

**THE PHILOSOPHICAL BASIS  
OF  
MAHÂYÂNA BUDDHISM**

**DEBABRATA CHATTERJEE**

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**BHARAVI**

13/1, Bankim Chatterjee Street, Kolkata-73

*The Philosophical basis of Mahâyâna Buddhism*

By

*Debabrata Chatterjee*

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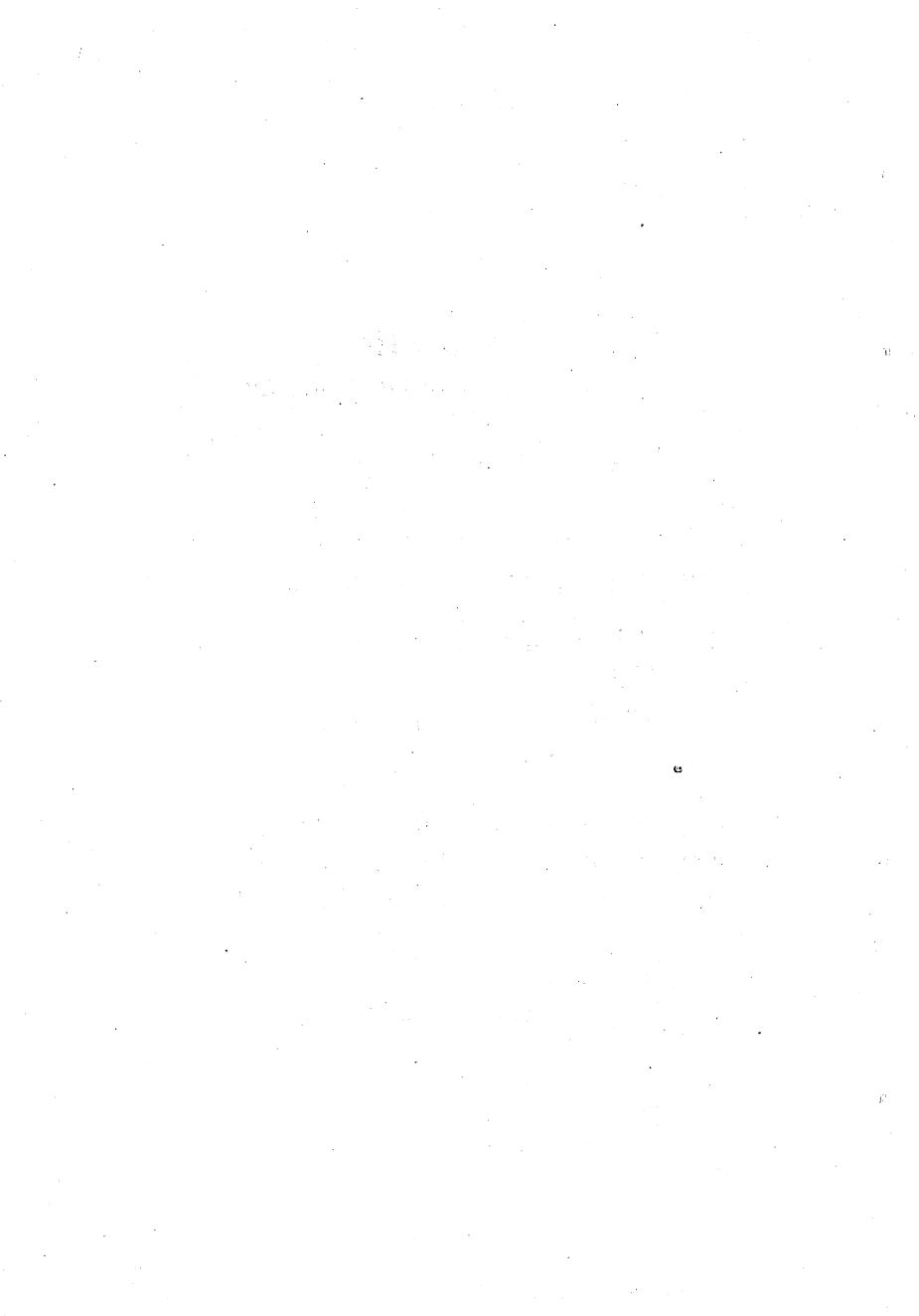
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**Compliments  
of the author**



## **Dedication**

### **Golden deer & God's delight**

Pleasant are the five to compose,  
So is the very self forever,  
The house and the lord to savour  
In twain, that ignorance not knows.

The real is but through the glasses,  
In clear, decided, precision,  
Yes but No, under the midday sun,  
Another says, for the one passes.

Neither the same nor different are,  
They, the constructs, the cause of the ill—  
Utterly empty are the views.  
In this hale, is release not afar,  
Of the twain, the dureful dole with fill  
His bowl from the knower in muse.

Thakurpukur  
21-12-09



## Foreword

This book contains a brief historical survey and review of the literature of the philosophical basis of Mahâyâna Buddhism, in India, stretching for 1500 years from the time of Buddha to about 10<sup>th</sup> century AD, when Buddhism disappeared from India. The central philosophy, the Mâdhyamika evolved from the three other Indian Schools as a critique. Dialectical consciousness developed from the Ideas of Reason as Kant put it, where categories of Reason led to the construction of extreme stances of thesis and antithesis in the manner of Hegel, if you like. It appeared to the Mâdhyamika philosophers that these contradictory constructions are epistemological and subjective that distorts reality. Such is the nature of knowledge that is deemed unfit to seek the real.

Throughout the search the concentration is focused on what Buddha said and what he meant. There are many gaps in the history and literature, many a work are not extant, lost, destroyed and many discovered, recovered

and translated from reliable sources. In the process I aimed at tracing Buddha's statements carefully in order to realize and show that the central philosophy which took IC BC and several outstanding philosophers, to evolve, took place within Buddha's life time in his mind. However, how is this possible, I fail to fathom. In my endeavour, I had to humbly disagree with several distinguished Buddhist Professors and modern academics, having put forward my facts and arguments. Mādhyamika is a critical philosophy which is utterly silent as Buddha taught and has no doctrine or position. It is not a no reality doctrine but has no doctrine of reality. Its total dedication is towards self education and is devoted to eradicating any thesis of any philosophy using the proposer's own doctrine and methodology by reductio ad absurdum. Criticism without holding a position is philosophy. The resolution of all contradictions is by negating both views, all views, in a nonintellectual, nondual intuition of absolutism called sunyatâ or void, since it is devoid of all predications. This highest knowledge equates with the Absolute and Buddhahood as the summum bonum. The logical rigour, technique and universality of application and the equality of all in finding their refuge in the Absolute, may appear to make Buddha a unique and universal philosopher in the humanity at large.

Utterly diverse the mind of man may be and endless and novel the quest, but do we think the same similarly over periods of millennia or different dissimilarly? Are we really original or truthfully plagiarists? It is a subject of modern analytical scientific research, as well as, of philosophical estimation.

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## Introduction

From the ancient time, in Indian philosophy, every system (Darsana = intuition) had a goal in view, such as, being or seeing the ultimate reality and a theory had a counterpart in practice, of conduct or observances, aiming towards the same goal. Philosophy and religion went together. Such criterion according to some thinkers, such as, Bertrand Russell in the West, excluded Indian philosophy from any consideration at all. An entirely theoretical or armchair system without a practical relevance is likely to fail to stimulate a serious student of philosophy in India. However the modern text books of the history of philosophy in India cover philosophies of both the East and the West and the University curricula also cover both. We are also indebted to numerous scholars from all over the world, e.g., Max Muller, Garbe, Rhys Davids, Jacobi, Keith, Suzuki, Takakusu, Sogen, Nanjio, Hobogirin, only just to name a few, who took a special interest, researched and made valuable contributions in Indian philosophy. Buddhism became globalised before the concept of globalisation came into vogue. Analysis, empiricism and secularism made it attractive to modern man. Intellectualism is the only way in and its submission

is essential for Nirvana, release. Emphasis is ethical idealism and not metaphysics. By not hurting oneself, nor hurting others, one busks in the supreme reality. How could Kant, Bergson, August Comte come 2000 years ago, before time? There is no East or West in Buddhism and no thought is disallowed by him. It just happened that Buddha was born, preached and died in India, but the message is truly global and modern. Spread is by assimilation and not by sword, guns or diplomacy. You do not change the world, you change yourself, in a hot contest, yet in this life and attain Nirvâna. Indian Philosophies and Religions achieved their best and most civilized through Buddhism. It can then be said undoubtedly that Buddhism is the global man's heritage within our village planet.

I aimed in this book to bring out the correct position of Buddha by carefully exploring his suttas, at times against opinions of distinguished Buddhist teachers and Western scholars. The most surprising of my findings was that the whole evolution of the thought processes through a century and a half for the central Mâdhyamika philosophy to mature through the minds of many Buddhist Âchâryas (professors), in fact took place within Buddha's life time, in his mind. I have provided careful references in order to come to this conclusion. However, how is it possible, I certainly know not.

## How it started and ended in India

As opposed to many minds of Upanisads came one and without any inhibitions, to take the central position in Indian philosophy and religion, to exert a sustained and uncompromising pressure for over a thousand years, to challenge against complacency and dogmatism. He was Goutama the Buddha (567-488BC). His tools are empiricism, the given, and critical analysis. I am an analyser and not a generaliser, he said (Majjhimâ Nikâya [MN] II 107). Come and see-ehi passika, test it as gold is by fire. Orthodox Brâhmanism and heterodox systems, such as Jainism, woke up in the face of this profound influence, to put their houses in order. Logic, epistemology and philosophy in general became critical, precise and rich in depth and comprehension. Buddha instituted an intellectually liberal and democratic milieu. Within Buddhism therefore a bewildering number of schools and sub schools evolved. In a hundred years after Buddha's death, there were 18 sects, all claiming to be the original. Pali cannon and Kathâvattu deal with them. The Hindus however mention of only four



schools. The elders (=Sthavira=Thera) who were the direct descendants of Buddha, read out, discussed and edited with great certainty the master's teachings in the councils of Râjagrha at Buddha's death and Vaisâli, a hundred years later. Suggestions made in the Suttas (Pali=sutras, Sanskrit=shortest aphorisms) were streamlined into a realistic and pluralistic Dhamma theory, a doctrine of elements. The treaties were cramped, with lists of dhammas, elements, and mnemonic aids devoid of critical analysis. These Sthaviravâdins dwindled in three hundred years from the time of Emperor Asoka 3C BC and the third council in Pâtaliputra (Pâtnâ) and disappeared from India and settled in Ceylon, Siam and Burma. They latched on to the objective reality in their metaphysics, Abhidharma, as a result of their no-soul doctrine instituted by Buddha. Sarvâstivâda-everything exists-became the dominant school but as old as the other, which spread all over India independently of the former. These causationalists own seven treaties written by human authors, the most important was Jnânaprasthâna written by Katyâyaniputra, three hundred years after Buddha. The supplementary treaties, the six Pâdas, are, Prakarana by Vâsumitra, Vijnânakâya by Devasarmâ, Dharmaskandha by Sâriputra, Prajnâptisâstra by Maudgalyâna, Dhâtukâya by Purâna, Sangitiparyâya by Mahâkausthila, AKV p 9, 11; Buston Vol. I p 49-50. The great commentary-Mahâvibhâsâ, was edited by 500

ârhats (worthy), elders, under the chairmanship of Vâsumitra after the great council under the Kushân emperor Kaniska, at about the time of Christ. Vâsubândhu's *Abhidharmakosa* is the summary which Yasomitra commented on. These pluralistic realists, Sarvâstivâdins, are also called Vaibhâsikas, the followers of Mahâvibhasâ. They wrote in Sanskrit instead of Pali. They established the doctrines of elements, dharmas and composites, skandhas and worked out the details of atomic theory, aggregations, sense objects, sense organs, epistemology of perception and conception. Perceiver is *vijnâna*, the intellect, and the substratum is consciousness and is permanent. It is mind or *citta*. We cannot yet compare and contrast these two Hinayâna schools without further translations from Chinese (Nanjio. 1263, 1264; Hobogirin 1945, 1946). The original Sanskrit is wholly lost. However, when we follow the continuity of four main Buddhist schools, we start from Âbhidharmikas of the Vaibhâsikas and not from the Pali work of the Sthaviravâdins, McGovern, *A Manual of Buddhist Philosophy*. Vol. I, p16-17.

The second school Sautrântikas followed sutras, the sayings of Buddha and not sâstras, the books. Kumâralabdha of Taxillâ, a contemporary of Nâgârjuna, was the leader and Vâsubândhu, Yasomitra and Dharmattora also belonged to this realistic school.

Through the mental representation we infer the extra mental existence of the phenomenal world. Things are momentary, each originates and is destroyed instantaneously in toto, without any cause, an entirely different thing originates again, this is not a changed former thing- a more rigorous Bergsonianism evolved, although, Buddha was obliged to say that the causal force-pachhayasatti connects.

These two schools had their puritanical, atheistic, monastic and reclusive practices. Their path was named Hinayâna, mean vehicle, because the elders, the Theras called the others pâpavikkhus, sinful monks, for their wanting to relax certain rules of Vinaya, discipline, which was dismissed in the first council after consideration. In the second council the members of this great liberal club, Mahâsanghikas, after a severe struggle, were defeated by the elders and they held their own council in Jalandher. The main bone of contention was about Buddhahood which they thought was everyone's right, not just of a chosen few. Their path is Mahâyâna, the great vehicle. Buddha said in MN22, even those who have not entered into the paths are sure of heaven, if they have love and faith towards me.

The Sautrântikas developed a complementary doctrine of conceptual construction and knew of the subjectivity

of phenomenon and the resemblance between the object and the knowledge. Therefore came the Yogâcâra school—we know our ideas which are real, objects are inferred and are a conceptual construction, just like Locke's representative perception gave rise to Berkeley's idealism. The leader was Maitreyanâtha who was expounded by Asanga and his illustrious and converted brother Vâsubândhu. Vijnânavâda is the theoretical elaboration of the practical Yogâcâra and was led by Dignâga and Dharmakirti. The subject-object duality is unreal, the substratum, Vijnâna, the consciousness, is real and can be achieved by the practice of Yoga. Vijnâna is dynamic and creative of the subject-object and stands logically in the position of Hindu Âtman, the self, the soul, which is static. The Sâmmitiyas (Vâtsiputriyas), the heretic Buddhist school and not considered by the Hindus, held the individual âtman, pudgalâtman, as neither completely identical with nor altogether different from the mental states. They found the doctrine of elements of the realists to be inadequate and looked for their quasipermanent unity in pudgalâtman. The fourth school Mâdhyamika is the crest gem and the central philosophy of Buddhism and forms the true basis of Mahâyâna, just as Kant is the basis of the Western philosophy. There is a great similarity between them. We shall concentrate on this Indian school.

Brahmajâlasutta reviews 62 systems of philosophical speculations current at the time of Buddha, of which he was very much awake. He considered them and dismissed all as mere dogmatic views (ditthivâda) MN I, p. 171. Buddha abhorred metaphysics because they were empty waste of time and in fact an active hindrance toward spiritual life. He was predominantly practical and his emphasis was on ethics. Man's action however depends and in fact reflects his understanding and belief. Our experience tells us that we become aware of an object first and then we infer the seer, the self. Everything that we see is an object or not-I, as Buddha mentions in his second sermon of Benaras. He like David Hume could not see the ego since this was not an object. As for whether one believes in whether or not there is an ego, if one says, I don't believe, you will note that the non believer's negation rests on his I, *ya eva hi nirâkartâ tadeva tasya svarupam*, the soul is the very self of the denier, said Samkara the Advaitin. He who holds that there is no soul is a man with false notion, said Buddha in Burden sutta, Warren p. 160. To be born is to take up the burden (the five composites-objective manifestation, perception conception, will and reason), to lay it down is to attain bliss or Nirvâna.

More predominantly however Buddha preached Anatta, soullessness of everything which included the

immutable objective reality, the substance, the Brahman of the Hindus, as well as the immutable subject, the seer, the Âtman, of the Hindus (Hindus also identify these two). In fact Anatta, Anichha (impermanence) and Dukkha (sorrow) were the original preachings or mantras of Buddhism. Believing in the permanent objective reality is ignorance, Buddha said, yatha Sâriputta na samvidyante tathâ samvidyante evam avidyamânâs tenochhante avidyeti, (MN 22), that which does not exist is said to be existing-speaking in this manner is ignorance. This view of substance, Sakkâyaditthi, is the cause of sorrow. For if we love the permanent and get attached to it, when it passes away, we cry.

