

BUDDHISM

Buddhist Wisdom for a Changing World: How Impermanence Can Heal Immigration Tensions

Rohit Ekka

Pontifical Athenaeum Jnana Deepa, Institute of Philosophy and Theology, Pune, Maharashtra, India

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Abstract

Migration is an intrinsic and historically significant aspect of human civilization, mirroring natural phenomena such as the movement of birds, the dispersal of seeds, and the flow of rivers across borders. While migration has long been a driving force behind cultural and economic development, it has become a contentious issue in the contemporary global landscape. Many nations perceive immigration as a threat to national identity, economic stability, and resource distribution. Although the preservation of cultural heritage is a legitimate concern, the ethical ramifications of restrictive immigration policies necessitate a critical and balanced examination.

This study explores the applicability of the Buddhist doctrine of *Anicca* (impermanence) as a philosophical framework for addressing immigration-related challenges. The principle of impermanence highlights the transient and evolving nature of human societies, challenging the sustainability of rigid opposition to migration. By incorporating this perspective, the research advocates for a balanced, ethical approach a “middle path” that reconciles national interests with fundamental human rights while fostering global harmony. Utilizing a combination of theoretical analysis and empirical research, this study critically assesses contemporary immigration policies and underscores the potential repercussions of sustained resistance to migration, including socioeconomic disparities and geopolitical instability.

The findings suggest that acknowledging the impermanent nature of social and political structures can facilitate more adaptive, humane, and forward-thinking immigration policies. Although integrating this philosophical framework into national governance presents challenges, historical evidence demonstrates that societies have continually evolved in response to migration. This research underscores the necessity of transcending rigid nationalism in favour of a more inclusive, human-centred paradigm of co-existence. Furthermore, this study provides a foundation for future research on how the principle of impermanence might reshape national security discourses, either by alleviating migration-related anxieties or presenting new policy considerations in managing global migration crises.

1 Introduction

Immigration is a pervasive existential issue worldwide, encompassing complex ethical and political dimensions that significantly impact human survival and societal harmony. As members of a civilized society, we are compelled to critically engage with and reconsider the implications of migration. Historically, migration has been a continuous phenomenon driven by various factors such as war, forced displacement, and environmental crises, including floods, droughts, and wildfires. Recently, the United States government has deported numerous non-citizens, categorizing them as illegal migrants, a move that has also affected other nations, including India (Ahmed, 2025). Similarly, the plight of Rohingya Muslims in Bangladesh, Myanmar, and various Indian states such as Jharkhand, West Bengal, and Assam underscores the persistent challenges associated with migration (The Hindu, 2024; Ananthakrishnan, 2025; Reuters, 2024). In these regions, migration has often been framed through

misleading narratives that exacerbate misconceptions about Muslim communities and minority tribal groups. Such narratives are frequently manipulated for political gain, creating exaggerated perceptions of a burgeoning Muslim population threatening the land and resources of local tribal communities (Alam, 2024; Times of India, 2025). Consequently, these portrayals contribute to socio-political and religious tensions, further complicating the discourse surrounding migration. While global migration is often presented as a looming threat, much of the existing discourse fails to address the ethical and humanistic dimensions necessary for fostering peaceful coexistence. This study seeks to integrate the Buddhist philosophy of *Anicca* (impermanence) as a conceptual framework for rethinking migration tensions. By emphasizing the transient nature of existence, this perspective offers an alternative approach to understanding migration as an inevitable aspect of human experience, thereby promoting more compassionate and ethically grounded responses.

2 Research problem, purpose, and significance

This study addresses the pervasive issue of immigration, which has become a source of both visible and latent tensions across political boundaries. These tensions often stem from diverse factors, including political, economic, and social dynamics, leading to widespread misconceptions and conflicts. The research problem focuses on the manner in which migration is frequently framed through narratives of fear and threat, neglecting the broader ethical and existential dimensions human life in the world.

