. However, as seen in the latest protests, the relationship between traditional beliefs and modern political goals is still changing, reflecting a complicated situation where Thai political ideas navigate national identity amidst global influences and internal conflicts (Meyer et al., 2021) (Carmody et al., 2017).

The monarchy has greatly shaped how politics are viewed in Thailand, mixing old traditions with new ideas that affect current governance. There's a strong cultural respect for the king as a father figure, which creates a special political atmosphere where power is often seen in family terms, as shown by the ongoing youth activism movements. These movements reveal a clash between generations, where younger Thais push for equal rights, opposing the monarchy while dealing with family relationship complexities, highlighted by feelings of rebellion against authority and 'hierarchical siblinghood' in their political actions (Bolotta et al., 2024). Additionally, the connection between the state and religion adds another layer to this scenario, as the Sangha is important for making the monarchy legitimate and supporting

its ethical role in governance (Larsson et al., 2019). Thus, the monarchy continues to be a key part of Thai political identity, linking historical respect with modern goals for democracy.

4. Comparative Analysis of Buddhist Ethics and Thai Political Thought

The relationship between Buddhist ethics and Thai political ideas shows a complicated connection that mixes old values with new government methods. A key part of this discussion is the work of Phra Buddhadasa Bhikkhu, an important person who changed how people view Theravada Buddhism to fit modern issues. His new interpretation questions the strictness usually linked with traditional beliefs, pushing for a flexible approach that takes into account social and political situations, highlighting how Buddhist values are important in today's world (Jackson et al., 1986). Moreover, globalization, made possible by improvements in information and communication technologies, has increased cultural exchanges that create both chances and challenges. While it can enhance local cultures, it also risks promoting ethnocentric imperialism, which might damage these unique cultural practices (Ess et al., 2008). Therefore, this comparison shows that successfully combining these views requires carefully managing ethical standards in the changing Thai social and political environment.

The ethical base of traditional Buddhist ideas and current Thai political views shows clear similarities, especially in their focus on compassion and mindfulness. Traditional Buddhist ethics, based on non-harm and the idea of interconnectedness, create a moral guide that aims to lessen suffering for all living beings. This closely connects to modern Thai political talk, which often includes Buddhist ideas to support social welfare and community peace. The rise of modern mindfulness practices also shows a merging of ethics since they try to make Buddhist ideas easier for regular people to understand while keeping the main ideas of compassion and awareness. As pointed out, "these movements were, in part, attempts to render Buddhist practice and insight accessible to laypeople unfamiliar with Buddhist philosophy" (Ahn J et al., 2015). In both the old and new contexts, these common ethical foundations act as an important link, encouraging teamwork between spiritual and political areas (Sharf et al., 2017).

The differences in governance application, especially in Thai political thought and Buddhist ethics, come from how traditional values mix with current political situations. In Thailand, governance is greatly shaped by Buddhist ideas, which stress moral leadership, community good, and social peace. These ideas often conflict with the modern political demand for quick and clear decisions in governance, creating a complicated relationship. While traditional Buddhist ethics suggest a caring and inclusive governance style, current practices might rely on bureaucratic systems that focus more on stability and control than on spiritual or ethical values. Additionally, research from a program looking at religion and public policy in Southeast Asia shows that different views of Buddhism can influence governance approaches, affecting how the state manages diversity and social change (2016)). This relationship highlights the need to balance historical cultural contexts with changing political systems for effective governance in Thailand (2017)).

The connection between community and individualism is important in Buddhist ethics and Thai political thought, showing that collective health is needed with personal growth. In traditional Buddhist ideas, people are taught to develop compassion and mindfulness, which helps build a community that goes beyond just personal gain. This communal idea is clearly shown in the Thai Asoke community, where group mindfulness represents a real example of these beliefs. These groups not only push back against capitalist individualism but also

promote sustainability and social responsibility, demonstrating how community values can lead to social changes (Ambedkar B R et al., 2017). Yet, it is important to recognize that modern views can sometimes lean toward individualism, as seen in today's political talks. The presence of language bias on digital platforms can reinforce narrow views, making it harder to understand these complex issues and reducing the appreciation for different cultural views within the idea of community and individualism (Luo et al., 2023).