Everything is impermanent, Anichha, passes away, vaya dhammâ samkhârâ appamâdena sampâdetha, Mahâparinibbânasutta (MPNS), vi, I, was his last saying before his death, everything passes away, make your plan diligently. Buddha calls the doctrine of Âtman, the eternal self, the doctrine of fools. This in reality he considered to be his great and original discovery which so far no one thought before, SN II 105, MN I 171, Stcherbatsky, Soul theory of the Buddhists p 824-825. Professor V. Bhattâcharyâ says, thus and in various other ways, too many to be mentioned, the existence of a permanent self or Âtman, as accepted in other systems (such as, Vedas, Upanisads, Sâmkhya, Yoga,

Nyâya, Jaina, Kant) was utterly denied by the Buddha, thereby pulling down the very foundation of desire where it can rest, Basic conception, p 70 & 95. Thus is the conduct of a spiritual aspirant directed towards non-selfish acts. Buddhist metaphysics is essentially a psychological ethics and only incidentally metaphysics.

Although one would call it a stroke of genius to root out the soul, in the practical causal world one has to accept both the seer and the seen, the subject and the object. In the history of evolution of philosophy we have seen that denying one would lead to a correcting movement of thought. The elders who logically started directly from Buddhas's teaching of no permanent subject, had no choice but to concentrate on the object as the reality. Thus the wheel of law was turned once and the thought processes evolved through centuries to correct itself. As the four schools evolved in succession each reinterpreted Buddha's teaching. Buston (1290-1364) and Taranath (1574-1608), the Buddhist historians, speak of the Three swingings of the Wheel of law, interpreted differently by the schools. In metaphysics, the radical pluralism of dharma, the elements, changes to essential unity of them, dharmatâ, as the radical absolutism or non-dualism, advayavâda. Epistemologically, empiricism and dogmatism, ditthivâda, changed to dialectical criticism, sunyatâ or the Critique of Kant. Ethically, egocentric private

salvation of an ârhat changed to unconditional, universal salvation, the ideal of a Bodhisattva. Universal love, karunâ, compassion and the highest intellectual perfection, prajnâ or sunyatâ, became identical. If you do not genuinely believe in the hollowness of the world, that is, do not yet have the prajnâ, the highest pârâmitâ, excellence, you will not be able to practise the other parâmitâs, ethical excellences (sila, morality ; dâna, charity ; khânti, forbearance ; virya, effort ; dhyâna, meditation) with automatic ease.

Since the objects pass away, bondage for the object is the cause of pain, the ârhats of Hinayâna practised impossible extinction or annihilation of natural life. Death was the goal. A celibate, perfect egoist, a loner hiding from family, company and the world, a non believer standing on his own feet for his own salvation is untrue to a man of pity and compassion like Buddha.

Buddha meant a triumph over not-self but not its destruction. He required us to look for opportunities in the retreats of misery, haunts of pain, tumult of traffic and the clamours of conference and not to abolish the will, not to turn away from the world into mystic contemplation. Unregenerate thirst when rationalised is desire (knowledged desire of Spinoza) is tanhâ. He insists on a hot contest with desire, an active wrestling with evil. Eschewing of all evil, perfecting of good



deeds, purifying of one's mind is his teaching, DP 183. Anekajâtisamsâram sandhâvissam anibbisam gahakârakam gavesânto/dukkha jâti punappunam. I have run through a course of many births looking for the maker of this dwelling and finding him not; painful is birth again and again. DP 153. Gahakâraka! Dittho 'si, puna geham na kâhasi/sabbâ te phâsukâ bhaggâ, gehakutam visankhitam/visankhâragatam cittam tanhânânam khayam ajjhagâ. Now are you seen, O builder of the house, you will not build the house again. All your rafters are broken, your ridgepole is destroyed, the mind, set on attainment of nirvâna, has attained the extinction of desire. Buddha uttered this at the moment of his enlightenment. Another verse is mentioned next in Professor Râdhâkrishnan's DP p. 111 without reference-Kâma, jânâmi te mulum, samkalpât kila jâyase/na tvam samkalpayisyâmi tato me na bhavisyasi, in Sanskrit. Desire, I know thy root; from imagination art thou born; no more shall I indulge in imagination, I shall have no desire any more. This was used by Sir Edwin Arnold for his translated verse and by Nâgârjuna in his MK xxii. 1:paraphrased-samkalpaprabhâvo râgo dveso mohas ca kathyate, of imagination are born attachment, aversion, and delusion.

There is no doctrine, not excepting Platonism that sees in this very life now, a greater possibility of perfection. Nor is there any system, not excepting Christianity

which sees in the evolution of human love a more exalted transcendence of the lower forms of that emotion, said Mrs. Rhys Davids, JRAS 1898, p. 55. MN 21 reads-our mind shall not waver, no vile speech will we utter; we will abide tender and compassionate, loving in heart, void of secret malice and we will be ever suffusing the whole world with thought of love, far reaching, grown great and beyond measure, void of ill will and bitterness. Buddha orders his monks-Go ye now, O Bhiksus, for the benefit of the many, for the welfare of mankind, out of compassion for the world, AN ii 245. In the Western way of putting the Hinayâna ideal is as Ibsen puts it-There are actually moments when the whole history of the world appears to me like one great shipwreck, and the only important thing seems to be to save oneself and the Mahâyâna ideal is as William James puts it-If at the last day all creation was shouting hallelujah, and there remained one cockroach with an unrequited love, that would spoil the peace of bodhisattva, though not the absorption of the ârhat.

I have produced some evidence that all schools and Hinayâna and Mâhayâna followed Buddha directly and the schools and sects also claim the same. Hinayâna followed Buddha till the time of Emperor Asoka in 3C BC. Asoka popularised what was a local sect of Hinduism to a world religion, as Constantine did to

Christianity. He sent missionaries to all over India and to foreign lands, such as, Egypt, Syria, Macedonia, Cyrene and Epirus (the 13th edict says). Mahâyâna was in the ascendancy with the fall of Hinayâna and the rise of Hinduism. Mahâyâna spread to Tibet, Nepal, China, Mongolia, Korea and Japan. The invading tribes, Yavanas, Sakas, Ksâtrapas Satavâhanas, Pahlavas and Kushânas, adopted the language, culture, civilization and religion of the Buddhists in India. The dying creed of Hinayâna was dominated by a popular mystical, theological, devotional religion which adapted and compromised to peoples' needs. Like St. Paul, it was all things to all men, so that he could get a few more. They were famished for the spiritual liberty which was denied before. It did not matter what god you believe as long as you are good, the new religion taught; you must respect life and the Buddhist order and thereafter you are free to follow your creed. To compromise was the supreme strength of Mahâyâna which helped them spread far and wide, and to compromise was its weakness. The religion was brought down to the level of the understanding of the various tribal people and a good dosage of magic, mystic animism, fairies, clairvoyance, ghost-seeing were added, whereas, on the mataphysical side, subtleties, new theories, endless Buddhas, immaculate conceptions were rife. Buddha was made God which, he warned against and devotion was the essential ingredient in this theism which they

imitated from the success of theism of Yoga, later Upanisads and the Bhâgavatgita of the Hindus, with an enormous success from Asoka to Kaniska, the Kushân king at about the time of Christ and up to a millennium thereafter.

There was no simple and noble lesson of the founder. Instead of monks living a pure life, there were fat priests and opulent churches. Hindus and Buddhists exchanged identical philosophical and religious views exchanging their gods. Hinayâna approached Saivism and Mahâyâna, Vaishnavism of the Hindus. As the Hindu establishment declared Buddha an incarnation of Hindu god, the death knell of Buddhism was sounded in India. Both religions blended, there was no distinction. After the Hinduism was reformed by Buddhism the latter died a natural death in India. Uncompromising devotion to moral law was its strength and neglect of the mystic man was its weakness.

## **Preamble of the Dialectic**

We now come to the philosophical basis. Being a self declared critic, Buddha was acutely aware of the conflict and the inherent duality of reason which is interminable. He was aware of the antinomical character of metaphysical questions beyond the law of contradiction, where a solution of progress was not obtainable. He therefore famously chose to remain silent as a legitimate answer to these questions. Dialectic is the consciousness of this conflict in reason which Buddha was the first to realise long before Zeno. We must not forget that Zeno did not disbelieve in rest and therefore was not a real contestant but Kant certainly was. The two alternatives were âtma and anâtma, self-notself doctrines of the Hindus and the Buddhists, just like Rationalism and Empiricism of Kant. Buddha resolved conflict in a non-dual (advaya) intuitive perception. Hindu and Buddhist realist schools developed their systems over the centuries to follow. Mâdhyamika philosophy systematised the dialectical technique through Nâgârjuna in the IC BC. He laid down the foundation and worked out the details with

the help of Ârya Deva, his able pupil, drawing his inspiration and source directly from Buddha and from Prajnâpâramitâ texts, about a century earlier. Thus the critique of all philosophies was born.

For centuries (1000-300 BC) Upanisads suggested an immutable soul view amongst a changing world to which it is dubiously related. Buddha took the responsibility from god and gave it to man and told him that Karma, work, is his only possession. Through this he can attain perfection and through this he will bring sorrow. Now how does the doctrine of fools stand up to Karma, rebirth, adoption of holy life? Let us examine : this is the world and this is the self, and I shall continue to be in the future, permanent, immutable, eternal, of a nature that knows no change, yea, I shall abide to eternity, is not this simply and entirely a doctrine of fools? MN 1, 138. A permanent soul cannot have a varied volition, a varied action to varying circumstances. Like Kant in his second critique, individuals are given freedom and given moral will to act the imperative. A permanent agent does not know reform and progress. Kant like Buddha latched his hope on Rousseau's prediction that man can change for the better. Buddha was sure of moral perfection. Âtman cannot change. If it stays the same a while and then changes that means there are two different âtmans. If we say that one part is immutable and the other part

changes, that violates the Buddhist dictum, *yo viruddho dharmâdhyâsavân nâsâveka*, that is not the one of which two or more contradictory attributes are predicated. Buddha neither affirmed nor denied the existence of *âtman*. He proposed a mind continuum connected by the causal law which provides progress and continuity of man's Karma thus avoiding the heresy of permanent soul on the one hand and the heresy of annihilation after death or no soul either in this life or in the next, on the other. These heresies do not give hope to a spiritual aspirant believing in the theory of Karma as Buddha taught and we have seen that an understanding and belief determine the type of action. Rebirth does not mean that an element migrates from this world to the next but there is continuity of causes and conditions and a recognition of the fruit of Karma, *Sâlistamba sutra*, MKV p568. When Buddha says that he was Sunetra, both belonged to the same Buddha series emphasising the causal connection indentifying the two individuals and ignoring their difference, AKV p. 710.

How is memory or recognition explained? A mental state is strictly mementary, individual and unitary in content and a Buddhist, cannot recognize another state. Consciousness of change is not change of consciousness. Identity running through the states is an illusion. *Vâsubândhu's* remembrance is a new state of consciousness directed to the same object, conditioned

as it is by the previous states, will not do since the series of A is not remembered by the series of B. How do the âtman theorists fare? It is true that the seer must be at rest in order to see the object in motion. In recognition there are two subjects and two objects. The subjects are identified, he says, I have seen this before, not someone has seen this before. Objects are also identified by the subject. Consciousness they say belongs to the permanent self. The unchanging âtman does not laps, it knows no past. So they say that âtman is permanent awarness and the changing mind alone knows or remembers and these two assume false indentification, Adhyâsa between them, what is true for one is mistakenly ascribed to the other, Sâmkhya Karika 20. Nyâya-Vaisesika (Logical-pluralistic realism) says that mind gives the changing states to non-conscious âtman. They believe with Sâmkhya, changing and unchanging, substances. Advaitins accept unchanging alone as real and change unreal and the Buddhists believe the opposite. Our experience of what is given has got to be classified, compared, contrasted, apperceived in to a unity as Kant said and we must also see distinction. Using the categories of reason, one sees the emergence of something new and different, when the other sees necessary connection and continuity. Some see the permanent as real and change as illusion, the others see change as real and permanent as illusion.



Buddha put forward the antithesis of *nairâtmya* view in sharp contrast of centuries of orthodox *âtma* view. Although it needed many centuries to work out the metaphysics, logic and epistemology by the respective parties, that there were problems of explaining reality by upholding either conceptual pattern, was only known too well by Buddha and perhaps more strongly than anyone else at the time. He discredited and dismissed, like Kant, all view making. This is the meaning of his famous silence to such questions. The *Mâdhya*mika philosophy is the systematic from of this silence and could not develop if Buddha did not adopt no metaphysics position and if there was no *nairâtmya* tradition as against *âtma* tradition.

## **Answer by Silence**

The answers of metaphysical questions are inexpressible (avyākṛta), Buddha said many times. They are 14 in number. He had no reasoned conviction, he was practical and disputation does not help, said Keith, BP P 63. Oldenberg said that the questions ought not or could not be answered and even that his silence meant no ego or Nirvâna is annihilation, Thomas, HBT p. 127-8. Not at all. With all due respect to these outstanding scholars, I humbly submit that their readings are incomplete and incorrect. Without an understanding and belief, one can not act, one can not have a way of life, we have said before.

### **The antinomies are :**

1. Is the world eternal or not, or both or neither;
2. Is the world finite or infinite or both or neither;
3. Does Tathâgata exist after death. or does not or both or neither;
4. Is the soul identical with the body or different from it?

They are like the antinomies of Kant and also note the

celebrated catuskoti, the four positions of Mâdhyamika, deriving from these. The first two are cosmological, seeking transcendent substance, Prakrti, Nature, of Sâmkhya, the ground of phenomena, and reasoning from effect to cause, beyond experience, an eternal ground for change, is the thesis and the materialist denial of this ground, is the antithesis. The last, the soul that is consciousness, mind or intelligence which is transcendent and will abide is the thesis (Hindu âtmâ) and the soul as body, the sense organs subject to birth and death, is the materialist anti-thesis (Ajita Kesakâmbolin). The third, Tathâgata, stands between the soul and the world, the subject-object, is the perfect man, the god, having absolute existence beyond phenomena, is the thesis and the denial implies real to be empirical, that is, positivism and nihilism, is the anti-thesis. Buddha knew 62 theories of the orthodox schools and of the six heretic teachers of his time. He dismissed all as mere views (ditthivâdas) and refused to be caught in the net, (jala), BJS DN 1 34. He knew the perpetual conflicts of dogmatism. Dialectic was born with Buddha. He answered all questions, by the only possible answer, silence. If he said yes or no, he would be dogmatic which he would be the first to protest. Staying out of both sides, he attacked both by criticism, which alone is deliverance and freedom, a truly Mâdhyamika position. Criticism is philosophy for Buddha as it was for Kant.

