



EXISTENCE AFTER DEATH: AN ANALYSIS OF INTERMEDIATE EXISTENCE (ANTARĀ BHĀVA) IN BUDDHISM

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ABSTRACT

According to early Buddhist school records, at least six separate schools, namely *Sarvāstivāda*, *Darṣāntika*, *Vātsīputrīyas*, *Sammitīya*, *Pūrvaśāila* and Late *Mahīśāsaka*, accepted the concept of an intermediary person. *Mahāsāṃghika*, *Mahīśāsaka*, *Theravāda*, *Vibhajyavāda* and *Śāriputrābhidharma* (or *Dharmagupta*) were all against them. The classical *Kathavatthu*, for example, rejects the idea of an intermediary or transitional state between rebirths, claiming that rebirth occurs instantly (in a moment of mind) through the mind *paṭisandhi* (*paṭisandhi citta*). In addition, in the suttas of *Nikāya* there is mention of the state of *Gandhabba* as a being waiting to be born. This study shows that there is no conflict between the Buddhist schools of being reborn immediately or there is a waiting period to be born in a new body. Furthermore, it is shown that there are beings who are going from life to life but their nature is 'No-Self'. This shows that each individual exists only because of a combination of many conditions it is impermanent and not fixed.

Introduction

1. Reason for choosing the topic

In Indian philosophical schools excepting Cārvāka, the concept of life after death has been widely accepted. Even Ājīvakas who are in the side of Cārvākas and who are considered as one of the followers of heterodoxy and shared a conception of matter in the latter, assume that the physical personality of a human being can survive death. The Vedic tradition has given a different methodology in accepting the conception of rebirth of rebirth basic on the concept of an immutable self. The Buddha accepted karma and rebirth on the basis of a middle view between special view that there can not be a next birth and the other extreme union believe in the mystical nature of such claims which has nothing to do with ordinary existence.

The Buddha by taking a middle position and acceptance these two concepts on the basis of empirical grounds. Taking the dependent origination as the paradigm for the happening of the things, Buddhism has to accept that any being born would die and after death the person has no complete control. However, if a person's desire to live (*bhava- taṇhā*) is one of the contributing factors to such survival, with the elimination of such desire, a person can hope to get rid of future rebirth. Thus the overcoming of rebirth in the result of

his getting rid of craving in the present life. It is said that in some of his discourses wherein the Buddha refused to admit a visual faculty cakṣu through which one could perceive a Buddha of the past. Nandaka, a monk, narrates how in his past life he was having greed that was unwholesome and now he has been able to overcome it and attaining to a state of unwholesome life¹.

There is no doubt about the fact that Buddhism and Hinduism believe that like survives death and this dissertation turn up to analyze this concept confically as found in the Buddhist source texts.

We have already seen how rebirth in acception by the Buddhists the trace of union me get in the Jātakas stories and the implications are there in the twelve fold chain of existence. From this we may draw a conclusion that living beings after death have a corresponding realm for that being to be reborn. The next life of such beings depends on the good or bad karma they have done in this life or in previous lives. There are living beings who are reborn in evil realms after death such as: Hell, hungry ghosts, animals and asura, there are also sentient beings with good karma who are reborn in heaven and human realms. However, there are beings who transcend that rule, they are beings who have cut off ten fetters and, after the death of the physical body, enter Nirvana.

Although all schools of Buddhism agree on the doctrine of rebirth, the continuous continuation of lives, there are differences of thought regarding the states of existence after death and the rebirth path for the next life. During his sermons, the Buddha often kept silent for questions that were illusory or unrealistic. People who ask such questions either do not understand themselves or they just show off their knowledge through fantasies or conjectures; and if there is an answer, the limitation of language also makes it impossible for any explanation to fully describe all the Master's knowledge. This perhaps was the reason why Buddha remained silent on many questions about union which have metaphysical implications. However, in the matter of the intermediary body, although there is no scripture that the Buddha clearly explained the state of a reborn person after the death, in some suttas of early Buddhist texts, the Buddha mentioned the state of being waiting to be born and in some suttas he also made it clear that this person after death was reborn in the heaven or the hungry ghost realm.² That proves that the Buddha did not completely avoid mentioning things beyond human eyes and ears. Because the Buddha did not have a sutta about the intermediary body, so the post-Gautama Buddha schools have a lot of difference of opinion on the existence of an intermediate body after the life and death of a person. Since there are divergent views on the states after death among different schools of Buddhism, this study clarifies the view that the intermediary body exists, but the existence of the intermediary body does not represent a contradiction within the philosophy. This dissertation will study on different terminologies of 'intermediate body' in different traditions, yet the concepts and explanation of three terminologies seem compromise each other.

