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THE PLACE OF BUDDHISM IN INDIAN THOUGHT

Introduction

In the *Nagarasutta* in the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, (SN p.74) the Buddha states,

> *"As a person discovers an ancient path to a lost city. I have discovered this ancient path leading to Nibbāṇa."*

Thus the Buddha assumed the role of a re-discoverer rather than that of an original path-finder. What he meant by this statement is subject to interpretation and has given rise to a controversy among students of Buddhism and Indian philosophy.

The Buddhists, who believe that Gotama, the Buddha of the sixth century before Christ, was the twenty-fifth in a line of Buddhas commencing from Dīpaṅkara (or the 29th, commencing from Tanhankara), have no difficulty in explaining that the Buddha's reference was to the doctrines of the earlier Buddhas. The Buddhist commentators from very early times accepted this explanation. In fact, one of them, Buddhaghoṣa, the most illustrious translator of Sinhala commentaries in the fifth century CE, went further and suggested that the Vedas themselves were only a degenerated version of the teachings of Buddha Kassapa, the immediate predecessor of Gotama, the Buddha. But in the absence of reliable historical data, one does not readily accept this Buddhist tradition. So there has been an attempt to review

the statement of the Buddha in the light of what is known for certain of Indian philosophy.

What I propose to do in this paper is to examine some of the theories, which students of Indian philosophy and Buddhism have sought to establish. I have a special reason for revisiting this subject on which my first paper, co-authored with my revered teacher, Professor Betty Heimann, was published in 1949 in the University of Ceylon Buddhist Brotherhood Journal, Patipada Volume II, edited by W. S. Karunaratne. Over the last sixty years, there have been further discussions on the subject.

Assumptions or Theories of Early Scholars

There are a number of generalised statements by scholars whose genuine quest for the truth is not disputed. They are -

(1) that the Buddha restated what was already current among the Brahmanical thinkers of the Indian subcontinent;
(2) that the Buddha based his teachings on the teachings of the Upaniṣads;
(3) that the Buddha was a follower of the Yoga system of Patañjali; and
(4) that the Buddha's doctrine derives its inspiration from the Sāṅkhya Philosophy.

Each of these statements has been made presumably after careful examination of whatever data were available and, therefore, should be examined with due care.

Originality or Otherwise of Buddhism

It was Professor T. W. Rhys Davids who stated most emphatically that the Buddha was in every respect a product of the Brahmanical environment. He says,

> *"Gautama was born and brought up and lived and died a Hindu. Such originality as Gautama possessed lay in the way in which he adopted, enlarged, ennobled and systematised that which had already been well-*

> *said by others; in the way in which he carried out to their logical conclusion, principles of equity and justice already acknowledged by some of the most prominent Hindu thinkers. The difference between him and other teachers lay chiefly in his deep earnestness and in his broad public spirit of philanthropy"* (Davids 1896 p. 33).

Professor Herman Oldenberg in his pioneering work, Buddha, too, was of the same opinion when he said,

> *"It is certain that Buddhism has acquired as an inheritance from Brahmanism not merely a series of its most important dogmas but what is not less significant to the historian, the bent of its religious thought and feeling, which is more easily comprehended than expressed in words"* (p. 53).

Much later, Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan had been the most ardent supporter of these views. In a foreword written in 1956 to the Government of India publication, "2500 years of Buddhism" (ed. P. V. Bapat), he says,

> *"The Buddha did not feel that he was announcing a new religion. He was born, grew up and died a Hindu. … Buddhism was an offshoot of the more ancient faith of Hindus, perhaps a schism or a heresy"*(pp. ix and xii).

Dr. Radhakrishnan's assessment of the relationship between Buddhism and Brahmanism has undergone a gradual change. In his magnificent work *Indian Philosophy* in two volumes published in London in 1927 he began the chapter on Buddhism with the statement,

> *"There is no question that the system of early Buddhism is one of the* ***most original*** *which the history of philosophy presents"* (Vol. 1 p. 342).

This is followed by the comment,

> *"Early Buddhism is not an absolutely original doctrine. It is not a freak in the evolution of Indian thought. Buddha did not break away completely from the spiritual ideas of his age and country. To be in open revolt against the conventional and legalistic religion of the time is one thing; to abandon the living spirit behind it is another"* (Vol. I p. 360).

Three Preliminary Considerations

There are a number of points, which should be clarified before we proceed to discuss these views:

1. **CHRONOLGY**: The foremost among them is the **question of chronology**. As far as Buddhism is concerned, chronology presents little difficulty. According to the tradition preserved in Southern Buddhist countries, the demise of the Buddha took place in 544-43 BCE and this date has been established with historical evidence by Paranavitana (*Paranavitana EZ V*, p. 86 ff). Even otherwise, the date as accepted by most modern scholars on the basis of Chinese records and Greek and Latin sources is 483 BCE. In a country where events have to be dated vaguely as falling within centuries or even millennia, a difference of sixty years is negligible.

   While the date of Buddhism is known with a greater degree of certainty even after considering the recent dates suggested by Western scholars like Heinz Bechert and Richard Gombrich (Guruge 1990 pp. 3-4), other philosophical systems have to be dated purely on speculation. But the antiquity of Brahmanism is not disputed even though the actual dates are in dispute. (I have excluded from this discussion the dates as proposed by the publications of Akhil Bharatiya Itihasa Sankalan like Rajendra Singh Kushwaha's *Glimpses of Bharatiya History* or the prolific writings of David Frawley which call for in-depth scrutiny. In refuting the theory of an Aryan Invasion, these works place the Vedas in the fifth millennium BCE and the Buddha in 1800 BCE).

   The Ṛgveda, which on linguistic and cultural evidence is dated not later than 1500 BCE, is, no doubt, the oldest document of the Aryans, which reflects the growth as well as the consolidation of those religious and philosophical views, that ultimately formed the basis of Brahmanism. It is also agreed that the later *Saṃhitās*, namely the Sāmaveda and the Yajurveda, came into existence in their present form at a date not later than 1000 BCE, while the development of the *Brāhmaṇa* literature on sacrificial rites and ceremonies is assumed to have taken place between 1000 BCE and 800 BCE. By this time, two of the fundamental aspects of Brah-

manism were well established: namely, the concept and technique of sacrifice and the caste system. Thus, if the Buddha, who lived in the sixth century BCE, was really a follower of the Brahmanical way of life, he should have subscribed to the doctrines relating to these matters at least during the earlier phase of his life.

