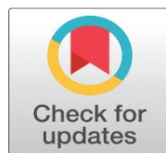
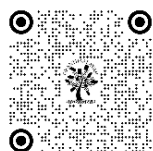


THE CONTRIBUTION OF SIX CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHERS IN BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY

Dr. Chintala Venkata Sivasai¹

¹ Assistant Professor, School of Buddhist Studies and Civilization, Gautam Buddha University, Greater Noida, U.P



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ABSTRACT

There were two different religious and cultural traditions in ancient India. The Munis and Sramanas have a pre-Aryan past that includes wandering ascetics, yogis, and an association with water sacredness. They had the doctrine of samsara, which holds that there is essentially something unsatisfactory with the world and that the only way to find true happiness is to renounce it. Their doctrines also included Karma (action), an eternal soul, and Mukti (release). In addition to the Brahmanic philosophy, there were up to sixty-two other schools of philosophy in ancient India, all of which were antagonistic to it. The six non-Buddhist thinkers who were revered by kings, nobles, and the wise are mentioned frequently in Buddhist and secular origins. As the founders of schools of thought, they were widely recognized across the nation. A few of them were senior Buddha contemporaries, and the masses of disciples also followed them. The names of these six philosophers and their philosophies are listed below.

Keywords: Buddhist Philosophy, Karma, Nibbana, Samsara, Buddhism etc

1. INTRODUCTION

It is clear that Buddhist beliefs affect how the Buddha lived his life. The main problem here is Dukkha, which happens when we are unhappy with the world and always want something. People are unhappy because they want things all the time and find that even when they get them, they don't really satisfy them. The Buddha wrote The Four Noble Truths to explain the problem of why suffering happens and how to end it. The most important things in modern man's intellectual life are the rationality standards set by modern science and the materialist view that goes along with it. Many modern intellectuals who have been affected by these things have turned away from metaphysics, dogmatic religion, and many traditional morals. Without a doubt, scientific rationality has led to huge progress in the real world. However, it can't be said that people in the modern world are happier, feel safer, and don't worry that other people will hurt their interests without a good reason. There are a lot of armed conflicts in the world today. In many parts of the world, we see horrible moral crimes like terrorism, violating human rights, racial and other forms of discrimination, and violence against innocent people all the time. Poverty and being without money are common.

(1) PURĀṆA KASSAPA

According to the Buddhist texts, Purāṇa Kassapa was a respectable teacher and leader of a religious sect who promulgated a no-action theory¹(*Akriyavada*). He was, most probably, born into a Brahmana family. His name Purana also indicates that he was regarded as fully enlightened and perfect in wisdom.

According to Purāṇa Kassapa, Karma doesn't affect the soul in any way. One may accomplish things, or one may do. One might cause harm or incite someone to commit murder. Theft or dacoit may be perpetrated or observed, adultery may be committed or witnessed, or a lie may be told or observed. The soul is unaffected by everything. Even if an act is licentious, sin has no effect on the soul. No matter how good the deed is, it does not merit the soul. Nothing affects the soul in a *Kriya* (result). When a person dies away, all of the components that constituted him come together in their original form. Both the body and the soul perish after death. Purana Kassapa also advocated for aheturvada. The Buddha even attributed the power to predict the location of a specific deceased person's rebirth to Kassapa and other heretical teachers.

(2) PAKUDHA KACCĀYANA

According to the Buddhist texts, Pakudha Kaccāyana was one of the six heretical teachers. According to Buddhaghosa, his family name is Kaccāyana, and his personal name is Pakudha. According to the Prasonopanisad, he was also known as Kakudha Katyayana. The philosophical ideas of Pakudha are known from *Sāmaññaphala*²*Sutta*. The *Sāmaññaphala Sutta* represents him as a pluralist and a semi-materialist.