¹ Philip B. Yampolsky, tran., *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch Huineng: The Text of the Tun-Huang Manuscript* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), 133.

² Dīgha Nikāya, *The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya*, trans. Maurice O'C Walshe (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2012), 645-665.

2. Scope of the Study

According to the *Abhidhamma* of *Theravāda*, after the cessation of the final thought consciousness (*cuti*) immediately a new birth consciousness (*paṭisandhi*) appears, but even in some of the *Nikāya* suttas, the Buddha mentions a state called *Gandhabba* means a being waiting to be born. In the *Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya* composed by Vasubandhu and *Yogācārabhūmi-Śāstra* also refers to the form of "Intermediate Existing Body"³⁴. If it is admitted that there is a form of existence in the form of an "Intermediate Existing Body" after death, is it misleading that there is a self that exists in every being that ordinarily known as the soul (*Ātman*), which does contradict the Buddhist doctrine of no-self?

This study draws on sources such as *Sutta Piṭaka* - a collection of suttas in *Pāli* of *Theravāda* Buddhism, *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*- is a detailed scholarly analysis and summary of the Buddhist teachings in the suttas; sutras belonging to the *Mahāyāna* tradition such as The *Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*, *Samādhinirmocana Sūtra*, *Vimalakīrti Sūtra*; *Milinda Pañha*- a famous Buddhist philosophical work of *Pāli* literature and the treatises of famous Buddhist scholars such as *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* by Vasubandhu, *Mahā-prajñāpāramitā-sastra* composed by Nagarjuna, *Yogācārabhūmi-Śāstra* translated from Sanskrit to Chinese by Xuanzang

3. Research methodology

By method of analysis and synthesis the research clarify the issues:

There is no contradiction between Buddhist schools in whether or not there exists an intermediate realm after death. The concept of some sects that sentient beings will be reborn immediately after death is not inconsistent with the fact that there is an intermediate realm for the intermediate body because the intermediate state itself is also a being and is composed of consciousness (*Viññāna*) and subtle matter.

1. Existence of An Intermediate Body in Early Buddhism

In early Buddhism, the Buddha often emphasized the practice of meditation and emphasized the teachings of suffering, impermanence, and non-self. These dharmas help people understand suffering and the method of cessation of suffering which our most urgent task is to eliminate. The Buddha explained these dhammas to be beneficial in our practice, attain liberation and enlightenment. As for the occult problems, of which there are four related to the universe, whether finite or infinite, eternal or non-eternal, they are of no use to the liberation of mankind suffering.

Moreover, due to the limited domain of language, ordinary people cannot understand or express all the mysterious matters through language. Language created by people to express the feelings, experiences and thoughts that they experience through phenomena and things. Language is one of the modes of communication amongst human so human can understand each other, but it does not go beyond the limitations of time and space. Regarding the state of existence after death, no suttas has specifically mentioned it, but in some suttas of the *Nikāya*, the Buddha mentioned a state of being waiting to be entered into the mother's womb. Of course,

³ Vasubandhu, *Abhidharmakośa-Bhāṣyam*, trans. Leo M Pruden, vol. II (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1991), 380-399.

⁴ Xuanzang Tang, tran., *瑜伽師地論* (中国电子佛教协会, China: CBETA, 2018), 159-161.

the intermediate body is mentioned a lot in the *Mahāyāna* suttas such as the *Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*, the *Mahāratnakūta Sūtra*, and treatises such as the *Maha Prajnaparamita sastra* by Nāgārjuna, the *Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya* by Vasubandhu, and the *Yogācārabhūmi-Śāstra* translated by Xuanzang. This study attempts to prove that there is an intermediate state after death not only to explain a metaphysical thing, its purpose is to prove to some extent that this doctrine in and through different Buddhist schools is not contradictory. This creates confidence in the non-contradictory Buddhist philosophy for those who want to learn and practice Buddhist teachings.

