

Cabbages and kings

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Some have wondered why the Sutta Discovery (SD) series does not seem to be found in some of the better or best known Buddhist sites. Firstly, there are so many sutta sites that it is difficult or useful to list all the links in a single site or page. Anyway, the SD site is not such a well known one.

Secondly, the owners or administrators of a site or page have their own reasons for setting it up. For various reasons—each Buddhist siter or pager has his own beliefs—they cannot include other links, or have to severely limit the list of linking, even, sutta links. All such sites and pages have to be paid for or to gain money; hence, there are limitations.

Memes

The third reason is the most difficult to explain, and is the most interesting one. The reason why most people do not understand why there are so many sutta sites, each in denial of (some) others (not specifically the SD), is the very reason why **religions** exists at all.

We all have views: most of us follow Teachers rather than live teachings. Teachers look alive; teachings seem dead—to most of us, anyway. Teachers need a living, too, or at least the adoration of a crowd.

Then, there are memes. We are easily overwhelmed by **memes**: they work because we do not know what they are. When we understand what memes really are (not the slang meaning but the original sense), we will better understand how religion works. In fact, our lives begin to be more free by this understanding.¹

Kings and priests

The Sutta Discovery (SD) is very different from other sites or pages because it tries not to be a **meme**. The SD series does not propagate itself but points to the Buddha Dhamma. In doing so, much of the writings found in the SD series are **uplifting** (they explain the truth and beauty of early Buddhism); they are **educational** (they teach us to see our best and to seek the Dhamma); they **awaken** us to see true reality in the Dhamma for ourself.

Internet

The Internet today has given a voice to everyone, anyone with an internet connection, some intelligence and a big drive. However, this new individual and his autonomy, along with the **network** effect of the Internet, makes it difficult to reach any real consensus even on Buddhism itself. Buddhism, after all, is all things to all humen (sic).

¹ On **Memes**, see eg fb181128 Talk or truth; or fb180601 Janus faith. Recommended reading is Memes ([SD 26.3](#)).

Priests and kings

One result of this cyber-freedom is that the old school teachers and leaders who thrive on consensus (total agreement with “us”) are now challenged by the new and open “others.” The old Kings who built greater empires and power impressed others with bigness and buildings—like the great Priests of the past who created Great Religions to control society and wealth. Hence, in ancient times, Kings were often Priests, too, who had absolute control over others.

The Priests made up stories fibbing us that the gods or God spoke to them; that they are their spokesman. Others were born from God’s arms: they were fated and fiated to protect the Priests. Those born from God’ thighs, the Merchants, were to support the upper classes with their wealth. Then, those born of God’s feet were to slave for the upper classes. There were also the outcastes, who do not fit into these classes at all!

The Buddha

The Buddha rejects this false Story. He carefully points out to us why this Story is fabricated and false. Those who listen to the Buddha are liberated as arhats and path-finders. That is why the Story-believers, even today, hate the arhats. Without the Buddha’s teachings and the arhats, we will continue, even today, to be enslaved by grand, false Stories and Rituals of “cabbages and kings.”

The phrase “cabbages and kings” came from Lewis Carroll’s “Alice in Wonderland” (1865) poem on how the Walrus and the Carpenter tricked some oysters into being eaten by them. (A hilarious poem but patently true of religion even today.) Although Carroll's book is a children’s story, some of his episodes and imageries inspire us to see how religion and wrong views can be dangerously exploitative.

Based on this, O Henry, the famous short-story writer, wrote a book entitled, “Cabbages and Kings” (1904), where the word “Banana Republic” first appeared. Such writers help us to see clearer and deeper into the things around us. We must know what really is going on, especially in religion (including Buddhism). Then, we will free ourself from falseness to become true and good people.

Afternote

Some of us may have noted from my writing style that I'm not really interested in who's right, who's wrong (which can be very embarrassing). Yet, we cannot pretend to live what is false and unhelpful. One way out of this pretence and falsity we all have to put up with is to write about it as wittily and humorously as our imagination allows. I find such writing most enjoyable and well know that posterity will celebrate this for all the better. So let's laugh and smile together meantime.

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[an occasional re-look at the Buddha’s Example and Teachings]

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