Vâsubândhu AK v 22, said, a question can be answered directly, multiple questions need analysis first, a question can be answered by a question and some questions can not be answered. These he formulated following Nâgasenâ in Milindâ Pannha and Nâgasena formulated noticing Buddha in his suttas. Vâsubândhu answered the 14 questions to Vâtsiputriya who held Pudgalâtman theory. He said that Buddha had a view of the soul and objects. The soul is a name of states and nothing unitary. Conflict of reason is a difficulty of verbal formulation. But with all due respect to this distinguished teacher and venerable "little Buddha," as he was called, Tathâgata said that all views are dogmatic and that he does not have a view. Vâcchâgotta, noticed a difference between Buddha and other philosophers, they answer while the Lord does not, to questions about the unconditioned, yet Vâcchâ is oblivious of the ground of this difference, SN iv 392-3. Buddha was alive unlike others to the problems of conceiving the Transcendent in terms of the empirical. Tathâgata is like the ocean, beginningless and endless. Tathâgata as the totality is beyond predication, SN iv 392-3, 376. He is no longer in his familiar form. Dogmatist takes skandhas, composite, as self. Buddha does not, nor the self to be skandhas. He does not spin theories, *ibid* 395-7. He realised that real is transcendent to thought. Buddha explained his silence, to Ânanda, when Vâcchâ left: If I said yes to

self, I would be siding with eternalists and will that accord with the knowledge that all things are impermanent? Again, if I said no to self, I would be siding with annihilationists, Vâcchâ would be more bewildered, he would say, I had a self, now I had none, SN iv 400-1. The relevance is that all his moral endeavours would have been in vain. Buddha therefore did not make dogmatic proclamations. But has Gotama any theory of his own? The Tathâgata, O Vâcchâ, is free from all theories and this the Tathâgata knows-the nature of form, how they arise and perish... Therefore the Tathâgata has attained deliverance and is free from attachment...imaginings, or agitations, or false notions of Ego or pertaining to Ego, have perished, faded away, ceased, given up and relinquished, MN I 486. Others do not know the skandhas and so they theorize. When do we know? Not when we are using it, enamoured with it, but when we know the antinomies and be critical and know that a theory is false. To hold these propositions Vâcchâ, is the jungle, the wilderness, the tangle, the bondage, the shackles of theorising, attended by ill, distress, perturbation and fever and leads not to detachment, passionlessness, tranquillity, peace, to knowledge and wisdom of Nirvâna. This danger I perceive in these views which makes me discard them all, *ibid idem*. This exposition clearly demonstrates how Buddha criticised views and does not make one. We have now found that Buddha was not an agnostic in

doubt. His answer was decisive. He did not suspend judgement awaiting opportunity. He taught the truth without reservation, MPNS ii 25. He was not ignorant of metaphysics, he was well versed and of a high order. His penetrative dialectic annulled dogmatism and rejected speculations. Criticism was his philosophy. He was not a Nihilist. He is explicit of the reality of Nirvâna and the implication of his specific teachings of doctrine and spiritual discipline. He speaks of Nirvâna as reality beyond all suffering and change, as unfading, undecaying, taintless, as peace, blissful. It is an island, the shelter, the refuge and goal, SN iv 369. There is a not-born, a not-become, a not-created, a not-formed. If there were not this not-born....there would not be the escape, the way out of this bondage..., Udana 80-81. Anattan tapo aparantapo ditthe ve dhamme, nicchâto, nibbutō, sitibhuto, sukhapatisamvedi, Bramhabhutena attanâ vihâradi-*neither hurting oneself, nor hurting the other, yet in this life, not thirsty, extinguishing, stilled, being pleased with oneself, the self basks in Brahman (universal reality), Apannaka sutta MN I 412. Buddha was certain of Nirvâna but he refused to characterise it in empirical terms. The absolute is not a matter of empirical observation, Râdhâkrishanan, IP vol I, 682-3.*

Upanisads of Hindus define Brahman as, not this, not this. It eludes, sense or thought and is beyond speech.

It is neither big nor minute, but indeterminate. This does not make it unreal since it is the soul, the sole reality of the universe. Enjoying a sustained monopoly for centuries without opposition, they started with the intuition of the real and thereafter tested by reasoning. The very milieu of Buddha's time was the hot bed of the conflict of reason. Buddha was the analyser, the empiricist, not given to metaphysics. He was acutely aware of the dialectic nature of Reason and was the founder of the Dialectic. Parties were all in the opposition, views were abound, as we have seen in the *Brahmajâlasutta*. For Upanisads, knowledge of the self is the means to freedom. For Buddha self is a wrong notion for a spiritual aspirant. Substance view is the cause of attachment and pain. Why then did he teach dharma (elements, aggregates etc), which he certainly did? First of all, in the forum of logic there is subject and object. Buddha introduced his newly invented truth of no-soul, hitherto entirely unknown, against the Hindu soul view, a modal view as against the substance view. This led to, of necessity, the only choice that was available, namely, the objective reality, which his followers latched on to. Without this conflict of views he could not lead his followers to a dialectic consciousness. Furthermore, Sâmkhya thesis of evolution of nature was a precursor for at least a century. Buddha's two gurus, Uddyaka Râmaputta and Alâra Kâlâma, were Sâmkhya philosophers. Four noble

truths of Buddha followed the four truths of Sâmkhya, namely, pain, the cause, relief, the way. The Buddhist terms, Avidyâ, Samskâra, Vijnâna, Nâmarupa, Sadâyatana, Pratityasamuppâda followed Sâmkhya terms, Pradhâna, Ahamkâra, Tanmâtra, Indriya, Pratyayasangha (for Ignorance, Tendencies, Ego-sense, Fine elements, Senses, Dependent origination), Kern, p47. It is true that Hinayânists, the immediate followers of Buddha evolved the Realist path and the dialectical consciousness and maturation to Mâdhyamika took centuries to 1C BC. The wonder is how within his life time it evolved, matured and he not only reached his goal but succeeded in organising his order and taught mankind effectively. He states specifically that the skandhas are illusory, mere bubbles. SN III 142, MN II 261. He says, phenomena are relative, nothing by themselves, light of the lamp depends on the oil and wick. It is not in one, nor in the other, nor in itself, MN III 245. All things are unreal, deceptions ; Nirvâna is the only truth. Mâdhyamika philosophy had to mature by criticising the Buddhist Realists by bringing in the unreality of Dharma, elements. This Dharmanairâtmya, no-object is described as void. The last statement of Buddha is paraphrased by Nâgârjuna. "In declaring that it is deceptive and illusory, the Lord means sunyatâ-dependence of things," MK XIII 2. SN II 267 says, monks will not listen and learn the proclamation by the Tathâgata, deep in meaning, reaching beyond,



dealing with the void but will only listen to the profane sayings proclaimed by the disciples. Buddha compares dharma to a raft which has to be left off after crossing the stream. They are not meant to be taken as ultimate tenets, they have just a means value, MN I 135. Nâgârjuna is also of this opinion, MK XXV 24. No one holding either of the two main views, existence and not-existence, can be freed from the grip of birth and death, (the world of phenomena), Buddha said, MN I 65; Udâna p33; Itivuttaka p 43-4. Kâccâyana wants to know the right view. The Lord says that the world relies on a duality, it is and it is not; but the one who sees in truth with wisdom how things of the world arise and perish, for him there is no "is" or "is not." Everything exists is one extreme and that it does not exist is another. Not accepting the two extremes, the Tathâgata proclaims the truth from the Middle position, SN II 17. Nâgârjuna refers to this and says that the Lord has rejected both the "is" and "is not" views—all views, MK XV 7. The early Buddhism was like Mâdhyamika was agreed by Kern (A manual of Indian Buddhism, p50), Keith (Buddhist Philosophy, p49) and Poussin (ERE VIII, p334).

## **Anatomy of the Dialectic**

Older Vedanta and Sâmkhya, view Âtma, the Soul; The Substance, the Being, to be the Supreme and Universal and is the abiding aspect of experience. The effect is the cause, Satkâryavâda. The change, difference, plurality is an illusory appearance, due to avidyâ, ignorance, said Gaudapâda and Samkara of later Vedânta, Advaitavâda (non difference) in 8C AD. The older Buddhists say, becoming, change, difference, plurality, impermanence, momentariness, is the reality of experience. There is no substance, Nairâtmya. Substance is a conceptual construction, an illusory appearance, due to avidyâ, ignorance. Causation is the coordination of separate elements.

Mâdhyamika is dialectically conscious and criticises both Âtma and Nairâtma views. The soul view and the momentary entities (dharma) view are dogmatic conceptual constructions. If the effect is identical with the cause, there is no production, nothing new. If the momentary entities are self sufficient and different, there is no causality. So Buddha taught dharma as a

stepping stone to teach relativity. Things depend on each other and therefore are devoid of reality, sunya. In fact causality apart, all categories of understanding will lead to contradiction and are sunya. Mâdhyamika therefore takes a phenomenal (Samvrti = covered) stand of practical world where intellectual conceptions are hollow, devoid of reality, Sunya, and a transcendental, the highest, the final stand. Some texts therefore have common truths, Neyârtha and others, the highest truth, Nitârtha.

The conflict of reason is due to the dogmatism of views. The devastating discovery of the subjective, the Copernican revolution is epistemological and not ontological. Speculative metaphysics is untenable. Prajnâ the intuitional insight is to reject all views, dr̥sti. What are the effects of conflict of views?

Scepticism, Protagoras and Gorgias followed Eleatic (Being) and Heraclitus (Becoming); Pyrrho, Arcelaus and Carneades followed Plato and Aristotle; Hume followed Rationalism and Empiricism. Positivism denies metaphysics. August Comte followed the Idealists, Fichte, Schopenhauer and Hegel. Logical positivists had negative reaction against idealism and realism.

Conflicts were also resolved by a disjunctive addition of views by Jainas- Yes or No, each view is an aspect

of real. Yes and No together and an indeterminate, Yes indeterminate, No indeterminate and Yes and No indeterminate, make a total of seven disjunctives, each of which is true and together show a manifold reality. They used the famous analogy of different blind people perceiving different parts of an elephant and describing reality as each perceived. Hegel takes reality as the passage of dialectic from one concept, deriving its opposite, which leads to a new synthetic concept, richer and inclusive in content and this again is the thesis of the next trio. Hegel equates thought and reality and his dialectic is synthetic, creative, ideal and absolutist while Jaina's is realistic and pluralistic, representative of real. Mādhyamika resolves by rejecting all views including that of Hegel and Jaina. Reason is incompetent. Real is transcendent to thought.

Following Buddha, Mādhyamika classify four views of any problem : Yes, No, Yes and No, neither Yes nor No, the celebrated Catuskoti. Real is beyond these four positions, the ends, antas. It is in the middle (Madhya hence Mādhyamika), where a critical review of all things takes place. This middle is not another view or position. Buddha explains, KP 65, 97, that, the critical awareness of the conceptual hollowness, sunyatâ, is the antidote of the disorder of holding views. The irrevocably lost, the forlorn, the incurable, misapprehends sunyatâ itself as a theory. It is dangerous

to hold a snake by the wrong end, Nâgârjuna said, MK xxiv 11. The third view of the chatuskoti is to avoid one sidedness of the first and second. The fourth is not negation together, i.e., of acceptance of first and second, hence neither third nor fourth. The examples are: first Vedanta; second-old Buddhists, Hume; third-Jaina, Hegel; fourth Pyrrho, Sanjaya the heretic-this I am not, that also I am not, the other also I am not, no also I am not, no no also I am not too, DN I ii 24.

## **Compare and contrast**

We now examine some Western and Eastern systems of philosophy and compare and contrast them with Mâdhyamika, not only to understand the latter more in depth and width, but also to draw a wider interest.

Aristotle says that the inventor of Dialectic is Zeno, Zeller, History of Greek Philosophy, I, 613, but Zeno did not attack Being or Rest as he was dogmatic of his own position. Plato in Parmenides mentions not only contradictions of Being- Becoming, One-Many, but also searched for the resolution beyond. I mentioned Buddha's antecedence in Dialectic. Kant brought Dialectic in European philosophy. Mâdhyamika and Kant challenged dogmatic speculative metaphysics. The Copernican revolution took place from the objective to the devastating subjective of the Buddhists and Kant. The impasse of contradictions are Rationalism-Empiricism in Europe and Âtma-Anâtma, soul-no soul traditions of the Hindus and the Buddhists in India. The battlefield is endless, inevitable and universal and is in the ideas of Reason. Dialectic is the consciousness

of this battle, as well as, an urge to seek resolution. Mâdhyamika jumps into the battle at hand. We pick a concept depending on the individual leaning, and speculate, generalise with regard to supersensible, without scientific, empirical restraints and verifications and enter into logical fallacy of antinomy where the law of contradiction does not work and we cannot progress. So we have what Kant calls an Idea of Reason and the Mâdhyamika calls *drsti*, view or *anta*, a decided end. Kant was preoccupied with the explanation of experience. In Transcendental (Tr.) Aesthetic and Analytic he discovers apriori transcendental subjective ways of perception and understanding, which give universality and necessity (for the empiricists) and through which the manifold sense data is given from the things-in-themselves and thus the experience is composed. In Tr. Dialectic, Kant then warns us that these subjective categories of thought are valid only phenomenally. We get the unadulterated real through Aesthetic, as it is given but come to reason, judgement, dialectic, the real is distorted, speculative metaphysics is rampant for disabusing categories for non empirical matters. Here is the source of transcendental illusion and Kant's Dialectic consciousness starts here, he enters the arena late. All *drstis* are relative, therefore hollow, *sunya* and is confined in the empirical, phenomenal, *Samvrti* realm. Buddha exhorts us to cultivate the attitude of unceasing critical alertness with regard to

conception of all things in their true form-not viewing things in duality, eternal-change, substance-mode and so on. Reality of soul is one end, no soul is the other, the middle of the two ends is intangible, incomparable, not appearing, incomprehensible, without any position....that is verily the Middle path, the vision of the Real in its true form, Kâsyapaparivarta (KP), p 82-87. Mâdhyâmika went ahead to eliminate all dogmatism, all views, drstis, antas which are in duality, in order to reach the Absolute, nondual, Sunyata which is a non-intellectual, nondual (Advaya) intuition, called Prajnâ. It dissolves all ignorance, i.e., conceptual constructions, hence is freedom. Prajnâ is absolute and identical with Tathâgata, ens realissimus which latter is a free phenomenal manifestation of Sunyatâ. Prajnâ is the supreme of the six excellences (morality, charity, forbearance, effort, meditation, Prajnâ) and in it is the union of intellectual, moral and spiritual consciousness. This is the same view of all absolutisms in India. Kant was acutely conscious of the dialectical conflict of the duality of reason. He knew illusion as illusion but was not free from it. He could not rise to the nonduality of Absolute lest it would be a concept and the Noumenon would resemble a nonentity. I quote Buddha again, Likewise Kâsyapa, Sunyatâ is the antidote for all dogmatic views; but him I declare incurable who misapprehends Sunyatâ itself as a theory, Kâsyapa Parivarta, p 97. Convinced of the failure of knowledge



to reach the Absolute, Kant closed his first Critique and reached his goal by his act of faith in the second Critique. Perhaps that was the norm of his time.

Hegel's dialectic is conscious of reason's opposition. It moves from understanding where things are isolated, abstracted to analysis, to Reason which comprehends opposites in synthesis. Mâdhyamika goes for duality of reason phenomenally to nondual in intuition of Absolute. It is not two aspects of truth together of Jaina. The synthesis is new, higher, richer and comprehensive, being-nonbeing into becoming. Hegel asks Kant why can't apriori be objective too? To Hegel thought is Real. Kant found thing and thought together is the cause of opposition. But Hegel does not find them foreign to each other. Reason is unconditioned, self characterising and decides its content. Hegel brings degrees of truth when we reject false and accept true. Fully real, partly real has no place in, Mâdhyamika. There is doctrine of two truths, the truth of practical world is absolutely false in spite of empirical utility, only the Absolute is true. Moreover reality is out with all four positions, which are all different and all of them are negated. Hegel's is summation of yes-no with problems of both and how does the conflict live in synthesis, we do not know.

Intellect differentiates, relates one to the other, Absolute is non dual and beyond reason and is known by prajñâ, intuition. For Hegel Real is relativity, nonrelative is insignificant. Thought moves from alienation to itself. Samvṛti, phenomenal of Mâdhyamika is Hegel's Absolute. If thought is reality then there would be no war, no conflict. But we have a different experience, conflicting ideologies affect conduct and practical life and we strife for real. Hegel's evolution is within phenomenon, Mâdhyamika's away from it. Intuition dissolves theories without residue. Hegel's synthesis goes for the next triad ad infinitum. Yet Hegel strangely said, (The Logic of Hegel, Trans. by Wallace, p 351-2), the good is eternally realised and the function of thought is to get rid of the illusion which it had, perhaps unwittingly created.