Abhidhamma of Theravada tradition holds that when the moment of death (*Cuti Citta*) perishes, there is a moment of *paṭisandhi viññāṇa* (conjunction consciousness). Next are sixteen *bhavaṅga* moments. Then arises the moment of Mind-door apprehending consciousness (*Manodvārāvajjana*), developing fondness for the new life (*bhavanikanti javana*). Next is *bhavaṅga* arising and passing away, and the mind-stream continues without interruption.⁵ Theravada scholars such as Zen master Pa Auk⁶, Minh Duc Trieu Tam Anh⁷ also put forward the concept based on their tradition that after death begins a new life immediately. Between the death-consciousness (*cutti citta*) and its subsequent rebirth-linking consciousness (*paṭisandhi*), there are no other thought moment, or anything resembling an intermediate body⁸.

2. Existence of An Intermediate Body in Mahayana Buddhism

The assertion that there is no intermediate body of existence is flawed. Fo Guang Dictionary (佛光大辭典) defines the intermediate existence of the body to refer to the body consciousness of a person between the time of death and reincarnation in the next life.⁹ The Pali Proper Name Dictionary provides the following definition of the word *Gandhabbā*: *Gandhabbā* is a class of semi-divine beings, besides it also means “a being fit and ready to be born to the parents concerned”¹⁰. Concise Pali-English Dictionary mentions that *Gandhabbā* is “a being ready to take a new existence”.¹¹ A word similar in meaning to *Gandhabbā* is

⁵ Thera Anuruddha, *A Manual of Abhidhamma: Being Abhidhammattha Sangaha of Bhadanta anuruddhācariya*, trans. Mahāthera Narada (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Buddhist Missionary Soc., 1987), 310.

⁶ Doan Pham, “Hỏi Đáp Về Thân Trung Âm,” Đạo Phật nguyên thủy (Đạo Phật Nguyên Thủy, April 19, 2009), <https://daophatnguyenthuy.wordpress.com/2009/04/19/h%E1%BB%8Fi-dap-v%E1%BB%81-than-trung-%E1%BA%A5m/>.

⁷ Minh Đức Triều Tâm Ảnh, “Có 49 Ngày & Thân Trung Âm Không?,” THƯ VIỆN HOA SEN (Thuvienhoasen, 2015), <https://thuvienhoasen.org/a24209/co-49-ngay-than-trung-am-khong>.

⁸ University of Bristol, “Death and Dying in Buddhism,” Online Guide | Department of Religion and Theology | University of Bristol (Bristol.Ac.Uk.), accessed March 24, 2022, <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/religion/buddhist-centre/projects/bdr/chaplains/online-guide.html#:~:text=Tibetan%20Buddhists%20believe%20that%20there,get%20reborn%20upon%20their%20death>.

⁹ Thích Quang Do, tran., *Phật Quang Đại Từ Điển = Fo Guang Da Ci Dian*, vol. 6 (Taipei, Taiwan: Hội Văn Hóa Giáo Dục Linh Sơn, 2000), 6406.

¹⁰ G. P. Malalasekera, *Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names*, vol. II (London: Published For The Government of India, 1938).

¹¹ Buddhaddatta Mahāthera A P, *Concise Pali-English Dictionary* (Delhi, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1997), 113.

Sambhavesī, which is found in the Pāli dictionary by Buddhadatta Mahāthera explains: “one who is seeking birth”.¹²

Searching for the Pali canon, there are a number of suttas that mention a being waiting to be born. The *Mahātaṇhāsāṅkhaya Sutta* mentions that conception must meet all three conditions, otherwise the conception will not succeed: 1. There is the union of father and mother; 2. Mother is in season; 3. The spirit being reborn is present¹³. The original Pali text reads: “*Yato ca kho, bmanshave, mātāpitāro ca sannipatitā honti, mātā ca utunī hoti, gandhabbo ca paccupaṭṭhito hoti — evaṃ tiṇṇaṃ sannipātā gabbhassāvakkanti hoti*”.¹⁴ In one of his essays Bhikkhu Analayo also mentioned *Gandhabbā* as follows:

“Thus, though the Vedic concept of a 'god of transfer' helps to explain how the *gandhabbā* would have come to be associated with the transition from one life to another, in its Buddhist usage the term seems to have lost this connotation and appears to stand just for the being about to be reborn”.¹⁵

In the *Assalāyana Sutta* of the Majjhima Nikāya No. 93, which describes the conversation between the hermit *Asiata Devala* and seven Brahmin hermits, the presence of the intermediate existence body is very clear:

“But, sirs, do you know how the conception of an embryo in a womb comes about?