II. **GEOGRAPHY**: The second problem, which has to be settled as a preliminary step in our discussion is the **question of geography**. Whether as invaders or as peaceful migrants, the Rgvedic Aryans appear to have come to the Indian subcontinent via the passes in the North-western Frontier Region. The early hymns of the Ṛgveda refer to geographical features of this region. The ancient settlement of the Aryans in the Indian subcontinent was known as "Sapta-sindhavaḥ," that is, "the land of seven rivers" (RV. VIII, 24, 27). Though there had been several interpretations of this term by Max Muller, Ludwig, Lassen and Whitney, the most reasonable view appears to be that the seven rivers were the Indus, the five rivers of Punjab and the Sarasvati. The gradual widening of the geographical horizon is reflected in the *Ṛgveda* itself. Thus in a later hymn, reference is made to such rivers as Gaṅgā and Yamunā, which lay further towards the East (RV. X,75). In commenting on this hymn, Max Muller said,

> *"It shows us the widest geographical horizon of the Vedic poets, confined by the snowy mountains in the North, the Indus or the sea, in the South and the valley of the Jumna and Ganges in the East. Beyond that, the world, though open, was unknown to the Vedic poets"(The Vedas pp. 95-96).*

The geographical data in the later *Saṃhitās* and the *Brāhmaṇas* merely reveal a drift to the east, but there is no definite evidence either to indicate the route or to mark the eastern-most boundary. If Revottaras in *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa* is a variation of Reva, the southern boundary of the areas known to Aryans of the Brāhmaṇas might have been the river Narmadā. The names of the two cities Kauśambi and Kampila in the same Brāhmaṇa help to establish the eastern limit with a certain amount of accuracy. But

it is presumed that the Aryans had moved further east at the time of the Brāhmaṇas; however, the evidence on which a definite conclusion can be drawn is somewhat vague.

The problem is related to the identification of the river Sadānīra mentioned in *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa* as the boundary between the Kosalas and the Videhas. The mention of Videha is of special significance, as it occurs in a story, which deals with the spread of Aryan culture. Videgha Māthava, with his priest Gotama Rahugaṇa, is said to have carried the sacrificial fire from river Sarasvati to the land across river Sadānīra, where the kingdom of Videha was established. This is clearly an indication of the manner in which Brahmanism spread eastwards.

It was very unlikely that the Aryans as a hoard invaded or migrated *en masse* into this region. Only a few adventurers could have gone eastwards to seek their fortune and incidentally to spread their culture. The accounts found in the epic *Rāmāyaṇa* about the Aryanization of the Southern parts of the Indian subcontinent also give us an idea of the role which Ṛṣis and Brahmans might have played. They might have spread into the eastern region, too, in a similar manner and established hermitages, which might have served as pockets of Brahmanical culture. This is an important aspect to be borne in mind when the extent to which Brahmanism was known in the east is to be gauged.

III. **AUTHORSHIP OF CULTURES**: There is a third problem, which is closely related to that of the geographical horizon. Were the Aryans the only people who contributed towards the cultural evolution of ancient Indian subcontinent? Only a very few scholars had so far devoted adequate attention to this question. The majority were apparently satisfied with the theory that Aryans, a branch of the Indo-European family, entered the Indian subcontinent through the passes in the North-western Frontier and moved steadily towards the east and the south widening their range of settlements in the shape of a mighty wedge and that their religious and philosophical views evolved gradually from animism to polytheism, and from polytheism to pantheism and monism, while their religious practices ranged from elaborate sacrificial rites to

asceticism and pure philosophical speculation. This, indeed, is a very simple explanation of the cultural processes of ancient Indian subcontinent; but its simplicity is the result of two factors:

Firstly, the pioneering scholars were over-impressed by the volume as well as the character of the ancient Indian literature. *Ṛgveda*, the later *Saṃhitās*, the *Brāhmaṇas*, the *Āraṇyakas* and the *Upaniṣads*, in addition to *Vedāṅgas*. Their works showed a development in Indian thought which appeared logical, regular, and sequential. It was, therefore, difficult for them to visualize any other influences, which in their own way could have been adequately formidable as to leave an indelible mark in the cultural pattern of the Indian subcontinent.

Secondly, the real serious work in this field was undertaken and completed long before the discovery of the Indus Valley Civilization, which was a significant eye-opener. It was enough evidence to refute the argument that Aryans met in the Indian subcontinent only aboriginal tribes with no cultural attainments. The Aryans, in fact, could have come in contact with a superior civilization or mingled with an existing civilization to enrich it further. To imagine that the Indus Valley people merely succumbed to the "Aryan invaders" is idle. What was most likely was a cultural synthesis.

What evidence is there to disprove that the culture reflected in the *Ṛgveda* and the later Vedic works is not the result of an admixture of the Aryan and Indus Valley cultures? To my mind, the differences, which exist between the Avestan Aryans of Iran and the Ṛgvedic Aryans of the Indian subcontinent, were brought about by this synthesis. If this was possible, there is nothing to prevent one from concluding that similar cultural contacts were possible in other parts of the Indian subcontinent.

It should also be noted here that the general conception has been that various peoples entered the Indian subcontinent through her passes in the North-west. Were there no other migrations to the Indian subcontinent? Could not some tribes find a way by her passes in the North-east? In fact, the Aryan migrants themselves could have moved into the North-eastern region of the Indian subcontinent and settled down long before the Ṛgvedic Aryans came.

Who were the Vrātyas? There were also other possibilities.
The Chinese, too, were active in very early times. They had evolved a highly developed culture and were in a position to influence these parts of the Indian subcontinent culturally and by physical presence. One would, however, call for evidence. It should be admitted that there are no documents whatsoever to support this contention. But there is one very important piece of evidence. There are two references in Buddhist literature and the *Rāmāyaṇa* to kings of North-eastern Indian subcontinent, who were playing a leading role in the agricultural life of the people. In the Buddhist works, we meet King Suddhodana of Kapilavatthu participating in ceremonial ploughing. The king is said to have been at the head of the train of people who ploughed their fields on this ceremonial occasion. Similarly, the *Rāmāyaṇa* narrates how King Janaka found Sītā on the occasion of ceremonial ploughing. This custom finds no reference in the Vedic literature. The only parallel, which I am aware of, is from Chinese culture. As far back as the Shang Period (1760 -1122 BCE) the Chinese had evolved the concept of the farmer-emperor and had maintained the traditional rite of the emperor ploughing a field at the Temple of Earth at the beginning of each year until the fall of the Manchu dynasty two centuries ago.

I

Buddhism and Brahmanism: The Pāli Canon on Vedas and Vedic Brahmanism

I have discussed these three problems in order to emphasize the need for an open mind in analysing the question of Buddhism and its relationship with other Indian systems. The issues are so complicated that one cannot afford to be too confident, as both Professor Rhys Davids and Dr. Radhakrishnan had been in summarily stating that the Buddha was born, grew up and died a Hindu.

Let us take the data at our disposal. As the Vedic texts do not give us any definite material to establish the relationship between Brahma-

nism and Buddhism, we should search for evidence in Buddhist literature. From the Pāli Canon, whose authenticity is the least in dispute, we find that Buddhist circles of the Indian subcontinent in the east were familiar with the Vedas and the principles of Brahmanism. The early texts of the Buddhist Canon speak of the Three Vedas (*Sn*. verse 594), the *Devayāna* (*DN*. I, p. 215), Ṛgvedic gods (*Loc. Cit*. p. 244), the Sāvitrī hymn of twenty-four syllables (*Sn*. verse 568) some of the Vedic Sākhās such as Addhariyā, Tittiriyā, Chāndoka, Chandavā, and Brahmacariya (*DN*. I, p. 236), and a list of Vedic seers which recurs a number of times as the ancient Ṛṣis, composers of the Mantras (*DN* I, p. 104, *Vin*. I, p. 245, *AN*. III, p. 224 and IV, p. 6).