Bradley, a neoHegelian conceives thought as immediate experience in which the differences of the finite are transmuted and united. His dialectical criticism of categories is like that of Mâdhyamika. For thought what is not relative is nothing, Appearance and Reality, p 25. Relation is relative to relata. Each can be something neither together with nor apart from the other. Relational view of thought must give appearance and not truth. Reality is left uncomprehended, p 28-9. This is very much like Mâdhyamika. Neither of those two things is real which cannot be conceived either as

identical with or different from each other, MK xx 19. Bradley proceeds to examine all categories like Nâgârjuna, Causation must be continuous and yet it cannot be continuous, p 51-2. Mâdhyamika dialectic is explicitly conscious of transcendental illusion with dogmatism and criticism in view, rejecting the alternatives on any problem of any philosophy according to the schema of Catuskoti of four possible positions. Bradley is not explicitly conscious of Tr. Illusion, he has no schema. He criticises categories at random. He does not follow Prasanga, Reductio ad absurdum, exposing the opponent's weakness. He even advances a counter position (i.e., dogmatic). He therefore is not systematic. Bradley seems to know the Reality when we all are perpetually hankering for it, and he enumerates its contents. Reality is self consistent, it must own appearance and it is experience. He then tests- anything that is self contradictory is not real. We know appearance through knowledge, which is conflicting and relative hence unreal. We may therefore add attribute to real as Bradley did and so we become dogmatic like Bradley. He knows the trouble with thought and under the influence of Hegel he speaks of it as constituting absolute and accepts degrees of reality and truth. He does not start with transcendental illusion like Kant and Mâdhyamika but considers things to be contradictory. If the real is

contradictory ontologically, it will remain so, we shall be unable to change that. But if our views of things are contradictory, which is epistemological, we can change that, as all absolutists do, in order to obtain the reality of the appearance, as Mâdhyamika does with Prajnâ.

The main absolutes of the Indian systems are Sunyatâ of the Mâdhyamikas, Vijnânâvâda, Brahman of Vedânta, Isvarâdaita of Pratyabhijna, Sabda (sound) Brahman of the Grammarians. I choose to discuss the first, second and third.

The opening verse of MBK of Maitreyanâtha the founder of Yogâcâra-Vijnânâvâda, brings the thesis: *abhuta parikalposti dayam tatra na vidyate, sunyatâ vidyate tatra, tasyam api sa vidyate*, Constructive ideation is real. In it duality exists not. Sunyatâ exists there and in this sunyatâ constructive ideation also exists. Consciousness according to this school, is self luminous and self known as a lamp. It self-determines according to its own law and creates subject-object and also reverts to its own nondual state and is realised in trance as nondual knowledge.

Samkara defines the position of Advaita Vedânta : Brahman (Absolute) is true, phenomenal world is neither true nor false. The self is not different from Brahman. The Being is pure, changeless, universal,

undifferentiated and self evident Absolute. Change is conditioned, particular and related. The given thing-in-itself is there before knowing. Knowing only reveals, discovers. What is in relation to knowing act and nothing apart from it is appearance. Empirical illusion for both schools starts with rope-snake of Vedânta and dream object of Vijnânnavâda. To Vedânta from the stand point of knowledge, "this" is the given, the real, substrate which was there before knowing, i.e., the rope. The snake is misperceived and is exhausted in the knowledge relation and is the appearance and is false, an illusion and is negated. Vijnânnavâdin negates "this" of knowledge created by consciousness. The snake is not out there as "this", as an object, independent of the ideating consciousness but is identical with the latter. What is illusion for the one is the real for the other.

Both extend illusion analogically to the phenomenal world. Knowing the real and having the bias of choice, the analysis of illusion above and its universal extension are perhaps dogmatic. Vedânta uses the revelation of Veda which declares Brahman alone to be real and Vijnânnavâdin refers to their trance state where object disappears and consciousness as the sole reality remains. Mâdhyamika starts with transcendental illusion, i.e., the views of philosophies about the real. Dialectic or criticism of experience is philosophy for

Mâdhyamika. Both terms of the above two schools are mutually relative without a nature of their own. They are appearances of the nondual absolute of reflective intuition, prajñâ. Vedânta often, like others, criticises Mâdhyamika as nihilist. Samkara says, it is not possible to negate the empirical world without accepting another reality; for to negate an error is to accept the general truth on which it is based, BSB II ii 31. But this sounds Mâdhyamika who explicitly accepts the absolute reality, Sunyatâ and they negate all possible predications, positive as well as negative. Mâdhyamika has “no doctrine of reality” and this really upsets doctrine makers, who mistakenly call it “no reality doctrine!”

Samkara (Sm) criticises Vijnânâvâda, (VV), Brahma Sutra Bhâsya (BSB) II ii 28. VV-Existence of object as atoms or whole is untenable. This predicament infects every conception as categories, substance-attribute etc.//Sm-The given object is revealed by knowledge which cannot be denied.

VV-Existence of object apart from knowledge is inconceivable. Knowledge is invariable//Sm-Cognising act is not the object cognised. Cognition reveals the given and does not create content. This is not knowledge.

VV-Consciousness can exist without object as in dreams, it cannot be denied as it is self revealed//Sm-If the thing-in-itself is not given how can he

comprehend as if there were a given, admitting by implication the reality of object.

VV-Vijnâna unfolds itself impaled by seeds of desire, different states of knowledge with different contents.// Sm-If there is no object without knowing, there is no knowledge without object. Internal modification of Vijnâna occurs equally with dream and waking objects. On waking, false or true is evident when objects are given, independent of knowing, dream objects are sublated, rejected.

Like Kant and Mâdhyamika, Vedânta accepts the given thing-in-itself, on which subjective thought categories superimpose. Empirical experience does not allow to know a thing as it is. Knowledge of Brahman (absolute) is pure without subjective form. It is so pure that there is no difference between the knower and the known. What is in relation to our knowing act and nothing apart from it is the appearance which exists only within this relationship. The empirical world of appearance is real but only as Brahman.

For Yogâcâra, Vijnâna is the creative act, the will, pure, cosmic and impersonal which creates subject-object from itself from a transcendental subjectivity. In dream it gives the dream object, the illusion. It produces subject-object in the phenomenal world and reverts

again to pure Vijnâna, known in trance state. This is the only Idealistic school in India. In the West, Fichte, Hegel have Pure ego or Reason, creating categories and objects. Hegel's Absolute is Reason with the duality of opposites. Hegel uses logical Dialectic to draw out categories while Vijnânâvâda, uses psychology to establish three strata of consciousness, Parikalpita, illusion, Paratantra, phenomenal and Parinispanna, the absolute pure consciousness.

Mâdhyamika criticises Vijnânâvâda, if the objects are unreal, what in fact is known? Mind cannot cognise itself, the sword cannot cut itself, the fingertip cannot touch itself. How can one be the knower and the known at once? If it is known by a knowledge, then that in turn will be known by another, ad infinitum. Vijnânâvâda, accepts Vijnâna but not the object. Only denial of both standpoints is truly the middle position of Buddha.



## Objections met

It is unnecessary and irrelevant to hold an antithesis in order to criticise a thesis. Rather being a refutation it is a critique of Reason (Kant), Dogmatic reason the object and Critical reason the subject. Mâdhyamika is a self criticism with a spiritual goal, that is, cleansing the mind of dogmatism. The dialectic is nirvikalpam (free from conceptual construction), prapancopasamam (cessation of the phenomenal world), sivam (benign, blessed).

The law of excluded middle is for thought regulation and is applicable to deductive sciences. When the relation of thought to reality is the question, it is irrelevant. It has no use to Mâdhyamika, Kant or Hegel. Two contradictories do not exhaust the universe, a third is always possible, such as, being, nonbeing and becoming; affirmation, negation, indefinite. Antinomies do not allow a choice. Illusory snake is neither real nor unreal, it is nonexistent. For A is B there are A is not B and A is not, excludes the excluded middle. A Mâdhyamika does not have to accept valid sources of knowledge through principles of logic and canons of evidence in order to dispute a thesis, as these may

ostensibly be indispensable, axiomatic or universally accepted.

These cannot be accepted on the strength of other principles without regress and cannot furthermore be accepted without proof. There is amenability of the relation between the source of knowledge and the object. A lamp may reveal an object but not as the lamp as an object. Non intellectual intuition is accepted but that transcends thought. Phenomenal experience invariably is conditioned by a priori categories (Kant). We do not accept proofs in order to determine them. If we enter into a discussion then it is possible without accepting proofs. Philosophers stand on disputing the sources of knowledge. They have their own logic for their own system. Dialectic is critical knowledge of the categories. The former is conditioned and the latter is Prajnâ, Sunyatâ or the highest knowledge.

Universal negation of Mâdhyamika is consistent and significant. If negation of itself implied the truth of the thing negated, then negation of Sunyatâ itself implied the truth of Sunyatâ (VV, 62-63). What is negated is not real and need not be real. In fact subjectivity is what is criticised and this pruning is significant. Mr X is not in the house. His relation with the house is nonexistent. Man mistaken for a lamp post, has no object except in the subjectivity of knowledge.

We negate not from real to phenomenal. Asato mâ sat gamaya (Brhadâranyaka Upanisad (Br. Up.), 1, iii, 28), from unreal lead me to the real. We take appearance as real. We take body for soul. Then we are disillusioned, become reflective. This gives us the real being abâdhya, nirvikalpa (uncontradicted, non conceptual). In Vedânta, Upanisads reveal the sole reality of Âtman. This is followed on by dialectic of difference which resolves conflict in the intuitive knowledge of Brahman. With Yogâcâra they find in the trance state no object but the sole reality of consciousness. They follow it up with the dialectic against realism and Vijnâna alone is reaffirmed. For Mâdhyamika, dialectical consciousness negates views logically and reach nondual Absolute in intuition. It denies negative views too and infact all views, negating judgement. It frees the real by convicting knowledge and declaring all views to be empty, sunya. It reaches real beyond predication, sunya. This universal is beyond views and all views are particulars. Sunyatâ is the antidote of views. The dialectic consciousness which is Prajnâ is aware of the hollowness of views, knowing which, one is delivered. He who holds Sunyatâ as a view is incurable (KP 65, p97), as if, one were to ask when told that there was nothing to give, to be given that nothing (MKV 247-248).

## How Dialectic Works

### Causality

Ekasya Sunyatâ yaiva saiva sarvasya sunyatâ CS VIII, 16, Sunyatâ of one is Sunyatâ of all, said Ârya Deva. We look into Causality. Satkâryavâda of Sâmkhya holds the theory of self becoming. Buddhist realists and Nyâya-Vaisesikas see difference between cause and effect. Jainas combine both as do the Hegelians and Materialists and Sceptics reject all. Things are produced by chance. Against Sâmkhya there is no point, no limit to duplication. Manifestation may be new but the substance is the same (pitcher/clay). But manifestation means efficient causation. Are they, cause and effect, identical? Attributes are different. Either they are not identical or if identical, causality is void. Absolute identity is beyond thought, in view of time, space and circumstance. What stops the seed just duplicating without manifesting further to fruits and leaves?

If cause is potential and effect is actual state, different but not in substance, what makes cause efficient and not wholly potential? Then there must be another cause

not satkârya. Presence of Purusha (Soul) sets Prakṛti, Nature, going, like the piercing of the dam releasing water (YB iv 3). If cause and effect are identical, which is which? They have different attributes underlying their distinction. If not there would be no difference between doer and done (MK xx 19, 20). With Sâmkhya, universe would be a colourless mass.

Mâdhyamika now denounces production from another, logically differences and engages in dispersal of causes of Buddhist realists. They are Hetu, âlambana, samanantara and adhipati unlike Aristotelean four or Nyâya-Vaisesikas three. Hetu is material cause, Samavâi Kârana of NV, that directly brings result, seed to sprout. They are six for AK ii 49. Âlambana, the object condition produces mind and mental. Samanantara is the immediate antecedent producing mental sanskrta and asamskrta dharma. Adhipati is both dominant condition and comprehensive and universal cause, identical with Kârana hetu, defined as all except itself. Its scope is wider than all pratyayas, conditions. All four engender mind and mental except for two nirvikalpa (non-conceptual) trances which latter do not have object condition, âlambana. Hetu and adhipati condition matter and material including citta vipryukta (nonmental) dharma. Âlambana and samanantara do not apply to non-mental events, AK ii 64. God, Prakṛti, time, chance are no causes, idem, ibid, MKV p 77.

For Sarvâstivâda cause is not single and is different from effect which Mâdhyamika criticises. If effect is other, there is no relation with cause. Stone or seed may sprout to plant. The otherness may be time or nature. The effect is not in causes, no standing or bonding, how is it produced? If A follows B, we observe, for what reason, why not C, D or E, where is the necessity? The seed has to go before sprout can come. The relata must be co-present for the relation. It is not a balance with two pans going up and down in invariable succession. The pans are related. If cause puts activity, it has to be embodied and cannot belong to seed which is nonexistent and the sprout has not come yet. Steps may be added ad infinitum. Without a relation, the gap will yawn (Hume, THN p88). How are the disconnected conditions unite for a common end? Some additional factors lead to regress. Buddhists have no god to help. Cause and effect are unconnected strangers. Cause indicates that the effect would occur but cannot produce it, leads to occasionalism, dharma sanketa. In the third alternative if identity and difference are added, the problems are added too. If one is subordinate, it is dispensable. If the synthesis is a tertium quid of Hegel, what is the relation between this and each one of the constituents-identity, difference or both? If the elements of synthesis are alive they are subject to previous objections. If the synthesis is devoid

of distinction then it is the Mâdhyamika position. If a new synthesis is brought in there is regress. The fourth alternative, things emerge at random without a cause is dogmatic and any reason given will be self contradictory, the conclusion being derived from the premises.

Causation cannot be explained. Theories are conceptual devises and have no practical bearing. Causation cannot obtain between entities which are identical with or different from each other, MK xx 19-21; Bradley, A & R p-46. Does it mean that there is no causation? No. That which originated depending on others are nothing by themselves. What is in itself is unproduced. Phenomena are conditioned, relative, CSV p 226-28. Yathâ mâyâ yathâ svapno gandharva-nagaram yathâ/tathotpâda tathâ sthânam tathâ bhanga udârhrtâ, MK vii 34, origin, existence and destruction are like mâyâ, dreams and fairy castle.

### **Motion and Rest**

Although Ârya Deva says, sunyatâ of one is sunyatâ of all, for the uninitiated or newly initiated we shall examine a few more Categories just to get the hang of it and to clinch the essence of the dialectic that Buddha meant. We examine the concept of motion and rest. For motion, we study, space traversed, MK II 14, moving body and movement, MK II 18. What is

traversed? Not that which has already been traversed or that yet to be traversed, since there is no third, being traversed, MK II 1. If being traversed must be with the body in action, motion cannot be with both. If motion is one then that must be with the body. Space is ubiquitous. If there are two motions then there must be two bodies to support both. Since there is no space being traversed, division of space is unreal.

Does the mover move? Surely not the non-mover. Is a mover anything with or without motion? He is either motionless apart from motion or has a motion other than the one that inheres. So firstly, there is a mover without motion and secondly there are two motions which call for two movers and not a disembodied one. Mover and the moved are neither identical nor different from each other, MK II 21. They do not exist, they are relative to one another, nothing on their own.

Concentrating on the locus of motion whether in the body which is without motion, solves the problem? The problem is not with the motion which has already started, but when and where? Not in the traversed or to be traversed, since we know that there is no space as being traversed for there will be two motions and two bodies, since motion cannot be without a body, MK II 12. As regards when does the mover begin? Not when he is at rest when there is no past or present and motion cannot be started in the future.



Without motion the space and time cannot be divided or distinguished until the motion starts, MK II 14. The rise of motion is in turn related to space and time divisions and thereby establishing circularity and inexplicability. Without distinction, uniform space and time of Nyâya-Vaisesika or Newton do not stand apart from things in them but become a colourless mass. Nor the distinctions are space and time like those of early Buddhists where there was no further underlying entity. With Mâdhyamika the substance and the time, space distinction are relative to each other and so nothing on their own.

So much for the motion, now let us examine rest but Zeno is no where to be found, the dogmatist disappeared. Who rests, not the mover, nor the non-mover and there is no third. If static rests, there are two rests means two bodies. The mover cannot rest or else he is not mover and one at rest is no mover either. Can a mover stop? Stopping is the opposite of activity. No. When will be the stoppage? From the space already traversed, yet to be traversed or from the one being traversed, MK II 17. As we have seen that there is no motion in the first two and the third does not exist, so there is no stoppage for the same reason. Again if rest is possible when does it start? When at rest, not at rest or about to rest. The problem is as before. So it is not true that motion exists whose opposite (rest) exists, since motion does not exist,

nor does the space and time distinction. Furthermore if there is no motion, there is no mover and therefore there is no path. They are all relative to each other, nothing on their own, MK II 25.

