

EARLY BUDDHISM AND THE
BRAHMANICAL DOCTRINES

P. R. BARN



ASIATIC SOCIETY OF PAKISTAN, DACCA

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PREFACE

In 1953 the Central Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Education, declared an Overseas Scholarship for doing B.A. or M.A. in Pali in the London University for two years. I applied for the scholarship and was subsequently selected by the Federal Public Service Commission for the award. On going over to England I wanted to do Ph.D. by a thesis, but the difficulty that stood on my way was the question of 3 years study for doing Ph.D. degree. I cabled to the East Pakistan Government through the High Commissioner for Pakistan in U.K. for an extension of my scholarship for another year. But the reply came to me that the overseas scholarship was given from the budget of 1953-54, but if the scholar wanted extension of his scholarship for another year, there was no knowing wherefrom the extension for another year would be given. It was, therefore, better that the scholar should return within the period of two years. Finding no other alternative I packed my writings and submitted my thesis for the Degree of Master of Arts in the London University after two years' study there, took the degree and resumed, my post of Professor of Pali in the East Pakistan Educational Service.

After my return from England I submitted my thesis to the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Dacca, for publication, as my thesis was approved by the Board of Examiners in the London University as a work suitable for publication. The Society could not publish it owing to various reasons. I insisted upon the fact that my work would be a pioneer in this field for future scholars as it is the first of its kind among publications of the Society regarding the Brahminical doctrine in Buddhism and the Buddhist teaching. I am very thankful to the Society that it is going to be published now. I owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. Muhammad Shahidullah, the Veteran orientalist and the founder-member, and Dr. Abdul Karim, the General Secretary of the Society, without whose earnest efforts and sympathetic consideration my book would not have seen the light of the day. Lastly, I wish to thank also other members of the Society who directly or indirectly helped me in this matter.

P.R. Barua

Dedicated

to

**the sacred memory of my uncle the
late Harakishore Talukdar (Barua) under
whose fatherly care I grew up to
manhood.**

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Early Buddhism And The Brahmanical Doctrines

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Brahmin doctrine forms an integral part of early Buddhism as the latter arose out of it, partly in rivalry with and partly in modification of the existing Brahminical systems of the Buddha's day. The seventh and sixth centuries B. C. mark an important landmark in the history of intellectual activities of the ancient Indians. Among the non-Brahminical religious Orders (*Saghas* or *Gaṇas*) either contemporaneous with or anterior to the Buddhist Order, six are often referred to in the Pāli Canon. Their founders are called *Titthiyas* or heretics ; each one of the *Titthiyas* was a prominent thinker of the age. But as it does not come within the scope of our book we have not discussed the views propounded by those leaders, but confined ourselves within the scope of Brahmin and Buddhist teaching.

Apart from the Introduction and Conclusion, the book is divided into four main chapters, dealing first, with the doctrine of *Ātman* or Soul ; secondly, with Brahmin doctrine of caste ; thirdly, with the Vedic rites and rituals connected with sacrifice involving animal killing ; and fourthly, with the existence of the gods and their position in Buddhism, as a consequence upon the doctrine of sacrifice, which was performed to please the gods, in the hope of obtaining some favour from them by those sacrificial acts.

The doctrine of *Karma* and Rebirth or Metempsychosis is Brahminical and was in vogue in India long before the time of the rise of Buddhism. As a matter of fact, Buddhism accepted this doctrine without much criticism, whilst not admitting the Brahminical theory of Soul or Self. These and other well-known

doctrines common to both religions have not been discussed at length in this book.

The title of my book needs an explanation. As it appears, the title may be broadly interpreted in a twofold way, as concerned (1) with the Brahmin doctrine as opposed and foreign to the Buddhist teaching, particularly in Buddhist polemics found mostly in the *Suttas* of the *Dīgha-Nikāya* in the *Sīlakkhandha-vagga*, and (2) with the Brahmin Doctrine as an integral part of early Buddhism, which arose partly in rivalry with and partly in modification of the existing beliefs. The subject is very vast and unwieldy, as Buddhism must have incorporated many of the existing beliefs and ideas with some modifications and innovations, e.g., the belief in the doctrine of *Karma* and Rebirth, the repeated cycle of existence (*samsāra*) and the different ways of escape from them were current in India long before the time of the advent of the Buddha. Accordingly, early Buddhism accepted without any adverse comment the existing social rites and customs with some refinements, as Buddhism had no concern practically to produce a reformed society of lay people, or a reformed Welfare State, but taught a way of escape from the ills of life to the eternal peace of *Nibbāna*.

It is certain that in Buddha's day the general means believed in for attaining the final goal—whether it was called *Brahman*, *Nirvāṇa*, *Mokṣa*, or *Mukti*—was to renounce the world and to become a homeless ascetic or monk. In the legend of the early life of the Bodhisatta, the Buddha-to-be, we find that the Bodhisatta Siddhārtha, the prince of Kapilavatthu, saw four sights before he renounced the world, namely, representations of old age, disease and death and of a hermit who had renounced the world (*pabbajita* in Pāli), whose calm and peaceful demeanour made a deep impression on the mind of the prince, so much so that he determined to renounce the world on that very night and to find out the path Immortal in order to overcome the miseries of life. The ascetic ideal and the mendicant life as a means to such salvation (*mukti*) is of course to be found as early as the earliest *Upaniṣads*. In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad* (III, 5), Yājñā-valkya says : “Thus *Brāh-*

mans who know this *Ātman*, rise above the longing for sons, the longing for wealth, the longing for worlds, and live the life of the mendicants.” As noted above, the final aim of Buddhism, as of other Indian creeds, is to escape from the terrible unrest of *saṃsāra* or transmigration from one existence to another, continually undergoing all the miseries and afflictions connected therewith, and to find an eternal repose in *Nibbāna*. This highest aim can only be attained by a recluse who has cut off all longing for worldly happiness. The teaching of the *Dhammapada* is to the same effect, namely, to renounce all longings for worldly desire which is gross and material, and to gain the ‘indescribable joy’ of *Nibbāna* by overcoming such desire and by self-mastery and self-culture.¹

We must not forget that there were various other sects in India that existed during the time of the rise of Buddhism, and as many as sixty-two views are mentioned in the *Brahmajāla-Sutta*, the first dialogue in the collection of the *Dīgha-Nikāya*. All the theories unite together in asserting that whatever misfortunes there are—here or hereafter—they are rooted in ignorance (*avijjā*)² and the destruction of ignorance depends on perfect knowledge (*sammā sambodhi*). Ignorance means not knowing, or the condition of sleep, whilst knowledge (*paññā*) is the condition of awakening from the darkness of ignorance. The nature of this ignorance is explained in the early Pāli texts as the lack of knowledge of the four noble truths (*cattāri ariya-saccāni*). After each and every one of the sixty-two views in the *Brahmajāla-Sutta* has been rejected, the doctrine of *Nibbāna* is held out to be the highest ideal in Buddhism. Whilst the various other

¹. Cf. *Dhp. Bālavagga*, v. 5 :

Puttaṃ m’atthi, dhanam m’atthi iti bālo vicinteti

attā hi attano n’atthi, kuto puttā kuto dhanam ?

(It is only the fool who says ‘I have a son, I have wealth etc. The self is not the self, then wherefrom are the son and wealth?)

². see *Itivuttaka*, p. 34.

theories, Brahminical or non-Brahminical, were busy with matters relating to the origin and destruction of the world, the Buddha on the other hand, gives an explanation of the origin and cessation of the objects produced from a cause, which is known as the law of dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*), recognising neither God (*Īśvara*), the One Creator and Organiser of the Universe, on whom man can rely for deliverance, nor the release of the 'Soul' by such acts as offerings, sacrifice and worship of the gods.

In my book I have discussed how far the Brahminical teachings are accepted or criticised, and how far they have been discarded by the Buddhist teaching. It is evident from a comparative study that the Brahmin doctrine forms an integral part of early Buddhism, as the latter arose out of the existing Brahminical system of the time. It may be noticed that many of the Buddha's earliest disciples, and very prominent ones, who became famous by dint of their accomplishments in subsequent days, came from Brahmin families, e.g., the two chief disciples of Buddha, Sāriputta and Moggallāna, were Brahmins before they became converted to Buddhism. Although many of the most important Brāhmin doctrines are found existing in Buddhism, they have been interpreted in a new light, emphasising more their ethical value than their formal aspects. I have accordingly confined myself within the scope of some of the important Brahmin doctrines in Buddhism, and omitted from consideration those doctrines which are very widely known, e.g., the doctrines of *Karma* and Rebirth. As a matter of fact, the relation between Brahminism and Buddhism as religions and schools of philosophical thought runs through the whole history of Buddhism.

It has not been possible, or indeed necessary, to utilise all the works in the Pāli canon for my book. The *Sutta-Piṭaka*, which is most important for our present purposes, is divided into five *Nikāyas* or Collections (= *Samgraha*) consisting of the oldest as well as the most modern Buddhist doctrines, and as such, it is very important for the study of Buddhist philosophy and religion, as well as other Indian doctrines such as Brahmanism and Jainism ; for the discourses of the *Sutta-Piṭaka* very often refer to the

systems of philosophy and dogmas prevalent in the Buddha's time, either in refutation of those doctrines or in acceptance of them, with modifications according to the Buddhist ethical teaching.

The *Vinaya-Piṭaka*, the "Basket" of Disciplinary Rules, is our main source of information for the early history of the Buddhist Order, as it gives the rules for the daily life of monks and nuns ; as such it contains comparatively few references to Brahmin doctrine. Regarding the major omissions, the most important text of the *Vinaya-Piṭaka*, the *Pātimokkha*, consisting of the rules guiding the daily life of the monks and nuns in the Buddhist Order, has not been consulted, since it has little bearing on the subject of my book. The *Pātimokkha* may be divided according to its contents into three main sections, viz., Penal Code, Law of Etiquette, and Law of Settlements.

Among the five divisions of the *Vinaya-Piṭaka*, the most important for our purpose is the *Khandhakas*, Sections or Fragments on the *Vinaya* consisting of twenty-two sections taken together and known as the *Mahāvagga* and the *Cullavagga*. They illustrate some of the most important events in the life of the Buddha, from his enlightenment up to the second Buddhist Council, which took place a hundred years after the *Parinibbāna* of the Buddha. It is worth while to mention that in presenting the life of the Buddha, the *Vinaya-Khandhakas* follow the most methodical treatment of the subject of all the books in the Pāli Canon, and in doing so they include many historical discourses and legends from the Nikāyas.

I have to refer to the *Abhidhamma-Piṭaka* consisting of seven treatises, only when I wish to explain the Buddhist point of view in comparison with the Brahmin standpoint. The *Abhidhamma*, it may be noted here, is not the metaphysics of Buddhism, as some previous scholars have rendered it.¹ There is no

¹. Similarly 'Sīla' is not 'duty' but a prescribed code of morality to be observed by the initiated ones. It is not 'duty' as ordinarily understood. Cf. Jennings, *Vedāntic Buddhism of Buddha*, Intro.

metaphysics of Buddhism in the *Abhidhamma-Piṭaka*. But it is a systematisation of the *Dhamma* as contained in the *Sutta-Piṭaka*, and as such, it may be taken as a supplement to *Dhamma* or *Sutta*.

The term *Abhidhamma*, as explained by Buddhaghosa in his *Atthasālini*, a commentary on the *Dhamma-saṅgani*, signifies a long-developed exegetical method of explaining the doctrine of the Buddha in excess of what is found in the *Sutta-Piṭaka*. That is to say, in the *Abhidhamma* books a rigorously scientific method has been adopted for explaining the meaning of various psychological terms employed in the Dialogues of the Buddha. The method is claimed to have been thoroughly analytic (*vibhaj-javāda*)—analysis being the first step to any scientific treatment of a subject. For the real philosophical discussion the reference must always be had to the *Suttas*, on the foundation of which the superstructure of *Abhidhamma* has been built. The *Abhidhamma-Piṭaka* has really very little bearing in the scope of my book and has seldom been consulted.

In addition to canonical works, I have referred to some non-canonical ones, notably to commentaries on the various books of the *Tipiṭaka*. The earliest literary evidence of the existence of the *Piṭakas* and the *Nikāyas* is to be found in the *Milinda-Pañha*, a non-canonical Pāli work of the first rate importance, assigned to the first century A. D. Further literary evidence is supplied by the Ceylonese Chronicles, the *Dīpavaṃsa* and the *Mahāvaṃsa* and the *Aṭṭhakathās* (Commentaries). Among other important works of non-canonical Pāli, mention may be made here of the *Visuddhi-Magga*, or the Path of Purity, by the celebrated commentator Buddhaghosa, an encyclopaedic work on Buddhism of the 5th. century A. D. The *Dīpavaṃsa* 'Island Chronicle' and *Mahāvaṃsa*, the 'Great Chronicle' of Ceylon, containing an account of the introduction of Buddhism into Ceylon and of the Buddhist Councils, form a literary supplement to the dialogues and discourses of the *Vinaya* and the *Nikāyas*, and as such, they are consulted and referred to when occasion arises in the course of our discussion of the Brahmin doctrines.

In regard to the antiquity of the Pāli Canon, it is generally supposed to be the most authentic and the most ancient canon of Buddhism. It has been studied and preserved in Ceylon, Burma, East Pakistan (Chittagong), Siam and Cambodia. According to tradition, the *Vinaya* and the *Sutta-Piṭakas* were compiled shortly after the *Parinibbāna* of the Buddha in the Council of Rājagaha. The *Abhidhamma* was finally fixed in the Council of Pāṭaliputta during the time of King Aśoka. These three *Piṭakas* were preserved in Ceylon by the monks of the Mahāvihāra at Anurādhapura and were written down in the reign of King Vaṭṭagāmani in the first century B.C.

The Buddhist-Sanskrit literature, though not translated from the Pāli, also testifies to the antiquity and fidelity of the Pāli transmission. This literature, apart from the Buddhist-Sanskrit literature in *Mahāyāna*, provides evidence that there are many literal agreements between the two. Among the most important of the Buddhist-Sanskrit works I have used Aśvaghoṣa's *Buddhacarita* and *Saundarananda-Kāvya*s, works of the first century A.D., *Lalitavistara*, *Mahāvastu*, etc., and the exact page and chapter have been mentioned when they are referred to. In connection with the discussion of Buddhist doctrine in contrast to Brahmin teaching, I have often referred to the *Mahāyāna* doctrines for purposes of comparison and contrast, and the *Mahāyāna-Sūtras* are mentioned in their appropriate places.

The *Bṛhadaraṇyaka* and the *Chāndogya* are among the earliest *Upaniṣads* and are said to be pre-Buddhist. I have referred to these two *Upaniṣads* in connection with the Brahmin doctrine and the Buddhist doctrine in their similarity and dissimilarity. Occasional references are also made to other *Upaniṣads*, apart from the *Vedas*, as for example, the *Praśna* and *Kena*. One important book on the doctrines of the *Upaniṣads* and the beginnings of Buddhism is by Dr. Oldenberg, *Die Lehre der Upanishaden und der Anfänge des Buddhismus*, Göttingen, 1915, which is a valuable contribution to the study of the Upaniṣadic teaching and early Buddhism. As my knowledge of German is scanty, I have obtained an idea of the contents of the book through a German friend. The same

applies to another German book by Dr. Kirfel, *Die Kosmographie der Inder*, Leipzig, 1920, which deals mainly with the Brahmin, Buddhist and Jaina cosmography and cosmology. They are referred to in the discussion of relevant topics in this book. Other books in German, as for example, *Vedānta und Buddhismus*, by Helmuth von Glasenapp, and *Das Seelenproblem im älteren Buddhismus*, by Herbert Gunther, are valuable contributions to the comparative study of Vedānta and Buddhism in the systems of Indian philosophy. Dr. M. Winternitz's *A History of Indian Literature*, and Richard Fick's *The Social Organisation in North-East India in Buddha's Time*, originally written in German, are accessible to me through their English translations.

I have divided the main body of my book into four chapters, dealing first with the doctrine of *Ātman* or the question of Soul ; secondly, with the doctrine of caste ; thirdly, with the doctrines of sacrifice and Vedic rites and rituals connected therewith ; and fourthly, with the position of the gods in early Buddhism. All these doctrines were held by the Brahmins, but I have not entered into detail as to their origin, growth and development, since this is outside the scope of my book. I have confined myself to attempting to determine how far these Brahmin doctrines are maintained or discarded in Buddhism, as found in the different *Suttas* of the Pāli literature, and in discussing such matters I have also had to refer to some other works in Sanskrit, both Brahminical or Buddhist *Mahāyāna*, or Mixed Sanskrit, to illustrate the contrast between the two systems, Brahmin and Buddhist.

My investigation into the references to Brahmin doctrine in the Pāli Canon has led me to certain conclusions regarding the inter-connection of Brahminism and Buddhism, and how far these two systems agree and disagree with each other in respect of doctrinal, ethical and philosophical matters. This will, I trust, become clear in the course of the following chapters.

CHAPTER II

The Doctrine of Atman or Soul

The *Dīgha Nikāya*, the collection of long *Suttas* in the *Sutta-Piṭaka* of the Pāli canon, especially the first book (the *Sīlakkhandha-Vagga*), comprising *Suttas* 1—13, deals with the problem of *Attā* or Self.¹ Though the *Dīgha Nikāya* cannot be said to contain the earliest form of the Buddha's teaching, it contains, according to Winternitz, some of the earliest pieces of the Buddha's sayings.² It is divided into three books which differ in contents and character. The earlier *Suttas* are found mostly in the first book and the later in the third book. In the second book the *Suttas* are old, but they have been enlarged later on by interpolation.

Most of the *Suttas* are written entirely in prose, but there are many written in prose and verse. The majority of *Suttas* in Book I deal with ethical questions, particularly, *Sīla* (morality). Invariably, the *Suttas* first speak of the Brāhmanic and other non-Buddhistic beliefs and practices, point out their defects, bringing out the excellence of the Buddha's teaching in comparison with that of others. In the *Brahmajāla-Sutta* all the sixty-two views have been put together and it is shown that they are all wrong while that of Buddhism is right. Incidentally, it also speaks of all kinds of occupations and discussions which were in vogue in ancient India in the 6th century B. C., and also the modes

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1. See the *Paṭṭhapāda, Jāliya* and *Mahāli-Suttas*, *Dīgha* I, Nos. 6, 7, and 9 ; *Pāsādika-Sutta*, *Dīgha* III, 136, where the 'undetermined questions' (*avyākātāni*), regarding the nature of the Self have been discussed over and over again.
 2. See Winternitz : *History of Indian Literature*, Vol. II p. 35 (Calcutta, 1933).

of life and thought of the Brāhmanical and non-Brāhmanical ascetics, from all of which the Buddhist monk is to keep himself aloof.

In the *Sāmaññaphala-Sutta* the doctrines of the six heretical teachers are discussed and their uselessness for attaining emancipation is shown. In the *Ambaṭṭha-Sutta* one finds the Buddha's attitude towards the caste system. In the *Kūṭadanta* and *Tevijja-Suttas*, Buddha ridicules the Brāhmanical cult of sacrifices and the doctrine of union with Brahmā, and establishes the superiority of Buddhism to Brāhmanism. In the *Nidāna* and *Satipaṭṭhāna-suttas* the fundamental principles of Buddhism are discussed, while in the *Siṅgālovāda* are laid down the domestic and social duties of the Buddhist layman. In the *Mahāparinibbāna-Sutta* we have a continuous record of the latter part of Buddha's life, his last speeches and sayings and an account of his cremation and of the division of his relics. It differs from all other *Suttas* of the *Dīgha Nikāya* in as much as it is neither a discourse nor a dialogue on one or more of the chief points of the doctrine. It is more of the type of a biography than a *Sutta* containing a discourse. It seems originally to have been an independent work with the account of two Councils found in the *Vinaya-Cullavagga* as the last portion. Later on it was included in the *Dīgha Nikāya* excluding the account of the two Councils. This *Sutta* is a mosaic composed of earlier and later pieces. There are many anomalous statements in it. In one place the disciples are recommended to visit the Buddhist sites while in another the disciples are advised not to worship the Buddha. Use of miraculous powers especially in front of laymen is condemned by the Buddha, but there are passages in this *Sutta* showing how *Ānanda* was admonished for not taking recourse to miraculous powers.

The *Mahāpadāna*, the *Lakkhaṇa* and the *Pāṭika-Suttas* show a stage in which the Buddha is no longer looked upon as an ordinary human teacher. He is treated more as a human being with divine attributes. There are also several semi-poetical and mythological *Suttas* in which the gods take a leading part. In the *Aggañña-Sutta* the origin of the universe and the beings is dis-

cussed. In the *Pāyāsi-Sutta* there is the discussion about soul and the beyond between *Pāyāsi* and *Kumāra-Kassapa*. The *Ātānāṭiya-Sutta* is an incantation to ward off snakes and demons, while the last two *Suttas*, *Samgīti* and *Dasuttara*, written after the style of the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya*, contain an enumeration of all the fundamental doctrines in the form of a catechism like the *Abhidhamma-piṭaka*.

The above survey of the contents of the *Dīgha Nikāya* shows that it was not a uniform work of one author. A uniform idea underlying the whole of the *Dīgha Nikāya* cannot be traced. There are in it different conceptions about the Buddha, *Nirvāṇa* or the path leading to *Nirvāṇa*. It was compiled no doubt with certain ideas but from its mixed character one may infer that it is one of the latest of the four *Nikāyas*.¹

The *Brahmajāla-Sutta* is the first dialogue of the Buddha in the whole of the *Dīgha Nikāya* (in its present form) as well as in its first book called the *Sīlakkhandha-Vagga*. Book I of this *Nikāya* thus comprising thirteen *Suttas* is so named because of containing three fragments on *Sīla* in each of its component *Suttas*. This *Sutta* is of importance not only for the history of Buddhism, but also for the entire religious life and thought of ancient India in the time of the Buddha. The discourse may be divided into two parts, first an exposition of the *Sīlas* and secondly, the various philosophical speculations of the ascetics and *Brahmins*.

This is the first *Sutta* or *Dhamma* of the *Sutta-Piṭaka* recited by the venerable *Ānanda* according to the earliest account of the first Buddhist council at Rājagaha contained in Chapter XI of the *Vinaya-Cullavagga*. *Brahmajāla*, which literally means

1. In the Chinese translation of the *Dirghāgama* the 14th *Sutta* of the Pāli *Dīgha Nikāya* has been placed as the first *Sutta*, which is an evidence of the fact that the *Suttas* of the *Dīgha Nikāya* were compiled by different authors at different times. "The last three *Suttas* also serve to indicate that the final redaction of the *Dīgha Nikāya* must have been complete at a later date." Winternitz, II, p. 44.

‘*Brahmā’s* net’ or ‘Brahman net’, is evidently a metaphorical expression which means ‘God’s magic’ or ‘Brahmā’s magic.’ In its secondary meaning it is the “Best or Perfect Magic”, as the commentator Buddhaghosa would like to say. It is just one of the four titles suggested by the Buddha himself in the concluding portion of the Dialogue, the three other titles being “*Dhammajāla*” Net of Doctrine ; “*Atthajāla*” or Net of Advantage ; and “*Amuttarasāṅgāma-Vijaya*” : the means of complete victory in war. The expression “*Brahmajāla*” can be explained more clearly in comparison with Sanskrit “*Māyājāla*” and “*Indrajāla*”, the “Net of Illusion” and “Indra’s Net” bearing a close resemblance.¹ The appropriateness of the title is explained in the body of the text itself. Just as by dragging a fine-meshed net in a pond or lake it is possible to expect that all fishes of a specific size would not escape but would be caught in it, so by means of this *Sutta* one might expect to catch hold of all types of theories and views that are inconsistent with the Buddha’s doctrine. In other words, the main purpose of the Dialogue was to furnish the Buddha’s Disciples with a knowledge of the various modes of living and of thinking that fell short of the standard approved by the Buddha.

It should be noted here that by no means all of the theories were of Brāhmanical origin ; some are decidedly non-Brāhmanical and tally with the views of one or other of the six heretical teachers mentioned in the *Sāmaññaphala-Sutta* and other texts.²

1. The recluses and Brāhmins are entrapped in the net of these sixty-two modes ; this way and that they plunge about, but they are in it ; this way and that they flounder but they are included in it, caught in it.” Rhys Davids, *Dialogues of the Buddha*, pt. I, p. 54. The Disciples of the Buddha are warned not to be entangled with this net of Illusion but to avoid it and keep themselves away from it.
2. For detailed information regarding the doctrines of the six heretical teachers see the *Sāmaññaphala-Sutta* in the

Prof. N. Dutt, in the *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol. VIII, 1932, p. 717, says that the speculations and theories mentioned in the *Brahmajāla-Sutta* are based on the experiences of the Buddhist monks, and they are, therefore, not to be taken as the current theories and speculations prevalent in the Buddha's time. But our text definitely mentions that there are some *Samaṇas* and *Brahmaṇas* who, being maintained on the alms provided by the faithful, are addicted to wrong views and speculations relating to the Self and the world, but the Buddhist monk is to keep himself aloof from all such philosophical speculations. The text further asserts that they resort to such speculations taking a partial view of things and not a whole view of truth or reality. It must be remembered that the words *Samaṇa* and *Brāhmaṇa* are very frequently mentioned together in the early Pali texts which distinguish between the *Brāhmaṇas* and those sects which do not conform to the rules of the *Brāhmaṇas*, called the *Samaṇas*, meaning thereby, not only the Buddhists, but also other heterodox sects such as the *Jainas* and *Ājivikas*, etc.

Like all other *Suttas* in the *Nikāyas*, the *Brāhmajāla* has a dramatic setting of its own. In giving reasons as to why the Buddha's disciples should remain unperturbed when any outsider spoke either in praise or in dispraise of them, the Buddha points out that it is not with regard to mere matters of morality that the *Tathāgata* can truly be praised. It is with regard to matters that are deep, profound, difficult to understand, tranquillising, excellent, subtle, beyond the scope of logic and comprehensible only to the wise that he may truly be praised. In developing this idea the Buddha introduces certain

Dīgha I, 2 ; A.L. Basham, *History and Doctrines of the Ajivikas*, Chapt. II, pp. 10-18 ; B.M. Barua, *A History of Pre-Buddhistic Indian Philosophy*, 1921, Sect. III ; N. Dutt, *Early Monastic Buddhism*, Vol. I, Chap. III ; B.C. Law, *Historical Gleanings*, Cal. 1926, Chap. III, (ed.) *Buddhistic Studies*, Cal, 1931, Chap. IV ; Miss I. B. Honer, *Gotama and the other Sects*, J A.O.S. vol. 64, No. 4, 1946, pp. 284 ff.

types of philosophical views and reasonings that would not lead to his own point of view. These types together with their reasonings are traditionally known as the sixty-two heresies (*Dvāsaṭṭhiyo diṭṭhiyo*). These types of theories or philosophical speculations of the Sāmaṇas and Brāhmaṇas of the time of the Buddha are broadly divided into two heads in our *Sutta*, viz, (i) *Pubbantakappikā*, appertaining to the first beginnings, and (ii) *Aparantakappikā*, appertaining to the ultimate end of things. The total number of these types may be reduced to a few as follows :

- (1) *Sassatavāda*, Eternalistic theory.
- (2) *Ekaccasassatikā*, Semi-eternalistic theory.
- (3) *Antānantavādā*, theories regarding the infinity and finitude of the world.
- (4) *Amarāvikkhepikā*, Scepticism.
- (5) *Adhiccasamuppannikā*, the theory of fortuitous origination of things.
- (6) *Uddhmāghātanikā saññī-asaññīvādā*, theories regarding the conscious or unconscious state of the soul after death.
- (7) *Ucchedavādā*, theories of extinction.
- (8) *Diṭṭhadhamma-nibbānavādā*, theories regarding the condition of *Nibbāna* attainable at the present conscious existence.

Let us now consider in some detail the Brāhmanical theories first and then refer briefly to the other non-Brāhmanical views that were prevalent in the time of the Buddha.

1. *Sassatavādā*,—our *Sutta* considers this type with reference to its four grounds and counts accordingly four sub-types under it, but the grounds may be reasonably reduced to two, viz., I) an argument from direct experience, and II) a deduction from a logical axiom. The direct experience is to be considered in the light of a personal testimony of a mystic. It is possible as claimed by a Yogī to remember correctly in all their details his previous births, no matter what is the total number of them, whether 50 births or 500 or 5,000 births in succession. He finds that he had passed from birth to birth and does not find a time when he was not in some form of existence. From this

he comes to the conclusion that both he and the world are eternal substances.

(ii) The second argument is not elucidated in our *Sutta*. We are simply told : “In this case some recluse or Brāhmaṇ is addicted to logical reasoning. He gives utterance to the following conclusion of his own, beaten out by his argumentation and based on sophistry”. (*takkapariyāhataṃ vimaṃsānucari-taṃ sayam paṭibhānaṃ* : eternal are the soul and the world, giving birth to nothing new etc.) The logical axiom presupposed by this line of argument may be supplied from other sources, and it is this : “There is no being of what is not, there is no non-being of that which is.” “*Nāsato vidyate bhāvo, nābhāvo vidyate sato*”. (*Bhag.*, II, 16).

2. *Ekaccasassatavādā*—semi-eternalism. Our *Sutta* speaks of four different grounds or arguments in support of the theory of semi-eternalism. The arguments may, however, be reduced to three (i) cosmological, (ii) moral and (iii) logical. The cosmological argument is stated as follows :

A. At the end of a cycle of the world system all living things are reborn into the *Ābhassar-aloka*. When the world system begins to re-evolve, a certain being disappearing from the same *Ābhassar-aloka* is reborn into this world. The first being, when alone begins to feel the need of companions. As chance would have it, other beings pass from the *Ābhassar-aloka* and are reborn into this world. Finding this, the first being begins to think fondly, “It occurred to me before, may it be that other beings should come here for their birth ! These other beings must have come into existence due to that wish of my heart”, and the other beings who are reborn into this world after him begin to think : “He must be the *Brahmā*, *Mahābrahmā*, the Lord of All..... and we must have been created by this *Brahmā*. Why so ? Because we find that he was born first and we have all come after him. He is eternal, immutable, not subject to change, and for ever the same, while we, the beings created by him are mutable, subject to change, short-lived, liable to decease”.

B. There are certain beings who are reborn as *Khiddhā-padosikā* gods. As they are not given up to innocent self-enjoyment

for a long time, they do not suffer self-forgetfulness, due to which they do not fall away from that state, but remain in that state without being subject to change and forever the same, while others, being given up to innocent self enjoyment for a long time suffer self-forgetfulness due to which they pass from that state and are reborn into this world as mutable, short-lived and subject to change.

C. There are certain gods whose heart is ill-disposed towards others (*Manopadosikā*). They begin to quarrel among themselves for a long time, due to their mutual jealousy, in consequence of which they fall away from that state of being gods. Suppose one of those beings falling from their state is reborn in this world. He finds on recollection that his downfall from that state was due to his jealousy. Had he not been under the influence of jealousy, he would not have fallen from that state.

Here the first argument is cosmological and the next two are moral. The first argument is in substance this :—He who is the first to come, the long-lived one, is the creator, the ordainer, the Lord of the rest. The second and third arguments are in substance this :—That the liability to change is due to the moral deficiency of the living beings. Those who are not morally deficient are not subject to changes, and those who are so become subject to changes.

3. *Adhiccāsamuppāda*—theory of fortuitous origination. This is just another name for *Yadṛcchā* or doctrine of chance. The term *Adhiccāsamuppāda* is antithetical to *Paṭiccāsamuppāda*. According to the doctrine of *Adhiccāsamuppāda*, both the self and the world come into existence fortuitously and not as a result of any causal progress. The logical axiom of the doctrine is, “*Ahuvā hoti*”—“without having been, it comes to be ; something comes out of nothing.” The logical axiom of *Paṭiccāsamuppāda* is “*Imasmiṃ sati, idam hoti ; imassūppādā idam uppajjati*”—“that having been, this comes to be : from the rising of that this arises.” The doctrine is tenable either on the grounds of personal testimony or on pure logical reasoning. The axiom that something comes out of nothing is repudiated in the *Chāndogya-upaniṣad*. On the other hand, the axiom that something comes

out of nothing is upheld and explained in the *Taittiriya-Upaniṣad* (vii, 8, 2). The axiom something out of nothing as explained in the *Taittiriya-Upaniṣad* signifies that all forms proceeded from the formless. Brahman at the beginning was *asat* (lit., non-existent), i. e., formless, but full of existence.¹ According to *R̥gveda* X, 129, the primitive substance was neither 'sat' (existence) nor 'asat' (non-existence). All forms evolved out of that substance. According to Buddhaghosa, "*Adhiccasamuppannan ti akāraṃ samuppannam.*"

4. *Uddhamāghātana*—Eschatological Doctrine. Buddhaghosa explains the word '*āghātana*' by death. The word literally means execution (*āghātana*). So the term '*uddhamāghātana*' means something relating to the condition of the self after death.² This doctrine seems to have some bearing upon the Jaina doctrine of *Śyādvāda*. The various types of beliefs are mentioned under this head as follows :

(i) The soul after death remains conscious (*saññī*) and not subject to decay. It has form ; it is formless. It both has and has not form ; it neither has nor has not form. It is finite ; it is infinite ; it is both, it is neither. It has one mode of consciousness ; it has various modes of consciousness ; it has limited consciousness ; it has infinite consciousness. It is altogether happy ; it is altogether unhappy ; it is both ; it is neither.

1. See *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* VI, 2,1. "*Taddhaika āhur asad evedam agra āsid ekam evādvitīyam. Tasmād asataḥ sajjāyata iti.*" The word '*sat*' as already noticed by Max Müller (*History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature*, sub voce) means not only 'real' but also 'good'. See Hiriyanna—*Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, Ch II.
2. See the *Pañcattaya-sutta*, *Majjhima* III, 102, where these various theories of the Self are discussed, with which the *Tathāgata* is well-acquainted. Realising each and every one of these various theories, all of which are composite and material, the *Tathāgata* discerns an escape from the composite and leaves them all behind.

(ii) The soul after death remains unconscious (*asāññī*), but not subject to decay. It has form, it is formless. It both has and has not form ; it neither has nor has not form. It is finite ; it is infinite ; it is both ; it is neither.

(iii) The soul after death remains neither conscious nor unconscious (*n'ev-asāññī-nāsaññī*) but not subject to decay. It has form ; it has not form. It both has and has not form. It is finite, it is infinite ; it is both, it is neither.

5. *Amarāvikkhepa*-This is but a technical name for the various types of scepticism. *Vācāvikkhepa* or prevarication in speech is just another word for *Amarāvikkhepa*, which literally means something which is elusive like an eel or quicksilver. In commenting on the word, Buddhaghosa, observes : “*amarā nāma micchājāti, sā ummujjana-nimmujjanādivasena udake sandhāvamānā gahetuṃ na sakkoti*”. A sceptic wriggles like an eel, so he is an eel wriggler. Etymologically “*na marati ti amarā*” (*Niddesa*, II, 139, 7=*Vibh.* 491. 6). The usual Pāli term for scepticism is *vicikicchā* or doubt, perplexity. (*Samsaya* or doubt, it may be noted, is a great enemy in the way of faith or knowledge or action). Here *Amarāvikkhepa* or *vācāvikkhepa* stands for scepticism. This is evidently a non-Brāhmanical doctrine, as it may be shown to have a direct reference to the philosophical views of *Saṅjaya Belatṭhiputta* mentioned in different *Suttas*.¹

6. *Antānantavādā*-Extensionism and Non-Extensionism. According to our *Sutta*, these theories were based upon four different grounds which may really be reduced to two, viz. (i) empirical and (ii) logical. A person uses the earth enclosed by the horizon as the object of meditation, thereby taking the earth to be limited in space. Another person concentrates his mind on the earth and all the *chakravālas*, thereby taking the world to be limitless in space. A third person, instead of mentally extending the earth up-wards and downwards, goes on extending it sideways and thereby takes it to be limited in space upwards

1. As for instance, the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta*, *Dīgha* 1, 2, and the *Saḍḍaka-sutta*, *Majjhima* II 76, etc.

and downwards, and unlimited sideways. The logical ground is not elucidated. These theories as described and discussed in our text hardly deserve any serious consideration, being apparently of no philosophical importance. This sort of meditation may be practised by any sect, whether Brāhmanical or not.

7. *Ucchedavāda*-Annihilationism. Under this head our *Sutta* mentions and discusses seven different views, the first of which savours of typical atheism propounded by Ajita Kesakambali. We should note that the theory is really one, the seven being only the different modes of stating it. All the religious thought of India aimed at salvation or deliverance of the human soul from the bondage of sin by putting a stop to the course of *samsāra*, i.e., of the transmigration of souls. Ajita Kesakambali denied the possibility of future existence of the soul. So he thought death was for all the natural means of escape from the grip of sin and suffering. The other variations of this view differ as to the nature of the self and its destiny.

8. *Paramadiṭṭhadhamma-nibbāna-vādā*—the theories or beliefs regarding the modes of attainment of *nibbāna* in this very existence. The views are enumerated in our *Sutta* as five. According to the first view, which is grossly materialistic and sensual, *nibbāna* is attainable in the present existence by a full enjoyment of the pleasures of the senses. According to the second view, which is sensuous, *Nibbāna* is attainable by means of the first *Jhāna*. According to the third view, which is also sensuous, the same is attainable by means of the second *Jhāna*. According to the fourth view, which is in a lesser degree sensuous, the same is attainable by means of the third *Jhāna*, and according to the fifth view, which is in the least degree sensuous, the same is attainable by means of the fourth *Jhāna*.