They were also quite conversant with the subject-matter of the Brāhmaṇas. The fire sacrifice and also Aśvamedha, Puruṣamedha and Vājapeya are referred to (*Sn*. verse 303). Analysing the *Brāhmaṇadhammika Sutta* of the *Suttanipāta*, it will be seen that the contemporary religious practices were identical with those of the *Brāhmaṇas* (Sn. verses 284ff). Sacrifices attended by bloodshed were the normal procedure and the Buddha vehemently opposed them. The *Brāhmaṇadhammika Sutta* is an unambiguous exposition of the Buddha's attitude to both Brahmans and their ritual; he traces a gradual degeneration of the Brahmans from selfless seekers after truth to money-grabbing sacrificers who kill cattle and persuade kings to perform sacrifices, saying, "Much indeed is your wealth. Increase it by the performance of sacrifice." The Buddha states that even Indra and other deities discard these Brahmans. Similar, and even more severe, attacks on the ancient Brāhmaṇa institution of sacrifice are found in abundance in the Buddhist Canon.

Not only-were sacrificial rites the target of the. Buddha's attacks; the caste system of the Brahmans too was severely criticised. The standpoint of the Buddha is, however, too well known to be discussed in detail. It will, nevertheless, suffice me to state that the Buddha was opposed to the caste system from both the spiritual and the social point of view. As a teacher of a lofty code of ethics, he revolted against the unfair discrimination against humans on grounds of birth. Further, as a Kṣatriya he treated the Brahmans with little respect. It is interesting to note how the Buddha is represented as winding up an argument on caste in the *Ambaṭṭhasutta* of the *Dighanikāya* by reciting an ancient stanza to the effect that the Kṣatriyas are the best of men.

There should be no doubt from these data that the Buddha was not prepared to accept either of the two fundamental principles of Brahmanism. Dr. Radhakrishnan, of course, is unable to refute it. But he considers that the open revolt against these does not constitute a complete breakaway from the spiritual ideas of his age and country. This is no doubt true, provided it is conceded that Brahmanism, alone, did not constitute the spiritual ideas of the Buddha's age and the part of the country in which he lived and taught. The need for such a proviso is based on the fact that even the metaphysics and ethics, which the Buddha preached, had developed with no direct connection with Brahmanism. For instance, Brahmanism places very little emphasis on ethics.

It is impossible even to imagine that the inspiration for such codes of ethics as one meets in Buddhism and Jainism came from the Vedic literature. Buddhist ethics are closely related to the ascetic ideal of life it upholds. But one does not find that aspect of religious life in any Vedic texts of the pre-Buddhist times. The evidence in both Buddhism and Jainism leads most poignantly to a conclusion that the religious values of the Northeastern region of the Indian subcontinent were more ethical and that they were connected with the doctrines of Karma and Rebirth, which were specifically non-Brahmanical in origin. The ascetic ideal developed with the aid of such doctrines. Dr. E. J. Thomas was correct when he said in *A History of Buddhist Thought*, that "probably pre-Aryan influences were at work" (p. 10); presumably what he meant by 'pre-Aryan' is really the non-Brahmanical Śramaṇa Cult, whose origins seem to extend to the Indus Valley Civilization (Cf. images of Proto-Siva in yogic posture). The doctrines of Karma and Rebirth are neither Vedic nor Brahmanical. They find no reference in the early Vedic literature.

The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, in fact, gives some valuable data to establish the contention that Brahmans knew nothing about these doctrines. It says,

> *"As to what you have told me, O! Gautama, this knowledge has never yet come to Brahmans before you and therefore in all the world has the rule belonged to the Kṣatriya only" (V, 3).*

In the seventh Chapter of *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, we come across another interesting statement: Nārada, apparently the revered Ṛṣi of

the Brāhmaṇas, comes to Sanatkumāra, saying, 'Teach me, Sir." Sanatkumāra teaches him the doctrines of soul and karma. It is not so much the doctrines, which draw our attention as the name, Sanatkumāra. We meet him so often in the Buddhist literature; the Buddha himself is said to have referred to him as a Kṣatriya teacher.

Even though I have not marshalled enough data to warrant a definite conclusion, I may yet venture to hazard the opinion that even the fundamental Upaniṣadic teachings arose in the East and their propagation was particularly sponsored by the kings of Videha and Kāśi among whom Janaka and Ajātaśatru find specific mention in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (BrU. II, I, I).

These data will no doubt show that Buddhism can in no way be called a mere restatement of Brahmanical teachings.

II

Buddhism and the Teachings of the Upaniṣads

Let us now examine the second statement that the Buddha based his system on the teachings of the *Upaniṣads*. The earlier scholars were not emphatic in associating Buddhism with the *Upaniṣads*. For instance, Professor Max Muller merely stated,

> *"In that fifth century B.C. took place the rise of Buddhism, a religion built up on the ruins of the Vedic religion, and founded, so to say, on the denial of the divine authority ascribed to the Veda by all orthodox Brahmans"* (The Vedas p. 128).

It was George Grimm, who in 1926 in his *The Doctrine of the Buddha*, hinted at a possible connection between the two systems. He said,

> *"Thus the Buddha has not become untrue to Indian thinking; rather is his doctrine* ***the flower*** *of Indian thought. He is* ***'the true Brahman'****, who has completely realized the ideal of the Upaniṣads. And precisely because this is so, India will again greet him as her greatest son, as soon as she again shall have recognized this"* (p. 502).

The Indian subcontinent was not so late in recognizing this, for in the very next year, Dr. Radhakrishnan in his *Indian Philosophy* advanced the theory that the Buddha was not so much creating a new dharma as rediscovering an old norm. It was presented most cautiously as a conjecture. He said,

> *"Early Buddhism,* ***we venture to hazard a conjecture****, is only a restatement of the thought of the Upaniṣads from a new standpoint"* (I p.361) (emphasis mine).

He also explained the manner in which the doctrines of the Upaniṣads were adapted by the Buddha:

> *"To develop his theory Buddha had only to rid the Upaniṣads of their inconsistent compromises with Vedic polytheism and religion, set aside the transcendental aspect as being indemonstrable to thought and unnecessary to morals and emphasize the ethical universalism of the Upaniṣads"* (*Ibid*.).

Further in his discussion of early Buddhism he admittedly assumed that the spirit of the Upaniṣads is the life-spring of Buddhism.

Let us examine these views in the light of what is revealed by the Buddhist Canon.