In Zeno's Achilles and Tortoise, the infinite number of space divisions could not be summed up in a finite quantum of time, Zeller, PreSocratic Philosophy, vol. 1, p 619; Gompertz, Greek Thinkers, Vol, 1, p 192. Bergson complains that this is unnecessary spatialisation of time. Movement is one sweep that cannot be chopped. It is to be felt and not conceived. First of all, any infinite series of any length that one can imagine will always sum to a finite number that is one. If movement is to be felt and lived and not conceived, then comparisons, distinctions and measurements, directions and progress of movements will not be possible. Space and time distinction incident on the commencement of motion will be impossible. Duration and movement of Bergson as real cannot be sustained. Without concepts of time, space and objects the manifested manifold world will be a colourless indistinguishable mass. The real is as little identified with time as with space. I must here clear the perspective. Buddha or Nâgârjuna are not common conjurers. Motion is a fact that they do not deny. Only it is inexplicable, such is the conjuring nature of the categories of Reason. The real is beyond reason or

thought. Buddha is the original dialectician who declared that submission of all concepts is Nirvâna. Incidentally, Bergson too realised that the real can not be conceived but lived.

### Âbhidharmika Categories

The categories of early Buddhist Realists are, Âyatana, the door, sense organs and sense data, i.e., seeing, hearing, which are epistemological and cognitive. The objective, ontological ones are skandhas or aggregates which are rupa (manifested matter), Vedanâ (perception), Samajnâ (conception), Vijnâna (intellect), Samskâra (disposition). These are in the causal domain as opposed to cognitive. The last four are mind or mental. Dhâtus or elements are, space, earth, water, fire and air. These are irreducible like alphabets and phenomenal things, or words and sentences are made out of these. The Lord talks about these things and how they arise and subside, The Lord said that these phenomena are characterised by origin, cessation and change of state. Now Pratitya samutpâda, dependent origination and pratitya samuccheda, dependent cessation by which life comes into being and ceases through twelve steps, is a very important doctrine which arose during the time of Buddha's enlightenment. Man is tied to this causal chain. Dependent on ignorance in past life arises tendencies, on them, the relinking consciousness of the present life, on it, mind and body,

on them, the senses, on them, contact, on it, craving, on it, clinging, on it, coming to be in the future life, on it, rebirth, on it, old age and death and the whole gamut of suffering. He then reflected on the reverse order, when the cause does not exist the effect does not, with the cessation of cause the effect ceases. With the cessation of ignorance, tendencies cease, on them, relinking consciousness, on it, mind and body, on them, senses, on them, contact, on it, emotion, on it, craving, on it, clinging, on it, coming to be in future life, on it, rebirth and on it, ceases old age and death and the whole gamut or suffering.

We shall concentrate on Samskr̥ta, phenomena. All Buddhist schools agreed that Buddha denied substance, world is anatta, Soulless. The schools varied with regard to the number, nature of elements and the manner of their interaction. Nâgârjuna probably directed his criticism against Vaivâsikas, or more probably against Sautrântikas since their arguments evolved and sharpened further and Kamâlâlâta, the founder of Sautrântika school, was a contemporary of Nâgârjuna. The thesis against fire is that there are unique, momentary entities which are destroyed in toto into nonexistence. Completely new ones arise. The flow is conditioned by ignorance, the substance view and disposition. All are subjected to causality. Phenomena are impermanent, soulless and lead to sorrow.

The criticism is that, the three characteristics of phenomena that Buddha mentioned must be taken together to avoid the necessary anomalies of individual treatment, such as, something that decays has not originated, MK VII 2. The three functions cannot operate on a thing simultaneously since by nature they are opposed to one another, CS XV 11. They do not operate successively which would mean, if they do that at the time of origin, the thing is permanent and only later it ceases to be and vice versa.

As all are subject to these forces, does origination originate, endures and ceases. If not then the forces do not function universally. Sâmmitiyas accepted origination of origination but that is a regress, just as, an illuminating lamp cannot be a subject as well as an object. Does a thing already in being originate or the nonexistent? Each case is impossible., MK VII 17. When there is no entity before or after, there is no 'it' that originates. It is just the moment but no 'it', nothing before or after. There is no thing, the subject, for which we could use the, predicate, 'it'. Only the moment exists without a content. Furthermore there is no legato movement or change of moment, let alone the content, the 'it', without the thing. They are discrete without relation and beyond comparison. If we do not know what originates, we do not know what endures and what changes, MK VII 22. Is cessation by itself or by some

external force, or both or neither, MK VII 32? Origination, duration and cessation of samskrta are inexplicable like illusion, MK VII 34, CS XIII 25. Asamskrta which is relative to samskrta is equally untenable, MK VII 33. Buddha's Pratitya Samutpâda doctrine is nullity then. No. Buddhist realists missed the real meaning of the Lord's teaching. This is dependent on that means they are relative to one another, nothing on their own. Furthermore, the realists propounded svasabhâvata, own nature of a thing, by saying, an entity existing by itself, in its own nature, retains its state and form. It does not depend on any other. They are the ones who contradicted Pratitya Samutpâda. The Scripture is quoted by Chandrakirti, MKV p 160, Whosoever perceives the real nature of Pratitya Samutpâda perceives the Dharma; and whosoever perceives the Dharma perceives the Buddha. So Mâdhyamika redefines Pratitya Samutpâda. It is not the temporal sequence of the origin and subsidence of momentary entities but their mutual dependence, their lack of thing hood or reality. It is to be equated with the unreality of things, nihsvabhâvata or void, sunyatâ. This is the revolution or evolution of Buddhist thought initiated by the Mâdhyamika.

### **The soul examined**

The Master stroke of Buddha that Âtman, soul, is the doctrine of fools and that there is no such thing and that

he is the first to invent, that no one had done before, is the laying down the foundation of the institution, and starting the Dialectic, the first antithesis. It was left to the successive teachers of Mâdhyamika to raze to the ground the continued specific formulations of it, as mentioned later. This Âtman, however was tied with a far more fundamental generic question of permanent-the Being, substance, Brahman of the Hindus, the thing-in-itself. While Advaita Vedânta developed the Sâmkhya idealism of the sole reality of the soul as proposed in the Upanisads, Nyâya-Vaisesikas were developing the Sâmkhya Realism by applying the apriori categories to the objective side. The substance, attributes and relations are all real. Atoms are immutable. Permanent is at the top of causal chain, the final cause, it never was not, Vaisesika sutra IV i 1-4. Other permanents are the ways of knowledge of Kant, space and time, which are apriori epistemological principles through which, things are received and in which they exist and change. In the Indian context, both space and time have been treated as if they are things and they observe causality thus giving rise to fallacies and logical attacks.

Likewise the concept of atom can only remain a concept, an hypothesis, without having any possibility to take part in the phenomenal experience. Application of categories, such as, movement, parts, perceivability, is unfair and so are adverse criticisms on this basis. The status of atom

has changed in modern science, it has subatomic parts and we have reliable methods to experience them. Coming back to permanent, having been put at the top of causal chain, a new problem started. Permanent has no cause but does it produce effect? They are totally transcendent, purists will say. Yet if it is also immanent, it must produce effect. Empirically however, there is nothing uncaused. There is no entity which is neither a cause nor an effect. Non-dependent is nonexistent and so is permanent. So did Buddha taught Dharma, a thing, as mentioned earlier with all its implications. Sautrântikas with their brilliance and logical rigours through teachers like Kumâralâta, Vâsubhândhu and Yasomitra, generated a piece of classic which is repeatedly quoted by Buddhists, Jainas, Brahmanical schools and Mâdhyamikas and Dr. S K Mookherjee, Buddhist Philosophy of Universal flux and Stcherbatsky, Buddhist Logic, Vol. 1 p 79, as follows.

The real is efficient, permanent is not, so unreal. Can it be efficient simultaneously producing all at once! What does it do then, continues interminably producing the same effect, which is absurd. If it does not but continues to exist as non-efficient, it cannot be both, *yo viruddho dharmâmhyâsavân nâsâveka*, that is not the one of which two or more contradictory attributes are predicated, is the Buddhist dictum. Can permanent produce successively? A producing B, then C, then D. Can A produce C when producing B? If it could, it would release all effects at



once and the problem will be as before. If not, it will never, a stone never produces sprout, given any length of time. If A remains the same in two moments, it is both efficient and non-efficient, violating the dictum. The cause, seed, remains the same and auxiliary conditions bring efficiency. But permanent remains inefficient. Auxiliary modifies the seed before it sprouts. If modification is essential, that is the cause. If not, then the seed has two natures, the original and what it becomes in response to the auxiliary. But according to the dictum that means there are two things. Things are different every moment. Difference of time is difference of thing. No two moments are identical. Existence is momentary. So is decay and destruction.

Permanent is illusion, like one flame or one stream; like a heap of corn, constantly changing. Archisâm santâne pradipa iti upachâryate eka iveti kritva; râsivat dhârâvad iti..., AKV p 713, 705. If a thing is breakable, applying a force is only an occasion of destruction, which it is destined for always. If it is non-breakable, no amount of force will ever break it, like empty space. Things change every moment imperceptibly. Again a thing does not change to another, each entity goes in toto for ever, without a cause and a completely new thing arises. A thing is a point instant both in time and space without a before or after, there is no duration. Characters are things. There are as many things as there are parts. A tree in light and

shed, a part moving and not moving are all different things. Like time spatial point lacks magnitude and diversity.

Universal, uniform, identical, existing in all particulars separated by time, space and circumstances, is not possible. We see a particular thing and also not its duplicate thing, universal. Real is simple, unique, unitary, momentary, particular. Permanent, aggregate, whole, substance, identity, are thought constructs.

Vaibhāsikas see Mādhyamikas destroying Buddha's key doctrine and Mādhyamika quotes MN II 32, I shall teach you the Dharma, says Buddha, that being present, this becomes; from the arising of that this arises. That being absent, this does not become; from the cessation of that, this ceases. It has the definition of Panchikârani, the five steps of establishing causality. It has the powerful argument of Arthakriyâkâritva, efficiency of a cause, as we have seen in the Sautrântika argument earlier. It also has, as Mādhyamika says, that Buddha implied that everything is dependent, relative and nothing on their own.

They blamed Âbhidharmikas for their holding the doctrine of an entity existing by itself in its own nature (svabhâva) and retains the state and form, and it does not depend on any other. This is against Dependent origination. Mādhyamika's Pratitya Samutpâda is the mutual dependence of Dharmas, their lack of reality, or their relativity or dharmatâ. This is the progress, of Buddhist

thought initiated by the Mâdhyamika as mentioned earlier.

Âtman (substance) is the major permanent that concerns the contesting parties. Hindus see it identical in changing and different from them. Buddhist Realists see it as a conventional name for a series of discrete, momentary states, composite skandhas and they are five, matter (manifestation), sense organ, sense data, conception, intelligence (mind=citta). There is nothing unitary in states, nothing left as a residue and no vacancy for Âtman which they call pudgala, the individual. Jainas and Vâstiputriyas take Âtman/pudgala as a quasipermanent entity neither identical with states, not different from them.

If Âtman is states, it has origination and destruction. There are as many Âtmans as there are states, MK VI 127-8. Each Âtman is nonexistent before birth and after death. It is born without cause, discrete without relation with the one before or the one after, MK XXVII 12. Will the latter Âtman experience the results of the former Âtmans? Acts are discrete and not causally continuous. If states are Âtman then acts are agent, feeling is a person. But feeling is not feeler, content is not knowing it. There is a subject for a mental state. Yet the Buddhist Realists say Âtman=states. A bundle of qualities is not substance. Self unifies acts, makes mental life coherent and continuous. All these do not mean that Mâdhyamikas are accepting

the opposite view. Hindus hold Âtman to be eternal, identical among change and is apart from states, MKV 344. But is Âtman apprehended apart from states? If not then it is a thought construct (Advaita Vedânta establishes Âtman without object in deep sleep, according to Samkara). Âtman an ego reflected in states enjoys as semblance of independence, identity and permanence and such is the conceptual construction, MKV 345, as Kant said that transcendental I is an empty construction without categories and sense data. One's Âtman is another's nonÂtman. No relation between states and Âtman can be worked out. If Âtman is not a real entity then who moves the body? Immaterial moves the material? Furthermore Âtman being all pervasive and inactive, it cannot be the agent, coordinator or synthesiser, CS X 17. Unchanging Âtman cannot get better or worse by Karma (act as cause) or spiritual discipline. If Âtman is neither bound nor free and phenomenal life is due to ignorance, then saving knowledge is not that the real is Âtman or non Âtman, it is that none of the conceptual patterns applies to it. The self and states are mutually dependent and so unreal, MKV 189-90. If both views are united then that can avoid the faults of each other, like the views of Jainas and Vâtsiputriyas. Are not the problems duplicated, as they love to say? Identity, difference, both and neither exhaust the possible relationships that the soul can have with the states. Does the soul come before? How can we know without the states, MK IX 3? Can soul be without the

states? Then why cannot the states be without the self, MK IX 4? Is the self prior to each state? But not before each, it must be prior to the block, MK IX 7.

Can the soul come after the states? Does that mean that the states can exist without the soul, MK IX 10? Do they come simultaneously? That is not through the causal chain but independently, it follows, MK IX 12. Nâgârjuna examines the fire and fuel analogy, MKV 202, two reals may be mutually dependent, MK 10 1-3. They are not identical as the subject/object, consumer/consumed. If they are different then the fire starts without the fuel. In this reciprocal dependence how can we know the relative priority or posteriority? It is not possible, MK X 10. So what Nâgârjuna has to say? The self is not different from the states, nor identical with them; there is no self without the states nor is it to be considered non-existent, MK XXVII 8. But that is what Jainas and Vâtsiputrias said and to this Mâdhyamikas said, quoting Buddha, that there are no states without the self, nor is there the self without the states, and therefore both are unreal, being relative.

Vâsubândhu's polemic against the heresy of Vâtsiputriya's theory of Pudgalâtman is also a classic where one of the most abstruse and distinguished âchâryas like Vâsubândhu called in Nâgasenâ and Kamâralâta on his side. How did that all terminate? If the individual is the elements he is composed of and nothing else, why

then did the Lord decline to decide the question, whether the individual is identical with the body or not, AKV 708, Stcherbatsky, Soul Theory, p 846?

Vâsubândhu-Because he took into consideration the intention of the questioner. The latter asked about the existence of the soul as a real living unit, controlling our actions from within. But as such a Soul is absolutely not-existing, how could Buddha have decided whether it did or did not differ from the body. Fancy someone asking: "are the hair of the tortoise hard or smooth?" This question has already been analysed by quite ancient teachers (Nâgasenâ, AKV p 708).

Vâtsiputriya-And why did not the Lord declare that it does not exist at all, *ibid*, *idem*?

Vâsubândhu-Because he took into consideration the questioner's state of mind. The latter could have understood that the living being is the same as the continuity of elements of a life, which is also denied. He thus would have fallen into a wrong doctrine (of Nihilism).

Vâtsiputriya-why then did not Buddha declare that the "living Being" is a conventional name for a set of constantly changing elements?

Vâsubândhu-Because his interlocutor was not capable of grasping the theory of elements...This method of teaching

according to the mental capacity, can be clearly seen in the express words of Buddha to Ananda, when he had answered by silence to Vâtsâgotra and the latter had departed... This point has been explained by Kamâralâta thus : The Buddha was pleased to construct his doctrine concerning the elements of existence with the greatest caution like a tigress who holds her young by her teeth, (her grasp is not too tight in order not to hurt him; nor is it too loose in order not to let him fall). Buddha saw the wounds produced by the sharp teeth of dogmatic belief in eternity, on the one hand and by the downfall of, every responsibility for one's actions, on the other. If humanity accepted the idea of an existing soul, it lay down wounded by the sharp weapon of dogmatism. But if it did cease to believe in the existence of a conditioned self, then the tender child of its moral merit would perish, *ibid*, *idem*. The same author goes on and says: since the living being does not exist, the Lord did not declare that it is different from the body. Nor did he declare that it did not exist, fearing that it could be understood as a denial of the empirical self. Vâsubândhu is clear that Buddha had a view of the soul, but we have shown that Buddha had no views. It also appears that conflict of reason is seen by the teachers to be a difficulty of verbal formulation, that is, one that would give least offence to the weak minded. Nâgârjuna says, that Buddha asserted the existence of self, as well as, quite emphatically denied the self and finally taught that there is neither self nor non-self, MK XVIII

6. He adjusted his treatment according to the need of the patient. Those with Nihilism was taught the self to emphasise on moral responsibility and its results. For those addicted to *Âtman* was taught no-soul doctrine as an antidote, to avoid selfishness. His final teaching is neither self nor not self as these are subjective, empty views, MKV 359. Many are the approaches to the Absolute. The Lord chose his methods to suit the dispositions of the disciples, CS VII 20. *Ârya Deva* also says that it may also mean that in the first stage a pupil is taught to be moral on the basis of the existence of the self and to wean him away from vice. He is then taught detachment from self view, no-soul doctrine and finally he is taught to give up all views for freedom, CS VIII 15.