Sir, we know how the conception of an embryo in a womb comes about. Here, there is a union of the mother and father, and it is the mother's season, and the being to be reborn is present. Thus the conception of an embryo in a womb comes about through the union of these three things.

Then, sirs, do you know for sure whether that being to be reborn is a noble, or a brahmin, or a merchant, or a worker? Sir, we do not know for sure whether that being to be reborn is a noble, or a brahmin, or a merchant, or a worker.”¹⁶

This passage shows that the intermediate body did exist, but with their ordinary eyes, the seven brahmins could not clearly distinguish the difference between the four classes of the intermediate body. This sutra is also the basis for the assertion of Vasubandhu about the intermediate body in his work *Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya*.¹⁷

Because of such proofs, it cannot be said that there is no being called an intermediate body. However, this does not contradict the view that a dead person is immediately reborn. According to *Abhidhamma Pāli*, the function of *paṭisandhi citta* is to link two lives, past and present, it is also called rebirth consciousness.¹⁸

¹² Buddhadatta, *Concise Pali-English Dictionary*, 187.

¹³ Nikāya Majjhima, *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A New Transl. of the Majjhima Nikāya*, trans. Bodhi Bhikkhu and Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli (Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society, 1995), 358.

¹⁴ Nikāya Majjhima, “Mahātaṇhāsāṅkhayasutta—Mahāsaṅgīti Tipiṭaka Buddhavasā 2500,” SuttaCentral (Dhamma Society, 2005), <https://suttacentral.net/mn38/pli/ms?layout=plain&reference=none¬es=asterisk&highlight=false&script=latin>.

¹⁵ Venerable Analayo, “*Rebirth and the Gandhabba*,” Academia.edu, August 14, 2015, https://www.academia.edu/14932647/Rebirth_and_the_Gandhabba, 96.

¹⁶ Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 769-770.

¹⁷ Vasubandhu, *Abhidharmakośa-Bhāṣyam*, trans. Leo M. Pruden, vol. 2 (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1991), 383-386.

¹⁸ Nārada Mahā Thera, *A Manual of Abhidhamma* (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Buddhist Missionary Society, 1987), 188.

However, *paṭisandhi citta* at the moment of death is very weak, so it cannot form beings of form, it has to go through a stage from the mind that gives birth to karma, since the birth of karma can from karma give birth to form, during this time the mind does not directly give birth to beings with the form as when it was in the state of the body of the five aggregates. The immediate rebirth mentioned by the *Abhidhamma* does not refer to the next life being as form or formless whereas in this universe there are forms of energy that exist but are not visible such as magnetic field, electric current, etc. So is the intermediate body a form of being that cannot be seen with the normal eye but which we assume does not exist? Here, the karma of each being will lead that being to be reborn in any realm of the six realms. In *Abhidhamma*, birth is conditioned by past wholesome or unwholesome karma that is most prominent, dominant, and powerful at the time of death. The karma that conditions that rebirth is called reproductive karma (*Janaka Kamma*).¹⁹ Reproductive karma is what creates mental aggregates and material aggregates at the time of conception. The preliminary thought-moment, called *paṭisandhi viññāṇa* (linking consciousness, or rebirth consciousness), is conditioned by this karma (*Janaka Kamma*). On the other hand, *Āsanna kamma* or Death-proximate Karma has an important role in determining the next realm in which sentient beings are about to be born. Specifically, it is the things we do or think about right before we die. In most Buddhist countries, the karma created at this time of death is considered paramount, because it is itself that conditions the coming rebirth. For this reason, in Buddhist countries it is customary to remind the dying person of the good deeds he has done in his life, and to give him the opportunity to dwell on the state of a wholesome mind as it is the karma from the mind before he dies. Sometimes a bad person can die peacefully and be reborn well through good luck remembering, or performing, a good deed, right at the moment of death. This does not mean that by enjoying a good rebirth, the other person will not have to pay the bad results of his past unwholesome actions. The unwholesome karma accumulated in the past will bear fruit accordingly when given the opportunity. Since the intermediate body is most likely a being with a subtle form body, even according to *Theravāda* - a school that opposes the “intermediate body” concept, it is impossible to conclude that the intermediate body does not exist at all. If it is recognized that the intermediate body is also a being, the views of ‘immediate rebirth’ and the views of ‘passing through a period of the intermediate body’ do not contradict each other.