First and foremost, the absence of any reference to the Upaniṣads should be noted. There is, however, a Pāli word *upanisā* which some have attempted to explain as meaning the Upaniṣads. In verse 75 of the Dhammapada, this word occurs in the following form: *"Aññā lābhūpanisā aññā nibbāṇagāmiṇī"*. In *Majjhimanikāya* III, p. 7, it occurs in a compound as *"Samādhiṃ saupanisaṃ"*. In both contexts the only permissible meaning is that of *upaniśraya* (cause or means).

Brahman, Ātman and Brahmasahavyatā

The two main terms of the *Upaniṣads*, *Brahman* and *Ātman* are, however, profusely used in the *Suttas*. At first sight the shades of meaning and the philosophical import of these terms seem to reveal an actual relationship between the *Upaniṣads* and Buddhism. But a more

careful examination reveals entirely different results.

The term *Brahmā*, which is always used in the masculine sense in Buddhist texts, refers to the personal God. The Upaniṣadic notion of a neuter principle is not found in the Buddhist Canon. Here *Brahmā* is described in the *Brahmajālasutta* as the great Brahmā, the conqueror, the unconquered, the all-seeing, the controller, the lord, the maker, the creator, the greatest, the mover, the powerful and the father of all past and future beings (*DN*, I, p. 46). In the *Kevaṭṭasutta* he is not even omniscient (*Ibid.* I, 221). The epithets used for *Brahmā* elsewhere in the Canon, too, have no relation to the Upaniṣadic principle. Here the Brahmā is said to be celibate, free of hatred, malice and stain and very powerful (*Ibid*. I, p. 247), while the Upaniṣadic Brahman can only be described in negative terms as imperishable, infinite, unqualified and *neti neti* (not this only, not that only).

There is in the *Tevijjāsutta* an important term. The Buddha, in discussing the religious practices of Brahmans, states that the goal of such rites is "*Brahmāsahavyatā*" (the company of Brahmā). Dr. I. G. Jennings believes that this reference is to the neuter Brahman of the Vedanta and in his *The Vedantic Buddhism of the Buddha*, interprets *"Sahavyatā"* as complete absorption. (p. 556) It is rather difficult to assume that the Upaniṣadic concept of a universal soul into which individual souls were re-absorbed is what is expressed in this *Sutta*. On the other hand, one can discern a more ancient and primitive concept behind this term. *"Brahmasahavyatā"* appears in all likelihood to be a synonym of *"Brahmasalokatā"*; that is, being in the same realm as the personal god Brahmā. The path for the attainment of this state is given in the *Tevijjāsutta*. It is plainly the Vedic *karma-mārga* – the path of sacrifice. The preachers of this path are listed and we do not find the names of Upaniṣadic teachers of repute such as Yajñavālkya, Uddālaka, Āruṇi, Sākalya or Gārgi. Instead, we meet Aṭṭhaka, Vāmaka, Vāmadeva, Vessāmitta, Yamataggi, Aṅgīrasa, Bhāradvāja, Vāseṭṭha, Kassapa and Bhagu. These were really the composers of Ṛgvedic hymns. How was it that Buddhist literature shows no knowledge of the great Upaniṣadic thinkers?

My contention, therefore, is that the fundamental doctrine of a universal soul from which the individual souls emanated and into which they should ultimately return was also unknown in the Buddhist

circles. The trends of Indian philosophy with which they were familiar belonged to an earlier era than that of the Upaniṣads.

Let us examine the philosophical import of the other Upaniṣadic term so frequently used in the Buddhist Canon. ***"Ātman"*** occurs in the Suttas in both a positive form, *attā* and a negative formulation, *Anattā. Attā*, in addition to being a reflexive pronoun, means the "soul." In this sense it finds no place in Buddhist philosophy, but occurs always in the criticisms and enunciations of rival teachings. Thus we hear of sixteen ways how *attā* is conscious after death, eight ways how it is unconscious and not subject to decay and seven ways how it is annihilated (DN. I, p. 31). As such, we have here an opportunity of investigating the traces, if any, of the Upaniṣadic concept of *Ātman* in the theories of *attā* known to the Buddha.

Attā as identical with the body was a concept well-known in Buddhist circles. Poṭṭhapada speaks of a material *(Olārika) Attā*, having a form composed of the four elements and enjoying food *(rūpiṃ, cātumahābhūtikaṃ, kabalinkāhārabhakkhaṃ)* (*ibid*. I, p. 186). Also, the Buddha is reported to have said, "It would be better if an uninstructed person should consider as his Attā this body composed of the four elements, rather than the mind" (*SN*. II, p. 94). There are a few places in the Canon, where the *Attā* and the form *(rūpa)* are treated as identical: "*My* form is the *Attā*" *(Rūpaṃ me attā)* (*Ibid*. III, 219). Commentarial literature explains it as "He looks upon the form and *Attā* as indivisible" *(Rūpañ ca attañ ca advayaṃ samanupassati)* (*Atthasālini* p. 300; *Papancasūdani* p. 300). This conception of *Attā* evinces some resemblance to certain views found in the old *Upaniṣads*. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* states, "His body *(Ātman)* indeed is his work, for with his body he performs work" (I, 4, 17). *Taittirīya* II,4 further remarks "This indeed, is its bodily *self" (Tasyaisa eva śarīra atmā)*. But the *Ātman* as *Śarīra* marks *only* a very primitive stage of the Upaniṣadic speculations and is turned down as an imperfect understanding, which satisfies *only* the Asuras (Virocana – cf. *ChU*. VIII). Furthermore, it can be questioned whether a material *Attā* as described by Poṭṭhapāda refers to the Upaniṣadic or the *Cārvāka* materialistic teachings of *Ātman*.

A second *Attā* is mind-made *(Manomaya)*, comprising all major and minor limbs and not devoid of sense-organs *(Sabbaṅga-paccaṅgim*

ahīnindriyaṃ) (*DN*. I, p. 186). The notion of *Ātman* as the mind, the receptacle of sense-perceptions, no doubt, represents also a stage, though a passing one, in the gradual development of the Upaniṣadic *Atman* concept. If the rather ambiguous statement in *Aṅguttaranikāya*, *"Attā te purisa jānāti saccaṃ vā yadi vā musā"* (*AN*. I, p. 57) can be explained as "Your *Ātman*, o man, knows if it is true or false", we can surmise that the *Ātman* as the subject of sense perception was a notion familiar to the early Buddhists. But a more valid translation, taking *attā* to be the reflexive pronoun, could be "You yourself know if it is true or false."

The third Attā, enunciated by Poṭṭhapada, is formless and made of *Sajñā* (consciousness) (*DN*. I, p. 186). The old Upaniṣads, however, refer to a formless *Ātman*. made of *Sajñā*. But we may consider that this notion has its prototype in the old Upaniṣadic *prajñāmaya-ātman*.

A fourth theory postulates an *Ātman*, which is eternal *(Sassato)* and having form and consciousness *(rūpī Saññā)* (*Ibid*. III, p.137).