The *Tathāgata* is well-acquainted with these divergent beliefs and knows also how these are adhered to, how these are tarnished or twisted, and their implications and consequences. But he knows something further than that (*Uttarītara*), and knowing it he does not tarnish or twist it ; without tarnishing or twisting it he experiences *Nibbuti* (supreme tranquillity), and having experienced the true nature of the cause of the rise of feelings, the cause of their

cessation, the enjoyable and distressing aspect as well as escape from them, he becomes emancipated. All these divergent forms and shades of opinions and beliefs rest fundamentally upon the acceptance of the validity of *Phassa*, contact through the sense with the objective world. (*Phassapaccayā*). The real attitude of the Buddha towards them is not difficult to determine. He does not bound them in a body as false or erroneous. In our opinion, the views considered and criticised by the Buddha are not exactly erroneous views, but views that are not comprehensive, but may be right as far as they go. They are not, therefore, discarded in toto as false, wrong or erroneous, but as those which fall short of perfection and hence are deficient and incomprehensible. Each of them gives only a partial and fragmentary view of truth or reality. This fact is clearly brought out in the *Titthiya Sutta*¹ of the *Udāna* by the simile of a number of persons born blind describing an elephant in terms of the likeness felt by each of them with his hand, ears, feet, etc., none giving a complete or comprehensive description of the animal.²

While the Buddha was living at Sāvatti in Jetavana, so the story goes, some Samāṇas and Brāhmaṇas were quarrelling with one another on the following ten topics (*avyākātāni* or indeterminates). Some said, "The world is eternal and the other views are false." Some said, "The world is not eternal." Some said, "The world is finite", while others said, "The world is infinite." Some declared, "The soul and the body are different", while others, "The body and the soul are one." Some said, "The *Tathāgata* lives after death", while others taught,

1. *Udāna*, pp. 61 ff.

2. The parable of the blind men and the elephant (*jaccandhānaṃ hatthidassanaṃ*) was known before the time of Buddha as is evident from "*Andhagajanyāya*." It is also to be found in the Jain *Syādvādamāñjari* of *Saḍdarśanasamuccaya*, p. 46 ; see Col. Jacob : *A Handful of Popular Maxims Current in Sanskrit Literature*, Bombay, 1906, p. 3. see also V.S. Ghate, *Indian Antiquary*, 42, 1913, p. 251.

“The *Tathāgata* does not live after death.” Some said, “The *Tathāgata* does or does not live after death”, while others said, “The *Tathāgata* does neither live nor does not live after death.” They held different views, saying, “This is like this and this is not that, my view is true and all others are false.”

The Buddha told them a parable that there was formerly a king in Sāvattthi who ordered all the blind people of his country to assemble. When they assembled together, they were shown an elephant. When the elephant was brought, some of the blind people felt its head, some its ears, some its tusk, others its trunk and tail. Then the king asked them, “What does an elephant look like ?” Those who felt the elephant’s head said, “It is like a pot” ; those who felt the elephant’s ear said, “It is like a sieve” ; those who felt the elephant’s tusk said, “It is like a plough-share” ; and those who felt the elephant’s tail replied, “It is like a broom”, etc. Then a great tumult ensued, each one of them maintaining that an elephant was like this and not like that, till they came to blows with one another. At this the king was highly amused. In exactly the same way, said the Buddha, those ascetics and Brahmins who have known partially the truth (*janā ekaṅgadassino*) maintain, “This is truth, it is not otherwise, and this is this, and this is not that.”

It is a noteworthy fact that the ‘*Avyākatāni*’ (Sanskrit *Avyākṛtavastuni*) are dealt with in the first book of the *Dīgha-Nikāya* (*Suttas* 1-13) again and again, as for example in the *Poṭṭha-pāda*, *Jāliya* and *Mahāli-Suttas* (Nos. 6, 7, and 9), *Pāsādika Sutta* in the *Dīgha*, III, 136, and fully illustrated by the parable mentioned above in the *Udāna*, VI, 4, pp. 66-69. What the “*Avyākatāni*”, the undetermined questions, really are, is left unanswered in the Pāli texts, but that does not imply that the Buddha did not have any answer for them or he was simply ignorant of the answers for their right solution. The most plausible explanation for such an omission is that the Buddha left these questions unanswered because such metaphysical speculations do not tend to the increase of the converted nor spread the conversion, as they do not lead to the escape from the

miseries of life (*dukkha*). This would appear from the dialogue between the Buddha and Vacchagotta in the *Saṃyutta-Nikāya* (44, 10)¹ and in the *Cūḷamāluṅkyā-Sutta* of the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (1, 63), where the Buddha evades an answer to the question as to whether there is an ego or not, or reconstructing the past and arranging the future in terms of time.² It does not thereby mean that he did not know these things, but all he said is that knowing about all these things will not help one to be able to reach the end of all suffering. In other words, they are irrelevant to the realisation of the ultimate goal, *Nibbāna*.

According to the *Mahāyāna* school of Buddhism, the Buddha is omnipotent (*sarvajña*). According to the Pāli canon

1. See also *Aggi-Vacchagotta-Sutta* in the *Majjhima* (1, 72) ; *Saṃy IV*, 400-401. *Dharmasaṅgraha* 137, Mv v. 206. They are four in number but they are 14 for the different modes of stating them.

2. See *Bhaddekaratta-Sutta* in the *Majjhima* (III, 131) :
Atītaṃ nānvāgameyya, nappatikhaṅke anāgataṃ,
Yad atitaṃ pahīnaṃ taṃ, appatañca anāgataṃ.
Paccuppannānañca yo dhammaṃ tattha tattha vipassati
Asaṃhiraṃ asaṃkappaṃ taṃ vidvā manubruhaye.

The teaching that this *Sutta* inculcates is of inestimable value, showing the importance of exerting at the present moment, leaving nothing for the morrow. People generally think in three terms of time—*atīta* (past), *anāgata* (future) and *paccuppanna* (present). Here the Master's exhortation is that what is past is now no more, the future is not yet born, and no one should determine the present in relation to either of them, but exert in the immediate present (*ajj'eva kiccaṃ ātappam*). This is just the opposite of the Indian *Cārvāka* philosophy or of the Epicurean one which says "Eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die." The point emphasised here is to act to-day, leaving nothing for the future.

also,¹ the Buddha is all-knowing (*sappaññu*) and the all-perceiving conqueror (Jina). But the *Mahāyānists* believe that the Buddha used two languages in his teaching (which is *upāyakauśalya* in Sanskrit),² i.e., the method of expediency, one for the learned and the intellectually more mature ones (*netārtha*), and the other for the simple-minded (*neyārtha*) i.e., esoteric and exoteric doctrines ; and he taught two truths, one, ' *samvṛta-satya* ' conventional truth ; and the other : ' *paramārtha satya* ' or the absolute truth. But the theory of an esoteric doctrine, as upheld by the *Mahāyānists*³ can be refuted by quoting the Buddha himself. In the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta*⁴ where the Buddha says, "I have preached the truth without making any distinction between esoteric and exoteric doctrine ; for in respect of the truths, *Ānanda*, the Tathāgata has no such thing as the closed

1. Cf. *Vinaya-Piṭaka*, I, 9 :—

Sabbābhibhū sabbavidū'ham asmi

Sabbesu dhammesu anupalitto,

Sabbañjaho taṇhakkhaye vimutto,

Sayam abhiññāya kaṃ uddiseyyam ?

See *Dhammapada*, *Taṇhāvagga*. v. 17.

2. See *Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka* ed. H. Kun & B. Nanjio (Bibliotheca Buddhica),

II :— *Upāyakauśalya mamevarūpaṃ*

Yat trīṇi yānāni upadarśayāmi

Ekam teu yāmamhi nayaśca eka

Ekā ciyam desānā nayakānaṃ. II. 69.

3. See R. Kimura—*A Historical Study of the Terms Hinayāna and Mahāyāna, and the origin of Mahāyāna Buddhism*, Cal, 1927, pp. IX. 55 ff. N. Dutt—*Aspects of Mahāyāna Buddhism and its relation to the Hinayāna*, Cal. 1930, p. 37 ff. cf. S. Radhakrishnan,—*Gautama the Buddha*, Bombay, 1945, p. 16.
4. *Dīgha-Nikāya* II. 100 ; *Dialogues of the Buddha*, II, p. 107. (*anantaram abāhiraṃ katvā*)."

fist of a teacher who keeps something back",¹ leaves no room for doubt that the Master has taught both esoteric and exoteric Buddhism to his disciples, as the *Mahāyānists* would have us believe. In the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (II, p. 197, 99) it is stated that the Buddha is a *Vibhajjavādin* and not an *Ekamsavādin*, which clearly refers to his teaching method ; because he refuses to make a one-sided or partial answer (*ekamsavāda*), but analyses the distinctions (*vibhajjavāda*) before answering a question.² "The fact is that there never has been any such thing as esoteric teaching in Buddhism, and that the modern so-called esoteric Buddhism is neither esoteric nor Buddhism."³ As an instance in point we may cite the *Vajrayāna* sect of the *Mahāyāna*, which arose in the beginning of the 7th or 8th century A.D., commingling with a queer mixture of occultism and magic, known as Tantric Buddhism.⁴ The main purport of the philosophy of this sect, whether *Advaita* or Monism, is that the female sex symbolises the Padma (lotus) and the male sex represents the *Vajra* (Thunderbolt or Diamond) and without the union of these two, the bliss of *Nirvāna* (*Nirvāṇānanda*) cannot be achieved, which is quite contrary to the teachings of the original Buddhism, where purity and celibacy by means of the observance of the *Silas* (moralities) are said to be the stepping-stone or the vantage-ground for the realisation of *Nibbāna*.

In the incident of Vacchagotta's interview with the Buddha

1. *Ācariyamutṭhi*-Skt. *Ācāryamuṣṭi*. The closed fist of a teacher is an ancient Indian custom to disclose the most secret thing to one's favourite son or disciple at the last stage of one's life which is still prevalent here and there.
2. Cf. *Majj.* III, 208 (136) ; *Milinda* 144 ff ; *Ang.* III, 67. (I, p. 197.)
3. *The Questions of King Milinda*, (SBE, 35) iv i, 8, P. 268, footnote 3.
4. Their cult is five M's (*pañca-makāra*) viz. *madya* (wine), *matsya* (fish), *māmsa* (meat), *mūdrā* (symbolic figure) and *mithuna* (sexual intercourse), which is, evidently enough, quite contrary to the teachings of the Buddha.

mentioned above,¹ the Buddha told Ānanda when Vacchagotta departed thence after his conversation with the Buddha that had the latter answered Vacchagotta's questions in the affirmative, he would have been admitting the *Sassatavāda* (eternalism) of the Brāhmanists, while if he had answered Vacchagotta in the negative, he would have been censured as a nihilist (*ucchedavāda*),² both of which are quite contradictory to the Buddhist *Kiriāvāda* or the doctrine of action. It is an unprofitable question to answer from the point of view of the religious life, which is of no value, profit or advantage for the realisation of the truth. The "*Avyaktas*" or "unanswered ones" may be briefly put in a question like this, as in a modern text-book of Logic :—"Have you stopped beating your wife?" So the 'undetermined questions' have been termed by some scholars as 'the silence of the Buddha.' But the Buddha was not silent over these questions, as we find in the *Suttas* where they occur. The Buddha's reply to the questions was that such kind of speculations would not form the basis of the religious life in the Order, and would not lead one to the realisation of *Nibbāna*. If it is still characterised as the silence of the Buddha, yet it is not the silence of a misonomist or an agnostic, but, the silence of an affirmation that reality cannot be talked about or discoursed upon, but to be experienced and realised within one's own self. In the *Samyutta-Nikāya*³ we read that King

1. See also *Aggivaccha-gotta-sutta* in the *Majjhima*, I, 485 ff. : "To hold that the world is eternal...etc., Vaccha, is the thicket of theorising, the wilderness of theorising, the tangle of theorising, the bondage and shackles of theorising attended by illness, distress, perturbation of fever. It conduces not to aversion, absence of passion, tranquillity, cessation, illumination and Nirvāṇa", Buddha says to Vacchagotta Paribbājaka.
2. *Śāśvatocchedanirmuktaṁ tattvaṁ Saugatasammataṁ*—See *Advayavajra-Saṁgraha*, ed Haraprasad Shāstri, G. O. S. XL, p. 62.
3. *Samyutta-Nikāya* (*Kosala-Samyutta*), I, 77 ff. ; See Oldenberg—*The Buddha : His Life, His Doctrine, His Order*,

Pasenadi asks the nun Khemā why the Buddha did not explain whether the Tathāgata exists after death or not. The nun replies that the existence of the Buddha cannot be measured in physical frame, although the question assumes such a form of existence ; because corporeal forms (*rūpa*) “are abolished in the Perfect One, their root is severed, they are hewn away like a palm tree, and laid aside, so that they cannot germinate in future. Released, O great King, is the Perfect One from this, that his being should be gauged by the measure of the corporeal world : he is deep, immeasurable, unfathomable as the great ocean. ‘The Tathāgata exists after death’ : this is not quite fit to say : ‘The Tathāgata does not exist after death’ : this also is not to the point ; The Tathāgata does or does not exist after death ;’ this is also quite apposite ; The Tathāgata does neither exist nor does not exist’ : this also is quite irrelevant.

In the *Saṃyutta-Nikāya*¹ again the Buddha says, “And why, monks, have I not elucidated it ? Because it is not profitable, does not belong to the beginning of religious life, and does not tend to revulsion, absence of passion, cessation, calm, higher knowledge, enlightenment, *Nirvāṇa*. Therefore have I not declared it.” Similar arguments or reasons are given for not elucidating the ‘undetermined questions’ in other *suttas*, as for example, the *Pāsādikā-sutta* of the *Dīgha-Nikāya*.² In this *sutta* the Buddha tells Cunda that when people ask why the Buddha did not reveal whether the Tathāgata does exist or not after death, they are to be told : “Because, brother, it is neither conducive to good, nor to true doctrine, nor to the fundamentals of religion, nor to unworldliness, nor to passionlessness, not to tranquillity, nor to peace, nor to insight, nor to enlightenment, nor to *Nibbāna*.

translated from the German by W. Hoey (The Book Company Ltd., Calcutta 1927), pp. 279, 280; Cf. *Majjh.* I, 485 ff

1. *Saṃyutta* V, 437 ; E. J. Thomas—*Early Buddhist Scriptures*, p. 118 ; *Majjh.* I, 72.
2. *Dīgha* III, 136 ; *Dialogues*, pt. III, 136 ; *Dialogues*, pt. III, p. 128.

Therefore, it is not explained by the Exalted One." In the Dialogue between the Buddha and Upasīva, a Brāhmin disciple of the Brahmin Bāvari living on the banks of the Godāvari,¹ the Buddha says, "Just as the flame untouched by the breath of the wind goes to its rest and disappears from knowing, so also goes the sage leaving his name and body into his rest, completely disappearing from human knowledge, and no measure can measure him in words." For one, it is difficult to understand, who hold other views, another disciple and another teacher.² If the fire burns on account of the fuel of grass and sticks, it will be extinguished when no more fuel is left. But when it is extinguished, nobody knows to what direction it went, whether north, south, east or west. Similarly, the body, feelings, perceptions, aggregates and consciousness by which one might define a Tathāgata are passed away, cut off, uprooted like a palm-tree, made non-existent, not liable to arise again in future. So it does not fit the case to say that he is reborn, or not reborn, or reborn and not reborn, or neither reborn nor not reborn, etc.³

In the *Māluṅkyā-Sutta* already noted above, while Māluṅkyā-putta was upset with those questions of metaphysical speculations and threatened to leave the Order if his questions were not answered by the Buddha, the Master illustrates the point by saying that if a man is hit by a poisoned arrow, it would be foolish on his part not to get rid of his arrow until and unless the wounded man knows from where the arrow shot has come, from which direction it has been shot, and to which caste the man belongs who shot the arrow. And the Buddha elucidates to Māluṅkyā-putta the fundamentals of his teaching, which are the Fourfold Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path, viz., the fact of sorrow, the origin of sorrow, the cessation of sorrow

1. See *Sutta-Nipata*, V-(*Pārāyaṇavagga*), *Upasīva-māṇava-pucchā*; Cf. the verse, *Majjh.* II no. 72, *Udāna*, VIII, 4.
2. See *Aggi-vacchagotta-sutta*, *Majjh.* II, No. 72.
3. See *Majjhima* I, 486 ; I, 431, etc. *Smyutta-Nikāya* IV, pp. 374 ff. (*Avyākata—samyutta*).

and the path that leads to the cessation of sorrow.¹

Professor Rhys Davids rightly points out that the *Brahmajāla-Suttanta* “sets in sixty-two divisions various speculations or theories in which the theorists, going out always from various forms of the ancient view of a ‘soul’, attempt to reconstruct the past or to arrange the future. ... All such speculation is condemned. It is certain from the details given in this *Suttanta* that there were then current in Northern India many other philosophical and theosophic speculations besides those the priests found it expedient to adopt, and have been preserved for us in the *Upaniṣads*.”²

In the oldest *Upaniṣads* we find dialogues like those of Plato which offer us an insight into life at the princely court where priests and famous wandering teachers including learned women flocked together in order to hold disputations before the kings. The kings also sometimes took part in the discussion. We also find there accounts of students undertaking long journeys in order to listen to the discussions of famous teachers.

The princely courts of the *Upaniṣads* are replaced by the *Kutuhala-sālās* and *Paribbājakārāmas* of the *Nikāyas*. The topics discussed are nearly the same as those in the *Upaniṣads*. But the problems are put in a more definite form.

The entire thought of the *Upaniṣadic* philosophers centres round the two conceptions of *Brahman* and *Ātman* expressed thus :— the Universe is the *Brahman* and *Brahman* is the *Ātman*.

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1. Mr. Troy Wilson Organ says that the Buddha’s reply to the ‘*Avyākṛtavastuni*’ is a pragmatic reply, and the unanswerable questions remain problems still. “So from the teachings of this man who refused to engage in metaphysical thinking and who warned others of the dangers which lurk in theorising have emerged some of the most speculative philosophical systems the world has yet seen”.— See “The Silence of the Buddha”, in *The Philosophy, East and West*, a quarterly journal of Oriental and comparative thought. University of Hawai Press, Vol. IV, No. 2, July, 1954, pp. 125-140
 2. *Dialogues of the Buddha*, part I, pp. XXVI

Brahman means sacred knowledge, it is the creative principle, the cause of all existence. Professor Deussen expresses this fundamental idea in the following words :— The Brahman, the power which presents itself to us materialised in all existing things,— which creates, sustains, preserves and receives back into itself again all worlds, — this eternal infinite divine power is identical with the *Ātman*, with that which, after stripping off everything external, we discover in ourselves as our real most essential being, our individual self, the soul (*tat tvam asi*).”¹

In early Buddhism every being human or non-human is composed of five *khandhas*.² In later ‘*Śūnyavāda*’ Buddhism, nothing exists, not even the five *khandhas* ; the only reality is *śūnyatā* or *dharmatā* or *tathatā* or *Nirvāṇa*,³ This is identical with the variegated objects of the world. The objects appear different, but they are substantially one, i. e., *dharmatā*. In *Yogācāra śūnyatā* is described as *viññānamātratā* (consciousness) and the world is described as a concept of the imagination (idealism).⁴

In the *Upaniṣads* much attention is given to the exposition of ‘*prāṇa*’ or intelligent self, and to the sense organs, namely, speech, sight, hearing, thinking and breath, corresponding to the five forces of Nature : fire, the sun, the quarters of heaven, the moon and the wind. Of these five, breath is the most vital and therefore it may be identified with ‘*prāṇa*’, spirit or vital force.

1. *The Philosophy of the Upaniṣads*, translated by A. S. Geden, Edinburgh, 1906, p. 39 ; see *Chhāndogya-Upaniṣad*, vi, 8, 6.
2. Viz, *Rūpa* (form), *Vedanā* (feeling), *Saññā* (perception), *Samkhārā* (plastic forces or conformation) and *Viññāna* (consciousness).
3. For an exposition of the doctrine of ‘*śūnyatā*’, see *Mādhyamika-Vṛtti*, pp. 264-265.
4. *Cittamātram bho jinaputrā-yaduta traidhātukam iti*—‘the three *dhātus*, sons of the jina, are *citta* or mind only.— see *Daśabhūmiśvara-sūtra* ed. Rhader, p. 49 ; *Subhāṣita-sangraha* ed. C. Bendall, p. 20 (98) ; *Mādhyamika-vṛtti* of *Chandrakīrti* ed. L. Poussin (*Bibliotheca Buddhica*), p. 276.

In Buddhism, both the terms *prāṇa* and *jīvitindriya*, vitality, which is usually associated with *usmatā* (heat), occur. According to Buddhism, a person may remain alive without breathing as in *saññāvedayitanirodho*, but one cannot live without *jīvitindriya* and *usmatā*.

In the *Upaniṣads*, recognition is given to the transmigration of souls and along with it the ethical doctrine of *Karma* which must have its consequences.¹ For this doctrine of *Karma*, it may be noted, the moral element plays an important role in the *Upaniṣads* far greater than the *Brāhmaṇas*. Moreover, we cannot ignore the fact that the metaphysical doctrine of *Ātman* underlies a deep ethical idea, as it is the universal soul which we love in each individual : it is in reality the idea of *Ātman* for whose sake we love our fellow-beings.² In the *Upaniṣad* however, the moral precepts are not elaborately elucidated.

The existence of soul is not denied by some previous scholars, but the *Upaniṣadic* conception of the unity of soul with the First Cause is not to be found in Buddhism. In other words, in Buddhism existence of any soul corresponding to the *Upaniṣadic* *Ātman* is denied. The soul is substituted by the five *khandhas*, of which *viññāna* (consciousness) and *saṃkhāra* (conformation) generally serve the purpose of *Ātman*. But it is not the identical *viññāna* that passes from one existence to another. According to the Buddhists, everything is *kṣaṇika* (momentary) including *viññāna*. Therefore *paṭishandhi-viññāna* is different from *cuti-viññāna*. But *cuti-viññāna* by its decay gives rise to *paṭisandhi-viññāna* and thus, it may be said serves the purpose of the

1. Cf. 'Nothing is dear if self is not dear, and all things or persons are dear because the self is dear'.—*Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad*, IV, 5, 6 ; *Samyutta-Nikāya* I, p. 13. King Pasenadi says to his queen Mallikā that the husband is dear to the wife, not for the husband's sake but for the love of the self.
2. *Bṛh. up.* IV, 4 :—“A person consists of desire, and as is his desire, so is his will ; and as is his will, so is his deed ; and whatever deed he does, that he will reap.”

Upaniṣadic soul.¹

On the non-existence of the soul Dr. E. J. Thomas says² “The soul (*Ātman*) which is denied is not the self of actual experience, but a theory of the permanent nature of the soul, a reality held to be behind all the psychical phenomena.” The story of the conversion of the group of thirty young men (*Bhaddavaggiyā*) at Benares as told in the *Vinaya-Piṭaka* (*Mahāvagga*, 1,14) is that they were sporting with their wives, and when a harlot hired by one of these young men fled with his belongings, they were searching for her, and eventually met the Buddha on the way. He told them to search for themselves rather than to search for a woman ; which reminds us of the *Ātman* of the *Upaniṣads*, according to which knowledge means to know oneself (*ātmānaṃ viddhi*). It must of course be stated here that though the ‘*attā*’ might have been suggested by the *Upaniṣadic* idea, yet there is no indication of the *Upaniṣadic* conception of *Ātman-Brahman* nor any permanent or eternal self is meant here. At all events, “seeking oneself” here means attaining to the highest knowledge, according to the Buddha’s teaching.³ What is repeated again and again in the *Suttas* of the *Nikāyas* that all the mental and bodily phenomena (the five *khandhas*) are not the self (*anatta*), and moreover they are impermanent (*anicca*) and subject to illness (*dukkha*). So it cannot be said of the body or of the feelings etc., “This is mine, this is I, this is myself. Let it be this or let it not be thus.” (*netam mama, neso’ haṃasmi na me so attā ti*).⁴ These notions of the self, however, must be totally eradicated

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1. See, for instance, Dr. W. Stede—*The Self and its Complications*, B. S. O. A. S. XII, pts. 3 & 4, 1948, pp. 652-658 : I.B. Horner—*Atta and Anatta in the Middle Way*, Nov. 1952.
 2. *The life of Buddha as Legend and History*, 1927, p. 88.
 3. Th. Stcherbatsky says, “Buddhism never denied the existence of a personality or a soul, in the empirical sense, it only maintained that it was no ultimate reality”. *The Central Conception of Buddhism*, p. 25.
 4. Cf. the *Sāṃkhya-kārikā*, 64, “*nāsti na me nāhaṃ*”—“it is not ; it is not mine, it is not I”.

by him who wants to be freed from the bondage of *saṃsāra* and attain *Nirvāṇa*. In the *Saṃyutta-Nikāya* it is said, "All the *Samaṇas* or *Brāhmaṇs* who think they see the self by looking for it in the multitude of beings, see in reality only the five factors (*khandhas*) of clinging to the world of the senses or any one of these factors." (*Saṃy.* XXII, 47, 3). In *Saṃyutta* XXII, 33, this doctrine that the bodily and mental phenomena are not our self has been most emphatically brought out by the Buddha in the Jeta grove of Anāthapiṇḍika at Sāvattthi.

In the *Kassaka-Sutta* of the *Saṃyutta-Nikāya* (I, p. 114), Buddha says to *Māra*, the ploughman,¹ "That which they say, 'this is mine' and those things which they call 'me,' if your mind is there, O *Samaṇa*, you will not be free from (the idea) 'me.' But that of which they say, 'That is not mine,' and 'they are not I (*aham*), O Evil One, know thou this my path (*maggam*) thou hast not seen." It is said in the *Vinaya-Piṭaka* (*Mahāvagga*, I, 3, 4) that the abandonment of the conceit 'I am' (*asmi-māno*) is indeed the highest bliss.² In the *Dhammapada*³ also we are told that a man may conquer a thousand men in a thousand battles, but he who conquers himself (*jeyyaimattānami*), he is verily the best conqueror. Buddhagosa's *Visuddhimagga* (Chap. XXI, p. 656) says, "Let one remove the belief in the self and pass beyond the realm of death. The king of death never finds the man who thus beholds the world."

What is repeatedly reiterated is that all bodily and mental phenomena which we ordinarily call 'a person', 'an individual' or 'a being' (*puggala*, *sakkāya*, *sattā*) are not the self. "As they are not-self, therefore put them away . ." (*Saṃyutta*, III, 33-34 ; *Majjh.* I, 140-141). "Had they been self, there would have been power to dispose of them" (*rupam c'idaṃ attā*

1. See *Saṃyutta-Nikāya* I, *Māra-Saṃyutta*, 119.

2. —"*Asmimānassa yo vinayo etaṃ ve paramaṃ sukhaṃ*"—*Vinaya* I, 3, 4.

3. *Sahassavagga*, v. 6 :

"yo sahaṣṣaṃ sahaṣṣena saṅgāme masuse jine, /
ekam ce jeyyaṃ attānaṃ sa ve saṅgāma-juttamo."

abhavissa, etc.... ...*Vinaya*, I, 13). Even so, the ideas 'I am', 'mine', 'I am the doer', 'another is the doer', etc., are to be completely eradicated by one who aspires after the Ideal Self.¹ One can only develop by self-training and meditation such equipoise as to remain unaffected by them. (cf. *Aṅguttara*, II, 216 ; *Saṃyutta*, III, 83 ; *Majjh.* I, 139, etc.).² 'This is mine', 'This is my family', 'This is my house', etc., are to be rejected totally by one who aspires after the attainment of *Nibbāna*. This view is the right view for the Aryan disciple that all that makes up the body, feeling, perception, sensation, and consciousness, i.e., the Group of Five, are impermanent, suffering, and liable to change ; therefore, as has been noticed already, 'it is not mine', 'This am I not', 'This is not myself.'

In the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya* (III, 238, p. 33) the Buddha is represented as censuring a Brahmin in denying the reality of the Self as an agent in oneself, as myself, thyself, yourself, etc. The Brahmin is recorded as having denied that there is any such agent. The Buddha says, "Never have I heard of such an opinion, when you move leg or arm, do you not use initiative ? If so, how can you say that it is not you, the Self, who take the initiative ?" This Dialogue may have been a later interpolation, but still it deserves to be counted as an evidence of the Buddhist *Anatta-vāda*³ of the Pāli Canon. Similarly, in the

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1. By which Self (*kena attena*) does a man reach the Brahma-world ? In the *Sutta-nipāta*, v. 508, it is made clear that the Buddhist writers drew a distinction between two or more uses of the word 'Self'. By two uses we mean 'Actual Self' and the 'Ideal Self'.
 2. See *Saṃyutta* III, 3 :—'*rūpaṃ attato samanupassanti rūpavantaṃ, vā attānaṃ, attani vā rūpaṃ rūpasmim vā attānaṃ ahaṃ rūpaṃ mama rūpaṃ* etc. cf, *Nāgārjuna's Suḥṛllekha* (Friendly Epistles) edited in *J.P.T.S.* 1886, p. 15
 3. Certainly this doctrine of *Anattā*, Not-Self, reaches its culmination and converges on all the Abhidhamma thought, a fact which cannot be ignored as a mere by-product.

Aṅguttara-Nikāya (III, 40, 4) 'the Self' is used in the sense of 'one's conscience', thus : "There is no secret place, in all the world, for him who does an evil deed : Thy Self, O Man, sees what is true or false."¹ Here and in similar other cases 'thy Self' certainly means 'thy conscience.'

It is a well-known fact that the reincarnation of the *Ātman* has been compared in *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad* to the passage of a leech from one blade of grass to another. The nature of this belief of the 'soul' so commonly popular in India, may be guessed to some extent even from the Jaina conception of 'soul' where the '*jīvas*' are bound by transmigration (*samsāriṇaḥ*) or freed and perfect (*siddhāḥ*). The Jaina '*jīva*' stands for 'living being' and is essentially of the same dimension as the body, a fact which is parallel to the Buddhist conception of the '*khandhas*' or the constituent factors.

The *Attavagga* of the *Dhammapada* similarly constitutes a reply to those who interpret Buddhism as a religion which denies the existence of 'soul', 'the percipient' (*Ātman*). The Buddhist doctrine of *Anattā* or non-self or non-ego, in our opinion, stands for the non-existence of the ego or individuality (*puggala*) in the ultimate sense. It is the false notion of the Self that is to be rejected. An elaboration of this notion (*Sakkāya-Diṭṭhi*) of the ego is emphatically brought out in the first controversy of the *Milinda-Pañha* (II, I.I.) which also forms a subject for discussion in the *Kathāvatthu*, or Points of Controversy. The verses of the *Attavagga* are intended to illustrate the Buddhist doctrine of self-reliance and self-culture ; because self-purification and self-perfection is the most fundamental of

1. Cf. *Dhammapada*, *Pāpavagga*, 12 :

"Na antalikkhe, na samuddamajjhe,
Na pabbatānaṃ vivaraṃ pavissa,
Na vijjati so jagatippadeso,
Yatraṭṭhito muneceyya pāpakammā"

(There is no place anywhere in the sky, or in the midst of the ocean, or by entering the caves of the mountains, standing in which place you can get rid of the sins committed by you).

all states of existence.¹ This idea is more clearly brought out in the following verse of the *Dhammapada* (*Sahassavagga*) :

*Attāhave jitaṃ seyyo, yā cāyaṃ itarapajā
Attadantassa posassa niccaṃ saṃyatacārino,
N'eva devo na gandhabbo na Māro saha Brahmunā,
Jitaṃ apajitaṃ kayirā taihārūpassa jantuno.*

—Victory over oneself is better than victory over others. If a man controls himself and practices restraint, neither gods nor gandhabbas, nor Māra together with Brahmā, can undo the victory of such a man.²

The very popular and common conception of the transmigration of soul has been stated thus in the *Bhagavadgītā* (II, 22) :

*Vāsāṃsi jirnāṇi yathā vihāya
navāni gṛhṇāti naro' parāṇi, etc.*

—Just as a man wears new clothes after leaving aside the old worn-out clothes, so also the soul leaves the body from existence to existence.

This popular idea of soul, one can find, has been accepted without criticism and illustrated by the simile of a snake in the story of the *Uragapeta* of the *Petavatthu* (I, 12 ; IV, 3), as well as the *Uraga-Jātaka* of the *Jātaka* Collection (II, No. 154).³ In giving reasons as to why a man or woman should not take recourse to lamentation or grief as an expression of sorrow for him who is already dead, it says :

*Urago'va tacaṃ jinnaṃ hitvā gacchati saṃ'tanuṃ,
Evaṃsarīre nibbhoge pete kālakate sati,*

1. Hence it says, Self is the lord of Self, who else can be the lord ? *Attā hi attano nātho, ko hi nātho paro siyā ?* (*Dhp.* 48)
2. Cf. *Attā hi kira duddamo*—*Dhp.* 29. Self is difficult to tame ; and : *Attānañ ce piyaṃ jaññā rakkheyya nam surakkhitaṃ*—*Dhp.* 26 : *Rakkhito attā*, the Self is guarded, in the *Saṃyutta* I, 73 : let him make of Self a refuge, *Saṃyutta* III, 143 ; *Udāna*, 47 : *na-piyataraṃ attanā koci* : nought is dearer than the Self, etc.
3. Cf. B. C. Law—*The Buddhist Conception of Spirits*, Revised Edition, 1936, p. 32 ff.

*Dayhamāno na jānāti ñātinam paridevitaṃ
Tasmā evaṃ na socāmi, gato so tassa yā gati—
Anabbhito tato agā, nānuññato ito gato,
Yathāgato tathāgato, tattha kā paridevanā ?¹*

—Just as a snake moves on casting away its old worn out skin, in the same way, when a man is dead, leaving behind his aged body, he meanwhile, being burnt in a funeral pyre, does not know of the lamentation on the part of his living kinsmen. He fares according to his destiny. He came from there, being uncalled for, and is gone from here without waiting for permission ; as he came, so is he gone, so what does lamentation mean ?

Thus it has been made abundantly clear that *sattā*, *attā*, *jīva*, *puggala*, are the terms found in the Pali literature which denote the 'Self,' the 'Soul' or the 'Ātman' in the sense of the individual. An individual may be called either Nāgasena, or Sūrasena, Vīrsena or Sīhasena, but no idea of individuality is conveyed in the name. It is only a name, a mere term, a designation by means of which an individual is distinguished from other individuals. It is only a convenient way to count an individual, be he named Datta or Matta (whatever may be his name), but in the ultimate sense no individuality or egoism is to be found therein (*paramatthato puggalo nūpalabbhati*).² Just as the various constituent parts go to make the 'chariot', so also the constituent elements of a being, the five aggregates (*pañcakkhandha*) make the 'being.' To be more precise, the so-called 'being' (*satta*),

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1. The verses are put into the mouth of the Brahmin whose son is dead, in the *Uraga-Jātaka* (II, 154). In the *Piya-Sutta* of the *Saṃyutta-Nikāya* (I, 1,8) Queen Mallika tells King Pasenadi that there is no other man on earth more endeared than to one's own self (*attā*). The opening verse of the *Attavagga* in the *Dhp.* is on similar lines.
 2. Cf. for instance, the second sermon of the Buddha known as the *Anattalakkhaṇa-Sutta* in *Vinay*, I, 6 : and *Saṃy*, XXII, 59 : cf also *Vinayamahā*, I, 6, 42-46.

which we so often hear, is a mere bundle of conditioned factors.¹ In the *Visuddhimagga* of *Buddhaghosa* we read that the word 'living entity' or 'ego' is but a mode of expression for the presence of the five *khandhas*, but when we analyse the elements of being one by one, we discover that there is no 'living entity' to form a basis for such notions as 'I' or 'I am.' In other words in the absolute sense, there is only name and form (*nāma-rūpa*).²

The seers of the Upaniṣads realised and advised that there is only the Self or Ātman. In the *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* (VII, 25, 2) we read "He who sees, perceives and understands this, loves the Self, delights in the Self, revels in the Self, rejoices in the Self, becomes a Self-resplendent (*svarāt*).” Thus according to the Upaniṣadic seers, one becomes completely free from the bondages of the Self which are covered through material coverings, by the realisation of the Self. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (II, 4, 5 ; IV, 5, 6) says, "Verily the Self is to be perceived, to be heard of, to be thought of, and to be meditated upon." But the Buddha took a quite different view. According to him, the knowledge of the Self instead of being the cause of emancipation is, in fact, the cause of bondage. The notion of 'I' and 'Mine' (*ahaṃkāra* and *mamakāra*) is really the cause of bondage which must be shaken off totally by one who aspires after perfect knowledge or *Sammā-Sambodhi*. If there really is the existence of the Self, the notion centering round it cannot disappear and this led the Buddha to take a quite opposite view to the *Vedāntins* that there is no Self or Ātman.³ This is what is known as the absence of the Self or

1. Cf. *Bhikkhuni Vajirā* :

*Yathā thi aṅgasambhārā hoti saddo ratho iti,
Evam Khandhesu santesu satto hoti ti sammuti.
—Saṃyutta-Nikāya, I (Bhikkhunī-Saṃyutta).*

2. See Warren, *Buddhism in translations*, pp. 133-134.

3. Cf. *Bhagavadgītā* II, 71 :

*Vihāya kāmān yaḥ sarvān pumāṃścarati niḥśprhaḥ /
Nirmamo nirahaṃkāraḥ sa sāntim adhigacchati //*

[The man who forsakes all desires, and being free from

Anātman, the '*Nairātmya*' of the *Mahāyanists* as propounded by the *Mādhyamika* school of philosophy according to which '*Śūnyatā*' or 'Void' means 'devoid of Self'. In the *Mādhyamika*, it may be observed that '*Śūnyatā*' or '*Nairātmya*' is twofold, viz, *Dharma-Śūnyatā* or '*Dharma-Nairātmya*', the absence of all things or objects and '*Pudgala-Śūnyatā*' or '*Pudgala-Nairātmya*', the absence of the individual. '*Pudgala*' is nothing but what is known to us by such terms as '*Sattva*', '*Jīva*', '*Puruṣa*' and so on, that is, the individual Self. Thus by '*Pudgala-Nairātmya*' is meant what is believed to be the Self or *Ātman* has no independent nature (*sva-bhāva*) of its own, and consequently no existence in fact ; therefore it is not a thing of reality (*vastuśat*), but exists merely in imagination as a name, a term, a designation, a convention for serving the purpose of ordinary life. Similarly, the '*dharma*' or things around us internal or external, have not their *Ātman* or independent nature, because they depend for their being on causes and conditions (*Pratītya-samutpāda*). Therefore, the things visible have no existence in fact and are merely imaginary.¹ These developments of the idea of non-Self or non-Ego are generally found associated with the two later schools of Buddhism, namely, the *Mādhyamika* and the *Yogācāra* mentioned above.

yearnings and devoid of the notion of 'I' and 'Mine' marches onwards or attains peace." See *Theragāthā* and *Tālapuṭa* :

Kadā nū'haṃ bhinnapaṭandharo muni

Kāsāvattho amamo nirāsayo

Rāgañ ca dosañ ca tath'eva mohaṃ

Hantvā suklū pavanagato vihassaṃ—*Theragāthā* XX,

Tālapuṭa, v. 2.