Although intermediate existence is a being with a body faculty, however, because that intermediate body faculty is very subtle, not everyone can see it. According to the *Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*, the intermediate body cannot be seen with the ordinary eye.

“When the skandhas of the present life die out, an in-between existence comes about. It is not that the skandhas of the present life change into the skandhas of the in-between five skandhas. And, also, the in-between five skandhas do not come about by themselves mud. It dies out emerge. But the time cannot and differ from each other. Such is the case. That is why I say: The in-between five skandhas with the fleshly eye; they are what can be seen with the heavenly eye²⁰”.

¹⁹ Nārada, *A Manual of Abhidhamma*, 291-295.

²⁰ Tony Page, ed., *The Mahayana Mahāparinirvana Sutra*, trans. Yamamoto Kōshō (Ube: The Karinbunko, 2007), 399.

3. Existence of An Intermediate Body in Science

With their subtle nature, small and hard to see, they have contributed to the formation of some views that intermediate existence is not real, it is similar to the view of early physicists but later quantum physics is different. According to Nasa Science, this universe has 68% dark energy, 27% dark matter and only 5% normal matter. Normal matter is matter we can see, dark matter is matter we can not see but that does not mean it is antimatter. Normal matter is made up of particles called brayons but dark matter is not: “it is made up of other, more exotic particles like axions or WIMPS (Weakly Interacting Massive Particles)”.²¹

Here, due to its subtle structure, it is not easily discernible, so what exactly is the intermediate body? Nāgārjuna explained in the *Maha Prajñāpāramitā-Śāstra* that kind of body is consciousness. Consciousness here is the five aggregates in the intermediate stage, because these five aggregates are so subtle that they are only called consciousness²².

In the *Anenjasappaya Sutta*, No. 106, of the Majjhima Nikāya, there is an important sentence related to rebirth of consciousness: “On the dissolution of the body, after death, it is possible that this consciousness of his, leading [to rebirth], may pass on [to rebirth] in the imperturbable.”²³, ‘this consciousness’ is mentioned in the original Pali sutta as “*saṃvattanikam viññānam*”²⁴ According to Piyadassi, the *saṃvattanikam viññānam* is also *vipāka-viññāna*. *Vipāka-viññāna* is the consciousness that continues to flow, to continue to flow, to proceed from one life to another as a consequence (*vipāka*), consciousness proceeds to the next life.²⁵ Piyadassi also in *The Spectrum of Buddhism* asserted: The third element, *gandhabba*, is simply a term for *viññāna*, consciousness, or *paṭisandhi-viññāna*, connected consciousness, or *saṃvattanika-viññāna*, consciousness- rebirth²⁶. In the words of Wijesekera, the intermediate body is the manifestation of a special state of consciousness in cyclic existence²⁷. This consciousness according to *Sandhinirmocana Sutra* (one of *Mahāyāna Sūtras*) is called appropriating consciousness, ie Alaya consciousness²⁸.

²¹ Nasa Science, “Dark Energy, Dark Matter | Science Mission Directorate,” NASA (Science.Nasa.Gov), accessed March 26, 2022, <https://science.nasa.gov/astrophysics/focus-areas/what-is-dark-energy>.

²² Nāgārjuna, *Luận Đại Trí Độ = Mahāprajñāpāramitāśāstra*, trans. Kumārajīva and Dieu Khong Bhikkhuni, vol. 5 (Hô Chí Minh : Thời Đại, 1997), 334.

²³ Bhikkhu Ñānamoli and Bodhi Bhikkhu, trans., *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A New Transl. of the Majjhima Nikāya* (Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society, 1995), 869-870.

²⁴ Majjhima Nikāya, “*Āneñjasappāyasutta—Mahāsaṅgīti Tipiṭaka Buddhavasse 2500*,” SuttaCentral, 2005, <https://suttacentral.net/mn/106/pli/ms?layout=plain&reference=none¬es=asterisk&highlight=false&script=latin>.