*Prâsangika*, *reductio ad absurdum*, is the correct *Mâdhyamika* technique. All Categories of Reason of Kant were taken through the format of exclusive views, which are, yes, no, yes and no, neither yes nor no and each view ended in absurdity. Rejection of one view does not mean that one subscribes to the opposite. Dialectic is criticism only and is not another view. Reality is found to be beyond thought processes, it is transcendent to thought and is beyond the duality of reason, that is non-dual and void (*sunya*) of views or predications.



### Something Odd

At the end of the fire and fuel examination of Nâgârjuna, on the occasion of criticising Vâtsiputriyas position or that of Jainas, namely, the Pudgala, the individual is neither identical with nor different from the states, Nâgârjuna makes his conclusion, namely, The self is not different from the states, nor identical with them (MK XXVII, 8), which turns out to be the exact position of Vâtsiputriyas. He also adds that it is not nonexistent. Where do we go from here? It is the fourth position of the four Buddhist views, Catusatikâ and the real is beyond all four views. We are clearly shown that Âtman and the Skandhas are mutually dependent hence unreal. Are we then obliged to accept Nâgârjuna that the reals can be mutually dependent? The Sautrântikas were admonished because they held that things have a fixed nature. It contradicts Pratitya Samutpâda and the definition of a 'thing', given by Buddha. In saying that fire and fuel are both real, as well as, mutually dependent is entirely out of order and is tantamount to bhedâbheda, yes-no together position. Buddha used the fire-fuel position to illustrate, MN III, p245, Depending on the oil and the wick does the light of the lamp burn; it is neither in the one, nor in the other, nor anything in itself, phenomena likewise are nothing in themselves. All things are unreal, they are deceptions... and infact Nâgârjuna added (MK XIII 2) lord means by sunyatâ, dependence of things. What I mean

is that the lord did not say that the fire and the fuel are reals and they are mutually dependent. The fourth position of Vâtsiputriyas and Nâgârjuna are also void, sunya and certainly not real and Nâgârjuna's not non-existent is also not.

## **Evolution of Mahâyâna**

Buddha's emphasis was on ethics. He taught Dharma, not Abhidharma, metaphysics. He had no metaphysical stand. Metaphysics was only incidental. This reflected in his Order. Âchâryas, teachers, were monks and monasteries, centres of learning. Precursors of Mahâyâna brought out the deeper meaning of Buddha's esoteric teaching whilst conservative literalists highlighted the phenomenological exoteric meaning, Kimura, p 12, 15, 67, 115. Just as Nâgârjuna systematised the doctrine of Sunyatâ of Prajnâpâramitâ metaphysics, spiritual and religious ideals which were in loose form, the Prajnâpâramitâ in turn far from being innovations, brought out the profounder teaching of Buddha himself. The Dialectical consciousness is brought to fruition, denying reality (Dharmanairâtmya), establishing a severe form of Absolutism, significantly interpreting the 14 inexpressibles of Buddha. Of all Pâramitâs, Excellences, Prajnâ, the highest knowledge, is the leader that gives proper meaning and perspective to other excellences. Therefore it would be interesting and relevant to follow the history of the Orders and

Schools and Literature of Mahâyâna, in order to understand the evolution of philosophy and doctrines that stretched from Buddha to Nâgârjuna in IC BC (History-Kathâvattu, Vâsumitra, Bhavaviveka, Buston, Taranath, N. Dutta, Vinita Deva), (Literature-Winternitz, N. Dutta, S. Dutta, Buston-Obermiller). Sthaviravâda and Sarvâstivâda schools of Hinayâna have been mentioned. Schism of Vajjiân monks and revolt of Mahâsanghikas represent Mahâyâna trend of much earlier times.

Sâmmitiyas were a landmark, looked down upon as heretics by all. They found Dharma theory to be lacking and an incomplete substitution of Âtman theory. They put forward Pudgalâtman (individual), a quasipermanent entity, neither identical with nor different from five skandhas, composites, to explain experience, memory, moral and spiritual life better than the others. Later, Mâdhyamikas will say that there is no self without states and no states without self, they are relative, hence sunya, void. The work of Sâmmitiyas are not extant. What we know is from their opponents. They were a transition between one sided modal stand of the Realists and no position of Mâdhyamikas. The latter however are the true procurors of Mahâyâna philosophy and religion.

Sautrântikas are critical realists full of dynamism and

brilliance and their view, that momentariness and uniqueness is the ultimate real, which alone is the object of perception, approximates the modern scientific view of reality of our own time. Continuum is empirical and is inferred. There are two aspects of objects, viz., particulars and general and are cognised by perception and inference. In practice, misunderstanding of elements as permanent substance gives rise to attachment and infatuation. These are passions under the skandha samskâra (composite-dispositon) and is derived from the ignorance of view. The antidote is thinking universal soullessness. Sautrântikas were aware of the subjectivity of phenomena like Kant and developed the doctrine of conceptual construction and applied to phenomena without exception. They reduced the number of dharmas from 75 to 43 because many of them are not real but ideal. They rejected citta-vipryukta samskârâ (the non-mental forces). We know our ideas which are real, objects are inferred. Their doctrine of resemblance between knowledge and object, i.e., representative perception led to Yogâcâra-Vijnânâvâda idealism just as Berkeley's idealism came from the criticism of representative perception of Descartes and Locke. The work was done for Mâdhyamika. The only problem was that Sautrântika was unconscious of their own view being equally conceptual. Dharmanairâtmya, no-object, had yet to come followed by absolutism of Yogâcâra and Mâdhyamika in philosophy. Dipavamsa

(see Thomas EJ, History of Buddhist Thought, p 32) describes the revolutionary Mahâsanghikas: They broke up and reversed the scripture and altered the collection, changed sutta collection, changed the doctrine of Nikâyas and set aside the sense of Vinaya, six sections of Abhidhamma, the Patisambhida, the Niddesa and part of the Jâtaka. Mahâsanghikas say that the literalists do not understand the deeper meaning of the Scriptures.

Vâsumitra and Bhâvya and others following the doctrinal differences, are of the opinion that Mâhasanghikas guessed a real ground of changing phenomena which they passed on the Tathâgata whom they considered as divine and supermundane, Lokottara. Three other schools together maintained: Buddhas are supermundane with no worldly attribute. Their words are for turning the wheel of Law. They preach all doctrines with one utterance. They preach only truth. Their bodies, powers and lives are limitless. They are never tired of enlightening beings and awakening pure faith in them, Kimura, Hinayâna and Mahâyâna p 86-7 (quotes Vâsumitra, Nikâyabheda-dharma-mati cakra Sâstra). There is little doubt that they were evolving Buddhakâya view, Bodhisattva ideal and Buddha devotion. By its own inner dynamism, Buddhism was heading for Absolutism in Metaphysics and Pantheism in religion, Murti TRV, The Central Philosophy of Buddhism, p 81, although, Kern suggests borrowing

from Hindu Bhâgavatgîtâ, Keith, from Greeks and Christians and Stcherbatsky, from Hindu Upanisadic Brahman, which are guesses without any evidentiary demonstration. During the period of four hundred years following Buddha, Theism of Yoga, Svetâsvatara Upanisad and Bhâgavatgîtâ no doubt taught such popular and successful views, although, Brahmasutra was holding a Bhedâbheda (both difference-non-difference) position and Sâmkhya a dualism, maintaining a continued inconsistency, when the Buddhists through their own dynamism were rapidly approaching Absolutism in IC BC which Mahâyâna Prajnâpâramitâ reached a further centry earlier. Vedânta nondualism was yet to come eight centuries later when Gaudapâda-Samkara, borrowing the Yogâcâra-Mâdhyamika dialectical technique established the orthodox Absolute non-difference of Upanisads, Bhattacharya V, Âgama Sâstra of Gaudapâda, edited, translated and annotated, Calcutta, 1943, p 102.

The transit from Hinayâna to Mahâyâna contained a common and important group of literature, highlighting the evolution of the transit. Mahâvastu is the Vinaya pitaka of Lokottara branch of Mahâsanghikas, of epic proportion containing moral stories, Jâtakas, dogmatic sutras, Buddha as god and anticipates ten bhumies (ground/stages) of the Bodhisattva. Lalitavistara belongs to Dharmagupta sect of Sarâvâstivâdins (Hinayâna).

This divine sport of Buddha is a Vaipulya sutra of Mahâyâna, the source of *The Light of Asia* of Sir Edwin Arnold and is one of the nine Dharmas (important texts), reverently used by Mâdhyamikas as a source; Cause, seed is not the same as the effect, sprout, nor different; a thing that is produced by dependence on others is nothing in itself; things are apparent like mâyâ, mirage. Avadâna literature (moral stories) are religious and ethical, glorifying Bodhisattva ideal.



## **Prajnâpâramitâ (pp)**

During the three to four centuries following Buddha's parinirvâna, Mahâyâna literature Prajnâpâramitâ (Prajnâ = the highest knowledge, pâramitâ = excellence) came to realise fully the deeper meaning of Buddha's teaching, the significance of 14 Avyâkrta (silence). Dharmanairâtmya (nonsubstantial object = No-object as opposed to Pugalairâtmya = no individual soul, self or ego or subject) indicated the total dialectical consciousness and freedom from dogmatism altogether, resolving all conflicts in a conclusive Absolutism, Sunyatâ (devoid of predication). Mahâyâna now featured super mundane Buddha as the essence of phenomena, Bodhisattva ideal of Universal salvation of beings and Buddhahood and the metaphysics of Sunyatâ beyond predication.

Astasâhasrikâ (8000 verses) is the oldest text expanded to Satasâhasrikâ (100,000) and Pancavimsatisâhasrikâ (25,000) and abridged to Saptasatikâ (seven), Adhyârdhasatika (having an additional half) and so on down to Prajnâpâramitâ hrdaya (heart) sutra of a few

lines : The skandhas are empty, all things have the character of emptiness, they have no beginning, no end, they are faultless, and not faultless, they are not imperfect and not perfect, therefore, O Sariputta, here in this emptiness there is no form, no perception, no name, no concept, no knowledge, S. B. E. xlix p 148. There is an enormous literature of collections and translations in various languages. Lokaraksa translated Astasâhasrikâ into Chinese in 172 AD. Nine Dharmas are Astasâhasrikâ, Saddharma Pundarika, Lalita Vistara, Lankâvatâra, Gandavyuha, Tathagataguhyaka, Samâdhirâja, Suvarna Pravâsa and Dasabhumika sutra. These are held in great regard and respect by Mâdhyamika and Yogâcâra. Nâgârjuna used the first three and Samâdhirâja. Kasyapa Parivarta (Ratnakuta) is famous and comprehensive and is a formative sutra of Mâdhyamika, defining the celebrated middle path in a new light and Samâdhirâja advises not to make a position in the middle. Ratnakuta contains 48 sutras, mostly short tracts, yet Pitâputra samâgama goes over the entire ground of Mâdhyamika.

Prajnâpâramitâ and subsidiary sutras repeat the correcting mantra of nonphenomenal in phenomenal terms: There is no change, no origination, no cessation, no coming in or going out; the real is neither one, nor many; neither âtman nor anâtman; it is as it is always. Origination, decay etc. are imagined by the uninformed,

they are speculations indulged in by the ignorant. The real is utterly devoid (sunya) of these and other conceptual constructions; it is transcendental to thought and can be realised only in non-dual knowledge-Prajnâ or Intuition, which is the Absolute itself. We are also expressly warned not to consider Sunyatâ as another theory, the Dharmatâ as other than the phenomenal world. The absolute transcends phenomena and is immanent as their reality. Samvrti (covered) is the truth of the Practical world and Paramârtha is the highest truth. Skandhas are sunya, not anitya (impermanent), lacking nature. Pratitya Samutpâda (dependent origination) is not a temporal causal chain but essential dependence, relativity of entites, i.e., sunya (void).

The dialectic is relentless and its application is universal. Nâgârjuna and his followers had to systematise and bring perfection to this age old wisdom of Prajnâpâramitâ.

## **Mâdhyamika**

Nâgârjuna was one of the most original minds of India. He was a Kosala or a South Indian Brahmin, who according to legend brought Satasâhasrikâ from the abode of nâgas, serpents, and came to teach in Nâlandâ Mahâvihâra. He is associated with the remains of Buddhist monasteries and temple in Nâgârjuna Konda in Sriparvata in Andhra, Buston II 122, four hundred years after the parinirvâna of Buddha in IC BC, if we believe in the Dalai Lama archive, since he converted Dhorabhadra in 76 BC. He was a friend of the king Satavâhana of Andhra. He wrote Suhrlekhâ (writing to friend) for him. There are sceptics regarding his historicity and time, Walleser, Life of Nâgârjuna, Asia Major, Hearsh Ann., vol. p 1, 6. It remained for his dialectical consciousness to self criticise Buddhist realism, the Momentary discrete and unique particulars as real, to be an epistemological apriori thought construct. Dharmanairâtmya balanced the original Pudgalanairâtmya of Buddha. Total rejection of views is Prajnâ, the highest knowledge, which itself is the nondual Absolute, beyond any predication, sunyatâ.

This sunyatâ is the reality of Samvrti (covered), the phenomenal world and is its refuge. Criticism is philosophy, silence is the Absolute beyond reason and knowledge. Only a word had to be used to signify this Absolute, i.e., Sunyatâ (devoid of predication). In a thousand years since Buddhism died a natural death in India after injecting its best to Hinduism, there is hardly any change in the Mâdhyamika of the founder. Six treatises are, Mâdhyamika Kârikâs, 448 verses in 27 chapters, examining views; there are eight commentaries including his own and by distinguished philosophers; Chandrakirti's Prasannapadâ is important; Sunyatâ Saptati, 66 verses in anustup metre, about unreality of things; Yukti Sastikâ, 60 verses in anustup regarding cause and dependent origination; Vighraha-Vyâvartâni refutes objections against Sunyatâ; Vaidalya sutra and Prakarana is his self defence against the charge of perverting logic and Vyâvahâra Siddhi shows that the Absolute truth and the empirical stand points, go hand in hand. Chatus Stava are four feeling verses in anustup, of highest devotion. There are many more including Tantrika and Medical works. In general the originals are lost but preserved in Chinese and Tibetan and some are revived and translated.

Ârya Deva was a crown prince of Ceylone when he renounced and came to Nâgârjuna. He was the worthy successor and a great debator. He wrote Catusataka,

400 verses in 16 chapters, each with 25 verses; spiritual disciplines occupied the first half and refutation of dogmatism the second, against not only the Buddhist realists but also Sâmkhya and Vaisesika Hindu realist Schools; Sata Sâstra and Aksara Sataka. All three were directed against the rising prominence of Sâmkhya and Vaisesika. The Hasta Vâla Prakarana is a handbook of six verses summarising the doctrine. The world is like rope-snake, unreal. The wise should abandon attachment. There are other works. Ârya Deva and his writings are second to Nâgârjuna and Mâdhyamika Kârikâs in style, content and authenticity. Chandrakirti and others wrote commentaries.

Buddhapâlita and Bhâvaviveka arrived next. The former established the Prâsangika school of Mâdhyamika. Prasanga is Reductio ad absurdum, which according to Chandrakirti, is the true and only method of Nâgârjuna and Ârya Deva. Bhâvaviveka the younger, required to advance a counter position before indulging in refutation. But why? If you donot like either view or any view, why support one, being a Mâdhyamika? If you like both views to support empirical reality and validity, then there is no conflict to settle, there is no argument. We have no historical evidence to account for his holding his own position like all other dogmatic philosophers. His school is Svântrika, having his own position for which Candrakirti criticised him severely

and personally. He also believed, as opposed to Nâgârjuna, that Bodhisattva path and realisation of Sunyatâ is not necessary for Nirvâna.