Similar *gāthās* are to be found in *Mahājanaka*

—*Jātaka* (VI, No. 539).

As a matter of fact, the whole religious literature of India are replete with this idea.

1. See Vidhusekhara Bhaṭṭācāryya—*The Basic Conception of Buddhism*, Cal. 1934, Chap. II, p. 14.

Without admitting the *Upaniṣadic* conception of soul, the Buddhists accept the *Upaniṣadic* theory of *Karma*.¹ They contend that *Karma* modifies the *Khandhas* every moment, and so really the *Khandhas* serve as the carrier of *Karma*. To be precise, they state that the *Samkhāras* which appear in the next existence contain the effects of *Karma*. In other words, the *Samkhāras* are *Karmic* effects which co-exist with *cuti-viññāna* and *Paṭisandhi-viññāna*. *Viññāna* and *Samkhāra* are interdependent and so the fresh existence cannot evade the effect of *Karma*.

Buddhism also preaches universal love. But its theory is based on a different conception. According to the Buddhists, all beings are composed of five *Khandhas*, and therefore substantially all are the same. In order to make beings realise this fact, the Buddhist ethics teaches the four *Brahma-vihāras*, viz *Mettā* (friendliness), *Karunā* (compassion), *Muditā* (equanimity) and *Upekkhā* (indifference or poise). The object of these practices is to make one feel that all beings are not different from him and that he is not different from them. One who perfects himself in these four higher practices is said to have attained *Nibbāna*.

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1. See *Mojjima-Nikāya*, III, p. 203 ; *Milinda-Pañha*, p. 65. *Kammassakā mānavasatta, kammadāyādā kammayonī kammabandhū kammapaṭisaraṇa, kammaṃ satte vibhajati, yad idaṃ thinappanitāyāti*—Men are the inheritors of *karma*, *karma* is their very own, *karma* is the cause of their rebirth and *karma* is their refuge. Cf. “As you sow, so will you reap.” The action and re-action of *karma* are fully illustrated in the *Jātaka*, *Picavatthu*, *Vimānavathu* and *Apadāna* stories in Pāli as well as the *Mahāvastu* and the *Avadāna* stories in Sanskrit Buddhist literature. It is noteworthy that while the Vedantins understood by *karma* different Vedic rites and sacrifices, the Buddhists took it in the literal meaning of action, action of mind, body and speech. (*Mano-kamma*, *kāyakamma* and *vacikamma*). Cf. *Cetanāham bhikkhave kammaṃ vadāmi*—volition is *kamma* I say, o monks) *cetayitrā kammaṃ karoti kāyena vācāya manasā va*—see *Āṅguttara-Nikāya*, III, p. 415.

CHAPTER III

The Doctrine of Caste

Our concern here is not the origin and development of the Caste system in India, but how far caste is accepted or criticised in Buddhism. The Buddhists not only put aside 'unprofitable questions' but also invented a genealogical story of the origin of the Universe and the beings living therein, as we shall presently see, undoubtedly in rivalry with their Brahminical opponents, who trace their pure descent from *Brahmā*. There were four aspects of life (*caturāśram dharmah*) in the pre-Buddhistic age, according to the Brahminical literature. These four aspects were divided into (1) the *Brahmacarya* that is, the student life of celibacy and holiness ; (2) the *Gārhastya*, the life of a householder when he married and settled in life after he had finished the study of the Vedas ; (3) the *Vānaprastha*, religious life when both the husband and the wife devoted their time primarily to the cultivation of religious life according to the tenets of the Vedas ; and (4) *Yati*, the life of a hermit (*pabbajita* in Pali), in which the aspirant renounced all worldly possessions and attachments, and practised indifference to all worldly objects.¹ Similarly, the four *Varṇas* (colour or complexion) or the four classes of people, namely, *Brāhmaṇa*, *Kṣatriya*, *Vaiśya* and *Śūdra*, i. e., Brahmins, nobles, tradesmen and workers, were later on hardened into four castes, known as the *Varṇāśram dharma*, the four 'colours' or 'classes' (*śrenī*) of people. According to the Brahmin view, the Brahmins are born of *Brahmā*'s mouth, the Kṣatriyas from the thigh, the Vaiśyas from the navel, and the Śūdras from his feet.²

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1. Similarly, *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma*, and *mokṣa* are the four ends of the Brahminical system found current in India even from Ṛgvedic times, cf. *Attha-dhammānusāsako amacco* in Pali, found in most of the Jātakas,
 2. On the origin of the four castes, see *Ṛgveda* X, 90, and

The *Ambaṭṭha-Sutta* of the *Dīgha-Nikāya* (1, 3) is one of several *Suttas* in the Pāli Canon dealing with the subject of caste, besides many others in the *Majjhima-Nikāya*. It is very important for the history of the Indian caste system and the Buddha's attitude towards the problem. It refers to the origin of the Sākya race and the Ṛṣi Kṛṣṇa (Kaṇha) in dealing with the topic of caste, and it is of particular interest for the light it throws on the relative position of the Brahmins and Khattiyas, the two upper classes of society.

It is evident from this *Sutta* that the Brahmins claimed their superiority on the authority of their being born from the mouth of Brahmā, and as such, being his direct heirs. To counter-act such a view held by the Brahmins, the Buddha is said to have invented a genealogical story with its fanciful etymologies of the names of the four Vannas (Skt. *Varṇa*) in favour of the Khattiyas. There he shows that if the Brahmins claim their superiority according to their birth and lineage, the claims of the Khattiyas are far superior to theirs. The Khattiya caste is the most honourable, but wisdom and conduct (*vijjā* and *caraṇa*) are higher still. It is neither the pride of birth nor of lineage, nor of social position that determines the difference between man and man. In support of his contention he cites an age-old verse, first said to have been uttered by Brahmā Sanamkumāra :

*Khattiyo seṭṭho janetasmiṃ ye gottapaṭisārino,
Vijjācaraṇasampanno so seṭṭho devamānuse ti*¹

—The Khattiyas are the best among those who put their trust in lineage, but he who is endowed with knowledge and right conduct, is the best among gods and men.

on the creation of *Prajāpati*, see *Rgveda* X, 121 ; see also B. C. Law—*Concepts of Buddhism*, 1835, Chap. III, on Caste.

1. The verse is often quoted and is found in many *Suttas* in the *Nikāyas* and the *Vinaya*. It occurs also in *Majjhima* 1,358 ; *Samy.* 1,153 ; 11,284 : *Dīgha* III, No. 27, etc.

It is a remarkable fact that the Brahminical books give preference to the Brahmins over the Khattiyas and in the Buddhist and Jaina records Khattiyas are given preference over to the Brahmins. So the relative position of both is a point of controversy between the Brahmins and the Buddhists. The Khattiyas are given preference in the *Upaniṣads* too, as for instance, in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad* (1, 4, 11). Exactly similar views are found in the *Śatapatha-Bṛhmaṇa* (XIX, 4, 1) : “There is nothing higher than the Kṣatriyas. Therefore the Brahmin sits down below the Kṣatriya.” As a matter of fact, it is the *Śatapatha-Bṛhmaṇa* which first gives an indication of Brāhmaṇ-Kṣatriya superior position in society which finds its fullest expression in the Buddhist and Jaina books, as also in the earliest *Upaniṣads*.¹

In the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (II, 90) the Buddha is represented as saying :—“*cattāro ’me mahārāja vaṇṇā, Khattiyā ca Brāhmaṇā ca yadidaṃ abhivādanapaccuṭṭhā-ñjalikamma-sāmicikammaṃ ti.*” “But it is sufficiently evident”, as Prof. Rhys Davids points out, “from the comparative frequency of the discussion on the matter of Brāhmaṇ pretensions, that the subject of caste was a burning question at the time of the composition of the *Nikāyas*. No other social problem is referred to so often ; and the Brāhmaṇa would not be so often represented as expressing astonishment or indignation at the position taken up regarding it by the early Buddhists unless there had really been a serious difference on the subject between the two schools.”²

There was a common phrase current among the people which divided them into four *vaṇṇas* (colour or complexion), viz., Khattiya, Brāhmaṇa, Vessa and Sudda. The priests put themselves first, and the remaining three were distinguished from one another by social position or occupation, such as warriors, traders and working-class people ; outside these classes there were others

1. See *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol. XII, 1946—“The Origin and growth of Indian Caste System.”

2. *Dialogues of the Buddha*, pt. I, p. 96,

resembling in many points the modern low castes or depressed classes which is also testified to by other old texts in the Canon such as the *Majjhima*, 11, 93; *Saṃyutta*, I, 93; *Aṃguttara*, 11, 85; *Vinaya* IV, 6—10, etc., e.g., *Caṇḍālas*, *Pukkhusas*, *Veṇas*, *Nesādas*, *Rathakāras*, that is, workers in various occupations, with an important list of which we are acquainted in the Jātaka tales also.¹ They are called ‘*Hīnajātiyo*’, low tribes, equivalent to modern scheduled castes. In the *Aṃguttara*, 1, 162 (cf. *Petavatthu*, 11, 6, 12), the Buddhist argument against caste is put forward by a simile of the oxen. Just as in arranging the classes of oxen, the strong, the active, the well-trained, are given preference, so among men those who are well-trained in mind should be given preference in spite of their colour (*vaṇṇa*), without any regard for their caste, even if they be *Caṇḍālas* or *Pukkhusas*. In the *Sāmaññaphala-Sutta* (*Dīgha* 1, 2) it is taken for granted that if a slave were to join the Buddhist Order, he would be respected and revered like any other members of the Order.²

It is apparent, then, that the Buddhist position in regard to caste is a distinct one. As regards the Buddhist Order, the Buddha ignores completely all barriers of caste whether arising

1. On the Brahmin doctrine of caste and its representation in the *Jātakas*, see Richard Fick—*Die Soziale Gliederung im Nordöstlichen Indien zu Buddhas Zeit*, translated by S K. Maitra (Calcutta University Publication, 1920), Chap. VIII, pp. 117-162.
2. The *Sāmaññaphala-Sutta* furnishes us with a list of ordinary occupations such as elephant-riders, washermen, barbers, cooks, charioteers, archers, slaves, bath-attendants, confectioners, garland-makers, weavers, basket-makers, potters, etc. In the *Therīgāthā* (Canto XVI) there are references to butchers of sheep and swine, fishermen and trappers, executioners and thieves as wrong-doers, who cannot be freed from their evil deeds by ablution in the Ganges water, and which serves as interesting evidence of the social conditions in ancient India at the time when the *Nikāyas* were composed, if not earlier still.

from birth or occupation or social position,¹ and sweeps away the disadvantages or facilities arising from them. Thus, in the *Āmagandha-Sutta* of the *Suttanipāṭa* (II, 5), it is laid down that defilement or impurity does not come from eating fish or meat (*maccha-mamsaṃ*) prepared or served by this or that person ; that is to say, from untouchability, but from sin in word, thought and deed. It is bad mind and wicked deed that defile a man. No outward observances can purify a man who is not internally purified. *The Dhammapada* (verses 141, 142) says that not by nakedness nor by plaited hair nor by dust, nor by fasting nor by lying on the bare ground nor by rubbing the body with dust nor by sitting motionless can a man be purified who is not free from desires. But he who, though dressed in fine apparel, exercise tranquillity, subdues his senses, leads a life of celibacy, well-collected in body and mind, he is indeed a *Brāhmaṇa*, a *Samaṇa* and a *Bhikkhu*. That Buddhism does not agree with the supposition of purification coming through food or eating is propounded in the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (I, 10). On the other hand, it upholds that purity comes by restraint over such bodily, mental and moral conduct as could defile a man, and by possessing moral habits.² It does not consider a man's outward signs, his birth or his clan, or his abstinence from fish and meat, as cleansing a man from his impurities.³ For it is not the eating of meat or fish, which can sully him and which is his defilement, but wrong acts in deed, thought and speech that will defile or purify him. He is neither defiled nor purified by what he eats nor is he purified by fasting, if he has not overcome desires.⁴

1. See the account of the lives of the Theras and the Therīs (Early Buddhist Brethren and Sisters) preserved in the *Commentary on the Thera and Therīgāthā*.

2. See *Aṅguttara* I, 221.

3. See *Sutta-Nipāṭa*, 249.

4. See *Sn.* 241-247, cf. *Dhp.* 141. See also I. B. Horner—“*Early Buddhism and the Taking of life*” in B. C. Law, Volume, pt. I, 1946.

Similar arguments frequently occur. A Brahmin might object by saying that the Brahmins were originally born from the mouth of Brahmā, and as they are Brahmā-created and Brahmā-born, they are, therefore, his legitimate heirs. The *Aggañña-Sutta* of the *Dīgha-Nikāya* (111, No. 27) supplies a fitting reply to this. It is a kind of Buddhist Book of Genesis.¹

It furnishes us with an account of the origin of the Universe and of beings in society, in dealing with the origin of the four castes, and it establishes that righteousness is above birth or lineage among gods and men. The Buddha also says in this *Suttanta* that though King Pasenadi of Kasala was of the same age as the Buddha, yet Pasenadi used to show respect to him as the Buddha was endowed with higher knowledge. In dealing with the origin of the four castes (*vaṇṇas*), viz., *Khattiya*, *Brāhmaṇa*, *Vessa* and *Sudda*, the Buddha here traces in a lengthy discourse the origin of the world and beings through its evolution. The *Khattiyas* were the first among men as they were descended from King Mahāsammata, the first king chosen by the people. As evil deeds such as stealing, lying, back-biting, etc., became manifest among them in course of time, some decided to do away with those evils (*bāhenti*) and those who did so became known as the Brahmins.² At first they by making huts in the forests began to meditate there and they used to go begging their food in the morning and evening each day in the villages and towns, and after returning from their begging round, they used to meditate in their leaf huts and thus they came to be known as meditating ones (*Jhāyakā*). Some of them who could

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1. Cf. the genesis down to the election of King Mahāsammata in the *Mahāvastu*, a *Vinaya* work of the *Sarvāstivāda* School, ed. E. Senart, I, pp. 338-487 ; see also *A Study of the Mahāvastu*, Supplement, by B. C. Law for an English translation.
 2. Cf. the *Dhammapada*, *Brāhmaṇavagga*, for a fanciful etymology of *Brāhmaṇa* as follows : (*Bāhitapāpo ti Brāhmaṇo, samacariyā samaṇo ti vuccati, pabbājayaṃ attano malaṃ tasmā pabbajito ti vuccati*).

not endure such meditation in the forest, took to compiling books (*ganthe karontā*), that is to say, compiling the three Vedas (*tayo vede abhisakkarontā ca eva vācentā ca*) and they thus came to be known as *Ajjhāyakā* (*Skṭ. Adhyāpaka*), i.e., repeaters of the three Vedas. Such is the social order or grade of the Brahmins (*Brāhmaṇamaṇḍala ca Brāhmaṇa ca*).

Now there were some others who, after getting married, took recourse to carrying on various sorts of trades (*vissa*) and they came to be known as the *vessas* (traders). Of those who remained outside they took to hunting and other trifling pursuits of life, and they came to be known as the *Suddas* or the lowest class of people. This is the origin of the social group according to the most ancient and primordial order of things.

Now if a man of any of the four castes or classes leads a bad life in deed, word and thought, and harbours ill-will, he will certainly be reborn in an unhappy state after death, when the body breaks up, irrespective of whether he is a *Khattiya*, a *Brāhmaṇa*, a *Vessa* or a *Sudda*. Similarly, if any one of the four *Vaṇṇas* leads a virtuous life in deed, word and thought, and harbours goodwill towards all beings, he will surely be reborn in a happy existence after death, irrespective of his membership of any of the four classes of people—whether nobles, Brahmins, tradesmen or working folk.

Vāseṭṭha and *Bhāradvāja*, two Vedic Brahmins,¹ one a disciple of the Brahmin Pokkarasādi and the other a pupil of Tārukkha

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1. These are the representative names of the Brāhmins of the Vedic school. Names of many distinguished Brāhmaṇas are mentioned in the *Tevijjat-sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya* (I, 13), i.e., *Cankī*, *Tārukkha*, *Pokkharosādi*, *Jānussoṇi*, *Todeyya* and many other distinguished and wealthy Brāhmaṇas lived at Manasākata in Kossala. There is an interesting account of the mission of the sixteen Brahmin disciples of the Brahmin *Bāvari* living on the banks of the Godāvari in the *Pārāyaṇa-vagga* of the *Sutta-Nipāta*, V; see also *Sn.* 1, 4, and *Samy.* 1,172, on the Brahmin cultivator *Kasibhāravaja*, better known as “the Parable of the Sower.”

Brahmin, are found holding a discussion with the Buddha after their conversion to the Buddhist faith, in the *Aggañña-Suttanta* of the *Dīgha-Nikāya*. On being asked by the Buddha they said that they were censured by other Brahmins for taking recourse to the homeless life under the doctrine and discipline promulgated by the Buddha. The other Brahmins blamed them saying that the Brahmins are the highest class (*Vaṇṇa*), others are low, the Brahmins are of fair complexion, others are black, only the Brahmins are pure, others are not, only the Brahmins are the genuine sons of Brahmā, born from Brahmā's mouth, created by him, and they are the real offspring and heirs of Brahmā. As for *Vasetṭha* and *Bhāradvāja*, they have degraded themselves by forsaking the upper class and going over to the reviled class, who are born of Brahmā's feet.

The Buddha replied that they made this distinction in forgetfulness of the past.¹ On the contrary, the Brahmins are also born from the wombs of women, then how can they claim that they are born of Brahmā's mouth? It is, on the contrary, a misrepresentation of *Brahmā* (*abbhācikkhanti Brahmāṇam*) whom they worship as their Creator God (*Īśvara*). The Buddha then tells *Vāsetṭha* and *Bhāradvāja* that there are these four classes of people, viz—, *Khattiya*, *Brāhmaṇa*, *Vessa* and *Sudda*, nobles, Brahmins, tradesmen and workers. But should any one of these four classes commit slaughter of life, adultery, theft, lying, slandering, etc., he will fare according to his misdeeds.

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1. In the *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad*, IV, 4, the story of Satyakāma tells us that Satyakāma, son of Jabālā, an Anarya went to learn the *Vedas* from the famous sage Gautama, and when he was asked as to his clan or Gotra, he could not say anything about it, but the next day after asking his mother he spoke out the truth, whereupon Ṛṣi Gautama embraced him, declaring him to be the best Brāhmaṇa who spoke the truth. In the Veda also *satya* is *ṛta* and *ṛta* is *satya*, that which is truth is the order and that which is the order is truth. cf. *Bh. Up.* 1. 4. 14 : "There is nothing higher than dharma. That which is the dharma is the truth."

The *Soṇadaṇḍa-Sutta*, the fourth *Sutta* of the *Dīgha-Nikāya*, to be placed just after the *Ambaṭṭha* deals similarly with the doctrine of caste and the replies given by the Buddha to *Soṇadaṇḍa*, a Brahmin youth, are the same as in the *Ambaṭṭha-Sutta*, namely, a true Brahmin, in Buddhist terminology, is he who has attained *Nibbāna* in this present existence, who is an Arhat.

According to *Soṇadaṇḍa*, a Brahmin is well-born on both the father's and the mother's side from seven generations back, with no slur or black spot on him in respect of birth. He is a master of the three *Vedas*, a repeater of the *hymns*, one who knows the mystic verses by heart, with their indices, the ritual, the phonology, and the exegesis, a learned man in etymology and grammar, versed in casuistry and expert in knowing the thirty-two bodily signs of a great man (*ajjhāyako mantadharo tinnam vedānam pāragū sanighaṇḍu keṭubhānam sākkarappabhedānam itihāsa-pañcamānam padako veyyākaraṇo lokāyatamahā-purisa-lakkhaṇesu anavayo ti*).

The claim to superiority of the Brahmins is refuted again and again by many similes and analogies put forward by the Buddha in the *Assalāyana-sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* (II, 93).¹ Once, while the Buddha was staying at Sāvatthi in *Anāthapindika's* park, as many as five hundred Brahmins of different countries went there for trade. They came to visit the Buddha headed by a young Brahmin named Assalāyana, who was versed in the three *Vedas*, well accomplished in the ritual with their phonology and etymology, learned in casuistry and expert in knowing the thirty-two bodily marks of a great man (see these qualities of a Brahmin in the *Soṇadaṇḍa-sutta* above). He put questions to the Buddha regarding the Brahmin claim that they are the superior class, all other castes are inferior, etc. (as in the *Madhura-Sutta*, see below). What view does Gotama hold of them? In reply, the Buddha illustrates the point by saying that the Brahmins are also born of women, that the Brahmin mothers

1. —“Such dialogues about the problem of caste, as that between the young Brahmin Assalāyana and Gotama Buddha merely frequently have occurred in real life.”—
Winternitz : *History of Indian Literature*, II, p. 47

have their periods of conception just like other women, and they are required also to suckle and maintain children just like any other women. Then how can the Brahmins maintain that they are born of Brahmā and all other castes are sprung from their kinsmen Brahmā's navel and feet? Thus the Brahmin's claim is not supported in actual fact in life. Similarly, if a man commits slaughter, theft, adultery, lying, slandering and harbours ill-will, it does not necessarily follow that he will go to heaven simply because he is born in a Brahmin family. But on the other hand, if a man refrains from such acts, surely he will attain the state of bliss, no matter whether he is a Brahmin or a non-Brahmin.

Furthermore, if the King orders all the people of his country to kindle fires the same fire will burn whether it is lighted by a noble, a Brahmin or a man of any other caste. Again, if between two uterine Brahmin brothers, one is educated but vicious, and the other is uneducated but virtuous, which one will get preference in respect of gifts? *Assalāyana* is made to agree that the virtuous one will be preferred both by the Brahmins as well as by the members of other castes. This being so, a Brahmin is a Brahmin by qualities and not by accident of birth (*evaṃ sante na jātiyā Brāhmaṇo, guṇehi pana brāhmaṇo hoti—Sutta-Nipāta Commentary*, 11, 464-66)¹.

In the *Madhura-Sutta* of the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (11, 84),² the empty assertion of the Brahmin claims to superiority over all other castes or classes has been established by the venerable *Mahākaccāna* in reply to King Avantiputta of *Madhurā* (modern Madora in the Madras Presidency). The discourse was held immediately after the *parinibbāna* of the Buddha. King Avantiputta put forth the question as to the Brahmin superiority, saying

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1. The *Assalāyana-sutta* mentions at the end that in the *Yona* and *Camboja* countries there are only masters and slaves and no caste distinction. A slave might be a master when he becomes wealthy, and vice versa.
 2. Cf. R. Chalmers : *J.R.A.S.*, 1894, p. 341 ff. on the discussion of the caste problem.

that they maintain that the Brahmins are a superior class, all other classes are inferior ; Brahmins alone form the white class, all others are black ; purity is to be found only in Brahmins and not in non-Brahmins. The Brahmins are born of Brahmā's mouth and are his legitimate heirs. *Mahākaccāna* explains to the King that if a man becomes rich, he can employ as his servant any man from among the four classes whether a *Brahmin*, a *Khattiya*, a *Vessa* or a *Sudda*. And likewise, if a Brahmin becomes wealthy, he can do so from among any of the four *vaṇṇas*. Such being the case, there is no justification on the part of the Brahmins to claim superiority to all other classes of people.

The *Sutta* goes on to show the emptiness of the Brahmin claim by pointing out that if a man is a thief, a burglar, house-breaker or adulterer, and if he is caught by the king's people for his misconduct, then the king will surely punish him according to the gravity of his misconduct in total disregard of the fact that he is a Brahmin, a noble, a middle-class man or a labourer, and punishment will be meted out to members of any of the four castes according as one commits the offence. Hence we see that men of all the four castes stand on the same footing of equality and that there is no justifiability of the Brahmin's superiority. Similarly, a counter-question was put to the king, that if a *Khattiya* (noble) renounces the world, puts on the yellow robe and goes forth from house to houselessness as a pilgrim, leading the higher life in virtue and celibacy, what would the king do to him? The king could not decline to respect and revere him just as he would any other member of the Order, for the noble has been merged in the recluse. Thus the king agreed that on many grounds the Brahmin claims to superiority could not stand.

Similarly, in the *Caṅkī* and *Esukārī-suttas* of the same *Nikāya* (II, Nos. 95, 96) birth's invidious bar or the Brahmin pretensions on birth-right are put forth in similar language by the Buddha. The Buddha says that it is only the noble doctrine which is the true wealth. The pride of family in which a man happens to be born only determines his designation, but not his qualification, whether

he is born in a *Brahmin*, *Khattiya*, *Vessa* or *Sudda* family. Just as a fire is named after the material out of which it is kindled — such as wood fire, bracken fire or cowdung fire, in the same way birth only determines a man's designation in one of the four classes but not his qualification. In the *Kaṇṇakatthala-Sutta* of the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (II, 90) king *Pasenadi* of *Kosala* asks the Lord that is there any difference or distinction among the four castes or classes of people? In reply the Buddha says that two out of the four classes, viz., the *Khattiyas* and the *Brāhmaṇas*, generally have precedence over the others, but in regard to deliverance or religious life in the Order, there is no difference, or distinction as such. It is just the same as when one man lights a fire with a stick of brush-wood, a second man lighting it with a stick of *sāl*-wood, while a third uses the mango-stick and the fourth man a stick of fig-wood. Though kindled from different woods, there is no difference in hue, colour or flame among these four kinds of fire and the same fire would burn. Similarly, as regards caste in the Order, the same deliverance will be attained by men of any of the four castes.

The problem has been dealt with from the biological point of view in the *Vāseṭṭha-Sutta* of the *Sutta-Nipāta* as well as of the *Majjhima-Nikāya*, several verses of which are also included in the *Brāhmaṇa-vagga* of the *Dhammapada* (canto 26). The question is, as in the *Soṇadaṇḍa-Sutta* of the *Dīgha-Nikāya*, what makes a man a Brahmin, whether deeds or birth. Herein the Buddha opposes the caste system on grounds drawn from biology. Once *Vāseṭṭha* and *Bhāradvāja*,¹ the two great Vedic scholars mentioned before, disputed on the topic of caste. But they could not come

1. These are the representative names of the Vedic *Brāhmaṇas* and they cannot be taken as personal names. The names are equivalent to the word 'Smith' in English. See J. Brough : *The Early Brahmanical System of Gotra and Pravara*, Cambridge 1953, which elaborately deals with the subject of clans and genealogy. In *Ṛgveda* VII, 18, we find such families as the *Vaśiṣṭhas*, the *Kauśikas* the *Jamadagnis* and other *Ṛṣi* families out of which king *Sudāsa* chose his *purohita*.

to a conclusion on this subject, one contending that a man is a Brahmin by birth, and the other maintaining that a man is a Brahmin by deeds or actions. At last they agreed to refer the matter to the Buddha who was then dwelling at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvattthi. Both of them approached the Buddha and related the matter to him. Buddha said that there are no species or castes among men. There are many species or classes among trees and plants, birds and animals, insects and serpents, in regard to their respective features. Accordingly, they are classified into various sections. But there is no such species or no such biological factor among men. Every man possesses the same limbs, and bodily organs. In social status they are classified only by their respective occupations. He who tills the soil is called a farmer. A man is known as a carpenter because he works on timber. A man is called a goldsmith or a weaver according to his occupation. A man cannot be distinguished from another man by his fingers, nails, mouth, feet, thighs, or teeth, etc. On the other hand, he is judged by his own work. The central meaning lies in the fact that a man who is born in the family of a Brahmin is not really a Brahman; a real Brahman is judged by his actions. A man who embraces the priestly profession is a priest, one who lives by trade is a merchant, he who lives by archery is an archer or warrior, and a man who has lands and subjects is a king. According to the Buddha, he is a *Brāhmaṇa* who is free from lust, hatred, heresy and anger. He is the best *Brāhmaṇa* who knows him best and considers things as they really are by means of the law of causation (*Paṭiccasamuppāda*),¹ He is a Brahmin who crossed the sorrowful world and has conquered birth and death. But a question arises, who can come to such a state, and how? A man can come to this state only by his noble deeds, by his self-concentration and self-mastery. So we

1. *Evam etam yathābhutam kammaṃ passanti paṇḍitā, Paṭiccasamuppāda-dassā kamma-vipāka-kovidā*. Many classes of people, the *Sutta-Nipāta* enumerates (Sn. 650-2), the ploughman, the warrior or soldier, the sacrificer are what they are because of their actions or occupations (*Kammanā*).

see everywhere 'work' or 'action' plays the most prominent part in distinguishing a *Brāhmaṇa* from a non-*Brāhmaṇa*. It has been said by the Buddha :

Na jaccā brāhmaṇo hoti, na jaccā hoti abrahmaṇo

Kammanā brāhmaṇo hoti, Kammanā hoti abrahmaṇo.

—A man cannot become a Brahmin by birth and a man is not a non-Brahmin by birth. But one is a *Brāhmaṇa* by deeds and one is a non-*Brāhmaṇa* by deeds only. This is elaborated more clearly in the *Vasala-Sutta* of the *Sutta-Nipāta* wherein the Buddha says :

Na jaccā vasalo hoti, na jaccā hoti brāhmaṇo.

—One is not an outcaste by birth and one is not a *Brahmaṇ* by birth.

To sum up, according to the Buddha, *jāti* or caste is primarily a biological term and it signifies 'species'. The social divisions among men cannot be treated as '*Jātis*' or castes in this sense. These divisions are merely occupational and not congenital, as a *Brahmaṇ* and a member of one of the other castes can mate together if they are one male and the other female, for the purpose of procreation, while a male of one species and a female of other species cannot procreate offspring as in the case of men.

The Buddha's own view of a *Brāhmaṇa* is beautifully portrayed in 41 verses in the *Brāhmaṇavagga* of *Dhammapada*. According to the *Dhammapada*, a *Brāhmaṇa* is a perfected man while a *Bhikkhu* (monk) is on the way to perfection. A *Brāhmaṇa* should cut off the stream of passion with energy. He must be meditative, dutiful, and free from all corruptions. A *Brāhmaṇa* should always be controlled, on the three points, namely, in deed, word and thought. Not by matted hair, nor by lineage nor by birth does one become a *Brāhmaṇa*. A *Brāhmaṇa* must be truthful, righteous and pure. A man clothed in cast-off rags, lean, with knotted veins, meditating alone in a forest, is a true *Brāhmaṇa*. He is a real *Brāhmaṇa* who is free from anger, without lust, virtuous and is well-controlled in his senses. He is a *Brāhmaṇa* indeed whose knowledge is deep, who is wise, who is clever in knowing the right way and the wrong, and who

has reached the highest good. He keeps aloof from layman as well as from recluse, frequents no houses, and he has few wants. He finds no fault with creatures, whether feeble or strong, and does not kill nor cause slaughter. A *Brāhmaṇa* fosters no desires for this world or for the next. He is free from doubt and knows the path leading to *Nibbāna*.¹

A real *Brāhmaṇa* is the conqueror of *Māra* and his sins are washed away (*bāhitapāpo ti Brāhmaṇo*). He knows his former lives and has reached the end of births. He is the bearer of his last physical body (*antimadēhadharī*). The knowledge of the *Brāhmaṇa* is perfect in all perfections. The definition of a *Brāhmaṇa* is best shown in the following oft-quoted verse of the *Pāli Canon* :—²

*Na cāhaṃ brāhmaṇaṃ brūmi yonijaṃ mattisambhavaṃ,
Bhovādi nāma so hoti, sa ve hoti sakīñcano,
Akiñcanaṃ anādānaṃ taṃ ahaṃ brūmi brāhmaṇaṃ.*

—I do not call a man a *Brāhmaṇa* because he is born of a *Brāhmaṇa* mother or because of his birth in a Brahmin family. He will be addressed as such (*bho !*),³ he may be with worldly

1. Cf. *Dhammapada*, *Brāhmaṇa-vagga*, V. 5 :

*Yassa pāraṃ apāraṃ vā pārāpāraṃ na vijjati,
Vitaddaraṃ viṣaṃyuttaṃ taṃ ahaṃ brūmi brāhmaṇaṃ.*

2. The theme of “true *Brāhmaṇahood*” which does not consist in birth but in good conduct is also met with in an old portion of the *Mahābhārata* (See Winternitz : *History of Indian Literature*, I, p. 363) and in the Jaina *Uttarājjhāyana* XXV (see Jacobi, *Jaina Sūtras*) besides the *Pāli Udāna*, 1, 5.

3. *Bhovādi* is a reproachful epithet applied by the Buddhists to the Brahmins, i.e., ‘one who says *bho*’, a Brahmin of the lay society (*bho* = sir, sirrah, friend). Unconverted Brahmins are always represented in the *Pāli Nikāyas* as saying ‘*Bho Gotama*’ or the ‘*Sākyaputtiya Samaṇa*’ to the Buddha, and this must have been very displeasing to the Buddhists who in addressing their Master always used the reverential address ‘*bhante*’—‘Lord, Reverend Sir’.

possessions, but him I call a *Brahmaṇa* who is without any possessions (i. e., free from earthly bonds) and without any attachment to the world.

The above passage clearly points out that the *Brāhmaṇa* as such is virtually identical with the Buddhist *Arahā* (*Ariya*=Noble one) and he is not an ordinary *Brāhmaṇa* of the lay-society. The *Brāhmaṇa* as idealised by the Buddha is one who is free from all worldly possessions (*akiñcana*), while a *Brāhmaṇa* of the Hindu society is not a freed man (*mukta puruṣa*), but has worldly possessions (*saktiñcana*); a contrast between the two has been beautifully portrayed in the dialogue between the Buddha and *Dhaniya*, the cowherd, in the *Dhaniya-Sutta* of the *Sutta-Nipāta*, certainly one of the earliest dialogues in the Pāli Canon.

It appears that the Buddha entertained high regard for the ancient *Brāhmaṇas*, ten of whom are mentioned by name in several *Suttas* of the Pāli Canon, viz., *Aṭṭaka*, *Vāmaka*, *Vāmadeva*, *Vessāmitta*, *Yamataggi*, *Aṅgirasa*, *Bhāradāja*, *Vāseṭṭha*, *Kassapa* and *Bhagu*,¹ an interesting evidence of which is supplied by the *Tevijja-sutta* of the *Dīgha-Nikāya* (I, No. 13). They were characterised by the Buddha as the makers of chants (*mantānaṃ kattāro*) and the reciters of chants (*mantānaṃ pavattāro*). Once several old and decrepit but wealthy *Brāhmaṇas*

‘*Bho*’ is a familiar term of address and by using it to the Buddha the Brahmins implied that they considered themselves superior or equal to the Buddha.

1. The names are evidently clan (gotra) names, such as *Brāhmaṇas* of the *Vaśiṣṭha* gotra, *Bharadvāja* gotra, etc., like the word ‘Smith’ in English. The Sanskrit equivalents of the names are : *Aṣṭaka*, *Vāmaka*, *Vāmadeva*, *Viśvāmitra*, *Jamadagni*, *Aṅgirasa*, *Bharadvāja*, *Vaśiṣṭha*, *Kāśyapa* and *Bhṛgu*. According to Vedic tradition, the Gautamas are called *Aṅgirasas* and so the Buddha was sometimes called *Aṅgirasa* in the *Vinaya-Piṭaka* (see *Vinaya Texts*, I, p. 122) and the *Sutta-Nipāta* as well as many other archaic passages of the *Nikāyas* where allusions to the Brahmins are made.

came to the Buddha to ask about the customs of the ancient Brahmanas (*Brāhmaṇa-Dhamma*) whilst he was sojourning in Jetavana in Sāvatti. Their question was whether the Brahmanas of the time were seen maintaining the Brahmanical customs of the ancient Brahmanas. The Buddha replied that they were not, and described the real cause of the downfall of the Brahmins. The seers of old were self-restrained sages, and having abandoned the objects of sensual pleasure, they looked after their own welfare. They had no such treasure as cows, cattle, gold or corn, but they kept watch over their best treasure in the shape of guarding the doors of the senses. For forty-five years they used to practise celibacy (*komārabrahmacariyam*) and did not marry from other castes nor did they force a woman to be a wife. Formerly there were only three kinds of diseases amongst the Brāhmaṇas namely, desire (*icchā*), hunger (*analaso*) and decay (*jarā*), but seeing worldly riches and adorned women, they were degraded from their ancient path during the Buddha's time and they were thus despised by the Khattiyas, Vessas and Suddas, the ancient Dhamma (custom) being lost to them. Their downfall is regretted by the Buddha in the *Brāhmaṇa-Dhammika-Sutta* of the *Sutta-Nipāta*. The *Sutta* describes how the *ṛishis* of old (*isayo pubbakā*) were "true Brāhmaṇas" and how they later on aspired after the wealth and luxury of the kings, which made them deteriorate from their high moral standard of life which brought about their downfall during the Buddha's time. Thus the downfall of those who were protected by their *jātivāda* (cultural traditions) was brought about through sensuousness and covetousness. "Here then", says Winternitz,¹ "Buddhism is represented as a return to the ancient 'true Brāhmaṇism.'" In the

1. See Winternitz : *History of Indian Literature*, II, p. 94. In *Jātaka* No 495, the dialogue between Yudhiṣṭhila (Skt. Yudhiṣṭhira), the Kuru king and his wise counsellor Vidhura (Vidura of the *Mahābhārata*) centres round the question of who is a "true Brāhmaṇa". Fick places it with the *Sutta-Nipāta* dialogue. (See Fick—*op. cit.*).

Mahāparinibbāna-Sutta (Chapter I) we find that Buddha in prescribing the seven essential conditions of national welfare for the Vajjis, a powerful Khattiya clan in Northern India, says that so long as the Vajjis, did not upset what had long been established as a custom, so long their growth might be expected not to decline but to prosper.

In the *Brahmāyu-Sutta* of the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (11, 91) the aged Brahmin Brahmāyu of Mithilā, who was well-versed in the three Vedas and other sciences connected therewith and had attained 120 years of age, came to visit the Buddha whilst the latter was staying in King Makhādeva's mango-grove in Videha and held conversation with him regarding the criterion of a true Brāhmaṇa. The Lord replies to him in words similar to those found in the *Dhammapada* (verse 423) that one who knows his former births, who sees the rise and fall of beings, whose round of births is done away with, who is free from passions, who has gone beyond birth and death and has attained transcendent knowledge—he is a true Brāhmaṇa.¹

Repeated reference has been made to the criterion of a true Brāhmaṇa in the *Brāhmaṇa-Saṃyutta* of the *Saṃyutta-Nikāya* (1, 67), the *Brāhmaṇa-vagga* of the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya* (1, pp. 163-168) besides the *Suttas* already referred to above. The question as in the *Soṇadaṇḍa*, *Ambatṭha* and *Tevijja-suttas* of the *Dīgha-Nikāya*, is raised in *Brāhmaṇa-Saṃyutta* and *Brāhmaṇa-vagga*, as to what kind of person do the *Brāhmaṇas* acknowledge to be *Tevijja-Brāhmaṇa*, a *Brāhmaṇa* with the threefold knowledge or versed in the three *Vedas*? The Buddha's rejoinder is that one who has acquired the threefold knowledge of an Arahant is one who is endowed with the threefold lore (*tevijjā*=Skt. *trividyā*).