These four theories of *Ātman* can be connected only with certain stages in the development of the Upaniṣadic *Ātman* concept as observed by Betty Heimann in her *Studien Zur Eigenart Indischen Denkens* (p. 56 ff). But the fully developed Upaniṣadic *Ātman* as the imperishable, unperceived all-functioner, the inner controller, that is immanent in all beings and things of the Universe and is identical with the super-personal creative, underlying and re-absorbing principle of Brahman, is neither here nor anywhere in the Buddhist Canon expounded.

On the other hand, the *Attā* which is denied in Buddhism is more a psychological illusion of *Ahaṃkāra* (I-ness) and *Mamatva* (My-ness). Hence the formulation of the Buddha's refutation of Attā runs as *"Na etaṃ mama. Na eso ahaṃ asmi. Na me eso attā"* (*MN*. I, p. 135). The *Anattālakkhaṇasutta* emphatically states that there is no *Attā* – or rather room for *Attā* – for one cannot determine for one's self how one's *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, etc., should be. (cf. *Avasavattatthena anattā*, *Anattā* because of the impossibility to control – *Nettippakaraṇa* 6.21). Physical change from growth to decay in bodily existence is a natural law beyond human control. This teaching of *Anattā*, as far as the Suttas go, compares only with the *Nirmamatvaṃ* and the *Nirātmakatvam* of later *Upaniṣads* like the *Maitrāyana Upaniṣad* (cf. *Mait. Up*. VI, 20. 21), which had been strongly influenced by the teachings of Yogic system and even quite likely by Buddhism.

While the Buddha stresses man's incapacity to control the course of natural evolution and stops at a negation, the Upaniṣads postulate an inner controller *(Antar-yāmin)* in the form of the *Ātman*, who is identical with the *Brahman* or the *Paramātman*. *Brahman*, again, it is taught, transcends the relativity, the impermanence and the imperfection of the single *Ātman*.

Nāmarūpa, Samsāra and Nirvāṇa

We shall also consider, now, the apparently common notions of *Nāmarūpa*, *Saṃsāra* and *Nirvāṇa*. *Nāmarūpa* in the *Upaniṣads* is a term suggesting two concrete and empirical factors, viz., the name or designation and the form. Every embodied *Ātman* has a *Nāma* and a *Rūpa* (cf. *ChU*. VIII, 14; *BrU*. 1.4.7 and 1.6.4). In Buddhism the term *Nāmarūpa* is given a new and wider interpretation. The five aggregates or the component parts *(khandhas)*, which constitute a being, are divided into the two categories of *Nāma* and *Rūpa*, where *Nāma* represents the four psychological phenomena of *Vedanā*, *Saññā*, *Saṃkhāra* and *Viññāṇa*.

The belief in *Saṃsāra* was common to all sects of the Indian subcontinent other than the *Cārvākas* since the times of the *Brāhmaṇas* and hence it can be regarded as belonging to the religious and philosophical public property of the Indian subcontinent. The direct influence of the Upaniṣads, therefore, is not necessarily to be surmised here.

With regard to the concept of *Nirvāṇa*, we have to apply a slightly different method. It is true that the word *"Nirvāṇa"* occurs, not in the old and the middle *Upaniṣads*, but only in the *Bhagavadgītā* and later *Upaniṣads*, such as *Āruneya Upaniṣad* and *Nirvāṇa Upaniṣad*, which are later than Buddhism. Even if we could assume that Buddhism here has influenced Hindu thought, the contents of the Upaniṣadic *Nirvāṇa* or the *Brahma-nirvāṇa* concept develop not on Buddhist lines, but under the influence of pre-Buddhist Upaniṣadic notions. In Buddhism, *Nirvāṇa*, whether it is complete cessation of existence or a state of ending all suffering is a form of liberation attained through psychological development. It is a Yogic attainment. The Upaniṣadic *Nirvāṇa* or *Brahmanirvāṇa*, on the other hand, is the re-absorption into the universal source of Brahman, caused by the realization of the true knowl-

edge that the *Ātman* is essentially the same as *Brahman*.

With this survey we may arrive at the conclusion that the Buddha and his disciples, whose speeches and discourses are recorded in the Canon, knew for certain the *Vedas* and the *Brāhmaṇas*; they were quite conversant with the Brahmanic ritual. But their knowledge of the Upaniṣads was not complete in so far as they did not take into consideration the climax of Upaniṣadic teachings: namely, the cosmic doctrines of *Brahman* and *Ātman*, which are united in a primary and final, pre- and post-empirical, stage. The Buddhist circles knew Brahman as a personal deity – *Brahmā*, and *Ātman* as a psychological and merely individual factor. In the Tripiṭaka, as a whole, a characteristic vagueness pervades all that is akin to the Upaniṣadic teachings.

It is very doubtful whether one can still hold the view that the Upaniṣadic teachings were the life-spring of Buddhism. The unacceptability of the claim made by some writers that the Buddha's contribution to Indian thought was made in the role of a popularizer of Upaniṣadic doctrines should be abundantly clear from the fore-going discussion of actual literary data. A comparison of the essential doctrines of the two systems will throw further light.

Origin and Nature of the Universe

The basic difference between Buddhism and the Upaniṣadic philosophy relates to their notions of the origin and the nature of the Universe. It is true that the Buddha was not inclined to discuss the question of the Universe seriously, simply because he pragmatically considered that such knowledge, though of academic interest, did not contribute towards the salvation of humankind. His attitude was vividly expressed by means of the parable of the wounded man. "When a man is shot at with an arrow and a doctor comes to attend on him, the primary concern of the wounded man should be to have the arrow removed and the wound attended to. Instead, if he were to inquire as to who shot the arrow, what his caste or complexion or stature was, he would, long before the answers are found, succumb to the injury."

Thus from the Buddha's point of view, the search was meaningless and hence to be abandoned in preference to the path that leads one

to complete deliverance. But, on the other hand, the Upaniṣadic philosophy has no foundation if its teachings relating to the origin of the Universe are not there. The neuter principle of Brahman, the active as well as the material cause of the Universe, is an essential concept. The Universe comes into existence when all phenomena including individual souls emanate from it and the end of suffering (and hence the final bliss) lies in the re-absorption into it. By its very nature, it has to be permanent and static. Unborn, imperishable, immutable and eternal, the Brahman is the very antithesis of change. Such a view is repugnant to the Buddhist concept of the nature of the Universe. According to the Buddha, impermanence is the very nature of all existence. There is nothing that escapes this universal law.

This doctrine of impermanence goes hand in hand with that of Dependent Causation or Origination. There is no cause, which is uncaused. Existence is the result of an ever-continuing chain of actions and reactions; one thing leads to another and that to a further thing. This doctrine of Dependent Causation or Origination, called the *Paṭicca-samuppāda* is **the most salient** contribution made by the Buddha to Indian thought (*Walpola Rahula* p. 53ff). With this the Buddha shattered the very foundation of the Upaniṣadic philosophy. Neither the *Brahman* nor the *Ātmans* can retain their Upaniṣadic character when viewed from the point of view of *Paṭicca-samuppāda*.