Both Buddhâpâlita and Bhâvaviveka came from South India in early 5C AD and both wrote commentaries on Mâdhyamika Kârikas, establishing their stances. The latter was a widely read scholar, with a liberal streak and had his own mind with a large following and left a mark in history and posterity. Bhâvaviveka wrote Mâdhyamakârtha Samgraha which starts with two truths. The highest truth Paramârtha is nisprapanca, not phenomenal. This is either aparyâya, beyond all expression, corresponding to that of Nâgârjuna and paryâya which is expressible in words. This latter can be Jâtiparyâya vastu, the universal positive being as in Sâmkhya and Janmarodha, the complete extinction of all manifestations corresponding to Hinayâna concept of Nirvâna. Samvrti is divided into tathya which is empirically efficient and mithyâ which is not so efficient. This latter again either involves ideation for apprehension like rope-snake or mechanical illusion, such as, a bent stick in water. Mâdhyamikas and Vedântists are rather touchy and intolerant to each other presumably because of Âtman. They donot recognise each others views of empirical reality, as well as, Paramârtha. Bhâvaviveka however is more liberal and accepts and respects views of Hindus and Hinayâna.

Again in his Mādhyamikahrdaya Kârikâ and in its commentary Tarkajvâla, besides covering other items, he wrote for Hinayâna, Yogâcâra, Sâmkhya, Vaisesika and Vedânta. He also wrote Mâdhamikâvatâra Pradipa and Mādhyamika Pratitiya Samutpâda. In Karatalaratna (the jewel in hand) Bhāvya brings his Svântrika, his own view, of Mādhyamika, by spelling out his position.

It is true that Buddha, Pranjnâpâramitâ and Nâgârjuna had to, in so many words, lay down their doctrine of Sunyavâda as Kant had to in his Critique, but the sum and substance is that dialectically conscious criticism is their philosophy which only exposes the contradictions of categories of Reason that clad (samvṛti) the real. This inveterate desire to theorise, generalise and distort the real unconsciously, is dogmatism, view making, dr̥sti. Criticism exposes the contradiction and cannot be classified under the genre of dr̥sti. This I had to mean when so much I had to say. Bhavya's syllogistic position is, conditioned things are unreal, sunya, from the standpoint of ultimate truth because they are produced through causes and conditions, like things created by magic. The conditioned, such as, space, Nirvâna, etc., are nonexistent from the standpoint of ultimate truth, because they are non originating, like sky flower. Both propositions, have circularity. Mâyâ, sky flower are used by Nâgârjuna for the epistemological, apriori,



subjectivity, the categories of Reason, which he examined in his MK and found inexplicable. Bhâvya talks about things when he uses these words. Things are as they are, they are only covered (samvṛti) by the categories. He agrees later that things are not nullified but devoid of essence as PP and Nâgârjuna say. Space is an apriori epistemological entity, through which objects present. It is nonoriginating but not nonexistent. Nirvâna, Buddha said, is the only truth and it is described as non originating but not nonexistent. Real may appear to Hegel, Jaina or Kant as nonexistent but not to a true Mâdhyamika or Samkara. Digdesagunagatiphal- abhedasunyam hi paramârtha sat advayam Brahman, mandabudhthinum asat iva partibhâti, Samkara said. Devoid of direction, location, quality, movement, effect, difference is the Absolute nondual real that appears nonexistent to a weak intellect. Bhâvya later accepts vyâvahârîka (practical) truth and of scripture and common sense and says that it is not necessary that a thing must be accepted as real before one can negate it. That is true for Nâgârjuna because we are only negating the subjectivity. Voidness of all things is itself void, as Bhâvya says, is a regress. Criticism is not a theory. This I have already mentioned earlier, before I came to Bhâvya's position. In KP p 97, Buddha expressly says....Likewise, Kâsyapa, Sunyatâ is the antidote, for all dogmatic views, but him I declare incurable who misapprehends Sunyatâ itself

as a theory. Does Bhāvya prove sunyatâ positively? If one has to produce a negative example to confirm the invariable concomitance between the middle and the major terms, as the realist Nyâya school demands, one can easily say, as said before, not unreal (Nirvâna) is also not dependent in origination. One must understand why Buddha, PP and Nâgârjuna used sunyatâ for everything phenomenal because they knew the subjectivity of Reason that makes the real appear and they have not clinched the real on the palms of their hands to apply the negative example. Nyâya can easily do so- they have all the reals, Âtman, Brahman, on the palms of their hands. It does not make the Mādhyamika dogmatic. What and how Bhāvya reasoned, have all been done by his predecessors. There is nothing exclusive about his position.

Candrakirti came from South India, Samanta and was a pupil of Kamalabuddhi who in turn was a pupil of Buddhapâlita and Bhāvaviveka. Stcherbatsky calls him a mighty champion of the purely negative method of establishing monism. He was instrumental in reviving Prâsangika, *Reductio ad Absurdum* as the correct method of Mādhyamika. He wrote commentaries, *Prasannapadâ* (clear worded) on Mādhyamika Kârikâs and also on *Sunyatâ Saptati*, *Yukti Sastikâ* and on *Catuh Sataka* of Ārya Deva. His *Madhyamakâvatâra* is important with its own commentary. Two small

manuals are Madhyamaka-Prajnâvatâra and Pancaskandha. Candrakirti studied Nâgârjuna and his work in depth and width and inturn elaborated and crystallised Mâdhyamika philosophy authoritatively. In the interim period distinguished Sautrântika philosophers, such as, Vâsubândhu, refined their thesis. This in turn gave rise to Vijnânâvâda in the hands of towering figures of Maitreyanâtha and his great disciple Asanga who converted his illustrious brother Vâsubândhu. The famous logician, Dignâga, the disciple of the latter two, about whom a western scholar commented that Aristotle has not said the last word in logic, was a Vijnânâvâda leader with his able follower Dharmakirti who was a contemporary of Candrakirti. It was left to Candrakirti to criticise Sautrântika and Vijnânâvâda schools adequately. Using the dialectic in the vein of Nâgârjuna, who exposed both sides of the coin adequately and equally and criticised the antithesis as much, Candrakirti pointed out, if there is no Âtman apart from the skandhas, states, then there are no states apart from Âtman. If cause and effect are not identical, then they are not different from each other. In order to denote the empirical truth, highlighting the momentary states, the activity must of necessity highlight the agent. The concept of particulars does violence to common sense and everyday thought and language. The perception of unique particular without the universal and the relational is logically untenable. If there is no

pitcher without the quality then there is no quality apart from the pitcher, table, the substance. In the notion of Absolute, the logical nature is indeterminateness and the mode of apprehension is inaccessibility to reason. For the highest truth there is neither the substance nor the qualities, neither the pitcher, nor the roundness or baked clay colour. Yet when we come to the empirical truth, determinate relational mode of perception, apriori categories of Reason must be observed and respected. To cover all, Mādhyamika accepts perception, inference and verbal testimony like the Nyâya school, as the means of knowledge, unlike the Buddhist perception and inference for particular and universal objects. Samvṛti truth is important because it is the means through which we reach the Absolute. Kant accepts categories of Reason for the empirical reality, only transcendently they are unreal. Vyāvahâram anâsṛitya paramârtha na desyate/ paramârtham anâgamyâ Nirvânâ nâdhigamyata iti, MK XXIV 10. Without the logical, highest knowledge is not possible and without the highest knowledge, Nirvâna is not possible. We go from the unreal to the real, from darkness to light, from death to immortality, Br. Up. said.

Sânti Deva was a prince from Saurâstra in 8C AD. As he was to be crowned he was advised by Manjusri to renounce, in a dream. He fled to Nâlandâ to Jayadeva. He wrote Siksâ Samuccaya a book of Mahâyâna and

Mâdhyamika in 27 chapters. The other is Bodhicâryâvatâra containing PP in the ninth chapter. Both are very popular and standard texts and as one expects from a typical Buddhist âcârya, the preoccupation is spiritual, cultivating Bodhicitta. An air of serenity and detachment pervade his work. Like Candrakirti he follows Prâsangika and criticises Vijnânâvâda. His devotion to Buddhas and Bodhisattvas and confession as a step to the path reminds one of Nâgârjuna's Catustava.

Sântaraksita and his pupil Kamalâsila lived in 8C AD and visited Tibet. It is because of them and teachers, such as, Atisa (Dipankar Srijnâna) from Bengal that Mâdhyamika became the dominant philosophy in Tibet and Mongolia, Murti, p 103. It is also the faith of the Sanron sect in Japan, Winternitz M, History of Indian Literature, Vol. II, Univ. of Cal. 1933, p 351. Sântaraksita wrote Mâdhyamikâlankâra Kârikâ and Vrtti. He expounds Sautrântika doctrines, such as, momentariness, svalaksana and accepts Vijnânâvâda thesis of non-existence of objects from the empirical viewpoint. Kamalâsila wrote a commentary (Panjikâ) on the Kârikâ and the three Bhâvanâkramas. He follows Sântaraksita, Buston, History of Buddhism, Vol. II p 136, translation from Tibetan by Dr. E. Obermiller, Heidelberg, 1931; Obermiller E, The Doctrine of Prajnâpâramitâ, p 90. In the latter reference three phases

of Buddhism are mentioned (p 91-100). Bhāvya followed Sautrântika- Mādhyamika-Svâtantrika school, the distinction is based on their conception of empirical reality. Nâgârjuna, Buddhapâlita and Candrakirti, of course belonged to the original Prâsangika school. Nâgârjuna concentrated his attack on the realist school of early Buddhism, Sarvâstivâda. Criticism of Sâmkhya or Upanisads were not open or explicit. Ârya Deva showed a lot more attention against Sâmkhya and Vaisesika as did Buddhapâlita and Bhâvaviveka. Candrakirti was vociferous against the Hindus, Vijnânâvâdins and Bhâvaviveka. He revived Prâsangika as the true teaching. Sânti Deva followed him. Sântaraksita and Kamalâsila accepted Vijnânâvâda and criticised Nyâya and Jaina views, as well as, those of Mimâmsâ of Kumârila. They also refuted Upanisads and Sabda Brahma.

## Summary

If you play with philosophies long enough with all your good will, you will pick your toy, depending on your bias and protect it with you life against the whole world. Is this our dogmatic slumber? Why then one fine morning you find yourself grown up and reject all toys? You are now conscious of the alluring illusions. The interminable conflicting war is taking place in a venue that is your mind. Consciousness of this Dialectic, coming of age is Mâdhyamika, who starts with transcendental illusion and jumps with two feet to clear the jungle of all views. Why did Kant take such a long time to jump? What was the motive of his Critique? The impasse was already there, Rationalism-Empiricism, like Âtma-Anâtma, Soul-no soul, in India. He starts with-is Pure reason possible and ends with-no it is not. Why then this enormous staircase beforehand? (at the crossroad to mount up to a high mansion, which no one knows, Buddha said in Tevijja sutta)? Was Kant still under the influence of building his dream castle, a metaphysical system, instead of destroying them all, for he says: such a system of pure

reason I hope myself to produce under the title of Metaphysics of nature, p 14. Perhaps like Hamlet's soliloquy, he was teaching himself, planning. He was building, constructing. In the Transcendental Aesthetic and Analytic, he gives the Empiricists apriori, subjective ways, of perception and understanding, through which the objective manifold of given, the things-in-themselves, are revealed in experience. Hume and Kant knew the categories not to be objective, although, Hume thought that they are empirical law of association and habit. Why can't apriori be objective, Hegel asks, because Kant cannot explain Universal and Necessity in knowledge except by CONCEIVING them through innate ideas. So Kant says immediately in Tr. Dialectic that apriori categories are only valid phenomenally-a glaring circular reasoning!- and Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, Schopenhauer and 2000 years ago Vijnânavâdins of India, were waiting behind the door. Instead of creating, constructing experience out of irreconcilable opposition, (Perception-Conception; Thing-in-itself, the object, the given- apriori categories, the subject, Thought; Unconditioned Noumenon-conditioned, relative Ideas of Reason), why not the mind, the only real, gives data of knowledge, including of object, the given, through its own law? Or even that, thought does not manipulate, relations are given with terms, matter and forms are both objective- this is the



Indian system of Nyâya-Vaisesika, Logic-Pluralistic Realism. Vijnânnavâda says Mâdhayamika in their enthusiasm, rejects all theories without a ground and threw the bathwater and the baby with it. Idealistic arguments apart, Kant and Mâdhyamika are Empirical Realists, accepting subject-object and their duality. Kant says, neither the senses nor the understanding by themselves fall into error, p 298. The true object is subjected to error and illusion by the categories of reason, in judgement, p 299-300. Kant wants another way, a non empirical one, whereby, we come to realise pure thing-in-itself without categories and pure categories, without the given.

Vedânta gives Kant the Pure object, Brahman, sanmâtra (only Real), immediately, self evidently, unrelatedly. Vijnânnavâda gives Kant Pure thought, Vijnânaptimâtra (only Thought), without a given.

Kant and Mâdhyamika, the empirical realists (provisionally), are now conscious critically with the categories of subject-object, which are relative to each other, hence unreal on their own. They are now Transcendental Idealists where Reality is immediately perceived and not inferred, p 347. Kant at the end of the day ended his first critique by concluding that the Absolute cannot be reached and the critical consciousness cannot eradicate the transcendental

illusion, lest the Noumenon be a mere concept and it would be a nonentity for any objectivity, p 270-1. Mâdhyamika on the other hand resolves the intellectual conflict by rising to Absolutism in a non-intellectual intuition of non dualism (Advaya). This highest knowledge, Prajnâ, is instantaneously also freedom or Nirvâna and Buddhahood, the Summum Bonum (Dignâga, Prajnâpâramitâ Pindârtha nirdesa quoted in Haribhadra's Abhisamayâlankâraloka twice, pp 28, 153; Ârya Deva in CS viii 15).

## **An Estimate**

Is Sunyata consistent and significant? It is, we have already shown, (p 59, 60). Dialectic is the necessary conflict arising from the categories of Reason and in the Indian context, 'soul' of Hindu and 'no soul' of Buddhists are the conflicting theses. Consciousness goes through the antinomical nature of reason, in choosing 'is' and 'not-is' and resolution is arrived at a higher critical intuition. This teaching of Buddha in finding resolution in the middle position is developed by Prajnâpâramitâ and Mâdhyamika, as the system implies. This is further refined with the warning that middle is no position but an antidote of positioning tendency of categories of reason. Each position and Mâdhyamika has four, Catusatikâ, to cover all, is criticized by reductio ad absurdum, only to emphasize that real is transcendent to thought. It is not nihilism. Only thought is negated, being incompetent. The highest knowledge is Prajnâ which is, devoid of, Sunyatâ of, views. The real is beyond predication and is the real of the relative sphere where reason clads and hides the real, in the practical world.

Mâdhyamika appears to be positivistic. Kant warns against speculative metaphysics because the unwarranted designation of pure reason makes god, freedom and immortality of soul, unsafe. He seeks to realize noumenon in a nonintellectual mode, in his second critique of practical reason, in categorical imperative. Mâdhyamika Absolute has a spiritual end. It is not nil but devoid of limitation of reason. It is a practical strife to free mind of its constant preoccupation to generalize, to make views. Western positivists deny metaphysics as nonsense and significant is that, which is verifiable, i.e., in science. Sensible is all and knowledge of transcendent is no knowledge. Mâdhyamika convicts knowledge but accepts its utility only in the practical world, yet not absolutely.

The practical goal of this system lies in the practice of being wide awake, always correcting oneself from view making and this state of awareness is the highest knowledge, Prajnâ, which is synonymous with freedom and Buddhahood, basking in the reality at large, in peace and tranquility, in the cessation of conflict, verbal elaboration and the phenomenal world.

## **Twenty Modes of Sunyatâ**

The Unreality of Internal Elements of Existence.

The Unreality of the External Objects.

The Unreality of Both together as in the sense organs or the body.

The Unreality of (the Knowledge of) Unreality.

The Unreality of the Infinite Space.

The Unreality of the Ultimate Reality, Nirvâna.

The Unreality of the Conditioned.

The Unreality of the Unconditioned.

The Unreality of the Limitless.

The Unreality of that which is Beginningless and Endless.

The Unreality of the Undeniable.

The Unreality of the Ultimate Essences.