The *Divyāvadāna*, a Sanskrit Buddhist work of the Sarvāstivāda School,² may be said to have summed up the various arguments of the Buddhists against the Brāhmaṇical doctrine of caste. It reads as follows :-

1. This recurs also in the *Itivuttaka*, p. 100.

2. Edited by Cowell & Neil, Cambridge, 1886, p. 626. Chap. 33.

“*Yathā hi dārakā bālā kriḍamānā mahāpathe,
Pāṁśupuñjāni sampiṇḍya svayaṁ nāmāni kurvate,
Idaṁ kshīraṁ idaṁ dadhi idaṁ māṁsaṁ idaṁ ghṛtaṁ,
Na ca bālasya vacanāt pāṁśavo ‘nnaṁ bhavanti hi,
Varṇāstathaiva cattvāro yathā brāhmaṇa bhāṣase.*”

—Just as thoughtless children while playing about on a high-road heap up dust and sand in different forms and name them saying, “this is milk, this is curd, this is meat and this is ghee”, in exactly the same way stand the four *varṇas* (colours) O’ *Brāhmaṇa*.

The *Divyāvadāna* further points out (p. 625) exactly like the *Vāseṭṭha-Sutta* of the *Sutta-Nipāta*, that there is only one species among men ; all of them possessing the same characteristic features (*ekaivajātir loke ‘smin sāmānyā na pṛthagvidhā*). The names *Brāhmaṇa*, *Kṣatriya*, *Vaiśya* and *Śūdra* are arbitrarily fixed and they have no connotation. Just as a man may have two children, one a son named *Padma-Lochana*, (lotus-eyed) and the other a girl named *Vijuliprabhā* (flame of the lightning) but in actuality the boy named Lotus-eyed may be blind and the girl named flame of the lightning may be dark. In other words, these are names arbitrarily given by the parents, but they have no connotation at all. There may be different moral, intellectual or occupational traits in different persons in society, but these traits do not determine the birth or lineage of those persons.¹ The differences are mainly individual in character and have nothing to do with birth or lineage or clan or family tradition or customs.

1. See *Divyāvadānā*, pp. 629-30 ; cf. *Divyāvadāna*, p. 611 ff. (*Śārdūla-Karṇāvadāna*) where the *Caṇḍāla* girl Prakṛiti was ordained by the Buddha. The Buddhist monk Ānanda asks the *Caṇḍāla* girl for water, whereby the outcaste girl falls in love with Ānanda and is ultimately redeemed by the Buddha. The story narrates that the Buddha in his former birth was the *Caṇḍāla* chief Triṣaṅku and in a lengthy discourse Triṣaṅku criticises the Brāhmanical system of caste in a most severe manner and says that such differences as are found among trees and animals cannot be shown among the four classes of people. More-

Similarly, in the *Vajrasūci* (Diamond Needle) a work belonging to the Buddhist Sanskrit Literature and sometimes ascribed to the poet *Aśvaghoṣa*,¹ the refutation of the caste system of the Brahmins is made by quoting the Brahminical books themselves, as for instance the *Veda*, the *Mahābhārata* and the law-text of Manu. The author of the book vehemently opposes the caste system in a most democratic way and shows very cuttingly how frail are the Brahmin claims to superiority over other classes. He defends the equality of all classes of men, whether *Brāhmaṇa*, *Kṣatriya*, *Vaiśya* or *Śūdra*, as all men are equal in regard to their “joy and sorrow, birth and death, profession and trade, fear and sexual love.”

Professor Rhys-Davids is right when he says “If the contention of the Buddhists had been universally accepted, if the word *Brahmaṇ* had come to mean not only a man of certain descent ; but exclusively a man of a certain character and insight—then the present caste system of India could never have grown up.”² But it is not quite correct when he points out that, at the same time, “the Buddhists failed in this respect and the Brahmin claims remained an uncontroverted fact. Because the Buddha was neither a social reformer like Karl Marx, nor a political leader like *Mahātmā Gāndhī*. Social customs or social grades were not his concern. Politics were not born in his age. He was mainly concerned with religious matters and spiritual advancement :—*vijjā*—(knowledge) and *caraṇa* (conduct). That is why we find the oft-repeated phrase in different passages in the *Pāli* Canon, that just as such great rivers, as the *Gaṅgā*, *Yamunā*, *Sarayū*, *Sindhu*, *Chandrabhāgā* and *Mahī*, reaching the sea lose their identity, abandon their previous names and all come to be known

over, according to the law of *Karma*, the theory of caste distinction cannot exist, if everybody is reborn according to his or her own action, good or bad.

1. Dr. Winternitz doubts seriously whether the work was written by the celebrated poet *Aśvaghoṣa* ; see *History of Indian literature*, II, p. 266.
2. *Dialogues of the Buddha* I, 141 ;

by the name of the sea, so also the men of the four social grades (*Khattiya, Brāhmaṇa, Vessa, Sudda*) renouncing the world and joining the Order lose their identity, give up their previous names and all come to be known as the sons of the Buddha (*puttā Buddhassa orasā jātā.*) “Just as the great ocean has one taste, the taste of salt, so also mendicant brothers, the doctrine and discipline promulgated by the *Tathāgata* has but one taste, the taste of liberation.”¹

This fact is ably corroborated by the saying of the Buddha in the body of the *Ambaṭṭha-Sutta* itself. Herein the Buddha says:—“In the supreme perfection in wisdom and righteousness, Ambaṭṭha, there is no reference to the question either of birth, of lineage or of pride. It is where the talk is of marrying, or of giving in marriage, that reference is made to such things as that. For whosoever, Ambaṭṭha, are in bondage to the notions of birth, or of connection by marriage, they are far from the best wisdom and righteousness. It is only by getting rid of all such bondage that one can realise for himself that supreme perfection in wisdom and in conduct.”

(*Na kho Ambaṭṭha anuttarāya vijjācaraṇa-sampadāya jātivādo vā vuccati gottavādo vā vuccati mānavādo vā vuccati. Yattha kho Ambaṭṭha āvāho vā hoti āvāha-vivāha vā hoti, ettha etaṃ vuccati jātivādo iti pi gottavādo iti pi mānavādo iti pi. Yehi keci Ambaṭṭha jātivādavinibandhā vā gottavādavinibandhā vā mānavādavinibandhā vā āvāha-vivāha-vinibandhā vā ārakā te anuttarāya vijjācaraṇasampadā-yāti.*)

If the Sanskrit word ‘Varṇa’ in the ‘*Varṇaśrama dharmah*’ is translated as ‘colour’ and not caste, still there was ‘colour bar’ between the white-complexioned Brāhmaṇas and the dark-complexioned Śūdras, as in Africa today. And the Brāhmaṇas in strict accordance with endogamy and exogamy would not dine with a Śūdra under any circumstances whatsoever. The late Gāndhiji’s life-long struggle for the improvement of the conditions of the ‘Harijans, the untouchables, throws into relief

1. See *Vinaya-Cullavagga*, IX, 1,4 ; *Udāna* I, IV, for the caste inequality in the Buddhist *Saṅgha*.

the rigidity of the Indian caste system.¹ If some scholars explain that it was no 'caste' but 'gotra' (clan) and 'pravara' (genealogy), still the rigidity of caste is there. Buddhism challenged the whole of it in principle but failed so far as the lay society is concerned, but it definitely succeeded in the Saṅgha, where all names and clans cease completely and the individual is submerged within the Saṅgha-members as the waters of the rivers merge into the ocean. It must be remembered that Buddhism did not seek a reformed state of worldly society, but an explanation of the ills of life and the escape therefrom and as such it did not attempt to abolish caste or class distinctions. So for a layman who did not renounce the world and had not been initiated into the Saṅgha, class distinction remains as a structure of the lay society and as a member of that society he had his duties of caste to be done. We have passages in the Pāli Canon where social rites and sacrifices are reinterpreted and entirely moralised, but not abolished as such, e.g., the Peta-belief and the Peta-rites, though generally found associated with the Brahmins, are not totally abolished or discarded in Buddhism, but modified according to the Buddhist ethical teachings of *Karma*. It is only when a man enters the Order that he totally discards his name and clan (*nāma-gotra*) and is submerged as a member of the Order becoming a son of the Buddha (*puttā Buddhassa orasā Jātā*).²

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1. It is an important fact to consider that if there was no 'caste' or colour bar in India, but only 'gotra' and 'pravara', then why have the present Indian Government passed a law for the abolition of all caste distinctions in India ?
 2. In the story of the life of the Buddha as told in the *Nidānakathā* of the Jātaka, we find that when the Buddha returned to Kapilavatthu, his native town after his enlightenment he, as usual, was begging his alms in the streets of the city and King Suddhodana, his father, told the Buddha that thereby he was putting his father to shame. But Buddha replied that King Suddhodana's

It appears that though rigidity of caste rules may not go back to the date of the Buddha himself, yet the caste rules became rigid strictly by the time of Buddhaghosa, and he, in order to maintain the purity of generations of the Kṣatriya clan of the Sākiyas, invented the idea of marriage between brothers and sisters in describing the origin of the Buddha's caste or *gotra* (clan), i.e. the Sākiyas. The legend of the Sākya princes marrying their own sisters occurs in the quarrel between the Sākiyas and the Koliyas during the Buddha's life-time, when the Koliya made it a ground of reproach to the Sākiyas.¹ In the *Kāth-Upaniṣad* (XIII, 7) we read *Prajapāti* assumed a bisexual form for the purpose of the procreation of the human race, as he had no other mate for pairing,² and in the *Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa* (III, 33) we are told that *Prajapāti* in the form of an antelope united with his sister.³ Similarly, Buddhaghosa in describing the origin of the Sākiyas invented the story of the union of brothers and sisters for the purpose of keeping the purity of blood of the Sākya race. In other words, the legend of the origin of the Sākiyas and Koliyas, the two most powerful Kṣatriya clans of Northern India during the Buddha's time, is comparable to the legend of Yama and Yamī in the *R̥gveda* (X,10) in order to show the antiquity of the Buddhist legend of the origin of the Kṣatriya caste to which the Master belonged. Just

family (vaṁsa) is that of the King while Gotama's family is that of the Buddhas. That is to say, he no longer belongs to his earthly relations but to the relations of the Buddhas, who are the perfected ones in their accomplishment of their attainment of knowledge.

1. See *Kuṇāla-Jātaka*, V, 536 (Introductory story) ; *Dhammapada* Commentary III, pp. 254 ff. (*ñāṭikalaha-vūpasamana-vatthu*),
2. Cf. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad* (I, 4) :- “*Ātmā ya idamagra āsit puruṣavtdhah sa ha etavān āsa yathā strīpumāṁsau sampariṣvaktu.*”
3. The myth of Manu, the first man is also of similar purport.

as in the case of the origin of the Sākya and Koliya Buddhaghosa described that the Sākya were very proud of the purity of their blood so much so that they did not like to marry from other castes and eventually married their own sisters, in the same way we find in the *Dasaratha-Jātaka* (IV, No. 451) that Rāma marries his sister Sītā, as the four banished brothers of the Sakya legend married their own sisters. According to Dr. Thomas¹, one story has been modelled on the other and the verses of the *Dasaratha-Jātaka* also do not seem to be very old and as such, probably belonged to the fifth century A D., the age of Buddhaghosa, the celebrated commentator.

The Introductory story of the *Bhaddasāla-Jātaka* (IV, No. 465)² tells us how the utter annihilation of the self-conceited and proud *kṣatriya* clan of the Sākya was brought about by *Viḍūḍabha*, the king of Kosala, who succeeded his father Pasenadi who was a devout lay follower of the Buddha. The Sākya and the Koliya trace their origin to King Mohāsammata and Okkāka (Skt. Īkṣvāku) of the solar race³. The story relates that King Pasenadi of Kosala being desirous of gaining the confidence of the Buddhist monks, wanted to marry a daughter of the Sākya, the clan to which the Buddha belonged. But the

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1. *The Life of Buddha as Legend and History*, 1927, p. 11. This is distinctly set up in rivalry with the Brahmin claims of superiority. In other words, Buddhaghosa as well as the early Pāli texts have put emphasis on the purity and predominance of the Khattiyas over the Brāhmaṇas, and thus Buddhaghosa invented the story of marriage between brothers and sisters which is unthinkable in India from Ṛgvedic times.
 2. See also *Dhammapada Commentary* I, pp. I, *Viḍūḍabha-vatthu*.
 3. *Ādiccā nāma gottena, sākiyā nāma khattiyā, Himavantassa avidūre kosalesu nīketino*. See *Sutta-Nipāta, Pabbajjā-Sutta*. See also Preamble to *Kuṇāla-Jātaka* V, No. 536 ; *Sumaṅgala-vilāsini*, I, pp. 258-262 ; *Mahāvamsa*, ch. II ; *Dipavamsa*, ch. III, etc.

Sākiyas were so proud of their caste that they did not like to give their daughter in marriage to Pasenadi. But Pasenadi was a powerful and mighty king, so fearing his wrath they gave *Vāsabha-*, *Khattiyā* a daughter of Mahānāma Sākya by a slave-woman, in marriage to Pasenadi. In due time a son was born to her. But when the prince grew up to sixteen years of age, he wanted to go to his maternal uncle's home. When Prince Viḍūḍabha approached the Sākiyas in Kapilavatthu, all the younger generation of the Sākiyas went out of the town on some business or other in order to avoid saluting Viḍūḍabha whose mother was born of a slave woman. After staying for some time at Kapilavatthu, Viḍūḍabha was preparing his return journey to Kosala when he heard the whisper that the seat on which he sat was washed with milk by a maidservant, as it was used by Viḍūḍabha born of a slave girl. When the news reached Viḍūḍabha, he swore to take revenge by washing the same plank with the blood of the Sākiyas, when he became king of Kosala. After his return to Kosala, Pasenadi heard about this and degraded Vāsabhakhattiyā and Viḍūḍabha to the position of slaves. But on the Buddha's saying that the mother's status is not the criterion for determining social position, he again raised them to the position of queen and prince respectively. After Pasenadi's death Viḍūḍabha succeeded to the throne of Kosala and remembering his former wrath he marched against the Sākiyas three times. But each time he found the Buddha sitting under the shade of a banyan tree on the border, having come to protect his kinsmen. But on the fourth occasion remembering the evil deeds of the Sākiyas in their former births, the Buddha did not come to intervene and Viḍūḍabha wreaked his vengeance upon the Sākiyas by utterly destroying the Sākiya clan. Mahānāma who was left alive, so the story goes, committed suicide rather than dine with Viḍūḍabha. Thus the proud Kṣatriya clan of the Sākiyas was totally annihilated. In the legend of Ambaṭṭha as told in the Commentary on the *Ambaṭṭha-Sutta* of the *Dīgha-Nikāya*, Ambaṭṭha, a young disciple of the Brahmin Pokkharasādi, complains to Buddha of the rudeness of the Sākiyas to him when he visited them in Kapilavatthu. The Buddha in reply

tells Ambaṭṭha of the pure origin of the Sākiyas and of his (Ambaṭṭha's) origin from a slave maiden of the Sākiyas. These illustrations go to prove that although the rigidity of the Brahmin caste system does not go back to the Buddha's lifetime, yet the caste claims and caste distinctions became very rigid by the time of the fifth century A.D., the age of Buddhaghosa. But happily for the Buddhists, 'caste' in its strict sense ceases to be and there is no endogamy or exogamy or commensal distinction among the Buddhist lay people. In accordance with the principles of Buddhism, the only distinguishing mark is the question of virtue and the Buddhists generally emphasise the question of education and qualification and not so much on the point of origin or birth or lineage. In modern times many Buddhist boys are marrying Hindu girls especially in Bengal and those Hindu girls are accepted in the Buddhist society without any prejudice or question of *gotra* and *pravara*, but if a Buddhist girl is married by a Hindu boy, the same place is hardly to be found in the Hindu society, not to speak of the Brahmin society.

CHAPTER IV

Sacrifice And Rituals

We are not concerned here with the origin and significance of a Brahmanical sacrifice, which may be defined as the inherent tendency or the yearning of the feeble human heart to make itself part of the divine nature by means of a rite in the course of which something is forfeited or destroyed, the main object of which is to establish relationship between a source of spiritual strength and the one in need of such strength on earth.¹ Buddhism as arising out of Brahmanism may be said to have started in agreement with the central religious tenets or principles in Brahmanism of that day. But it drifted far away from Brahminism in not attaching importance to external rituals, but in emphasising the sanction of religious conduct (*caraṇa*). We find that many *Suttas* in the *Nikāyas* do not hesitate to speak of the laxity in the moral standard of the Brahmins and take up a certain viewpoint involving disagreements with Brahminism as to ritual observances, the veneration shown on account of birth or caste, and the value given and to be given to religious conduct or morals. It is to those external matters and not to internal spiritual matters that much weight has been attached in the Pāli *Suttas*. This is evidenced by the fact that in the *Brāhmaṇadhammika-Sutta* of the *Sutta-Nipāta*, certainly one of the earliest discourses in the Pāli canon, the Buddha is described to have held a conversation with some Brāhmaṇas at Sāvatti and to have been consulted as to his opinion regarding the Brahmins of his day as compared with their predecessors. The Buddha did not utter a single word of dissent with their religious beliefs, but only denounced the moral laxity to which they were addicted, having deteriorated from the standards of their predecessors.²

1. See *ERE*. (Sacrifice—Hindu).

2. In the *Vessantara-Jātaka* (VI, no 547, v. 517, p. 554) when prince Vessantara was going to hand over his children

The *Sutta* narrates that once several old and decrepit, but wealthy Brahmins came to the Buddha to ask about the customs of the ancient Brahmins, while he was sojourning at Jetavana in Sāvattthi. Their question was whether the Brahmins of the time were seen maintaining the Brahminical customs (*dhamma*) of the ancient Brahmins. The Buddha replied that they were not, and described the real cause of the downfall of the Brahmins. The *rishis* of old were the sages self-restrained and having abandoned the objects of sensual pleasure, they looked after their own welfare. They had no such treasure as cows, cattle, gold or corn, but they kept watch over their best treasure in the shape of guarding the doors of the senses. They practised chastity, virtue, mildness, quietude, compassion, tenderness and forbearance. At the time of sacrifice they did not slaughter cows or any other living creature, but they used to offer their sacrifices in oil, ghee, rice and butter, collecting from the people. But seeing the king's prosperity in material wealth and adorned women, a change was wrought in their outlook and they became covetous. Then they approached King Okkāka (*Sanskrit Īkṣvāku*), after composing hymns, and besought him to offer *Assamedha*, *Purisamedha*, *Sammāpāsa* and *Vācāpeyya* sacrifices, and by these they obtained wealth from the king. Their desire increased still more and the king, instructed by the Brahmins, caused many hundred thousand living beings to be slain in sacrifices. Then Indra, the lord of the Gods, the departed forefathers, the *Asuras* and the *Rakkhasas*, became agitated at the animal sacrifices, and after this injustice of violence being done to the innocent animals at sacrifice, the Brahmins fell from the old *dhammas* and were despised by others.¹

Jāli and Kaṇhājina to the Brahmin who asked for them as gifts in charity, the children say that an evil person like Jujuka cannot be a Brahmin at all, which means that they had regard for a real Brahmin if he was virtuous and pious, but not only on the basis of his being born in a Brahmin family.

1. S N. II, *Cūlavagga*, *Brāhmaṇadhammika-Sutta*. The

The *Brāhmaṇas* are an extensive compilation of prose works which deal with the sacrificial rituals of the Brahmins in their minutest detail, the most important of which are the 1) *Rājasūya*, royal consecration, and 2) *Vājapeya*, 'drink of strength', a kind of rejuvenation ceremony which raised the king performing this sacrifice, from the state of a king (*rājā*) to that of an emperor (*samrāt*), owing allegiance to none, the minor kings being subordinate to him. Most important and significant of all is the *Aśvamedha*¹, the horse sacrifice, in which a horse was let loose to wander about in the neighbouring kingdoms, and if it was not challenged or caught by any of the neighbouring kings, it returned home safely and was sacrificed at the end of a year by the paramount king. By the end of the *Rgveda* and during the period of *Brāhmaṇas* the most important sacrifices were the

Aśvamedha and the *Vājapeya*.

The *Tevijja-sutta* of the *Dīgha-Nikāya* (1,13) deals with the *Tevijja* Brahmins, i.e., the Brahmins who were endowed with the knowledge of the three Vedas (*trivedajña* in Sanskrit).² Naturally the *Tevijja-Sutta* speaks of these four kinds of chief priests in a Brahminical sacrifice, namely, (1) the *Hotar*, a 'caller' who recites the hymns (*ṛcaḥ*) praising the gods inviting them to

degeneration from harmless rites to bloody animal sacrifice which the Brahmins took resort to after coveting the king's riches, is also commented on by Buddhaghosa in his *Saṃyutta* commentary I, 144 et seq., by *Dhammapāla* in his *Itivuttaka* commentary I, 93.

1. The *Aśvamedha*, the horse sacrifice and the *Vājapeya*, the drink of strength, a sacrificial drink or *Soma* associated with secular Brahminism, had a political significance.—See B. C. Law : *India as described in early texts of Buddhism and Jainism*, 1941, p. 205.
2. According to the *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa* (V,5,5,10) "The whole sacrifice is as great as the three-fold Veda." The whole of Brahminical literature is dominated by the conception of sacrifice.

the sacrifice ; (a) the *Udgātar* or 'singer' who prepares and presents the sacrifices, particularly the *Soma* with chants (*Sāman*) ; (3) the *Adhyaryu* or 'executor of the sacrifice' who is in charge of the performance of all the acts of the sacrifice, muttering simultaneously the prayers and the formula (*Yajus*), and (4) the Brahmin or the high priest, whose duty is to protect the sacrifice from any harm or danger. Hence the Brahmin is responsible for the correct performance of every act of the sacrifice, as regards the correct intonation of the prayer formula, or the correct singing of the melody.

The Buddha points out in this *Sutta* that the belief of the Brahmins that the knowledge of the three Vedas will lead to the re-union with *Brahmā* is futile¹ and speaks of the practice of the four *Brahma-Vihāras*, which will certainly lead one to the attainment of the *Brahma-loka*.

Similarly, in the *Kūṭadanta-suttanta* of the *Dīghanikāya* (1, 127 ff.) while the Brahmin Kūṭadanta was going to celebrate a sacrifice, the Buddha's duty was to tell him a wonderful story. The Buddha arrived at the village of Khānumata (which had been given to the Brahmin Kūṭadanta as a royal gift, '*rājadeyyaṃ Brahmadeyyaṃ*' by King Bimbisāra of Magadha) at the time when Kūṭadanta was going to offer a great sacrifice (*mahā-yañña*). He asked the Buddha the best way of offering sacrifice and the Buddha told him the story of King Mahāvijitāvi, who offered a sacrifice in days of yore under the able guidance of his *purohita* (domestic priest), when no living things were injured, no regret felt at any stage of the sacrifice, when all

1. Cf. *Dhammapada*, verse 20 :—

'*Bahuṃ pi ce sahitaṃ bhāsamāno,
Natakkaro hoti naro pamatto,
Gopa va gāvo gaṇayaṃ paresaṃ
Na bhāgavā sāmāññaṃ hoti.*

-If a man utters many a sacred text but does not act up to them, being indolent, he cannot be a sharer of monkhood, just like the cowherd who counts the cows of others but does not own them.

the services were done voluntarily and the sacrifice was offered not only on behalf of the king, but also of all the good people. The Buddha then tells Kūṭadanta of the sixteen requisites of a sacrifice, each one higher and of greater value than the previous ones, and the *Sutta* concludes with a description of Arhatship and of how the best form of sacrifice can be made, not by killing animals in such sacrifices but by cultivating the cult of *Ahiṃsā*¹ (or non-harming any living things) and by observing the *Sīlas* which will lead a man certainly to his mental training, which will pave the way for the realisation of truth.

The performance of *Yañña* or sacrifice was once considered to be the highest object in life for an earthly monarch or a wealthy man in the Buddhist as well as the pre-Buddhist ages. Thus in the *Vinaya-Piṭaka*² (*Cullavagga*) we find that the great *seṭṭhi* of Rājagaha was supposed by his brother-in-law Anāthapiṇḍika, the treasurer of Sāvatti, to be offering a great sacrifice ; while the former was much absorbed in attending to his visitors, namely, the Buddha and his disciples, whom he had invited for a meal on the next day. In the *Sela-sutta* of the *Sutta-Nipāta* (93, p, 202)³ as well as the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (II, 92)⁴ while

1. This *Sutta* sounds like a *Jātaka* story and is really a *Jātaka* included in the *Suttas* without the hero being identified with the Bodhisatta, or the Buddha-to-be in his last birth, which may be called *Suttanta-Jātakas* ; the primary ethical teaching of the *Jataka* stories is the doctrine of *Karma* according to which the Bodhisatta had to undergo countless previous births until he attained to perfection.

2. See *Cullavagga* VI ; *SBE.* XX, 180.

3. Cf. *Theragāthā* pp. 78-80 ; *Vinaya-Piṭaka*, I, 245.

4. King Wīdarealm's sacrifice, though told in the way of satire or irony in the Kūṭadanta *Sutta*, and may never have taken place in actual fact, is typically Vedic in character, and as such, there would have been slaughter of cows, cattle, goats and rams, See I. B. Horner : *Early*

Keṇiya, the fire-worshipper *Jaṭila* and his other *Jaṭila*-followers were busy with preparing a meal for the Buddha and his disciples for the next day, the Brahmin Sela was wondering whether it was a great sacrifice that was going to be offered, or a wedding-feast, or whether the King *Seṇiya* Bimbisāra of Magadha was invited with his retinue to Keṇiya's house on the morrow. In the *Kosala-Saṃyutta* of the *Saṃyutta-Nikāya* (I, 76), we are told that King Pasenadi of Kosala was going to celebrate a sacrifice (*mahāyāñña*), as advised by his *purohita* (chaplain) in order to prevent a threatened danger foreseen in a dream. Five hundred bulls, five hundred bullocks, and the same number of heifers, goats and rams were led to the pillar to be sacrificed. The slaves and menials who were to do the necessary preparations for the sacrifice were said in the commentary to be carrying out their duties with tearful eyes and weeping. A number of monks with their alms-bowls were out on their begging rounds, and the matter of the sacrifice was reported to the Buddha by those monks. The Buddha's duty was to deliver a sermon as to how best a sacrifice can be made by cultivating *ahiṃsā* (or non-killing of living things in a sacrifice). That is to say, in Buddhism we always find an ethical meaning has been given to sacrifice, in that bloody animal sacrifices where hundreds of animals are killed mercilessly for the pleasure of the so-called gods (*devatās*), are replaced by the cultivation of the four *Brahma-vihāras*, characterised as the *Śeṭṭha-vihāras* by the commentator Buddhagosa, viz., *mettā* (friendliness), *karuṇā* (compassion), *muditā* (equanimity) and *upekkhā* (poise). These four aspects of the mind, or rather, one aspect of the mind in four different forms are said to be the best form of sacrifice that a man on earth can perform, by means of which he can develop within himself an unbounded love for all creatures that have life.

In the *Kūṭadanta-suttanta* already referred to above, the eminent Brahmin Kūṭadanta is represented as having prepared a great animal sacrifice, regarding the best procedure for which he

Buddhism and the Taking of Life, in B. C. Law Vol. I, 1946, p. 440.

consults the Buddha. It is, as the learned translator of the *Sutta* points out,¹ nothing but a deliberate irony, humorously stated to propound the Buddhist teaching of respect for animal life,² since the Brahmin *purohita* of a Brahminical society was the last man to come to the Buddha to seek such advice, as the Brahmin has his own liturgical formula for all the Vedic rites and rituals of a sacrifice to be performed.

Buddhism as a religion assumed and adapted much of the current beliefs of the time. But its simple ritual was not based on the sacrificial Brahminism of the day, in which slaughter of innumerable living creatures was involved for the pleasure of the gods. On the other hand, we find in the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (I, 76) that a vehement protest has been made against such killing of animals, and it is asserted that such animal sacrifices not only bring forth no good results, but also that the gods (*Devatās*) for whose pleasure the sacrifices were made are not pleased with them. In the *Brāhmaṇa-dhammika-sutta* of the *Sutta-Nipāta*, four kinds of animal sacrifices prevalent at the time (see p. 67) are referred to and regretted by the Buddha because of the slaughter of innocent animals in those sacrifices.³ In the

1. Rhys Davids : *Dialogues of the Buddha*, I, 173.

2. For the cult of *ahiṃsā* or respect for animal life as practised by Aśoka, the Buddhist Emperor of India in the 3rd. century B. C., see Rock Edict I (‘From this day no animals may be slaughtered for sacrifice’)--*Nigrodhamiga-Jātaka* (No. 12) is one of the finest examples showing how man gradually developed moral sense and compassion towards lower animals and ultimately recognised mercy as a principle far above the mere law. See also *Dham. Comm.* III, pp. 144 ff. and *Questions of King Milinda*, p. 289, as the *Jātaka* is referred to in the *Milinda* too.

3. Though horse and cattle sacrifices were characteristic of the Vedic Aryans, it seems that the *Sutta* alludes to the seers of old who had reverence for the cows as parents, brothers and kin, as their best friends, and the source of milk which gives health, complexion and long life.

*Samyutta-Nikāya*¹ (*loc. cit.*) it has been stated that sacrifices called 'the Horse,' 'the Man,' 'the peg-thrown site,' 'the drink of victory,' 'the bolts withdrawn,' and all the great ceremonial performances, are not the rites that bring a good result. The noble seers who walk on the perfect way never repair to such rites as these, where various kinds of goats, sheep and kine are slain. But offerings to the Righteous Ones where there is no fuss or bustle and no animals or goats are slain to such sacrifices alone the noble seers do repair ; because these rites produce good results and the celebrants also are blessed and not cursed by the gods who are certainly pleased with this sort of sacrifices.

During the Middle Ages of ancient Indian history, these five kinds of great sacrifices (*pañca mahāyajña*) are found associated with the Brahmins, viz.

- 1) *Brahmayajña*—the worship of Brahman, the World Soul, by reciting the Vedas.
- 2) *Pitryajña*,—worship of the forefathers by libations of

So in gratitude they never slaughtered cows in sacrifices ; but then there came a change and the Brahmins became avaricious. Instigated by the huge gifts they received from the king for offering sacrifices of horses and man (*assamedha purisamedha*), their next choice fell upon the cows and so Okkāka caused many thousands of cows to be slain.

1. See *Samyutta-Nikāya*, I, 76 ff. :-

*Assamedham Purisamedham Sammāpāsam Vāeāpeyyam,
Niraggalam mahārambhā na te honti mahapphalā.*

Ajelakā ca gāvo ca vividhā yattha haññare.

Na taṃ samaggatā yaññaṃ upayanti mahesino,

Ya ca yaññā nirārambhā yajanti anukulamā sadā,

Ajelakā ca gāvo ca, vividhā na ettha haññare.

Etam sammagatā yaññaṃ upayanti mahesino,

Etam yajetha medhāvī, eso yañño mahapphalo

Etam hi yajamānassa seyyo hoti na pāpiyo,

Yañño ca vipulo hoti, pasīdanti ca devatā ti.

These verses also occur in *Ang*

II, 42 ; IV, 151, S. N. 303, *Itivuttaka*, 21, etc.

water and performance of 'Śrāddha' periodically.

3) *Devayajña*—worship of the gods by pouring ghee on the sacred fire, *Agni*.

4) *Bhūtayajña*—the worship of all living creatures by scattering food on the threshold for animals, birds and spirits.

5) *Puruṣayajña*—the worship of men by doing hospitality.¹

In comparison with and in contrast to the above five, we find the fivefold offering (*pañca-bali*) of the Buddhists mentioned in the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya* (II, 68 ; III, 45), namely, (1) offering to kinsfolk (*ñāti*), (2) to guests (*atithi*), (3) to the departed (*pubbapeta*), (4) to the king (*rājā*) and (5) to the gods (*devatā*). In several *Jātakas* of the *Jātaka* Book,² offering of food to *bhūtas*, *devas* and others as well as offering to tutelary genii of a city, which are called 'bali-kammas' in Pāli, are recommended. In the *Vinaya-Piṭaka*³ and the *Sutta-Nipāta*⁴ as well as the *Majjhima-Nikāya*⁵ it is stated that in the forefront of Brahminical sacrifice is the oblation to *Agni* ; *Sāvitrī* (*Sāvitthi*) is the foremost of Vedic metres⁶, a king ranks first among men, the sea among the streams, the moon among the lamps of night, the sun among the luminaries, but gifts to the Monkhhood constitute the most profitable of all sacrifices for those who desire merit.⁷

It is clear, then, that Buddhism lays special stress on the inner purity, but it certainly did not abrogate the idea of the material sacrifice, whether direct or vicarious, as we shall presently see when discussing the stories of the *Petavatthu*. What Buddhism emphasises is the transformation and spiritualisation of the nature of a sacrifice, viz., as symbol and as self-devotion. The

1. See A. L. Basham : *The Wonder That Was India*, 1954, p. 170.

2. e. g. *Jāt.* I, 169, 260 ; II, 149, 215 ; IV, 246, etc.

3. See *Mahāvagga* VI, 35,8.

4. No. 93, p. 102 ff.

5. II, No. 92.

6. The *Sāvitrī* is the famous *Rgvedic* hymn of the light of the same name in *Rgveda*, iii, lxii, 10.

7. "Puññam ākaṅkhamānānaṃ Saṅgho ve yajato mukhaṃ."

stages of progress to a higher life are set forth in a graduated method in the *Kūṭadanta Suttanta* already referred to, as so many degrees of sacrifice, each one higher and more fruitful than the other.¹ Naturally, therefore, the conception of sacrifice has undergone a great change for the Buddhists. Fundamentally the conception of a sacrifice carries this twofold result, viz., (1) the propitiation of a higher power or divine power, and (2) the acquisition of merit (*puṇya* in Sanskrit). The action of sacrifice may be conceived to take place as a direct communion between the sacrificer and the recipient or object of the offering, or it may go through an intermediary, a connecting link between the donor and the recipient (earth and heaven). In the Vedas, we may recall, the son of the departed was required to make periodical offerings at the grave, as he still is, but the purpose here is to bring the dead back to earth.

Yañña (Sanskrit ; *Yajña*) has two main meanings in Pāli, namely, (a) a Brahminical sacrifice, and (b) alms-giving, especially a gift (*dāna*) or offering to a Buddhist monk (*bhikkhu*), or to the order of monks (*saṅgha*). The word “*yajña*” has thus lost its original meaning in the Brahminical sense and has come to equal *dāna*, *pūjā*, *dakkhiṇā* or *deyyadhamma*. In the *Niddesa*, II, 523, it is stated : “*Yañño vuccati deyyadhammo*”. The actual sacrificial act or the object sacrificed has thus come to be termed *yañña*, *dāna*, *pūjā* or *deyyadhammo*, “sacrificial duty”.

The purpose of the sacrifice is the acquisition of merit (*puṇṇa*), and some of the terms in Buddhism for the recipient of the sacrifice are *Dakkhiṇeyyo* (worthy of an offering), or *Puṇṇakkhetto* (field of merit), or simply *Arahanto* (holy man). Hence the formulary of taking refuge in the Buddhist *Saṅgha* came to be designated in later days as :—“*Supaṭipanno bhagavato sāvakaṣaṅgho ujupaṭipanno bhagavato sāvakaṣaṅgho ñāyapaṭipanno bhagavato sāvakaṣaṅgho sāmīcīpaṭipanno bhagavato sāvakaṣaṅgho yadidaṃ cattāri purisayugāni aṭṭhapurisa puggala esa bhagavato sāvakaṣaṅgho āhameyyo pāhuameyyo dakkhiṇeyyo añjalikaraniyo anuttaraṃ*”

1. See *Dialogues*, I, 173 ff.

puññakkhettaṃ lokassā ti."¹ (The community of disciples of the Lord is well established, is straight, is based on morality, is well-bent on good ; just as a community of the disciples of the Lord consists of four pairs of noble disciples. They are worthy of respect, veneration, to be worshipped with folded hands, and are incomparable in the world.)

It is apparent, then, that the sacrifices and the rites themselves, so far as they are not bloody animal sacrifices, are not condemned by the Buddha, but what is propounded is the right way or the proper method of approach for performing those sacrifices by mental training, by the observance of the *Sīlas*, and by cultivating unbounded love and respect for others that have life.²

The popular Indian custom of offering food to dead relations (*mataka-bhatta* in Pāli) by a householder, was prevalent in India even from the *Rgvedic* times, if not earlier still. From time immemorial the Peta beliefs and the Peta rites were very popular in India. In the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya* (III, 43) it is enjoined that the regular offering of 'Peta-dakkhiṇā', i. e., gifts in honour and for the dead ancestors, is a duty of the householder. ("*dāyajjam paṭi-pajjati atha vā pana petānaṃ kālakatānaṃ dakkhiṇaṃ anuppada-ssati*"). The *Matakabhatta-Jātaka* (I, 18) deals with the sacrifice of animals by Vedic teachers in offering such food to dead relatives by householders for the benefit of their dead kinsmen, and the doctrine of non-harming or non-killing of beings, promulgated by the Buddha³. The *Jātaka* relates how the ram which was going to

1. See *Majjhima-Nikāya*, I, 27 ; II, 89, etc.

2. The *Jātaka* mentions the "drum of no-slaughter" being sounded throughout the town (III, 428, 434) and it mentions that a zamindar laid a prohibition on the slaughter of animals (*Jāt.* IV, 115). King Aśoka too in 3rd. century B. C. minimised the slaughter of animals in the royal kitchen by reducing the number to 1 deer 2 peacocks (*eko migo dve morā*), but even then "those 3 living creatures shall not be slain in future" (R. E. I.)