The effect of globalization on thinking systems, especially in Thai political ideas and Buddhist morals, shows big changes in social and political environments. As Thailand deals with outside influences, traditional ideas often face challenges from new beliefs, leading to a complicated relationship between old knowledge and modern management. For example, the growth of different educational movements based on Buddhist values shows this struggle, as supporters attempt to include spirituality in their reactions to the dominance of global reforms. This situation is clear in the way grassroots efforts, like those started by Buddhist "forest monks," have worked to build civil society while handling the impacts of globalization (Walter et al., 2006). Additionally, studies show that Thailand's historical trends have reflected global patterns, indicating a two-way connection where local beliefs adjust to and resist outside forces (Jones et al., 2008). Thus, the mix of traditional and modern thinking systems is a careful response to the mixed effects of globalization on Thai society.

The merging of old Buddhist ethics with new political ideas is clearly seen in the leadership of key people in Southeast Asia, especially in Thailand. These leaders often deal with the complex nature of governing by showing compassion and social responsibility based in Buddhism, while also tackling modern issues like human rights and gender matters. An important example is how recent protests by monks connect political actions with Buddhist teachings, showing the religious basis of social justice and public policy in countries where Buddhism is the main religion. These protests relate to larger discussions about the link between Buddhism and human rights, showing how traditional beliefs can influence and improve current governing systems. The research from various countries highlights these details in the setting of quick social change in Southeast Asia, showing the lively connection between tradition and new ideas in political leadership (2017) (2008).

5. Contemporary Relevance of Blending Traditions

The current importance of mixing old and new political ideas is crucial for Thai political discussions, where Buddhist values play a significant role in shaping how people participate in politics and how government operates. As Thailand deals with the challenges of globalization, merging local philosophies, especially those from Buddhist backgrounds, into modern political ideas creates a governance model that is more inclusive and responsive. The differences in thinking and language between Eastern and Western viewpoints show the need for this blend, as highlighted in (Alasuutari P et al., 2014), which shows that Asian management studies gain from including various perspectives. Also, the study of spiritual identity in modern art, as mentioned in (Pattanachoti et al., 2012), acts as a symbol for society's broader quest for identity in the face of modernization. Therefore, mixing traditions enriches the political environment, making sure that both cultural legacy and modern ideas support a more comprehensive way of governance.

Thailand's current political situation faces many hard issues that challenge the country's ability to mix old values with new governance. The relationship between Buddhist morals, which is key to Thai political thinking, and today's political needs has created a tough split. This tension shows in the rising public calls for transparency and democratic changes,

which often conflict with strong cultural ideas supporting hierarchy and stability. The ongoing political unrest, marked by protests asking for reforms, highlights the fight between maintaining historical practices and responding to the people's demands for change. Moreover, globalization and digital communication bring new ethical problems that the Thai government needs to handle, stressing the need for a moral guide that aligns local customs with global human rights standards. Thus, tackling these political issues needs a careful understanding of the fine line between old principles and modern goals, which can be greatly informed by insights from current discussions on ethics and religion (Ess C, 2020) (Enstedt D et al., 2019).

In today's governance, Buddhist ethics play a key role that affects political talks and choices in Thailand. The ideas of kindness, non-violence, and awareness found in Buddhist beliefs push leaders to focus on the well-being of their people and encourage social peace. As Thailand deals with the challenges of modern life, the lasting impact of these ethical ideas is visible in policies aimed at improving community health and fair resource sharing. Researchers look at the connection between the government and religion, especially the role of the Sangha, underscoring the link between moral power and political authority (Larsson et al., 2019). Furthermore, including Buddhist ethics in public policy shows how old values can shape modern governance, dealing with matters like multiculturalism and social action in a fast-changing Southeast Asian setting (N/A, 2016). Therefore, the blend of Buddhist ethics with current political systems highlights an important aspect of Thailand's distinct governance style.

