

## ICBS 73

# A STUDY OF THE BUDDHIST MORAL PRINCIPLES REFLECTED IN NĀGĀRJUNA'S TEACHINGS ON LEGALITY AND VIRTUOUS VALUES AS DEPICTED IN *SUḤṚLLEKHA*

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All social problems are created due to the deterioration of moral values in a person. Nāgārjuna's *Suḥṛllekha* contains a series of excellent instructions on developing a person's moral values. The *Suḥṛllekha*, (Friendly Epistle) is a letter written in the form of a poem to speculate that the King may be *Gautamīputra Śatakarṇī* at around circa 2-3 CE. In his *Suḥṛllekha* consisting of 123 stanzas, the master Nāgārjuna instructs the King to follow the basic Buddhist teachings and encourages him to govern with humanity and justice. The comparative study method is applied in this research, using primary and secondary sources. The main purpose of this research is to show how counseling on legality and virtuous provisions of the *Suḥṛllekha* contributes to enhance social progress. A residual aim is to identify the *Theravāda* Buddhist teachings contained in the teachings of the *Mahayāna* Buddhist philosopher. *Suḥṛllekha* criticizes some of the views expressed in the Upanishads such as determinism, rationalism, and naturalism. It is also an important historical literature source, as it reveals various doctrinal views that existed in contemporary society. Although this book is meant to be a letter to a friend, it is written in the form of four-line verses. However, some of the points mentioned in it are rules and regulations. The results point out the service rendered by ancient Buddhist poetic creations in providing the readers with timely advice on modern social issues; and identify the philosophies that existed in contemporary society. This research focuses on the modern world of books in ancient literature. It is important to point out that the practicality of the literary work of Nāgārjuna is equally valid for modernity.

**Keywords:** Legality, Virtuous, Nāgārjuna, Moral, Justice