According to his beliefs, a being is composed of seven components: Prathvi, Apa, Tej, Vayu, Sukha, Dukha, and the Soul. One does not influence the other; they are both independent of one another. They are eternal and self-existent. They cannot be destroyed by anyone. A man is not killed if his head is chopped off. It simply means that the weapon has made its entry into the seven elements.³

However, the sutrakritanga introduces atmashashthavad as a six-category system that substitutes either space for pleasure or pain. The Buddha denounced the Pakudha concept as a form of annihilation of Eternalism (*Ucchedavad*).⁴

(3) MAKKHALI GOSĀLA

Buddha's significant contemporary was Makkhali Gosāla. We can find descriptions of his name and life in Buddhist and Jain scriptures. According to B. M. Barua, however, they are not historical. As the first part of his name suggests, he carried a bamboo staff and was a member of the Acelakas, or Naked Ones, sect, according to Pl. Gupta. For almost six years, he lived with Mahavira as a student of Parsvanatha, but Gosāla later separated because he thought that every living being could be reanimated. He founded the Ajivika School, a separate philosophical movement. Nanda Vacca and Kisa Sankicca, his two other predecessors, are noted in the *Majjhima Nikāya*. Thus, he could be considered the Ajivika School's third or final Tirthankara. He belonged to the fatalism concept.

His philosophy is one of metamorphosis through reanimation, similar to plant seeds. Transmigration purifies humans, and the entire cycle of reincarnation periods is estimated to reach eighty-four hundred thousand, which may be where the phrase "wheel of eighty-four" originates. He considered that nothing could alter fate because everything was predestined. He therefore rejected the value of hard work and manly vitality, arguing that these are set and predetermined, just like everything else. Everything behaves in accordance with its inherent nature, which is a self-evolving process that causes things to exist and disappear.

Gosāla held that Karma had its own logic and was not influenced by free will. Putting himself and just two other people in the "supremely white" category, he divided humanity into six groups. The four disciplines of austerity, asceticism, comfort-loathing, and seclusion were practiced by his disciples, who outlined eight stages of life from birth until renunciation. Gosāla taught that, despite being condemned as immoral by Buddhists and Jainas, it was still one's responsibility to be law-abiding, not infringe on the rights of others, utilize one's freedoms to the fullest, be considerate

¹K. N. Jayatilleke, "*Early Buddhsit Theory of Knowledge*", New Delhi, India, 1980, p. 143.

²The 'Fruits of Monkhood', is the name of a famous Sutta (D. 2) and also according to D. 33, a name for the 4 supermundane fruitions: Stream-entrance, Once-return, Non-return, and Perfect Holiness (*S. ariya-puggala*).

³DR. B. R. Ambedkar, "*The Buddha and His dhamma*", Buddha Bhoomi Publication, Nagpur, 1997, p. 98.

⁴There were another class of Brahman philosophers who declared that there remains nothing after death; complete annihilation come as soon as a man passes away. See *Charvak Darsana*.

and pure, refrain from killing, be free from material belongings, minimize the necessities of life, and strive for the best and highest potential of humanity. Apart from determinism, there are a lot of parallels between Gosāla and Mahavira's teachings. In addition to recommending nudity for the saints and believing in the omniscience of the Creator, they both classified living things under the same six categories.⁵

(4) AJITA KESAKAMBALA

Ajita Kesakambala was an elder contemporary of Buddha. Ajita Keshakambalin is credited with founding materialism in India. His philosophy rejected karma's effects. Since there is only the material world—no other realm, no afterlife, no reward for service, and no ascetics who have achieved enlightenment or perfection—he also saw no value in making sacrifices, giving, or doing good deeds. When a person passes away, their body returns to the soil, their fluids turn to water, their heat turns to fire, their breath turns to air, their senses turn to space, and they lose their identity. He disagreed with Katyayana's and other people's belief that the soul existed apart from the body. The apprehending mind can imagine the individual as a whole, as Ajita did. In reality, Ajita taught people to appreciate life and honor the living while they are alive rather than death and the dead, regardless of Mahavira's criticism that his ideology encouraged people to kill, burn, ruin, and enjoy life's joys. His beliefs are comparable to those of the Charvaka School. The cutting off of the destruction, the annihilation of a living creature, is known in Buddhism as the *Ucchedavada*.