Combining ethical ideas from Buddhist ethics and current political ideas has a lot of potential for fixing conflicts, especially where heritage and identity meet. In Thailand, for instance, the existence of many discussions about cultural heritage—like the traditional Buddhist/animistic view and Western Authorized Heritage Discourse—often causes issues among various groups (Saengphueng et al., 2011). Using ethical practices that focus on respecting cultural differences and social duties, as discussed in the realm of cosmopolitan archaeologies, can help manage competing interests in a better way (N/A, 2020). This method not only recognizes the different values linked to heritage but also encourages conversation among communities, promoting a shared sense of responsibility that can mend gaps. In the end, using various ethical ideas can improve understanding, boost teamwork, and create ways to solve deep-rooted conflicts related to cultural heritage stories.

Social movements have been key in changing political ideas, especially in places with strong traditional values like Thailand. The rise of communitarian ideas in the 1980s by social activists and academics is a clear example of this. These ideas not only influenced political talks but also became part of national development plans and Thailand's Constitution. The growth of these concepts shows how different political beliefs came together for a common goal, with state leaders, anti-state activists, and social reformers working together to advance communitarian philosophy ((Shinichi S, 2013)). Additionally, in Southeast Asia, the link between religion and political changes highlights the active relationship between social movements and policy discussions, focusing on gender roles and identity formation ((N/A, 2017)). These movements represent a mix of traditional views and modern political thinking, creating a better understanding of governance in today's Thai society.

As Thailand moves through modern times, its political identity's future will depend on how traditional Buddhist values mix with today's political ideas. Blending these views provides a way to look at civic participation, governance, and national identity. New movements from younger generations stress democratic principles but still honor Buddhist teachings, possibly creating a new political culture that respects Thailand's heritage. This combination could lead to improved social unity and inclusion, especially for groups that have

been overlooked politically. Yet, there are ongoing difficulties, like the rising role of digital communication, which can both connect and divide communities. These trends are similar to those in communities abroad, where political interests and personal identities blend through social media and traditional connections (McDonnell et al., 2005)(Castells M et al., 2012). In the end, Thailand's political identity will evolve based on its capacity to balance these various factors.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the comparison of Buddhist ethics and Thai political thought shows a lively mix of old ways and new ideas, which importantly affects Thailand's social and political scene. Adding Buddhist ideas into modern government helps not only to strengthen cultural identity but also to support the state's authority in a changing global environment. The Wai Phra Kao Wat example shows how this mix illustrates a larger trend of using religious practices to tell national stories and involve citizens in politics (KAIMOOK et al., 2018). Additionally, looking into the common themes of existence found in both Buddhism and Qohelet's teachings reveals how different philosophies can enhance our understanding of human suffering and ethical governance (Lorgunpai et al., 1995). In the end, this merging of traditional and modern political views encourages more discussion about the influence of spirituality on today's governance.

The study of how Buddhist ethics and Thai political thought interact shows that old practices greatly affect today's governance. Main results suggest that social movements in Thailand, particularly those in favor of different education, often show a strong Thai identity that puts spirituality and community participation above Western ideas of educational change. This view is in line with historical trends of resisting dominant reform approaches, indicating that the alternative education movement encourages educational progress while also being a spiritual challenge to mainstream ideas. Moreover, the PRCD model, as seen with NGOs like Warm Heart Worldwide, highlights the difficulties in carrying out community development plans that align with Buddhist principles. The results demonstrate a special connection between local movements and how the state reacts to globalization, underscoring a unique mix of traditional and modern political ideas that influence current Thai society (Jones et al., 2008) (Mitchell et al., 2012).

Mixing old and new political ideas is important for understanding societal values, especially in Thai culture. Traditional beliefs, like Buddhist values, give a moral guide that focuses on kindness, connection, and social unity. This can strengthen modern political ideas by connecting them to a relevant cultural ethic. This mix is crucial as Thailand faces economic changes that redefine work, showing the changing links between labor, identity, and cultural values (Baker et al., 2001). Additionally, bringing mindfulness into daily and work life shows a growing focus on mental health, tying traditional mindfulness to new therapeutic techniques (Percy et al., 2016). This thought shows that merging these different traditions not only improves political thinking but also helps create a more complete way to approach governance and community unity in today's Thailand.