The purpose of this study is to integrate the Buddhist philosophy of Impermanence (*Anicca*) as a conceptual framework for addressing migration-related tensions and promoting peaceful coexistence. The philosophy of *Anicca*, which emphasizes the transient nature of existence, offers profound insights into the existential challenges associated with migration. This study seeks to demonstrate how adopting this perspective can foster a more humane and ethically grounded approach to migration, encouraging societies to move beyond rigid nationalist frameworks and consider the broader implications of human interconnectedness and shared existence as it rightly pointed by Harari in his book *21 Lessons For 21st Century* Harari speaks about nationalism in his catchy phrase 'Global problems need global answer' (Harari, 2019, p. 129).

The significance of this study lies in its potential to inform policy-making by encouraging a re-evaluation of existing migration policies. It seeks to provide a philosophical foundation for addressing migration issues in a manner that transcends political and economic interests, emphasizing human ethics and the impermanence of all phenomena. This research is particularly relevant to fields such as philosophy, political science, sociology, and religious studies, as it offers a novel perspective on migration that can enhance discourses on cultural integration, ethical governance, and conflict resolution. By situating migration within the framework of *Anicca*, this study aims to illuminate pathways toward fostering harmonious relationships between diverse cultural groups in the context of limited resources and heightened socio-political tensions.

3 Methodology, results, and discussion

This research adopts a mixed-methods approach to explore the applicability of the Buddhist concept of *Anicca* (impermanence) to contemporary migration issues worldwide. Data were collected from various international organizations, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). These sources provide compre-

hensive data on migration patterns, policies, and humanitarian crises, enabling the researcher to analyse both quantitative data and qualitative narratives.

The study primarily relies on secondary data analysis, focusing on existing reports and policy documents to identify the current state of migration across different regions. In addition, the study examines scholarly literature, although such literature remains notably scarce when it comes to directly connecting Anicca with migration. Consequently, the research adopts an exploratory approach, identifying indirect references to impermanence within broader socio-political and cultural contexts. However, several challenges arose during the research process. The political sensitivity of migration issues rendered certain aspects difficult to address explicitly, as many countries implement restrictive migration policies tied to national security, economic stability, and cultural preservation. Moreover, the scarcity of literature directly engaging with Anicca in the context of migration posed another significant limitation, compelling the researcher to extrapolate connections from broader philosophical and socio-political frameworks.

The findings of this study reveal that the concept of Anicca, though underexplored in migration discourse, holds profound implications for understanding the transient nature of political power, cultural identities, and national borders. The data indicate that very few academic works explicitly discuss Anicca in relation to migration. However, the underlying theme of impermanence remains deeply relevant, particularly in the context of demographic shifts, political instability, and the erosion of national boundaries. Migration issues, as demonstrated by the data from international organizations, are unlikely to subside in the near future. Global migration is expected to intensify, driven by economic inequality, political conflict, and environmental degradation. However, the application of the concept of Anicca to these issues raises significant political and ideological challenges. By emphasizing the transitory nature of national borders and state power, Anicca questions the very foundation of political authority over populations, particularly in terms of employment, demographic control, and electoral politics.

The study also highlights how migration issues, particularly in politically sensitive contexts, expose the inherent tension between the impermanence of state power and the rigidity of national borders. For instance, countries experiencing rising nationalism and protectionist policies may view Anicca as a subversive concept, as it undermines the perception of state sovereignty and cultural stability. The data further suggest that political polarization worldwide is exacerbating migration issues, as nations become increasingly insular, imposing stricter border controls and restrictive migration policies. Despite these challenges, the study argues that Anicca could serve as a critical framework for rethinking migration policy, emphasizing adaptability and fluidity rather than fixed borders and rigid national identities. The findings indicate that a more nuanced approach to migration could be developed by conceptualizing an Anicca Political Philosophy, one that acknowledges the inherent transience of socio-political structures and promotes more inclusive, adaptable policies.