²⁵ Nayaka Thera Piyadassi, *The Spectrum of Buddhism* (New York: Jivinda de Silva, 1991), 180. Cf: this *vipāka-viññāna* is referred to as the *saṃvattanika-viññāna*, the consciousness that goes on, that links on, that proceeds from one life to another as *vipāka*, the consciousness that evolves into the next life.

²⁶ Piyadassi, *The Spectrum of Buddhism*, 181. Cf: The third factor, *gandhabba*, is simply a term for the *viññāna*, or *paṭisandhi-viññāna*, or the *saṃvattanika-viññāna*, rebirth consciousness.

²⁷ OH de A Wijesekera, *Vedic Gandharva and Pali Gandhabba*, vol. III (Pune: University of Ceylon Review, 1945), 95. Cf: *Gandhabba*: to denote a particular state of samsāric consciousness (*viññāna*).

²⁸ John Powers, tran., *Wisdom of the Buddha: Sandhinirmocana Sutra* (Berkeley, CA: Dharma Pub., 1995), 70.

Although the intermediate body can be classified as a type of beings, the nature of the intermediate body is very weak, the duration of existence in this realm is very short and not fixed. According to *Yogācārabhūmi-Śāstra*, it only lasts seven days, more than seven days, if there is still no condition for birth, then it will die and be reborn, it can stay for a maximum of seven days. Thus, in turn, if there is no conditioned birth, then one can stay there seven times of seven days, from then on decide to have the condition for birth.²⁹

In summary, there is no contradiction between the conception of rebirth immediately after the death of the *Mahāsāṃghika*, *Mahīśāsaka*, *Theravāda*, *Vibhajyavāda*, *Śāriputrābhidharma* schools and the concept of an intermediate body existence of the *Sarvāstivāda*, *Darṣāntika*, *Vātsīputrīyas*, *Pūrvayas*, *Samvāsya* and Late *Mahīśāsaka* schools. Because the intermediate body is also a being made up of consciousness (*Vijñāna*) and dark matter, a being of the six realm. Therefore, these two views are not mutually exclusive.

Conclusion

The period in between death and rebirth are not widely discusses in Buddhism. In Hinduism the soul of the person after his dead is taken to the abode of the deceased and the disembodies soul (preta) is given *śrāddha* (ritual od respect) for him not to become a *bhūta* (malignant spirit) turning up for frighten the living person including relatives. In due come, the soul goes through different lokas including getting birth in the world and continues his journey till he get liberation. Similar ideas are echoed in Buddhism and Buddhists believe in the existence a life after death. They however do not believe in heaven or hell sometimes attribute to them ; Buddhist after life does not involve God playing a role as the bestower of fruit of action. In keeping in the teachings of the Buddha, it is believe that a person gets birth till he attain to the state of Nirvana.

At the Buddha time, He did not answer people who came to ask metaphysical questions, and the question of the intermediate body was not explicitly explained in a sutta. This does not mean that He is not knowledgeable. In the *Simsapā sutta*³⁰ the Buddha said that what he realized was like leaves in the *Simsapā* forest, and what he preached was like leaves in his hand.³¹ However, after Buddha's Nirvana, Buddhism was divided into different schools and among these, typically Theravāda, disagreed with the idea that the intermediate body existed, but *Mahāyāna* scholars believed it existed. With the view that there is no contradiction in the Buddha's philosophy, although Buddhism has been divided into different traditions. In the end, it is still the truth that leads beings to the cessation of suffering and Nirvana, the study proves. There is a state of being waiting for life to be an intermediate body. The source of information for this is found in the suttas of the *Nikāyas*-system of sutras accepted in Theravāda tradition. However, Buddhism does not inherently contradict each other because the intermediate body is a being in the form of a subtle body, which in *Abhidhamma* of Theravāda does not mention rebirth immediately after death consciousness ceases to be a sentient being form or without form.

²⁹ Xuanzang and Linh Son Phap Bao Dai Tang Kinh, trans., “*Du Già Sư Địa Luận Quyển 001*,” Tạng Thư Phật Học, October 16, 2017, <https://tangthuphathoc.net/du-gia-su-dia-luan-quyen-001/>.

³⁰ Samyutta Nikāya, *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Samyutta Nikaya*, trans. Bodhi Bhikkhu (Somerville, Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2003), 1857-1858.

The limitation of this study is that it deals with an issue of the state of man after death, which cannot be proven experimentally. The entire study is based solely on Buddhist suttas and treatises.

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