3. The moral of the story inculcated in the *gātha* is as follows :—

be sacrificed was washed first with the holy waters of a river and adorned with the five-finger marks (*pañcaṅgulika*) before it was taken to the execution block. The custom of offering sacrifices or oblations to dead ancestors is also to be found in Buddhism in a more refined way which is fully elaborated in the *Tirokkuḍḍa sutta*, in the *Khuddaka-Pāṭha* (No. 5) and the stories of the Petavatthu.

The verses of the *Tirokkuḍḍasutta* set forth the fulfilment of obligations by a house-holder to his dead relations and inculcate the Buddhist teaching that lamentation over the dead is not a dignified way of expressing sorrow felt by the human heart at the loss of dear and near ones. The futility of this mode of lamentation or expression of sorrow is fully brought out in the *Salla-sutta* of the *Sutta-Nipāta* too. Mention may be made here that the *Dasaratha-Jātaka* (IV, 461) which contains the Pāli version of the *Rāmāyaṇa* story of Rāma and Sītā, relates how Bharata brings the news of the death of King Daśaratha whereupon Rāma tells Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā to slip into the water to offer the libations to the departed. Bharata asks Rāma how it is that he shows no sign of sorrow, and Rāma replies with a lengthy speech of consolation, explaining how futile it is to lament over the dead as death is inevitable to all mortals.

It is true that Buddhism did not introduce the *preta*-belief. The belief itself in its varying forms was prevalent among the people at large and served as the basis of many social functions and religious rites. (See *Pāyāsi Suttanta* in the *Dīgha*, *Mahānārada Kassapa Jātaka* (No. 544).¹ The belief has also found its expression

“Evañce saṭṭā jāneyyuh dukkhāyaṃ jātī sambhavo,
Na pāṇaṃ pāṇinaṃ haññe, pāṇaghātī hi socatī ti,”

“Let the beings know by this that existence is painful ;
so let no creature kill another creature, for it is the
killer who has got to lament for his misdeeds”.—

—*Jātaka* I, 18; *Dhammapada-Atṭhakathā*, I, 50. The *Nikaya*
version of this *Jātaka* story is to be met with in the *Kūṭa-*
danta-suttanta of the *Dīgha-Nikāya*, as already mentioned.

1. See also B. M. Barua, “*Gayā and Buddha Gayā*”, Call, 1966,
Vol. I, Book I.

in the literature and art of Buddhistic as well as pre-Buddhistic ages, as will appear from the *Grhya-Sūtras* of Brahminical literature. A guiding principle of Buddhism is not to introduce anything new which is not consistent with the times, and not to upset anything which has long been established as a custom.¹ According to this principle, Buddhism has accepted without adverse criticism but with some modifications the social functions and religious rites based upon the existing belief.

Now, *Peta* is a Pāli form of the Sanskrit *Preta*, which literally means “he who has gone forth ; “the departed one”, and hence the “departed spirit or ghost of a dead person”, as Childers puts it.² Again in the Pāli expression “*Petānam kālakatānam*” the word ‘*peta*’ has been used as equivalent to *kālakata*, i. e. “he whose time is finished”, or “he who has died”. The word ‘*peta*’ has a verbal correspondence with the Vedic *pitṛ* and the expression ‘*pettiviṣaya*’ or ‘*pittiviṣaya*’ is synonymous with ‘*petaloka*’, the world of the ‘*pitāras*.’ In Buddhism, too, the *petas* are the dead ancestors or kinsmen (*ñātakā*, *ñāti*), whether the happy dead or the unhappy ones, and, like the Vedic *pitāras*, they are the inhabitants of the ‘*petti-viṣaya*’ or the ‘*pitṛloka*’ and they, too, are the beings of the next world or the world of *yama* (*pāralokikā sattā yamalokikā*). The stories of the *petas* in the *Petavatthu* are the stories of those *petas* who are the dwellers in the *pettiviṣaya* or *petaloka*, the spirits or ghosts of the unhappy dead forming a class of infernal beings.

In complete agreement with the doctrine of *Karma*, the consequence invariably following on man’s actions, either good or bad (*sukaṭa dukkaṭānaṃ kammānaṃ phalaṃ vipāko*), the Buddhists have developed the idea of heavens and hells (*sagga-niraya*) and the possibility of intercommunication between this world and the next. The usefulness of the funeral rites over the dead kinsmen and the social functions connected therewith have been elaborately dealt with in the *Tirokkuḍḍa-Sutta* mentioned above (p. 137) which forms the doctrinal basis of *Petadakkhiṇā* (offerings to the dead ancestors) as well as the *Tirokkuḍḍa-Vatthu* of the *Petavatthu*.

1. See *Mahāparinibbāna-Sutta*, VI, *Dīgha-Nikāya*, II, 100 ff.

2. See Childers : *Pali Dictionary*.

Half the stanzas of the *Tirokkuḍḍa-Sutta* are cited in the *Kathāvatthu* (VII, 6), a compilation of the Aśokan age, which goes to prove that the idea had developed as early as the 3rd century B.C.

The main purport of the stories of the *petas* (*Petavatthu* I, 1, 2) is to establish the merit of offering gifts to the Buddhist Saṅgha (community of monks) and the efficacy of transferring the merits to the *petas* to enable them to be released from their state of woe. Other religions, the *Samaṇas* and *Brāhmaṇas* of other religions are not excepted from this idea of charity or offering gifts : the only question to be considered is whether a person is worthy of such an offering of gifts or not. The argument put forward in favour of charity and liberality to persons worthy of respect and veneration has been stated thus in the *Petāvatthu* (*Petav.* 67) :- “*Yam dadāti na tam hoti, deth'eva dānam datvāna ubhayam tarati, ubhagam tenā dāneva gacchati, Jāgaratha-mā pamajjatha*” (“The gift that is made may not reach him for whom it is meant, yet give away the gifts, for by giving a man overcomes misery both here and hereafter, and attains happiness in both worlds, doing good to himself and to others. So be awake and not slothful”).

It should be borne in mind that a personal gift or an interchange of gifts between a man and a *peta*, or the donor and the recipient, is not possible ; hence, as regards food, clothing and other worldly objects, it is clearly stated that a *peta* cannot accept such gifts from here, either by force or guile, or even when the gifts are voluntarily offered ; but it is only when the gifts are offered to holy men (*sappurisā*) and the merits transferred to the dead spirit that these worldly comforts can reach the *petaloka* and supply the *peta*'s needs there. This is the fundamental idea of the Buddhist teaching of removing the sufferings and woes of the departed spirits, which is in agreement with the Brahminical form of ‘*Śrāddha*’, excluding the external ceremonies.¹

1. For a detailed description of the growth and development of the *Peta*-belief in Buddhism, see B. C. Law, *The Buddhist Conception of Spirits*, Revised Edition, 1936. In the *Dakkhiṇā-vibhaṅga-sutta* of the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (III, 142),

Buddhism is said to be partly a revolt against the Vedic religion, and partly an innovation. Accordingly, though several modifications have been made by the Buddhists in Brahminical doctrine of re-incarnation or metempsychosis, they accepted without adverse comment the term 'preta' with modifications, namely, as indicating not a transitory existence of the departed spirit before the performance of the funeral rites by his living kinsmen, as in the Hindu doctrine, but as a possible career among five destinies (*pañcagati*) of a dead man, to wit (1) hell (*niraya*), (2) birth as an animal, (*tiracchāna*) (3) birth as a *peta* (*petayoni*), (4) birth as a man (*manussaloka*), and (5) birth as a god (*devaloka*). The first three stages are apparent states of punishment or suffering, and according to the commentarial addition, a sixth stage, that of the *Asuras*, (demons), was added later (see *Khuddakapāṭha*, Commentary, p. 189). Similarly, the conception of Yama has been changed in Buddhism. In the Vedas Yama is the King of the Dead in the happy world of the dead ancestors, whilst to the Buddhists he is not only the lord of the fathers, but also the ruler of the ghosts, and he is in charge of the tortures of hell (*niraya*). Consequently, *yamaloka* has been equated with *Petaloka* in Buddhism.

donations to individuals are ranked in fourteen grades, of which the *Tathāgata*, the All-enlightened Arahāt supreme comes first ; next come the *Pacceka-buddhas* and the *Arahāt*, *Anāgāmins*, etc. Similarly, in the same *Sutta* four degrees of donations in almsgiving or charity are enumerated :— (1) the purity of the donor but not the recipient, (2) of the recipient but not of the donor, (3) of neither recipient nor donor, (4) of both. That is the question of virtue and good dispositions to be found either in the donor or the recipient. In other words, if the gift is offered to a virtuous person, it blesses the giver and the recipient as well. cf. *Dhammapada*, *Sahassavagga*, v.II :—

*Māse māse Sahassena yo yajetha satam samam,
Evam bhāvitāttānam muhuttam api pūjaya,
Sā yeva pūjanā seyyo yañ ce vassasatām hūtaṃ.*

Most probably the sacrificial instinct among the people at the time of the rise of Buddhism was too deep to be completely eradicated,¹ and hence Buddhism sought to propound its own way of attaining salvation first, by cogent arguments against the Brahminical system of sacrifice and, secondly, by spiritualising or dematerialising the nature and concept of a sacrifice. The cult of “*ahimsā*” crystallised the disapproval of such material sacrifice where living animals are slaughtered for the purpose of pleasing the gods, with the obvious reason of the acquisition of merit by the donor. The Brahmin sacrifices, especially animal sacrifices, are criticised by the Buddhists on the twofold grounds of (1) misdirected effort, and (2) the ultra-material aspect of the benefits wished for. In the *Vinaya-piṭaka*² Uruvela Kassapa was asked why he had abandoned the sacrifice to Agni. In reply, Kassapa said that sacrifices offer material things and savour of sensual delights, and in these material objects or gains he had perceived that “this is dross”; therefore he had no more delight in sacrifice or oblation.³ That animal killing in sacrifice is reprehensible for the Buddhists appears in the *Suttas* in the doctrine of the four categories of beings, viz., (1) those who torment themselves, (2) who torment others, (3) who torment both self and others, and (4) who torment neither. Of these four categories, the first are

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1. The Upanisadic teaching, though opposed to the excessive ritualism in Brahminical sacrifices and the domination of the priesthood, did not alter the sacrificial system. It is Buddhism alone which challenged the whole Brahminical sacrifice in principle, especially the animal killing therein.
 2. See *Vinaya-Piṭaka*, *Magāvagga* 1, 24, 4.
 3. *S. B. E.* XIII, 11. In the *Padhāna-sutta* v. 11 of the *Sutta-nipāta* Buddha’s reply against Māra’s invitation to the regulated life of a man of the world offering oblations to fire and acquiring merit instead of following the difficult mode of mental exertion through penances and privations, is that the Buddha would prefer the latter as the means of obtaining the supreme bliss.

those who practise excessive asceticism (*tapas*), whilst Buddhism teaches the middle way by avoiding the two extremes of asceticism and hedonism. The second category includes the butchers, hunters, fishermen and robbers, etc. ; the third one includes kings or mighty priests who used to hold a sacrifice of slaughter with animals, wood-cutting and grass-strewing, with much bullying of menials and servants who worked for fear of chastisement (*daṇḍabhaya-bhītā vācādosā bhayadditā*). The fourth category includes the *Buddhas*, *Pacceka-Buddhas* and *Arahats* as well as those who follow the teaching of the *Buddhas*.¹ This sympathy with animal suffering or cruelty to living creatures is not only eloquently expressed in the *Bhuridatta-Jātaka* (VI, 543) in the address delivered by the Bodhisatta on the futility of sacrifices practised by the Brahmins and the abuses to which these practices led, but also more elaborately brought out in the verses of the *Dhammapada* which is to the Buddhists what the *Gītā* is to the Hindus. In the *Dhammapada* it is stated that all beings desire happiness (*sukhakāmāni bhūtāni*) as we do ourselves, so putting oneself in the place of another, one should not kill or cause slaughter. Again, just as the bee collects honey from flower to flower without causing any injury or harm to the fragrance or the colour of the flower, so should a person mind his own business without causing harm or disadvantage to others.² It must be remembered that this respect for life in Buddhism not only includes all men

1. See *Majjhima* I. 34, I, ff. ; *Aṅguttara* II, 205, etc. See especially *Kandaraka-sutta* in the *M. N.* II, 51.

2. See *Dhammapada*, *Daṇḍavagga*, V, I ; *Pupphavagga*, V 5 ; *S. B. E.*, X, pt. I. Cf. :

*Prāṇā yathātmano' bhiṣṭā bhūtānām api te tathā,
 Ātmanupamyeva bhūteṣu dayāṃ kurvanti sādhaṇā.
 Yo'hiṃsakāni bhūtāni hinastyātmasukhecchayā,
 Sa jīvaṃścamṛtaṃścaiva na kvacit sukkhaṃ edhate.
 Hitopadesha I, II ; Manu, V, 45 :*

*Ahiṃsakāni bhūtāni daṇḍena vihinanti yaḥ,
 Ātmanaḥ sukhaṃecchan sa pretya naiva sukhī bhavet,*

Cf. Mahābhārata XIII, Hitopadesha I, 12, Rāmāyaṇa V, etc.

in its religious significance, but also all creatures and beings that have life.—“*Sabbe sattā sabbe bhūtā sukkhitā hontu*”—“let all beings, all creatures be happy”—mentioned in different *suttas* in the *Nikāyas* and the *Vinaya*.

Vehement protest is meted out in the early Pali texts against the futility of Brahminical rites of oblation by fire and ablution in the sacred waters of the Ganges, for the purification of self and the acquisition of merit. In the *Saṃyutta-Nikāya* (I, 169) the Buddha says :—

“I lay no wood, Brāhman, for fires on altars,
Only within burneth the flame I kindle.
Ever my fire burns, ever composed of self,
I perfected, fare the Brahma-faring.
As load of fuel surely is pride, O Brāhman ;
The altar’s smoke, anger ; thy false words, ashes,
The tongs, the priest’s spoon, and the heart the altar ;
The flame thereon—this is man’s self well-tamed.¹

For, to quote the *Chāndogya Upaṇiṣad* (IV, 4, 3), “sacrifices and other such pious works lead only to new re-births, but just as no water remains attached to the lotus-leaf, so no bad deed remains attached to him who has acquired knowledge.” It is related in the *Vinaya-Piṭaka* (*Mahāvagga* I, 15 ff) that the three Kassapa brothers of the Gayā district, Gayā-Kassapa, Nadi-Kassapa and Uruvalā-Kassapa, after their renunciation of the world, became leaders of the three groups of ascetic followers, known as the *Jaṭila* sect, with matted hair as their characteristic mark. They were Vedic Brahmins and fire-worshippers, their sacrificial cult was ‘*Agnihotra*’, sacrifice to the Vedic god Agni, and their clan name (*gotra*) was that of Kassapa (Sanskrit : *Kāśyapa*)². The three brothers are said to have had thousand followers ; one resided at Uruvelā, another on the banks of the river *Nerañjarā*

1. Mrs Rhys-Davids—*Kindred Sayings*, I, p. 212.

2. According to the *Mahāvastu*, a Sanskrit Buddhist work of the 1st. cent. A. D., all the verses of the *Saḥassavagga* in the *Dhammapada* are addressed to the Jaṭila leaders who were fire worshippers (*agni-upāsakas*) before their conversion to the Buddhist faith.

(*Skt. Nairanjanā*, modern Phalgu), and the third in the Gayā region. The Buddha converted the three brothers and their numerous following by preaching the famous sermon known as the Fire Sermon.¹ Before their conversion to Buddhism they were addicted to bathing in sacred waters for purification (*suddhi*), and to other Vedic sacrifices (*yañña*). Their *gāthās*, preserved in the *Theragāthā* of the *Khuddaka-Nikāya*² contain the lonely musings of the respective *Theras* after their attainment of Arhatship as to how they were brought to correct views (*sammā diṭṭhi*) and how they got rid of wrong views (*micchā-diṭṭhi*). It need hardly be mentioned here that Buddhism attempted to shift the outward sanctity to an internal one, bodily purity to mental purity. In connection with the idea of purity by observing the *Sīlas*, which may briefly be called the gateway to the city of *Nibbāna*, Buddha-ghosa refers in his *Visuddhimagga*³ or the Path of Purity, to the ancient Brahminical practice of bathing in sacred rivers, of which only seven are mentioned as the prototype, viz., *Gaṅgā*, *Yamunā*, *Sarabhū* (= *Sarayū*), *Sarassatī*, *Mahī*, *Aciravatī*, and *Mahānadī*. As regards the Buddhist view of purity, the *Vatthupama-sutta* of the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (1, 6), where the names of the rivers are slightly different, and the *Jaṭila-Sutta* in the *Udāna*, (I, 9), contain an elaborate refutation of the idea of purity, in its doctrinal aspect, by ablution, and lay more emphasis on the purity of the mind (*citta-visuddhi*).⁴

1. See *Vinaya-Piṭaka*, I, 26 ; *Saṇy.*, V, 8. The *Jaṭilas* were exempted from the probationary period of four months (*parivāsa*) to receive ordination in the Buddhist Saṅgha, as they were believers in *Karma* (See *Vinaya-Piṭaka*, I, 38, 11).

2. See Canto V + VI. tran : *Pasalms of the Brethren* by Mrs. Rhys Davids.

3. Vol, I, *Sīlaniddesa*

4. Cf. *Dhammapada*, verse 394 :—

“*Kin te jaṭāhi dummedha, kin te ajinasāṭiyā,*
abbhantaran te gahanam bāhiraṃ parimajjasi”

The verses ascribed to *Puṇṇikā* in the *Therīgāthā*,¹ are also remarkable for their strong criticism of this Brahminical practice. *Puṇṇikā* was a domestic slave in the household of *Anāthapiṇḍika*, the great treasurer of *Sāvathi*. During winter, when she went to fetch water from the river, she met the Brahmin *Udaka-suddhika* bathing in the river and trembling from the biting cold. Asked by *Puṇṇikā*, the Brahmin said that by bathing in the Ganges river he was washing away all the sins committed by him. *Puṇṇikā*, by way of showing the worthlessness of ablution for washing away sins and acquiring merit (*Puṇya*) argued with the Brahmin that if the sacred waters could cleanse from sin and offer merit, aquatic animals, such as frogs, crocodiles and tortoises, etc., would surely have gone to heaven, while sinners like butchers, hunters, and robbers, might have washed away their sin. Moreover, if the sin were washed away by the current of the river, merit is also washed away, leaving one stripped of all. As a matter of fact, there is no redemption from the consequences of sin by outward observances. To keep sin at arm's length one should be established in the *Sīlas* (Precepts). Thus one should be cleansed by the inward spiritual bath (*antarena sinānena*). The Brahmin was thus convinced of the hollowness of bathing in holy waters to become holy.²

An earlier form of this criticism of the Brahminical practice is found in the *Jaṭila-sutta* and the *Vatthūpama-sutta* already mentioned above (p. 151). In the *Vatthūpama-sutta*, better known as the parable of the cloth (Sanskrit : *Vastropama*), the Buddha says that even as a dirty piece of cloth takes dyes badly, so in

1. See *Therīgāthā* canto XVI, trans. *Psalm of the Sisters*, 1909, by Mrs. Rhys Davids.
2. According to Buddhaghosa's *Papañca-Sūdanī*, a commentary on the *Majjhima-Nikāya*, *Adhikakkā* was a well-known bathing ghat and *Bāhukā*, *Sundarikā*, *Sarassatī* and *Bāhumatī* are described as four rivers, but none of them was of any use for internal purification. See *Papañca-sūdanī*, Vol I, p. 178, ff.

an impure mind bliss is not to be found. He then proceeds to enumerate the mind's impurities and to show how they can be cleansed. Let the monks know what the impurities are, and, fully knowing, they should abandon them. Just as a clean piece of cloth from which all stain has been washed away will take the dye readily, so also he in whom the spotless eye for the truth has arisen, knows "whatsoever has its origin has the inherent quality of passing away". Thus, being pure in mind a monk is contented with whatever he gains as soup or curry, and then he develops within himself the four *Brahma-vihāras*, viz., love, compassion, equanimity and indifference to pleasure and pain. In him thus set free arises the knowledge of his emancipation and he knows "Rebirth is no more, the higher life has been led, the task is done," etc. A monk thus purified in mind is called "bathed internally".

The Brahmin Sundarika-Bhāradvāja¹ asks the Buddha if he has bathed in the Bāhukā river for merit (*puñña*). The Buddha then gives a list of places whose waters are considered holy by the Brahmins and explains to him that the real cleansing is the cleansing of the mind and not of the body; "to love all that lives, to speak the truth, to slay not, nor steal, not to be niggard, but dwell in faith." When a man is purified thus, he is not required to go to the river in order to purify himself.

But what is the underlying conception of mind here? It is "*pakati pabhassara*", radiant by its intrinsic nature. But it becomes tainted coming in contact with the impurities from outside which are, naturally, foreign or alien to its inherent nature (*āgantukadosehipaduṭṭho*). The impurities being foreign to its nature, it is possible for us to get rid of them. The reference to "*śukla*" or white, which is synonymous with "*pabhassara*" in Pāli (= *Sanskrit* : *prabhāsvara*), i. e., the purity of mind as conceived and illustrated by the simile of a piece of cloth dyed blue, red, yellow, or the like in the *Vatthūpama-sutta* of the *Majjhima-Nikāya* can be traced

1. See the *Sundarika-Bhāradvāja-Sutta* in the *Sutta-Nipāta*, IV, 12.

in the earlier *Upaniṣads*, and is later hinted at in the Jaina *Sūtra-kṛtāṃga* and developed in the *Uttarājjhāyana*.¹

The popular Buddhist conception of mind (*citta*) has been described in the verses of the *Cittavagga* in the *Dhammapada*. The mind is unsteady, fickle, flighty, and seizes upon whatsoever it desires, and is very difficult to guard and restrain. It goes afar, moves alone, incorporeal, and hides in the cavity of the heart. But those who bridle their mind like a fletcher makes straight his arrow, it brings happiness to them. As a fish struggles hard when taken out of its watery home and cast on land, so also the mind struggles hard to get rid of the domain of Māra, the Evil One. So the wise ones, knowing the body as fragile as an earthen jug and the mind as strong as a fortress, fight out the armies of Māra by means of the weapons of knowledge. Because, in whatever way a hater may harm him whom he hates, or an enemy may injure his foe, still greater mischief will be done by a misdirected mind. Hence the opening verse of the *Dhammapada* starts from the broad-based truth—“*mano-pubbaṃgamā dhammā manoseṭṭha—manomayā*”—“that of all things, states or conditions mind is the foremost, every state or condition is dominated by mind, dictated by mind and made up by mind”. In other words, mind is the prime mover of all actions. Hence the teaching which strikes the keynote of Buddhist ethics—that no-one should cherish hatred for anybody, for hatred does not cease by hatred, rather it ceases by love—this is the law eternal.

Numerous allusions to sacrifices (*yañña*) and other Vedic rites and rituals may be cited from the stories of the *Jātakas*², which are considered to be the most important vehicle of Buddhist ethical teaching, more especially the story of the king who sacrificed all his belongings, even his dearest wife and

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1. See Jacobi—*Jaina-Sūtras*, S. B. E., Vol. XXI, pt. I ; B. C. Law—*Mahāvīra : his life and teachings*, Calcutta, 1940, pt. II (*The Jaina Doctrine of leśā or leśyā, Colour*).
 2. See *Jātaka*, Vol. III, Nos. 314, 433, and Vol. VI, Nos. 542, 543, 547, etc.

children in the *Vessantara-Jātaka* (VI, 547), where the Boddhisatta born as the Prince Vessantara sacrificed all in fulfilment of his *dāna-pāramitā* (generosity)¹. Similarly, while in the *Mahāmaṅgala-Jātaka* (IV, 453) all the Brahminical rites and practices of “*maṅgala-kiriyā*” (good or auspicious acts) are discussed, the tone and spirit of the Buddhist teaching of “*maṅgala*” has been changed in the *Mahāmaṅgala-sutta* in the *Sutta-nipāta* (S. N. II) and the *Maṅgala-sutta* in the *Khuddaka-Pāṭha* (No. 3). The term “*maṅgala*” as used by the Buddhists contains the idea of “*sotthi*” — “well-being”, meaning thereby the “means of victory” in direct contradistinction to “*Parābhava*” or “defeat”;² while the Brahminical teachers understood it in the sense of superstitious rites and practices (*maṅgala-kārya*), the Buddhists viewed it in the light of the conscious fulfilment of all duties and obligations by the right-minded householder³. Both these meanings are also found to have been contrasted in Asoka’s Edicts (Rock Edict IX).

As a matter of fact, the ethical doctrine of self-sacrifice and oblation of a contrite heart involving intelligent self-unification with God⁴ through prayer, penitence and abstinence, are con-

1. The *Milinda-Pañha*, pp. 117-118, alludes to the uncommon sacrifice of Vessantara in giving up his wife and children in charity, due to which the earth quakes in applause of his gift.
2. See the *Parābhava-Sutta* in the *Sutta-nipāta*, III, 3.
3. See the *Sīṅgālovāda-Suttā* in the *Dīgha-Nikāya*, III, 27, which is characterised as the ‘*gihi-vinaya*’ or the *Vinaya* for householders, and which is in complete accord with the Asoka’s Dhamma as promulgated in his Edicts throughout his empire. See also *Samyutta-Nikāya*, I, 33.
4. In Buddhism the Buddha happens to be the highest god among all gods after his decease. In the Mahāyāna the idea has become developed as far as that the Buddha is conceived to be the Ādi-Buddha or Primordial Buddha, and the Bodhisattas are his reincarnations who come down to earth from time to time for the salvation of beings. See Alice Getty ; *The Gods of Northern Buddhism* ; Oxford, 2nd edition, 1934, Intro.

ceived in the early Pāli texts involving the practice of the *Bodhisattacariyās* or *Pāramitās* to sacrifice their own selves for the attainment of *Bodhi* or knowledge, and fully developed in the *Mahāyāna* teaching. It is undeniably the *Bodhisatta* cult which is the foremost factor distinguishing the Buddhism of the two schools of *Hīnayāna* and *Mahāyāna*. Whilst in the original teaching of the Buddha we find Arahatsip is the ultimate goal, in the *Mahāyāna*, Bodhisatta-hood is the first and foremost ideal to be set up by any man, even in the household life without renunciation to attain finally to the Buddha-hood. (See the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* Ch. I., of Śāntideva for the cult of the Bodhisatta). As for instance, mention may be made here of the *Kshānti-Jātakaṃ* of Āryaśūra's *Jātaka-mālā* (No. 28), a Sanskrit Buddhist work of the 4th. century A.D. belonging to the canon of the Northern Buddhists, illustrating one of the ten 'perfections' attained by the Bodhisatta, namely *Kshānti-pāramitā*. As in the Pāli *Jātaka*, the story is introduced by a simple prose sentence, which is to be illustrated by the story viz., "*sātmī-bhūtakshamānām pratisamkhyāṇamahatām nābisahyam nāma kiñcid asti*"—"Those who are imbued with the idea of patience and forbearance and endowed with knowledge, there is nothing unbearable for them." The *Jātaka* is really a lesson for forgiveness. The story relates how a wicked king maltreated an ascetic and how the patience of the holy man endured to the last, and the cruel king was thrown into hell.

In the Pāli *Jātaka*¹ it is stated that the story was told by the Master regarding the malice of the renegade Devadatta who figured as the wicked king. This idea of patience and forbearance is also clearly brought out in the *Dhammapada*, *Buddhavagga*, verse 6 :—

*Khanti paramaṃ tapo titikkhā, nibbānaṃ paramaṃ vadanti
Buddhā,
Na hi pabbajito parūpaghāti samaṇo hoti paraṃ viheṭṭhayanto.*²

1. See *Khantivādi-Jātaka*, *Jāt.*, Vol. III, No. 313.

2. This idea of endurance and forbearance has been illustrated more effectively in *Nāgavagga* of the *Dhammapada*.

Many Jātakas illustrate this idea ; special mention may be made here of the *Sasa-Jātaka* (111, 316) and the *Sivi-Jātaka* (IV, 499)¹.

Two minor canonical books included in the *Khuddaka-Nikāya*, namely, the *Buddhavaṃsa* or the history of the Buddhas, which gives an account of the life of the Bodhisatta, the Buddha-to-be, in the character he fulfilled during the dispensation of each of the twenty-four previous Buddhas, and the *Cariyā-Piṭaka*, which consists of thirty-five *Jātakas* told in verse, contain the *Buddhakarā* or *Buddhakāraṇakā-dhammā*, the Buddha-making virtues or the qualities that tend towards making a Buddha. In other words, they illustrate the qualities maturing the life of a Bodhisatta for the attainment of Buddha-hood in his last birth. In order to attain *Bodhi* or Enlightenment, the Bodhisatta has to fulfil the ten *Pāramis*.² The virtues or the *cariyās* to be fulfilled by a Bodhisatta are called *Bodhisatta-cariyas* or *caritas*, which mean literally 'conduct' (*cariyā*, *Skt. caryā*) as well as

*Ahaṃ nāgo va saṅgāme cāpāto patitaṃsaraṃ,
Ativākyam titikkhissam, dussīlo hi bahujjano.—Dhp. Naga,
v. I. cf. Saṃyutta—Nikāya, III, p. 138 :—na bhikkhave dham-
mavādi kenaci lokasmim vivadati.*

The elephant is an emblem of endurance and self-restraint to the Buddhists. According to the *Lalita-vistara* (p. 553) the Buddha himself is called the *Mahānāga* (the great elephant) and he is *Sudānta* (well-tamed) like an elephant. He descends from the Tusita heaven in the shape of a white elephant to be born on earth. —See *Acchariyabbhūta-Dhamma-sutta* of the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (III, 123) and the *Nidānakathā* of the *Jātaka* I, Intro.

1. Cf. also the *Śibi-Jātaka* in Sanskrit, which occurs in three Versions in the *Mbht.* III, 130 f. ; 197 ; XIII, 32 ; VII, 58 ; etc. The legend of Śibi also occurs in *Avadāna-Śataka* (No. 34) who gives away all his possessions, *Sivāja-Cariyā* in the *Cariyā-Piṭaka*, I, VIII.
2. The *Pāramis* are ten in number in Pāli while they are said to be six in Saustain Buddhist literature.

‘efforts’ to fulfil certain virtues, which are nothing but the *Pāramis* or *Pāramitās*, the bulk of Pāli works inclining to the former, and the later Sanskrit Buddhist works to the latter. The special featute of the books, apart from the *Jātakas*, is that Buddha himself is the narrator of these verses and he is invariably the moraliser in them. Another work of the same type, viz., the *Apadāna* (*Sanskrit* : *Avadāna*) meaning ‘pure action’, ‘heroic deed’, or ‘edifying legends’ contains legends of the Early Buddhist saints of 550 male members and 40 female members of the Buddhist Order in the time of the Buddha. Each of the *Apadānas* first gives his or her pure actions in a previous existence, by means of which he or she can come to a distinguished position in the present life. These *Apadāna* chronicles may be broadly divided into the three sections or *Buddhāpadāna*, *Paccekabuddhāpadāna*, and *Therāpadāna*. Looked at from this point of view, the *Apadāna* forms only a literary supplement to the *Buddhavaṃsa* and the *Cariyā-Piṭaka* constituting together the *Buddha-Bodhisatta-Apadāna*. At any rate, the *Apadāna* stories lay much stress upon the formal aspects of the religion, e. g., *Pūjā*, *vandanā*, *dāna*, and *dakkhiṇā*. They exemplify by the lives of the Theras and Therīs how the heavenly reward so obtained by them continues until Arahatsip is attained. They show the importance of the worship of shrines, relics and topes, and emphasise the charitable and humanitarian aspects of the faith. In a word, they show traces of *Mahāyāna* in the making. Under the *Buddhāpadāna*, for example, we are given a highly imaginative and poetical account of *Buddhakkhetta* or the sphere of benign influence of the Buddhas, which anticipates the later Mahāyānic conception of ‘*Sukhāvatī*’ or ‘the Land of Bliss’, a paradise which has been fully developed in the *Sukhāvatī-Vyūha* and the *Amitāyurdhyāna-sūtra* in the *Mahāyāna*,¹ where the

1. See Max Müller—*Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XLIX : *Buddhacarita* and the *Buddhist-Mahāyana Sūtras*, trans. by E. B. Cowell, F. Max Muller and J. Takakusu, Oxford, 1884.

Buddha Amitābha, of limitless light or *Amitāyus*, of unlimited age, is presiding over the host of the Bodhisattas, who reappear on earth from time to time as the incarnations of Buddha *Amitābha*. The position of the gods in Buddhism is, however, discussed in the next chapter. (*continued*)

CHAPTER V

Gods And The Brahma-Viharas

We have seen that Buddhism rejects the worship of gods and the performance of animal sacrifices for the pleasure of the gods or to obtain a desired boon from them, as a means of final peace. Instead Buddhism preaches the doctrine of release from suffering. In spite of this fact, we find that after his decease the Buddha appears to be regarded as the highest divine personality and in the Mahāyāna the idea has been elaborated so much that the Buddha is not only *Mahādeva* (the great god) but the highest of all gods (*devātideva*). In the *Amitāyurdhyāna-sūtra* of the Mahāyāna, the Primordial Buddha is the first cause of all, Ādi-Buddha¹, and the series of Bodhi-sattvas are his re-incarnations who come to earth from time to time for the liberation of all beings. Such is the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, the eternal redeemer, the Lord who perennially looks down on mankind for their redemption and will not attain *nirvāna* for himself until and unless all the beings are redeemed. To serve as his *Śakti* (energy) there came forth the female counterpart of Avalokiteśvara, the goddess Tārā, the Rescuer, better known as the *Prajñapāramitā*. To add to this a series of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas were brought forth, who are the re-incarnations of

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1. Cf. the conception of the Trikāya-doctrine in the *Mahāyāna*, namely (1) *Dharmakāya*, the body of Dharma, which is the source of the manifestation of all things on earth. (2) *Sambhogakāya*, the body of bliss or Enjoyment, and *Nirmānakāya*, the body of transformation, which is apparently a *līlā* (sport) and *māyā* (illusion). Cf. N. Dutt : *Aspects of Mahāyāna Buddhism and its relation to the Hīnayāna*, Calcutta, 1930 pp. 96 ff.

the eternal Buddha *Amitābha* or *Amitāyus*, who in his infinite glory and unlimited age, is eternally at rest in *nirvāna*. In addition to this, many other series of gods came from the Hindu pantheon, especially from the cycle of Śiva, to fill the Mahāyāna Buddhist pantheon.

As a matter of fact, the development of the Mahāyāna is said to have been much influenced by the doctrine of the *Gītā*¹, namely the cult of *Bhakti* (devotion) and reliance on Kṛṣṇa for salvation, which has been retained in Mahāyāna as *Buddha-Bhakti*. Already in the Pali Canon we find that the Buddha is a superman (*lokuttara*) but this side of popular Buddhism has been extended to such an extent even in the Hīnayāna schools of *Sarvāstivāda*, and *Lokuttaravāda*, that the historic Śākyamuni is not only above all ordinary mortals, but is the highest god above all gods (*devātideva*). The most plausible explanation for the idea of God in early Buddhism as given by A. S. Geden is as follows :—"The most striking and for Buddhist doctrine important conception of the divine was the uniform exaltation of the Buddha himself above the highest god. In the Northern School this thought found expression in the conception of Ādi-Buddha, supreme and alone, the first of all the Buddhas, without

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1. See Winternitz—*History of Indian Literature*, vol. II, p. 229 ; Cf. the following śloka which Lord Kṛṣṇa says to Arjuna on the battle-field of Kurukṣetra :—

“*Yadā yadāḥi dharmasya glānir bhavati Bhārata,
Abbhyutthānam adharmasya tadānātmānaṁ sṛjāmyaham,
Paritrāṇāya sādhunāṁ vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām,
Dharmasaṁsthāpanārthāya sambhāvāmi yuge yuge.*”

—Whenever there is a decay of righteousness and a rising of unrighteousness, then I emanate myself. In order to save the good and to destroy the evildoers, to establish righteousness I am born from age to age. (*Bhagavadgītā*, iv, 7, 8). Cf. also Eliot, *Hinduism, and Buddhism*, III, p. 445 ff. ; A. B. Keith, *Buddhist Philosophy*, p. 217 ; Kennedy, *J. R. A. S.*, 1902, p. 377 ff. ; S. Levi, *Mahāyāna-Sūtrā-lamkāra*, II, p. 16 ff., L. Pousin, *E. R. E.* VIII

companion or peer. But the religious thought of the Hīnayāna moving on different lines, glorified the Historical Buddha, Gautama himself, and finally satisfied its need for an object of reference and worship by practically deifying its Founder".¹

The hierarchy of Hindu gods headed by *Brahmā* or *Mahābrahmā*, the Great One, along with other contemporary and earlier religious beliefs of the ancient Indian people are not infrequently mentioned in the Pāli Canon. In the *Brahmajāla-Sutta* of the *Dīgha-Nikāya* (1,188 ff) Brahmā has been characterised as "the Lord of all, not overwhelmed by any, the omniscient, the Vanquisher, God, the Lord, the Creator, the chief, the father of those who are born and others must have been created by this Brahmā. Why so ? Because he was born first and all others have come after him". But to the Buddha he is as much under the influence of *karma* as any human being and he is bound in the chain of existence like any ordinary mortal. In that *Sutta* the sixty-two views are mainly divided into two classes, namely, speculations or theories about the past and the future. Of these two, the first class contains theories about the beginnings of things in eighteen different ways, and the second class about futurity in forty-four different ways. The second class of views deals with the nature of the gods and though it does not deny the existence of gods, it makes all the gods necessarily liable to rebirth or change of their place or abode according to the law of *karma* like ordinary mortals.² That the Buddha did not believe in gods requiring worship for human salvation and that he did not believe in the superiority of any god, risen by means of rebirth from the state of man, will be clear if we go through the *Suttantas* in the *Nikāyas* and *Vinaya*, dealing with the gods and spirits. In several of the *Dīgha-Nikāyas*,

1. E. R. E, God (Buddhist).

2. "Buddhism neither denies nor affirms the existence of gods.....all gods pass away as we do.....the saint (Arahat) who has worked out his salvation and above all the Buddha, is superior to any god." Subhadra Bihkṣu, *A Buddhist Catechism*, 1890, p. 78.

especially the *Mahāsamaya Suttanta* (II, No. 20) and the *Āṭānāṭiya-Suttanta* (III, No. 32), the vast host of Vedic gods, spirits and angels supporting or opposed to the Buddha appear in large numbers.¹ The gods of the Hindu pantheon appear, as has already been observed, frequently in the Pāli Canon, but they have changed and much diminished in power and are fully subordinate to the Buddha who is the perfectly Enlightened One and not subject to the recurrent cycles of rebirth, unlike the hierarchy of gods in the Hindu pantheon. Mention is also made of the Vedas the collection of hymns addressed to various gods by the ancient Aryan Indians, but throughout the Pali texts only the first three Vedas are found mentioned omitting the fourth one, the *Atharva*, consisting of incantations, charms and spells (*mantras*), etc., which was recognised as a Veda at a date later than the other three which comprised the “trayīvidyā”. The phrase “*tiṇṇaṃ vedānaṃ pāragū*”, well versed in the three Vedas, occurs in different *suttas* of the Pāli Canon, either in connection with the *Tevijja* Brahmins or the *Bodhisattva*, as in the case of first *Bodhisatta Sumedha Tāpasa* during the dispensation of the *Buddha Dipaṅkara*, the first of the series in the line of twenty-five Buddhas.²

The existence of Brahmā is not denied in Buddhism, but what is propounded is that Brahmā is not the maker and disposer of a new cycle of existence. On the other hand, he is an individual born from a still higher plane of existence which he does not know and cannot remember.