The future of political ideas combining Buddhist ethics and Thai governance shows a turn towards community-focused and sustainable leadership methods. Buddhist principles teach mindfulness and social responsibility, which have been seen in modern political actions, particularly in the Thai Asoke community. This group illustrates how community mindfulness in Buddhism can lead to new political ideas that focus on environmental care and community well-being, pushing back against the individual-based nature of modern capitalism (Ambedkar

B R et al., 2017). Also, the changing scene of Western Buddhism encourages researchers to reconsider Buddhist identity and its importance in politics, highlighting socially engaged Buddhism as an effective agent for social change (Henry et al., 2006). These changes imply that political thinking in the future might increasingly use principles based on spiritual ethics, creating a more complete approach to governance that supports both environmental protection and community strength.

Future studies in Buddhist ethics and Thai political ideas should look at how traditional beliefs mix with modern government systems. Researchers could examine what the PRCD model in (Mitchell et al., 2012) says about nonprofit public relations and community growth in Thailand. This might show how Buddhist ethics can improve civic involvement and social welfare programs in Thailand. Also, discussing mental health in schools, based on findings from (Day et al., 2023), could help clarify how cultural views affect young Thais' political involvement. By focusing on these topics, researchers can build a well-rounded discussion that shows how Buddhist ethics matter in today's policies and tackles important social challenges, helping to create a more inclusive political environment in Thailand.

To sum up the study of Buddhist ethics in Thai politics, it is clear that this mix acts as an important link between old values and new governance. The ideas of compassion, mindfulness, and community well-being found in Buddhist ethics serve as a strong guide for political leaders to make more responsible and caring choices. As Thailand faces modern issues like economic inequality and political unrest, adding these ethical ideas can promote a more inclusive political setting, leading to better conversation and understanding among different groups in society. Additionally, blending Buddhist ideas with current political methods not only enriches the national identity but also reinforces the idea that ethical governance is vital for long-term development. In the end, adopting Buddhist ethics in Thai politics can boost the democratic process while maintaining the cultural heritage, achieving a good balance between tradition and modern times.

Originality & Body of Knowledge

Originality: This study presents a novel approach to understanding the intersection between Buddhist ethics and Thai political thought, offering a comparative analysis that has not been extensively explored in previous research. While past studies have examined Buddhist principles in governance or Thai political traditions separately, this paper uniquely integrates these perspectives to highlight their reciprocal influence on contemporary governance. By analyzing historical Buddhist teachings and their applications in modern political contexts, the study provides a new framework for evaluating political leadership, social justice movements, and conflict resolution within Thailand. Furthermore, it offers an original contribution by incorporating case studies and contemporary political events, demonstrating the practical implications of Buddhist ethics in political decision-making. The comparative analysis with Western political philosophies adds further depth, distinguishing this research from conventional studies that focus solely on either Buddhist or Western frameworks.

Body of Knowledge: This research expands the existing body of knowledge by contributing to interdisciplinary discussions on political theory, ethics, and governance. It situates Buddhist ethical principles—such as compassion, non-violence, and mindfulness—within the broader discourse on political thought, providing insights into their role in shaping governance structures in Thailand. By examining the historical evolution of Thai political thought and its interaction with Buddhist philosophy, the study enhances our

understanding of ethical governance models that prioritize communal well-being over individualistic paradigms. Additionally, this paper contributes to the ongoing discourse on globalization and political adaptation, shedding light on how traditional ethical systems can inform contemporary political challenges. The findings also provide practical implications for policymakers, educators, and political leaders seeking ethical frameworks that foster social harmony, sustainability, and conflict resolution. Ultimately, this research advances interdisciplinary methodologies, bridging political science, philosophy, and Buddhist studies to offer a more holistic view of governance in Thailand and beyond.

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Conflict of interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Ethical treatment of experimental subjects (animals & human): The research was conducted in compliance with the principles of the Helsinki Declaration regarding human subjects, so formal ethical approval was not required.

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