The study identifies several avenues for future research. First, further exploration of how migration issues challenge liberal democratic ideals, such as freedom of movement and human rights, could provide valuable insights into the ideological implications of Anicca. Second, a focused study on internal migration in India could examine how impermanence might inform policy responses to rural-urban displacement, particularly in states facing economic and environmental crises. Third, a comparative analysis could investigate whether Anicca could serve as a framework for migration policy in regions with diverse political climates, assessing potential conflicts between impermanence and existing power structures. Despite its limitations, the study underscores the relevance of Buddhist

philosophy in contemporary socio-political discourse. The concept of Anicca, with its emphasis on transience and change, offers a compelling lens through which to reconsider migration as a dynamic, inevitable aspect of human society rather than a crisis to be resisted or suppressed. In doing so, it calls for a fundamental shift in how states conceptualize their borders, their power, and their responsibilities toward displaced populations.

4 Migration: A fundamental aspect and challenge of human society

Migration has always been an intrinsic part of human society. Regardless of whether nations welcome or oppose the movement of migrants within or beyond their borders, migration remains a significant political and economic global issue, comparable to environmental challenges. This point is well articulated by Koser (2007) in *International Migration: A Very Short Introduction* and further explored by Harari (2019) in *21 Lessons for the 21st Century*. Consequently, it is essential to critically examine migration as both a societal phenomenon and a global challenge.

Migration is not a distant concept but rather an integral part of human history and society. Across India, numerous instances of both internal and external migration can be observed. For example, the Sadhobos from Odisha migrated to Java and Sumatra, while the Cholas were actively involved in trading activities in Malaya and Sumatra. Similarly, the Mauryan Empire accumulated wealth through extensive trade networks, both overland via the Silk Route to China and by sea to Sumatra, Ceylon, Persia, and Africa. Furthermore, the Pandya dynasty-maintained trade relations with the Roman Empire. Additionally, Adivasis from the Chotanagpur plateau migrated to the then Great Assam to work in tea and rubber plantations (Times of India, 2023; Kanisetti, 2025; Hancock, 2021; NEXT IAS Team, 2024; Wolf, 2022). These examples clearly demonstrate that migration is a fundamental aspect of human existence. Human migration is embedded in our very nature, dating back to the early stages of human evolution. From the Rift Valley in Africa, between approximately 1.5 million and 5000 BCE, *Homo erectus* and *Homo sapiens* migrated to Europe and subsequently to other continents (Koser, 2007/2022, p. 1). However, it is equally important to address the complexities and challenges associated with migration. As modern humans, known as *Homo sapiens*, we pride ourselves on wisdom, yet, as Harari (2015) points out, “tolerance is not a *Sapiens* trademark.” Harari speculates that earlier human species might have been eradicated by *Homo sapiens*, suggesting a potential for conflict even within our species (Harari, 2015, p. 19). This observation partially indicates that differences within the human species, such as racial distinctions, can potentially lead to conflicts, as seen in contemporary migration and border disputes worldwide. Therefore, migration must be acknowledged not only as an essential element of human society but also as a source of social and political challenges. It is imperative for states to develop ethical and inclusive policies to ensure peaceful coexistence and the harmonious integration of migrants within societies.

4.1 Underlying causes of global migration

Migration, a phenomenon that can be seen as a blessing for some and a challenge for others, is indeed one of the most significant issues of the 21st century. As Harari (2019) aptly posits, immigration represents a critical issue of our time, asserting that “some cultures might be better than others,” which underscores the profound inequalities inherent in migration patterns across the globe. Such disparities highlight an existential reality in the contemporary world. Migration can result from a variety of factors, including economic, political, environmental, social, educational, and skill-related opportunities.

In the context of India, migration driven by economic factors is particularly evident. For instance, many individuals from Kerala migrate to different states or even abroad, particularly to the Middle East and the United States, in search of better economic opportunities (Economic Times, 2025; Seethi, 2025). This trend reveals an alarming phenomenon—educated and skilled Indians seeking employment abroad rather than in their own country, a situation commonly referred to as ‘brain drain’ (Subramanian, 2023). At the same time, another segment of the population faces forced migration. Marginalized groups, such as Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Scheduled Castes (SCs), often find themselves displaced from their ancestral lands under the guise of national development. This process is driven by the interests of powerful politicians and large corporations that profit from displacing these communities, particularly in states like Jharkhand, Odisha, and Chhattisgarh (Singh, 2025; Panigrahi, 2019; Vijetha IAS, 2024). This phenomenon highlights the profound disparities within India, which, in turn, points to the even greater challenges faced by developing countries.