On more than one occasion Sakka, the *Yāma* gods, gods

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1. For a detailed classification of these gods, see Rhys-Davids, *Buddhist India*, pp. 219-236.
 2. It is to be noted that the earlier Canonical texts e. g., the *Mahāpadāna-Sutta* in the *Dīgha* II, No. 14, mention seven Buddhas including the historical Gautama Buddha, while they have been increased to 25 or 28 in the *Buddhavaṃsa*, which is a later addition to the *Kuddaka-Nikāya* in the Pāli Canon. For a similar list of the *Paccekabuddhas* see *Isigili-sutta* in the *Majj.* II, 116.

of the Tusita heaven, Brahmā and Mahā-Brahmā, together with the gods of the *Tāvātimsa* heaven, appear to offer homage and reverence to the Buddha during his lifetime ; he is represented as the teacher and guide of all these gods and finally to have converted them to the right way by his teachings (see *Mahāparinibāna-Sutta*, II, 9 ; III, 49, etc.). The infirmities and disabilities of man are all to be found in the gods, viz., they are all subject to old age, disease and death, and are not freed from the cycle of rebirth as they are bound by the law of *karma* as much as any human being. (*Mahāp.-sutta*, VI, 16, 19 ff., etc.). They are subject to desire or passion with all its evil consequences (Sn. III, 6), and the greatest of them all, *Mahā Brahmā* himself, is ignorant of the nature of things which he is supposed to know, but ultimately he sends the disciple to the Buddha for the right solution of this question.¹ The *Dhamma-cakka-pavattana-sutta* (25 f.) says that the Wheel of Law which the Buddha has set forth cannot be turned back or upset by any god and when the Buddha established the foundation of the kingdom of righteousness (*Dhammacakkam pavattesi*), the sound of it reached from the earth-dwelling gods (*Bhūmma devas*) to the heaven of the Thirty-three from rank to rank including *Mahā Brahmā*, the chief of the gods in the Brahma heaven. Apparently in the Pāli *Sutta* the gods are not omniscient and so they are not omnipotent. According to this teaching, therefore, not even a god, but only one who is born a man can attain to the highest goal *nibbāna* by his own individual efforts.² It is interesting to notice that the gods of the current polytheism are excluded from the plan of the scheme of salvation or emancipation. The disciple of the Buddha neither desires to be reborn in the heaven

1. See *Kevaḍḍha-Sutta*, *Dīgha*, I, 81, etc. ; *Dhp.* 419 ff., Sn. III, 9, etc. Where the true knowledge of a 'true Brāhman' has been contrasted with the ignorance of others. The *Dhammapada* (VIII, 105, cf. IV, 44 f. ; Sn. III, 35, etc.) says "Not even a god including Māra himself..... can undo the victory of a man who has conquered himself".

2. *Jātaka* I, 14.

of Brahmā nor as a god in any of the heavens, nor to seek any help from them for attaining the ultimate goal, *Nibbāna*, which is considered to be the highest attainment even above the Brahmā's Heaven.

In the *Niddesa*, a Canonical work, we find that divine qualities are ascribed to the Buddha and the meaning of god (*deva*) has been classified into three main categories¹, namely, (1) gods by convention (*sammuti devā*), i. e. gods in the public opinion such as the kings, princes and queens, *deva* in the sense of a regular form of royal address. (2) gods by birth (*uppatti devā*), i. e. gods in the ordinary sense born in a heavenly state (as one of the destinies (*gatis*) as the Bhūmmadevas from the Cātummahārājaka gods up to the gods of the Brahma heaven and even beyond that; (3) gods by purity (*visuddhi-devā*); i. e., gods by purity through great religious merit, like the disciples of the Buddha who are *Arahats* and *Paccekabuddhas*. The Buddha himself is the supreme god (*atideva*) and the highest of all the gods (*devāti deva*) by convention, by birth and by purity.² In one *Sutta* in the *Anguttara-Nikāya* (II, 38), Buddha was asked by a Brahmin whether he was a god or a man or a *gandabbha* or a *yakkha*, and he replied that he was none of these, but overcoming and transcending all the *āsavas* (cankers), he had become a Buddha, superior to all the gods, *gandabbhas*, *yakkhas* and men in knowledge, since they were subject to the *Āsavas*. In the *Saṅgārava-sutta* of the *Mājjhima-Nikāya* (II, 100) the

1. *Jātaka* I, 132; *Dhamp. Atṭh.* I, 174, etc.

2. Nd. 2, 307; Vbh. 422; KhAth. 123; VVA. 18, etc. In the *Lalita-vistara* (134 (112)), *Mahāvastu* II, 26, Rock-hill—*Life*, p. 17, Buddha is called 'devātideva'—'god surpassing the gods'. Out of the three classes of gods the second category (*uppatti devā*) includes seven groups enumerated as *cātummahārājaka*, *Tāvatisa* (with Sakka as chief), *Yāma*, *Tusita*, *Nimmānarati*, *Paranimmita-vasavatti*, and *Brahma-kāyikā* gods. See *Dīgha* I, 216 ff; *Ang.* I; 210, 332 ff; Nd 2,307; cf. *Samy.* I, 133; *Jātaka* I, 48, etc. see below.

young Brahmin Saṅgārava went to the Buddha while the latter was sojourning at *Caṇḍālakappa* in Kosala in the mangogrove of the Todeyya Brahmins. He asked the Buddha :—“Is it true to say that there are some *samanas* and *Brāhmaṇas* who, by insight here and now, claim to have attained perfection and the ultimate goal ?” In reply the Buddha said that he differed from such an opinion ; because some of those recluses and Brahmins depended on mere tradition and claimed to have won the ultimate goal such as the *Tevijjas* (the Brahmins who knew the three Vedas). There were others who claimed to be so, such as the Sophists and the Casuists. There were still others who unaided had discerned a doctrine till then unknown and unheard of before and had by perfect insight won the ultimate goal ; to this latter group Gotama belonged. Because the stage of *nirvāṇa* which the Buddha attained was *lokuttara* (*supramundane*), whilst a god, i. e., a ‘god by birth’, was one who through his bondage to the *Āsavas* had attained that position. Every god remained such as long as his merit lasted to keep him in that position, but as soon as he passed away, another came to take his place according to his merit. In other words, they remain gods as long the merit which put them in their position of gods is not exhausted.

In the *Purāṇas* and in some sections of the Epics we find Indra, the Lord of the gods, represented as paying homage to the god *Śiva* or *Viṣṇu*. Similarly, in the *Dīgha-nikāya* (*Suttas* 17-21 especially) we find Indra (*or Sakka*) and other gods and demi-gods appearing as devout worshippers of the Buddha,¹ the most interesting evidence of which is to be found in the *Sakkapañha-Sutta* (*Dīgha*, II, 21) “the questions of Sakka discourse”. Sakka, the lord of the gods, is afraid of approaching the Buddha ; so he first sends one of the Gandhabbas or heavenly musicians (*pañcasikkha*) to the Buddha in order to seek the opportune moment to have conversation with the

1. Rhys-Davids calls these *Suttas* ‘Tendenzschriften’, i. e., pamphlets with a purpose’—See *Dialogues of the Buddha*, II, p. 228.

similarly, in regard to water, fire, air, creatures, Prajāpati, Brahmā, the Ābhassaras, the Subhakiṇṇas, the vehapphalas, the Vanquisher, the All—no such ideas about them occur to him, nor does he pay homage to any of them ; because he has comprehended them to the full, and by extirpating all craving, by not lusting after them but by destroying and renouncing them all, the *Tathāgata* has become all-enlightened with full knowledge.¹ Thus in the *Vinaya-Piṭaka* (*Mahāvagga*, 1, 6) Buddha says :—“I have no teacher, none is like me ; in the world of men and gods none is my equal. I am a saint in this world, a teacher unsurpassed in wisdom, sole supreme Enlightened One. Having attained tranquillity (*sītibhūta*) I am at peace (*nibbuta*).. in the darkened world I will beat the drum of immortality (*amata*).”

We read in the *Jātaka-Nidānakathā* as well as the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (II, 123) that at the time of the birth of the Buddha Sakka, Santusita, Suyāma, Paranimmita-vasavatti, and all the gods of the ten thousand horizons came to salute the Buddha, and *Brahmā* himself held a white parasol over his head. After his birth he was first taken by the Mahābrahmās with a golden net and then from the hands of the Brahmās the Four Great Kings received him in an antelope skin and from their hands he was received on a silken cushion by attendants, while Mahābrahma holding a parasol and *Suyāma* holding a fan and other divinities holding other insignia of royalty followed the Bodhisatta when he made seven steps forward and declared “I am the Chief of the World”.² At the time of his attainment of Bodhi (Englightenment) all the gods came in praise of the *Tathāgata*. After his Englightenment the Buddha hesitated to preach his doctrine which is deep, profound, difficult

1. See also *Brakabrahmā-Jātaka* (III, 359) and *Bakabrahmā-sutta* in the *Brahmā-Saṃyutta* of the *Saṃyutta-Nikāya* (I, 142 ff.).

2. See also *Sutta-Nipāta* IV. *Nālaka-Sutta*, identified with *Moneya-Sutta* in Asoka's Bhābru Edict. In the *Nālaka-Sutta* the gods are rejoicing at the birth of Prince Siddhattha waving their garments out of delight.

to understand by the ordinary people, tranquil, subtle and beyond the scope of logic, but it was Brahmā Saṃkumāra who came to beseech the Lord to preach the doctrine and to save the world from utter destruction. Again, at the time of his *Parinibbāna* all the gods together with Brahmā came to pay homage to the Buddha and the Venerable Upavāna was asked to be removed from the sight of the dying Buddha who was beholding those deities (*Digha* II, 99, *M. P. S.* III).¹ It is said that the Buddha after performing the Twin Miracle (*yamaka-pāṭihāriya*) went to the *Tāvātimsa* heaven to preach the *Abhidhamma* to his mother as all the previous Buddhas had done before him and with three strides he rose to this heaven. After preaching the *Abhidhamma* in the *Tāvātimsa* heaven he descended at *Samkāssa* (*SKt. Saṅkaśya*) by means of a ladder of jewels with one of gold on the right hand for the gods and the other of silver on the left for *Brahmā* (*Dph. Comm.* III, 199 ; *Jāt.* IV, 265 ; *Sn.* IV, 16).

In the *Samyutta-Nikāya* (I, 154) we find that even the Buddhist monk is capable of instructing Brahmā and his retinue in the Brahma world. The monk exhorted *Brahmā* and his company to attach themselves to the teachings of the Buddha, even while staying in the Brahma world :—

“*Ārabbhatha, nikkhamatha, yuñjatha Buddhasāsane,
Dhunātha maccuno senaṃ naḷāgāraṃ va kuñjaro*”.

—Bestir yourselves, rise up and attach yourselves to the teachings

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1. At the time of the Buddha's *parinibbāna* sakka devānan, indo utters a verse which is very familiar in Buddhist literature, “*Aniccā vata saṅkhārā*” etc. “All component things are transient. To arise and decay is their nature. Their cessation is bliss.” This verse occurs repeatedly in several parts of the Pali Canon. On Buddha's death it was uttered by Sakka in the *M. P. S.* VI, p. 158 ; so also in *Samy.* I, p. 158 ; Buddha again utters the verse in *Samy.* II, p. 193. It again occurs in *Samy.* I, pp. 6, 200 ; *Jātaka* I, p. 362 ; in the *Theragāthā* the celebrated verse is said to have been uttered on the death of Sāriputta, *Therag.* I, 17. etc.

of the Buddha. Shake off the armies of Māra, the King of Death, as an elephant crushes the reed-thatched shed.”¹ In another *Sutta* of the same *Nikāya* (I, 228), Buddha says that Sakka, the ruler of the gods, was formerly reborn as a human being and he carried out seven rules of conduct due to which he obtained sovereignty over the gods in the heaven of the Thirty-three. These seven rules of conduct, it may be observed, are nothing but the Buddhist teaching of piety and liberality to be fulfilled by a right-minded Buddhist layman, to wit (a) Sakka wished that as long as he lived he would maintain his parents, (b) he would revere the head of family, (c) he would not utter harsh words, (d) he would not slander, (e) he would take delight in generosity, renunciation, and be amenable to petitions and to sharing gifts with others, (f) he would speak the truth, (g) he would be without anger, or, if angry, would be able to suppress his wrath quickly. The *Sutta* says that by carrying out these seven rules of conduct he became the ruler of the gods in the *Tāvātimsa* heaven.² So the *Dhammapada* (*Appamāda-vagga*) teaches that by diligence and efforts Maghavā (Sakka) attained to the sovereignty of the gods, while speaking of wakefulness as the path to immortality as opposed to lethargy, lapse or indolence, which is the path to death.³

In *Samyutta* (I, 139) a Brahmin's son, Brahmadeva, was ordained into the Buddhist Saṅgha and was begging his alms as usual in course of which he came to the door of his mother. Now the Brāhmanī was in the habitual practice of making oblations to Brahmā. While Brahmadeva stood in front of her door seeking alms, Brahmā Sahampati is made to appear before her and standing in the air Sahampati exhorted her offerings to Brahmadeva, the Buddhist monk who had in a very short

1. The verse is quoted in the *Milinda—Pañha*, p. 245.

2. For an elaborate treatment of the subject see *Kutāvaka-Jātaka* (No 31, I, 198-206) and *Dhammapada Commentary*, I 263-281.

3. *Appamādena Maghavā devānām seṭṭhataṃ gato, appamādo pasamsati, pamādo garahito sadā.*

time attained Arhatship ; for an Arhat is regarded as higher in knowledge and attainment than Brahmā himself. Myriads of devas or *devatās* (gods or deities)¹ are depicted in the *Samyutta-Nikāya* and² the *Khuddaka-Nikāya*³ to have come to the Buddha in order to listen to the doctrine of the Master at dead of night in the Jeta grove where the Exalted One used to live, illuminating the entire world with the effulgence of their glory.⁴ If this conception is taken to be a later idea, still it is not later than the Pāli Canon itself ; because in the canonical literature we find that several *Suttas* are introduced as follows ;—
 “This I have heard. Once the Buddha was sojourning in Anāthapiṇḍika’s park at Jetavana in Sāvatti. Then a certain deity, when the night was far spent, shedding lustre from his body and illuminating the entire Jetavana, came to the presence of the Exalted One and saluting him stood at one side, and thus standing he addressed the Exalted One in verse”. In the *Maṅgala-Sutta* (Sn. II and Kh. p. 3) it has been stated that many gods and men (*bahū devā manussā ca*) could not determine the true “maṅgala”, best blessings or highest good (*uttama maṅgalam*) and approached the Buddha as to what were the best “maṅgala” and the Buddha narrates in twelve verses the whole duties of a right-minded householder in the conscious fulfilment of all the duties and obligations to be carried out towards parents, wife and children, friends and relatives, as well as Brahmins and recluses, teachers and pupils, etc. (See also *Siṃgālovāda-sutta* in the *Dīgha-Nikāya* III, 27, which is characterised

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1. *Devatā*, literally a deity or divine spirit as a comprehensive term may be either *deva*, *devaputta*, *devadhītā* or simply *devatā*.
 2. *Samyutta-Nikāya* I, (*Devatā-Samyutta*, *Devaputta-Samyutta*, *Yakkha-samyutta*, *Brahma-Samyutta*, *Sakka-Samyutta*, etc.).
 3. *Khuddaka-Pāṭha*, Nos. 3 and 9 (*Maṅgala* and *Karaniyametta-Suttas*).
 4. According to Buddhaghosa, *devas* generally used to visit the Buddha and his disciples just before dawn.

as the 'Gihi-vinaya' or the Vinaya of householders ; (cf. *Samyutta* I, 32 ; and Asoka's *Dhamma* in R. E. XIII).

In the *Dhānañjani-Sutta* of the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (II, 97) seven grades of gods are enumerated, beginning with the Four Great Kings, next the Thirty-three gods, next in order the *Yāma* gods, then the *Tusita* gods, next the *Nimmā-narati* gods ; then come the *Paranimmita-vasavatti* gods, and lastly, the gods in the Brahma heaven.¹ The Brahmin *Dhānañjani* was asked on his death-bed by the Venerable *Sāriputta* as to whether the Brahmin intended to be reborn in hell or as an animal or as a ghost or as a human being. In reply the Brahmin said that he wished to be reborn in the heaven of Brahmā, which evidently seems to have been the highest heaven where a layman could be reborn for his meritorious deeds on earth. In the *Mahāparinibbāna-Sutta* (*Digha*, II, 90, Ch. III, 21-23) we find that eight '*parisās*' (Skt. *pariṣad*), assemblages or sessions of gods, are mentioned, namely, the sessions of Khatiyas, Brāhmaṇas, householders, lay devotees, devas attending the *Cātummahārājikas* (i. e., guardian gods of the Four Great Kings), of *Tāvātimsa* gods, of *Māra*² and *Brahmā*. In the *Anuruddha-Sutta* of the *Majjhima* (III, 127) four states of rebirth are enumerated, namely the rebirth among the *Pavittābhā* gods (gods of lesser brilliancy, *Appamāṇābhā*, gods (of boundless brilliancy), and *Parisuddhābhā* gods (of pure brilliancy) *saṅkiliṭṭhābhā* gods (of tarnished brilliancy). When those deities assemble together, they differ in hue, but not in brilliancy just as there is difference in flame but not in brilliancy, among a number of oil-lamps brought into a house. But when all those oil-lamps are brought outside the house, they manifestly differ in flame and brilliancy, so when these gods depart from their assembly, there is manifestly a difference in hue and brilliancy.

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- 1, These are the gods of the current polytheism. For a list of popular gods, see *Digha* II, 253 ; III, 194, etc. See also Dr. Kirfel—*Die Kosmologie der Inder*, Leipzig, 1920.
 2. *Māra*, the Evil One, or the personification of Evil (Satan) is sometimes compared to Kāmadeva, the Indian Cupid, as Māra is also represented as a Deva-putta, or god's son.

They have no thought of their lot as to whether it will continue for ever or it will be changed some time hereafter ; their brilliancy is determined by their state of re-birth. The question is raised as to why, though reborn into a single class of gods, some of these deities are of tarnished brilliancy and some are of pure brilliancy. Anuruddha replies that just as burning oil-lamp which has got pure oil and a foul wick and their combined foulness make the lamp burn dimly, and an oil-lamp which has pure oil and a pure wick burns clearly, the case is similar with these deities though they are reborn in the same class of gods.

The *Makhādeva-Sutta* in the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (II, 83) which forms the *Nikāya* version of the *Jātaka* story of *Makhādeva* and *Nimi*, contains the episode of *Makhādeva*, the King of Mithilā, as to how he, after the fulfilment of a religious life, attained to the Brahma heaven (Brahma-parāyaṇo). The *Jātaka*, it may be mentioned here, contains two separate stories—one after the name of *Makhādeva* (No. 9) and the other after *Nimi* (No. 541). *Makhādeva*, *Mahājanaka* and *Nimi* were all kings of Mithilā who renounced the world for the fulfilment of religious vows.¹ They are described as the most religious kings of ancient India (cf. “if the whole of Mithilā is burnt, nothing of mine is burnt”). The story is also to be found in the Commentary on the *Cariyāpiṭaka*, by Ācariya Dhammapāla (pp. 51-53, P. T. S.) who lived in Kāñcipura (modern Conjeeveram) in the fifth century A. D. and was the immediate successor to the celebrated exegetist Buddhaghosa.² Both the *Sutta* and *Jātaka* versions tell us that all the kings in the line of *Makhādeva* attained to the Brahma heaven by developing and cultivating the four *Brahma-vihāras* ; and so in an unbroken succession not only *Makhādeva*, his sons and grandsons, but also the later descendants numbering 84,000 kings in all, attained to the Brahma world. The last of the three kings to do so was *Nimi*, the virtuous king of *Mithilā*, who governed his kingdom righteously and dealt com-

1. See *Mahājanaka-Jātaka*, VI, 539.

2. The Story of *Makhādeva* is inscribed in Stūpa of Bhārhut, see Cunningham—*The Stūpa of Bharhut*, pl. XLVIII.

passionately with Brahmins and householders in towns and villages.

Now at a certain time the Thirty-three gods assembled together in the *Tāvātimsa* heaven to discuss the righteous acts of Nimi, and Sakka, the Lord of the gods, appeared before Nimi to convey to him the message of the Thirty-three gods that they wished to see *Nimi*, who was a monarch of signal righteousness. Sakka, after obtaining Nimi's consent, sent his charioteer, *Mātali*, down to earth to take *Nimi* to the gods of the Thirty-three heaven. *Mātali* in accordance with the wishes of Nimi took him in his chariot both by the routes travelled by evil-doers and doers of good deeds to reap the fruits of their acts, good and bad, and when he was shown round both the routes, he was again carried back to *Mithilā* to rule righteously. But King Nimi had a son named Janaka, who broke that high tradition, and became the last of the line. The Buddha concludes that *Sutta* by saying that he himself was King *Makhādeva* in his previous birth and founded that noble tradition which future generations continued. But that high tradition did not conduce to "aversion, absence of passion, calm, peace, tranquillity, knowledge, enlightenment, *Nirvāṇa*", —but only to a future birth in the Brahma heaven. According to Buddhism, the Brahma heaven can be reached by cultivating *Iddhi* (magic faculty)¹. The belief in *Iddhi* or miraculous power is pre-Buddhistic and common to all schools of Indian thought, whether pre-Buddhistic or post-Buddhistic. In the Buddhist system, practice of miraculous powers for the purpose of material gain by the disciples is forbidden by the Buddha, but the higher and more fruitful miracle, so to say, is advocated by the mental training (*sīla*) which culminates in *Arahatship*. It has been said in the *Suttas* that by developing '*Iddhi*' one can become many, again become one, from being visible he becomes invisible, he penetrates through solid ground, he can travel cross-legged in the sky like the birds on the wing, he touches even the Moon and Sun and reaches

1. See *Kevaḍḍha-Sutta* in the *Dīgha* I, 11 ; *Sāmaññaphala-Sutta*, *ibid* ; I, 2.

up to the Brahma heaven, where Brahmā with his retinue is ruling over other gods in that heaven.

The ideas of heaven and hell (*sagganiraya*)¹ along with the doctrine of metempsychosis or rebirth, the reward and punishment following upon man's actions, good or bad, (*sukaṭadukkaṭānam kammānam phalaṃ vipāka*) are found existing in India long before the time of the advent of the Buddha and as Buddhism is said to have accepted the current beliefs of the time with some modifications, the idea of Yama, the king of death (*Maccurājā*) has also been accepted with similar modifications. In the Vedas, Yama is the lord of the fathers, i. e. dead ancestors (*pitṛs*). In the *Ṛgveda* (I, 35, 6 ; X, 123, 6) out of the three heavens one belongs to Yama and two to Savitar. In the *Ṛgveda* Yama though associated with the dead spirits, never, assumes the terrible role of the king of death as in Buddhism. Instead Rudra is the king of death in the *Ṛgveda* (X, 14, 3-7).

The conception of Yama's role as the fearful god of death seems to have been derived from the popular aspect of the word Yama from the root *Yam* (to restrain). This aspect of mythology may be said to have been preserved in the *Ṛgveda* (X. 10), though in a slightly different form. In the *Mahābhārata* (II, 8, 2-4), there is the description of the *Sabhā* of Yama. In Buddhism he is not only the lord of the departed forefathers, but also the ruler of the ghosts (*petas*) and he is in charge of the tortures or punishments to be meted out to the evil-doers in thought, word and deed. In the *Devadūta-Sutta* of the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (III, 130), Yama's five warning messengers to earth are enumerated.² Yama first sends the man charged with evil-doing to the first

1. See *Majjhima Suttas*, Nos 129, 135 ff, where the torments of hell are described in their minutest detail and which have their counterparts in the description of hells given in the Hindu *Purāṇas*.

2. In the *Aṅguttara* III, 35, the three messengers of gods about whom Yama asks the evil-doer in hell are described as old age, disease and death, and King Yama then hands the evil-doer to the guardians of hell for punishment.

messenger and successively to the fifth one ; he questions the man whether he has seen these messengers and on the man's answer in the affirmative, Yama delivers judgement : "O man, your misdeeds were not committed by your parents, nor by your brothers and sisters, nor by your friends and relations, nor by recluses and Brahmins, nor by the gods ; they were committed by none but yourself. Therefore it is you who will reap the fruits thereof," and according to this judgment, the man is thrown into the great purgatory by the wardens of hell. The description of hell and the severities of punishment therein are then described in detail.¹ At the end the *Sutta* states that this thought came to the mind of Yama : should he be able to be reborn as a human being under the doctrine and discipline promulgated by the *Tathāgata*, he might thereby get rid of his work of sentencing people to diverse tortures in hell for their various sorts of misdeeds on earth. It has thus been made clear that to become an *Arhat* one has to be born in the human world, as other forms of rebirth beginning from the existence of gods in the highest Brahma heaven down to the tiniest insects are subject to repeated births until and unless *Arahatship* is attained, in which there will be an end of re-births and consequently the end of all pain connected with the trammels of re-births. In the First Sermon, the sixty *Arahats* existent then on earth were exhorted by the Buddha, the supreme *Arhat*, to go forth for the gain of the many, for the welfare of the many, out of compassion for the many, and for the good and the benefit of gods and men (*hitāya sukhāya devamanussānam*). It is evident that the gods or spirits or "all classes of intelligent beings, visible or invisible"² are open to instructions by the *Arahats*, which goes to prove that for the gods or spirits it is essential to be born as men, as men alone can rise to the height of enlightenment or *Nirvāṇa* by individual efforts.

1. See also *Aṅguttara*, I, 138, where death's messengers and the tortures of hell are enumerated.

2. Translated as such by Jennings ;

The Vedantic Buddhism of the Buddha, introduction.

It must, however, be said in this context that the Buddhist universe is divided into twenty-six worlds (*lokas* or *avacaras*). Out of these the principal ones are, first the *Kāmaloka*, the world of sensual pleasure, which includes the world of men, some gods of the lower heavens, and some beings in the three states of punishment, to wit, (a) hells of which the lowest is *avīci* (waveless), (b) the world of the *petas*, ghosts or spirits, (c) the world of men, and (d) the lower heavens such as the *cātummahārājika* and *tāvātimsa* gods governed by Sakka or Indra, the Yāma gods, the *Nimmāṇarati* gods and the *Paranimmita-vasavatti* gods. Secondly, *Rūpaloka*, the world of form, in which the senses of taste, smell and touch cannot remain. It includes four abodes (*āvās*), namely, (a) the world of Brahmā, (b) the spheres of the *Ābhassara*, (c) *Subhakiṇṇa* and (d) *Asaññisatta* gods. Thirdly, *Anūpaloka*, the realm of formlessness, in which the beings living there consist of the sense of mind only (*manomaya*). It includes four abodes which are the stages of the four *Attainments* (*Samāpattis*), that is (a) the realm of infinite space (b) of infinite consciousness, (c) of nothingness, (d) of neither consciousness nor un-consciousness.¹ It reaches to the limit of existence (*Bhavāgra*) through which a being may be reborn. Fourthly, *Lokuttara*, the supra-mundane world which is the abode only of the Buddhas who are fully Enlightened Ones ; all other beings in the above forms of existences are liable to rebirth like ordinary human beings, as they have not attained final release or *Nirvāṇa* by coming to a realisation of the Truth, and therefore are liable to rebirth in their appropriate abodes (*āvāsas*). The practice of the four *Brahma-vihāras* is said to have led one to the

1. In the *Mahāyāna* these four attainments are spoken of the spiritual progresses of the *Bodhisattva* until he attains to the fourth stage, which is designated as *Nirvāṇa* stage. But there is a controversy between the *Mādhyamika* and the *Yogācāra* as to whether *Nirvāṇa* is complete nothingness (*Śūnya*) or a state of existence (*ālaya-vijñāna*) known as the *Śūnyavāda* and *Vijñānavāda* schools.—See B. Bhaṭṭāchāryya—*Indian Buddhist Iconography*, Oxford, 1924, Intro.

attainment of the *Brahma-loka* and the practice of the *Samāpattis* or Attainments leads one to be reborn in the Formless World as it does not lead to the breaking up of the Fetters (*Samyojanāni*), ten of which are generally found to be enumerated in early Buddhist texts. Of these ten fetters, those who have cut off the first three fetters of heretical belief in a permanent self (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*), doubt (*vicikicchā*) and belief in mere vows and rites (*silabbataparāmāsa*), are those who have entered the Stream (*Sotāpatti*). They have entered the first stage of sanctification and are not liable to unhappy existence. Those who have cut off the above three fetters as well as the bonds of passion, hatred and delusion, are those who are Once-Returners (*Sakadāgāmī*). They will return once to this world before they attain the final release. Those who have cut off the five lower fetters (the above three together with malice and lust) arise in a higher state of existence in apparitional births (these beings are called *Sattā opapātikā*) and do not return to this world, attaining *Nirvāṇa* there ; they are those who are Never-Returners (*Anāgāmī*). Those who have destroyed the *Āsavas*, cankers (lust, desire for existence, false views and ignorance), who have laid aside the burden and completed their task of what was to be done, who have gained their end, are those who are completely liberated with full knowledge (*Arhat*).¹ Their destiny cannot be determined (see *Majhi*, I, 141) and their course cannot be pointed out just as the track of birds cannot be pointed out in the sky (*ākāse va sakuntānaṃ paduṃ tassa duranvayaṃ*).² Hence in the *Dhammapada* it is said : “He whose mental faculties have attained tranquillity, who is well-trained, like a

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1. This scholastic classification of the four stages of spiritual progress on the path of the attainment of Truth seems to be a later development, based on the Noble Eightfold Path, as the Noble Eightfold Path itself has been arranged scholastically as *sīla* (morality), *samādhi* (concentration) and *paññā* (insight).
 2. See *Dhammapada*, *Arahantavaggo*.

horse by the charioteer, who has cast aside pride and is without taints – such a one even the gods envy” (*devāpi nam pihayanti tādino*).¹ In the *Alagaddūpama-Sutta* of the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (I, 139), better known as the parable of the snake, the Buddha is represented as saying that all the gods, including Indra, Brahmā, Prajāpati are not able to track out the monk who has attained final release. For he who is released is “deep, profound, immeasurable, hard to fathom, like the great ocean”.²

The Buddha’s own attitude towards the hierarchy of Hindu gods headed by Brahmā or Mahābrahmā is best shown in the *Tevijja-Suttanta* in the *Digha-Nikāya* (I, 13), where it is demonstrated that it is impossible for the *Tevijja* Brahmins to have union in spirit with Brahmā, whom they have never seen, by means of their knowledge of the three *Vedas*. Instead the *Sutta* prescribes the cultivation of the mental training for the development of the four kinds of mental exercise which is characterised as the ‘*Brahma-Vihāra*’ or the ‘sublime state’. Consequently, prayer to the gods by invoking them to be merciful and kind towards the devotee for an offer of a boon or otherwise by sacrificing animals or *Soma-juice* for the pleasure of the gods, is similarly of no use, since a man can attain his salvation only by his own efforts.

In the First Sermon, the *Dhammacakka-pavattana Sutta*, there is a comprehensive method of Buddhist salvation. The scheme consists of three parts, physical discipline, mental discipline and perfection in knowledge. This *Sutta* mentions that perfection in knowledge is attained by the realisation of the four noble truths. In short, this *Sutta* mentions briefly the bare fundamental principles of Buddhism, but the explanation of *Samnā-diṭṭhi* or *Nirvāṇa* is to be found in the *Mūlapariyāya Sutta*, the opening discourse in the *Majjhima-Nikāya*, where we get a clear philosophical explanation of *Nibbāna*. This *Sutta*, moreover, is characteristic of the entire doctrine of the Buddha (*sabbadhamma mūlapariyāya*), i. e. the most fundamental of all. It was preached at *Subhagavana*

1. *Dhammapada*, VIII, 29.

2. See *Majjhima*, I, 486.

in *Ukkatṭhā*, and in it the Buddha explains the various contemporary systems of philosophy and the differences between these and his own system. It also deals with the theory of the soul and *Nibbāna*. It establishes that worldly objects have no real permanent substance. It enumerates the objects in a gradual order thus : the four great elements, the several forms of existences from *Prajāpati*, *Brahmā*, *Ābhassara*, *Subhakiṇṇa*, *Vehapphala* deities, *Abhibhū*, infinity of space, infinite consciousness,¹ all things whatsoever seen, heard, thought or known ; all characteristics of identity, difference, entirety, and lastly, *Nirvāṇa* as the highest state of bliss. Buddhaghosa explains the *Sutta* as an interpretation of the *Anattā* doctrine. But the object of the *Sutta*, as it appears to us, is that truth or real *Nibbāna* is beyond all concepts and as such, it can only be distinguished as that which is not any one of the worldly objects known to us ((*Neti-Neti* : not this, not that).² Furthermore, the preamble to the *Mūlapariyāya-Jātaka* (II, 245) forms a connecting link with this *Sutta*. While the philosophical aspect of the Buddha's teaching is the *Sutta*, the popular aspect is to be found in the *Jātaka*. The moral of the *Jātaka* forms a sharp contrast with the teaching in the *Mahābhārata* (*Śāntiparvan* XII) which says, “*Kālaḥ sthāpayate sarvam, Kālaḥ pacati vai tathā*”. The first line of the *Jātaka-gāthā*, too, agrees with the Epic moral, whilst the second line inculcates the Buddhist teaching as a contrast, namely, “Time, they say, consumes all, even itself, but he who is really wise (i. e. *Arhat*) consumes even time, the all-consumer.” the story

1. There are seven grades of gods mentioned in *Ang.* I, 227 ff. IV, 118-119 : V, 59, *Dīgha* I, 115 ; II, 207 ff., 250 ; III, 259 ; *Majjh.* II, 194 ; *Samy.* V, 410, 423, *Buddhavaṃsa*, p. 1, *Kathāv.* p. 609 ; *Vinaya* I, 12, III, 15. There are other passages where only six classes of gods omitting the *Brahma-kāyikā-devas* are mentioned ; see Kirfel : *Die Kosmographie der Inder*, Leipzig, 1920.
2. Cf. *Bh. Up.*, III, 9. 26 ; IV, 2. 4, 22 :—“*Sa eṣa neti neti ātmā agṛhyo na hi gṛhyate*”.—This *Atman* can only be described by “no no !” It is incomprehensible, for it cannot be comprehended.’

narrates that once the Bodhisatta (the Buddha in one of his previous births) was a renowned Brahmin teacher and he used to teach five hundred Brahmin disciples, all of whom were well versed in the three Vedas. After learning a while the pupils became very proud and self-conceited thinking that they had known what the teacher himself knew, and thus thinking they began to laugh at the teacher when an opportunity for such an occasion arose. One day the teacher was sitting under the shade of a jujube tree. The pupils assembled round him and began to ridicule the teacher by scratching the bark of the jujube tree saying that the lesson imparted by the teacher was without any substance like the jujube tree. The teacher realising that he was the object of their laughter put them to test asking a question and they were given seven days' time to answer the question. The question was :—'Time, they say, consumes all, even itself, but who can consume Time ?'

The students were bewildered at this question and they could find neither the beginning nor the end of that question in the three Vedas. After the expiry of seven days they approached the teacher, confessed their ignorance and asked his forgiveness. The teacher pardoned them by saying that there are people on this earth who have their heads stuck on their necks, but wisdom or intellect is very rarely to be found in them. He explained the meaning of the question to them that people generally think in three terms of time—past, present and future, but he who is really wise i. e., 'who has attained nirvāṇa, consumes even time, the all-consumer. In other words, he becomes immortal in this mortal world.

The *Tevijja-Sutta* is the thirteenth *Sutta* in the *Dīgha Nikāya* preached to the Brahmins *Vāseṭṭha* and *Bhāradvāja*, two Brahmin disciples of the Vedic school, who visited the Buddha at Manasākaṭṭa in Kosala, disputing between themselves as to the straight path leading to the union with Brahmā (*Brahma-sahavyatā*), the creator god. They put their dispute to the Buddha for right solution. *Vāseṭṭha* says that just as near a village or a town there are various paths, but they all meet together in the village or the town, in the same way there are various paths for leading one

to the Brahma world taught by various schools such as the *Addhariyas* (= *Adhvaryū*), the *Taittiriya*, the *Chandāvā* (= *Chāndogya*), the *Chandokā*, and the *Bavhāricā* (= *Bahvṛca*) Brāhmaṇas. The names evidently refer to the *Ṛg*, *Sāman* and *Yajurveda* schools, in connection with the discourse on the knowledge of the three Vedas. In Buddhist polemics it is always found that the Buddha takes the phraseology of his interlocutors and applies in it a deeper and higher meaning. Such is the word '*Tevijja*', which in Brahmanical phraseology means one who is well-versed in the three Vedas (*trivedajña* in Sanskrit), but in Buddhist interpretation the term means one who has acquired the threefold knowledge (*trividyā* or *trayīvidyā* in Sanskrit), in the sense of *Arahatship* ; the threefold lore being the knowledge of former births, of the rise and fall of beings and of the destruction of the *Āsavas* or defilements. The last one is virtually identical with the knowledge of an *Arhat* who is often called a *Khīnāsava*, meaning thereby one in whom the *āsavas* are extinct.