(5) SAÑJAYA BELAṬṬHAPUTTA

Belaṭṭhi's son, Sañjaya, was also a religious educator. In the time of the Buddha, he was also one of the six well-known heretics. He was most likely one of the Buddha's elder contemporaries. He is most likely the same as Parivrajaka Sanjaya, who taught Sāriputra and Moggallāna and who, along with his other students, joined the Buddhist Saṃgha after being moved by Buddha's theory of causality. Most people characterized him as an agnostic. He was a famous skeptic who advocated for problem avoidance and judgmental suspension. His doctrines seem to have been identical with those of the *Amarāvikkhepikas* (Eel-wrigglers) who, when asked a question, would equivocate and wriggle like an eel. Sañjaya explicates his theory to the King “*Atthi parolokoti iti ce maṃ pucchasi, atthi parolokoti iti ce me assa, atthi parolokoti iti tenaṃ vyākareya*, etc...”⁶ It is likely that Sañjaya only paused his rulings on those questions whose answers must always be left up for speculation. It's possible that he wanted to convey to his followers that the ultimate solution to these problems was outside the realm of speculation and that he wanted to focus their attention on maintaining mental clarity rather than on fruitless research.

NIGAṆṬHA NĀTAPUTTA

It so happened that Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta, also known as Mahavira, was an older contemporary of Buddha. He was from a noble family, possibly a chief of a clan, just like Buddha.⁷ He lived a married life for a while before giving up all. He established an order of monks that committed to far more austerities than those required of Buddhist monks and reintroduced Parsvanatha's teachings.

Nigaṇṭha elucidates his theory to the King that “*Idha, mahārāja, nigaṇṭho catuyāmasaṃvaravuto hoti, kathaṇca, mahārāja, nigaṇṭho catuyāmasaṃvarāvuto hoti, idha, mahārāja, nigaṇṭho sabbavāritoca hoti*”, etc...”⁸ From the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta* we learn that the Nigaṇṭha is restrained with a four-fold, restraint. Since he is restrained from all sinful actions, he is also restrained from all water. He has cleansed himself of all sins and is now at peace with himself. The Ahimsa commandment was highlighted by the Nigaṇṭha. Mahāvira maintained the Kriya theory. He believes that one's own actions are the cause of their sorrow. No one else is too responsible. Good behavior and true knowledge are the keys to liberation. Good or bad deeds determine whether a soul transmigrates.⁹

When assessing the ethics of Jainism, we must remember that the householders, who adhered to a scaled-down form of the five precepts, likely outnumbered the austere monks and nuns. For those who have given up the world, spiritual freedom (Moksha) from the wheel of reincarnation (*Samṣāra*) is their main objective. This goal of taking their souls out of the earth thus served as the primary driving force behind their lives. Despite their minimalist lifestyle and minimal

⁵K. N. Jayatilleke, “*Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*”, New Delhi, India, 1980, p. 113.

⁶*Samanyaphala Sutta* of *DĪGHANIKĀYA*.

⁷K. N. Jayatilleke, “*Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*”, New Delhi, India, 1980, p-140.

⁸*Sāmaññaphala Sutta* of *DĪGHANIKĀYA*.

⁹Gail Omveddt, “*Buddhism in India*”, New Delhi, 2003, p. 39.

use of Earth's resources, they nevertheless relied on laypeople to meet their basic survival needs. Apart from their example of self-discipline and perhaps some teaching, their whole emphasis on this otherworldly objective does appear to keep them from making many contributions to civilization. Even Nevertheless, the laypeople were making a contribution to society by practicing Jainism and supporting their families while trying their best to avoid hurting other people or any living thing. As a result, they were vegetarians and, if they followed the precepts, led extremely moral lives. Despite setting an example of peace, Jainas frequently favored the battles that were prevalent in ancient India. The nonviolence they practiced as individuals was somehow not able to spread into a broader social ethic that would have converted society as a whole. Despite maintaining a sizable following, the religion never gained the same level of popularity as Buddhism or Hinduism, presumably due to the extreme of its austere practices that so severely disdain happiness and personal pleasures. In addition to offering a spiritual path for individuals seeking emancipation and an exceptional model of self-discipline and respect for all life, Jainism has brought a delightful example of individual harmlessness to our world. However, it may not be a comprehensive answer to all human issues.