The pattern of migration in India underscores the broader issues of economic disparity and resource management. It is evident that migration contributes to a growing income gap: the wealthiest Indians who migrate abroad continue to amass wealth, while the poorest are left behind, exacerbating poverty. This dynamic reflects a form of forced migration and deepens economic inequality within the nation. Furthermore, this situation may fuel social unrest, including the rise of movements such as Maoist insurgencies in certain regions (Mabood, 2024; Scanlon, 2018). Migration often occurs due to political reasons, with conflicts and wars forcing individuals to seek refuge in safer regions. For example, the Rakhine Army movement has driven the Rohingya Muslims out of Myanmar, while the conflict in Sudan has caused many to flee to safer locations (Gowayed, 2024). Similarly, the political tensions in Bangladesh have led to a significant number of people migrating to India (Amnesty International, 2024; Gowayed, 2024).

War, often fueled by political or ethnic disputes, leads to large-scale displacement as people lose their homes and lives. This includes the ongoing conflicts in Gaza, the war between Israel and Palestine, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and the Sudan-South Sudan conflict. Moreover, religious and ethnic persecution, such as that experienced by the Rohingya Muslims, also drives migration in the name of war (Harari, 2019, p. 209; Gable, 2024; Trauner and Wolff, 2024). As Harari (2019) aptly points out, “we should never underestimate human stupidity,” referring to the recurring patterns of conflict and displacement caused by political leaders’ shortsighted and often selfish decisions. This highlights the profound consequences of such actions not only on the citizens of the nations involved but also on neighbouring countries, which bear the brunt of the crisis. This situation can be compared to the atrocities committed in Nazi concentration camps, where political leaders’ selfishness forced many Jewish individuals to flee Germany in search of safety. These patterns of migration demonstrate how political leaders’ decisions, whether driven by a desire for power or short-term gain, can deteriorate human values and, at times, erode the very principles of human dignity and compassion.

Environmental factors also serve as significant drivers of migration, particularly when natural disasters such as wildfires, droughts, floods, and other calamities occur. In the future, there is concern that environmental changes, such as floods resulting from infrastructural developments in neighbouring countries, could force communities to migrate. For instance, China’s potential diversion of water resources could lead to floods in Northeast India, prompting migration from tribal communities to neighbouring regions such as Tibet, China, or Myanmar. This phenomenon highlights the increasing role of environmental factors in forced migration (Nayak, 2024). Environmental migration is also linked to resource nationalism, wherein governments allocate natural resources to large multinational companies, often resulting in the displacement of indigenous communities. This pattern is

evident in the tribal dominated regions of Odisha, Jharkhand, and Chhattisgarh, where large-scale mining projects, particularly those involving foreign companies, have led to the exploitation and displacement of local populations. Similarly, many African countries have witnessed the extraction of gold and other valuable resources by Chinese and other foreign corporations, further marginalizing indigenous groups and exacerbating migration pressures (Nayak, 2024; Jaiswal, 2022; Survival International, 2022; South China Morning Post, 2018).

However, there are contrasting cases where certain indigenous communities, despite facing challenging environmental conditions, choose to remain in their ancestral lands rather than migrate. For example, the Eskimos in Alaska, the Sentinelese on North Sentinel Island in India, the Dukha of Mongolia, and the Filipino communities living in volcanic islands continue to thrive in their respective environments. Although these regions present significant environmental challenges, these tribes maintain their way of life, with only a few individuals choosing to migrate (Cultural Survival, 2010; Survival International, n.d.; ResilientPH, 2024). Migration is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon shaped by a range of social, economic, political, and environmental factors. Among these, social factors such as family reunification and social networks, educational opportunities and skill acquisition, and policy and legal frameworks play pivotal roles. Family reunification is a significant driver of migration, particularly in the context of legal immigration. It allows migrants to bring their immediate family members to join them in the host country, facilitating the maintenance of familial bonds and providing social and emotional support.