The Unreality of All Elements of Existence.

The Unreality of all Determinations.

The Unreality of the Past, Present & Future.

The Unreality of Relating or combination conceived as a Non-Ens.

The Unreality of the Positive Constituents of Empirical Existence.

The Unreality of Non-Ens.  
 The Unreality of Self-Being.  
 The Unreality of Dependent Being.

Haribhadra in his *Abhisamyâlamkâraloka* treats these modes of Sunyatâ as they are mentioned in the later *Prajnâpâramitâ*, *Pancavimsatikâsâhasrikâ*. The author also joins these modes in turn with *Dasa Bhumi*, Ten Planes of Concentration of a Bodhisattva in Mahâyâna as opposed to the original eight commandments or *Mârga*, the way, of Buddha. Total number of modes vary from other texts, e.g., *Madhântavibhâgatika* (p 43, 51), 16 modes, *Dharmasangraha* (p 8-9), 18 modes.

First 3 modes correspond to the preparatory stage of Action in faith. Logically too, elements, objects, sense organs are neither real nor unreal but relative, therefore void, *sunya*. The fourth mode corresponds to the Training stage. Logically, this mode means that everything is relative but the statement is not representing real, it is also relative. The middle is no position has been warned in *Samâdhirâja* as mentioned before. It is the criticism, the medicine against the disease of holding views, as Buddha said.

The fifth mode corresponds to the First plane of concentration. Logically space is not an object but objects present through space (and time) as Kant said and are mutually relative and void. The sixth mode

corresponds to the Second stage and so on. Logically this mode means Nirvâna and is not a separate reality as the Hinayânists made out. They conceived Nirvâna as resulting from cessation of the defilement and a separate entity or dharma. Mâdhyamikas saw Nirvâna as the reality beyond thought, the transcendent ground of the phenomenal world. There is a not-born, a not-become, a not created, a not-formed. If there were not this not-born...there would not be the escape, the way out of this bondage...Udana 80-81. Nirvâna's positive description of the self basking in the Universal Reality is mentioned in Apannaka Sutta (see p 39). It is beyond all suffering and change, the shelter, refuge and goal, Buddha said, SN iv 369.

The seventh mode by definition is dependent and unreal and the eighth is mutually dependent on the seventh and is void. The ninth and tenth modes, limit/limitless, beginningless/endless are subjective, logical and notional therefore relative and unreal. The eleventh, Undeniable, being unreal resembles the fourth, sunyatâ of sunyatâ.

The twelfth mode, the unreality of the essences means that things are empty, devoid of essence of their own. Dialectic does not make any difference to the real, the notion is changed. Likewise the thirteenth mode is already covered. Definition of Buddhist realists of

dharmas, elements, are notional particulars and like general are conceptual constructions and so mode fourteenth is void and so is fifteenth-past, present and future, being relative concepts.

The dependent of elements of existence as mentioned in Pratitya Samutpâda are not nil but relative and so void, they have no self nature. This is the sixteenth mode. Likewise the five groups, skandhas, of existence have no reality beyond the concept of worlds in the seventeenth mode.

The last three modes, the unreality of Non-Empirical, Selfnature and Dependent Being, correspond to the plane of Buddhahood and logically signify that the real is what it is and is besides our ideas, wisdom or conduct, as well as, whether there is Buddha or not.

The final word of warning in the Mâdhyamika Philosophy is that, 'everything is void', is a criticism and it is not a further position or entity, or else it will regress. It is a medicine, a therapy, an antidote against making dogmatic views, Buddha said, but him I declare incurable who misapprehends Sunyatâ itself as a theory, KP 95 p 97. It is dangerous to hold the snake by the wrong end, Nâgârjuna said, MK xxiv 11. This is as if one were to ask, when told, that there was nothing to give, to be given that nothing. MKV 247-248.



## Glossary of Sanskrit and Pali words

*Abhâva*, absence

*Âbhuta-parikalpa*, construction of the non-existent object

*Achârya*, teacher

*Adhipati*, dominant condition

*Advaita*, non-dual, non-different

*Advaya*, *advaya-vâda*, negation of both views, nondual.

*Âlambana*, object condition

*Anâtma-vâda*, (Pali-anatta, soullessness) no-self theory.

*Anitya*, (Pali-anichha) impermanent

*Anta*, , end

*Anustup*, a metric rhythm of eight syllables used in verses and music.

*Ârhat*, the perfected saint. This is the highest stage of Hinayâna.

*Arthakriyâkâri*, efficient

*Asamskrta*, the unconditioned

*Âtman*, self, soul, substance

*Âtma-vâda*, the theory that the real is substance, permanent and eternal, and has a nature of its own.

*Avyâkrta* (Pali, *avyâkata*) the inexpressible

*Âyatana* literally, that which engenders the ingress of sensation; sense organs and sense-data

*Bhâva*, being, existence.

*Bhiksu*, monk.

*Bodhi*, enlightenment

*Bodhisattva*, the aspirant for enlightenment

*Brahman*, absolute

*Buddha-bhakti*, devotion of Buddha

*Buddhi*, intellect, mind

*Buddha-kâya*, the body of Buddha

*Catusatika*, *catuskoti*, four positons yes, no, yes and no, neither yes nor no.

*Citta*, mind, pure consciousness

*Citta-vipryukts-samskâras*, the non-mental forces

*Dâna*, charity

*Darsana*, immediate knowledge, transcendental insight, intuition, a ststem of philosophy.

*Dharma*, law, especially moral law; virtue or merit; essence or nature of a thing; element or ultimate constituent of existence.

*Dharma-nairâtmya*, the unreality of elements

*Dhyâna*, concentrated contemplation

*Drsti* (*Pali*, *ditthi*), view, philosophical standpoint, speculative theory

*Drsti-vâda*, dogmatism, speculative philosophy

*Dukkha*, suffering, pain

*Hetu*, cause or condition

*Jiva*, the empirical self, individual soul.

*Jnâna*, knowledge, cognition

*Kalpanâ*, conceptualization

*Karma*, free or purposeful act, volition; past deeds and their traces or results

*Karunâ*, compassion, pity

*Klesa*, defiling forces, passions

*Ksânti*, forbearance, forgiveness, patience

*Lokottara*, super-mundane

*Madhyamaka*, *Mâdhyamika*, the middle position or philosophy of Nâgârjuna

*Madhyamâ pratipad*, the middle path; the avoidance of extremes

*Mâyâ*, illusion

*Mimâmsâ*, a school of Brahmanical philosophy

*Milinda panna*, Pali-the questions of King Menander to Nâgasenâ, the canon of Buddhist leftists, IC BC.

*Nairâtmya*, soullessness

*Neyârtha*, teaching of the indirect or circumstantial import, having phenomenal validity only

*Nihsvabhâvatâ*, devoid of real essence or reality

*Nirvikalpa*, free from conceptual construction

*Nisprapanca*, transcending speech or verbal elaboration; the absolute

*Nitârtha*, teaching of the direct or ultimate import.

*Nikâya*, division, chapter

*Paramârtha*, *paramârtha-sat*, the ultimate or noumenal reality

*Paratantra*, the relative reality

***Pâramitâ*, literally, that which has gone beyond all limits; infinite excellence, perfection**

***Parikalpita*, the imputed or illusory aspect of appearance**

***Parinispanna*, absolute reality**

***Prajnâ*, wisdom, non-dual knowledge, intuition.**

***Prajnâ-Pâramitâ*, perfection of wisdom; the highest reality identified with the Buddha.**

***Prajnâpti-sat*, literally, real in thought (only); subjective; unreal**

***Pramânas*, sources of valid knowledge**

***Prapanca*, verbal elaboration; the phenomenal world**

***Prapancopasama*, the cessation of the world**

***Prasanga*, reductio ad absurdum**

***Prâsangika*, one who resorts to reductio ad absurdum arguments**

***Pratitya-samutpâda*, dependent origination, this is equated, in the Mâdhyamika, with Sunyatâ, the relativity of things.**

***Pratyaya*, (Pali, pachhaya), condition.**

***Pudgala*, (Pali, Puggala), the empirical individual, ego**

***Pudgalâtma-vâda*, the theory, held by the Vâtsiputriyas or Sâmmitiyas, of a quasi-permanent entity (pudgala), neither completely identical with the mental states, nor totally different from them.**

***Rupa*, matter, material forms or elements**

***Samanantara*, the immediately preceding condition**

*Samavâya*, inherence relation of the Nyâya-Vaisesika  
*Samsâra*, literally, incessantly in motion, flux; the  
world of phenomena.

*Samskâra*, the forces, mental and material, that  
condition phenomenal entities.

*Samskrta*, conditioned existence, phenomenon

*Samvrti*, the covered or the covering activity,  
superficial reality, appearance

*Samvrti-satya*, apparent truth, phenomenal reality

*Sânta*, quiescent, tranquil

*Sarvâsti-vâda*, the Buddhist School which holds that  
all the elements (dharmas) exist in all the three times  
(sarvadâ asti); another name for the Vaibhâsika

*Satkâya-drsti* (Pali, *Sakkâya-ditthi*), the dogmatic view  
which clings to the reality of âtman or substance; same  
as âtma-drsti

*Satkârya-vâda*, the Sâmkhya theory that the effect is  
preexistent in or identical with the cause.

*Sautrântika*, the adherents of the Sutras of Buddha who  
deny the canonical character of the Abhidharma  
treatises; the Buddhist school of critical realism.

*Sila*, practice of moral virtues

*Siva*, benign, blessed

*Skandha* (Pali, *khandha*), the five groups of elements,  
dharmas, into which all existences are classified in  
Early Buddhism. The five are; Rupa, matter; Vedanâ,  
feeling; Samjnâ, ideation; Samskâra, forces; vijnâna,  
pure consciousness

*Sthavira-vâda*, The doctrine of the Elders; an early school of Buddhism belonging to the Hinayâna; same as Theravâda.

*Svasvabhâvatâ*, having one's own nature

*Sunya*, *Sunyatâ*, the terms are used in two allied meanings; a) the phenomena are sunya, as they are relative and lack substantiality or independent reality; they are conditioned and hence are unreal; b) the Absolute is sunya, as it is devoid of empirical forms; no predicate (is, is-not, is and is-not, neither is nor is-not), can legitimately be applied to it. It is beyond thought

*Sutra (Pali-sutta)*, shortest aphorism, saying

*Svalaksana*, the thing-in-itself, the unique momentary particular

*Svatantra*, *svâtantrika*, the Mâdhyamika School of Bhâvaviveka and others which adduced arguments and examples of their own in refuting their opponents; this is opposed to the other Mâdhyamika School (the Prâsangika) of Buddhapâlita, Candrakiriti, etc., which strictly adhered to the method of reductio ad absurdum.

*Tathâgata*, appellation of Buddha, one who has realised and known things as they are in reality; Perfect Being.

*Tathatâ*, suchness, thatness, absolute

*Uccheda-vâda*, nihilism, materialism

*Uâpya*, means

*Vedanâ*, feeling

*Vihâra*, monastery

*Vijnâna*, consciousness

*Vijnânaptimâtratâ*, the sole reality of consciousness

*Viklpa*, conceptual construction, the subjective thought  
of interpreting object

*Virya*, effort

*Viveka*, discrimination

*Vyâvahârîka*, phenomenal reality, relative truth

*Yâna*, vehicle, Mahâyâna-great vehicle, Hinayâna  
mean vehicle

## Abbreviations

- A & R** = Appearance and Reality.  
**AK** = Abhidharma Kosa.  
**AKV** = Abhidharma Kosa Vyâkhyâ.  
**Bhedâbheda** = Different-nondifferent together view.  
**BJS** = Brahmajâlasutta.  
**BP** = Buddhist Philosophy.  
**Br. Up** = Brhadâranyaka Upanisad.  
**BSB** = Brahma Sutra Bhâsya by Samkara.  
**CS** = Catusataka.  
**CSV** = Catusataka Vrtti.  
**DP** = Dhammapada.  
**HBT** = History of Buddhist Thought by Thomas, E.J.  
**ERE** = Early Religions of the East.  
**IP** = Indian Philosophy by Râdhâkrishnan, S.  
**JRAS** = Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.  
**KP** = Kâsyapa, Parivarta.  
**MBK** = Madhyânta Bibhanga Kârikâ. Exposition of dividing the middle from the ends.  
**MK** = Mâdhyamika Kârikâs.  
**MKV** = Mâdhyamika Kârikâs Vrtti.  
**MPNS** = Mahâparinirvâna Sutta.



**NV** = Nyâya-Vaisesika.

**SBE** = Sacred Books of the East.

**Sm** = Samkara.

**THN** = Treatise of Human Nature, Everyman's Library  
by David Hume.

**VV** = Vijnânavâda.

**YB** = Yoga Bhâsya by Vyâsa.

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## **Introduction of the Author**

Professor Dr. Debabrata Chatterjee is a fascinating gentleman who is a combination, a consultant surgeon, medical researcher and teacher of international repute, humanitarian, poet and philosopher. Born in Chandannagar, India in 1937, the son of a National Professor of English and a grandson of a Mathematician and the Head of Sri Chaitanya order of Navadwip, he went on to graduate from NRS Medical College of Calcutta University and later obtained a long list of qualifications including that of LRCP, MRCS, DRCOG from London, FRCS from Edinburgh and England, a Master of Surgery recognition from Liverpool and an FICS from Chicago. Professionally having trained in all major branches of surgery, he worked as a specialist consultant surgeon, mainly in the United Kingdom and also abroad. His research work includes research Fellowship and research grants in Liverpool University, University College, Cork, Queen's University Belfast and University Hospital of the West Indies, in various subjects including, Gastroenterology, Urology,

Oncology, Wound infection. His major work is finding the cause of chronic gastritis, immunotherapy of peptic ulcer in man, theory of dynamic equilibrium of gastric mucosal structure. His work appeared in various influential publications, which have appeared in leading journals such as SGO, BJS, International surgery, JIMA, BJCP on a variety of medical subjects. He is a founding member of the British Association of Surgical Oncologists and Society of Minimal Invasive General Surgeons, a Fellow of the Association of Surgeons and Royal Society of Medicine and a Charles Darwin Associate of the New York Academy of Science. In addition he is a member of the Society of Laparoscopic Surgeons of the United States of America and Europe and of the American and British Associations. He was elected best teacher in the University of the West Indies (Medical) in 1976.

He is associated with British Humanist movement and Rationalist Press Association, Greenpeace, Amnesty International for over 40 years and is actively involved with the Humanities Fellowship of the British Redcross Society and similar activities with British Oxfam, UNICEF and other charity organizations.

He studied Law in London and Islamic philosophy in Spain. He is an erudite scholar in Indian classical music

and in Eastern and Western Philosophy. He studied music under the Late Panchanan Mukherjee of Tansen School and was closely influenced by masters such as Alauddin Khan, Vismadev Chatterjee and Sagiruddin Khan.

His name appears in Who's Who in Medicine and Health care, in Science and Technology, in Economics, in Madison Who's Who in Business and Industry, in Who's Who of the world and in Baron 500, in Leaders of the century-Europe 500, World 500. He is a distinguished Professor amongst 500 in the world. He received 'Glory of India' award.

He has been writing verses since age 13. He published verses in English and Bengali which were acclaimed highly by literary critics. "A poet's eye doth glance from heaven to earth and earth to heaven and he gives to 'airy nothing a local habitation and a name', said Shakespeare. "The poems do not fall far short of the dizzy Shakespearian standard. In fact, they are real gems. There is an ease, grace and fluency about them, despite the profundity of thoughts they're stuffed with."

His best love, life and soul is philosophy. He dived deep in the Western Philosophy, as well as, in all aspects of Indian philosophy mainly under the influence of Professor Radhakrishnan. He basks in Upanisads and

early teachings of Buddha. He lives, talks and lectures in philosophy. His international lecture on Perpetual Peace in the Bibliotheque World Wide and the Institute of the advancement of positive global solution, in Malaga, Spain, in August 2003, was in remembrance of Immanuel Kant and his implications on global peace in modern times. It was widely acclaimed world wide and was incorporated in the curriculum of International Law at the University of Riga. The current Islamic study in Spain is aimed at creating harmony amongst modern polarised religious, political and economic hostilities that are endangering peace and civilization.

Ten books of verses are published to date.

Abstracts from Who's Who Publications  
and  
Prefaces of Collections