Therefore, can one continue to recognize in the Buddha's mission a direct or even an indirect attempt to propagate or popularise Upaniṣadic teachings?

III

Buddhism and Patañjali Yoga

Let us now examine the third statement, namely, that the Buddha was a follower of the Yoga system of Patañjali. On purely chronological grounds this contention stands disproved. Though the orthodox Hindus claim a hoary antiquity for Patañjali, there is no evidence to date him earlier than 300 BCE. In fact the general consensus of opinion is that the date of Patanjali's *Yoga Sūtra* falls between 300 and

100 BCE (*Macdonell* p. 396; *Radhakrishnan* II p. 341). But the Yoga system is very old; perhaps, it is even older than *Ṛgveda*.

In several seals discovered in the Indus Valley, there is a figure seated in a conventional yogic posture. Yoga, however, is not referred to in any early Vedic texts. The earliest references are in the later *Upaniṣads* such as the *Kaṭha*, *Taittirīya* and the *Maitrāyani* (*Radhakrishnan* p. II p. 339). These works are more or less contemporaneous with the Buddha, if not later. But they do not give us any definite or detailed information of the Yogic system. On the other hand, the Buddhist texts evince a greater familiarity with Yogic practices. The Buddha was not only conversant with this system but also ready to adapt it to his path of deliverance. From the accounts of the Buddha's quest for deliverance, it is clear that the teachers, Ālāra Kālāma and Uddaka Rāmaputta (*MN*. I, 163ff; 240ff), to whom he went for instruction, were masters of Yoga, and the spiritual attainments which he experienced under their guidance, were Yogic in character.

The term "Yoga" occurs in the Pāli Canon, though not in the sense of a particular system of spiritual training. In most contexts, it means

(i) application, endeavour, undertaking, effort
(ii) magic power or spells and
(iii) bondage, tie, attachment. (PTS-PD sv)

The term *"Yogi"* occurs in older verses and here it is used as a synonym for *"muni"* (TG. I, 947). A Bhikkhu, devoted to meditation and spiritual exercises is called a *"Yogāvacara"* which need not strictly mean "one who is at home in Yoga" because the first part of the compound can also mean simply 'endeavour'. Thus *"Yogāvacara"* can mean a bhikkhu who is dedicated to spiritual endeavour. Similarly the frequent epithet to *Nibbāṇa*, *"Yogakkhema"* does not necessarily mean "safety gained through Yoga", as the general interpretation as "peace from bondage" appears justifiable. Again, in a statement like *"āsavānaṃ khayāya yogo karaṇīyo"* in the *Dutiyasamādhisutta* of *Aṅguttaranikāya,* the term "Yoga" is used more as a common noun meaning "endeavour or effort" than as a proper noun denoting a philosophical system. Likewise, the two Buddhist texts,

which are called *Yogasuttas* in the *Samyutta* and *Aṅguttaranikāya*, refer to fourfold bonds of sensual desire, becoming, wrong view and ignorance. While a doubt thus exists as to the term "Yoga," the terminology of the Yogic system is frequently confronted in the Buddhist Canon. *Samādhi, Jhāna (Dhyāna), Samāpatti, Saṃyama,* etc. occur in identical meanings in both Buddhist and Yogic systems.

Besides the terminological similarities, which are not unusual as all religious and philosophical systems of the Indian subcontinent used a common vocabulary, there are many resemblances in practices, which establish the dependence of Buddhism on early Yogic teachings. With the paramount importance assigned by the Buddha to the purification of the mind as an essential part of a person's spiritual training, meditation and the control of the mind are fundamental to the Buddhist path of deliverance. The mind, which according to Buddhism is the sixth sense organ, is fickle and subject to constant change; it has to be brought under one's control. For this purpose, many forms of mental culture are recommended by the Buddha. The development of mindfulness by pondering over subjects of meditation is stated to be the surest way to control one's mind and thereby attain the goal of spiritual pursuit.

In a very early text, the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhānasutta* of both *Dīghanikāya* and *Majjhimanikāya*, embodying a sermon which the Buddha had preached on his own accord, four subjects of meditation, namely, the human body, sensations, thoughts and mind-objects were described as the "Foundations of Mindfulness." The preparation for meditation outlined in this text is not only reminiscent of Yoga but also adumbrates a system, which the *Yoga Sūtras* had subsequently elaborated. Here the "*Yogāvacara*" is enjoined to find a quiet place, free from disturbances, such as a forest, the foot of a tree or an empty house. He should sit cross-legged with his body erect. Then he should proceed to mindful breathing *(ānāpānasati)*, by which he is expected to breathe in and out consciously and with awareness. The subjects of meditation are taken up when the mind is calmed and brought to a point of concentration through this meditation. This process, though only briefly presented in the Buddhist text, includes the salient elements of the eightfold method of Yoga advocated by the *Yoga Sūtras* (*Radhakrishnan* II p. 352), which is as follows:

Yama	abstension (equivalent to *sīla* or moral purity of Buddhism).
Niyama	observance of internal and external purification (also included in Buddhist *sīla*).
Āsana	posture, which has to be easy, comfortable and steady (which corresponds to the requirement in Buddhism that the meditator should sit cross-legged with the body erect).
Prāṇāyāma	regulation of breath (comparable to the Buddhist concept of "Mindfulness in regard to breathing" though not quite correctly. The Buddhist *ānāpānasati* calls for only awareness or mindfulness of the process of breathing e.g. whether the breathing is brisk or slow etc. But the Yogic *Prāṇāyāma* is a deliberate regulation of the breath according to set patterns, which should be mastered with conscious effort, guidance and practice.).
Pratyāhara	withdrawal of the senses.
Dhyāna	fixed attention or trance.
Dhāraṇa	contemplation, and
Samādhi	concentration.

The similarity which exists between the four dhyānas of Buddhism and four states of conscious concentration in Yoga as well as their common emphasis on faith, energy, thought, concentration and wisdom are also noteworthy (*Vajiranana* pp. 35ff).

The striking point of divergence between the Buddhist concept and the Yogic system is the importance attached to the state of *Samādhi*. In the *Yoga Sūtras*, *Samādhi* is the ultimate goal and from it proceed other attainments such as suspended animation, levitation, knowledge of past births and others' minds and also the mastery over the first cause which results in absolute independence *(kaivalya)*. But in Buddhism, *Samādhi* is only an intermediary step in spiritual training, *Sīla* or moral purity being the first and *Paññā* or insight (*i.e*. the realization of the true nature of life as embodied in the Four Noble Truths etc.) being the final stages. Such an extension of the Yogic concept of the ultimate goal is understandable in Buddhism because the Buddha reportedly rejected the teachings of his Yogic teachers on the ground that they did not go far enough.