THE BUDDHA'S ATTITUDE TO SIX PHILOSOPHERS

The Buddha did not accept the teachings of the new philosophers. His rejection of their teaching was not without reason. He said that:

If the principles of Purāṇa Kassapa and Pakudha Kaccāyana were accurate, anyone may commit any kind of evil or harm—even killing someone—without facing any social repercussions or obligations.

Man becomes the slave of fate if Makhali Ghosāla's theory is correct. He is unable to free himself.

If Ajit Kesakambala's doctrine is true, all that man has to do is eat, drink, and make err.

Man has to wander aimlessly and exist without a constructive philosophy of life if Sanjaya Belaputta's theory is correct.

According to Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta's theory, man's existence must be governed by Tapascharya and Asceticism, which include total subordination and uprooting of his inclinations and desires.

Therefore, the Buddha wasn't drawn into any of the life paths that the philosophers proposed. They were, he believed, the thoughts of men who had lost all hope and were now reckless and defenseless. So he made the decision to seek light elsewhere.¹⁰

The Buddha's ethics is chiefly based on the nature and place of man in the universe, and therefore, the main purpose of Buddha's *Dhamma* has been throughout to teach how man's efforts should be directed towards '*Kusala Kamma*' in society so that all living beings may be happy. The major thrust of Buddhist Cosmology, thus, is not metaphysical, but ethical, because it believes in the 'Moral Order' of the universe as generated by the totality of human karma. It is neither theistic, nor materialistic, but simply non-theistic and humanistic because it views the cosmos from the standpoint of human situation including its' diagnosis and prescription. This forms the cornerstone of Buddhist Humanism, and that distinguishes it, too, from the mainstream of the general Indian Cosmology as one may find in the Brahmanical literature and other religio-philosophical texts of the orthodox systems of Indian Philosophy.¹¹

2. CONCLUSION

An activity can be wholesome (*Kusala*), unwholesome (*Akusala*), or indeterminate (*Avyakata*), according to the Buddhist perspective. While uncertain activities are karmically neutral, wholesome and unwholesome actions have ethical significance. Regarding karmic punishment, the first two types are referred to as demeritorious (*Pāpa*) and meritorious (*Puñña*), respectively. Buddhism, in contrast to theistic religions, rejects all forms of supernatural involvement and evaluates the morality of these deeds only on the basis of scientific data. Immorality is disobedience because it is assumed that the moral code reflects God's will and that breaking the code is a violation of God's authority. This assumption, according to philosophers, can only be accepted if it can be demonstrated that God is morally good. Can we prove that? The evils of the earth, such as floods, droughts, cyclones, plagues, epidemics, cruelty, diseases, early death, and so forth, they claim, make it impossible to show.

¹⁰DR. B. R. Ambedkar, "*The Buddha and His dhamma*", Buddha Bhoomi Publication, Nagpur, 1997, p. 99.

¹¹D. R. Jatava, "*The Humanism of Buddha*", printed in A-55, Naraina Industrial Area, Phase-I, New Delhi, 1998, p. 28.

From beginning to end, Buddhism is morally and ethically pure. Without the use of a supernatural actor, the importance of a moral life is emphasized throughout, and the retributive consequences of actions that occur in this life and subsequent ones are demonstrated. Individuals are attributed free choice and responsibility, which empowers them to shape their own "destiny." Man holds a special place in the Buddhist ethical framework since he is the king of himself. The motivation and intention of an action are assessed in relation to the morality of the means used to carry it out, as Buddhism is particular about the ethical value of an action. Furthermore, the ultimate good of that specific action is determined by taking into account not only its outcome but also the advantage that the activity might guarantee to the performer and others. Essentially, an action might be driven by the wholesome roots of goodness, such as non-greed (*Alobha*), non-malice (*Adosa*), and non-delusion (*Amoha*), or by the unwholesome feet of evil, which are greed (*Lobha*), malice (*Dosa*), and delusion (*Moha*). The motivation that drives an individual to act in that specific way is the source of karmic potentiality. Since Buddhism holds that reaching the goal by any means does not excuse the use of those specific means, an action must be carried out by righteous means in order to be considered wholesome. Without a doubt, the action must be focused on one's own and others' well-being.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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None.

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