The text further names ten *ṛshis* of old who were the makers, the chanters and the repeaters of the Vedic hymns whose verses and *mantras* were chanted over and repeated exactly intoning as they were recited by the Brahmins of the Buddha's day ; even such Brāhmaṇas have not seen Brahmā face to face.¹ There are several schools of Brāhmaṇas who taught the path leading to the *Brahmaloka*, but they are blind to the fact that they teach a path leading to the union with Brahmā whom they have never seen. They can neither show the path leading to the Moon and the Sun which they see, nor to speak of Brahmā whom neither they, nor their teacher, nor their teachers' teacher have seen. The paths taught by them for union with Brahmā are just like a string of blind men who can see neither in the beginning, nor in the middle, nor in the end. They know neither what Brahmā is, nor where Brahmā is. Their theory for union with Brahmā is just like a man who loves the most beautiful maiden

1. See the chapter on caste where the names of these Brāhmaṇas are given for whom the Buddha entertained high regard.

in the the city, but he can say nothing whenever he is asked as to who that fair one is, or where does she reside, whether she is tall or short, dark or fair, or to what clan she belongs. It is like building a staircase at the cross-roads, but the builder does not know in what direction and on what grounds the staircase will be built, whether in the middle, in the end, or to the north, south, east or west directions. Further, it is just like one who wishes to go to the other shore after crossing the river by calling the other shore to him. The Buddha illustrates it by a simile that just as a man, when the river *Aciravatī* is full to the brim and flooded, comes on business to go to the other side of the river, but he invokes, without strong efforts,¹ the further bank, "Come, hither, O further bank, come over to this side", similarly the *Brāhmaṇas* versed in the three Vedas, omitting the practice of those qualities which really make a man a *Brāhmaṇa*, adopted the practice of what makes a man non-*Brāhmaṇa*, and invoke by prayer to *Indra*, *Soma*, *Varuṇa*, *Īśāna*, *Prajāpati*, *Mahiddhi*, *Brahmā* and *Yama*,² etc.

In the *Subha-Sutta* of the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (II, 99) the young Brahmin Subha, son of the Brahmin Todeyya, specifies five qualities of the Brahmins which are considered to be enough for the acquisition of merit and achievement of what is right, namely, the Brahmins first rank truth, next austerities, then charity, followed by study (of the Vedas) and lastly, by munificence. These are the Brahmins' five, but the Buddha says that they do nothing but implement the heart to free it from wrath and malice. He then enumerates the five hindrances (*pañca-nīvaraṇa*) by which the Brahmins like the great Brahmin Pokkharasāti of the

1. Cf. the opening verse of the *Appamāda-vagga* in the *Dhammapada* :

*Appamādo amatapadam, pamādo maccuno padam,
appamattā na miyanti, ye pamattā yathā matā.*

Cf. also the opening sloka of the *Sanatsujātiya gītā*, translated by K. T. Telang in *SBE*, VIII, p. 267.

1. All of them are Vedic gods, cf. *Dialogues*, I, 310 ; *Dīgha*, III, no. 32.

Upamañña sept (gotta), the lord of Subhagavana in *Ukkatthā*, are enwrapped and enshrouded from realising the true knowledge which transcends all human bounds. The Buddha illustrates the point by saying that just as a man who is blind from his birth cannot see black or white, red or yellow, blue or pink things, level or high ground, the stars, the moon and the sun, and affirms that these things do not exist in reality, since he had no knowledge or vision of them, similar is the case with the Brahmins regarding the true knowledge which transcends human bounds. The dialogue then proceeds to speak of the way to union with Brahmā. It has been elucidated to Subha by saying that as a man born and brought up in Naḷakāra-gāma is well acquainted with the full knowledge of all roads leading to that village, similarly the *Tathāgata* is not perplexed or at a loss as to the enquiry concerning union with Brahmā or the road leading to that way : for verily he knows Brahmā or the path trodden by those who are re-born in the Brahma world. Here again the *Sutta* enumerates the four *Brahma-Vihāras* by the simile that just as a mighty conch-blower can easily make his blast heard in every direction, north, south, east or west, in exactly the same way the monk who abides in unbounded love, pity, compassion and poise, pervading the whole length and breadth of the world, above, below, around, everywhere, with infinite love, beyond measure and radiant thoughts, untinged by hatred or malice, transcends the finite and neither abides therein nor halts there. This is the real way to union with Brahmā.

The word *Brahma* in the compound *Brahma-Vihāra* seems to have been derived from the existing Brahminical literature but definitely with a different meaning in the Buddhist phraseology and the *Brahma-Vihāra* practices are not a Brahminical teaching.¹

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1. The *Brahma-Vihāra* practice is also found in the *Yoga-Sūtras* (I, 33) and with the Jainas, though not before Umāsvāti of the Digambara sect, who lived about 135-219 A. D. It is more probable that the author of the *Yoga-sūtras* as well as Umāsvāti have borrowed it from the

The word literally means “dwelling with Brahma” or the “Brahma’s mode of behaviour” which may be equivalent to saying the chief or the highest behaviour, “*Setṭha-vihāra*” as Buddhaghosa would interpret it. In its secondary sense the compound may be translated as the highest, supreme or tranquil state or as the ‘Brahman state.’ In the *Dīgha-Nikāya* II, 54, and in *Vinaya* II, 290, ‘*brahma*’ has been used where severe punishment is to be meted out to the disciple Channa, which is called the ‘*Brahma-daṇḍa*’ or ‘the highest penalty’ So also the highest observance of *Uposatha* is termed the ‘*Brahmūposatha*’ which is again equivalent to say ‘*Ariyūposatha*’ in the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya* I, 207. *Brahmūposatha* or *Ariyūposatha*, it may be noted, is the highest religious observance with meditation on the Buddha (*Buddhānussati*) and the practice of the *Uposatha* abstinence as recommended by the Buddha to Visākhā, the wealthy lay-sister of Vesālī. Similarly ‘*Brahma-cariya*’ is ‘*setṭha-cariya*’ or the highest conduct of morality and celibacy which an ardent aspirant is to cultivate not only in embarking upon his religious life, but also in every form of life. The best royal gift given with full powers over the land granted by the king is called “*rājadeyyam brahmadeyyam*” in several passages of the *Pāli Suttas*, such as *Dīgha* I, 87 ; III, 27. The *Brahmadeyyam* is *setṭha-deyyam* as it is used here (see D. A. I., 246 ; cf. *Dialogues of the Buddha*, I, 108). As a Buddhistic term used in a sense different from the Brahmanic, it means the the supreme good (except in controversy with Brahmins) or a state like that of *Brahmā* or simply Brahman state.¹ It is obvious that the word *Brahma* as the first part of a compound has seldom been used in Pāli as referring to the Brahmanas,² but to

Buddhists rather than that the Buddhists have borrowed it from them. —See *Viśvabhāratī Quarterly*, Vol. II, part. I, New Series, 1936 ; pp. 53-56 ; cf. E. J. Thomas : *The History of Buddhist Thought*, 1933, pp. 50, 81.

1. See P. T. S. Dict., sub voce.
2. The ultimate reality (*Brahman*) has been characterised in the *Upaniṣads* as being (*sat*), thought (*cit*) and joy (*ānanda*) — *sacchidānanda*.

all intents and purposes has the sense of the most sublime or excellent. In other words, the original Brahminical idea of the divine is not totally discarded in Buddhism, but has been accepted in a modified form. This will be evident by comparing and contrasting the Pali word '*Brahma*' with the Sanskrit where it means the highest or the most sublime¹ in its doctrinal significance. Moreover, the god *Brahmā* is well-known to the Buddhist writers, but he is made subordinate to the Buddha, who is the perfectly enlightened one not subject to the recurrent cycles of existence, whilst *Brahmā* is certainly subject to rebirths and is liable to undergo repeated births according to the law of *Karma*. According to Mrs. Rhys Davids, the lively presentation of a *Brahmā*, a personal god who is not the be-all and end-all of life, is a later thought that arose when the *Piṭakas* were compiled some 300 years after the Buddha's death. The Brahmin teachers of the *Upaniṣads* had come to believe in God as identical with 'self', 'soul', 'spirit of man' or '*Ātman*' (Pāli *attā*). This was a fundamental change from the Vedic way which sought personal deity everywhere in rites and soma juice. In that teaching Buddhism resembles the ancient Vedism, for in the Pāli *Suttas*, she says, we find a personal deity, not the impersonal '*Brahman*' of the Vedāntic type, but *Brahmā*, a masculine personage, the one creator and disposer of things.²

But the immanent *Brahman* (neuter) is there in the *Suttas* though surviving in such compounds as *Brahma-bhūta*, *brahma-vihāra*, *brahma-cakka*, *brahma-cariya*, etc. The Pāli word *Brahma-cakka*, is equivalent to *dhamma-cakka* (cf. "*Brahma-cakkam pavattetum*" in several *Suttas*), meaning thereby the turning of the Wheel of Law. Similarly, '*Brahma-bhūta*' means 'state or existence of *Brahma*'. So also '*Brahma-bhāva*' means 'the state of *Brahman*' or 'becoming *Brahman*'³, as it has been defined in

1. Cf. the "*Brāhma-muhurta*" in Sanskrit which is equal to the chief or the highest part of the day at dawn.
2. See *Indian Historical Quarterly*, X, 1934, p. 278.
3. *Brahma-bhūta* has been equated with the *Tathāgata* in the *Dīgha* III, 34 ; *Majjh.* I, 111 ; *Ang.* V, 226, 256 ;

the *Muṇḍaka-Upaniṣad* II, 2, 9 : “*Sa yo ha vai tat paramam Brahma veda Brahmaiva bhavati*” (he who understands the highest *Brahman* becomes *Brahma*). As a matter of fact, the Pali scriptures are in complete accord with the *Brahma*’s immanence, namely that what is there called ‘Ātman, ‘Self’ or ‘Soul’, bears the dual meaning of Spirit and Holy Spirit, so to say, the One, the Ideal Self, who is to be sought after by the actual Self as being the goal of life ¹

In the *Ariyapariyesana-Sutta* of the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (I. 26), the *ariyapariyesanā*, search after noble truth, has been equated with *Ātma-eṣanā*, search after Self. The *Sutta* furnishes us with one of the earliest examples of the early days of Buddhahood and as such it forms the historical basis of the later legendary accounts of the life of the Buddha in the *Jātakas* and the *Avadānas*. The idea can traced in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad* (IV. 4. 22-25) where *eṣanā*, that is, *mātr-eṣanā*, *pitṛ-eṣanā*, *vitta-eṣanā*, *putra-eṣanā*, etc. is termed in the *Sutta* “*Anariya-pariyeṣanā*” and the search after Self “*Ariya-pariyesanā*.” In the *Upaniṣad* *Ātma eṣanā* is termed what is called *Ariyapariyesanā* in this *Sutta*. In the *Sutta* preached at Sāvattthi in the hermitage of the *Brahmin Rammaka*, the Buddha tells of the two quests in the world—the ignoble quest and the noble quest. By ignoble quest the text means seeking worldly objects and pleasures. The characteristics of worldly objects are *Jāti*, *Jarā*, *vyādhī*, *maranam*, *soka*, *saṁkilesa*, i. e. birth, decay, death, sorrow and affliction, etc. The text uses

Sn. 561, etc. Similarly *Brahma-cakka* *Dhamma-cakka*, *Brahma-cārī* *Dhamma-cārī*, *Brahma-yāna* *Dhamma-yāna*. Cf. “He who sees me sees the Dhamma” in the *Itivuttaka*, p. 91 ; *Samy.* III, 120, etc.

According to *Dīgha* III, 84, the *Tathagata* is *dhamma-kāya brahma-kāya*, *dhamma-bhūta brahma-bhūta*, etc. Cf. *Dhammapada*, *Bhāvitattānam*, etc. in *Sahassavagga*. Cf. also ‘*Brahmappatta*’ in *Anguttara* II, 184.

1. In the *Kandaraka-Sutta* of the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (I. 349 l.), the person who torments neither himself nor others nor both is said to have lived with a Self become *Brahma* (*brahma-bhūtena attanā viharati*), see also *Ang.* II, 206.

each of the terms metaphorically to denote sons and wife, male and female servants, cattle, gold and silver, etc. Those who become engrossed in these objects are said to be seeking improper objects. As Buddha in later days preached :¹

Tam puttāpasusamattam byāsattamanasam naram,

Suttam gāmaṃ mahogho va Maccu ādāya gacchati,

—he who is deeply attached to sons and cattle, is carried away by Death just as the great flood sweeps away a sleeping hamlet.

In contrast to the above the seeking of *Nibbāna* is described as the Noble Quest or *Ariyapariyesanā*. The characteristics of *Nibbāna* are given as *ajātam amaram abyādhiṃ amataṃ asokaṃ asaṃkiliṭṭhaṃ nibbānaṃ*, *Nibbāna* which is uncreated, undecaying, free from disease, immortal, sorrowless, and free from all afflictions. As a Bodhisatta the Buddha was engaged in *anariyapariyesanā* in seeking worldly objects. When he realised that he was not right in his aspiration, he renounced worldly life and became a disciple of Ālāra Kālāma and Uddaka Rāmaputta,² and learned from them the attainment of meditations (*samādhi*) called *Akiñcaññāyātana* (infinity of space) and *Nēvassaññā-nā'saññayātana* (neither consciousness nor unconsciousness). He realised that the above two attainments were not sufficient to give complete deliverance from worldly life. So he went to Uruvela, meditated there to realise ultimately the highest truth. There the Bodhisatta going out in quest of what is the ultimate good (*kimkusalanuesi*) realised two things, viz. *Idappacca-vatā paṭiccasamuppādo*, which is the philosophy of his quest, and *Nirvāṇa*, the Experience. The *Sutta* then proceeds to give an account of the Buddha's first reluctance to preach, of Brahmā Sahampati's intervention, of the meeting with Upaka, the Ajivika and the First Sermon preached to the Group of Five (*pañcavaggiya*). Finally, the *Sutta* expounds the pleasures of the senses, the dangers therefrom, and the freedom and confidence which ensue when one has overcome desire.³

1. See *Dhammapadam, Tanhāvagga*, v, 12.

2. See *Vinaya Texts*, I, 89 ; *Majjh.* I, 165 ; *Dham.* Com. I, 85 ; *Jāt.* 89, etc.

3. The *Atthasālinī*, quotes it. See also *Mahāsaccaka-Sutta* in the *Majjhima* I, 237, which speaks of the practice of

In the *Piya*, *Attarakkhita* and *Mallikā*—*Suttas* of the *Saṃyutta-Nikāya* (I, 71 ff.) we have an echo of the pure Brahmanic teaching of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad* (I, 4, 8, etc.) So also in the *Dhammapada* (verse 374), we have a similar echo of the Upaniṣadic teaching “thou art that” (*tat tvam asi*) :

*Yato yato sammāsati khandānaṃ udayabbayaṃ,
labhati pītipāmojjaṃ amataṃ taṃ vijānataṃ.*

—When now and then he (the *bhikkhu*) grasps the rise and fall of all things or constituent elements (*khandhas*), he gets joy and rapture knowing that it is the Deathless That.¹

The constant meditation of the four² ‘*Brahma-vihāras*’, or boundless love and pity towards all beings, may be said to have replaced the “*Tarpaṇa-mantra*” of the Hindus, and it is characterised in the *Metta-Sutta* of the *Sutta-Nipāta* (143-152) as well as in the *Khuddaka-Pāṭha* (No. 9), as follows :

*Mātā yathā niyaṃ puttāṃ
āyusā ekaputtaṃ anurakkhe,
Evam pi sabba bhūtesu
mānasam bhāvaye aparimānaṃ.*

austerities by Gotama during his six years’ search for Enlightenment. It enumerates the four trances (*jhānas*), a *Yoga* practice.

1. Cf. “So he knowing that becomes immortal”—*Ait.* 2, 4, 6 ; “He who knows this, having reached that the wise become immortal”, *Kauśi. Up.* 2, 13 ; “knowing That, the wise become immortal”—*Kena. Up.* 2, 13 ; “That is the immortal veiled by being or the real”—*Bṛhad. Up.* 1, 6, 3, etc.
2. Mrs. Rhys Davids in her “*Sākya or Buddhist Origins*”, pp. 216 f., 229, is of opinion that the four *Brahma-Vihāras*, although going back to an early period of Buddhism, constitute a later production, but the first one, namely *mettā* or friendly feeling towards all beings is a true attribute of Gotama.” Cf. *Dhp. Aṭṭh* II, 112 ; Kern—*Manual*, p. 87. The fourth item of *Brahma-vihāra*, viz. *upekkhā* (indifference) is one of the ten perfections (*pāramis*).

—Just as a mother protects her only child, even at the cost of her own life, so also let a man cultivate boundless love and friendliness towards all creatures, wherever they might be, above below, around, on land or sea.

CHAPTER VI

Conclusion

We have seen in the foregoing pages that regarding the Self, Soul or *Attā*, the implication of its denial is not its non-existence, but its permanency, or impermanency. In other words, Buddhism does not deny the existence of a Self, Soul or Spirit, but holds that it is not permanent, since all component things are impermanent, unstable and liable to change. The *Majjhima-Nikāya* (III, 102) in addition to the *Dīgha-Nikāya* (*Brahmajāla-Sutta*), states that there are some recluses and Brahmins who, busying themselves about ages to come and theorising about the future, have advanced a variety of assertions about futurity, to wit, (1) some assert that the Self is conscious after death, (2) is unconscious, (3) is neither conscious nor unconscious ; or (4) they affirm the break-up of the existent being, and (5) some assert *Nirvāṇa* here and now. Thus they either (a) affirm a Self after death, or (b) the annihilation of the Self after death, or (c) they affirm *Nirvāṇa* in the present existence. So these theories are evidently three though they may be enlarged into five.

There are other recluses and Brahmins who, busying themselves about past ages and theorising about the past, advance a variety of assertions about the past—each one maintaining that his own assertion is true and that all others are false. They severally affirm that (1) the Self and the world are eternal, (2) not eternal, (3) both eternal and not eternal, (4) neither eternal nor not eternal, (5) have a fixed end, (6) are endless, (7) have an end and are endless, (8) have neither end nor are endless, (9) have unimodal consciousness, (10) have multimodal consciousness, (11) have restricted consciousness, (12) have boundless consciousness, (13) are pleasant, (14) are unpleasant, (15) are both pleasant and unpleasant, (16) are neither pleasant nor unpleasant. Each maintains his own assertion as the sole truth, considering that all others are vain and empty.

The *Sutta* then goes on to describe the four *Jhānas*, each one higher than the other, and when the monk thus abides and dwells in the fourth *Jhāna*, he conceives that *Nirvāṇa* is a salutary path to tread and he grasps at nothing about the past or the future or at bondage to the pleasures of sense. The *Tathāgata* knowing that all this is composite and material, and that component things are liable to decay, has won complete deliverance that knows no grasping, and has thought out the true nature of the rise and fall, the perils and outcome of the six organs of sense, and fully realising this he has left behind all composite things and found the perfect way to utter peace.

In our opinion, the various types of theories, though different from one another in their arguments and implications, are based upon the fundamental assumption of the trustworthiness of the testimony of sense and that of the reality of the world with which we are in contact through sense. To comprehend the whole view of reality one must somehow get out of the reach of sense-cognition and obtain a first-hand experience of the ultimate nature of consciousness and its blissfulness. It will be noticed that already before the Buddha's time the practice of meditation was regarded as the true means of the attainment of *Nirvāṇa*. The same opinion is upheld in the early texts of the Buddhists. The difference lies not in time but in degree only. Each opinion, each thought, is good as far as it goes. Its real defect lies in its not being far-reaching in effect. As a matter of fact, in the terminology of the Buddha the expression '*micchādiṭṭhi*' (false views) means beliefs which are mooted from a particular point of view to the exclusion of all others. As such, they, when considered by themselves, are inadequate, insufficient and incomprehensive.

This will be evident from the *Satipaṭṭhāna-Sutta* of the *Majjhima* and the *Dīgha-Nikāyas*,¹ where the Buddha tells the

1. It is the tenth *Sutta* in the *Majjhima* whilst in the *Dīgha* it is the twenty-second *Sutta* with an enlargement of the four noble truths in a commentarial fashion. In the

monks that the one and only path that leads to purify creatures to pass beyond sorrow and lamentation, to shed ills of body and mind, to find the right way and to realise *Nibbāna*, is that of the four-fold “setting up of mindfulness” (*Smṛti* and *Upasthāna* in Sanskrit). In other words, minute observance of what is passing within one’s body and mind and also in things around him.

The teaching in this *Sutta* may be judged as the cornerstone of the whole of the Buddhist system of self-culture. The doctrine here expounded is perhaps the most important after that of the Noble Path in early Buddhism. One of the most important duties of Buddhist monks is ‘mindfulness, (*Sati*). The word, ‘*Sati*’ has been translated by various scholars as mindfulness, attention, thought, memory, insight and contemplation, etc. Etymologically, *Sati* is memory (Sanskrit *Smṛti*) and it connotes the memory, recollection, calling to mind, being aware of, certain specified facts. Of these the most important is the impermanence of all phenomena, bodily or mental. It includes the repeated application of this awareness, to each experience of life, from the ethical point of view. That is how repetition is the characteristic mark of mindfulness (*apilāpana-lakkhanā sati upatthambana-lakkhaṇa cā ti*), says *Nagasena* in the *Milinda-Pañha*, in complete accord with our *Sutta*. The *Sutta* concludes by saying that whoso shall practise these “four applications of mindfulness” for seven years or six years or five years and so on, even down to seven days, in him either one or two kinds of fruition may be looked for : these are ‘The Knowledge’ (*Aññā* one of the epithets of *Arahatship*), in this present life, and the state of him who returns no more (*Anāgāmitā*).¹

Regarding the Buddhist view of purity, the germ (*mātikā*) of Buddhaghosa’s *Visuddhimagga* is to be found in the questions

Majjhima the four noble truths appear in a separate *Sutta* called *Sacca-Vibhaṅga-Sutta* (*M.N.*, III, 137).

1. The practice of mindfulness is divided into four groups, viz. watchfulness of the body, of feelings, mind and phenomena, in all their aspects and bearings.

of Upatissa-Sariputta in the *Rathavinīta-Sutta* of the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (1,27). In fact, not only Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhi-Magga* but even Buddha-datta's *Abhidhamma* manual, the *Abhidhammāvatāra*, is nothing but an elaborate treatment of the topics suggested in the questions of *Upatissa* in the *Rathavinīta-Sutta*.

The *Sutta* opens with the praise of Puṇṇa Mantāni-putta, a highly spiritually advanced monk of Kapilavatthu. Sariputta visits him in the Andhavana and asks him why he lives the higher life. He enquired of Puṇṇa whether he had become a monk for purity in any one of the following :—

1. *Sīlavisuddhi*, physical purity,
2. *Cittavisuddhi*, mental purity,
3. *Diṭṭhivisuddhi*, correct knowledge of Name and Form.
4. *Kaṅkhāvitaraṇa-visuddhi*, realisation of the fact that name and form are caused by *taṇhā* (desire).
5. *Maggāmaggañānadassana-visuddhi*, circumspection.
6. *Paṭipadāñānadassana-visuddhi*, Insight into the origin and decay of things.
7. *Nānadassana-visuddhi*, purity of insight.

Puṇṇa Mantāniputta replies that he embraced the life of a *bhikkhu* (recluse) not merely for the above-mentioned purities, but to attain absolute *Nibbāna* (*Anupādā Parinibbāna*), i. e. *Nibbāna* without any qualities, and on being questioned further as to the nature of *Nibbāna*, he explains that *Nibbāna* is the goal and can only be attained by passing through various successive stages. He then dwells upon the various stages in the path of the attainment of *Nibbāna*. One cannot have *Nibbāna* at once. First purity of life will take one as far as purity of heart and no further, and purity of heart leads one only up to purity of views. In the same way one will have gradually the purity by dispelling doubts, the purity by the fullest insight into paths, right and wrong, the purity into the path to be followed, and the purity which arises from insight. It may be compared to a journey by King Pasenadi of Kosala from Sāvatthi to Sāketa, by means

1. Identified with 'Upatissa-Pasine' mentioned in Aśoka's Bhābru Edict.

of relays of seven carriages. Even if the above seven purities can be regarded as qualities of *Nibbāna*, then *Nibbāna* would become *Sa-Upādāna*. Therefore the seven purities are mere stages of *Nibbāna*, but have nothing to do with the attainment of *Nibbāna*. These seven purities may be compared to the seven stations through which a man may have to pass to reach his destination, but the destination has nothing to do with the previous seven stations.

The word '*Brāhmaṇa*' was originally applied to the specially trained priest who superintended the whole ritual of the sacrifice, but by the end of the Ṛgvedic period it is found that all members of the priestly class are meant by this term. It goes without saying that the sacrifice was the Brahmin priests' source of income and reputation. It was originally held that the gods made the world by means of sacrifice, but by the 7th and 6th centuries B. C. it came to be held that the gods had brought forth the world by means of austerities (*tapas*).¹ So the Brahmin priests vied with one another, as the importance of the sacrifice was dwindling, for sacrificial fees, as a result of which they were divided amongst themselves and followed all sorts of occupations.

Accordingly, I do not agree with Dr. E. J. Thomas when he says,² "The Brahmins as a caste are never treated as philosophers. They were attacked on certain definite points : the nature of caste, the value of sacrifice, and their worship of *Brahmā*. Objections were urged both on general ethical grounds and also with regard to the way of emancipation". For, we find two types of Brahmins in the early Pāli texts. The Buddhist books reveal a real veneration for the Brahmin, if he is pious and virtuous, without admitting the more extravagant claims of Brahmin

1. In the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* (XI, 6, 4) it is said, "Heaven is established on the air, the air on the earth, the earth on the waters, the waters on truth, the truth on the mystic lore (of the sacrifice) and that on *tapas*". In the *Chāndogya Up.* III, 17, *tapas* or austerity is said to be better than sacrifice and according to *Taittiriya Up.* III, 1, 5. it is regarded as the means of attaining the knowledge of Brahman.
2. *The Life of Buddha as Legend and History*, 1927, p. 125.

superiority. As first type or class we may mention the learned Brahmins who were the composers of the Vedas and who used to perform all the Vedic rites and rituals of the Aryan Indians. They were held in high esteem, whilst the second category of Brahmins were the village Brahmins who used to make their livelihood by fortune-telling, incantation, prognostications, auguries, etc., a detailed description of which is given in the first part of the *Brahmajāla-Sutta*, and who were not held in so much honour and veneration as the first category of Brahmins. In the *Brāhmaṇa-dhammika-Sutta* of the *Sutta-Nipāta* as well as in the *Tevijja-Sutta* of the *Dīgha-Nikāya*, we find that the ancient Brahmins who were the seers (ṛṣi) of old have been held in high esteem by the Buddha himself and the degradation of the Brahmins of the Buddha's day from their moral standards of life has been regretted by the Buddha in those *Suttas*. For the professional Brahmins apart from the composer of the *Vedas*, the *Jātakas* or the Birth-Stories of the Buddha are our best source of information where the Brahmins as a priestly class have been dealt with in many of them and even ridiculed when occasion for sacrificial feasts occurred. Not only in the *Jātakas* alone, but even in the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya* (III, 167) it is said about certain people that they are "running like Brahmins at the smell of sacrifice".¹

In laying down the moral rules for the conduct of his disciples, the Buddha enumerates in a lengthy discourse all kinds of philosophical speculations and popular superstitions which are generally found associated with the Brahmins and recluses of the time, in the *Brahmajāla-Sutta* (part I) of *Dīgha-Nikāya*. This *Sutta*, which is very methodical in its exposition, discusses the fact that there are some *Samaṇas* and *Brāhmaṇas* who earn their livelihood by sacrifices, divination and magic (*Aggihoma*, *Dabbihoma*, *Thūsahoma*, etc.) as well as in sundry other ways, such

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1. The degradation of the Brahmins is also described in *Aṅguttara*, III, 221, where certain Brahmin customs are enumerated which are generally found not among men, but among dogs. — See E. J. Thomas, *History of Buddhist Thought*, 1933, p. 86, n. 1.

as espionage carried on in the garb of ascetics, divining by means of interpreting signs and omens, exorcism, palmistry, prognostication by interpreting dreams, fortune-telling from marks on the body, auguries from marks on cloth gnawed by mice, sooth-saying as predicting whether the chiefs would march out or not, astronomical and astrological calculations as that there would be a lunar or solar eclipse, aberration of the stars, fall of meteors, an earthquake, rising and setting of the Sun or the Moon or the stars, foretelling abundant or deficient rainfall, plenty or scarcity of harvests, pestilence or disturbances, such occultism as arranging a lucky time for marriage or for conclusion of treaties of peace, using charms to procure harmony or discord, using charms to bring ill-luck on an opponent, using charms to procure abortion, to make people lucky or unlucky, incantations to bring on dumbness or deafness, obtaining oracular answers by means of the magic mirror through a girl possessed or obtaining such answers from a god (*devapañham*) the worship of the Sun, the Great one (*Mahābrahmā*), the invocation of Siri, the goddess of Luck, vowing gifts to a god if a certain benefit be granted, paying such vows, causing virility, making a man impotent, ceremonial rinsing of the mouth, ceremonial bathings, offering sacrifices,¹ fixing on lucky sites for dwellings, consecrating sites, practising as an occultist, practising as a children's physician, administering roots and drugs, etc. etc. : all of these *micchādiṭṭhis* (wrong views and low arts) the Buddhist monk is forbidden to indulge in. That is to say, the section dealing with the *Sīlas* in this *Sutta* bears important evidence of the various conditions of life led by the various *Samanas* and *Brāhmaṇas* of the time, the indulgence in all of which is forbidden to the Buddhist monk.

The Brahmin method of schooling in contrast with the Buddha's method of teaching is well introduced to us in the *Gaṇaka-Moggallāna-Sutta* of the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (III, no. 107). The Brahmin mathematician Moggallāna tells the Buddha that the Brahmins teach in a graduated method counting from one,

1. The Brāhmanical type of sacrifice to gods must be meant here.

once, two twice, three thrice, etc., and asks whether Gotama's teaching is a graduated method or not. In reply the Buddha said that it was graduated. He told him that the *Tathāgata* first begins his schooling by training the disciple to guard his portals of sense ; secondly to be temperate in eating, i. e. taking food not for display or delight, but to maintain his body, to protect it and to aid it for higher life. Thirdly, he proceeds in his schooling to be vigilant over all rebellious thoughts whether in the first, second or third watch of the night. Fourthly, he proceeds in his training to be collected and composed and mindful in looking forward and back, before or behind, or in any other posture. Fifthly, the disciple is trained to choose for himself a lonely place where he concentrates his mind (*satimā*) and falls into the first, second, third and fourth *Jhānas* (trances). Then the disciple's heart being purged of the five hindrances (*pañca-nivāraṇa*), he pervades the whole world with boundless love, compassion, equanimity and poise, by developing and cultivating in his mind the four *Brahma-Vihāras*. Such is the Teacher's schooling of the disciple who is under training and has not yet attained the ultimate goal for whose sake sons of noble families go forth from house to homelessness as wandering pilgrims. As for those who have won Arahatsip, being free from the *Āsavas* (defilements), who have lived the highest life, who have freed themselves from the Bonds, who have been delivered by knowing what is to be known, such development and cultivation of the mind is for their weal and for their mindfulness and self-collectedness. The Brahmin mathematician at this point asks the Buddha whether all disciples can win the ultimate attainment of *Nibbāna* by proceeding on such schooling. The Buddha replies that some disciples can win and some cannot ; and to illustrate this point he puts forth a counter-question by a simile, telling him that if two persons come to him and ask the way leading to the city of *Rājāgahā*, he would show him the right path to *Rājāgahā*. But one of the two after going a while takes a wrong path leading to another direction, while the second man walks along the right path and reaches *Rājāgahā* safely. Here then he is only the indicator of the path. Similarly the *Tathāgata* is only

the shower of the way leading to ultimate *Nibbāna*, yet some disciples can attain it, while others cannot. Here a sharp contrast may be drawn by comparing the following verses of the *Dhammapada* and the *Bhagavadgītā*. In the *Dhammapada* the Buddha says :

*Tumhehi kiccaṃ ātappaṃ, akkhātāro Tathāgatā,
Paṭipannā pamokkhanti jhāyino Mārabandhanā.*¹

In the *Bhagavadgītā* Kṛishṇa says :—

*Sarvadharmān parityājya māmekaṃ śaraṇam vraja
aham tvam sarvapāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ.*²

As regards the existence of gods and their worship, the Buddhists not only put aside the ‘unprofitable questions’ as means of escape from the miseries of life, but also deny the existence of any god superior to the Buddha himself who has acquired omniscience by his own individual efforts, as a result of which the Buddha has taken the place of the supreme god. Not only in the *Mahāyāna*, but also in the earlier Pāli canon, all the supernatural attributes are ascribed to the Buddha and after his death, he appears to be the highest divine personality. The introductory story (*Paccūppannavatthu*) of the *Kāliṅgabodhi-Jātaka* (IV, 499) narrates the circumstances under which the adoption of definite objects of worship was undertaken by the public demand, the great Bo-tree as the most prominent symbol of Buddhahood being accepted as the fittest object of worship in the absence of any Buddha image which was not materialised until the first century of the Christian era under Hellenic influence.³ The commentary distinguishes three other classes of objects as fit for worship, namely (1) *sārīrikā*, bodily remains or relics, (2) *Pāribhogikā*, things used by the Buddha, the Bo-tree as a type, (3) *Uddesikā*, referential objects, i. e. a Buddha image (*Buddha-paṭimā*). A Buddha image, it is to be noted, is not merely a dumb show to the Buddhists, but an idealised object created

1. *Dhammapada*, verse 276.

2. *Bhagavadgītā*, ch. 18, 66.

3. The incident of *Mahābodhi-Pūjā* by Ānanda is also referred to in the introductory story of the *Paduma-Jātaka*. II, 261.

by art. That is to say, the worship is the worship of the ideal and the idealised object, Buddha's teaching (*dhamma*) as the ideal and his image as the idealised object. Incidentally, the profession of faith (*saraṇāgamana*) by the Buddhists is the Triad, *Buddha*, *Dhamma* and *Saṅgha*,¹ each of which is a supreme object of devotion and meditation. The Buddha is said to have established his converts in the Three Refuges (*Tisarāṇa*) also called the Three Jewels (*Tiratāṇa*). If a man taking refuge in the Triad is ordained in the *Saṅgha*, he is called a monk, whilst if such a man does not renounce but remains in household life, he is called an *upāsaka*, because *upāsana* or an act of worship is the formal mark of an *upāsaka*. *Buddha*, the first member of the Triad, means the Enlightened or Awakened one. He is also called *Bhagavā*, the epithet being bestowed on him neither by his parents nor by his kinsmen, but which was acquired by him on his attainment of omniscience. *Dhamma*, the second member, signifies the doctrine which bears fruit in this very life (*sandiṭṭhikaṃ sāmāññaphalaṃ*). So it is called '*Ehipassiko*'—'come and see'.² *Saṅgha* really means *Sāvaka-Saṅgha*, "confraternity of disciples". It literally means '*Samūha*' or group, a corporate body characterised by the uniformity of creed and conduct, which stands essentially as a symbol of unity.³

In the spheres covered by the four chapters of this thesis, then, we may observe the use of the same or similar terminology in both Brahmanism and Buddhism, but with wide deviations in signification and in the development of the concepts alluded to.

1. Here compare the Hindu Trinity, *Brahmā*, *Vishṇu* and *Śiva*, creator, preserver and destroyer, with the Buddhist *Tiratāṇa*, three jewels.
2. *Dīghanikāya* II, p. 217 ; *Visuddhimagga*, p. 216 : *ehi passa imaṃ dhammaṃ ti evaṃ pavattaṃ ehi passa-vidhaṃ arahatī ti*.
3. See B. C. Law : *Concepts of Buddhism*, (Monograph of the Kern Institute, Leiden), 1935, chapter I, pp. 2 ff.

Pali and its origin

APPENDIX I

Pāli, originally meaning “text, row or line” is the sacred language of the Buddhists in which the sacred texts of Primitive Buddhism are preserved for us. By Pāli is understood the ‘text’, ‘sacred text,’ ‘*pāṭho*’ (-*iti pi pāli*), ‘reading’ (-*ayaṃ pi pāṭho*) or ‘row’ (-*panti*), i. e., the Text of the canon as distinct from the *Aṭṭhakathā* or Commentaries. The word Pāli always signifies the Text of the Buddhist scripture. Cf. the following expressions :—
“*Pālimattaṃ idhānitaṃ, n’atthi aṭṭhakathā idha*”—only the Text has been brought here, not the Commentaries--*Mahāvamsa*, ch. 37, V. 227.
“*Neva Pāliyaṃ na aṭṭhakathāyaṃ dissati*”—It is not to be found in the Text nor in the Commentaries—Commentary to the *Sāmaññaphala-Sutta* in the *Dīgha*, etc.

*Piṭakattaya Pāliṇca tassā aṭṭhakathāmpī ca,
Mukhapāṭhena ānesuṃ pubbe bhikkhu mahāmatī.
Hānim disvāna sattānaṃ tadā bhikkhu samāgatā,
Ciraṭṭhitatthaṃ dhammassa potthakesu likhāpayāṃ.*

When Pāli the Text as distinguished from the *Aṭṭhakathā* or Commentaries is used to mean the language, it is an abbreviated form of *Pālibhāṣā*; so also *Tantibhāṣa*. The term *Pāli-bhāṣā* or Pāli language, however, is a comparatively late coinage, late in the sense that in the Commentaries themselves and not in any earlier Buddhist writings the earliest mention of the term Pāli can be traced, and it is employed here precisely in the sense of the original authoritative text of the canon, a synonym for *Buddhavacana*, *Tipiṭaka*, *Tanti*, *Panti* and *Pariyatti*. If it is an established fact, then the notion that Pāli is equivalent to *Palli* (village) and *Pālibhāṣā* is synonymous with *Pallibhāṣā* as is current among the Buddhists of East Bengal, vanishes as an idle ingenuity.¹ The other term *Magadhi-nirutti*

1. For detailed treatment see, Dr. B. M. Barua : *Barhut Inscriptions*, pp. 168-169 ; Barua *Mitra-Prakrit Dhammapada*, (Introduction).

(*Māgadhānaṃ nirutti i. e.*, the idiom of the people of Magadha) or *Māgadhika-bhāṣā* as used by the commentators was held out to be the “*Mūlabhāṣā*”, ‘the primary speech of all men’, which may be taken as the *Māgadhi* idiom of the Pāli texts. This is corroborated by the evidence of the following verse :—

Sā Māgadhi mūlabhāṣā, jāya narā’dikappikā,

Brahmāṇaṅca assutaḷāpā, sambuddhā cāpi bhāṣare.