Another significant factor, which should be noticed in comparing Buddhism with Yoga, is the acceptance by the Buddha of higher men-

tal attainments of Yoga as not only possible and desirable but also as conducive to one's spiritual perfection. But these, in Buddhist texts, are not claimed to be intrinsically Buddhist for many an ascetic is said to have possessed Yogic powers even before the appearance of the Buddha. Besides, the use of Yogic powers of levitation, knowledge of others' thoughts etc. for purposes of worldly gain and renown has been strongly criticized by the Buddha (*Vin*. II, 110f).

The above facts very clearly show that the Buddha, besides knowing the Yoga as an ancient system of spiritual training, accepted its fundamental doctrines and, in evolving his system of mental culture, went beyond what the Yoga laid down. The elaborate system of meditation, which the Buddha formulated with as many as forty subjects of meditation, thirteen vows of physical restraint, and many aids for concentration (*Vajiranana* p. 71; *VM*. *Dhūtanga* and *Kammaṭṭhāna niddesas*), had an effect on the development of classical Yoga, while the developed Yoga techniques subsequently influenced the evolution of the Yogācāra Buddhist school (Bapat p. 122).

IV

Buddhism and Sāṅkhya Philosophy

The last of the statements, which I propose to discuss, necessitates a reference to Dr. Radhakrishnan. He says in his *Indian Philosophy*,

> *"The relation of Sāṅkhya to early Buddhism has given rise to much speculation as to mutual borrowing. Though Sāṅkhya works, which have come down to us, are later than the origin of Buddhism, and may have been influenced by Buddhist theories, the Sāṅkhya ideas themselves preceded Buddha and it is impossible to regard Buddhism as the source of the Sāṅkhya. If the Buddhist chain of causation resembles in some respects, the Sāṅkhya theory of evolution, it is because both of them have for their common source the Upaniṣads"* (II, p. 251).

Further on, he says,

> *"It seems to be very probable that the earliest form of the Sāṅkhya was a*

sort of realistic theism, approaching the Viśiṣṭadvaita view of the Upaniṣads. While this type of Sāṅkhya may be regarded as a legitimate development of the teaching of Upaniṣads, the dualistic Sāṅkhya, which insists on the plurality of Puruṣas and the independence of Prakṛti and drops all account of the Absolute can hardly be said to be in line with the teachings of the Upaniṣads. The question is how did it happen that the Sāṅkhya rejected the idea of the Absolute, which alone could make the system satisfactory? ***The Sāṅkhya did not become a well-co-ordinated system until after the rise of Buddhism. When Buddhism offered a challenge to realism, the Sāṅkhya accepted the challenge and argued on strictly rational grounds for the reality of selves and objects.*** *When it developed on a purely rationalistic soil, it was obliged to concede that there was no proof for the existence of God"* (ibid. p, 253 – emphasis mine).

The relationship between the Sāṅkhya system and Buddhism cannot be traced with any degree of certainty. The dissimilarities between them are as strong as the similarities. If Dr. Radhakrishnan is correct in his view that the Sāṅkhya was theistic at the beginning and that its theory of God was abandoned as a result of Buddhist influence, it is the Sāṅkhya system that is indebted to Buddhism. If the Sāṅkhya did drop one of its fundamental principles in deference to Buddhism, it is most likely that other aspects of the system were also influenced by Buddhism.

The non-acceptance of the theistic principle, which characterizes both Buddhism and the Sāṅkhya system, is the most conspicuous similarity between the two systems and has naturally raised the question of possible borrowings and influence in either direction. Dr. Arthur Berridale Keith in *A History of Sāṅkhya Philosophy*, dismissed the possibility of the development of the Sāṅkhya system out of Buddhism. He says,

"It is true that Sāṅkhya abandons the idea of existence of the Absolute, but it is, on the other hand, careful to retain the idea of spirit and nature; the doctrine of Buddhism, on the other hand, has in effect abandoned these two conceptions, and has left itself with only the fleeting series of mental states as a quasi reality, from which the development of the doctrine of the void is a natural enough step. It is impossible to prove, and certainly not plausible to believe, that from so developed a doctrine as that of Buddhism there could have grown the Sāṅkhya, which is indeed not a believer in the Absolute, but as little a believer in

> *the view that the only existing principle is the law of movement, which in essence is the view of Buddhism"* (pp. 24 & 33 – emphasis mine).

With regard to the view that Buddhism could have been influenced by Sāṅkhya concepts, Dr. Keith, like most other scholars who attempted to examine this issue, confronted the difficulty caused by the fact that the works on classical Sāṅkhya were of a much later origin than Buddhism. He felt that the Sāṅkhya as found in the Epics might be compared with Buddhism. Here, too, his conclusion was speculative:

> *"It seems best, therefore, to draw the conclusion that Buddhism did not draw its inspiration from the Sāṅkhya in the form in which it appears even in the epic, for there the doctrine of the isolation of spirit and nature and of the three Guṇas is fully and completely evolved"* (*Ibid*. p. 251 n).

But no less than twelve points of similarity are traceable between the two systems, viz.

(i) negation of or indifference to theism.
(ii) the belief in constant evolution *(parināmanityatva)*.
(iii) the denunciation of Vedic sacrifices and ascetic extravagances as well as the open hostility to caste system or the laxity with regard to Brahmanical restrictions.
(iv) the acceptance of suffering or misery as the nature of life.
(iv) the role played by *saṃskāra* (impressions) and *vāsanās* (tendencies) of past lives in determining the conditions of present and future lives.
(v) the renunciation of the concept of self, expressed in Buddhism as "*Ne'taṃ mama; N'eso'ham asmi; Na m'eso attā* (This does not belong to me; this am I not; this is not my Self) and in the Sāṅkhya as *"Nāsmi, na me, nāham"* (I am not; naught is mine; the ego exists not), as fundamental to deliverance.
(vi) the stress on the concept of causality or the law of cause and effect.
(vii) the correspondence between the four noble truths of Buddhism with the Sāṅkhya view of the *disease* (that from which release is to be sought), *health* (final release), the *cause of disease* (the cause of that from which release is to be sought) and *healing* (the means of attaining release).

(viii) the adoption of yogic approach of meditation, *(dhyāna)* as the path of release in both systems.
(ix) the emphasis laid on ignorance as the cause of bondage and suffering.
(x) the postulation of deliverance as the end of existence through knowledge by the elimination of *avijjā* in Buddhism and *aviveka* in Saṅkhya and;
(xi) the correspondence between the Buddhist doctrine of *Sopadisesa* and *Anupādisesa Nibbāṇa* with the Sāṅkhya concept of *Jīvanmukta* and *Videhakaivalya*.