For instance, the United States has specific family-based immigration categories, such as immediate relative visas (IR) and family preference visas (F), that enable U.S. citizens and permanent residents to sponsor their relatives (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, n.d.). Similarly, the European Union recognizes the right to family reunification as a fundamental aspect of its immigration policy, as articulated in the Family Reunification Directive (2003/86/EC). This policy seeks to harmonize member states' regulations while ensuring that family ties are preserved despite migration. Social networks also play a vital role in migration decisions. Migrants often rely on connections with family, friends, or members of their community to facilitate relocation and integration. These networks provide essential information, financial support, and emotional comfort. For example, diasporic networks have significantly contributed to labour migration from South Asian countries to the Gulf region, creating migration chains that facilitate the flow of workers through established networks.

4.2 The positive impacts of migration

Migration is often driven by complex challenges and hardships rather than voluntary movement. Political conflict, for instance, can force individuals to seek asylum in foreign countries to protect their lives and cultural heritage. A prominent example is the Dalai Lama, who sought refuge in India after China's annexation of Tibet. This migration not only safeguarded his life but also facilitated the preservation of Tibetan culture, religion, and customs (Ahuja, 2021). Similarly, Malala Yousafzai, who survived a terrorist attack in Pakistan, was granted asylum in the United Kingdom, allowing her to continue her advocacy for girls' education without fear of persecution (BBC News, 2012). Migration also serves as a significant catalyst for economic development and intercultural exchange. Many individuals migrate in search of better employment opportunities, thereby contributing to both their host and home countries. For instance, a substantial number of Tamilians migrate as labourers to Singapore and Malaysia, improving their economic stability and uplifting their communities back home (George, 2016). Furthermore, several countries rely on migrant workers to sustain their economies and achieve higher levels of productivity. Indian professionals, including doctors, nurses, and engin-

eers, work in various countries, contributing substantially to the economic strength of their host nations while simultaneously sending remittances to support their families and communities in India.

A pertinent example of the economic impact of migration can be observed in Spain, where foreign-born workers have played a crucial role in economic growth and labour market support. According to Spain's Ministry for Social Security and Migration, 45% of all jobs created since 2022 have been filled by approximately half a million new foreign-born workers. Foreign workers now comprise 13% of the country's workforce, totalling nearly three million individuals (Wilson and Naishadham, 2025). Similarly, in Australia, temporary migrants, including international students and skilled workers, accounted for 83% of the country's population growth during the 2023–2024 fiscal year. Their contributions have been vital in addressing labour shortages and sustaining economic development (The Australian, 2024). Migration also plays a crucial role in addressing demographic imbalances. In the United States, for example, immigrants offset the ageing population, sustaining the labour force and social security systems (Costa et al., 2024). Additionally, migrants are significant fiscal contributors. In the United States, they pay more in taxes than they consume in public services, thereby supporting the public sector (Thurston and Ricciardi, 2024; Fairless, 2024). Migration also fosters cultural enrichment. In Australia, the high proportion of migrants has enhanced cultural diversity, contributing to a vibrant multicultural society (Hutley, 2024). In the United States, increased intercultural interactions have promoted social cohesion, reduced prejudice and fostering mutual understanding (Thurston and Ricciardi, 2024). Thus, despite its roots in hardship and displacement, migration generates profound positive impacts, fostering economic growth, demographic rejuvenation, cultural preservation, and global interconnectedness.

4.3 The challenges and negative implications of migration

Migration, as Yuval Noah Harari observes in *21 Lessons for the 21st Century*, is one of the defining challenges of our time. Harari emphasizes that a significant drawback of migration lies in the pronounced inequalities between nations, asserting that “some cultures might be better than others” (Harari, 2019, p. 165). This disparity fosters socio-economic tensions, as migrants often move from less affluent regions to more prosperous countries, exacerbating existing inequalities. A comprehensive analysis of the broader implications of migration is presented in the report *Global Trends 2040*, published by the National Intelligence Council of the United States. The report underscores that shifting global demographic trends are likely to intensify economic and political disparities both within and between nations, potentially straining governance structures. It further suggests that such disparities will fuel migration pressures over the next two decades, leading to heightened friction between states (National Intelligence Council, 2021, p. 15).