It is true that Pāli is not a homogeneous language, rather it is a dialect of mixed character. In the course of its gradual development many distinguishable stages are seen in the history of the Pāli language and literature. There are at least four such stages :— First comes the language of the *Gāthās* or the metrical pieces, which consists of the very oldest as well as the more modern speech-forms. The language of the *Gāthās*, in a general way, is more archaic than that of the prose. Next comes the language of the canonical prose works, which is more uniform than that of the *Gāthās*. This stage is controlled by more rigid rules and the archaisms wholly subside by this time. The third stage is represented by the language of the post-canonical works as well as the non-canonical commentaries. The fourth stage is that of the later artificial poetry which is no longer homogeneous in character and form, but consists of archaism and Sanskritism.

The geographical basis of Pāli is still a matter of dispute among Indologists both Oriental and Occidental. There are a great many number of controversies in regard to Pāli and its origin. According to the ancient Buddhist tradition, Pāli is *Māgadhi* in which language the Buddha preached his doctrine. Gotama Buddha flourished in the 6th century B. C. The scene of his activity was the Ganges district in the North-East India in the Kingdoms of Magadha (Behar) and Kosala (Oudh). Born as a Kosalan, he attained Buddhahood in Magadha and preached his doctrine in the ancient kingdoms of Magadha-Kosala, the *Majjhima-deśa* (Middle country) of the Buddhists. As a matter of fact, early Buddhism was confined within the territorial limits of the *Madhya-deśa* or Mid-India before the time of Aśoka. It was the Emperor Asoka who in the 3rd century B. C. propagated the religion far

and wide after his conversion to the Buddhist faith and it was mainly through his efforts that Buddhism spread far beyond the limits of Asia, not to speak of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent alone, thus diffusing Buddhist culture and civilization in all countries of the East and West. Naturally, the Buddhist tradition asserts that Pāli, in which the *Tipiṭaka*, the Early Buddhist Scripture, was composed, is Māgadhi in which the Buddha himself spoke. But a comparison with the Pipprawah Vase Inscription which can be taken as contemporaneous with the Buddha shows that they are different. The dialects of the Asokan Inscriptions also differ a good deal from the language of the *Tipiṭaka*. The only epigraphic record which tallies with Pāli to a great extent is the Hāthigumphā Inscription of Khāravela in Orissa assigned to the middle of the 2nd century B. C. On the other hand, there is a Prākṛit dialect called Māgadhi which seems to have some bearing upon the modern Māgaḥi, a dialect of South Behar, and this Māgadhi Prākṛit as known to the Grammarians in its phonology and morphology is quite distinct from Pāli, though Pāli has got many Māgadhi elements in it.

Westergaard and E. Kūhn regard Pāli as the language of Ujjeni, whence Mahinda, the son of Aśoka, took the sacred canon to Ceylon for the first time. Dr. Oldenberg¹ and E. Muller² consider it to be the Aryan language of the Kalinga country. Sir George Grierson³ again would bring Pāli to Taxila, the capital of the ancient kingdom of Gāndhāra, where in the University of Taxila Pāli was studied. Dr. Sten Konow⁴ locates Pāli in the Vindhya region, to get this colouring. Dr. Winternitz,⁵ Windisch and James Alwis⁶ in accordance with the ancient Buddhist

1. Oldenberg — *Vinaya-Piṭaka, Introduction*.

2. E. Muller — *Pali Grammar*.

3. The Home of Literary Pāli in Bhandarkar Comr. Volume.

4. The Home of Paisāci, in ZDMG. pp. 64, 95 ff.

5. *History of Indian Litt.* Vol. II, Int.

6. *The Buddhist scriptures and their language Pāli*.

tradition think that Pāli is Māgadhi. Dr. Geiger¹ thinks that Pāli may have developed from some kind of *Ardha-Māgadhi* in which the oldest Jaina canon was written, though it is not an unmixed language of any area. Another derivation, according to Dr. Max Walleser, is that Pāli is a contracted form of Pāṭali or Pāṇali on the assumption that it was a language of Pāṭaliputra.² Mrs. Rhys Davids³ thinks that Pāli is not the name of any localizable tongue. It means “row” ; we have it in the name of famous courtesan *Ambapāli* (Mango-orcharder, lit. Mango-rower). She quotes the *Visuddhimagga* of Buddhaghosa to show that the teeth are said to be in a *pāli* (*dantapāli*). She is much against the theory that Pāli is another name for Māgadhesa, i.e., the Prākṛit dialect spoken at Patna during Aśoka’s time. She says that we find no doubt in Pāli forms of *Māgadhi* and *Ardha-Māgadhi* peeping out here and there, but it is not true to say that Pāli has its base in them. In her opinion Pāli is just “text” or “row” and it was never more than that. In the opinion of late D. Kosambi, a Buddhist scholar, Pāli is derived from the root ‘Pāl’ to protect, to preserve and consequently the Texts in which the ‘Buddhavacana’ is preserved.

According to Dr. Rhys Davids,⁴ Pāli was based on the spoken language of Kosala. He says that in the pre-Buddhistic period there existed a standard Kosalan speech, which was the speech of the Buddha and the Pāli scriptures mainly were composed within a century of the Buddha’s demise in this Kosalan country. Dr. Luders⁵ opines that Pāli has developed from old *Ardha-Māgadhi* and the existing Pāli canon is a translation from

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1. *Pali Literature and Language*, Introduction.
 2. Views of Max Walleser, see E. J. Thomas : Note on Dr. Walleser on the Meaning of Pali, *Indian Historical Quarterly*, 1928-29.
 3. *Sākya or Buddhist Origins*, Appendix I, pp. 429-30.
 4. *Buddhist India*, Ch. VIII ; *Cambridge History of Ancient India* Vol. I and *Pali-English Dict.* P. T. S. 1925.
 5. *Bruchtucke Buddhistischer Dramen*, p. 40 ff.

old *Ardha-Māgadhi*. Dr. Bapat¹ points out the dissimilarity between Pāli and *Ardha-Māgadhi* and says that the difference between the two is just like that of Pāli and *Māgadhi*. Dr. S. K. Chatterjee² thinks that Pāli seems to have been a western dialect of the Mid-land, an old form of *Saurośeni Prākṛt*, but retaining many remnants of the old dialect. According to him, Buddha's discourses and the earliest record thereof were certainly in an Eastern dialect, but they were rendered into other dialects when the Eastern official language, *Ardha-Māgadhi*, came to an end along with the decline of the Mauryas, and one of the versions became the Pāli canon as we now have it. The views of R. O. Franke,³ A. B. Keith,⁴ Turnour⁵ Sylvain Levi,⁶ Minayeff⁷ etc. are more or less to the effect whether Pāli was an Eastern or Western dialect. According to R. C. Chiders,⁸ Pāli was a vernacular of the people.

However, if the Pāli *Tipiṭaka* is not the oldest Buddhist canon now extant, there is not a tinge of doubt that it contains the earliest doctrine it preserves. The later Buddhists took resort to Sanskrit, the modified and stereotyped language of Pāṇini-Patañjali and thereafter of Kālidāsa, which was the literary vehicle of the more learned Pundits, and the vast Sanskrit Buddhist literature which grew up in course of time contains the later development of Buddhism known as the Mahāyāna or the greater vehicle of salvation as opposed to the earlier doctrine miscalled Hinayāna or the lesser vehicle, which is not, however, totally discarded by the followers of the Mahāyāna.

1. "Relation between Pāli and Ardha-Māgadhi", *Indian Historical Quarterly*, March, 1928.
2. *Origin and Development of the Bengali Language* (Introduction).
3. *Pāli and Sanskrit*.
4. "Pāli, the language of the Southern Buddhists" *I. H. Q.* 1925.
5. *Encyclo. Brit.*, vol. XVII. pp. 145-46.
6. *Journal Asiatique*, XX. pp. 495 ff.
7. *Pāli Grammar*, p. XLVI.
8. *Pāli Dict.* sub voce Pāli.

Pāli bears traces of so many different Indo-Aryan dialects that a consensus of opinion regarding the home of Pāli is still wanting. The conclusion arrived at by some European Orientalists after their laborious tasks in this field is that it is a “*Kunstsprache*”, an artificial language, that is a compromise of various dialects. But even an artificial and literary language must have a particular dialect as its base. Hence the question arises which part of India was the original home of Pāli and its basis? The language of the *Tipitaka* as found in Ceylon, Burma and Siam has got no counterpart in India; yet Pāli is an Aryan language and a distinct Indian vehicle of expression standardised in the Theravāda recension of the Buddhist canon and its commentaries and other ancillary works. In view of the fact that the Buddha and Mahāvīra were inhabitants of the East, some presume that their discourses must be in an Eastern or Prācya dialect. But the peculiarities of Pāli show that it attempts to steer clear of all “Māgadhisms” more and more and shows a tendency of Western elements. The form tallies with the Girnar (Guzrat) version of Aśoka’s Rock Edicts and other Prākritic dialects, more particularly that of Śaurasenī Prākṛt as known to the Grammarians. There are not only instances of “Māgadhisms” in Pāli, but also many Vedic survivals which are not to be found in Sanskrit e.g., *tehi*, *tebhi* for Vedic *tehis*, *tebhis* in the plural number of the Third case. Similarly, *yamāmase*, *bhavāmase*, *akaramhase*, *labhāmase*, *gacchare*, *paccare*, *bhāsare* etc. The Vedic infinitive suffix ‘*tave*’ is retained in Pāli as *pahātave*, *netave*, *kātave*, *gantave* etc. The Vedic ‘*tvāya*’ is very common in Pāli as *tvāna*, *tuna*, e.g. *katvā*, *katvāna*, *kātuna*, etc. The Vedic ‘*Ambra*’ is in Sanskrit ‘*Āmra*’ but in Pāli ‘*Amba*’ with the ‘*b*’ as in Vedic, e.g. *Ambapāli*, *Ambavana* etc. These archaic forms are found more abundantly in the metrical portions (*Gāthās*) but rare in the prose texts. According to Oldenberg (*Gurupūjākaumudi*, pp. 9 ff.) the metres of the Pāli *gāthās* are more archaic than those of the *Rāmāyaṇa*.

The history of the North-Indian or Indo-Aryan languages has been divided into three periods, viz. ancient, medieval and modern. The speech of the ancient period called *Old Indo-Aryan* is represented by the language of the Vedas. The medieval or

Middle Indo-Aryan period is represented by Pāli and the Prākṛts. The middle period again can be conveniently divided into three periods, namely, *Old Prākṛit* or Pāli, *Middle Prakṛt* i.e. the Prakrit of the Grammarians and *Late Prākṛit* or *Apabhraṃśa*. That Pāli is older than the Prākṛts with the exception of the Asokan dialects is evident from its characteristics. It contains many of the old grammatical systems. The *Ātmanepada* is common. The Aorist and Imperfect have fused together. The Dual number is lost. The Sibilant is dental s, y remains, r sometimes becomes l, but not always as in Māgadhi Prākṛt, n is cerebralised but not always. Conjuncts like dr, br, remain in some words, e.g. *brāhmaṇa*, *gadrabha*, etc. Anaptyis or Epenthesis (*Svarabhakti*) is common. *Ārya* becomes *Ayya* and *Ariya*. *Sūrya* becomes *Suriya*. The nominative singular in—o, the presence of sa, ra, ja show that Pāli is different from Māgadhi which is supposed by tradition to have been the language of the Buddha. On the contrary, Pāli cannot be said to have been derived from Sanskrit, for it has got some special characteristic features which indicate its close relationship to the Vedic.

There is an injunction in the *Vinaya-Piṭaka*, the first of the three *Piṭakas* or Baskets, containing rules for the guidance of monks and nuns, not to translate the words of the Buddha in the language of the Vedas. It was enjoined in regard to the Bhikkhus who complained to the Master that the members of the Saṅgha were of different origins and distorted the word of the Buddha (*Buddhavacana*) in their respective local dialects (*Sakāya niruttiyā*). They therefore proposed that the words of the Buddha should be translated¹ into the language of the Vedas which is called *Chandas*. But this is clearly forbidden by the Master at first negatively and then positively by the injunction which reads as follows :

“*Na bhikkhave Buddhavacanam chāndaso āropetabbam. Yo āropeyya, āpatti dukkaṭassāti. Anujānāmi bhikkhave sakāya niruttiyā Buddhavacanam pariyāpunitum* (*Vinaya-Cullavagga*, V, 33).

Some¹ have translated the second line of the passage beginning

1. Rhys Davids and Oldenberg-*Vinaya Texts*, pt. III in S.B.E. XX.

with *Anujānāmi* by “I allow you, O monks, to learn the words of the Buddhas each in his own dialect.” But Buddhaghosa, the celebrated Buddhist commentator, translates it by “I ordain the words of the Buddha to be learnt in his (Buddha’s) own language” i. e., Māgadhi which was used by the Buddha himself (*ettha sakā nirutti nāma sammāsambuddhena Vuttappakāro Māgadhiko vohāro*, Buddhaghosa’s commentary to the above passage in *Samantapāsādikā*, IV). It is highly improbable that by “*Sakā nirutti*” is meant the “own colloquial tongues” of the Buddha’s disciples who hailed from different parts of the country and different walks of life. But by “*Sakā nirutti*” the Buddha meant the standard vernacular speech which was the common medium of communication of the people of the whole of *Āryāvarta*, a lingua franca of India, the refined and elegant form of the language of all Aryan-speaking peoples, which was like the literary language of our day. It is through the medium of this language, no doubt, that the disciples of the Buddha learnt and preached his doctrine. The Buddha prohibited the translating of his words into Vedic verses (*chandaso*) referred to in the above canonical rule. The implication of this injunction in all probability, is that there can be no other form of speech than that of what the Master himself had preached. It is doubtless that the disciples of the Buddha were much concerned with the way in which the teachings of the Master might be preserved and handed down as accurately as possible both in form and content out of their great veneration and this was more so after his demise. At all events, the Buddha used a common standard of dialects in his discourses so that his teachings might be intelligible to his disciples who were of diverse origins, diverse races and of diverse types and this standard language is to be sought in the literary language of the spoken dialect prevalent in Mid-India (Madhyadeśa) and Pāli as we now have it, is based on the literary language of this spoken dialect as the standard vernacular.

We know that the language which was the exclusive monopoly of the Brahmins and prohibited to others, in which the Vedas and other connected sciences were composed, is known

by the name of *Chandas*, which was afterwards refined and stereotyped by *Pāṇini* and came to be styled “*Saṃskṛta*” (refined and modified) because of the “*Saṃskarana*” (refinement) effected by the grammarian. Hence the name “*Saṃskṛta*” is more appropriately applied to the Classical Sanskrit, and not the Vedic. It is to be noted here that the word ‘*Chandas*’ did not originally mean the old *Ārya-bhāṣā* in which the Vedas and Upaniṣads were written, but only the Holy Scripture of the Brahmins, just like the term Pāli, was applied to the Holy Scripture of the Buddhists. This *Chandobhāṣā* which is a form of the *Āryaka* or *Āryabhāṣā* has got to be employed in order to distinguish it from the *Laukika-bhāṣā* or the vernacular languages of the day such as *Māgadhi* or *Magadha-bhāṣā* which is a later form of the old *Āryābhāṣā*, used in the country of Magadha and round about it.

Magadha became the most powerful kingdom in Northern India during the life-time of the Buddha, after conquering the vast kingdom of Kosala and the surrounding Republics. Shortly after the demise of the Buddha it rose to the height of its glory and became the leading kingdom not only in the whole of India, but also in the countries around. Its ruler held sway over the whole of the continent of Jambudvīpa (India) and anything good and admirable in Magadha came to pass by the name *Māgadhi*, since it represented the culture and civilization of the whole of India. So also the dialect of Magadha became the common tongue of all the Aryan dialects and it became the most refined form of the standard vernaculars. These Aryan dialects were not very much different from one another as they appear from the Inscriptions of Asoka which were inscribed in different dialects in the different parts of his vast empire for the understanding of the ordinary people. Again this dialect could not be confined to Magadha alone, but imitated by the people of the surrounding countries such as Kāśī, Kośala, Vatsa, Avantī, Vajji etc. as these countries closely followed the civilization of Magadha. The Buddha preached his doctrine in this common standard of language which was, no doubt, the *Sakabhāṣā*, the refined speech of the cultured and

educated classes. Thus the language which we now call Pali is the refined popular language of the people at the time when the Buddha was born. It gradually split up and absorbed into different vernaculars such as Śaurasenī and other Indian Prākṛtic dialects much akin to the Girnar dialects of Aśoka's inscriptions.

Thus Pali is the second language of the Buddhists of the orthodox school in the same way as Sanskrit to the Hindus and Arabic to the Muslims, and it is used in all the Buddhist countries of the world in their religious and social functions.

The importance of the study of Pali language and literature is inestimable in as much as Pali literature is not only chiefly concerned with the oldest and most authentic Buddhist sacred text which at one time was able to conquer the whole world by its doctrine of non-violence and universal love, but also it contains many informations—social, political, economic, religious and geographical as well as that of the history and civilization of the ancient Indian people. It is essential for the reconstruction of the history of ancient India as it furnishes more reliable data for ancient Indian history than that of Sanskrit and the Prakrits.

There are no two opinions that the contribution of Pali and Buddhism towards Indian history and culture is unique and unparalleled in the cultural heritage of India and Pakistan. While there is a revival of ancient cultural traditions at the present age, it is impossible to ignore the legacy of Pali language and literature in the history of the culture and civilization of the ancient Aryans. Moreover, the study of Pali forms a connecting link between Burma and Siam, Ceylon and Pakistan, and other neighbouring Buddhist countries which received a great impetus through this language and will receive in the ages yet to come. From the point of view of linguistics too, Pali has got an immense value for the study of the history of Indo-Aryan languages and the old Prakrit epigraphs. As a matter of fact, Pali is indispensable for the study of Indology to which it contributed and is still contributing for its glory and achievement.

APPENDIX II

The Doctrine of Impermanence

The doctrine of impermanence in Buddhism is as old as the teachings of the Buddha himself. In one of the earliest Buddhist scriptures, viz. the *Vinaya-Piṭaka*¹, we are told that the Buddha after preaching the first sermon usually called in the scriptures the *Dhamma-Cakkapavattana - Sutta* or the turning of the wheel of the Doctrine, the five monks were established in the fruition of the First Path. The Buddha then preached to them his second sermon on the non-existence of the soul known as the *Anatta-lakkhana—Sutta*, literally the discourse on the marks of no-soul preserved for us in the *Vinaya*² and the *Saṃyutta-Nikāya*³ as well as the introduction to the *Jātaka*.⁴ In his second sermon the Buddha tells his disciples that in the form, feeling, perception, conformation and consciousness there is nothing which we can call by the name of soul or self, the nature of which is permanent and which, like the Upaniṣadic teaching, can fly out from existence to existence till it is finally liberated. Form is devoid of soul or self, says the Buddha ; so also feeling, perception, conformation and consciousness are without any soul or self. If the body were the soul, then it would not be subject to decay and it would be possible for the body to say “Let my body be like this or like that”. But since it is soulless, it is therefore, subject to decay, and it is not possible for it to say “Let my form (body) be like this or be thus” etc.

It is similar in regard to feeling, perception, conformation and consciousness i. e., the totality of the five aggregates. Then the Buddha asks, “What do you think, O monks ; is the body

1. *Vinaya* I, 10 ff.;

2. *Vinaya* I, 11 ff ;

3. *Saṃyutta*, iii, 66,

4. *Nidāna-Kathā* I, 59 ff.

permanent or impermanent ?” “Impermanent, Sir”, reply the monks. “That which is impermanent, do you think it painful or pleasant ?” “Painful, Sir”. “But do you think what is impermanent, painful and liable to change as “This is mine, this is I, this is my soul or self?” “Indeed no, Sir”. “Therefore, monks, whatever form, past, future or present, internal or external, gross or subtle, low or high, far or near, is to be looked upon by him who rightly understands, thinks as “All this from is not mine, not this am I, nor mine is the soul or self (*na m’eso attā’ti*). Similarly it is in regard to the other form, feeling, perception, conformation and consciousness. Thus perceiving the learned disciple feels disgusted with form, feeling, perception, conformation and consciousness. He feels loathing for these and becomes free from passion ; through his freedom from passion he is emancipated and there arises the knowledge of his emancipation. He understands that rebirth is destroyed, the religious life has been led, done is what is to be done, and there is nothing for him beyond this world. Thus said the Lord. The five monks rejoiced at what the Lord had said and their hearts became free from the *āsava*s (defilements) i. e. they became Arahats.

In the *Culasaccaka-Sutta* of the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (i, 35) the meeting between Saccaka Paribbājaka and Buddha is of great importance in this behalf. The wandering ascetic Saccaka was a past master in secular arts and sciences and he was the respected preceptor of the Licchavi princes of Vesāli. Once the Buddha visited the city of Vesāli and the wanderer Saccaka in order to prove the superiority of his doctrine to that of the Buddha wanted to find out what was the Buddha’s doctrine. With this object in view he visited the monk Assaji who was one of the five disciples of the Buddha in the beginning, and asked him about the Buddha’s doctrine. The monk Assaji replied that the Buddha’s doctrine was the Anattavāda, the doctrine of no-soul or self. Saccaka Paribbājaka thought that if it be so, then he would be able to prove the superiority of his doctrine to that of the Buddha and with this thought he went to the five-hundred Licchavi princes who were his disciples and invited them to come with him to the Buddha whom he would make perspire by his questions and

counter-questions. Let alone a living person, he said, even a wooden post will be utterly shaken by his questions from side to side. He will shake the monk Gotama from side to side with his questions as a goat, when caught hold of by its beard, is shaken from side to side. He will pull the monk Gotama to and fro with his questions, as a mat when washed in a pond, is pulled to and fro by a man holding its two fringes. With his questions he will whirl about the monk Gotama as a liquor stainer is whirled about when washed in water by a drunkard etc. And so the Licchavi princes, five-hundred in number, were invited by him to see this spectacle at Vesāli.

The Buddha knowing full well that Saccaka Paribbājaka was coming to question him about the Buddha's doctrine with five hundred Licchavi princes asked his disciple monks to send Saccaka to the park after their arrival. He then went to the park and seated himself under a tree. When Saccaka and the Licchavi princes arrived, they were directed to go where the Buddha was then seated. Thereafter Saccaka asked what was the Buddha's doctrine. The Buddha gave him the answer that it was the doctrine of *Anatta* (no-soul or self). Then Saccaka said to the Buddha : "O Monk Gotama, an illustration has come to my mind. It is this that just as trees and plants cannot grow and live without the earth, so also a person cannot perform good or bad deeds without the entities called body and mind. That is to say that without a sustaining support nothing can come into being" The Buddha put him counter questions and at last Saccaka admitted that his was the doctrine of *Attā* (Self or soul) which was the opposite of the Buddha's doctrine of *Anattā* (no-self or soul). Then the Buddha said to him that if the belief in *Attā* (Self) was the true doctrine, no being could either grow old or suffer from disease, or die, because no being wishes to grow old, or to be sick, or die. But inspite of this unwillingness to become old or to be sick or to die, all beings have got to suffer old age, disease and death. On the other hand, if the belief in *Attā* (Self or Soul) was a true doctrine, beings should have absolute control over their bodies just as monarchs with paramount powers have absolute control over their subjects, and

should be able to fashion their bodies according to their own sweet will, keeping their bodies youthful and vigorous and free from old age, disease and death. But they could not. Since they could not, the doctrine of *Attā* (Self or Soul) could not be a true doctrine.

While the Buddha was asking these questions, Saccaka being unable to give adequate answer was perspiring from head to foot and in the long run had to admit that the doctrine of *Anattā* (no-Self) was correct while that of *Attā* (Self) was incorrect.

“Now monks” says the Buddha “that which is without any Soul or Self is it permanent or impermanent ?”—“Impermanent, Sir”, answer the monks to the Buddha. “That which is not permanent, is it pleasant or painful ?” “Painful, Sir”. So also with regard to every object in the world animate or inanimate this doctrine of impermanence (*anicca*) is inseparably associated. It has been fully brought out in the *Dhammapada* (Magga-Vagga) which is held out to be as important to the Buddhists as the Gīta to the Hindus, as follows :—

“*Sabbe saṅkhārā aniccā ti yabā paññāya passati,
Atha nibbindati dukkhe-esa maggo visuddhiyā.
Sabbe saṅkhārā anattā ti yadā paññāya passati,
Atha nibbindati dukkhe-esa maggo visuddhiyā.*”

—“Impermanent are all component things”—When a man realises this by knowledge, he becomes free from suffering. This is the path to purity. “All compound things are without any substance, Soul or Self”—When a man realises this by knowledge, he becomes free from pain. This is the path to purity. “All component things are full of suffering, as they are constantly unstable one appearing, another disappearing”—When a man realises this by knowledge, he becomes free from pain. This is the path to purity. As a matter of fact, knowledge, according to Buddhism, grows in the proper understanding of the four Noble Truths and these three cardinal factors mentioned above. Buddhaghosa, the celebrated commentator, says that knowledge of the Path (Magga) means the knowledge of the Path to Purity (*visuddhī*) or to Nibbāna, the ultimate goal of the Buddhists.

It should be borne in mind that early Buddhism had to defend itself against two rival theories in order to maintain its own distinctive position, viz. the theory of eternalism (*Sassata-vāda*) on the one hand and the theory of annihilationalism (*Uccheda-vāda*) on the other. . It may be mentioned here that during the time of the rise of Buddhism there were prevalent in India many other theorists with their theories and speculations sixty two of which are distinctly mentioned in the *Brahmajāla-Sutta*. (*Dīgha* i. i ff.)

Among all these theories and speculations the one which is historical is the doctrine of Jainism with which Buddhism forms a sharp contrast, although it bears many outward semblances with it. The above two rival views are beautifully portrayed in two verses of the *Dhammapada*, (294, 295) in enigmatic phrases as follows :--

“*Mātaram pitaram hantvā rājāno dve ca khattiye—
Raṭṭham sīnucaram hantvā anīgho yāti brāhmaṇo.
Mātaram pitaram hantvā rājāno dve ca sotthiye,—
Veyaggha pañcamam hantvā anīgho yāti brāhmaṇo.*”

It stands thus in translation :—“A brāhmaṇa goes painless, though he may have killed father and mother and two valiant kings, and destroyed a kingdom with all its subjects. A brahmaṇa goes painless, though he may have killed father and mother, and two Brāhmaṇa kings and a tiger as the fifth besides”¹. The meaning of the words as explained in the commentary is that ‘mother’ means desire (*taṇhā*), father means ‘egoism (*asmi-māna*), two kings are the two wrong views of Eternalism (*sassata*) and Nihilism (*uccheda*), the kingdom with all its subjects are the six organs of senses (*saḷāyatana*) and their six corresponding objects (*dvādasā āyatanas*) together with

1. See V. Bhattacharyya, *The Basic Conception of Buddhism*, Cal, 1936 pp. 38-39 ; Max Müller-*Sacred Books of the East* Vol. X, pl. I, pp. 71 ff ; *Lāṅkavatāra-Sutra*-edited by B. Nanjio, Kyoto, 1923 pp. 138-140.

enjoyment (*nandi-rāya*), two brāhmaṇa kings are the two wrong views as above, and the tiger is the five hindrances (*nivaraṇa*) viz. sensuality, ill-will, sloth and torpor, worry and wavering. It is noteworthy that *taṇhā* (craving) is identified with mother, as mother gives birth to child, so does craving give rise to misery. The Brāhmaṇa here stands for a liberated monk (bhikkhu)¹

The *Mahāsudassana-Sutta*², a discourse which the Buddha delivered at his death-bed at Kusinārā of the Mallas, contains the famous verse uttered by the Buddha at his death-bed on the doctrine of impermanence (anicca). It was queen Subhaddā, the queen of king Sudassana, who broke into lamentation and grief at the impending death of her lord, king Sudassana and the eightyfour thousand ladies of the harem began to weep and sob; nor could any of the countless courtiers forbear their grief but all alike joined in a universal lamentation at the death of the king Sudassana. Then the king turning towards his queen said: "Weep not, my queen, lament not. For even down to a tiny seed of sesamum, there is no such thing which is permanent; all are transitory and all must come to an end."

Then he uttered this stanza:—

Impermanent are all compound things,
Growth is their nature and decay;
Having arisen then they cease to be;
And their cessation is bliss.

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1. "The Buddha never made it obligatory for the members of the Order to embrace the mendicant's life for ever as we find in the *Aśramic* system of the Brāhmaṇas". (2500 years of Buddhism, p. 349). He was at liberty to return to secular life as soon as he felt that he was unsuited to monastic life.
 2. *Dīgha* II, 17; *Dialogues of the Buddha*, II, 72 ff; *Jātaka* I, 95; *Stories of the Buddha's Former Births* I, 230 ff. The *Mahāsudassana-Jātaka* is in fact, one of the many *Suttanta-Jātakas* which lie scattered in the *Suttas* and the *Vinaya*, as for example, the *Mahāgovinda-Suttanta*, *Janavasabha Suttanta*-etc. in the *Dīgha-Nikāya*.

Prof. Rhys Davids says that this is "Perhaps the most frequently quoted and most popular verse in Pali Buddhist books".¹ In the *Mahāparinibbāna-Sutta*,² this verse is uttered by Sakka, king of the gods at the passing away of the Buddha. So also in the *Saṃyutta-Nikāya*.³ In the *Theragāthā*,⁴ this verse is again said to have been spoken at the death of Sāriputta, one of the two chief disciples of the Buddha. As a matter of fact, it is constantly repeated even to-day by monks at the death of not only eminent disciples, but any and every disciple of the Buddha in Ceylon, Burma and Siam, almost all over the Buddhist countries of the world. Dr. K. E. Neumann says : "This famous saying is so popular that it was recited to me in pure Pali by a servant in Colombo, and, what is still more significant in this case, was excellently interpreted by him in a popular way".⁵

A prose elaboration of this verse is to be found in the *Mahāparinibbāna-Sutta* in the *Dīgha* (II, 16) which is one of the most important discourses of the Buddha in the Pāli Canon. Here in exhorting Ānanda who was weeping at the thought of the impending *Parinibbāna* of the Buddha, the Buddha says that whatever, has origination has got the inherent quality of dissolution. Did not the Buddha repeatedly tell his disciples that all that is dear and near unto us, separation from them is inevitable ? There is change everywhere and separation from all things of the world which we hold dear to us. It is the nature of things that whatever things have their origin must come to dissolution

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1. See Rhys Davids—*Hibbert Lectures*, 2nd edition, p. 212, where a translation is given of the commentary on this stanza.
 2. *Dīgha* 16,6.20 ; *Dialogues* II, 72 ff ; *Buddhist-Suttas S.B.E.* XI.
 3. *Saṃyutta* I, 157.
 4. *Theragāthā* V, 1159.
 5. (See Winternitz-*History of Indian Literature* II, p. 113 f. n. ; See also *Saṃyutta* II. p. 193).

inevitably.¹ The *Mahāparinibbāna-Sutta*, in fact, contains the last utterance of the Buddha regarding his doctrine which is the doctrine of impermanence in the following words :—
“Vayadhammā saṅkhārā, appamādena sampādettha :—All compound things are liable to decay ; strive for your salvation with diligence”. These were the last words of the Buddha before he finally entered into *Parinibbāna*.²

It is a very bold assertion to say that the Buddha's teaching is derived from the *Upaniṣads*³ in the face of these teachings of the Buddha. So also the description of the Brāhmaṇa in the *Brāhmaṇa-Vagga* of the *Dhammapada* is not that of an ordinary Brāhmaṇa of the society who is born in a Brāhmaṇa family, but that of an Arhat, a perfected bhikkhu, a liberated monk indeed. While all the *Upaniṣads* are not of pre-Buddhistic age, it is yet to be decided whether the teachings of the Buddha

1. Cf. *Dhammapada*, V. 1701 :—

Yathā bubbulakaṃ passe,

*Yathā passe maricikaṃ evaṃ lokaṃ avekkhantaṃ māccurājā
na passati.*

—The king of death does not see the man who looks upon the world as one who regards it as a mirage or a bubble (of water).

2. In the *Dhammapada* the Buddha says :—

Jīranti ve rājarathā sucittā,

=atho sarīraṃ pi jaraṃ upeti.

Śatañca dhammo na jaraṃ upati, śanto have subbī pavedayanti.

=The gaily painted chariot of kings wear out ; so also does the body wear out. But the Law of the Good does not decay ; so does the wise proclaim to the wise.

3. See S. Radhakrisnan—*Gautama the Buddha*, Bombay, 1945, p. 36.

The Buddha says :—

*Sabbābhibhū sabbavidū ahaṃ'smi, sabbesu dhammesu anupalitto ;
Sabbāñjahio taṅkhaye vimuttosayaṃ abhiññāya kaṃ uddiseyyaṃ ?
M. N. I, 26 ; Vinaya-Piṭaka I, 6 ; Dhap. canto 24, V, 350.*

=I have overcome all, I am all-knowing and all-pervading. I have no attachment to any object in the world. Being free from desire I have attained emancipation (by myself). Then whom do I point out (as my teacher) ?

are derived from the *Upaniṣads* or the *Upaniṣad* teachings are influenced by the teachings of the Buddha. In the words of Prof. Ayyaswami Shastri ; “We should not forget what the Buddha’s invaluable and positive contribution to Indian thought was. In the scheme of his religious order, he laid the greatest stress on the fact that one should always train one’s mind and body in strict accordance with certain ethical standards called *Sīla*. In the *Upaniṣads* we find little about ethics. Indeed, the ethics we come across in some of the passages is overshadowed by overstressed enquiries about the soul and the Brahman and allied subjects.” (*2500 years of Buddhism*-edited by P. V. Vapat, 1956, P. 341).

In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*¹, one of the earliest and the most important *Upaniṣads* the human soul (*Ātman*) has been compared to a grass-leech and it has been explained there that just as a leech goes from one blade of grass to another, so also the *Ātman* flies from existence to existence until it is finally united with the Brahman and then only it is completely liberated.—“The *Upaniṣads* speak repeatedly of *Ātman* and Brahman as unborn (*aja*), imperishable (*avyaya*) and eternal (*nitya*, *dhruva*)² and that there existed previously only Brahman or *Ātman* and things other than that are unreal and diseased (*ārtam*)”—(Winternitz). In the *Bhagavad-Gītā*,³ also, it has been said that just as a man wears new clothes after leaving aside his old worn out clothes, so also the soul leaves the old body and enters a new existence. A further elaboration of this idea has been conceived later on that just as a snake leaves its old skin and takes the new one, similarly the soul leaves the old body and enters a new one. But such ideas about the

1. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad* III, 2,13 ff B. M. Barua-*History of Pre-Buddhistic Indian Philosophy*, Calcutta, 1926, p. 196 ; B. C. Law-*Concept of Buddhism*, p. 79.

2. Cf. *Dhammapada*, V. 117 :—

*Passa cittakataṃ bimbaṃ arukāyaṃ samussitaṃ,
Āturaṃ bahusahkappaṃ yassa natthi dhuvam̐ thiti.*

—Behold this variegated figure, this mass of corruption stuck together, sickly, full of idle thoughts and having no permanent existence.

3. *Gītā* II, 22.

soul are completely unknown in Buddhism. What is known and propounded in Buddhism is the doctrine of *Anatta* (no-Soul) instead of the permanent nature of the Soul or Self as discussed above. The learned editor of the "2500 years of Buddhism" published by the Government of India on the occasion of the Buddha Jayanti celebration in May, 1956 observed :—"There is however, no definite indication in pre-Buddhistic literature of the well-known and the important principle of *Anātmavāda* or the doctrine of no-soul". (*ibid*, p 12).

This principle of *Anātmavāda*, it may be observed, has been developed so far in the later school of Mahāyāna Buddhism that *Anātmā* (no-Soul) has been conceived as a goddess as *Nirātmā* Devī, to whom the Bodhisattva, i. e, one who is striving for the attainment of Bodhi (knowledge), plunges deeply.¹ The Mahāyāna, however, developed two kinds of Nairātmya viz. *Pudgala-Nairātmya* and *Dharma-Nairātmya*, the detailed explanation of which does not concern us here. In later Tantric Buddhism, which is an offshoot of the earlier Mahāyāna Buddhism, especially the Sahajayāna and Vajrayāna, the idea has been developed so far as to conceive that in order to attain the *Sahajānanda*, which is another name for *Nirvānānanda*, the Bodhicitta, i. e. the thought on Buddhahood is completely engrossed itself with the Goddess *Nirātmā*, just as *Paññā* (knowledge), one of the *Pāramitās* has been conceived in the Mahāyāna as the highest Goddess (*Prajñā-Pāramitā*), which is an epithet of transcendent knowledge. Tantric Buddhists, however, produced a highly developed literature in old Bengali for their Tantric cult. So also the Sahajiyās did the same for their Sahajiyā cult. The *Bauddha Gān-O-Dohā* edited by M. M. Haraprasād Shastri is a collection of such *caryās* and mystic songs of the Sahajiyā Buddhists of later days. It is undoubtedly a unique contribution to old Bengali literature from which modern Bengali literature has been developed. Dr. Muhammad Shahidullah has

1. "There is no rivalry between the Pali and other schools in their canonical sources. They developed new problems, but all accepted the same Scriptural utterances as their authority" (E. J. Thomas) --The Life of Buddha as Legend and History, p. 108.

indeed rendered an immense service which is decidedly a valuable contribution to Oriental learning by his "*Let Chants Mystiques de Kānha-et de Saraha*¹ : *les Dohā-Kosa-et les Caryā ed et trad par* M. Shahidullah, Paris, 1928. In modern times many scholars have written books and edited many original compositions of the old authors on the subject² but Dr. Shahidullah's contribution to Oriental literature of the Sahaja-Siddhas stands unique in this field.

1. Kaṇhapāda and Sarahapāda are two exponents of Sahajayāna cult of the Mahāyāna.
2. *The Post-Chaitanya Sahajiya cult in Bengal*, Cal. 1930 by Manindra Mohan Bose is a valuable contribution to the subject. Others are :— (i) *Sahaja-Sāadhanā* by Barindra Nath Ghoshtagor (ii) *Bauddha Sahajiya* by the same author ; (iii) *Banglar Bāul-O-Bāul-Gan* by Upendra Nath Bhattacharyya (iv) *Sahajiya-Sāhitya* by M.M. Bose, Cal, 1932; etc. etc.

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