These similarities, however, fail to establish any lines of influence from Sāṅkhya to Buddhism or vice versa because these broad points of agreement lose their significance when fundamental details are examined. While the approach to causality is common to the two systems, the theory of causation of one system differs from the other so vastly that each has to be stretched to its utmost to admit a semblance of what the other teaches. This is what Dr. Hermann Jacobi (*Ibid*. p. 26) did not realize when he came to the conclusion that the mere correspondence between the twelve principles of the Buddhist doctrine of Dependent Causation *(Paṭiccasamuppāda)* and the evolution series of the Sāṅkhya proved the dependence of the Buddha on the Sāṅkhya teachings. The significant difference, which existed in the order of evolution and in the stress laid on the evolution were glossed over by him altogether. Firstly, the Saṅkhya system begins with the postulation of a permanent entity, Puruṣa; secondly, the Sāṅkhya Chain of Causation explains the evolution of the material aspect of the Universe. In both respects the Buddhist *Paṭicca-samuppāda* is different. While no permanent entity is recognised here, it explains the evolution of the individual.

An examination of the literary data may also prove useful. Dr. Heinrich Zimmer in his *Philosophies of India* says:

> *"Sāṅkhya is referred to in the Buddhist Pāli Canon and Buddhist legends mention Kapila as one of the predecessors of the Buddha"* (p. 332).

Apparently Dr. Zimmer was depending on Dr. Rajendra Lal Mitra's statement quoted in Dr. Radhakrishnan's *Indian Philosophy* Vol. II,

> *"There is abundant evidence, both in Hindu and Buddhist works, of unquestionable antiquity and authenticity of the Sāṅkhya and Yoga systems having been current before the time of Buddha"* (p. 251 n).

Both Dr. Radhakrishnan and Dr. Zimmer refer to the *Brahmajāla-sutta* of the *Dīghanikāya*, wherein, among the sixty-two heretical teachings the Buddha describes a system of philosophy comparable to the Sāṅkhya;

> *"There are, o Bhikkhus, some recluses and Brahmans who are eternalists, and who on four grounds proclaim that both the soul and the world are eternal. They are addicted to logic and reasoning and give utterance to the following conclusions of their own, beaten out by their argumentation and based on their sophistry. 'Eternal is the soul; and the world is steadfast as a mountain peak, as a pillar firmly fixed; and these living creatures, though they pass from birth to birth, fall from one existence and spring up in another; yet they are for ever and ever"* (DN. I, p.30).

But the Sāṅkhya system is not referred to by name in the Buddhist Pāli Canon. While several Brahmans by the name of Kapila are mentioned in the Canon, only one, who may resemble the founder of the Sāṅkhya system, is referred to in the Udāna Commentary (p. 339 – See also DPPN s.v. Kapila) as an ancient teacher who taught that soul was limitless *(na antavā)*.

A very interesting word occurs often in the Pāli Canon as an epithet to the higher life of renunciation and religious training: *Sankha-likhhitam brahmacariyam* (*DN*. 1 p. 63; *Vin*. 1 p. 181). The meaning of this expression is obscure and the commentaries explain it as *"likhitasankha-sadisaṃ, dhota-sankha-sappaṭibhāgaṃ"* – pure, bright or perfect like the polished, inscribed or washed mother-of-pearl". This interpretation is not only far-fetched but also too figurative to be used in otherwise prosaic contexts as a frequent qualification for the life of religious training. One may, therefore, wonder whether the expression "Sankha-likhita" bears any reference to a form of religious life, which had been associated with the Sāṅkhya system. Patrick Olivelle's study of *Yatidharmasamuccaya* in his *Rules and Regulations of Brahmanical Asceticism* has thrown much light on the identification of Sankha and Likhita as two ancient and

duly recognized authorities on asceticism. Amidst such authorities as Śaunaka, Yajnavālkya, Jābali, Gārgi and others, these two are referred to individually and, quite frequently, jointly as exponents of certain specific aspects of ascetic life (*Olivelle* pp 41, 43, 45, 51, 69, 79, 81, 83, 86,107, 111, 117, 119, 133, 134, 141). Whether Sankha has anything to do with Sāṅkhya is nowhere suggested.

Aśvaghoṣa, in circa 100 CE gave a clue which may be usefully pursued in our attempt to trace the connection between Buddhism and the Sāṅkhya system. In his poem on the life of the Buddha, *Buddha-carita*, *Arāḍa* (i. e. *Ālāra Kālāma*) is said to have held Sāṅkhya views in a theistic setting. To what extent Aśvaghoṣa relied on a now-lost tradition, we cannot be sure; but the association of Sāṅkhya beliefs with a theistic element therein is not altogether untenab1e. Yoga has been very closely related to the Sāṅkhya system from very early times and Yoga was founded on a theistic footing. There is every reason to believe that a teacher of the calibre of *Ālāra Kālāma* could be an exponent of the combined teachings of Sāṅkhya and Yoga. Whatever similarities, which exist between Buddhism and the Sāṅkhya can be explained as a reflection of the Buddha's philosophical training under *Ālāra Kālāma*. The Buddha and his disciples were not only aware but familiar with the teachings of Sāṅkhya. Hence Dr. E. J. Thomas in *A History of Buddhist Thought* asks the question, "Did Buddhism get its notions of Sāṅkhya through the Yoga philosophy? (p. 80).

The data so far presented seem to permit the conclusion that the Buddha treated the Sāṅkhya teachings in identically the same manner as he dealt with the Yogic teachings. He used them in the formulation of his system of philosophy but went beyond their scope rejecting what was inapplicable. But the Sāṅkhya, he knew, was not the developed system of the classical age. The classical Sāṅkhya, on the other hand, can be shown to owe much of its development to Buddhism.

V

Conclusion

This brief survey of the place of Buddhism in Indian thought has brought to light a number of significant facts:

Firstly, the inadequacy of the current theories about the cultural evolution of the Indian subcontinent was strongly felt. There is a need to re-examine the data available with a view to assessing the pre-Aryan and other influences on Indian thought.

Secondly, the question of the relationship between Upaniṣadic philosophy and Buddhism is not so simple as to be dismissed with the generalized statement that Buddhism is another version of the *Upaniṣads*. The issues involved are so complicated that one should go deeper into details; it is idle to talk in terms of the spirit behind the *Upaniṣads* and general impressions, which unfortunately tend to be highly subjective. Literary data, alone, can give a full picture and with the evidence, which could be collected from the Pāli Texts, there was adequate proof that the most popular theory on the subject is unacceptable. And this applies not only to the Upaniṣadic problem but also to that of the Sāṅkhya system.

Lastly, the contributions to Indian thought made by the Buddha should be carefully borne in mind. It was no doubt the Buddha's admirable sense of humility, which led to his statement that he was not an original thinker. His theory of Dependent Causation or Origination was the most remarkable contribution to Indian thought. It is unique in the history of philosophy.

Abbreviations

AN	Aṅguttaranikāya
BrU	Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad
ChU	Chāndogya Upaniṣad
DN	Dīghanikāya
DPPN	Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names by Gunapala Malalsekera
EZ	Epigraphia Zeilanica
MN	Majjhimanikāya
PD	Pāli Dictionary
PTS	Pāli Text Society of London
RV	Ṛgveda
SN	Saṃyuttanikāya
Sn	Suttanipāta
TG	Theragāthā
Vin	Vinaya Piṭakam
VM	Visuddhimagga

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