Migration exerts profound implications across multiple domains, necessitating comprehensive policy responses to mitigate its adverse effects. Economically, migration can impose significant strain, as evidenced in the United Kingdom, where recent migration reforms aim to alleviate pressure on social services by implementing stricter visa regulations (The Guardian, 2025). Similarly, in the United States, the influx of low skilled migrant workers is perceived as a threat to native low-wage workers, intensifying labour market competition (Davies, 2013). Socially, migration can generate cultural tensions and challenges in social integration. In Australia, recent migration policies have sparked debates over cultural assimilation versus multiculturalism, underscoring the complexities of social cohesion in a diversifying society (Parliament of Australia, 2025). Politically, migration can provoke backlash, as observed in Senegal's coastal communities, where severe ecological degradation due to overfishing has driven local populations to migrate, further straining regional stability (Thompson,

2025). Human rights violations also emerge as a critical concern in migration contexts. In the United Kingdom, legal challenges have arisen regarding the deportation of asylum seekers to Bulgaria, with lawyers contending that such practices may contravene human rights protections (Fallon and Tondo, 2025). Health and sanitation risks similarly underscore the vulnerabilities of migrant populations, as illustrated by the deteriorating conditions in refugee camps in Greece, where overcrowding has precipitated severe health crises (Godin, 2020). Moreover, migration can exacerbate the phenomenon of brain drain, as seen in India's ongoing struggle to retain medical professionals who seek better opportunities in high-income countries (Ad Astra Consultants, 2024). Additionally, climate-induced displacement remains a pressing issue, particularly in Assam, India, where recurrent flooding has driven rural populations to overcrowded urban centres, compounding existing socio-economic pressures (Times of India, 2025).

Security concerns also intersect with migration, as evidenced by the persistent prevalence of human trafficking along the Mediterranean route, despite international efforts to curtail such activities (UNICEF & IOM, 2017). Thus, while migration holds the potential to stimulate economic growth and facilitate cultural exchange, it also poses substantial challenges, including socio-economic inequality, governance strain, and heightened security risks. Addressing these multifaceted implications requires nuanced and comprehensive policy frameworks that balance economic imperatives with humanitarian considerations.

5 'Anicca' as a new horizon for immigration issues

The concept of "Anicca," often perceived as religious, emerges as a significant framework for addressing contemporary immigration challenges. As Yuval Noah Harari eloquently articulates in *Sapiens* (2015), narratives and stories are not merely words or isolated meanings; they embody the collective imagination, encapsulating the richness of communal ideas, cultural depth, and civic consciousness. Similarly, the notion of Anicca transcends its religious connotations to offer valuable insights into pressing global issues, including border disputes, national security, resource distribution, and shifting religious demographics. Concerns about demographic changes have intensified in countries like France, Germany, and India, where anxieties about Muslim migrants potentially altering national identities have gained traction (ANI, 2011; Diallo, 2025; Alexander, 2025; The Times of India, 2025). The framework of Anicca, emphasising impermanence and the transient nature of socio-cultural constructs, provides a nuanced lens through which to examine such fears and the broader implications of migration.

In *Sapiens*, Harari (2015, pp. 87–94) characterizes the Agricultural Revolution as "the biggest fraud in history," arguing that while early Homo sapiens believed agriculture would provide abundant food, it instead led to their subjugation by a mere handful of wild grains and plants. Harari illustrates how every solution paradoxically generates new problems, a dynamic that may also manifest in the context of contemporary migration. The complexities of migration may eventually engulf human society in ways that are not immediately perceptible. Therefore, while it may be impossible to fully resolve the migration crisis, it is crucial to address it proactively and mitigate its impact to a significant extent.

5.1 A Buddhist perspective on migration: Embracing impermanence

Migration, as a global phenomenon, is often perceived through lenses of fear and threat, leading to polarised debates and stringent policies. Migrants are frequently labelled as terrorists, economic bur-

dens, cultural invaders, or criminals. This framing, rooted in power politics and nationalist rhetoric, exacerbates social fragmentation and conflict. To address this issue meaningfully, we can draw insights from Buddhist philosophy, particularly the concept of Anicca (impermanence).

5.2 Impermanence as a lens to understand migration

The Buddhist doctrine of Anicca asserts that all phenomena are transient, constantly changing, and never fixed. This insight challenges the common assumption that socio-political structures, cultural identities, or even national borders are static or permanent. The parable of Kisāgotamī, as narrated by Buddha, poignantly illustrates this idea. Kisāgotamī, grieving the loss of her child, is guided by Buddha to realise that death and loss are universal and inevitable aspects of existence. This profound realisation of impermanence leads her to accept suffering as part of life rather than resisting or denying it. As Buddha expressed: “Not the condition of the village, or the town, and also not the condition of one clan. This is the condition of the entire world with its gods: the impermanence of all that is.” (Geismar et al., 2021, p. 04). This parable highlights that suffering arises from the failure to accept the fundamental instability of life. Applying this principle to migration, we can recognize that human movement is not an anomaly but a natural expression of change. Political boundaries, cultural identities, and economic conditions are themselves subject to flux. History bears witness to the shifting nature of nations, cultures, and populations. Yet, contemporary political rhetoric often resists this reality, seeking permanence in a world that is inherently impermanent.

5.3 Towards a balanced perspective on migration

Buddhist philosophy encourages a Middle Path neither clinging to fixed ideologies nor succumbing to chaos. This approach can guide us to view migration not as a crisis but as a dynamic process reflecting the impermanent nature of societies. Instead of adopting extreme policies either of exclusion or unrestricted openness nations can cultivate a balanced and humane approach. To transcend the fear-driven narratives of migration, we must broaden our understanding of nationalism and community. Rather than perceiving migrants as existential threats, we can see them as contributors to an ever-evolving social landscape. By embracing impermanence, we acknowledge that political and cultural boundaries are mutable, allowing for coexistence and adaptation rather than conflict and resistance.

5.4 Reimagining nationalism and cultural identity

Nationalism should not be confined to rigid territorial or cultural boundaries but should instead embrace diversity as a facet of social evolution. A parochial vision of nationalism fuels division and conflict, as seen in xenophobic and isolationist policies. A more enlightened approach would recognize that just as past cultures and empires have risen and fallen, modern nations too are subject to transformation. By aligning our socio-political outlook with the Buddhist understanding of impermanence, we foster a world where fear of migration gives way to pragmatic and compassionate coexistence. As Geismar et al. (2021) argue in *Impermanence: Exploring Continuous Change Across Cultures*, acknowledging instability as a fundamental reality is crucial to overcoming suffering. Yet, attaining this mindset is undeniably challenging. Accepting the fluidity of power, politics, and cultural dynamics requires profound self-awareness and social responsibility. Migration challenges us to rethink our fixed perceptions of cultural and national identity. By adopting the Buddhist principle of impermanence, we can move beyond reactive, fear based responses and develop inclusive frameworks that reflect the dynamic nature of human societies. Rather than resisting change, we should embrace it as an opportu-

ity to build a more adaptable, harmonious world one that acknowledges both the hardships and the potential of human mobility.

6 Conclusion

This research explored how the Buddhist philosophy of *Anicca* (impermanence) can offer insights into addressing migration issues. The findings reveal that migration is a politically sensitive and volatile subject, often generating conflict between nations and significantly impacting global political and social stability. *Anicca* provides a potential framework for rethinking migration policies, advocating for a middle path that emphasizes adaptability and compassionate action. The study suggests that incorporating *Anicca* into political philosophy could offer valuable perspectives on global migration challenges, encouraging policymakers to adopt more humanitarian and inclusive approaches. Additionally, the research underscores the urgent need for international cooperation on migration issues, as data indicates that migration is likely to increase, potentially exacerbating social divisions and destabilizing communities. This calls for a global humanitarian response that acknowledges the interconnectedness of all life and respects the Earth as a shared home for all.

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